

2026 NATIONAL
TRIO DAY

ACTION PACKET

“TRIO FOR A DAY”

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Celebrating 40 Years of National TRIO Day

On **February 24, 1986**, Congress officially designated the first **National TRIO Day**, calling the nation's attention to the needs, aspirations, and extraordinary potential of students from low-income, first-generation backgrounds seeking to improve their lives through education. Since that historic moment, the TRIO community has gathered on the fourth Saturday each February to honor student success, deepen community partnerships, elevate alumni voices, and expand public understanding of the life-changing role that TRIO programs play in students' lives.

In 2026, we mark a milestone moment: the 40th anniversary of National TRIO Day. For decades, TRIO has ensured that talent, determination, and ambition—not income or background—define a student's future. More than six million TRIO alumni have gone on to earn degrees, pursue meaningful careers, strengthen the nation's workforce, uplift their families, and serve their communities. National TRIO Day is an annual reminder that when we invest in students from low-income, first-generation backgrounds, the returns are profound—measured not only in diplomas and professional success, but also in expanded civic engagement, generational mobility, and lasting social impact.

Why This Toolkit Matters

This toolkit serves as both a celebration and a call to action. It provides guidance, examples, and inspiration to help campuses, communities, alumni networks, corporate partners, and supporters plan meaningful National TRIO Day activities. Whether hosting a campus celebration, coordinating service events, engaging alumni in mentoring and storytelling, or highlighting student achievement through media and digital outreach, you will find resources here to support your efforts. This year's toolkit introduces a special endeavor that invites policymakers to experience "TRIO for a Day."

National TRIO Day is more than one moment on the calendar. It is an opportunity to deepen the understanding of TRIO's purpose, strengthen advocacy efforts, showcase student leadership, and expand partnerships that create opportunity year-round. By lifting TRIO's story, sharing our students' journeys, and highlighting the communities that support them, we honor our rich history while advancing a future in which every student can access and complete higher education.

Our Call to Action

As we celebrate 40 years of National TRIO Day, we recommit to the values that launched this movement and continue to define it today: access, success, opportunity, persistence, and possibility. TRIO's legacy is built on resilience, advocacy, and belief—in students, in their potential, and in the power of education.

Thank you for your leadership, your partnership, and your steadfast commitment to the work ahead. Together, we celebrate where we have been and boldly prepare for where we are going. National TRIO Day is a powerful reminder that educational opportunity is not simply a mission—it is a promise.

Today, tomorrow, and always, TRIO works. TRIO leads. TRIO changes lives.

Key Dates

National TRIO Day will be celebrated on **Saturday, February 28, 2026**. On this day, TRIO programs, alumni, students, partners, and supporters across the nation will commemorate forty years of National TRIO Day and sixty years of TRIO programs by highlighting student success, uplifting alumni stories, engaging elected officials, and serving local communities.

In February 2026, Members of Congress are expected to be in their home states for portions of the month, creating opportunities for programs to schedule campus visits, participate in community events, and invite policymakers to experience TRIO firsthand. Programs are encouraged to contact congressional district offices well in advance to confirm availability and coordinate visits that showcase TRIO's impact.

To support meaningful and well-organized celebrations, the recommended planning timeline begins ninety days before National TRIO Day. Three months prior marks the ideal moment to assemble planning teams, confirm program ideas, secure campus and community partners, and begin outreach to Members of Congress and civic leaders. At sixty days out, programs should finalize logistics, confirm speakers and volunteers, and begin promoting events on campus and online. Thirty days before, programs should launch visible public promotion, finalize service and advocacy activities, gather student and alumni stories, and confirm media outreach. In the final week leading up to National TRIO Day, final reminders, press confirmations, and event rehearsals will help ensure a successful celebration.

With thoughtful, timely preparation, National TRIO Day 2026 will serve as a powerful nationwide moment to honor TRIO's legacy and amplify the voices of the students and communities we serve.

Planning Timeline

A successful National TRIO Day celebration begins well before February 28, 2026. Planning early ensures that programs have time to engage partners, prepare students, coordinate with elected officials, and create meaningful experiences that honor TRIO's mission and legacy.

| Timeframe | Goal | Activity | Examples | Notes |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|-------|
| 60-90 days before National TRIO Day | Begin laying the foundation for the celebration. | This period is devoted to identifying goals, establishing event concepts, securing initial institutional support, and determining whether activities will focus on community service, campus recognition, alumni activation, policymaker engagement, or a combination of all four. | <i>Early outreach to congressional offices is significant at this stage, as schedules fill quickly and visits are most successful when arranged well in advance. Programs also begin to spotlight inspiring student and alumni voices and revisit previous TRIO Day successes for inspiration.)</i> | |
| 30-60 days before National TRIO Day | Planning turns from vision to execution. | Event logistics take shape, including reserving space, confirming speakers and attendees, planning service activities, and engaging campus and community partners. This is also the moment to prepare invitations, outreach messages, and promotional plans. | <i>Staff identify media opportunities, coordinate with institutional communications offices, and prepare students and alumni who will serve as speakers, ambassadors, and storytellers. With major elements in motion, programs begin introducing the celebration to their campus or community, helping build momentum and excitement.</i> | |

| Timeframe | Goal | Activity | Examples | Notes |
|------------------------------------|---|---|--|-------|
| 8-30 days before National TRIO Day | Final details come into focus, and public visibility expands. | Volunteers are confirmed, advocacy messages are prepared, and materials such as signage, briefing documents, and student success stories are assembled. This period is also ideal for practicing presentations, preparing remarks for dignitaries, and briefing institutional leaders so they are fully prepared to support and amplify TRIO Day. | <i>Programs launch social media campaigns, coordinate with local press, finalize agendas and run-of-show plans, and ensure participants—especially students—have the guidance and support they need to shine.</i> | |
| 0-7 days before National TRIO Day | Programs focus on execution and celebration. | This includes sending reminders to guests, confirming logistics with speakers and elected offices, conducting walk-throughs with staff and student hosts, and ensuring that photography, videography, and social media strategies are ready to capture the day's impact. | <i>Finalize press coordination, amplify student voices, and mobilize alumni and supporters to join in-person or online events. Most importantly, this final stretch ensures that TRIO Day reflects the pride, gratitude, and determination that define the TRIO community.</i> | |

With intentional planning and unified effort, National TRIO Day 2026 becomes not only a celebration of where we have been, but a powerful investment in the students and programs that will carry TRIO's mission forward.

Signature Activation: TRIO for a Day – 40th Anniversary Edition

“**TRIO for a Day: Walking in Their Shoes**” is the signature National TRIO Day activation for the 40th anniversary celebration. Designed to bring TRIO’s mission to life, this immersive experience places leaders, partners, and decision-makers directly in the shoes of the students we serve. Participants move through real TRIO programming—sitting beside student scholars, engaging with advisors and tutors, shadowing workshops, and learning about academic, financial, personal, and cultural barriers students navigate on their journeys to and through higher education. Through this hands-on model, guests do more than learn about TRIO—they feel its purpose, see its impact, and witness firsthand the power of educational opportunity.

Overview

The purpose of this signature activation is to deepen understanding, strengthen advocacy, and spark long-term partnership. TRIO for a Day introduces community leaders, policymakers, donors, and institutional decision-makers to TRIO’s work in a way that honors the lived experiences of first-generation and low-income students. Participants will see TRIO in action, connect with students one-on-one, hear powerful stories of resilience and success, and reflect on the challenges that TRIO helps students overcome. By the end of the experience, guests not only understand TRIO’s value—they are inspired to invest in it, speak up for it, and expand opportunities for the students who walk through our doors every day.

This activation is ideal for Members of Congress and other elected officials, university and organizational leaders, foundation and corporate partners, alumni influencers, and media representatives. The format helps them move beyond briefings or statistics and into real human connection—creating true allies, champions, and advocates committed to supporting TRIO’s mission for the long term.

