

**Ella Fields**

TRIO SSS

When I was in high school I struggled through all my classes and had a hard time following along. I ended up failing my freshman year and then my family moved to Lake Stevens, WA. I didn't have enough credits to be considered a Freshman so I met with a counselor at my high school and she told me I have a learning disability. My counselor told me I just learn a bit slower than others but nothing to worry about. Their idea of helping me was to place me into classes with students that had behavioral issues and with the students who were disabled.

I never once felt confident in my classes and they weren't challenging enough and I was always distracted. When I graduated I didn't have enough credits to walk with my class, so my mom spoke to my school and fought for me to be able to graduate.

I grew up in a family where my mom dropped out of middle school and my step dad never went to college. It was not a priority for me or my siblings. I figured since I struggled so much I would never make it in college.

I didn't decide to go to college until I met my boyfriend and saw that just working random jobs weren't going to fulfill my life. I remembered when I graduated that I was told I would be able to transfer my IEP from high school to the college I wanted to go to. I was a bit skeptical to use the IEP because I didn't know what kind of services I would be provided. Since I am a student with a disability I was able to apply to be a TRIO student.

Joining TRIO has really helped me grow as a person mentally and academically. I love the wonderful tutors and have spent many hours being overwhelmed trying to figure out a math problem but with help I have been able to really exceed in math and English. Being a part of TRIO with all the support and love I have received has given me more confidence in myself. I have been improving my learning skills and time management. Whenever I need to talk to someone I always go to my Advisor through TRIO. Fall 2015 is my first time ever getting all A's in my classes. I never would have been able to accomplish that without all the free printing, the computer lab and tutors.

I am still amazed that I have come this far in college. I will be the first in my family to graduate from college with a degree. I only need 30 more credits until I have my AA then I plan to transfer to a university. I have tried to encourage my siblings to start their college careers and giving them the support we never received from our parents. I wouldn't be where I am now if I didn't have the wonderfully family of TRIO.

Student Success Services

Through a grant competition, funds are awarded to institutions of higher education to provide opportunities for academic development, assist students with basic college requirements, and to motivate students toward the successful completion of their postsecondary education. Student Support Services (SSS) projects also may provide grant aid to current SSS participants who are receiving Federal Pell Grants (# 84.063). The goal of SSS is to increase the college retention and graduation rates of its participants.

All SSS projects must provide: academic tutoring, which may include instruction in reading, writing, study skills, mathematics, science, and other subjects; advice and assistance in postsecondary course selection, assist student with information on both the full range of student financial aid programs, benefits and resources for locating public and private scholarships; and assistance in completing financial aid applications. Education or counseling services designed to improve the financial and economic literacy and assist students in applying for admission to graduate and professional programs; and assist students enrolled in two-year institutions and applying for admission to, and obtaining financial assistance for enrollment in four-year programs. The SSS projects may also provide individualized counseling for personal, career, and academic information, activities, and instruction designed to acquaint students with career options; exposure to cultural events and academic programs not usually available; mentoring programs, securing temporary housing during breaks for students who are homeless youths and students who are in foster care or are aging out of the foster care system.

TRIO