

TRIO

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

TRIO Student-of-the-Year: Jo'Male Collier



Jo'Male Collier grew up in South Bend, Indiana. As a child, he often dreamed about becoming a doctor. Born with Osteogenesis Imperfecta, commonly known as Brittle Bone Disease, Jo'Male spent much of his childhood in the care of doctors. His disease inspired curiosity—he often wondered about how and why Osteogenesis Imperfecta affected his health as it did.

Jo'Male learned at an early age that one cannot become a doctor without hard work and dedication. He not only wanted to earn good grades for his future, but also to make his parents proud. He enjoyed praise from his mother and father, and felt ecstatic when he brought home medals and award certificates. He desired to be the student who knew every answer in class, and often times, he was. His parents were incredibly proud of Jo'Male, and would often brag to neighbors and friends about his accomplishments. Jo'Male and his sister were his parents' most celebrated achievements.

However, family life was not always easy and carefree. Some days were very difficult, and at times, Jo'Male's family would split due to arguments and stress. Jo'Male had just begun high school when he experienced a devastating loss. In June 2011, at the age of 15, Jo'Male's father, the man he respected and loved beyond measure, passed away unexpectedly. Jo'Male and his sister came to Fort Wayne to live with his aunt. Depression mounted as Jo'Male grieved the loss of his father and tried to adjust to this life-altering event. His loss, along with the transition to a new home and high school, made life very challenging. Jo'Male's motivation to learn and succeed waned.

Jo'Male found comfort in his family, and eventually, in TRIO Upward Bound. Jo'Male had heard about TRIO Upward Bound through North Side High School but was not interested in the program initially. He thought it would cause additional stress and pressure in his life; however, when he took the leap and joined the program, he found what he needed. While in TRIO Upward Bound, Jo'Male made lifelong friends and relationships with people who cared about him and his future. He enjoyed the summer programs, where he could attend school and live with his peers in college housing. He began to have an idea of what it would be like to further his education beyond high school and his motivation began to come alive again. TRIO Upward Bound helped Jo'Male to propel forward, reviving his dream of becoming a doctor.

In the fall of 2015, Jo'Male began his first semester at Purdue Fort Wayne (at the time Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne), majoring in Biology with a concentration in Genetic Cell Molecular Biology. He joined TRIO Student Support Services and became very involved on campus. He attended TRIO workshops and cultural trips, worked on-campus jobs, and volunteered at numerous campus and TRIO events. He has been a strong participant in TRIO, and an advocate for TRIO and first-generation college students. He has authored stories for the TRIO book: *Every Student Has a Story*, served on the leadership team in TRIO Club, completed the TRIO Leaders program, served as a peer mentor for other TRIO students, helped lead a service trip to Puerto Rico, and worked as a TRIO student worker, and a tour guide for the office of Admissions. This year TRIO recognized Jo'Male for his many accomplishments and involvement as a TRIO Student-of-the-Year.

Although the road to and through college was not an easy one, Jo'Male kept his determination intact. He worked incredibly hard and overcame obstacles, all while keeping a positive attitude and sharing his contagious laugh. In May of this year, Jo'Male crossed the stage, earning his Bachelor of Science degree in Biology with a concentration in Genetics. He is determined to work towards a second degree in genetic counseling because of his strong desire to help those who struggle with genetic disorders. Currently, Jo'Male plans on working in a laboratory for a year, and then will attend IUPUI for graduate school next fall. Jo'Male is an inspiration to other first-generation college students for his tenacity, perseverance, and positive attitude. We are all proud to see what he has accomplished—still making his father proud!

2018-2019 TRIO Graduates



This year, TRIO Student Support Services celebrates 30 graduates.

Selena Andrade, Hospitality Management B.S., Minor Spanish. Selena is currently an Intern at the Gasparilla Inn and Club in Boca Grande, Florida.
Juan Becerra, Business B.S. Accounting & Management. Juan has accepted a full-time position at Zimmer Biomet in Warsaw, Indiana.
Hannah Becker, Hospitality Management B.S. After completing her internship in Florida, Hannah has elected to stay there for work.
Krystal Bendele, General Studies B.G.S., Minor Psychology & Sociology. Krystal hopes to secure a position in the Fort Wayne criminal justice system with the City Police or the Allen County Sheriff's Department.
Nicholas Bonar, Human Services B.S., Minor Psychology & Sociology. Nick will be taking time to enjoy his new role as father and working in his major before returning for his master's degree in the future.
Angie Brice, Education B.S. Elementary Education, Concentration Early Education. Angie will be applying for a substitute teaching position and would love to teach English in South Korea someday.
Sierra Carpenter, Biology B.S. Sierra is moving to Georgia, where she will apply for a position working at a sea turtle hatchery.
Jo'Male Collier, Biology B.S., Concentration Genetic Cell Molecular Biology. Jo'Male hopes to work as a lab tech for one year while he prepares for the GRE. He is taking steps to apply for graduate school to study genetic counseling.
D'Jara Culpepper, English B.S., Concentration English Writing. D'Jara is seeking

