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FEATURES

TRIO Student-of-the-Year: Andrew Velez

Andrew Velez grew up in Indianapolis, Indiana with his mother, father, and two siblings. His father is from the Dominican Republic so his family shares cultural ties to that area. Andrew shares that during his childhood, he played little league and has a fond memory of winning a championship one year—the team went many years without winning so it was “definitely an amazing feeling” to earn a win.

Andrew came to Purdue University Fort Wayne because he knew he belonged at an engineering school. When things didn't work out for him to attend Purdue in West Lafayette, he “felt like it was a sign that PFW was so much better.” He attended two campus visits and knew PFW was where he was meant to be. Andrew started his journey with TRIO in the Upward Bound program at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) when he was in high school. They helped him with his transition to PFW once he graduated and decided to pursue college. Andrew is driven by the fact that he is “going to be the first one in his family that breaks the cycle and succeeds.” Being a first-generation college student motivated Andrew to work hard and complete his degree. While in college, Andrew was a peer mentor for the TRIO SSS program. He helped guide freshmen students toward success and encouraged them to work hard at their goals. Andrew shared that he struggled financially throughout college and made sure to speak up to his support system on campus. He was recommended for the Persistence Pays Off program that's offered through TRIO and found it to be a huge help. He was taught how to create a budget plan and to learn how to efficiently manage money. Andrew credits this program for keeping him going and getting him “where I am today.”

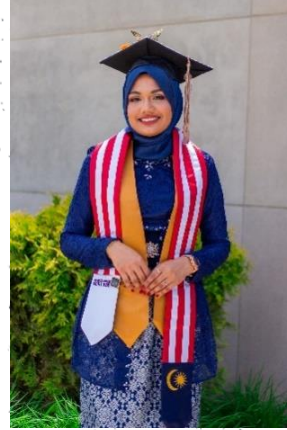
Andrew graduates this spring with a Bachelor's degree in Computer Engineering Technology, as well as, a minor in Information Technology. He participated in an Information Technology internship during his senior year and shares that he is “truly grateful for the experience.” His plans after graduation are to focus and “work up to what he wants to do in life” which is “become financially stable and live his best life.”



Andrew has dedication and resilience. While at PFW, he was recognized as a TRIO Student-of-the-Year for 2024 for all the hard work he put in academically and within the TRIO program. While Andrew doesn't have a confirmed job lined up after graduation yet, he's been working on applications and is confident that he will see offers come in soon.

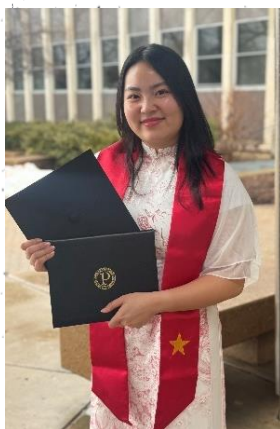
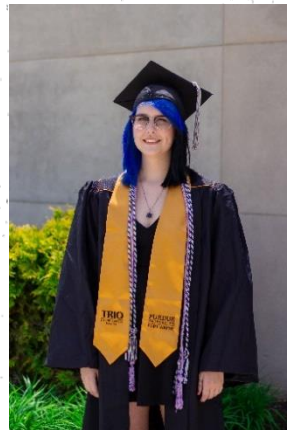
Andrew wants to share with others: “there are people in life that you come across that don't think you deserve anything and have never seen the dedication, hard work, and time that you have put into achieving what you want in life. Then there are people who do recognize that effort. I hope this goes to show that nobody can stop me from getting where I need to be.”
Congratulations Andrew!

