

# *2024 Utah* **TRIO**

# **FACT BOOK**





## 2023-2024 Utah ASPIRE Board

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[aspiroline.org/utah](https://aspiroline.org/utah)

Dear Friend of TRIO,

Thank you for your continued support and for the recent increase in funding for federal TRIO programs in FY23 and for sustained funding in FY24. Utah TRIO programs rely on federal funds to provide services and activities that support our mission of educational opportunity and college success for low-income, first-generation college students across the state.

Each year, Utah ASPIRE compiles this TRIO Fact Book to share TRIO student success stories and the wonderful TRIO work happening across Utah with local communities and with our representatives in Congress.

As you will see in the following pages, TRIO programs are life changing for many thousands of students in Utah who might not otherwise have the opportunity or skill set to graduate from college. For each of the student spotlights included in this book, there are thousands more successful TRIO students who are now changing the trajectories of their lives and that of their families with their college degrees.

Funded through the U.S. Department of Education and housed in the Higher Education Opportunity Act, TRIO programs provide resources to reduce poverty in Utah while creating an educated workforce. Utah's TRIO programs increase the quality of life for students and their families while also increasing state revenue, as most pre-college TRIO students go on to attend institutions in Utah and to become meaningfully employed within the state.

We appreciate your time and hope you are able to look through this book, where we have highlighted TRIO program outcomes in each congressional district and all across Utah. Thank you again for your support!

Sincerely,

Gregory P. Christiansen, M.S.  
President | Utah ASPIRE  
Advisor | Student Support Services | Weber State University

# What are federal **TRIO** programs?

TRIO is a set of federally-funded college opportunity programs that motivate and support students from disadvantaged backgrounds in their pursuit of a college degree. There are **844,383** low-income, first-generation students and students with disabilities spanning from sixth grade through college graduation and are served by **3,270** programs nationally.

## Who do **TRIO** programs serve?

As mandated by Congress, two-thirds of the students served by TRIO programs must come from families with incomes at 150% or less of the federal poverty level and in which neither parent has graduated from college. Some TRIO programs help students in grades 6 through 12 prepare for college, while others serve undergraduate students while they are in college and graduate school.

<b>TRIO Program</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Talent Search</b>	Pre-college support for students in grades 6-12 and adults up to age 27.
<b>Upward Bound</b>	Pre-college support for students in grades 9-12.
<b>Student Support Services</b>	College support for undergraduate students.
<b>Veterans Upward Bound</b>	Support in preparing and transitioning into college for veterans.
<b>Educational Opportunity Centers</b>	College skills support for qualifying adults and youth not served by Talent Search.
<b>McNair Post Baccalaureate Achievement</b>	Tutoring, mentoring, academic counseling, and activities to assist students in preparation for enrollment and success in graduate programs.

## In 2023, Utah **TRIO** programs...

- ✓ Served over 7,200 TRIO students, most from low-income households.
- ✓ Provided vital pre-college academic support to students in 93 middle and high schools in low-income communities across the state.
- ✓ Helped nearly 500 high school seniors enroll in college.
- ✓ Helped nearly 800 first-generation college students graduate with their college degrees.
- ✓ Provided vital connections to community resources and academic support in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

# TRIO in Utah

## Programs Across the State

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Senator  
**Mike Lee**  
State of Utah