employment in FWCS to give back to the school district that gave so much to her. She also wants to be a book/copy editor.
Ruby Dezaldo Valdez, Nursing B.S. Ruby has a position at Lutheran Hospital's Medical Surgical Intensive Care Unit.
Rebecca Eby, Nursing B.S., Minor Psychology. Rebecca is working at Parkview Behavioral Health as a nurse and loves what she is doing.
Riley Erck, Biology B.S., Minor Psychology. Riley is currently employed at a dental office and hopes to attend dental school in the near future.
Merandah Evans, Nursing B.S. Medical School is in Merandah's future. She is currently employed at Lutheran Hospital's Medical Surgical Intensive Care Unit.
Laura Garza, Political Science B.A., Minor History. Laura will be spending time with her children and hopes to work with the Allen County government.
Scott Gorrell, Business B.S. Management, Minor Psychology. Scott is enjoying his position at Kroger where he hopes to broaden his work experiences.
Ghin Hau, Computer Engineering Tech B.S.
TyShawna Herron, Psychology B.A., Minor Human Services. TyShawna will be attending graduate school at Purdue University Fort Wayne to study counseling.
Elizabeth Hess, Public Affairs B.S., Legal Studies. Elizabeth will complete her second major, criminal justice, in spring 2020. She hopes to attend the police academy and become a police officer.
Calvin Kennedy, Organizational Leadership Supervision B.S. Calvin will be moving to Indianapolis and potentially working at an organization called Indianapolis Team.
Gabriela Lemus, Public Affairs B.S., Health Services Admin. Gabby is working for Health Visions Midwest as a health community worker for the Latino community.
Martha Manuel, English B.A., Teaching English New Language UG Certificate. Martha hopes to teach English overseas and use her English degree to be an editor.
Hugo Mata, Public Affairs B.S., Health Service Administration. Hugo is considering graduate school and possible relocation.
Thuy Pham, Biology B.S.
Michael Salazar, Business B.S., Accounting. Michael will continue to take classes so to prepare for the CPA exam. For now, he is employed full-time at Total Quality Logistics in the accounting department.
Joseph Shell, Computer Science B.S., Minor Mathematics. Joe was recently offered a job at Vocera Communications.
Karla Silva, Human Services B.S., Minor Psychology. Karla hopes to work at SCAN, where she interned during college, and is considering graduate school in the future.
Rosa Tapia, Biology B.S., Concentration in Microbiology & Immunology, Minor Spanish
Cherry Aung, Human Services B.S. After graduation, Cherry is working at Aging and In-Home Services of Northeast Indiana as a Case Manager and looks forward to visiting Burma and Thailand in the near future.
Tony Tran, General Studies B.G.S. Tony is employed full-time at Total Quality Logistics on the sales team.
Bryant Williams, Human Services B.S., Minor Psychology. Bryant will begin graduate school in June at Purdue Fort Wayne and will begin working towards a Master's degree in counseling.



Scott Gorrell, Riley Erck, Juan Becerra, Karla Silva, Michael Salazar, Elizabeth Hess, Selena Andrade, Jo'Male Collier, Gabriela Lemus, Nicholas Bonar, Bryant Williams, D'Jara Culpepper, Cherry Aung, & Joseph Shell.

TRIO Alumni Spotlight: Gabriela Romo



Name: Gabriela Romo

Graduation Year: 2017

Degree: B.S. Biology w/concentration in immunology and microbiology

Current School: Indiana University School of Medicine

Degree(s) Sought: Medical Degree and Masters in Public Health (MD/MPH) 2022

Plans After Graduation: Family Medicine Physician for underserved communities in Northeast Indiana

Volunteer/Community Activities: Over the past 2 years, I have been volunteering at our Navari Student Outreach Clinic (NSOC) as a medical student provider. I am also the project leader in our Diabetes program at the clinic. NSOC serves low-income and uninsured people. Most of our patients are Spanish-speaking. This past year, I was also the treasurer for American Medical Women’s Association (AMWA). Throughout our school, we also volunteer once a semester at a place they choose for us. For example, I volunteered at the Homeless Center my first year and El Campito this past year. El Campito is a pre-K organization for low-income families. Studying takes up most of my day which leaves me with a few hours every day for anything other than studying.

