

**Emmanuel "Manny" Garcia**

TRIO SSS

My story begins in 2009, sitting in a prison cell, fighting the uphill battle of substance abuse, staring out of a stain-glassed window with my future completely out of reach. Upon my release in 2012, I was determined to move past my mistakes, so I took on the challenge to return to college, and immediately enrolled into the TRIO program. Since that decision, my life has never been the same. There were many obstacles and barriers that stood in my way, not to mention the social challenges of being restored back into the community—the stress of protecting the recovery of my ten-year drug addiction. However, the TRIO program has literally broken the chains of my past and placed me in the present reality of pursuing my dreams, here at Washington State University Tri-Cities as a campus leader, tutor, honor roll student, student speaker, research assistant, community outreach specialist, and recipient of six scholarships. You see without the TRIO program contributing to the current construction of my life, I could easily be another statistic and labeled as an outcast; instead, I am climbing the ladder of success, branded by the identity of an overcomer. TRIO WORKS!



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.

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