

**Mark Outland**

TRIO Student Support Services

My name is Mark Outland and I am 39. I am so blessed to be a part of the TRIO Student Support Services program at Lower Columbia College. I have been on disability for many years of my life which also resulted in me not graduating from High School. I lacked the motivation and education to help provide for me and my children; we were in the low-income bracket. After being accepted into Student Support Services, I have gotten my GED and will be graduating with my AA degree this March.

Because of the help and support I got from Student Support Services, I will have successfully completed almost of all my education and I already have my first job in over 18 years. This program and these wonderful advisors helped me plan the best classes for me to be successful, helped me to fill out scholarship applications (which I got), study for tests, make tutor appointments, and do wonderful volunteering projects in our community. Not only were these projects beneficial to giving back to the community, but they helped me realize the value of integrity, my education, and being an active member in my school and community. The respect, confidence, and friendly smiles I got from every advisor in the TRIO office everyday was enough of a positive push for me to know that I could do this, I am worth it, and I am TRIO. Please keep funding this wonderful program. Without TRIO I'm afraid I would have given up.



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