2023-2024 GRADUATES



Celebrating TRIO Students

- Willow Adelman** – Bachelor of General Studies
- Lillian Bailey** – Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership
- Faith Bradley** – Bachelor of Music Education and Bachelor of Music in Music Performance
- Alan Brito** – Bachelor of Science in Computer Science
- Tyler Cerezo** - Bachelor of Science in Computer Science
- Elijah Conley** – Bachelor of Science in Interior Design
- Pernasia Evans** – Bachelor of Science in Biology
- Agapi Kaplanis** – Bachelor of Science in Business Management
- San Ko** – Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering Technology
- Anna Kuras** – Bachelor of Science in Education
- Christian Mandala** - Bachelor in Marketing
- Nastocha McCoullum** – Bachelor of Science in Human Services
- Nicholas Miller** – Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering Technology
- Juma Mohamad Harun** – Bachelor of Science in Marketing
- Nuraisha Mohammad Hanif** – Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice
- Aung Mon** – Bachelor Science of Accounting
- Sha'Kayla Muhammad** – Bachelor of Arts in Psychology
- Aye Myint** – Bachelor of Arts in Psychology
- MarShay Neely** – Bachelor of Science in Accounting
- Danh Ngo** – Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership

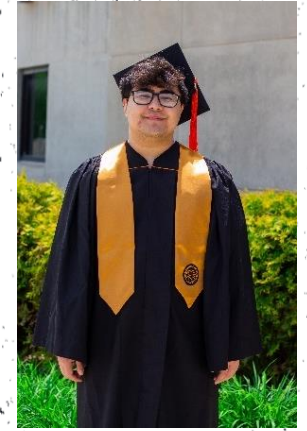
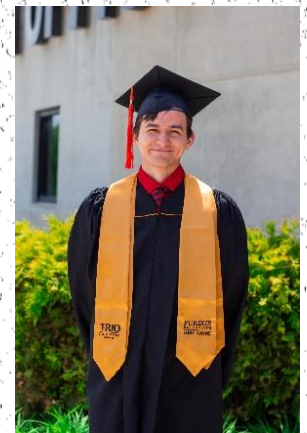


2023-2024 GRADUATES



Celebrating TRIO Students

- Hai Nguyen** – Bachelor of General Studies and Bachelor of Science in Accounting
- Roshidah Noordin** – Bachelor of Science in Accounting
- Oneel Occenat** – Bachelor of Science in Industrial Engineering Technology
- Taiwo Oladapo** – Bachelor of Science in Biology
- Tide Oo** – Bachelor of Science in Mathematics
- Victory Paw** – Bachelor of General Studies
- Jared Ragsdale** – Bachelor in Music
- Sarah Rock** – Bachelor of Arts in Theatre
- Morgan Schnitz** – Bachelor of Science in Biology
- Jordan Shakoor** – Bachelor of Science in Public Affairs
- Alivia Stidams** – Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership
- Olivia Swartzentruber** – Bachelor of General Studies
- Andrew Velez** – Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering Technology
- Thida Win** – Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership
- Marissa Wohlfiel** – Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology
- Anisu Yunus** – Bachelor of Science in Biology



TRIO STUDENTS EXPERIENCE THE ARTS

Hip Hop Nutcracker

Before winter break, a group of TRIO students attended *The Hip Hop Nutcracker* at the United Arts Center in town. This show was a fun holiday mash-up composed of Tchaikovsky's classic music and an inviting hip hop dance routine. TRIO student Willow Cribb shared that she enjoyed "the dancing the most. I've always enjoyed seeing how people can maneuver their body." The show was a great festive way to send students off to enjoy their winter break.



The Color Purple

During the spring semester, a group of TRIO students attended *The Color Purple* at the Civic Theatre. It was a musical adaptation of Alice Walker's Pulitzer Prize winning novel that features the main character, Celie, as she goes through forty years of personal awakening. TRIO student Olivia Swartzentruber stated that she felt "the story was powerful and the acting was beautiful. [She] loved getting to see this show; everyone was so talented." PFW's own Chief Diversity Officer, Dr. MarTeze Hammonds, was in the show and TRIO was excited to attend the musical and support him.

The Tempest

A group of TRIO students attended an adaptation of William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, performed by the PFW theatre department. The play follows a group of characters who crash their ship on a magical island during a violent storm. The cast is split up into groups and each participate in an interesting adventure. TRIO student, Brian Waltz, attended the play and stated that he had never experienced a Shakespearian play and found "the show itself was interesting-- the play's plot feels opposed to more modern traditions, where we would see the wizard's plot foiled or a less engineered positive ending." Students enjoyed the stage design and the overall interaction of the actors with the audience.