27 TRIO programs  
Funding: \$10,459,812

**7,243 students served**



Senator  
**Mitt Romney**  
State of Utah



# TRIO in Utah

## Programs by Congressional District

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### UT-1



Congressman  
**Blake Moore**

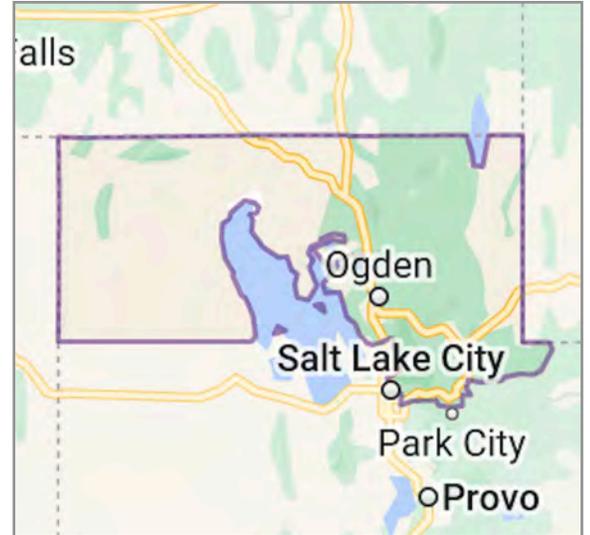
**District 1**

7 TRIO programs

Funding:

\$2,895,987

***1,172 students  
served***



### UT-2



Congressman  
**Celeste Maloy**

**District 2**

7 TRIO programs

Funding:

\$2,815,213

***2,042 students  
served***



# TRIO in Utah

## Programs by Congressional District

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### UT-3



Congressman  
**John Curtis**

**District 3**

8 TRIO programs

Funding:  
\$2,999,247

*2,926 students  
served*



### UT-4



Congressman  
**Burgess Owens**

**District 4**

5 TRIO programs

Funding:  
\$1,682,082

*1,103 students  
served*



# TRIO Snapshots & Spotlights

## Utah's District 1



Hello, my name is Nicolas Garner, and I was born in Salt Lake City and have lived here all my life. I attend Highland High School and will be attending the University of Utah in the Fall of 2024. I have been honored to receive the MLK Youth Leadership Award and a semi-finalist Sterling Scholar for Computer Science and Technology.

Upward Bound has always been part of my high school journey, and it has helped me grow and learn so much. Because of the UB summer programs I have completed, I have become a much more social person and have gained so many life-long friends. I have been able to explore my passion for tech through my involvement in UB Tech Support, which has set me up for my future in technology. UB has also been a great help in navigating the complex world of applying for colleges and scholarship, to the point that I've already received scholarships that already set me up for success in college.

Before attending Weber State University, Derek Jensen struggled with his transition out of the military. Jensen enlisted in the U.S. Air Force fresh out of high school. He served in active duty for seven years and was deployed twice to the United Arab Emirates, where he worked aboard an airborne warning and control system as the military's eyes in the sky. He monitored airspace and detected possible threats from enemy aircraft in real time.

After applying to several universities in Utah, Jensen ultimately enrolled at Weber State University. Veterans Upward Bound is an organization dedicated to supporting and assisting veteran students with their educational goals. Located on the WSU Ogden and Davis campuses, it offers free tutoring, life skills development workshops, and various resources to help veteran students on their educational journey. Jensen first enrolled at VUB when he needed tutoring in one of his physics classes, but he quickly found connection with other students there because of their shared military experience. "It's cool having a community where everyone is a veteran and we can talk about the things we're struggling with," Jensen said.

Jensen plans to graduate with a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering in 2025. After getting his bachelor's, he wants to attend graduate school and work toward employment at the NASA space program or work in the aerospace industry designing rockets.



# TRIO Snapshots & Spotlights

## Utah's District 1



As the first in my family to attend college, navigating my way through school and academics has always been a challenge. I constantly felt the anxiety of not knowing if I was making the right choices, selecting courses that would best fit my needs, and ultimately, not feeling that I belonged in higher education. However, my feelings of uncertainty dissipated when I discovered TRIO my sophomore year. My student success coach introduced me to the program and encouraged me to apply, which is why I am here today.

Although my experiences in college have been unpredictable, TRIO's support has been a constant support for my student needs. There are various events that happen throughout the school year that allow me to meet new, like-minded friends, as well as workshops that emphasize topics that help me grow not only academically, but also as a young adult (i.e. tax clinics, guest speakers, panels).

Seeing my mom work multiple jobs to support my siblings and I while I was growing up made me realize that I had to break down the barriers of being an immigrant who must work extra hard to survive in a different country. Because of TRIO, I can have many more opportunities and know about events that focus on including individuals such as myself. My student support advisor makes me feel valued and encourages me to be persistently ambitious, despite what society has told me growing up. Now, I am entering my senior year of college with confidence that I know exactly what I am doing and how I can achieve my goals.



