

CARLETON TRIO

NEWS LETTER

2024



Winter



NEWSLETTER SUMMARY

In this winter term newsletter, you'll find some of our most exciting and memorable events. We kicked off the term with co-sponsoring Dr. Anthony Jack as the first Convocation speaker! Our TRIO students had the opportunity to visit the Minneapolis Institute of Art, and Mall of America for a special behind-the-scenes STEM Tour. In addition to traveling off campus, we hosted a number of academic and cultural events for our students.

PEER LEADER UPDATES

Understanding that students sometimes need a break from studies, Peer Leaders worked to create a cozy space with stress-management strategies for students at the TRIO house. Beyond relaxation, they organized lively events such as ramen dinners, pizza feasts, game nights, and brownie baking sessions. Peer Leaders also collaborated with the St. Olaf SSS program to host a creative "paint and sip" event. These initiatives not only provided a space to prioritize self-care, but also cultivated a sense of togetherness and enjoyment among students.



STAFF NOTE

Winter term is winding down and TRIO staff have been hard at work planning for spring. We are looking forward to continue building community and providing support to students. Stay tuned for more information on our spring term events including our second annual poetry night, financial literacy workshops, a professional networking and etiquette dinner, and more! Make sure to stay connected and get involved. TRIO works!

DIRECTOR'S NOTE



Kim Hildahl

As we close out winter term, I want to offer a huge congratulations to all of our TRIO students. Although the weather has been mild, the academic demands of the term have been anything but! Through it all, our students persevered and accomplished their goals.

TRIO hosted several major events over the last ten weeks. We kicked off winter term by co-sponsoring Convocation with Dr. Anthony Jack, author of *The Privileged Poor*. Dr. Jack's talk helped to shed light on socioeconomic differences on campus and inspired us to continue to think critically about the low-income student experience. Our trip to the Minneapolis Institute of Art exposed us to photography created by Native artists and gave insight to new perspectives. Finally, our visit to the Mall of America allowed us to learn about various STEM and sustainability efforts and careers that help the mall run efficiently.

I have appreciated the time we have spent connecting with each of our cohorts this term. TRIO first-years had the opportunity to grow their leadership skills at the first-year retreat, while our sophomores honed their writing skills at the writing portfolio workshop. TRIO juniors were present at many of our seminars focused on financial literacy, and our seniors have modeled dedication to their studies while tackling comps presentations, career searches, and graduate school applications.

As you transition to the break, I hope you can use this week to recharge and rejuvenate. Spend quality time with loved ones and come back refreshed and ready to tackle spring term!



MALL OF AMERICA STEM TOUR

On Midterm Monday, 20 TRIO students joined us on a trip to the Mall of America (MOA) and delved into the ways in which science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) applications keep the 5.6 million square foot complex running smoothly. Our visit began with an overview of MOA history and architecture, followed by a question and answer session. This portion primed us to think about ways that large-scale operations can prioritize environmental responsibility.

Next, we were divided into groups and were led on a behind-the-scenes tour of mall operations. Our groups were given glimpses into the inner workings of the Nickelodeon Universe theme park and learned how MOA utilizes a system that eliminates the need for traditional heating and cooling through geothermal energy practices. Groups then explored the underground network of maintenance and support systems, including waste management, composting, and energy conservation strategies.

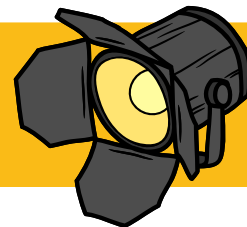


We ended our tour with a walkthrough of MOA's Santa Experience, where we paused to take photos and gained an understanding of how mall staff utilize data and technology to ensure MOA is a safe and welcoming space for all.

Finally, TRIO wrapped up our visit with lunch at Cadillac Ranch and some free time to explore the mall shops. Overall, the MOA STEM tour was a fun and valuable experience. Students appreciated learning more about careers in STEM fields and commented on how it opened their eyes to the many moving parts that keep the mall running sustainably. We look forward to hosting future workshops on this topic!