TRIO Award Winners

Each year, TRIO celebrates amazing students and highlights the work that they do during the TRIO Awards ceremony. This year, TRIO celebrated with over 100 students, family, faculty, staff, and friends to recognize the following individuals:

TRIO Student Workers: Aurea Nazaire Alconera, Taiwo Oladapo, Abi Pease, and Andrew Velez

TRIO Peer Mentors: Johan Esparza, Alicia Kingsberry, Taiwo Oladapo, Taylor Smith, Andrew Velez, and Bryana Washington

TRIO Leaders: Viridiana Diaz, Johan Esparza, Suhaid Haid, Sha'Kayla Muhammad, and Thida Win

TRIO Spirit Awards: Willow Cribb, Johan Esparza, Oneel Occenat, and Taylor Smith

TRIO Persistence Awards: Willow Adelman and Jared Ragsdale



TRIO Excellence Award: Danh Ngo

TRIO Students-of-the-Year: Taiwo Oladapo and Andrew Velez

I'm First Too Awards: Gemssy Munoz, Giang Petroviak, Blake Sebring, and Ryan Wooley

TRIO Champion: Department of Psychology

TRIO Student-of-the-Year:

Taiwo Oladapo

Taiwo Oladapo was born in Lagos, Nigeria and grew up in Indianapolis, Indiana. She lived with her two parents and four siblings: a twin brother, two younger brothers, and a younger sister. Taiwo shares that her childhood was filled with education, care, love, and support. Her parents have always cherished education and viewed it as “a pillar of succession,” so she shares that they always pushed her and her siblings to focus and work hard at their education. Growing up, her family celebrated their Nigerian culture through Owambe celebrations that can be “a celebration for anything and everything.” While she was growing up, Taiwo struggled speaking English because of her strong Nigerian accent. She would often get made fun of for her accent and had a difficult time communicating and asking questions in class. For these reasons, Taiwo was often seen as a shy student.

Taiwo started college at PFW in August of 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a kid, all she could think of doing for a career was being a professional singer or a superhero. After some introspection, she shifted her mindset and decided to study biology and attain a degree in a field that she loves. Taiwo is also driven by being the first in her family to attend college and achieve a college degree. Taiwo chose PFW because it was close to home and a more affordable option compared to the other schools that she was accepted into. Her twin brother also attends PFW and is a star on the track and field team. Taiwo shares that she faced many obstacles in college due to her being first-generation. She shares that she struggled to navigate her way around campus and was afraid to open up and talk to people, which stopped her from asking questions when she needed help. Thankfully, her confidence grew over time and she became more involved on campus—and even became a support and advocate for other students who were struggling. Taiwo is involved in the Black Student Union and Medlife program on campus. She is also a TRIO student worker and peer mentor. She has been a strong advocate for the TRIO program and TRIO students throughout her time at PFW. Taiwo shares that she owes it to her support systems: her TRIO family, family, and friends, “for being there when I needed a shoulder to cry on and for supporting me all through college.” In her last semester, Taiwo had the opportunity to be involved in genetic research as a student volunteer with the biology department. She worked alongside professor Dr. Rebecca Palu and other graduate students to learn the basics of research and lab procedures.



Taiwo is graduating this spring with a Bachelor's in Biology and a concentration in Microbiology and Immunology. She has also earned an Associate's degree in Chemical Methods and a minor in Human Services. After graduation, Taiwo plans to attend PFW as a graduate student; and after graduate school she plans to attend medical school with the hopes of becoming a doctor.

Taiwo is proud of herself that she did not give up through tough times. She is proud that she kept pushing herself and did not quit when things got difficult. “I am proud that I made it to the finish line with flying colors.” Taiwo was honored with a TRIO Student-of-the-Year award for 2024. She has worked hard academically and has been a constant bright light for other students in the TRIO program.

Taiwo wants to share with incoming students: “Do not give up what you started because at first it might seem impossible, but with time, and dedication, your work becomes fruitful and yields many possibilities. Always remember why you started the journey in the first place but do not lose yourself to it.” Congratulations, Taiwo!