*Weber State University Upward Bound students on a college tour in Denver, Colorado during the 2023 summer program.*



*Weber State University TRIO Student Support Services students participate in service projects during Spring Break in San Diego, CA.*

# TRIO Snapshots & Spotlights

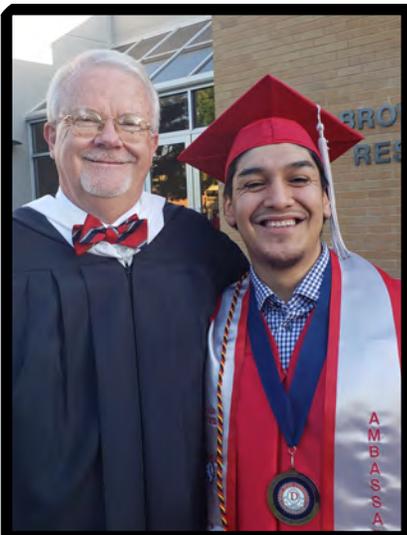
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## Utah's District 2



Nominated by her TRIO **Talent Search** advisor, Brooke Goold, to be in the TRIO/ETS students spotlight is Yvonne Plancarte. Yvonne has gone through a lot of hardship in her life and especially while completing high school. She ended up graduating early so that she could get a job to help supplement her family's income. She was accepted to the University of Utah and hopes to study nursing. She is on the high honor roll and took a lot of CE classes while attending Dixie High School. She is hard-working and determined to meet her goals. It is inspiring. We know she will go far in life.

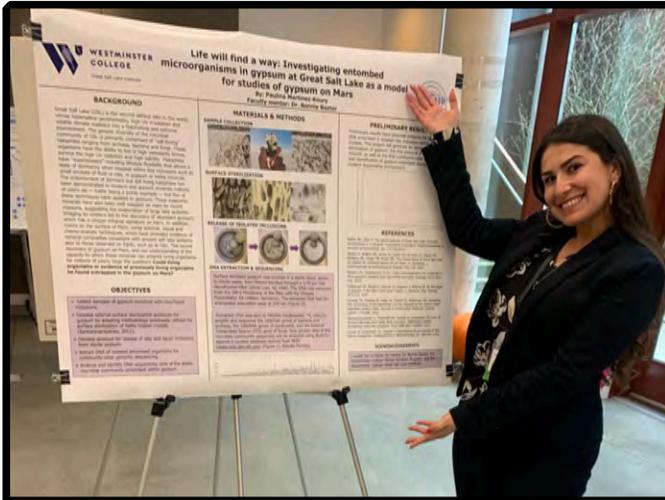
Areli Hernandez Islas is a senior **ETS** student from Snow Canyon. She has managed to keep a 4.0 cumulative GPA all through her high school career while taking many honors, AP, & CE courses. She also scored well on the ACT test. Areli has achieved her seal of biliteracy. With the manner in which Areli has approached her education she will be eligible for many scholarships at the college of her choice. We are proud of the academic achievements that Areli has accomplished to this point and look forward to seeing the finish to her high school career and attend a college of her choice.



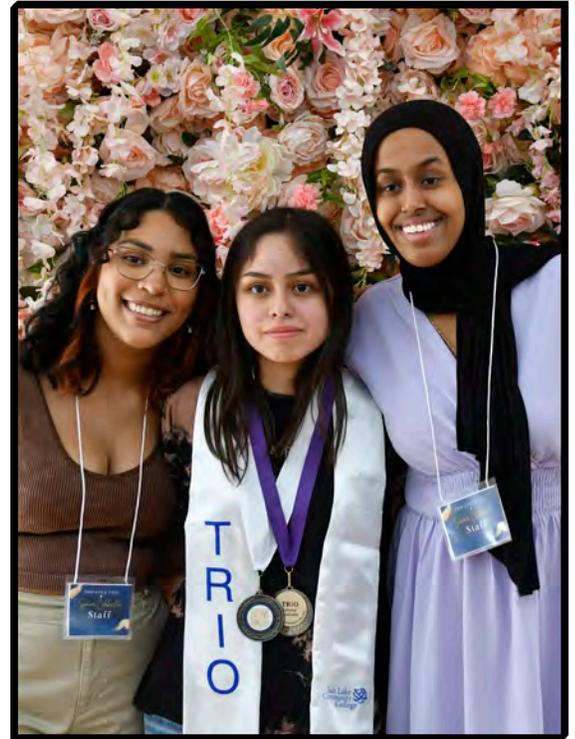
Oscar came to Utah Tech during the fall of 2016 from Avalon, California. His parents came from Mexico without a high school education and Oscar basically worked in the fast food industry with a parent before coming to Utah Tech University. Oscar visited UTU during a spring break trip to tour western universities with a group from his high school. He liked the feel of UTU and applied and received an out-of-state tuition waiver and began his educational adventure. After one semester, Oscar became one of UTU's Student Ambassadors. This position waived his tuition while he was at UTU and, with his Pell grant and part-time employment, Oscar completed his associate of science degree in May of 2018. He continued at UTU to complete his bachelor's degree in Exercise Science in May of 2021 without taking out any student loans. Graduating debt free, he attributes his academic success and financial freedom to the **SSS** program and staff he met during his initial visit to UTU. As a UTU ambassador, every student he escorted on a tour around campus who qualified for TRIO, he would bring to the **SSS** offices to meet the staff and talk about the services he receives as a first-generation and low-income student.

# TRIO Snapshots & Spotlights

## Utah's District 2



*A McNair scholar at Westminster College presents her research.*



*Salt Lake Community College TRIO Talent Search students and staff celebrate graduation.*



*Southern Utah University TRIO Talent Search 9th graders tour Brigham Young University.*



*Westminster College McNair scholars at UCLA's McNair conference.*

# TRIO Snapshots & Spotlights

## Utah's District 3



**M**y name is Adelynn Bennion and I was referred to TRIO by vocational rehab. I'm a dependent of a military service member and a student with multiple disabilities. TRIO has been such an amazing support for me.

I wasn't a UVU student at the time when I connected with TRIO through the EOC program. My advisor helped me get back to school as a transfer student and assisted me with financial aid and more. I was also introduced to the SSS program, applied, and was accepted. I have used tutoring and advising services frequently and I get direct needed help that I can't get other places on campus.

One of the biggest things is that the TRIO office recognizes, accepts, and accommodates me for my disabilities and who I am more than any other place on campus! My disabilities come into consideration in this office and that my disabilities don't define me but are part of me. TRIO programs have been so helpful for me this year and they've made a big impact!

**P**urity Mason is a Senior at Emery High School and in her fourth and final year of Upward Bound. Purity is a low-income student with expansive aspirations, who was not able to see her potential when she first joined the Upward Bound Program. She currently holds the position of Upward Bound President at Emery High School, where she has had the opportunity to not only participate in Upward Bound activities and service projects, but to also to assist in bringing her peers together and being involved in the planning and implementation, as well. Two other accomplishments that she is super proud of are being voted by her peers as the soccer Captain, and swim Captain during her senior year. During her Junior year of high school, Ms. Mason challenged herself by applying for the Horatio Alger Association National Scholarship and was fortunate enough to be one of the recipients of a \$10,000 scholarship. Since, Ms. Mason has applied and received a number of other scholarships and grants including, academic scholarships, as well as a Pell Grant. In addition to that, Ms. Mason has applied and been accepted to all universities across the state of Utah. While considering post-secondary opportunities, Ms. Mason expressed interest in the University of Hawaii, but after further investigations she found a statistic that expressed, given her circumstances, she had a .01% chance of being accepted. While that could have left her feeling defeated, she insisted on at least attempting to apply and was officially offered admissions. This was an incredible boost of confidence, but ultimately she has decided to attend Southern Utah University in the Fall of 2024, as she really connected to it during an Upward Bound Tour. Ms. Mason is excited for the opportunity of attending her post-secondary education and is grateful for all of the opportunities Upward Bound has afforded her.



# TRIO Snapshots & Spotlights

## Utah's District 3



*Utah State University (Price campus) Upward Bound students exploring Dimple Dell Regional Park on an environmental adventure.*



*Utah Valley University TRIO undergraduate students participating in a panel discussion.*



*Utah State (Price campus) Upward Bound students who attended the 2023 Summer Program were able to attend a once-in-a-lifetime educational experience, a bioluminescent tour in Cocoa Beach, FL.*

# TRIO Snapshots & Spotlights

## Utah's District 4

The Snow College TRIO Upward Bound program has helped me in an endless amounts of ways. I come from a first generation and low income background. Earning a college degree has always been a goal of mine, and being in this program has helped me accomplish it. Being in the Upward Bound program has allowed me to shape my future into something more than I thought it could be.

Being in the Upward Bound program has taught me to focus on college and opened so many doors for me. I'll never forget the lessons I've learned while attending our weekly meetings, activities, and summer component. The lessons and life experience I've gained I will cherish for a lifetime.



*Snow College TRIO Student Support Services students celebrate National TRIO Day.*



*Snow College TRIO Student Support Services students at College Survival Night.*



*Snow College TRIO Upward Bound students attend a educational trip in San Diego, California as part of the summer program.*

# TRIO Snapshots & Spotlights

## Utah's District 4

**M**y name is Joanna Rodriguez, I was born and raised in Sanpete County throughout my life. My parents were born and raised in Cerrano, Guanajuato. They came to the USA to give my siblings and me a better future. I'm a first-generation student with the motivation to graduate from Snow College and continue in a bigger university. I have had to face many barriers throughout my life. The biggest barrier that I have come across was not receiving financial aid. Being told I wasn't receiving financial aid would have closed many doors in my life. At the beginning I wanted to give up and not go to college. I thought I would just work. My family didn't want that for me, they wanted me to study and finish a career. After looking for scholarships that could help me, I ran into the TRIO SSS program. Thanks to TRIO programs, I am here today. TRIO SSS has helped me get scholarships that they knew I would be able to obtain. I still have to pay tuition out of my pocket, but it is less money. TRIO programs have put me on the right path. Being able to have tutors in TRIO programs have also been a help for me. Being part of TRIO has motivated me to continue my path and become someone important in this world.

**M**y name is Sitlali Ortiz, I am a first generation student. I have had many challenges with school. I didn't know how to navigate school or be a better student, as I didn't have anyone at home who had gone through schooling higher than elementary grades. I then heard of TRIO freshman year of high school and took a chance hoping that they would be able to help me become a better student. I enrolled in the Upward Bound program and they motivated me to have good grades all throughout high school they also gave me the opportunity to stay at Snow College over the summer and get extra college credit before even getting to college. They showed me what a good college student looked like and what I should aspire to be. I didn't understand how to even apply for college and they took the time and showed me step by step. They also helped me apply for my FASFA, which was a tremendous help and provided scholarship opportunities. Thanks to all the help that TRIO has provided I don't have to worry about burdening my parents with the expenses of college. I am now a college student that started with 16 credits and now have 31 credits as a freshman. Thanks to TRIO I don't have to worry about either buying food or paying my tuition. Thanks to TRIO I am going to be someone in life.



# For More Information on TRIO...

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## [Helpful websites](#)

Utah TRIO: <https://aspireonline.org/utah/>  
ASPIRE: <https://aspireonline.org>  
Council for Opportunity in Education: <https://coenet.org/>  
U.S. Department of Education TRIO homepage:  
<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/trio/index.html>

## [References](#)

Number of participants per TRIO project and funding based on data from the U.S. Department of Education, compiled here:  
[TRIO Programs by State and Congressional District - FY22](#)

For more information on Utah TRIO programs, please contact:

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This booklet was created by TRIO professionals throughout the state of Utah.

