

# Report to the Luther Community

## 2015-2020 Grant Funding Cycle

### FEDERAL TRIO FUNDING RENEWED

The 5-year federal grant funding cycle for Luther’s TRIO Achievement Program concluded on August 31, 2020. Fortunately, the TRIO grant proposal submitted on behalf of the college for the 2020-2025 funding cycle was successful, meaning that Luther students will continue to benefit from the TRIO Achievement Program!

### WHAT WE STAND FOR AND STRIVE FOR

The TRIO Achievement Program, which serves interested and eligible first-generation, limited-income Luther students, is committed to advancing a community where students successfully navigate through, excel in, and graduate from college prepared for life. TRIO guides and encourages participants throughout their journey, empowering them to become ever-learning and ever-growing and helping them to optimize their college experience while mitigating obstacles and celebrating successes along the way.

TRIO believes in the dignity, value, and potential of every person and strives to create a culture that is inclusive, holistic, non-judgmental, proactive, responsive, empowering, research-based, and student-centered.



The TRIO team includes (L-R):

- Jennifer Folstad** (Administrative Assistant)
- Tammy Hove** (Director & Advisor)
- Chivonne Marlow** (Advisor & Tutoring Coordinator)
- Cheryl Wieseler** (Advisor & Instructor)
- Heather Cote** (Financial Wellness Coordinator)

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Over \$1.5 million in federal funding
- Over 28,000 student contacts
- Over \$165,000 grant aid awarded to 200+ students
- Over 90% student persistence rate

TRIO Achievement Program  
Luther College  
107 Preus Library  
700 College Drive  
Decorah, IA 52101  
  
563-387-1269  
trio@luther.edu  
trio.luther.edu



### TRIO Student Contacts (2019–20)

Meetings with TRIO advisor	1,393
Personal communications with TRIO advisor	992
Classroom contacts	1,124
Meetings with peer leaders	145
Tutoring sessions with peer tutors	658
Workshops and other event attendance	554
Textbook and technology lending programs	580
Office visits (other)	534
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,980</b>

General/group communications to TRIO students are not reflected above. Total contacts represent an average of 30+ contacts/participant.

## MAKING CONNECTIONS

The TRIO program leads with connectivity, where student contacts average 5,735 a year. Academic support, financial support, and emotional support are routinely cited by students as key program benefits.

## TRIO STUDENT CONTACTS

	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	Totals
Meetings with TRIO advisor/coach	1535	1621	1495	1710	1393	7754
Personal communications with TRIO advisor	unknown	503	547	359	992	2401
Meetings with TRIO peer leaders	155	115	194	129	145	738
Peer tutoring sessions	725	521	499	708	658	3111
Classroom (GS100) contacts	956	901	1449	1034	1124	5464
Activity participation / event attendance	632	574	692	739	554	3191
Textbook and technology lending	408	430	522	702	580	2642
Office visits / other	875	602	621	742	534	3374
<b>Total Contacts</b>	<b>5286</b>	<b>5267</b>	<b>6019</b>	<b>6123</b>	<b>5980</b>	<b>28,675</b>

**Notes:**

Advising communication figures are likely conservative.  
 SASC (CAE) tutoring involving TRIO participants represents approx. 15-20% of sessions.  
 TRIO group communications/promotions are not reflected above.

## TRIO STUDENT PERSISTENCE

Source: U.S. Department of Education 2019-2020 Luther College Annual Performance Report

- **186** Luther students were served during the 2019-2020 year (112% of the 165 minimum)
- **174 (94%)** finished the academic year, including 30 graduates
- **160 (86%)** either graduated or are persisting toward graduation (enrolled for the 2020-21 year)
- **169 (91%)** is the adjusted persistence rate including participants taking a leave of absence

*The persistence rate for TRIO participants is consistently above 90 percent (and the stated objective of 82 percent).*

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Luther students served	180	179	182	188	188	186
Participants persisting	166	170	168	170	173	160 / 169
Persistence rate	92%	95%	92%	90%	92%	86% / 91%

**Notes:**  
 Persistence Rate = graduated or making progress toward Luther degree  
 Like the entire student body, an unusually high number of TRIO participants are taking temporary leave in 2020-2021.