SENIOR HIGHLIGHT



Hello Everyone! My name is Juanita Silva (she/her/ella), and I am a senior psychology major with a minor in Spanish. I am from Round Lake Beach, Illinois, and the proud daughter of Mexican parents. My identity as a first-generation college student has shaped many of my experiences here at Carleton, especially in approaching professors, social interactions, and how I measure success. The TRIO/SSS program has allowed me to feel a sense of belonging and community, especially in those tougher moments when I was dealing with imposter syndrome and homesickness. My TRIO advisors' support these past four years has been fundamental in my academic journey.

After Carleton, I will attend graduate school to pursue a master's in student affairs and higher education. I have worked as a resident assistant at Carleton for the past three years. My work in my role has inspired me to continue working in college and university spaces to create inclusive and welcoming communities. From my experiences, I have learned the importance of establishing trust among the people you are working with and creating inclusive communities where all students are given the opportunity to be vulnerable. With my degree, I hope to someday be able to give back to programs like TRIO, which focuses on the support of first-generation students as they transition through college.

I am grateful for the resources and opportunities the TRIO/SSS program has provided to help with my graduate school application and the incredible support from my peers and mentors as I navigate this process! As I begin to think about spring term, I can't help but feel excited, because graduating college is a milestone that symbolizes not only my hard work, but also the work my parents have put in to support me through the past four years.



Juanita Silva '24

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FIRST-YEAR HIGHLIGHT



Hello everybody! My name is Awa Cisse and I am a first-year prospective computer science and French double major. Home to me is The Gambia. I currently work at the Office of Off-Campus Studies and have benefited greatly from being a participant in TRIO/SSS. TRIO has provided me with a community of friends and mentors who have supported me in navigating Carleton.

As we all know, a great perk of being part of TRIO is the lending library! It's great not having to worry about books every term, and this has allowed me to focus on other things, such as applying for fellowships. I recently received the Larson Fellowship to research the role of cultural dynamics in women's empowerment in Morocco. I'm very excited to spend the summer in Morocco! I will be documenting my stay there on Instagram, so be sure to follow me @awaa_xo if you want to know more!



Awa Cisse '27

I will also be conducting research in computer science at Carleton with Tanya Amert! Alhamdulillah and Ma Shaa Allah (thank God) for all the fun stuff I have planned this summer! Fun facts about me: I speak three other languages, French, Wolof, and Mandinka. I love to travel and I enjoy reading and hanging out with friends! While I love cheesy rom-coms, I'm also a huge *Criminal Minds* fanatic and I love sitting out in the sun (you'll probably catch me in the bald spot spring term)! If you see me around, don't be shy and say hi!



PEER LEADER HIGHLIGHT



Francisco Arenas '26

Hello, hello, hello! I am Francisco Arenas, a sophomore prospective computer science and possibly environmental studies double major. North Hills, Southern California, is my amazing home away from Carleton! I love to play strategy video games, watch hilarious sitcoms, and bake for my friends and family. This is my first year as a TRIO peer leader, and I am eternally grateful for the memories and experiences I've collected!

TRIO is unmatched when it comes to fostering a welcoming space for first-generation students. From the best informational workshops on campus to cherished moments at Comfort Food Fridays, working for and being a part of the TRIO program at Carleton has taught me invaluable lessons about community, leadership, and growth.





OFF CAMPUS STUDIES HIGHLIGHTS

Lydia Olson



This winter, I had the opportunity to participate in Carleton's Architectural Studies in Europe program. As someone who has never traveled outside of the United States, this has been an incredible experience. The program began in Rome, Italy, where I visited iconic sites such as the Colosseum, the Vatican, and the Roman Forum. Italy is known for its great food, and I loved trying all the authentic Italian dishes.

During the fourth week, we flew to Spain and traveled to four different cities. My favorite city out of the four was Granada. Located in Southern Spain, the city is surrounded by mountains and is home to the famous Alhambra. Our final destination was London, where we focused on modern architecture and visited sites such as Tate Modern and Barbican Centre.