Sample Agenda

| TRIO for a Day: Walking in Their Shoes | | |
|--|---|---|
| Saturday, February 28, 2026 8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. | | |
| 8:30 – 9:00 a.m. | Welcome & TRIO Orientation Breakfast | Guests are greeted by TRIO students and staff and enjoy light breakfast. A brief introduction highlights TRIO's history, mission, and legacy, emphasizing 60+ years of access and 40 years of National TRIO Day. Student ambassadors share personal reflections to set the tone for a day rooted in lived experience and student voice. |
| 9:00 – 9:30 a.m. | Opening Session: Understanding the TRIO Journey | A guided briefing walks participants through the TRIO journey—from access and admissions support to college completion and career readiness. Facilitators introduce the concept of “walking in a student’s shoes” to help guests enter the day with empathy and purpose. |
| 9:30 – 11:00 a.m. | Immersive Experience: Life as a TRIO Scholar | Guests participate in real TRIO programming. Activities may include rotating through academic advising appointments, financial aid coaching, career and scholarship preparation, tutoring demonstrations, or a college-success workshop. Each participant is paired with a TRIO student or staff member to shadow and engage in the learning environment. |
| 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. | Campus & Community Engagement Tour | Participants tour TRIO program spaces, meet staff, observe student study areas, and see campus resources that support first-generation success. Along the way, students highlight barriers, breakthroughs, and the community built through TRIO. |
| 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. | TRIO Student & Alumni Networking Lunch | Guests and students share a meal together. Alumni and current participants share their experiences, discuss the importance of persistence and resilience, and reflect on TRIO’s role in shaping their academic, personal, and professional paths. This lunch serves as both a celebration and a table-side storytelling. |
| 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. | Reflection Circle & Advocacy Call-to-Action | Participants gather with TRIO students and staff for a facilitated reflection. Guests share what they observed and learned, and students respond with their own perspectives. Facilitators connect insights to TRIO’s national mission and invite participants to take meaningful next steps in TRIO support, advocacy, mentorship, and community engagement. |
| 2:00 – 2:30 p.m. | Closing Appreciation & Group Photo | A closing message thanks guests for walking beside TRIO scholars and reinforces the importance of continued partnership. Participants receive follow-up materials and advocacy resources and join for a commemorative photo celebrating 40 years of National TRIO Day and 60+years of TRIO programs. |

The TRIO for a Day experience begins with a warm welcome and a student-led introduction to TRIO's history, mission, and impact. Guests learn how TRIO opens the doors of higher education and why Congress continues to reaffirm its importance for low-income, first-generation students. They are then immersed in the student experience: shadowing advising sessions, joining workshops, touring TRIO spaces, observing tutoring or mentoring, or working alongside student participants on real academic or college-readiness activities. Lunch becomes an intentional time of connection—students and alumni share their stories, answer questions, and build relationships that inspire continued support.

Following the immersive portion, the group gathers for a guided reflection circle. Participants process what they experienced, name insights and takeaways, and hear from students about the transformational role of TRIO in their lives and communities. The day concludes with a clear call to action: continue to champion TRIO through advocacy, partnership, and resource development. Participants leave informed, motivated, and ready to serve as ambassadors for educational access and opportunity.

WHY HOST A “TRIO FOR A DAY” EVENT?

AWA'RENESS

Raises awareness and fosters in-depth understanding of TRIO's impact and challenges.

ADVOCACY

Encourages stakeholders to believe in TRIO and commit to our mission of supporting students.

ENGAGEMENT

Strengthens relationships with key stakeholders and the media.

PARTNERSHIPS

Creates new relationships that can provide new resources and opportunities for students.

FUNDING

Provides new opportunities to secure financial support.



SAMPLE SCHEDULE



Welcome: #TRIOWorks Orientation

30 Minutes

Gives participants an understanding of TRIO's purpose and gets them excited to engage.

Immersive Activity

2-3 Hours

Gives participants the chance to see TRIO in action, and gain insights into its successes and challenges.

Lunch & Learn

1 Hour

Builds connections between participants and TRIO staff and students.

Reflection & Call to Action

30 Minutes

Leaves participants inspired, informed, and ready to advocate for TRIO programs and engage further.

IMMERSIVE ACTIVITIES

One of the best ways to turn participants into partners is to give them the opportunity to experience what TRIO is for themselves. These activities are designed to do that:

TAKE A TOUR

Give your participants a guided tour of your facility to help them to see themselves in the student's shoes.

Outcome: Participants get to see TRIO in action and gain insights into the programs' successes and challenges.



SHADOW A TRIO PROFESSIONAL

This activity is best for a small number of participants. Match participants with a staff member or TRIO student and let the participant shadow them through a few hours of daily operations, including student counseling, workshops, and administrative planning. The participant can even assist with small tasks, such as program coordination or event preparation.

Outcome: Participants get to see TRIO in action and gain a deeper understanding of the work that goes into supporting students and managing the program.



SPEAK TO TRIO STUDENTS

Invite your participants to speak to TRIO students. Encourage them to share their personal and professional journeys and offer advice through panels, workshops, or informal discussions. Themes might include mentorship, career advice, or student empowerment. Student interaction is key to creating deeper connection between students and stakeholders.

Outcome: TRIO students benefit from the insights of community members, while participants create personal ties to the students in the program.



WORK ON A TRIO PROJECT

Participants contribute to a TRIO project alongside students or staff. Task ideas include drafting a college readiness resource or advice flyer, assembling care packages, or enhancing the TRIO space.

Outcome: Participants become personally invested in the TRIO program through labor and informal engagement with TRIO students and staff.



#TRIOWorks!

Tools to Support Implementation

To ensure a smooth and impactful experience, the toolkit provides customizable invitation messages for congressional offices, campus leaders, community partners, and donors; a run-of-show planning guide for structuring the event; and a logistics checklist outlining roles, materials, and student leadership assignments. An evaluation survey is included to capture participant feedback, reflect on program strengths, and identify opportunities for continued engagement. These tools help programs tailor TRIO for a Day to their campus and community while maintaining fidelity to the immersive spirit of the model.

Sample Invitation Emails

Sample Invitation – Member of Congress or Legislative Office

Subject: Invitation to Experience “TRIO for a Day” on National TRIO Day – February 28, 2026

Dear [Title and Last Name],

I hope you are well. On behalf of the [Institution/Program Name], I am pleased to invite you to participate in our **“TRIO for a Day: Walking in Their Shoes”** experience on **Saturday, February 28, 2026**, in celebration of the 40th anniversary of National TRIO Day.

“TRIO for a Day” is an immersive opportunity to step into the experience of first-generation, low-income students, observe TRIO programming firsthand, meet with TRIO participants and alumni, and learn how federal investment in educational opportunity transforms lives and strengthens our community.

Your participation would honor our students and affirm your commitment to educational access and college completion. We would be grateful to host you and ensure your visit offers a meaningful window into the work and impact of TRIO.

Please let us know your availability at your earliest convenience. Our team will gladly work with your office to coordinate details.

With appreciation,
[Name, Title]
[Program/Institution]
[Phone | Email]

Sample Invitation – Institutional Leaders / Campus Partners

Subject: Invitation to Join Our “TRIO for a Day” Experience – Feb. 28

Dear [Name],

In celebration of the 40th anniversary of National TRIO Day, [Program/Institution] will host a “**TRIO for a Day**” **immersion experience** on **Saturday, February 28, 2026**, and we would be honored to include you.

This experience allows campus and community partners to gain a firsthand perspective on the student journey by shadowing TRIO participants, participating in workshops and advising sessions, and engaging in dialogue about student success and persistence.

Your support and partnership play a critical role in the success of our students. We would be grateful for your participation as we highlight the impact of TRIO programs and celebrate the students and alumni who carry this legacy forward.

Warmly,
[Name]
[Title & Program]

Sample Invitation – Corporate & Community Partners

Subject: Join Us for “TRIO for a Day” – Feb. 28, 2026

Dear [Name],

We are excited to invite you to take part in “**TRIO for a Day: Walking in Their Shoes**” on **Saturday, February 28, 2026**, at [Institution].

This immersive experience introduces business and community leaders to TRIO’s mission by engaging directly with students, learning about their academic and career journeys, and exploring ways that employers and partners can support first-generation talent and opportunity pathways.