## TRIO WORKS!

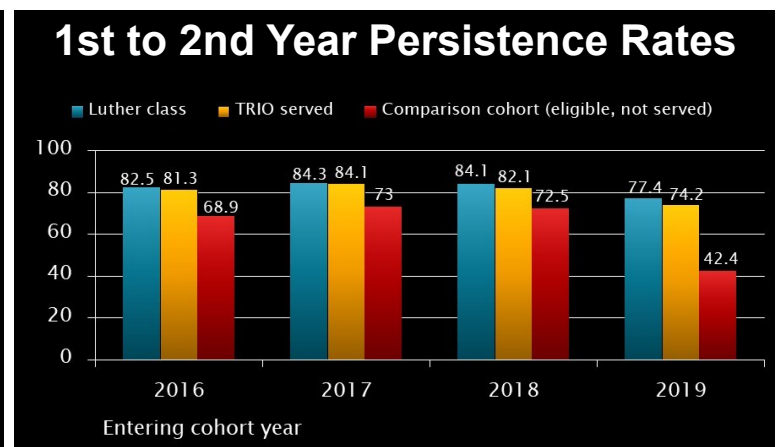
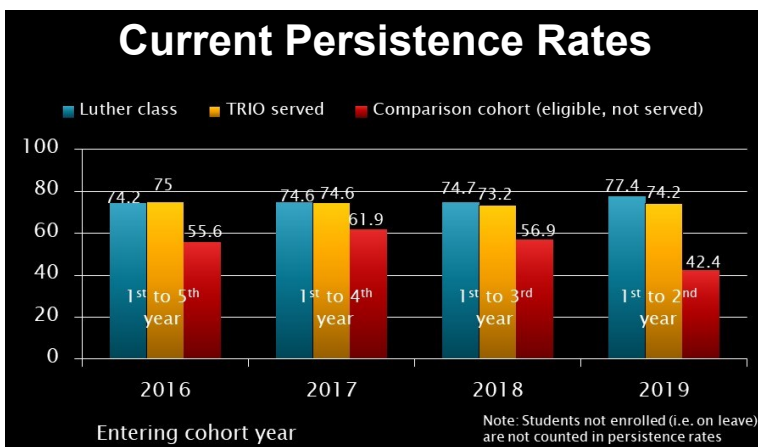
Persistence rates of TRIO students by cohort are comparable to the entire Luther class and well above comparison cohorts of eligible students.

## FIRST-YEAR TRIO STUDENT PERSISTENCE

New TRIO cohorts have ranged in size from 48 to 63 since 2015. Of the 186 TRIO participants served last year, 62 were first-year students.

- **62** first-years served during the 2019-2020 year
- **46 (74.2%)** are back for their second year at Luther and 6 are on leave
- **52 (83.9%)** is the adjusted persistence rate including participants taking a leave of absence

*First-year to second-year persistence for TRIO participants has consistently exceeded 80 percent.*





## DEGREE COMPLETION

76.4% of the 2015-16 TRIO cohort graduated from Luther College. This is comparable to the entire class (72.2%) and well above the comparison cohort (45.8%) of randomly-selected TRIO-eligible students not served. TRIO student graduation rates have ranged from 69 to 85 percent since the 2010-11 cohort and are consistently above the stated objective of 60 percent.

Luther TRIO alumni are accomplished professionals and involved citizens.

Vocational callings include:

- Accountant
- Artist
- Business owner
- Community organizer
- Criminal investigator
- Financial advisor
- Hospital administrator
- Lawyer
- Music educator
- Nurse
- Pastor
- Pharmacist
- Physical therapist
- Physician
- Podiatrist
- Production manager
- Programmer
- Social worker
- Student success coach
- Teacher



## WHAT STUDENTS SAY...

Between the workshops offered and the tutoring services I have received, TRIO is one of the sole constants I can reliably call upon to help me when I am in need.

The TRIO program has allowed me to learn more about myself so that I know how to maximize and benefit from my education and life.

The Luther TRIO program is helping me reach my goals by providing valuable resources, enriching experiences, and a home away from home.

As a first generation student, TRIO was able to provide me or direct me to the resources I needed in order to achieve the goals I set and live a healthy, organized life.



## WHAT STUDENTS SAY...

The counsel and advice from other TRIO members, peer leaders, and professional staff has helped me grow more confident despite the many challenges of being a first-year student.

My TRIO instructor has really helped me with important things like goal setting, time management, and stress reduction. TRIO activities, as well as the GS100 class, have made me feel much more comfortable and confident.

The most significant contributing factor to my success at Luther is the TRIO program and its wonderful staff! I adore my advisor, and it is reassuring to have a safe and familiar place to go whenever the need arises.

TRIO is an amazing program that has helped motivate me and teach me very valuable tools to use in life. I have had some incredible mentors through TRIO, and I am so thankful to have been given the opportunities I have through this program.

TRIO has given me the confidence and skills to thrive at Luther and beyond.

TRIO has been a vital piece of my success in college. The never ending support of the program has helped me in making decisions and working through hardships.

The TRIO program is one big family and that's exactly what a lot of students need.

TRIO provides a place that encourages students to succeed and is willing to walk with their students every step of the way.

## ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

94% of TRIO participants are in good academic standing, with 149 Dean's List and Academic Excellence certificates presented to students in 2019-20. The percentage of TRIO participants in good academic standing consistently exceeds the stated objective of 90 percent.

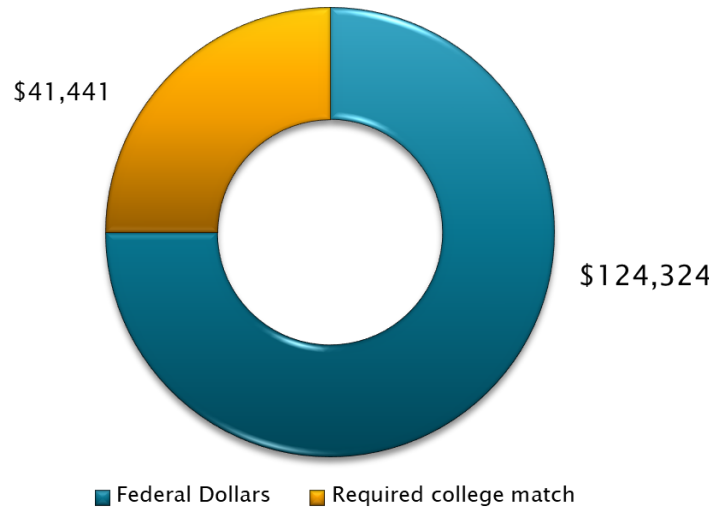
## TRIO GRANTS HELP STUDENTS' BOTTOM LINE

More than 200 Luther students were awarded \$165,765 in federal TRIO grants between 2015-2020 (¾ from federal TRIO funding and ¼ from required college match).

By completing minimum requirements that encourage their initial engagement in TRIO, new participants may earn a grant their first year with the aid applied to their sophomore financial aid award. A whopping 91 high-need students received awards in 2020 due to surplus funds available at the end of the grant funding cycle.

Forty-one TRIO participants also benefitted from \$1,000 scholarships through the Steven Mark Anderson and Karen Julesberg scholarships since 2015.

### TRIO Grant Aid



## FINANCIAL WELLNESS

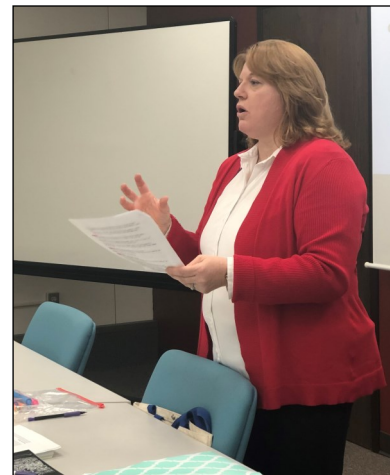
TRIO contributes to the overall well-being and academic persistence of students by providing counseling and education which promotes their basic financial literacy, wise financial behaviors and habits, and long-term financial health and security. The program ramped up this area by recently adding a half-time coordinator dedicated to this work.



# STUDENT SUCCESS COACHING AND COLLEGE SUCCESS COURSE ARE KEY

Every incoming TRIO participant is paired with a TRIO advisor/coach and invited to enroll in TRIO's college success course. 217 first-year participants have taken advantage of "Foundations for Learning and Development" over the last 5 years.

Foundations for Learning and Development (GS100 in the course catalog) is taught by professional staff with assistance from peer leaders. The fall credit course sets the stage for the Luther experience and helps students --regardless of academic profile-- get off to a strong start. Three sections prevent schedule conflicts. Students leave the course with important campus and peer connections, effective learning strategies, increased competence and confidence, and knowledge and habits that serve them well in college and beyond.



# FELLOWSHIP AND LEADERSHIP

TRIO hosted approximately 150 events between 2015-2020, bringing students together for some fun and even some learning. Many events involved peer influencers and/or collaborations with other Luther offices, and most – if not all – revolved around food!