For the last two days of the program, we worked with the local architecture firm, JAM, to design our own benches. It was very rewarding to construct something ourselves after looking at so many different structures throughout Europe. Overall, studying abroad was an incredible experience, and I urge all TRIO students to apply!

Architectural Studies in Europe

Jonathan Nguyen

Hi! My name is Jonathan Nguyen and I'm a junior biology/cinema and media studies double major attending the Film, Literature, and Culture OCS Program. I spent the first five weeks in Mumbai, India and the second five weeks of the term in Seoul, South Korea! This OCS program consists of reading different literary works and short films in Mumbai as well as watching a variety of Korean dramas and films while in Seoul! The final culmination of the OCS is a group video project (which I am currently editing!).

My favorite part of this OCS program has definitely been the food—everything from the savory thali (round platter of foods) and rolls in Mumbai to the kimchee and charcoal-grilled samgyeopsal (pork belly!) in Seoul. A few cool things while on my OCS was attending a professional kabaddi (a contact sport) match in Mumbai, going on various tours to learn more about the cities and film industries, and dressing up in hanbok (Korean traditional attire) at the Gyeongbokgung Palace!

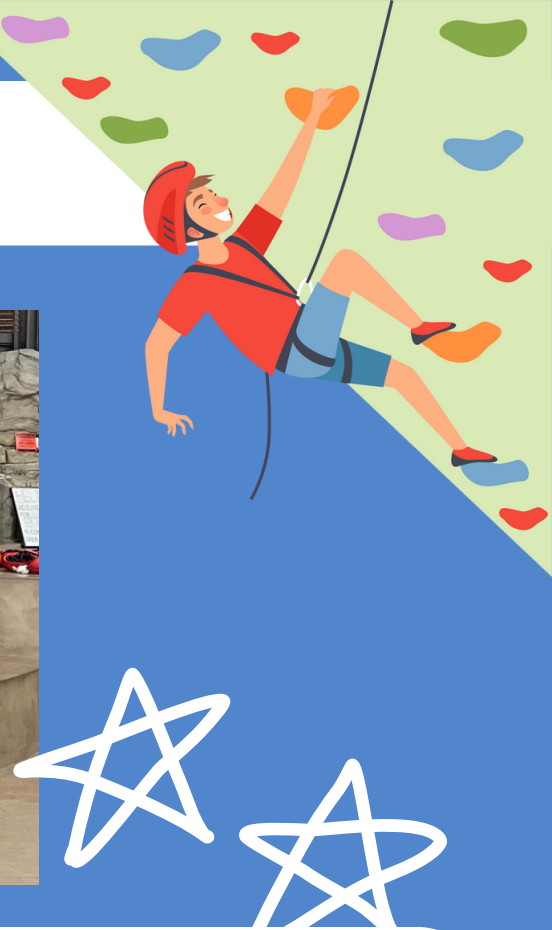
If you're reading this, take every opportunity you can to travel—it will not only give you valuable insights into the world around you, but help you grow intellectually and culturally as an individual.



Film, Literature, and Culture in Mumbai and Seoul



FIRST-YEAR RETREAT



On Saturday, January 13th, first-year TRIO students challenged themselves at Base Camp, an engaging team-building venue featuring archery and rock climbing in St. Paul, MN. Upon arrival, participants enjoyed huge pizza slices from Fat Lorenzo's before splitting into groups for activities.

Amidst the camaraderie, they tackled thought-provoking conundrums like, "If given 24 hours, how would you consume a wooden door?" Groups worked together to unravel intricate puzzles and jigsawed themselves into small spaces. Archery and rock climbing pushed students to get out of their comfort zone and helped build trust.

Overall, the first-year retreat was a huge success! TRIO would like to give special thanks to our first-year students and Peer Leaders who joined us on a Saturday for this special event!



