After a year-long search for a new Student Support Services TRIO Advisor at the Ray Hartstein/Skokie campus, we are thrilled to have Joe Palencia join our TRIO team! This academic year he will continue to advise 85 TRIO students at Skokie. Many students have already met Joe over the summer while attending TRIO’s yoga seminar in July and experiential learning seminar in August. Please welcome Joe to TRiO and to Oakton!

Greetings TRiO!

My name is Joe Palencia, I am the NEW Student Support Services (SSS) TRIO Advisor here at Oakton Community College. My office (A143) is located on the Skokie Campus, in the Learning Center (A135). As you continue to transition to a new semester, I wanted to take this opportunity to share a little bit about myself.

I was born and raised in the city of Chicago, and I am a proud native of the Pilsen neighborhood. I come from a working-class family; both of my parents were born in Mexico and immigrated to the United States at an early age. My parents did not pursue higher education or earn high school diplomas, but rather assumed low-skilled positions that offered limited financial gains and social mobility. I vividly recall seeing my parents struggle as they toiled in factories, hot kitchens, and warehouses.

As a low-income, first generation student, my successful transition into higher education was made possible with the help of several people who provided me with critical tools and knowledge needed to succeed in college. Through hard work and perseverance, I earned a Bachelor of Arts in Communication & Latina/o Studies with a minor in Business from the University of Illinois - Urbana-Champaign.

Throughout my time at Illinois, I participated in the Student Support Services (SSS) TRIO program. For me, the opportunity to pursue higher education has been a privilege. After receiving much support and empowerment from professors and Student Affairs professionals, I became interested in doing the same for others. Immediately after earning my Bachelor’s degree, I began working at Loyola University Chicago as a graduate assistant in the department of Student Diversity and Multicultural Affairs.

This past May, I earned a Master of Education (M.Ed.) in Higher Education from the School of Education at Loyola University Chicago. While I was working on my M.Ed., I had the privilege to intern at Harold Washington College in downtown Chicago and Dominican University, which is 10 miles west of Chicago in River Forest, Illinois.

I have been working at Oakton since July 22nd, 2013, and I am excited to learn more about the College. If you see me on campus or in my office, please do not hesitate to say, “hello!”

Enjoy the rest of your semester!

Joe

Inside this issue:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advising on D2L</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRIO Staff Hours</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Center News</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Financial Aid and Finan-
  cial Literacy          | 3    |
| Event Learning Goals   | 4    |
| Student Spotlight: Lisa| 4    |
TRIO ADVISING: CONNECTING ON-LINE

To support students’ work in the classroom and reinforce on-line learning tools now integrated with the curriculum, TRIO created “Advising on D2L.” Many advising resources and handouts are located here. To access: [http://d2l.oakton.edu](http://d2l.oakton.edu) and log-in the same way you do to log-in to your Oakton account.

After logging-in, visit "Start Here" first to review TRIO’s "Educational Planning Checklist." Use this list as a guide, and for any questions, consult the resources that are on D2L. Most important to know, TRIO on D2L is not intended to replace individual meetings with TRIO advisors. It's intended to help students track their progress towards degree completion in a more efficient way, so that face-to-face meetings are spent conversing with students, covering any questions or other topics of interest. Let TRIO know what you think about D2L, and inform TRIO of any questions or problems accessing these resources.

About Oakton’s “Students First” Messages: This is an early alert system that permits faculty and staff to identify Oakton students whose behavior suggests they are heading toward academic problems. For example, indicators might be excessive class absences; failure to turn in assignments on time; poor performance on assignments, quizzes, or tests; and regular tardiness. Faculty submit student’s information and checks from a list which behaviors the student is exhibiting. This “flag” is then sent to trained staff members who contact the student to offer individualized, personal assistance and/or interventions. Along with Advisors at Oakton, Learning Center Staff, Student Development Faculty, etc. TRIO is now part of this system to offer assistance to “flagged” TRIO students.

TRIO STAFF HOURS
 Offices are in Learning Center Des Plaines (2400) and Skokie (A135)

Mike Houlahan, TRIO Coordinator; Joe Palencia, SSS TRIO Advisor in Skokie; Kristine Panopio, SSS TRIO Advisor in Des Plaines; Annette Prince, Administrative Assistant; Elizabeth Georgieva, Math Tutor

If you want to meet outside of regular office hours, TRIO Staff can be flexible; please provide enough notice.

TRIO Advisors and Coordinator: Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm
TRIO Administrative Assistant: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 9 am to 3 pm
TRIO Math Tutor in Skokie: Thursday 4:30 pm - 7:30 pm and Saturday 10am - 2pm

ACADEMIC SUPPORT: LEARNING CENTER NEWS

The Learning Center is proud to announce an important advance for the Learning Center: up to the moment tutoring schedules, live and online on Learning Center’s home page. [www.oakton.edu/learn](http://www.oakton.edu/learn)

This new, improved feature provides essential information to the entire College—whether on campus or away, and at anytime—the same real time access to the most up to date information regarding tutor-availability. Learning Specialists also work with students on improving test performance, study skills, test anxiety management while supervising Learning Center tutors. GNA Garcia, Manager of Learning Center reports:

“Last fall the Learning Center had more than 7,000 visitors and provided more than 12,000 hours of academic support. Our team of tutors, Learning Specialists, and support staff perform a tremendously important and useful service to the College, yet we continue to count on your support in promoting our services to all Oakton students.”
Jamie Petersen, Manager of OSFA contributing:

- Although students may still sign up for classes as late as October, as students make plans for payment, they must also be aware of registration deadline dates to be considered for financial aid that semester. Federal regulations do not allow financial assistance to be increased for classes added on or after September 23.

