As a new staff, we are delighted to work in TRIO. We've enjoyed hosting workshops, programs, and getting to know all of our students. We are looking forward to spring term!

TRIO Staff

Inside, you'll find our first-year highlights, our senior spotlight, an overview of events, workshops, and OCS and DIS programs, a staff feature, and lots of pictures!

Newsletter Summary

Peer Leaders

This winter term TRIO Peer Leaders hosted a number of events and workshops along with their continued mentoring of the first-year TRIO students!
**Director's Note**

As my first winter term at Carleton winds down, I am incredibly grateful for our TRIO students and staff. I have learned how quickly the ten-week terms fly by and Comfort Food Friday was a wonderful way to slow down, check in, and be in community with each other. I enjoyed connecting with students at events and during advising meetings to navigate challenges and celebrate successes! TRIO is rooted in resilience, and our students demonstrate that every day.

This term, our amazing Peer Leaders, intern, and staff helped us to put on 13 workshops and retreats focused on financial literacy, career development, first-generation student issues, and more. Additionally, Fiesta Fridays hosted by our Peer Leaders were a great way to end the week. We also established a new partnership with the library to offer drop-in Reference and Instruction Librarian hours at the TRIO House to assist with finding resources and citations for papers.

I hope we can all use Spring Break to relax and rejuvenate before next term. I am looking forward to all that spring will bring!

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**Staff Feature**

I started as an Academic Advisor with the TRIO program in June 2022. I’m enjoying my first year at Carleton and getting to know all our amazing TRIO students. I received my bachelor’s degree in math education at St. Olaf College. One highlight from my undergraduate education was studying in Germany for a semester. I attended North Carolina State University for my master’s degree in counseling. One of the best parts of my graduate education was participating in various internships. I encourage all TRIO students to consider OCS programs and internships during college.

**Some Fun Facts About Rosie!**

- She has twins! Both are seniors in high school, so it’s been a little stressful for Rosie this year as her family has been trying to figure out what the plans are for both kids after graduation.
- She has an English Springer Spaniel named Sailor.
- She grew up on a farm with 50,000 laying hens. One of her chores was packing eggs into flats on a pallet. The bonus was they always had fresh eggs!
- Rosie’s favorite color is Red.
Hello! My name is Jiao Jiao Nelson. I am from Carthage, Missouri. I am thinking about being an English, physics, or Asian studies major. My favorite dining hall is LDC, but I prefer Burton for breakfast. My favorite study hall is the pit in 3rd Libe. My favorite memory of this term was Midwinter Ball, even though I spent more time getting ready than actually being there. My favorite TRIO memory is crying over noodles during Comfort Food Friday. I obviously felt awful, but looking back, having a good place where I could cry was really comforting. Knowing that there are people that care about me in TRIO makes the memory special to me, even if I was sobbing at the time. In my spare time, I like to draw, read manga, and watch anime. I am also involved in KarlPop and love dancing!

"Howdy, my name is Vivian Agugo and I am from Houston, Texas. I am a prospective cognitive science major and neuroscience minor on the pre-med track (Anderson is my second home, #STEMLife). Outside of classes, I love attending all the TRIO workshops where I get to learn more about Carleton and bond with peers. My general quirk is that I love lending a helping hand; from creating posters to being there for friends and family, I love to help those around me. I like doing art, watching a good comedy show/movie, and napping to unwind."

"Hello! My name is Fernando Rivera, and I am a philosophy major! While at Carleton, I've participated in the following clubs: Men of Color (MOC) and Tutors for the Korean Language (TKL). Both clubs provided me with a sense of community and an outlet from Carleton's academic rigor. Although stressful, I would say that Carleton's academic rigor has greatly enhanced my ability to acquire, analyze, and disseminate knowledge. Another one of Carleton's features that has shaped me is its tight-knit community. Coming from a big city, making strong connections with people is rare for me. My time at Carleton has taught me how to value and maintain connections within a small community. After I graduate, I would love to allow my body to gradually sink into my mom's couch while I casually binge 87 hours’ worth of Seinfeld. However, that won't get me into law school, so I plan to use my gap year to prepare myself for the LSAT and possibly take on an internship opportunity. If I had to give advice to a freshman version of me, I would look him in the eye and say; "This is an opportunity for you to develop yourself along with other brilliant minds, so don't be afraid to be vulnerable and withstand their judgment. Get eight hours of sleep, structure your day well, and walk the fine line between chaos and order."
Zaria Kelly '25

Hi, my name is Zaria Kelly and I'm from Orlando, FL. In the coming weeks, I plan to declare classics for my major. I am totally a green girl (my favorite color is green) and I would not mind eating pasta every day for the rest of my life. Outside of classes, I enjoy watching movies, knitting, and I'm currently learning how to crochet! My favorite hangout spot on campus is OF COURSE the TRIO House! It's such a welcoming space and a great place to study. It’s also a great place to get a cup of hot cocoa, especially in this weather! The vibes are just always *chef’s kiss*. In my next few years at Carleton, I’m hoping that I will continue to grow in my passion for my studies and meet new people who are just as enthusiastic as me, gaining opportunities and experiences that will not only be invaluable to my career, but my life as well. I hope that I'll leave Carleton prepared to further my education in graduate school, eventually becoming a professor of classics and even giving back to the community that helped me get there.

Jonathan Nguyen '25

Heyo! My name is Jonathan Nguyen (he/him/his) and I am a sophomore potentially majoring in either biology or cinema and media studies with a minor in biochemistry on the pre-health track from Houston, Texas! In my free time I like to workout, hang with friends, and solve sudoku/crossword puzzles. Another quirk about me is that I can solve a Rubik's Cube. From my role as a TRIO Peer Leader, I have been able to think critically of my own actions and how it may influence others. Being exposed to such a diverse group of people and seeing my mentees grow as individuals has been a highlight for me! In the future, I hope to apply what I’ve learned towards helping others somewhere within healthcare by becoming a medical physician or an optometrist specializing in pediatrics and vision therapy! One last fun fact about me is that I have the cutest niece and nephew ever.
My name is Allen Perales (he/him), and I am a sophomore. My hometown is Hemet, California. I am a prospective biology major and biochemistry minor. For the past five weeks, I've traveled alongside several Carleton students from the California-Oregon border to the sandy beaches of Monterey. We've analyzed Californian literature and art to understand the multiple cultures and ideas of the state. We have also met authors such as Maxine Hong Kingston, who wrote "China Men", and visited the John Steinbeck Museum. Reading the works of these authors while observing the setting in which the stories have taken place has made this experience more immersive. My favorite memory on this OCS has been snow skiing and surfing. It was very fun to glide down a snowy hill near Mount Shasta and learn how to surf. Although I fell trying to ski and got beat up by a surfboard several times, I still enjoyed the opportunity I would have never gotten elsewhere. On this OCS, I have learned about the concerns of people who belong to the same state as me. Although we are from the same place, the northern and southern parts have different issues, which has helped me understand the diversity of the state.

Hey! I'm Crystal Wu, and I'm a geology major from the class of 2024. I'm from Chicago, IL and Taishan, China and am currently in New Zealand for the Geology OCS program! In the Geology OCS program, we move to different locations every day. I am having fun exploring the New Zealand outback, beaches, small towns, and cities. For the first five weeks of the program, we spent each week in one area within the North Island. We observed what each outcrop showed and tried to piece out the geologic story from them. Currently, we are on the South Island part of the program, which includes multiple independent mapping projects. We go out in almost all weather for the rocks! My favorite memory from the OCS so far was going to an oyster bar after a long soaking hike on the Rangitoto Island and a swim in the ocean ($2 NZD per fresh oyster!). We were briny consuming tasty briny oysters! The Geology OCS has taught me many things while further exposing me to the field, which I'm planning to pursue in the future. I get to learn skills to work better in groups with various students. The projects allow me to build my skills in geology, and experience the intensity of geology camps most graduates have to attend before grad school. I have also been able to learn basics skills like using Brunton Compass and efficiently noting what we observe through my participation.
This term’s Class Act took place on February 3rd, 2023 in the Larson Family Room in the Weitz. The panel, hosted by Peer Leaders Graci Huff and Chris Melo, highlighted five wonderful staff and faculty members who were first-generation college students; Annette Nierobisz, Professor of Sociology; Daniela Kohen, Professor of Chemistry; David Wiles, Associate Professor of Theater; Danny Mathews, Director of the Gender and Sexuality Center; and Sindy Fleming, Associate Dean of Students. Students munched on delicious food catered by Cub Foods and were able to hear the panelists answer a variety of questions based around their college identities and experiences. This provided valuable insights and advice to current college students through sharing personal stories and anecdotes from their time as undergraduates.
This year’s First-Year Retreat took place on Saturday, January 14, 2023. The TRIO staff brought the first-year TRIO students on a trip to Northern Star Base Camp in St. Paul to participate in a variety of team-building activities, archery, and rock climbing. Students were split into two groups and led to separate stations, so everyone had the opportunity to participate in all of the activities. Lots of laughs were shared during our team-building activities, and our first-year students got the chance to build a stronger relationship with their mentors. The team building activities ranged from leadership games to a group teambuilding event. Students also challenged themselves with a realistic climbing wall that resembled rock formations in Taylors Falls and got to show off their archery skills to their classmates. All in all, it was a great retreat!

Graci Huff '25
Fiesta Friday

This term, the TRIO Peer Leaders hosted several Fiesta Friday events. Our first event was held on the third Friday of the term. At this event, we made friendship bracelets, necklaces and lanyards. Students gathered to hang out and learn crafts from Peer Leader Hiroki Coyle, while enjoying hot chocolate and s’mores. Students walked away with their own customized jewelry.

Our second Fiesta Friday was a bingo night put on in collaboration with OIL during sixth week. Peer Leader Zaria Kelly did a great job hosting! Students played bingo, and winners received prizes donated from both TRIO and OIL. We’re excited for further programming in the coming terms!

Graci Huff ’25

Comfort Food Friday

On Friday, February 24th TRIO hosted the winter term Comfort Food Friday with food catered from India Palace Grill. Our wonderful Dean Carolyn Livingston sponsors this event every eighth week of term. Fortunately this term, COVID cases on campus were low which allowed us to gather in the TRIO house with students and guests for a great time! TRIO staff and peer leaders were ecstatic to have so many students and friends in the house enjoying the company of each other.

Our Director, Kim Hildahl, was especially thrilled that there was an abundance of students who came out, and she had the ability to connect with the TRIO community at large over an amazing meal! While eating, the students chatted around the house in small groups, played board games, and listened to music together!

The TRIO staff and peer leaders hope that next term we will have more members from the Carleton community come out and enjoy good food and games while taking a break from the stress that comes along with eighth week!

Kaysha Neville ’24
While reflecting on the experience, Joanne Chung, ‘26, found that “talking with the business executives was very important to learn about cutting a path throughout college that also aligned with your interests. Additionally, being in an environment with such energy and optimism was invigorating. It made me eager to try new things that I never thought of. Finding a way to combine my passions while also developing my skills was my main takeaway.” Norman Colindrez ’25 stated he learned “how a basketball franchise has different branches to allow it to prosper,” and how “The sports industry has a lot of potential within many different fields.” After fruitful conversation, students enjoyed a professional basketball game between the Minnesota Timberwolves and the Denver Nuggets.

Jonathan Nguyen ’25
Chris Melo ’25
Hiroki Coyle ’25
This winter term was an exceptional time for growth for all of our TRIO students. The first-year students engaged in learning strategies and time management which allowed them to grow academically and use all their resources to their advantage. Sophomores got a head start on their writing portfolio, where they were given helpful tips on what to include and revise in their writing and time to actually work on their portfolios with outside help from the Writing Center staff. All class years were introduced to iGrad, a financial literacy platform, which allows users to increase their financial literacy skills ranging from learning how to save money, investing, and making a budget. All years were aided in tax preparation by a certified public accountant who guided them step-by-step through the process. In summary, all TRIO students learned practical skills that will carry them through their academic year!

Chris Melo ’25
KUDOS

Thank you to everyone who helped make this winter term so wonderful. Thanks again to all of the highlighted students for letting us showcase them and to the individuals who supported TRIO!

We want to extend our gratitude to the following individuals:

George Cusack and Melanie Cashin for leading the Sophomore Writing Portfolio Workshop

Kim Hildahl and Rosie Pfarr-Baker for leading the Financial Literacy iGrad Workshops

Kathy Evertz, Brie Baumert, and Adam Lewis for their participation in the Learning Strategies Workshop

R&I Librarians Brie Baumert, Adam Lewis, and Kate Brooks for hosting drop-in hours at the TRIO House

Marynel Van Zee; Carleton-Funded Fellowships
Naomi Ziegler and Tina Kukowski for leading the Financing OCS workshop

The Class Act Panelists; Dean Sindy Fleming, Daniela Kohen, Danny Mathews, Annette Nierobisz, and David Wiles, for their insightful perspectives on the first-generation college experience

And an extra special thank you to President Allison Byerly, Dean Carolyn Livingston, RJ Holmes and the Career Center staff, and Renee Faulkner and the OIL staff for their continued support of TRIO!