We hope you will join us for this meaningful experience and help us continue building bridges of opportunity for future leaders.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Title, Program]

Sample Run of Show Planning Sheet

| Time | Activity | Lead/Facilitator | Location | Materials Needed | Notes |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|---|-------|
| 8:00–8:30 a.m. | Staff/student host prep | Program Director / Student Team | TRIO office | Name badges, signage, welcome materials | |
| 8:30–9:00 a.m. | Guest check-in & breakfast | Student Ambassadors | Welcome area | Breakfast setup, check-in table, TRIO gear | |
| 9:00–9:30 a.m. | Welcome & TRIO mission briefing | TRIO Director & Student Speakers | Main room | Presentation slides, video, handouts | |
| 9:30–11:00 a.m. | Immersive program experience | Assigned Staff & Students | Advising/tutoring rooms | Schedules, student escorts, program materials | |
| 11:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. | Campus/program tour | Student Ambassadors | Key campus offices | Signs, talking points | |
| 12:00–1:00 p.m. | Networking lunch | Alumni & Students | Dining space | Place cards, bios, table prompts | |
| 1:00–2:00 p.m. | Reflection session & call to action | Facilitators | Reflection room | Discussion guide, advocacy cards, thank-you cards | |
| 2:00–2:30 p.m. | Closing remarks & group photo | Program Lead | Photo location | Banner, photographer, social hashtags | |
| Post-event | Follow-up communications | Program Staff | — | Email template, photos, survey link | |

Roles & Logistics Checklist

| Role | Task | Team Member(s) Assigned |
|--|---|--------------------------------|
| Student Ambassadors | Greet participants, lead tours, escort guests between sessions, share personal stories, and facilitate table conversations. | |
| Program Director & TRIO Staff | Welcome guests, provide program overview, coordinate logistics, supervise student roles, and lead reflection and advocacy segments. | |
| Alumni Representatives | Speak at lunch, share personal and professional journeys, and highlight TRIO's long-term impact. | |
| Administrative & Support Team | Manage RSVPs and communication, prepare event materials, coordinate room setup, and support hospitality services. | |
| Media & Communications Lead | Capture photos and video, coordinate social media updates, prepare branded materials, and support press engagement. | |
| Accessibility & Inclusion Lead | Ensure event materials, speaking environments, and physical spaces meet accessibility needs; support guest accommodations. | |
| Facilities & Technology Support | Assist with event setup, signage, room transitions, and AV needs. | |

Event Essentials Checklist

| Event | Item | Team Member(s) Responsible |
|-------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Space & Facilities | Welcome area ready with signage | |
| | Seating and catering arranged | |
| | Private advising rooms prepared | |
| | Tour path confirmed | |
| Materials | Printed agendas | |
| | Name tags | |
| | TRIO merchandise (buttons, t-shirts, swag, etc.) | |
| | Story cards | |
| | Evaluation cards | |
| | Signage | |
| | Thank-you packets | |
| Hospitality | Snacks/coffee | |
| | Lunch setup | |
| | Dietary accommodations | |
| | Guest check-in table | |

| Event | Item | Team Member(s) Responsible |
|---------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Technology | Microphones | |
| | Screens | |
| | Speakers | |
| | Presentation slides | |
| | Backup equipment | |
| Student Support | Briefing notes | |
| | Practice run | |
| | Talking points | |
| | Alumni introductions | |
| | Emergency contact plan | |
| Closing & Follow-Up | Group photo | |
| | Thank-you emails | |
| | Social media posts | |
| | Post-event survey | |
| | Next-step engagement plan | |

Plan Your Celebration

National TRIO Day is a moment to honor student achievement, advance public understanding of TRIO's impact, and strengthen the partnerships that sustain and expand access to opportunity. Every program celebrates differently, reflecting its students, community, and institutional culture. Some focus on service and giving back, others highlight alumni and campus visibility, and many blend civic engagement, storytelling, and celebration. What matters most is creating space for your students to shine, for your community to connect, and for TRIO's legacy to be seen, heard, and felt.

Celebration Approaches

Programs may choose to organize service projects, host campus-wide recognition events, highlight alumni leadership, or engage elected officials. Some will coordinate "TRIO for a Day" activities that immerse decision-makers in the student experience, while others may host scholarship presentations, student research or leadership showcases, community partnership events, or TRIO summits featuring students and graduates as speakers. The most successful celebrations elevate student voice and reflect the spirit of gratitude, advocacy, and empowerment that has defined National TRIO Day since 1986.

Consider how your event can honor TRIO's 40-year tradition while speaking to current priorities: expanding college access, advancing opportunity, supporting student well-being, and championing first-generation leadership. Think creatively, whether through storytelling nights, alumni homecomings, campus volunteer days, TRIO scholars spotlights, or collaborative events with community partners, local schools, or civic organizations.

Elements to Consider

As you plan, reflect on the experience you want each participant to have and the message you hope they carry forward. Identify students, alumni, and community leaders who can share powerful stories. Determine how to involve institutional leadership to demonstrate campus-wide commitment. Explore opportunities for advocacy, whether through legislative visits, letter-writing and call-to-action stations, or inviting local officials to offer remarks recognizing TRIO's contribution. Create moments that build connection, inspire pride, and deepen understanding of TRIO's mission and success.

Worksheets to Guide Your Planning

To support your process, this toolkit includes planning worksheets designed to help you structure your TRIO Day activities and bring your vision to life. These worksheets may be printed or completed digitally as part of your team planning process.

Event Vision & Purpose Worksheet

Use this worksheet to clarify your goals, identify your audience, and define the impact you want your event to have. Prompts include desired outcomes, core messages, and priority constituent groups.

| | |
|--|--|
| Event Name: | |
| Host Program(s): Primary Goal of Your TRIO Day Event (Example: strengthen campus awareness, celebrate students, engage policymakers, uplift alumni, service project, etc.) | |
| What impact do you want participants to walk away with? | |
| Who is your primary audience? (Students, alumni, campus leaders, elected officials, donors, partners, community, media) | |
| Key Message(s) You Want to Deliver | |
| How does this celebration reflect TRIO's mission and your students? | |

Program & Schedule Worksheet

This template supports the development of your event structure, including welcome remarks, student spotlights, service activities, alumni engagement, advocacy actions, and reflection moments.

| | |
|--|--|
| Event Date & Time: | |
| Location(s): | |
| Proposed Agenda Outline | |
| Welcome / Opening Remarks | |
| Student/Alumni Spotlight(s) | |
| Service, Activity, or Presentation | |
| Advocacy or Community Engagement Component | |
| Reflection / Call to Action / Closing | |
| Notes & Ideas | |
| | |

Speaker & Participant Preparation Worksheet

Use this tool to organize outreach to students, alumni, institutional leaders, and elected officials and to prepare talking points, story prompts, and event instructions.

| | |
|--|--|
| Speakers, Guests, or Participants You Plan to Invite | |
| Their Role in the Program | |
| Preparation Needed (remarks, briefing, run-of-show, student pairing, etc.) | |
| Student Leaders/Volunteers | |
| Student Story Themes or Talking Prompts (Example: first-gen pride, resilience, belonging, leadership, TRIO impact) | |

Communications & Media Planning Worksheet

This worksheet helps you outline your promotional approach, including campus communications, media outreach, social media storytelling, and branding elements.

| | |
|--|--|
| How will you promote your event? (Campus email, flyers, social media, newsletter, website, partners, alumni) | |
| Key Audiences to Inform | |
| Media Opportunities (Local newspaper, campus paper, radio, TV, digital storytelling, press advisory) | |
| Quotes, Photos, and Stories to Capture | |

Logistics & Materials Checklist

This checklist assists with planning physical and virtual needs such as space reservations, AV and technology support, signage, volunteer coordination, and guest management.

| | |
|--|--|
| Venue Details / Setup Needs | |
| Technology (microphones, screens, speakers, Wi-Fi, etc.) | |
| Materials Needed (signage, banners, name tags, programs, forms) | |
| Volunteers & Assignments | |
| Accessibility Considerations | |

Advocacy & Follow-Up Worksheet

Use this worksheet to document actions taken with elected officials and partners, track engagement, and plan post-event communication and stewardship.

| | |
|---|--|
| Elected Officials and Partners Engaged (e.g., U.S. House Representatives and Senators) | |
| Follow-Up Actions (thank-you notes, photos, media sharing, ongoing engagement) | |
| Opportunities for Continued Partnership (Student visits, internships, mentoring, campus tour, donation, sponsorship) | |

By completing these worksheets in advance, your team will be prepared to host a celebration that reflects the strength and spirit of your program and the students who make TRIO so powerful. With thoughtful planning and intentional storytelling, your celebration will uplift your campus and community and ensure that the legacy of National TRIO Day continues to grow.