A sampling of one-time or repeating TRIO-hosted events:

- Adulting 101 classes
- BBQ&A with Faculty
- Eat & Greet
- Financial Aid Jeopardy
- Financial Stress Reduction
- Finding & Winning Scholarships
- Frosty Fiesta
- Get Ready to Launch
- Grad School Roundtable
- Iowa TRIO First Generation Celebration
- Kick Off to Finals pizza party

- Making Study Abroad a Reality
- Money Smart Week
- Movie/board game/bowling nights
- National TRIO Day
- Navigating Stress & Building Resilience
- Night on the Farm
- Paideia Paper Party
- Picnic with the Peer Leaders
- Reboot Roundtable
- Rochester Nursing Student information swap
- Scholarship Search Days
- Soup's On

- Tropical TRIO Week
- TRIO Celebration Banquet

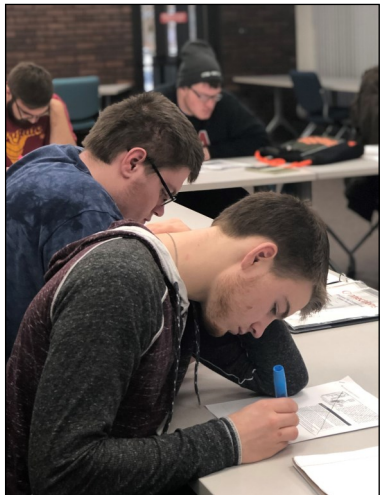
In addition, TRIO made it possible for students to participate in off-campus opportunities aligned with their career and leadership development, such as:

- Dare to Lead Summit
- Iowa Women Lead Change Conference
- TRIO Graduate School Prep Conference
- Men of Color Empowerment Conference
- Men of Excellence Conference



# EVER-LEARNING, EVER-GROWING

TRIO staff modeled a growth mindset by keeping up with the latest research and best practices in college student success through formal and informal learning opportunities. Especially helpful resources included: OnCourse, NASPA Conference on Collegiate Financial Wellbeing, Annual Conference on the First Year Experience, and the National Symposium on Student Retention.



## TRIO Student Satisfaction

Satisfaction Measure	Strongly Agree/Agree
The environment within the TRIO office is friendly and welcoming.	100%
The TRIO staff is committed to my success and cares about me as an individual.	100%
I have been encouraged and challenged by TRIO staff to do my best in college.	97%
I am satisfied with the assistance I have received through the TRIO program.	97%
The TRIO services I received have contributed to my success.	98%
I would recommend the TRIO program to other eligible students.	98%

Source: May 2019 survey of TRIO participants

## WHAT STUDENTS SAY...

For me, TRIO is a support group that I know I can always turn to. If it were not for all the help I continually receive from TRIO, I would not be attending Luther College.

Having my TRIO advisor to talk to is one of the best parts of the program because she gives me suggestions and ideas that I find incredibly helpful.

My meetings with my TRIO advisor have been life-changing. I do not have an adult on campus who I trust more.

## TRIO FINANCIAL SUMMARY (2015-2020)

Expenditure/Investment	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Totals
Student TRIO Grants	12,850	10,000	15,364	20,654	65,456	124,324
Professional Staff Salaries	148,941	165,116	162,898	169,507	176,329	822,791
Retirement Contribution	15,821	12,893	11,324	9,222	7,153	56,413
Health Care Premiums (employer's share)	30,236	29,147	29,395	30,772	38,238	157,788
Other Benefits	11,338	12,565	12,387	12,825	13,324	62,439
Student Staff (work study)	7,459	6,377	7,326	7,513	5,892	34,567
Meetings & Events	3,615	4,261	5,359	7,814	7,527	28,576
Student/Office Supplies	3,184	3,528	4,526	6,474	7,626	25,338
Printing & Student/Office Copying	1,160	3,795	4,912	4,254	2,456	16,577
Memberships & Services	250	0	0	12,434	11,234	23,918
Professional Development	3,259	6,111	5,872	5,457	4,380	25,079
Student Travel	2,437	2,141	3,311	3,487	3,678	15,054
Other Expenditures	7,143	5,556	2,033	3,171	5,477	23,380
Indirect Costs (overhead)	20,141	20,985	21,131	21,685	19,409	103,351
Carryover (applied)	16,920	10,822	14,791	(1,863)	(40,670)	0
<b>Award Totals</b>	<b>284,754</b>	<b>293,297</b>	<b>300,629</b>	<b>313,406</b>	<b>327,509</b>	<b>1,519,595</b>

Source: Office for Financial Services and TRIO Achievement Program

Notes: Luther contributed toward compensation in year 1. The number of professional staff increased to 4+ in year 4.

