

EQUALITY



COE hosts the National Student Leadership Congress, where TRIO pre-college students from across the United States and U.S. territories gather in Washington, D.C. to find innovative solutions to today's societal issues.

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Future Leaders Realized Their Power in D.C. This Summer

From June 8 to 13, young minds from across the U.S. converged for the National Student Leadership Congress (NSLC) in Washington, D.C. Hosted by the Council for Opportunity in Education (COE), this six-day event empowered 150 high school TRIO participants to tackle societal issues, engage in a Mock Congress, and explore landmark sites.



Students experienced a rigorous program with a full schedule that challenged them and provided an intensive learning experience.



From June 8 through 13, bright young minds from across the United States and U.S. territories converged to embark on a journey of discovery and leadership.



"NSLC has opened my eyes, and I would have never thought that I, a student from a low-income household, would get this experience," one participant remarked. The event helped her break out of her shell, embrace her true self, and form friendships with peers from across the country.

Cont'd from the front:

Students like Yessenya Jimenez from Coastal Bend College's **TRIO Talent Search** program and Paige Vick from Weatherford College's **TRIO Talent Search** program found the experience eye-opening, breaking out of their shells and embracing diversity.

Loryn Geisel from Saint Francis University's **TRIO Upward Bound**

program and Zamiah Bright from I.C. Norcom High School's **TRIO Upward Bound** program shared how NSLC helped them build confidence and form lasting friendships.

A Q&A session with COE President **Kimberly Jones** and author **Alejandra Campoverdi** provided additional inspiration, emphasizing the value of perseverance and resilience.

Alejandra Campoverdi (right) is the author of **FIRST GEN**, a memoir about navigating social mobility as a first-generation Latina.

NSLC highlights the power of experiential learning, helping students connect, grow, and realize their potential beyond their local communities and fostering a sense of empowerment and leadership among first-generation and low-income students.



STUDENT OPPORTUNITY

Expanding Horizons: The 2024 Keith Sherin Global Leaders Program

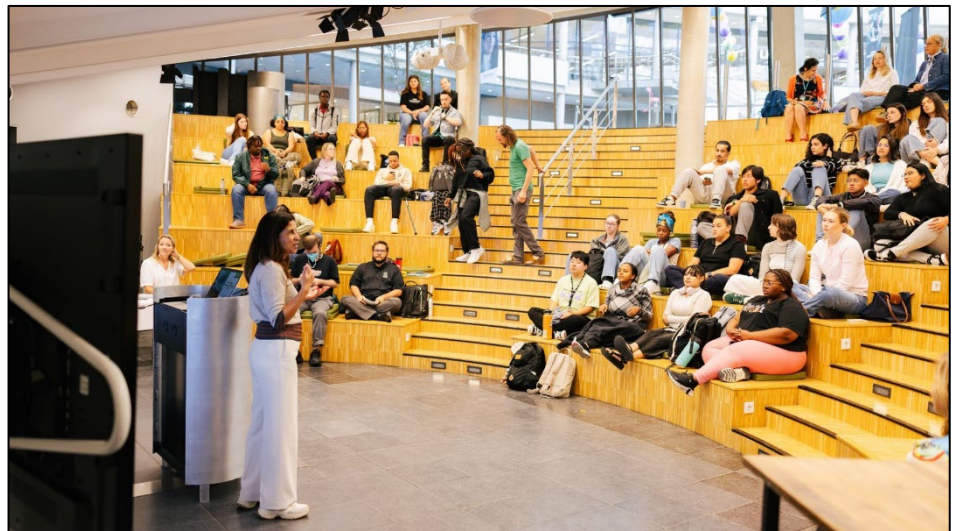
Study abroad programs offer more than academic enrichment; they provide personal growth, cultural immersion, and global perspectives, especially for first-generation and low-income students.

From June 21 to July 13, COE hosted twenty TRIO participants in **The Hague, Netherlands**, for the Keith Sherin Global Leaders Program. This experience allowed students to explore the world and their place within it.

Participants like Patrick Lehman-Martin from **Chemeketa Community College** deepened



COE hosted twenty low-income and first-generation undergraduate TRIO program participants and two group leaders for the 2024 Keith Sherin Global Leaders Program in The Hague, Netherlands, from June 21 to July 13, 2024.



Under the auspices of ECHO, the Center for Diversity Policy, students visited Amsterdam and met student leaders representing migrant communities

their understanding of Dutch politics; studying abroad enhanced his networking skills, which are crucial for his future as an archivist. Jaiden Lee-Jones from **Miami Dade College** built meaningful relationships across diverse backgrounds, emphasizing the value of cultural connections.

Bronson Mills from **Oregon State University** highlighted the importance of cultural immersion, while Jade Buchanan from **Suffolk University** reflected on the shared humanity that transcends geographical divides.

For Maria Cubias from **Northern Essex Community College**, time spent in nature evoked a sense of home, connecting her to her roots in El Salvador. Abby Hudson from **Glenville State University** learned valuable inclusion and cultural sensitivity lessons.

The 2024 Keith Sherin Global Leaders program shows the power of study abroad for first-generation and low-income students, enabling them to become global citizens ready to impact the world.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

My Journey from TRIO Student to Higher Education Advocate



By Alison Grendahl

TRIO has shaped everything I am and everything I've accomplished. Without the unwavering support of my advisor and the invaluable resources **TRIO Student Support Services** provided, I wouldn't have graduated college, let alone advanced into professional roles

within TRIO and the **Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE)**. I am deeply grateful for TRIO's continuous support throughout my journey.

My TRIO advisor at the **University of Wyoming** equipped me with academic resources essential for my classroom success and persistence to graduation. TRIO also offered a safe space for me to fail, learn, and grow, fostering personal and professional development through leadership opportunities.

One pivotal moment was when I told my advisor I wanted to be just like her. This conversation changed my career path entirely. I always knew I wanted to work in education, but witnessing TRIO's impact on my life inspired me to pursue a career in higher education access and success. My advisor helped me secure student employment within our TRIO program and encouraged me to

continue this work post-graduation. This guidance led me to pursue a master's degree, participate in leadership opportunities within ASPIRE and COE, and deepen my commitment to giving back to programs that support students like me.

As a graduate and a professional in TRIO, my experiences have profoundly influenced how I approach program development and policy creation. I always consider how students interact with higher education and how programs or policies eliminate or create barriers to access and success. Fortunately, my role within CDHE allows me to continue advocating for and supporting underrepresented student populations through our established and implemented programs and policies.

Alison Grendahl is a program manager at the Colorado Department of Higher Education

YOUR NEW HUB FOR ALUMNI NETWORKING

ENGAGE WITH OTHER TRIO ALUMNI ON LINKEDIN

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

From TRIO to Leadership: How Support and Mentorship Shaped My Career



By Juan Lopez

My journey with TRIO was transformative, shaping both my

educational and professional path. TRIO offered crucial academic support, mentorship, and resources that helped me navigate the complexities of higher education.

With its help, I pursued a double major in human resources management and managerial information systems at the **University of Washington**, building confidence and resilience. TRIO's support system and scholarships showed me that anything is possible with the right resources.

Participating in a residential summer leadership program at **Big Bend Community College** was a defining moment in my professional development. This experience, funded by **TRIO Upward Bound**, shaped my self-perception and aspirations. By engaging in leadership activities, discussions on social justice, and my first HR internship, I gained invaluable skills and insights.

TRIO also connected me with an exceptional advisor, Sue Workman, whose guidance was crucial in overcoming academic challenges and exploring career opportunities. Her belief in me fueled my drive for excellence.

As a senior executive in culture and engagement at the **YMCA**, I apply the values and skills I developed through TRIO. I advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion, striving to create a workplace where everyone feels valued and empowered. By leveraging my TRIO experience, I work to implement policies and programs that support underrepresented groups, ensuring they have equal opportunities to succeed and grow.

Juan Lopez is currently the senior executive of culture and engagement at the YMCA of Greater New York

WE WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT YOU

UPDATE YOUR TRIO ALUMNI PROFILE AT [TRIOALUMNI.ORG](https://trioalumni.org)

FROM THE PELL INSTITUTE
**Opportunity Matters
 Journal Highlights Key
 Research and Insights**

The Pell Institute announces the release of the fifth volume of **Opportunity Matters: Journal of Access and Opportunity in Education**. This latest edition brings together a diverse range of research and insights aimed at advancing educational equity for underserved populations.

Key essays in this volume include "Unveiling Success" by Austin Hayes, which explores how low-income students define institutional strategies that foster their success, emphasizing the importance of relationships, financial support, and holistic services. Pasha Sergeev's "First-Generation College Students and Mental Health" delves into the unique challenges these students face in seeking mental health support, highlighting the role of community and perseverance.