Advice to Current TRIO Students: I don’t know where you are right now in your college career, but what I do know from being a TRIO student is that feeling of being an imposter. Whether it is in school, social life, work life, or another aspect of your life, that feeling can make us feel very lonely and could potentially lead us towards isolation. However, our TRIO family is there to get us back on track. My advice is to never stop believing in yourself and to surround yourself with positive, uplifting, understanding, and supportive people. One trait I used to have was to never give up. Medical school robbed me from that trait. The amount of work in a short period of time was very overwhelming. To not fall behind, I would study all day which led me to isolate myself. Feeling overwhelmed and lonely allowed the imposter syndrome to come back. I literally called my mom and significant other crying and I told them that I wanted to give up. I stopped believing in myself and I let the stress take over my positive thoughts and slowly defeat me. However, my people helped me get out of that dark cloud and dominate my first 2 years of medical school. Looking back at it, I am still shocked and disappointed in myself that I was about to give up on this beautiful career path. Therefore, please don’t let naysayers and temporary stress blind you and lock you up in a dark place. You got this! And remember you are not alone in your journey. The more meaningful connections you make with people, the more successful you will be and the farther away you will be from that deceptive feeling of being an “imposter.” Also, please do not forget to enjoy your journey! Sprinkle some personalized de-stressors throughout your week.

TRIO Summer Cultural Trip to Cincinnati

TRIO SSS spent two days this June in Cincinnati on an exciting tour of Ohio’s third largest city. While in Cincinnati, students visited the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, Cincinnati Museum Center, Cincinnati Zoo, and enjoyed a riverboat dinner cruise. TRIO student, Kyle Miller, said this about the trip, “Being able to view the sites along the river was incredible. Often during the cruise, I contemplated the depth of desperation that the runaway slaves must have felt as they made their way to and across the river. I considered the level of danger that the conductors faced and the strength of their commitment to this cause.”

Regarding the trip, Riley Friar commented, “I never really thought about how much slavery there still is in the world today. “



TRIO Helps Welcome New Students



TRIO Student Support Services lent a hand at this year's Chancellor Signing Day. TRIO staff and students welcomed new students to campus and educated them on what a first-generation student is. Families were invited to take photo booth photos holding signs that said: Making Mom/Dad/Me Proud and other fun props. Families were also invited to learn more about first-generation students on campus by playing a spinning wheel game and answering trivia questions about being first-generation. Incoming students were also able to sign a large poster board showing their first-generation student pride. TRIO enjoyed helping out at the event and can't wait to help more during the upcoming school year.



TRIO Has Strong Showing at BIG EVENT



This April, TRIO SSS students participated in Purdue Fort Wayne's largest day of community service, The Big Event. TRIO students met in the Gates Athletics center for a quick breakfast and an encouraging word from the Chancellor before being whisked away to the World Baseball Academy Inc. Students tackled a number of outdoor tasks to help get the fields ready for spring play.

TRIO Awards Celebration



On April 8, 2019, TRIO celebrated student success at the 5th Annual TRIO Spring Awards Luncheon. The event honored graduating students, student workers, and TRIO peer mentors. —as well as—recognizing students for Academic Excellence, Persistence, Spirit, and Service.

Members of the campus community joined TRIO staff and students at the event, which saw the inclusion of several new awards. The newly established I'm First Too Awards are presented to campus faculty and staff who are also first-generation college students and have given of their time freely to assist TRIO students and the TRIO program. The TRIO Persistence Award recognizes a student who has shown persistence in the face of adversity. This year's recipient was Tony Tran who completed his bachelor's degree after 9 years of hard work and a number of personal and academic obstacles. The TRIO Achiever Award recognizes a TRIO Alumni who has shown exceptional professional achievement since graduation in the realm of business, philanthropy, or service. This year's recipient was Waylon Fisher, Co-owner of Spectrum Virtual Reality Video Arcade. The TRIO Champion Award is given to a campus colleague who has demonstrated sustained support and advocacy for TRIO programs at Purdue Fort Wayne. The very first TRIO Champion Award was presented to Kenneth Christmon, Associate Vice Chancellor for Admissions, for his work establishing TRIO grants and his dedication to advancing TRIO students on campus. Congratulations to all this year's award winners!

Award Winners 2019

TRIO Students-of-the-Year	Cherry Aung, Jo'Male Collier
TRIO Excellence Award	Selena Andrade
TRIO Spirit Award	Alexis Merkle, Cassidy Merkle
TRIO Peer Mentors	Bailey Berndt, Jonathan Brito, Jo'Male Collier, Amber Davenport, Riley Erck, Miranda Hall, Claudia Huezo, Gabriela Lemus, Alyssa Moore, Bryant Williams
TRIO Club Officers	Kyleigh Vibbert- President Miranda Hall- Secretary
TRIO Student Workers	Cherry Aung, Zachary Baker, Jo'Male Collier, Miranda Hall, Alyssa Vance
I'm First Too Awards	Lydia Bates, Nicholas Gray, Jenna Hoppe, Curt Hosier, Buck Jordan, Mary Ross, Tanya Soule
TRIO Persistence Award	Tony Tran
TRIO Achiever Award	Waylon Fisher
TRIO Champion Award	Kenneth Christmon



Top left: TRIO Graduates, Waylon Fisher, Cassidy and Alexis Merkle, Tony Tran, and Kenneth Christmon.

TRIO Student-of-the-Year: Cherry Aung



Although Cherry Aung grew up in Fort Wayne, her story has strong roots in two countries far away. Cherry Aung's mom and dad are from Burma (Myanmar). During the early years of their marriage, they made the bold choice to leave Burma because of a fierce civil war that was going on in the country. The civil war was only getting worse and made conditions in Burma extremely unsafe, so Cherry's parents fled Burma and crossed over into neighboring Thailand. Cherry and her sister were born while they were in exile in Thailand. Once in Thailand; however, Cherry's parents decided that to give their daughters the best chance at a better life and education, they would have to leave Thailand too. And so, they began the immigration process to the United States.

Coming to the United States was not an easy process. A sponsoring organization helped Cherry's family through the immigration and citizenship process. Her first stop in the United States was in Indianapolis, where her family lived for two years before coming to Fort Wayne.

The language barrier was a big issue for Cherry's mom and dad when they arrived. Eventually though, they did learn how to speak and understand English. As a child, Cherry struggled trying to fit in when attending public school. Because she identified with two very different cultures and she didn't want to assimilate completely into American culture and give up her Burmese traditions, she often times felt like an out-cast.

One American value her family embraced fully, however, was education. Since Cherry could remember, she always had a goal of getting her 4-year degree—no matter what it took. Her mom always told her that no matter what life may take away from her, it can never take away your education. And that always motivated her to keep moving forward in her studies.

Cherry feels that Purdue University Fort Wayne helped her with school because of how welcoming it is. While at Purdue Fort Wayne, Cherry felt surrounded by likeminded people who also wanted to better themselves and get to gradation. She also credits TRIO as being instrumental to her success while in college. In fact, Cherry says: "TRIO was my second family while in school. It was my home away from home. I truly believe that if it wasn't for TRIO, I wouldn't have thrived and done as well as I did in college. TRIO made me feel accepted and loved, more so than any other organization on campus. TRIO was a very important part of my college career and it will always have a special place in my heart."

Cherry started college at Purdue Fort Wayne in 2014 and graduated with her Bachelor of Science in Human Services degree in 2019. Currently, Cherry is working as a Case Manager at Aging and In-Home Services of Northeast Indiana. Eventually, Cherry would like to go back to graduate school for her Master's degree. She also hopes to visit Burma and Thailand in the near future with her mom and reconnect more with her Burmese culture. Best of luck in the future, Cherry!

Upcoming Events



All TRIO SSS students this fall will receive a new TRIO student planner. This planner will already be loaded with all the upcoming TRIO events for the year and will have room for students to keep track of classwork and other commitments! Planners should be available in August, so be sure to stop by the TRIO office to get yours!



TRIO

Coffee Hour

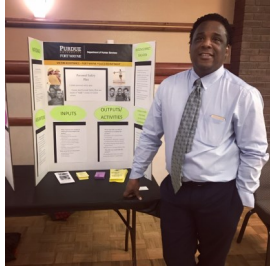
Wednesdays

8:30-10:30

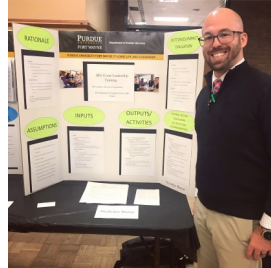
Resource Center

Kettler G30

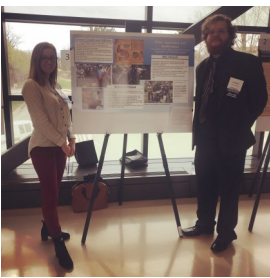
TRIO Student Success Stories



TRIO students and Human Services majors Bryant Williams, Cherry Aung, Karla Silva, and Nicholas Bonar presented at the Human Services Senior Capstone Poster Conference this spring. Williams, Aung, Silva and Bonar presented



on their internship experiences this year working for Victims Assistance FWPD, Bethesda Lutheran Communities, SCAN, and the Big Event.



Additionally, English major Zachary Baker presented his research on white supremacy and Norse Medievalism at the Student Research Symposium.



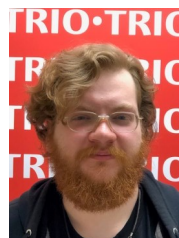
TRIO students have been busy this scholarship season writing essays and submitting applications. TRIO is proud to recognize the following students for their recent awards:

Claudia Huevo

Parkview Tapestry Scholarship

Zachary Baker

Wither's Scholarship, Outstanding English Major Scholarship, and Sylvia E. Bowman Scholarship



Cassidy Merkle

Indiana TRIO Textbook Scholarship



Ryan Knight

Educational Opportunity Association Foundation Scholarship

TRIO Fall Break Trip to Chicago

TRIO SSS is pleased to announce plans for the 2019 Fall Break trip to Chicago. On Monday, October 21, 2019, TRIO students will depart for a cultural trip to the Museum of Science and Industry and Shedd Aquarium. For more information and to sign-up, please see your TRIO advisor or stop by the TRIO Office. As always, this trip is free for all students selected and includes transportation, t-shirt, tickets, and meals.





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TRIO Spring 2019 Stats

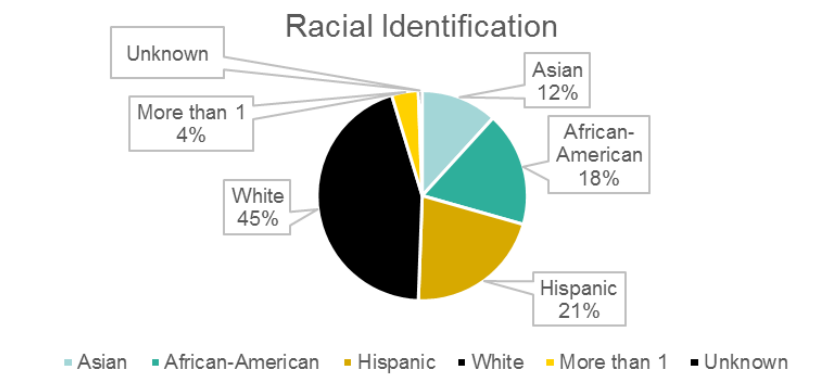
Good Academic Standing: **89%**

Persistence: **89%**

Graduation Rate (6-year): **46%**

GPA 2019 Spring Semester: **2.785**

GPA 2019 Spring Cumulative: **2.882**



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TRIO Gameshow Workshops

This year's TRIO workshops will be inspired by iconic gameshows! A number of success topics will be introduced game show-style. All workshops are on Mondays from 12-1pm in the TRIO Resource Center (KT G30). Come play games, win prizes, and learn.

Sept. 9-Wheel of Fortune

Nov. 4-Match Game

Feb. 10-Newlywed Game

Sept. 23-Family Feud

Nov. 25-Password

Mar. 2-Tic-Tac-Dough

Sept. 30-Jeopardy

Dec. 2-Wheel of Fortune

Mar. 30-Family Feud

Oct. 28-Price is Right

Feb 3-Who Wants to Be a Millionaire



The TRIO SSS program offers student leadership training to help first-generation TRIO students develop leadership skills and network with other emerging leaders. Training includes one-hour monthly meetings from 12-1pm. Dates for this year: Oct. 16, Dec. 4, Jan. 29, Feb. 26, Mar. 18, and Apr. 8.

Students must be a TRIO SSS student with a minimum 2.0 GPA and complete an application essay. Space is limited to 10 participants yearly so apply early. Return completed program applications for the 2019-2020 TRIO Leaders class to the TRIO office.