Advocacy Action Hub

National TRIO Day began as a call to action. In 1986, when Congress established the first National TRIO Day, the intent was not only to celebrate success but also to galvanize communities around the importance of protecting and expanding access to higher education. Forty years later, this mission remains central. As we honor over six decades of TRIO programs and commemorate the fortieth National TRIO Day, we reaffirm our collective responsibility to uplift the voices of students and alumni, strengthen support among decision-makers, and ensure that future generations have the same opportunities to learn, grow, and lead.

Sample National TRIO Day Proclamation

NATIONAL TRIO DAY FEBRUARY 28, 2026

WHEREAS, Congress first declared National TRIO Day in 1986 to recognize the achievements of the Federal TRIO Programs and to call attention to the importance of educational opportunity and opportunity in the United States; and

WHEREAS, 2026 marks the **40th anniversary of National TRIO Day**, highlighting **the Federal TRIO Programs**, which were established to ensure that students from low-income backgrounds, first-generation college students, students with disabilities, and military veterans can access, persist in, and graduate from postsecondary education; and

WHEREAS, more than **6 million TRIO alumni** have earned college degrees, launched careers, supported families, enriched communities, and contributed to the economic and civic strength of our nation; and

WHEREAS, TRIO programs provide comprehensive academic, financial, social, and career support services that empower students to succeed, foster leadership and service, and strengthen college completion and workforce participation; and

WHEREAS, National TRIO Day serves as a day of celebration, reflection, and community service, highlighting student achievement and reaffirming our shared commitment to expanding educational opportunity for future generations;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, **[Public Official Name]**, **[Title/Office]**, do hereby proclaim **February 28, 2026** as **National TRIO Day** in **[City/County/State]**, and I encourage all residents to join me in honoring TRIO students, alumni, and educators, recognizing their contributions to our communities, and supporting educational access and success for all.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this _____ day of _____, 2026.

[Public Official Name]
[Title]

Guide to Scheduling Congressional Visits

Inviting Members of Congress and their staff to visit your TRIO program is one of the most powerful ways to build understanding, encourage bipartisan support, and cultivate long-term champions for educational opportunity. Congressional visits allow policymakers to see TRIO in action, speak directly with students and alumni, and witness the impact of federal investment in college access and completion. The steps below provide a clear path for securing and preparing for a successful visit.

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Getting Started | Begin by identifying your elected officials, including both Senators and the Representative(s) for your district. You can locate their contact information on their official websites or by visiting govtrack.us/congress/members . COE staff can assist you by providing the direct contact information for their schedulers, education staff members, and district directors. District office contacts are significant as local staff often attend visits and are deeply engaged in community outreach. Once you have the correct contacts, draft a brief and respectful email requesting a visit. Make sure to explain the purpose of the event, offer several dates and time options, and emphasize the educational and community value of TRIO. Be sure to reference National TRIO Day and the significance of this 40th anniversary year to underscore the importance of their participation. If inviting to a special program like <i>TRIO for a Day</i> , highlight the immersive nature of the experience. |
| Following Up | Congressional offices receive many requests. It is common to follow up by email within seven to ten business days if you do not receive a response. If you still haven't heard back, a brief phone call to the scheduler—thanking them for their time and noting your request—is appropriate. Persistence matters, but professionalism and courtesy matter more. Once a date is tentatively confirmed, ask which staff members should be included in communications and request any logistical or security requirements. |
| Preparing for the Visit | Once a visit is scheduled, begin preparing your team, students, and campus partners. Share a run-of-show, assign greeters, and practice introductions. Brief students about the visitor's role and encourage them to share personal stories authentically and confidently. Prepare a short institutional overview and be ready to highlight key outcomes, including student success stories, alumni achievements, graduation rates, and examples of student leadership and service. It is helpful to provide the visiting office with a short background packet before the visit, including program facts, student profiles, and a schedule of events. Let them know if media will be present, confirm photography expectations, and ensure all campus protocols are followed. |
| During the Visit | Welcome the Member or staff warmly and introduce them to students right away. Provide a short program overview, then let students and alumni lead the story. Encourage questions and interaction. If appropriate, offer a campus tour or shadowing activity. Demonstrating TRIO in action—academic advising, mentoring, financial aid support, tutoring, or college planning—brings the program to life more powerfully than any presentation could. Remember: your goal is to create a connection, not just to convey information. Policymakers respond most strongly to the human impact of TRIO. |

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| After the Visit | At the conclusion of the visit, thank the Member or staff genuinely and offer a small token of appreciation, such as a TRIO pin or notes from students. Follow up with a written thank-you message, photos from the visit, and a brief recap of key student highlights. Maintain contact throughout the year by sharing student success stories, major program milestones, and invitations to future events. |
|------------------------|--|

WHO TO INVITE TO A “TRIO FOR A DAY” EVENT?

Elected Officials

Ex. U.S. Congressmembers, State Legislators, Mayor, Town Board

Elected officials can support your program through advocacy, media attention, and funding.

Community Based Organizations & University Stakeholders

Ex. Career Services office, Disability Services office, University President
Community Based Organizations and University stakeholders provide important institutional support for TRIO programs and can even direct increased funding in some cases. University offices are also important potential partners that can provide resources, services, and opportunities to your students.

Community Stakeholders

Ex. Youth organizations, local businesses, church groups, alumni

Community stakeholders can support your program through donations, volunteerism, and advocacy. They can also provide opportunities to your students in the form of resources, services like mentoring, and opportunities such as job shadowing and internships.

Sample TRIO Speaker Invitation Letter

[Date]

The Honorable [First Last Name]

[Address]

[City, State ZIP]

Dear [Representative/Senator Last Name],

I hope this message finds you well. On behalf of the **[TRIO Program Name(s)]** at **[Institution/Organization]**, I am honored to invite you to join us as a guest speaker for our **National TRIO Day Celebration** on **Saturday, February 28, 2026**, marking the **40th anniversary of National TRIO Day**.

Since Congress first established National TRIO Day in 1986, this annual celebration has brought communities together across the nation to highlight the achievements of first-generation, low-income students, students with disabilities, and veterans who are pursuing higher education. It is also a time to recognize the longstanding bipartisan commitment to expanding educational opportunity and advancing socioeconomic mobility.

Our TRIO programs serve **[number]** participants from **[geographic region/community/target population]**, helping them navigate academic pathways, financial aid processes, and college-to-career transitions. Your presence and remarks would not only honor our students' hard work and accomplishments but also reinforce the importance of federal investment in college access and completion.

Event Details:

Date: Saturday, February 28, 2026

Time: [Insert time or time range]

Location: [Insert venue + campus name]

Format: [e.g., "TRIO for a Day immersive visit and recognition ceremony"]

Estimated Participants: [Number] students, families, alumni, and campus leaders

We would be delighted to accommodate your schedule and tailor your participation to ensure meaningful engagement with our students and program team. Should you be available, our staff will gladly coordinate logistics with your office.

Thank you for your continued service to the constituents of **[State/District]** and for your leadership on behalf of students and families. We would be deeply honored to welcome you as we celebrate the transformative impact of TRIO and the bright futures of the students we serve. We hope you will join us for this special occasion. Please feel free to contact me at **[phone]** or **[email]** with any questions or scheduling details.

With appreciation,

[Your Name]

[Title]

[TRIO Program Name(s)]

[Institution/Organization]

[Email Address] | [Phone Number]

Sample Scripts

Effective advocacy begins with human connection. When policymakers sit with TRIO students, hear their stories, witness their determination, and see the transformational power of advising, mentoring, and academic support, they understand that TRIO is not an abstract program—it is a lifeline and a launchpad. This toolkit encourages programs to create opportunities for legislators and stakeholders to experience TRIO firsthand through visits, campus shadowing experiences, and TRIO for a Day events. Such engagements remind leaders that investments in TRIO are investments in the economic vitality, workforce development, and civic strength of our nation.

Advocacy also means amplifying student and alumni voices at the local and national levels. Sharing stories on campus, in the media, and across digital platforms builds visibility and support. Encouraging students and families to write letters, participate in postcard campaigns, attend legislative meetings, and engage respectfully in civic dialogue fosters confidence and civic leadership. Whether delivered in person or online, personal narratives shape policy perspectives and influence funding priorities.

STUDENT INTERACTIONS

Our students are why we do this. Giving partners the chance to get to know your students can spark excitement and foster a deep emotional investment in your program.

#TRIOWORKS ORIENTATION

Bring students onto the team to welcome your participants! Students and staff greet participants and get them settled for a brief presentation highlighting TRIO's mission and history. Then students share their own experiences as TRIO success stories with guests.

Outcome: Participants gain an understanding of TRIO's purpose and impact and are amped up to engage.



EAT & EDUCATE

A meal is a great opportunity to create connection between guests and TRIO students. Students should be encouraged to sit interspersed with participants and network. This may also be an opportunity for students to share their success stories with the room, or to invite alumni back as guest speakers.

Outcome: Builds relationships between participants and TRIO stakeholders, such as students & alumni.



CONTINUING INVOLVEMENT

A session dedicated to reflection and sharing a call to action is essential for turning event participants into partners. Here are some ideas for each component.

1. REFLECTION

Encourage participants to gather in small groups to discuss their experiences during the day and the insights they gained, before sharing out with the larger cohort.

2. CALL TO ACTION

TRIO staff should present on the different ways that participants can support their TRIO program. This might look like ongoing partnerships, such as providing internships or mentoring for students, volunteering, advocating on behalf of TRIO, or making monetary donations. You can also directly engage participants in advocacy at the event, such as by asking them to participate in a letter writing campaign.

Outcome: Participants leave the day inspired, informed, and ready to support your work and fight for TRIO!

Student Script

Purpose: A short, confident script a TRIO student can use when speaking to an elected official or stakeholder.

Hello, my name is **[Name]**, and I am a proud TRIO **[Program Name]** student at **[Institution]**. I am from **[hometown]**, and I am the first in my family to go to college.

Before joining TRIO, I was excited about college but unsure how to get here and worried about how to succeed. TRIO helped me navigate financial aid, strengthen my study skills, and find a supportive community that believes in me. Because of TRIO, I am on track to earn my degree in **[major]** and pursue a career in **[career goal]**.

TRIO is not just a program — it is a lifeline. It gives students like me the guidance, encouragement, and opportunities we need to achieve our dreams, support our families, and contribute to our community and economy.

Thank you for supporting TRIO. Continued investment in these programs means more students like me will have the chance to succeed and give back. TRIO works, and I am living proof.

Student “Quick,” 30-Second Elevator Script

Hi, I'm **[Name]**, a TRIO **[Program]** student and first-generation college student. TRIO helped me navigate college, stay on track, and believe in myself. Today, I am earning my degree in **[major]**, and I'm planning to become a **[career goal]**.

TRIO helps students like me succeed, graduate, and give back. Thank you for supporting TRIO and believing in our potential.

Alumni Script

Purpose: A storytelling-driven message emphasizing outcomes, careers, and long-term impact.

Hello, my name is **[Name]**, and I am a proud TRIO alum from **[Institution]**. I grew up in **[community/background]**, and as a first-generation student, college felt uncertain and overwhelming. TRIO guided me every step of the way — from applying to college and financial aid, to finding my path and building the confidence to persist.

Thanks to TRIO, I earned my degree in **[field]** and now work as a **[career/professional role]**. TRIO didn't just change my future — it changed my family's future. I am now able to support my family, serve my community, and mentor other first-generation students who are walking the same path.

TRIO is an investment that pays dividends in education, workforce development, and community leadership. Continued federal support ensures that future students have the same opportunity I did. TRIO works, and I am proud to be part of its legacy.

Alumni 30-Second Elevator Script

I'm [Name], a TRIO alum and first-generation college graduate. TRIO provided the guidance, support, and community I needed to earn my degree in [major] and build a career in [profession]. Today I'm contributing to my field and supporting my family because TRIO believed in me before I believed in myself.

TRIO works — and students in our community depend on its continued support.

"Two-Story" Script (Student + Parent Impact)

My name is [Name]. I am a first-generation college student from [community] and a proud TRIO participant. Before TRIO, I believed college was out of reach for me and my family. TRIO gave us guidance, encouragement, and access to resources we didn't know existed.

Today, I am majoring in [major] and preparing for a career in [field]. My success is not just mine — it has changed what my younger siblings believe is possible and given my family new hope for the future.

TRIO transforms lives, families, and communities. Thank you for supporting it.

Closing Lines

Participants may end with:

- "Thank you for continuing to support TRIO students like me."
- "We hope you will visit our program and meet more of our students."
- "Please help ensure TRIO funding remains strong so future students have this opportunity."
- "Your support makes opportunity real for students like me — thank you."

This hub provides guidance to help programs organize outreach, prepare participants, and sustain advocacy beyond TRIO Day. Institutions may schedule legislative campus visits, coordinate phone banks and email campaigns, prepare social media outreach, or host civic education workshops that demystify the policy process for students. Alumni networks may mobilize through coordinated messages, mentorship circles, or business-community roundtables that highlight TRIO's role in developing diverse workforce talent. Partners may use their platforms to elevate TRIO's mission and stand publicly in support of educational opportunity.

No single action defines advocacy; it is a movement built through repeated, strategic, and heartfelt engagement. Each conversation, each story shared, each office visit or campus invitation contributes to a culture of sustained support. The most meaningful advocacy is rooted in gratitude and collaboration. When advocacy reflects the spirit of service that defines TRIO—when it remains student-centered, dignified, and hopeful—it builds lasting champions.

As you engage in advocacy this TRIO Day, remember that you are contributing to a legacy that spans generations. You are honoring those who built TRIO from its earliest days and investing in the students who will carry its values into the future. Your voice, your leadership, and your commitment help ensure that TRIO remains strong, funded, and vibrant. National TRIO Day began as a call to protect opportunity. Today, that call continues—and together we answer it.

Communications & Outreach Center

The 40th anniversary of National TRIO Day offers an extraordinary opportunity to elevate the national conversation about educational opportunity, first-generation leadership, and the transformative power of college access programs. This Communications & Outreach Center is designed to help programs tell compelling stories, amplify student and alumni voices, and connect with audiences who may be learning about TRIO for the first time. Through clear messaging, intentional media engagement, and authentic digital storytelling, we honor TRIO's legacy and inspire future support for the students we serve.

At the heart of every TRIO Day communication is a simple truth: TRIO programs change lives. TRIO opens doors to education and economic mobility, strengthens campuses and communities, and ensures that talent and ambition—not background or income—determine opportunity.

Communications during National TRIO Day should highlight student pride, celebrate resilience and achievement, and emphasize TRIO's role as a catalyst for personal and generational transformation. Messages may focus on access and opportunity, first-generation leadership, economic opportunity, or the long-term civic and community contributions TRIO students make across the nation. Above all, stories should reflect the humanity and brilliance of the students and alumni who power this movement.

Storytelling and Content Strategy

Every TRIO program has powerful stories to tell. As you engage your campus and community, consider the voices and moments that bring TRIO's impact to life: students who overcame obstacles to pursue higher education, alumni who now serve as leaders and mentors, families celebrating first-generation success, and educators and advocates who support students every step of the way. Encourage students and alumni to share their narratives in their own words—in video testimonies, social media reflections, short interviews, or written tributes. Capture images and videos throughout the day, including group service moments, mentoring conversations, advising sessions, and celebrations. These stories serve as a living archive of TRIO impact and demonstrate to policymakers, partners, and the public why TRIO matters.