TRIO STUDENTS IN KOREA

Marissa Wohlfel

Marissa is currently studying abroad at Korea University—one of the top three universities in Korea. She is taking classes in international studies, human rights, globalization, sociolinguistics, economics, media, and yoga. Before Marissa went to Korea, she spent a lot of time studying and researching the country and its culture. When she first arrived, she felt like she was in a whole new world and made sure to immediately make connections with her roommates. She shared that there are times where she feels lonely and homesick, but she is still enjoying all the experiences that studying abroad has provided. Marissa has a strong desire to live and teach abroad and this is what motivated her to take advantage of this opportunity while she is in school. She shares that it “was a test run to see if I could live alone and be more independent in a different country.” She has always had a strong desire to expand her world and perspective and feels that “more people should study abroad and see the world instead of being sheltered within America.” Studying in Korea has also provided Marissa with a new perspective. In her classes, she is exposed to classmates from many different countries who share their input on different topics such as human rights and freedom of speech. She shares that “it is interesting to hear about the world from a *world* perspective, not just an American one.” After Marissa graduates this semester, she plans to return to the States and work for five months and then return to Korea to be an English teacher. She hopes to travel and teach in other countries as well, including Germany, Spain, and France. Her main goal in life is “to see and experience as much as I can. I think there is so much to see in this world and I want to explore and travel everywhere.”



Keytron Johnson

Keytron graduated from PFW in 2023 with an Associate’s Degree in Organizational Leadership. He is now employed as a machine operator for Shin Heung America and was provided a training opportunity in Busan, South Korea. Keytron received leadership training as well as training on a new generation of electric battery caps. He enjoyed his first flight on an airplane, as well as, meeting new people and learning a new culture. Keytron shared that he is one of the first individuals to learn the operation of these tools and equipment and he “plans on being a part of making this one of the most dependable industries in our country.” He shared that going back to school in his forties was “the best decision I ever made” and is very grateful to TRIO and his TRIO advisor, Bryant, for providing him support and resources throughout his college career. Keytron is now headed to Budapest, Hungary to attend additional leadership training so he can teach American employees about the new processes. He shares that this has been a “once in a lifetime opportunity.”

Danh Ngo

Danh studied abroad in Seoul, Korea during her spring 2023 semester and graduated from PFW in December of 2023. She majored in Organizational Leadership with a minor in Hotel Management. She was very involved in the Korean community here in Fort Wayne, serving as the assistant director for the Korea Festival. After completing her final semester in December, Danh moved to Korea and is now teaching in Seoul, Korea, with the intention to pursue a career in tourism as a tourism representative.



CAMP TRIO 2023



TRIO Students Attend Camp TRIO

Over Labor Day weekend, TRIO students stayed at YMCA's Camp Potawatomi in Wolcottville, IN. Camp TRIO is a fun way for new students to meet other TRIO students and form new friendships. TRIO student Hai Nguyen, shared that Camp TRIO was a great way "to connect with the TRIO family while experiencing new things." He enjoyed "learning new people's names and common similarities that [he] has with others that could lead to new friendships." Current TRIO students also enjoy attending Camp TRIO multiple years in a row to continue to build friendships and have a rewarding outdoor experience. While at camp, students participate in teambuilding activities, archery, rock climbing, swimming, and volleyball. In the evening, students spend time around the campfire telling ghost stories and eating s'mores. TRIO student Alondra Shackelford shared that "Camp TRIO helped me break out of my shell and meet so many people from the program!" She stated that a highlight of the trip was playing "tag in the dark and eating marshmallows by the campfire while [watching] the sunset."

Mark your calendar for Camp TRIO 2024 August 31-September 1. This event is open to all TRIO SSS students but space is limited so sign up early. Fun camp gear included!