CONVOCATION WITH ANTHONY JACK

On January 5, 2024, TRIO co-sponsored the first convocation of 2024 with the Carleton College Convocations program to bring in Dr. Anthony Jack, author of *The Privileged Poor: How Elite Colleges Are Failing Disadvantaged Students*. With a packed house, Dr. Jack, once a first-generation, low-income college student, spoke about his work on socioeconomic differences at elite colleges. He addressed challenges that can impede creating an accepting, level playing field for diverse and disadvantaged students.

The event was an eye-opening experience for many in the audience while resonating deeply with TRIO students. Special thanks to first-year TRIO student Monica Law for introducing Dr. Anthony Jack with an out-of-this-world opening!



MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE OF ART

On January 6th, Carleton TRIO students had the opportunity to visit the Minneapolis Institute of Art's special exhibit, In Our Hands: Native Photography, 1890 to Now. Students were in awe of the diverse, beautiful, and complex artworks that celebrated the legacy of First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and Native American photographers and their impact on photography. This trip allowed students to spend some time away from the "Carleton Bubble" and view thought-provoking art.



When asked about her experience, first-year TRIO student Monica Law shared: "My highlight of the MIA trip was seeing the art, mainly of Native American people here in Minnesota. Seeing their art spotlighted in such an incredible way was so cool." When asked about her favorite piece in the exhibit, Monica had difficulty deciding, "It takes work to pick a favorite piece. They were all very cool." However, she enjoyed the beadwork items on display: "The amount of detail...was impressive. It was beautiful to see how they used art to represent their culture." And finally, if given one word to describe the overall experience of the trip, Monica said it was "astounding."

The trip also included dinner at Mediterranean Cruise Cafe, where Monica recounted another highlight: fellow first-year Tony Brown's amazing dance moves. "Tony's dancing was too iconic. I am glad I was there to witness it. He did a fantastic job at the restaurant performing with the dancer."



TRIO AWARENESS WEEK



This year, TRIO Awareness Week was observed February 19th-23rd by hosting several events that were open to the campus community. On Monday, students were encouraged to represent TRIO by wearing their TRIO t-shirts. We engaged in conversations around socioeconomic differences on campus at Class Act on Tuesday and were inspired by the story of TRIO alum Jose Hernandez at a screening of *A Million Miles Away* on Wednesday. Our Peer Leaders hosted TRIO trivia in Sayles on Thursday and we closed out the week with Comfort Food Friday and a National TRIO Day celebration! Thank you to everyone who participated in these events to help spread awareness of the TRIO program at Carleton!



CLASS ACT: PERSONAL GROWTH



This term's Class Act focused on the intersections of socioeconomic status and personal growth. Held during TRIO Awareness Week, this event was open to the entire Carleton community. Panelists included TRIO students from diverse academic backgrounds: Chris Melo Mejia (psychology, '25), Kevin Bui (computer science and math, '24), Zaria Kelly (classics, '25), and Vivian Agugo (cognitive science, '26).

Emcees Francisco Arenas '26, and assistant director Dia Taliaferro asked panelists poignant questions and engaged the audience in impactful small and large group discussions. The panelists in turn had opportunities to highlight their amazing academic achievements and their paths to success. These paths were not without obstacles, and their candid discussion of the difficulties of navigating these obstacles was commendable. Many also pointed to organizations like TRIO as places to find support in continuing on their personal growth journeys!