Sample Talking Points

Students and alumni are the most powerful messengers for TRIO's impact. In preparation for TRIO Day events and media conversations, consider offering talking points or practice sessions to help them reflect on their journey, articulate the role TRIO played in their lives, and express their hopes for the next generation of scholars. Encourage authenticity over script—genuine emotion, personal detail, and individual perspective breathe life into the narrative. Support students in sharing what educational access means to them.

| | |
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| Talking Points for TRIO Staff & Students | TRIO changes lives. Every student we serve has talent, potential, and ambition—and TRIO ensures they have the support, resources, and community they need to reach their goals. Many TRIO participants are the first in their families to go to college, and they bring tremendous strength and resilience to their education. Our programs provide academic coaching, advising, mentoring, financial aid guidance, tutoring, and college and career preparation tailored to students' individual needs. What you see today reflects decades of dedication and a commitment to opportunity: opening doors, building confidence, and empowering students to succeed in college and beyond. When our students succeed, families flourish, communities grow stronger, and our country benefits from their leadership, talent, and contributions. |
| Talking Points for Alumni | I am proud to be a TRIO alum because TRIO believed in my potential long before the world knew my name. TRIO didn't just help me get into college—it helped me stay, grow, graduate, and launch my career. Many of us started our college journeys with questions, uncertainty, and limited resources, but TRIO provided guidance, mentorship, and a supportive community that made all the difference. Today, I give back because TRIO helped transform my life, and I carry its values into my work, my family, and my community. When we invest in TRIO, we are investing in future leaders, innovators, educators, and change-makers. TRIO works not because of one program or one moment, but because it believes in students and walks with them from aspiration to achievement. Supporting TRIO means ensuring the next generation has the same opportunity to dream big and make those dreams real. |
| Talking Points for Corporate & Foundation Partners | TRIO prepares exceptional talent—future professionals who are resilient, motivated, and driven to succeed. Our students bring unique perspectives shaped by overcoming barriers, leading in their families and communities, and demonstrating grit and commitment throughout their academic journeys. When organizations partner with TRIO, they are investing in a pipeline of first-generation leaders who represent the future of our workforce and our nation's growth. This partnership is not simply about philanthropy—it is about innovation, social mobility, and long-term economic success. By supporting TRIO, you help open doors to mentorship, internships, scholarships, and career pathways that strengthen both communities and industries. The students you meet today represent countless others with the talent and determination to excel. Together, we can build bridges that turn opportunity into achievement and ensure that every student has a fair chance to succeed and lead. |

Press Templates

National TRIO Day presents an opportunity to highlight student success to local, regional, and national audiences. Programs may share press announcements, pitch local education reporters, or invite media to cover student service activities, alumni panels, or campus celebrations. When connecting with the press, consider storytelling framed through community impact, economic mobility, and opportunity in higher education. Offer profiles of student leaders, success stories from alumni, and opportunities to observe TRIO programming in action. Clear talking points and press packets ensure that reporters walk away informed, inspired, and equipped to share the TRIO story accurately and powerfully.

Press Release Template

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Month Day, 2026]

CONTACT:

[Name, Title]

[Institution/Program Name]

[Email Address] • [Phone Number]

[Institution Name] Celebrates 40th Annual National TRIO Day, Honoring Student Achievement and Educational Opportunity

[City, State] — February 28, 2026 — [Institution Name] will join colleges and universities across the United States in celebrating the **40th annual National TRIO Day on Saturday, February 28, 2026**, recognizing the transformative impact of the Federal TRIO Programs and honoring the achievements of first-generation, income-eligible students, students with disabilities, and veterans pursuing higher education.

Established by Congress in 1986, National TRIO Day encourages communities to focus on educational access, academic persistence, and the power of college opportunity to change lives and strengthen the nation. This event celebrates the work of the **Federal TRIO Programs**, which were first created through the landmark Higher Education Act to remove barriers to postsecondary education.

As part of the celebration, [Institution Name]’s [TRIO Program(s)] will host [brief description: e.g., a community service project, a TRIO for a Day shadow experience, recognition ceremony, mentoring luncheon, campus visit, advocacy activity, etc.]. The event will bring together students, alumni, campus leaders, and community partners to highlight success stories, deepen public understanding of TRIO’s mission, and promote a culture of educational opportunity.

“TRIO students are scholars, problem-solvers, community builders, and future leaders,” said [Program Director Name], [Title] for [TRIO Program]. “National TRIO Day is our opportunity to celebrate their accomplishments, acknowledge their hard work, and reaffirm our commitment to ensuring every student has the support and resources to achieve their academic and career goals.”

“For forty years, National TRIO Day has served as a powerful reminder that talent is universal, but opportunity is not,” said **Kimberly Jones**, president of the Council for Opportunity in Education (COE). “This milestone year honors the millions of students and alumni who have turned their dreams into degrees, careers, and lifelong contributions to their communities. As we celebrate this anniversary, we recommit ourselves to protecting and strengthening TRIO so future generations can continue to thrive.”

[Institution Name] currently serves [number] TRIO students through [list program names such as **Upward Bound, Student Support Services, McNair Scholars, Talent Search, etc.**]. TRIO programs provide academic guidance, tutoring, advising, mentoring, college readiness services, financial aid support, and career development opportunities for eligible students. Nationally, TRIO serves more than 800,000 individuals each year, including middle school, high school, and college students, adult learners, veterans, and graduate scholars.

National TRIO Day began in 1986 when Congress passed a resolution recognizing the Federal TRIO Programs and calling for a national day of celebration, community service, and advocacy in support of students who face systemic barriers to higher education. This year marks the **fortieth annual National TRIO Day** and celebrates the legacy of programs that have helped more than six million students earn college degrees.

For more information about [Institution Name]’s National TRIO Day events or to learn more about TRIO services on campus, please contact [Program Name] at [contact information].

Sample Media Advisory

MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Month Day, 2026]

CONTACT:

[Name, Title]

[Institution/Program Name]

[Email Address] • [Phone Number]

MEDIA ADVISORY: [Institution Name] Celebrates 40th National TRIO Day, Showcasing Student Success and Educational Opportunity

What:

[Institution Name] will celebrate the **40th annual National TRIO Day on Saturday, February 28, 2026**, highlighting the achievements of first-generation, low-income students participating in federally funded TRIO programs. The event will feature **[brief event description: e.g., student panels, TRIO for a Day shadowing experience, community service project, recognition ceremony, campus showcase, alumni celebration, etc.]** and will spotlight the impact of TRIO programs in expanding college access, persistence, and success.

Who:

TRIO students and alumni

[Institution leadership titles]

Local and state officials

Community and corporate partners

Campus and community guests

Media representatives invited

Speakers include:

- [Program Director], [Title]
- [Institution Leader, e.g., President or Provost]
- TRIO alumni and student ambassadors
- Invited elected officials (pending confirmation)

When:

Saturday, February 28, 2026

[Time – include check-in / media arrival time, e.g., 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.]

Where:

[Institution Name]

[Campus Building & Room or Event Location]

[Full Address]

Why:

National TRIO Day, first established by Congress in 1986, recognizes the Federal TRIO Programs and their vital role in strengthening college access and opportunity. This year's celebration marks **40 years of National TRIO Day**. TRIO has helped more than six million students achieve their educational goals.

This event is an opportunity for media to see TRIO in action, hear directly from students and alumni, and learn how TRIO continues to expand educational opportunity and workforce pathways in our community.

Visual / Interview Opportunities:

- Student and alumni testimonials
- Program shadowing / “TRIO for a Day” immersive experience
- Campus tour with TRIO ambassadors
- Remarks from institutional and civic leaders
- Service and enrichment activities
- Group photos and interviews available upon request

RSVP:

Media interested in attending should contact [Name] at [email] or [phone].

For more information about TRIO programs at [Institution Name], please visit [website] or email [program contact].