OTHER TRIO NEWS

Persistence Pays Off Program

The Persistence Pays Off (PPO) Program is a coordinated effort of United Way of Allen County, Lutheran Social Services of Indiana (LSSI), and PFW and Ivy Tech TRIO SSS programs. The PPO program provides one-on-one case management to TRIO students. Students participating in the program receive coaching on financial literacy, life skills, educational goal setting, and are connected to other social services in the community. The goal of the program is to help eliminate non-educational barriers students have toward finishing their college degrees. Students who successfully complete the PPO program are also eligible to earn up to \$1,000 in assistance that can help with things like groceries, gas, car repairs, living expenses, child care, health care, or college expenses—things that are keeping students from graduating. This year, *Do it Best Foundation* provided a \$42,000 grant to United Way for the continuation of the PPO program. TRIO student Taiwo Oladapo helped celebrate the partnership by sharing about her experiences as a PPO participant with *Do it Best* and local news outlets. Taiwo shared how the PPO program has supported her and helped eliminate barriers to her college education. TRIO is very grateful for the continuation of this program and the support that students receive. Since 2021, nearly 120 students from PFW's TRIO SSS program have participated in the PPO program. "This program is a great example of how funders, organizers, practitioners, and educators can come together to help students in our community thrive. Without services and connection to social services, many of our most vulnerable students would stop-out of college. I've been very proud to work alongside all the people and agencies that are helping make this program possible in our community and for our students—and could not be more proud of the 99% persistence rate of students in the program last year. This is proof; this partnership works," says PFW TRIO SSS Director, Shubitha Kever.



TRIO FALL BREAK TRIP 2024

Save the date! TRIO is heading to Chicago, Illinois on Monday, October 21, 2024 (during Fall Break). Attendees will visit the Shedd Aquarium, Color Factory, and Chicago SkyDeck. This trip is a great opportunity to get to know your fellow TRIO peers while touring museums. This trip is free for TRIO students and includes transportation, t-shirt, tickets to museums/experiences, lunch, and dinner. Sign up by emailing trioss@pfw.edu. Spaces are limited so sign up early!





TRIO Achiever 2024: Nick Bonar

Each year, TRIO recognizes an outstanding TRIO Alumni Achiever who has shown exceptional achievement after graduation in the area of business, philanthropy, and/or service. This year's recipient is Nick Bonar. Nick graduated from PFW in 2019 with a bachelor's degree in Human Services. Since graduation, he has shown his commitment and dedication to the community of Fort Wayne by helping in the area of substance misuse programming and homelessness. Nick works at the Fort Wayne Rescue Mission and oversees case management services as well as the Restoration House. He manages day-to-day operations and fosters important partnerships with judicial entities and other organizations. TRIO academic coordinator Bryant Williams shares that Nick "deserves commendation for his invaluable contributions to the city of Fort Wayne" and that his "unwavering commitment to supporting vulnerable populations and fostering community resilience sets an inspiring example for all." Nick has returned to school at PFW and is pursuing a Master's Degree in Organizational Leadership. This continued education showcases a commitment to his own personal and professional growth which will allow him to increase his ability to lead and affect positive change.

TRIO FALL BREAK TRIP 2023

Over fall break, TRIO students took a day trip to Cincinnati, Ohio. Students attended the Museum of Natural History & Science where they learned about the history of transportation in Cincinnati, as well as, a Neil Armstrong interactive space exhibit. The museum also included a walkthrough cave and a dinosaur hall with fossils and information about dinosaur migration. After the museum, students took a trip on the Ohio River enjoying dinner and a dance party. TRIO student, Sophia Cheng, stated that she enjoyed the museum because "it felt like [she] was back in elementary school going on a field trip." She also shared that "the boat trip was a blast and the dance competition was crazy!" TRIO fall break trips are a great way for students to build friendships and experience things they may not be able to on their own. TRIO Student, Sam Billman, shared that he enjoyed "the level of freedom" on the trip and "getting to experience new things, socialize, and have fun together."