Other notable essays include Megan Simila and Sanghee Park's analysis of the **TRIO Upward Bound** program's impact on SAT scores, Evelyn Ojeda and Tatiana Pumacahua's study of mental health challenges for DREAMers, and Moya N. Malcolm's narrative on the intersections of immigrant identity and college access counseling. This volume is a valuable resource for educators, policymakers, and advocates working to create more inclusive and supportive educational environments. *Volume five of the Opportunity Matters Journal becomes available in late August.*



Pell Institute staff gather at the 2024 SFARN conference. The conference consists of formal research presentations and panel discussions covering a range of student financial aid and higher education finance topics.



**Pell Institute Hosts
 the 2024 Student
 Financial Aid
 Research Network
 Conference**

The Student Financial Aid Research Network (SFARN) Conference is a leading space for researchers and practitioners to network, seek input, and share expertise with colleagues from colleges and universities, state and federal agencies, membership associations, and other non-profit organizations.

This year's conference, which took place in July, consisted of formal research presentations and panel discussions covering



The 2024 conference was hosted at the University of Maryland, College Park in College Park, Md.

federal policy changes, student loan debt, higher education access, and how students and their families pay for college.

FROM THE PELL INSTITUTE

Insights from the 2024 Indicators of Higher Education Equity Report

The latest Indicators of Higher Education Equity in the United States - 2024 Historical Trend ("Equity Indicators") report illuminates the ongoing challenges and potential strategies for advancing equity in higher education. It emphasizes the need for targeted financial aid, data-driven policies, and comprehensive support programs to enhance student access and attainment.

Postsecondary Enrollment: Despite some progress, a significant gap remains. Census data reveals that 44% of 18 to 24-year-olds from the lowest income quartile enroll in college, compared to 79% from the highest income quartile.

Additionally, while the gap in college participation by race has narrowed, disparities persist.

Institutional Types: Enrollment in four-year institutions strongly correlates with socioeconomic status. Recent data shows that 73% of students from the highest income quintile attend four-year programs, while only 25% from the lowest quintile do. There's also an inverse relationship between the number of enrolled Pell Grant recipients and institutional selectivity, highlighting ongoing inequities.

Financial Aid and Costs: College costs have risen sharply, with the average cost in 2022-23 being 2.4 times higher than in the 1970s. The purchasing power of Pell Grants has significantly declined, covering only 25% of college costs in 2022, compared to two-thirds in 1980. There's also a stark funding inequity between selective and broad-access institutions.

Financial Responsibility: The financial burden of higher education has shifted to students and families, with growing disparities in affordability. Students from the lowest income quartile must allocate 90% of their family's income to cover college costs, compared to 13% for those from the highest income quartile. Rising student debt, particularly among Black students, exacerbates this burden.

Attainment Rates: Bachelor's degree attainment is four times higher for students from the highest income quartile than the lowest. Gender disparities show a significant increase in female degree attainment, which has surpassed that of males since 1980.

International Comparison: The U.S. ranks eighteenth among 38 countries in degree attainment for adults aged 25 to 34, slightly below the OECD average.



READ THE 50- YEAR HISTORICAL TREND REPORT

DOWNLOAD THE REPORT AT PELLINSTITUTE.ORG

LOCAL SPOTLIGHT

The Door: Transforming Lives Through Comprehensive Youth Services

By Barbara Clapp



The Door, established in 1972, is renowned for its comprehensive services and transformative impact on New York City's youth.

New Yorkers often say The Door's wraparound services "saved my

life," emphasizing its role as a vital safe space offering meals and support.

In 2023, The Door served a diverse group: 38% Black, 38% Hispanic, 4% Asian, 4% White, 13% multiracial, and 28% foreign-born. Additionally, 15% identified as LGBTQ+, though this figure may be underreported due to stigma and cultural factors. Many face systemic barriers, with 21% experiencing homelessness, 3% involved in foster care or juvenile justice, and 39% disconnected from school.

As a senior leader at The Door, I see firsthand how our holistic approach addresses the multifaceted needs of young people. Our Manhattan and Bronx Youth Centers offer free services to ages 12-24, including health care, mental health

support, legal aid, career services, and more.

Its unique, integrated model and adaptability to emerging needs drive The Door's success. Career and Education programs, for instance, provide training, internships, and college access, profoundly affecting lives and communities.

Support from donors is crucial, helping fund essential services and respond to growing needs. Donations enable us to provide immediate assistance, including meals, health care, legal support, and crisis intervention. The Door's ability to serve thousands yearly relies on this vital community support.

Ms. Clapp is the managing director of individual giving at The Door, the beneficiary of COE's 2024 public service project

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