BUDGETING 101 WORKSHOP

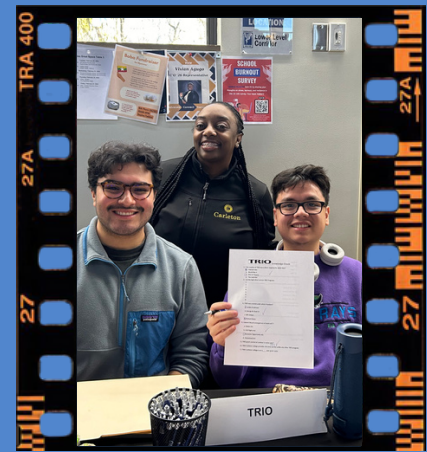
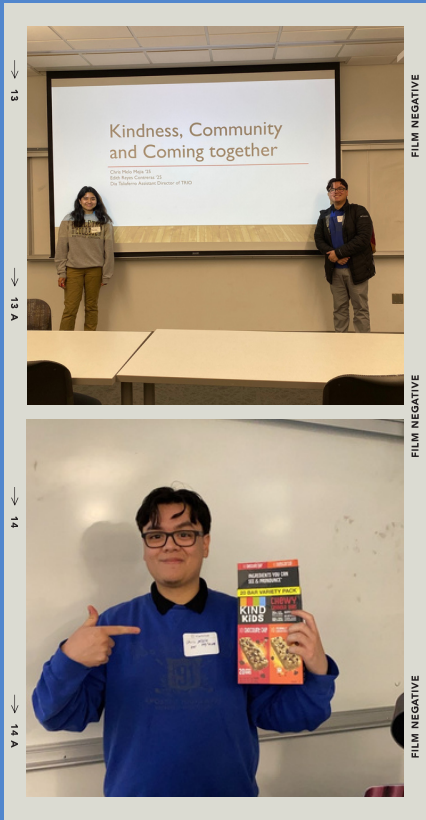
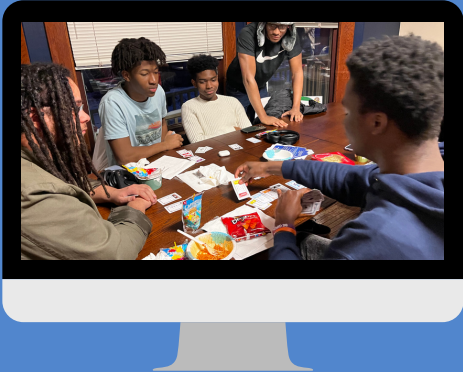


On February 15th, TRIO collaborated with the Student Engagement Series to host a "Budgeting 101" workshop, to provide attendees with essential financial knowledge. Students enjoyed dinner catered from Desi Diner while Ellie Rohman, Community Financial Wellness Coordinator at HomeTown Credit Union, guided participants through budgeting principles and discussed common obstacles and strategies to overcome them.

The workshop highlighted the importance of monitoring spending, setting realistic goals, and making informed financial decisions. Interactive discussions and real-world examples allowed attendees to pinpoint potential challenges, share their insights, and develop effective ways to manage their finances. Students appreciated the practical advice and left the workshop with new tools and a renewed sense of confidence in managing their finances. Many attendees noted that they now felt better equipped to create and stick to a budget and felt prepared to take control of their financial futures.

Overall, the "Budgeting 101" workshop was a great success! TRIO and the Student Engagement Series look forward to hosting more workshops and events that promote financial literacy and empower students to make informed financial decisions next term!

TRIO COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT!



KUDOS



Thank you to everyone who helped make this winter term so wonderful including all 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:

Judith Pannell, Senior Director of Student Life, for collaborating with TRIO on Student Engagement Series workshops

Tina Kukowski, Senior Assistant Director of Student Financial Aid, for leading the FAFSA Workshop for TRIO students

Marynel Ryan Van Zee, Director of Student Fellowships, for leading the External Fellowships workshop

Melanie Cashin, Director of the Academic Support Center, and George Cusack, Director of Writing Across the Curriculum, for guiding our sophomores through the writing portfolio process

David Liben-Nowell and Yansi Perez from the Provost's Office for leading our workshop on academic integrity

Our Class Act panelists: Chris Meija Melo '25, Zaria Kelly '25, Kevin Bui '24 and Vivan Aguogo '26 for sharing their personal growth journeys, wisdom, and insights with our community

Special thanks to President Byerly and Dean Livingston for their continued support of TRIO/Student Support Services!



THANK YOU!