Taiwo Oladapo, Andrew Velez, Alicia Kingsberry

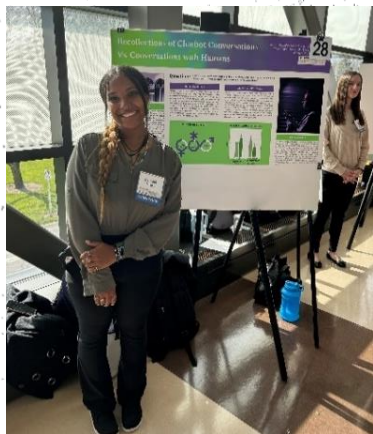
OL Case Competition

Three TRIO students, Alicia Kingsberry, Taiwo Oladapo, and Andrew Velez, participated in the first annual Case Competition hosted by Organizational Leadership. The students were given instruction on leadership and then provided a case that presented a realistic leadership challenge. Students utilized their new leadership skills to develop a solution for the case and presented their solution to a panel of judges. Alicia stated that “the case study was a great chance to pick my brain with some of my TRIO peers. It was fun and I got to learn different leadership styles.” The TRIO team placed second in the competition for their innovative solution.



Jared Ragsdale

Jared participated in the 27th Annual PFW Research and Creative Endeavors Symposium this year with his project *Do You Hear What I Hear? Muses and Uses of the Trumpet Over the Last 400 Years*. In his project, Jared walks readers through catalysts for change, or muses, in the trumpet as well as its uses and how those uses contributed to its development. He starts the conversation sharing that “music permeates our daily lives with no respect to species, vocation, passion, or person.” From there he touches on how music is written and what informs compositional ideas and the maturing of those ideas. In the case of the trumpet, he illustrates how the limitations of the early instrument informed how its repertoire was written. Throughout his research, Jared highlights how the trumpet’s various forms and functions have transformed the musical world. The intention of his project was to provide novice and veteran musicians and music lovers alike expectations of where to see the trumpet and its derivatives in everyday life. At the end of his presentation, Jared shared his own ideas of the involvement of digital instruments. He also theorizes how Artificial Intelligence could shape the continued development of the trumpet. He closed his presentation by pressing the importance of human-performed music across all genres and instruments, saying that “there shouldn’t be a complete abandonment of technologically aided music creation but that it should be held in balance with human-performed/created music.”



Dymond Barbre

Dymond also participated in the 27th Research and Creative Endeavors Symposium this year with a group project titled: *Recollections from Chatbot Conversations vs. Conversations with Humans*. In their study, Dymond and her group members were interested in human interactions and how they differ from AI chatbot interactions. Results of the study found that participants who interacted with a chatbot remembered more of what occurred in the interaction, but those who interacted with humans looked back more positively on the interaction than those interacting with the AI chatbot. These overall results indicate that there was less of a positive appeal toward AI chatbots compared to genuine human interaction.



Mary Johnson

Mary is a Digital Initiatives Student Assistant on campus. She spends most of her days digitizing media for the university archives and assisting anyone who may come into the Digital Humanities Lab. Mary enjoys seeing promotional work for previous events and comparing them to recent events she has attended. Mary’s favorite part of her job is scanning impressions of dinosaur footprints from Dr. Farlow. She shares that “it has been a great learning experience to work with him and the people who have helped [him] on that project.”

TRIO Student Feature:

Danh Ngo

Danh Ngo grew up in Fort Wayne, Indiana in a Vietnamese speaking household with eight of her extended family members. She was raised by her grandma and grandpa because her mother worked third shift at their family restaurant. Danh shares that her childhood was filled with a constant shower of love from her grandparents and she looks up to her grandpa because he was very talented in his ability to speak five languages. Danh states that her family was very big on keeping traditional conservative Asian traditions. She shares that she feels a lot of pressure to live up to her family's expectations to be successful, and it was difficult because there was no one to rely on if she failed. Danh also shared she struggled in school as a child because English was not her first language. She was made fun of in school because of her name, culture, and native language that made her dislike her name and language. As she grew up, Danh experienced a shift in mindset and realized that what she once thought was a weakness was actually her superpower. Danh could do something other kids couldn't. She could communicate in Vietnamese and Korean. This gave her access to make friends others couldn't communicate with.