- The Office of Student Financial Assistance expects to disburse financial aid to student accounts by mid-October. If a student owes money to the College or a student’s enrollment status changes after receiving financial aid and a balance is now due, the College will charge the $25 enrollment fee and initiate the payment plan process to collect the balance. We would encourage students to pay off any balance due before the payment plan goes into effect on November 5 to avoid paying the $25 enrollment fee.

- New federal loan legislation enacted as part of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21): Starting July 1, 2013, new loan borrowers applying for a need-based Direct Subsidized Loan will be limited to borrowing only enough money to cover one and one-half times the length of their program of study. This means that an undergraduate student working on a two-year degree at Oakton will only be able to borrow enough to cover one additional year of schooling (for a total of three years of borrowing), should extra time be needed to graduate. Students who transfer to Oakton from another institution will have their prior borrowing counted toward this limit. A new loan borrower is someone who does not have a prior student loan balance as of July 1, 2013. Additionally, the borrower who reaches the 150% limitation will have their interest subsidy end for all outstanding subsidized loans that were disbursed on or after July 1, 2013. Repayment does not begin, but like unsubsidized loans, the student (rather than the government) would become responsible for interest accumulation at this point.

FINANCIAL LITERACY NEWS: USE AND BENEFIT FROM SALT™ AT OAKTON

According to Alex DeLonis, Coordinator of Financial Assistance and Financial Literacy, as of late September, Oakton has 538 students currently signed-up for SALT! Oakton has partnered with SALT™, a FREE online financial literacy tool, to help students manage money and loans more effectively. Why become a member? Free SALT™ membership offers many advantages—all of them only a mouse click away, and available even after leaving Oakton! Benefits include:

- Interactive money management tools that show you how to take control of your finances.

- A personal dashboard that consolidates and tracks all of your federal student loan information.

- My Money 101, a self-paced resource that teaches you practical money management strategies for

- Budgeting, credit cards, banking, and more.

Access to thousands of job and internship opportunities.

Sign up at www.saltmoney.org/oakton.
What TRIO Learns during summer Experiential Learning Seminars:
(Snake Road Adventure Center, TRIO students and Donna, our facilitator, pictured right). Doing high ropes courses and team-building activities, students discover their own communication styles and methods of managing stress and anxiety while overcoming obstacles. TRIO advisors hope students who attend these seminars will apply this self-knowledge to their work as a student and beyond. Also, it is important to recognize that students with individual goals could go even further when they have support from peers—the group goal of seeing each other graduate and transfer, for example. When approaching a task or goal, we learned to apply the “5 Finger Contract” often communicated during experiential learning activities: 1) Affirm and acknowledge strengths and accomplishments; 2) accept self-responsibility; 3) manage strong emotions; 4) commit to individual and team goals; 5) recognize that we can be vulnerable—look out for one another; when we build trust and admit our weak areas, our team could help us out! TRIO at Oakton is a part of your team.

NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION LEADERS:
LISA, A TRIO STUDENT’S PERSPECTIVE

Special thanks to TRIO Student, Lisa, who shares her experience as Oakton’s New Student Orientation Leader (OL). The required, New Student Orientation informs incoming students while offering programs and student connections, helping them feel more welcome. A student employee at Office of Student Life at Oakton attending business classes part-time, she also shares advice to continuing Oakton students:

Anthony, Coordinator of Student Orientation and Retention, made being the OL position very manageable and easy to commit. We understood our tasks, but Anthony was great with preparation before we took on the role. After being an OL, Anthony gave us feedback of how I could continue to grow as a leader, which was important to my growth.

Favorite part of the job. The best part was getting to know the team (which was a unique selection) and going out for food.

Most challenging part of the job. Some new students didn’t want to participate in the program and didn’t want to be at the orientation sessions. Other students felt their energy and it was often hard to change their attitudes.

Word of advice for new students. Start every semester with something new and build on it.
Word of advice for continuing students: After having already spent 1 year at Oakton, I learned how important it is to start managing your time, so you don’t fall behind and don’t take on more than you could handle.

If students would like to be an OL, what steps should he/she take? Be a part of programs, speak with your OL or mentor, volunteer; contact your professor to write a recommendation letter, and contact Anthony.

Your major, transfer schools you’re interested in applying to, and how this experience enhances your college experience and/or connects to your major or career goals. I’m interested in business; what I experience is that students who are put in a situation that forces them to think quickly and manage time well, they will need someone to get them there. Being an OL opened my eyes—how to guide someone with my knowledge, and how to help him or her connect to one’s own path to leadership.

“Trust is knowing that when a team member does push you, they're doing it because they care about the team.” — Patrick Lencioni, The Five Dysfunctions of a Team, A Leadership Fable

— Patrick Lencioni, The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable