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ONLINE NEWSROOM: vikingnews.delmar.edu

TRIO Educational Opportunity Center receives \$1.19 million five-year grant renewal to serve low-income, first-generation Del Mar College students

Center to receive \$238,000 per year from U.S. Labor Department's Employment and Training Administration to provide comprehensive services and assistance to participants at no cost to ensure student success

(Corpus Christi, TX) – The Notification of Award just arrived, and Del Mar College (DMC) officials and the TRIO Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) received the news that the grant supporting the TRIO Program has been renewed.

The U.S. Department of Education's EOC Program through the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration has awarded the college a \$1.19 million five-year grant, which runs Sept. 1, 2026, through Aug. 31, 2031.

The college's TRIO Educational Opportunity Center provides comprehensive, individualized support to eligible low-income, first-generation adult students living in Nueces, Refugio and San Patricio counties to increase their attainment of a high school diploma or General Education Development (GED) certificate, financial aid and college enrollment.

"As a former TRIO participant, I know firsthand the life-changing impact these programs can have. TRIO opened the doors to higher education for me and created opportunities that positively impacted my family as well," said Chasity Munoz, project director with the college's TRIO Educational Opportunity Center, adding: "It is incredibly rewarding to now be on the other side, helping individuals and families achieve their educational goals and pursue opportunities they may have never thought possible."

The TRIO Educational Opportunity Center recruits and serves approximately 850 participants annually.

To help ensure student success, the TRIO EOC implements a structured intake and assessment process followed by individualized Participant Success Plans (PSPs) for each student. Core services include academic advising, GED preparation, career exploration, non-cognitive skill development, financial aid assistance and ongoing progress coaching to support students through each stage of their journey with the enrollment process.

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The college's program also expands students' access to career pathways, including pre-apprenticeships, registered apprenticeships and programs leading to in-demand, industry-recognized postsecondary credentials.

"These efforts align our participating students with workforce needs and support entry into high-growth careers," noted Munoz. "Participants receive guidance on apprenticeship opportunities and postsecondary options aligned with labor market demand."

Key partners supporting these opportunities include Del Mar College academic departments, area school districts, community-based organizations such as Coastal Compass, Elevate 361, Goodwill Industries of South Texas, San Patricio Adult Literacy Council, UpSkill Coastal Bend and Workforce Solutions Coastal Bend. Center staff also collaborate with workforce agencies to enhance outreach, service delivery and participant success.

For the five-year grant period, long-term outcomes include increased persistence, credential attainment and career advancement among participants.

Of the grant renewal, Munoz said, "Being awarded the continuation of this grant for another five years is especially meaningful because it allows us to continue providing these services and changing lives throughout our community. I am proud to be part of a program that empowers people to transform their futures through education."

To learn more about the TRIO Educational Opportunity Center and the services offered, visit www.delmar.edu/offices/trio/eoc.html or contact the center at 361-698-1262 or trioeoc@delmar.edu

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