Social Media Toolkit

Digital platforms allow TRIO programs across the country to unite in celebration and advocacy. On social media, highlight student voices, share photos and videos from your TRIO Day activities, and uplift the stories of alumni and partners who exemplify the transformative impact of education. Short videos, photo stories, student interviews, and “day-in-the-life” features resonate especially well online. Use hashtags such as #NationalTRIODay, #TRIOWorks, and #FirstGen to connect with the national celebration and strengthen the TRIO movement online. Invite your campus, alumni, and partners to amplify posts and engage with students’ achievements, creating a digital ripple effect that reaches far beyond your institution.

Instagram and Facebook

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| Post 1 — National TRIO Day Kickoff | <p>👉 Today we celebrate the 40th annual #NationalTRIODay — a day to honor student success, community service, and the power of educational opportunity.</p> <p>For 60+years, TRIO programs have opened doors, strengthened communities, and built pathways to college and careers for millions of first-generation scholars. Proud to stand with the TRIO family nationwide. ❤️ #TRIODay #ProtectTRIO</p> |
| Post 2 — Student Spotlight | <p>Meet [Student Name], TRIO [Program] scholar and future [career goal].</p> <p>With hard work, mentorship, and a community that believes in every student’s potential, success isn’t just a dream — it’s a plan. We are proud of our TRIO students and the bright futures they’re building. #NationalTRIODay #TRIODay #ProtectTRIO</p> |
| Post 3 — TRIO for a Day Experience | <p>Today, community leaders walked in a TRIO student’s shoes — meeting our scholars, joining workshops, and witnessing the power of access and support.</p> <p>When leaders see TRIO in action, they become advocates for opportunity. #NationalTRIODay #TRIODay #ProtectTRIO</p> |
| Post 4 — Alumni Pride | <p>Once TRIO, always TRIO. 🌟</p> <p>Our alumni prove that with opportunity, coaching, and belief, potential becomes achievement — and achievement becomes impact.</p> |
| Post 5 — Day of Service | <p>Share your TRIO story below 📸</p> <p>#NationalTRIODay #TRIODay #ProtectTRIO</p> <p>TRIO leads by serving. Our students and alumni spent #NationalTRIODay giving back — because when you rise, you lift others. 🌟 #TRIODay #ProtectTRIO #FirstGenProud</p> |

X (Twitter) Posts

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Post 1 | Celebrating 40 years of #NationalTRIODay and 60+ years of TRIO! Proud of our first-gen scholars and the futures they are building. #TRIODay #ProtectTRIO |
| Post 2 | TRIO works. TRIO leads. TRIO changes lives. Today we honor our students, alumni, and partners nationwide. #NationalTRIODay #TRIODay #ProtectTRIO |
| Post 3 |  First-generation  Future leaders  TRIO family Happy #NationalTRIODay! #TRIODay #ProtectTRIO |
| Post 4 | Thank you to the community leaders who joined us for TRIO for a Day to experience the power of access and support. #NationalTRIODay #TRIODay #ProtectTRIO |
| Post 5 | Once TRIO, always TRIO. Share your TRIO story!  #NationalTRIODay #TRIODay #ProtectTRIO |

LinkedIn Posts

| | |
|---|---|
| Post 1 — Institutional/Professional Tone | Today marks the 40th annual National TRIO Day , a celebration of access, achievement, and educational opportunity. For 60+ years, TRIO programs have expanded opportunity and strengthened communities by supporting first-generation and income-eligible students on their path to college and career success. Proud to be part of this mission — and to stand with students, alumni, and TRIO professionals nationwide. #NationalTRIODay #TRIODay #ProtectTRIO |
| Post 2 — Alumni Call | TRIO gave me confidence. TRIO gave me guidance. TRIO opened doors. To the next generation of first-gen leaders: we are cheering for you. #NationalTRIODay #TRIODay #ProtectTRIO |
| Post 3 — Corporate/Partner Engagement | Grateful for our partners who joined us for TRIO for a Day and experienced firsthand how college access changes lives. Together, we are strengthening the workforce of the future and expanding pathways to opportunity. #NationalTRIODay #TRIODay #ProtectTRIO |

TikTok / Reels Ideas + Captions

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| Video Idea 1 – “Day in the Life” | Clips: advising session → tutoring → campus shot → celebration Caption: Walking in a TRIO scholar’s shoes for #NationalTRIODay ❤️ #TRIODay #ProtectTRIO |
| Video Idea 2 – “Finish this sentence” | Prompt: “TRIO means...” Students answer rapid-fire. Caption: TRIO means possibility, family, and future. #NationalTRIODay #TRIODay #ProtectTRIO |
| Video Idea 3 – Alumni Glow-Up | Before/now montage Caption: Started as a first-gen dream. Became a TRIO success story. #NationalTRIODay #TRIODay #ProtectTRIO |

Suggested Call-to-Action Lines

- Share your TRIO story
- Tag a TRIO alum who inspires you
- Drop a ❤️ if TRIO made an impact in your life
- Help us advocate — visit coenet.org to learn more

Effective communication on National TRIO Day does not end when the event concludes. Share event recaps, post photos and testimonials, and highlight reflections from students, alumni, and participants. Send thank-you notes to speakers, partners, and supporters and share a brief event report with campus leadership, elected officials, and local media. Encourage students to continue telling their stories, alumni to remain engaged, and partners to deepen their support. With each follow-up message, you reinforce TRIO’s value and ensure that the spirit of National TRIO Day extends throughout the year, shaping awareness, policy, and advocacy long after the celebration ends.

Corporate and Employer Engagement

Corporate and employer partnerships strengthen TRIO's mission by expanding networks, opening pathways to careers, and connecting students to real-world experiences that ignite opportunity. National TRIO Day offers a unique moment to invite business and industry leaders to witness TRIO's impact, meet emerging talent, and become partners in a long-term effort to champion first-generation success and workforce opportunity.

Corporate engagement during National TRIO Day is grounded in shared values: opportunity, access, mobility, community leadership, and belief in students' potential. When employers invest time, mentorship, training, and resources in TRIO participants, they are cultivating the next generation of problem-solvers, leaders, public servants, researchers, educators, and innovators. This section provides tools to help TRIO programs welcome employers, introduce them to students, and build sustained engagement beyond the celebration. Whether hosting mentors, connecting alumni inside companies to their TRIO roots, or securing sponsorships to support programming, each interaction helps deepen TRIO's footprint in the business community and expand opportunities for students.

Sample Partner Onboarding Brief

Welcome to TRIO

Thank you for partnering with TRIO for National TRIO Day and beyond. TRIO programs serve students who are often the first in their families to pursue a college degree, as well as students from low-income backgrounds, students with disabilities, and veterans transitioning back to school. TRIO provides advising, academic support, career skills, and holistic guidance that help students thrive in higher education and beyond.

Why Employers & TRIO Work Together

Businesses and TRIO share a commitment to:

- Expanding opportunity and economic mobility
- Building a diverse, talented workforce
- Developing ethical, motivated, resilient leaders
- Strengthening communities through education and career advancement

By collaborating with TRIO, corporate partners can support talent development, build service-driven cultures, and give back to the communities where they work and live.

Ways to Engage

Corporate partners may choose to:

- Host job shadowing and career exposure opportunities
- Provide volunteers for workshops or mentoring
- Sponsor TRIO student experiences and scholarships
- Participate in TRIO for a Day or National TRIO Day activities
- Offer internships, fellowships, and early-career pipelines
- Celebrate first-generation employees and encourage mentoring

Our Commitment to You

We will:

- Introduce you to inspiring students and alumni
- Help you understand TRIO's mission and impact
- Coordinate logistics and ensure a meaningful experience
- Follow up with opportunities to deepen partnership

Thank you for joining us in expanding opportunity and investing in future leaders.

Volunteer/Host Template

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| Volunteer/Host Information | Name | |
| | Organization | |
| | Role/Title | |
| | Email | |
| | Phone | |
| Engagement Role | I will participate as a: | |
| | Career panel speaker | |
| | Mentor/Coach | |
| | Job-shadow host | |
| | TRIO for a Day participant | |
| | Site visit host | |
| | Workshop facilitator | |
| | Other: | |
| Session Details | Date & Time: | |
| | Location/Virtual Link: | |
| | Student Audience | |
| Guidance for Your Visit | <p>During your time with TRIO students, we encourage you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share your career path and experience • Offer honest advice and encouragement • Highlight resilience, problem-solving, and growth • Listen actively and ask questions • Speak with warmth, respect, and supportive language <p>Thank you for being a champion for opportunity and student success.</p> | |

Sample Sponsorship & Giving Opportunities Sheet

Invest in TRIO — Invest in Future Leaders

Corporate partners play a vital role in sustaining student success and expanding college-to-career pathways. Contributions directly support programming, student leadership development, and resources that remove barriers and fuel achievement.