When she was younger, Danh always felt like college was expected of her. There was no room for her to think about her future plans or what she may be interested in studying at school. She was expected to go into a well-paying field such as a doctor or a lawyer and be able to provide for herself financially. Since her family owned a restaurant, Danh was already used to juggling school, work, and the expectations placed on her at home. She claims she "never knew anything outside of working and succeeding in school."

Danh chose PFW because it was close to home and she could work at her family's restaurant to pay for school. She shares that her connection with TRIO, as well as her academic coordinator Bryant, made a difference in her college experience and helped push her to graduation. She shares that Bryant made her feel cared for and always made time for her when she needed it. She is driven to be academically successful by her family expectations and was grateful to find support on campus when she needed it. Danh also enjoyed attending Camp TRIO where she made close friends that shared common interests such as a love of K-pop. She shares that K-pop was always there for her at her darkest times and carried her through.



Danh graduated in December of 2023 with a Bachelor's degree in Organizational Leadership and a minor in Hotel Management. She is a 21st Century Scholar and Honors Student. She also earned TRIO's Excellence Award for having the highest graduating GPA during the school year.

While in school, Danh really struggled with knowing what she was going to do after college. She viewed success as grade letters, "so anything beyond school seemed frightening." She never had time to think about what she was passionate about or what she would like to achieve, which made her dreams feel like they were too far to reach. In spring of 2023, she decided to study abroad in South Korea. Danh shares that this was "the best decision I ever made" and it really helped "me know what I wanted to do after graduating." Danh shares she loved every part of the experience and all the struggles she faced helped her grow as a person and learn a lot about herself.

Danh is now living in Seoul, South Korea and teaching. She plans to pursue a career in tourism while there.

Danh wants to share with any incoming students to study abroad and travel if they're able. She shares "if you want to travel the world, do it. If you want to start a hobby, do it. It's one thing to be afraid of what other people think about you, but it's another to get to the end of your life and regret opportunities that you missed out on because you were afraid of what people might think about you."

TRIO Student Feature:

Oneel Occenat

Oneel Occenat was born in Haiti and raised in Orlando, Florida. He grew up under the care of his uncle, alongside his cousin and his brother. His family of origin includes seven brothers and two sisters. His whole family was born in Haiti and they keep cultural ties by celebrating Haitian Flag Day every year on May 18th. Oneel shares that he grew up poor so he never had a chance to “enjoy the finer things in life.” He shared a room with his brother and cousin and was never the type to stay home all day. He remembers that he and his friends “would spend hours on a day-to-day basis walking to all our destinations.” Oneel shares that he always wanted a lifestyle where he could travel and do whatever he wanted, whenever he wanted. He started running track and cross country in high school as an escape and a way to experience more opportunities. Participating in track and cross country allowed Oneel the ability to travel the country alongside his friends, stay in charming hotels, and eat at nice restaurants. He also fondly remembers attending “pasta parties” at his teammates’ houses and admiring “some of the most beautiful homes I have ever seen in my entire life.” Oneel was motivated in high school to continue seeking out experiences and opportunities to better his life, which eventually lead him to PFW.

Oneel initially started his college journey at the University of Southern Indiana but transferred to PFW because of the track and field program. He also enjoyed the look and feel of the campus. Oneel shares that he struggled when he first started college. He struggled to decide what he wanted to study. He struggled meeting people and fitting in. Oneel found community in his track and field teammates and in the TRIO program.

Oneel graduated from PFW in December of 2023 with a bachelor's degree in Industrial Engineering Technology and a minor in Industrial Engineering Technology. Throughout his time in college, Oneel was a team captain on the track and field team, won a state championship,

and received multiple academic awards. Before graduating college, Oneel interned as a process engineer and is now working a job as a mechanical engineer for a local company. He is grateful for the opportunities that came his way during his time in college. Oneel was motivated to graduate because he knew that a degree would provide him the freedom to go “anywhere in the world, whenever I want to with the right job.”

Oneel is most proud of himself for getting as far as he is in life and is looking forward to what his future holds. He shares with others a quote that has helped guide him throughout this life: **No matter how many times your fall or reach your lowest point, you can always start over.**



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