

What is TRiO?

TRiO is Educational Opportunity for Low-income and Disabled Individuals

Our nation has asserted a commitment to providing educational opportunity for all individuals regardless of race, ethnic background or economic circumstance.

In support of this commitment, Congress established a series of programs to help low income individuals enter college, graduate and move on to participate more fully in America's economic and social life. These Programs are funded under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and are referred to as the TRiO Programs (initially just three programs). While student financial aid programs help students overcome financial barriers to higher education, TRiO programs help students overcome class, social and cultural barriers to higher education.

Who is served?

As mandated by Congress, two-thirds of the students served must come from families with incomes within 150% of federal poverty levels (currently \$30,000 for a family of four) and where neither parent graduated from college. Over 2,700 TRiO Programs currently serve nearly 866,000 low-income individuals between the ages of 11 and 27. Thirty-seven percent of TRiO students are White, 35 percent are African-American, 19 percent are Hispanic, 4 percent are Native American, 4 percent are Asian-American, and two percent are listed as "other". Twenty-two thousand TRiO students are disabled, and more than 25,000 U.S. veterans are currently enrolled in TRiO programs as well.

How it Works

Over 1,000 colleges, universities, community colleges and agencies now offer TRiO Programs. TRiO funds are distributed to institutions through competitive grants.

Evidence of Achievement

Students in the Upward Bound program are four times more likely to earn an undergraduate degree than those students from similar backgrounds who did not participate in TRiO.

Nearly 20 percent of all Black and Hispanic freshmen who entered college in 1981 received assistance through the TRiO Talent Search or EOC programs.

Students in the TRiO Student Support Services program are twice more likely to remain in college than those students from similar backgrounds who did not participate in the program.

TRiO Programs at a Glance

TALENT SEARCH programs serve young people in grades six through 12. In addition to counseling, participants receive information about college admissions requirements, scholarships and various student financial aid programs. This early intervention program helps students from either low-income families and/or families where neither parent graduated from college, to better understand their educational opportunities and options. Over 386,000 students are enrolled in 471 Talent Search TRiO programs.

UPWARD BOUND helps students in grades 9-12 prepare for higher education. Participants receive instruction in literature, composition, mathematics and science on college campuses after school, on Saturdays and during the summer. Currently, 774 programs are in operation throughout the United States.

UPWARD BOUND MATH SCIENCE helps students from low-income families strengthen their math and science skills. In addition, students learn computer technology as well as English, foreign language and study skills. Over 130 programs are serving students throughout the country.

VETERANS UPWARD BOUND provides intensive basic skills development and short-term remedial courses for military veterans to help them successfully transition to postsecondary education. Veterans learn how to secure support from available resources that serve veterans.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES helps students stay in college until they earn their baccalaureate degree. Participants, who include disabled college students, receive tutoring, counseling and remedial instruction. Students are now being served at over 930 colleges and universities nationwide.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY CENTERS, located throughout the country, primarily serve displaced or under-employed workers from low-income families. These Centers help people to choose a college and a suitable financial aid program. There are 138 Educational Opportunity Centers in America serving 210,000 individuals.

RONALD E. McNAIR POST-BACCALAUREATE ACHIEVEMENT programs are designed to encourage low-income/first-generation and minority undergraduates, to consider careers in college teaching as well as prepare for doctoral study. Named in honor of the astronaut who died in the 1986 space-shuttle explosion, students who participate in this program are provided with research opportunities and faculty mentors. Currently there are 179 programs serving 4,100 students.

Council for Opportunity in Education: <http://www.trioprogams.org/>
WESTOP website: <http://westop.csuchico.edu/>