Ways to Support TRIO

National TRIO Day Sponsor

Support National TRIO Day events, student recognition, and community service initiatives. Sponsorship may include recognition on event materials, speaking opportunities, and direct engagement with students.

Student Success Fund

Help provide emergency aid, textbooks, technology, graduate test prep, professional attire, or travel assistance for college visits, internships, or conferences.

Career & Leadership Partner

Sponsor job-readiness programming, resume clinics, professional coaching, TRIO leadership summits, and employer-student networking events.

Internship & Workforce Partner

Offer internships, micro-internships, job shadowing, and early-career pipelines for first-generation scholars and TRIO graduates.

Named Scholarship or Cohort Sponsorship

Fund named scholarships or support a student cohort, ensuring TRIO students have continuous access to advising, mentoring, and career support.

Recognition & Impact

- Corporate partners receive recognition through:
- National TRIO Day communications
- Program websites and social channels

- Student events, signage, and print materials
- Alumni and community engagement networks

Most importantly, partners gain the opportunity to shape lives, strengthen communities, and build access pathways into their industries.

To explore partnership opportunities:

[Name, Title]
[Institution/Program]
[Email] | [Phone]

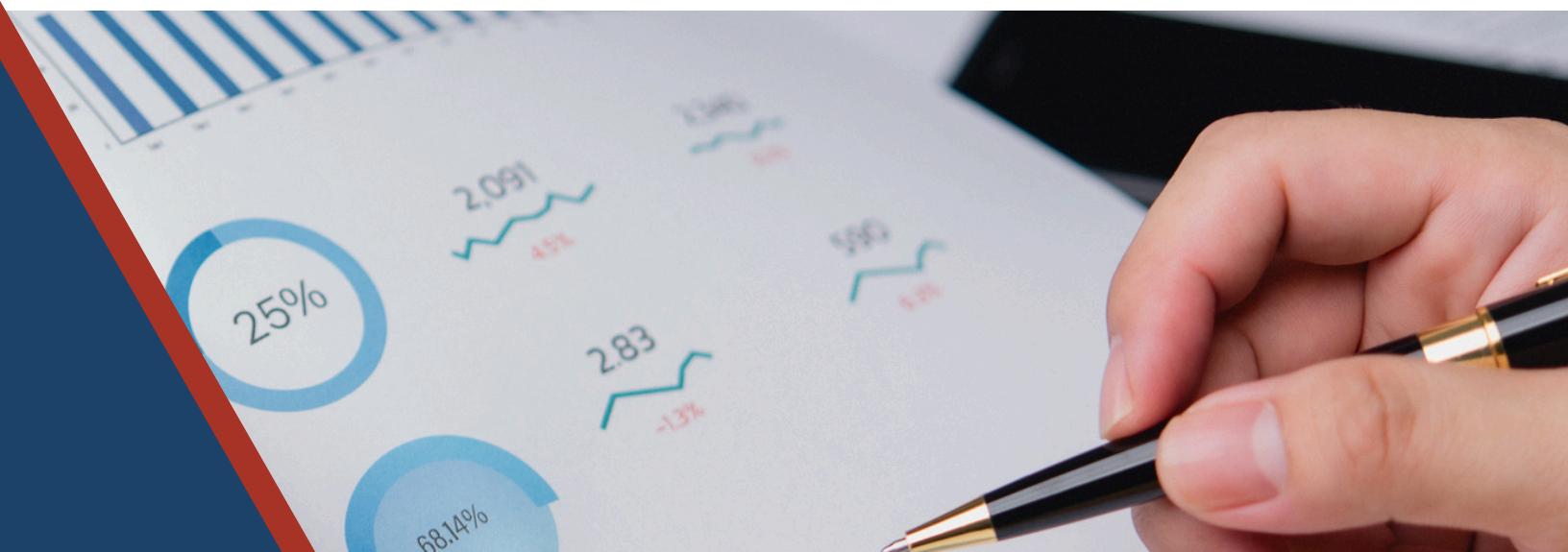
Together, we build futures, strengthen communities, and expand the promise of higher education and economic mobility for all.

METRICS FOR EVALUATION

Evaluation is key to understanding the strengths and weaknesses of your event, so that you can improve it for the future. Some ideas for metrics include:

- Number of participants (and repeat attendees, if not first engagement event)
- Amount of monetary contributions and in-kind support following the event
- Number of new partnerships initiated following the event
- Participant feedback and testimonials
 - While you might receive useful feedback by talking to participants during the event, you can also send out a survey following the event!

It can also be beneficial to follow up on your impact weeks to months after the event. Are your participants engaging in other events following joining “TRIO for a Day”? Have the new partnerships, such as mentoring or hosting an intern continued?



EVALUATION SURVEY TEMPLATE

This template includes example questions that you could send to participants in a survey. A survey can also include short answer questions in order to get more specific feedback.

| Question-Statement | Question Type | Purpose |
|--|--|---|
| I enjoyed attending TRIO for a Day | Likert Scale | Get a sense for participant attitudes towards their experience |
| I feel like I have a better understanding of TRIO | Likert Scale | Assess if you met the informational goals of TRIO for a Day |
| I feel more engaged with TRIO | Likert Scale | Assess if you met the engagement goals of TRIO for a Day. |
| What was the most engaging part of the day? | Multiple choice or ranked choice | Find out which events were the most engaging to participants to inform future programing. |
| I want to continue to engage with TRIO in the future | Likert Scale | Assess if you met the partnership goals of TRIO |
| I intend to engage with TRIO in the following ways over the next 6 months: | Checkbox <i>(ex. answers: contacting elected official, volunteering at a TRIO event, donating, hosting an intern)</i> | Assess which stakeholders are likely to become partners. The time-boundedness forces participants to think realistically about their engagement. This gives you a list of people you should follow up with to get engaged! |

Conclusion

National TRIO Day began forty years ago as a call to recognize educational opportunity and to stand with students whose potential deserved to be seen, supported, and celebrated. Today, that spirit endures—not only as a single day of celebration, but as a shared movement that advances opportunity, champions first-generation success, and drives our nation forward one student, one family, and one community at a time.

As we honor six decades of TRIO and mark the fortieth anniversary of National TRIO Day, we reflect on the countless lives changed, challenges overcome, degrees earned, and leadership journeys launched. The stories that fill classrooms, campuses, and communities across this country are proof of what is possible when talent meets opportunity and when support meets determination. TRIO is not simply a set of programs; it is a commitment, a community, and a legacy of belief in what every student can become.

This toolkit is a resource—but more importantly, it is an invitation. An invitation to celebrate boldly. To advocate powerfully. To elevate student voices. To connect across generations of alumni, educators, and partners. And to ensure that the doors opened by TRIO remain open wide for all who follow.

Thank you for the work you do each day to guide, mentor, empower, and champion TRIO students. Thank you for telling their stories, amplifying their success, and standing firm in the belief that educational opportunity should never be reserved for a select few, but extended to every learner who strives and dreams.

As you celebrate National TRIO Day, remember that you are part of a national family—millions strong and united in purpose. Together, we honor our history. Together, we uplift today's scholars and tomorrow's leaders. And together, we renew our promise to protect, strengthen, and expand TRIO for generations to come.

TRIO works. TRIO leads. TRIO changes lives.

Today, tomorrow, and always—thank you for being a part of the TRIO story.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Want more resources for TRIO Day events? **Visit coenet.org.**

If you have any questions or need assistance with this guide, please reach out to:

Tommy Walls

Director of Alumni Relations and Career Opportunities
Council for Opportunity in Education
tommy.walls@coenet.org

Your feedback and involvement are imperative. Together, let's amplify the impact of TRIO alumni and programs nationwide!