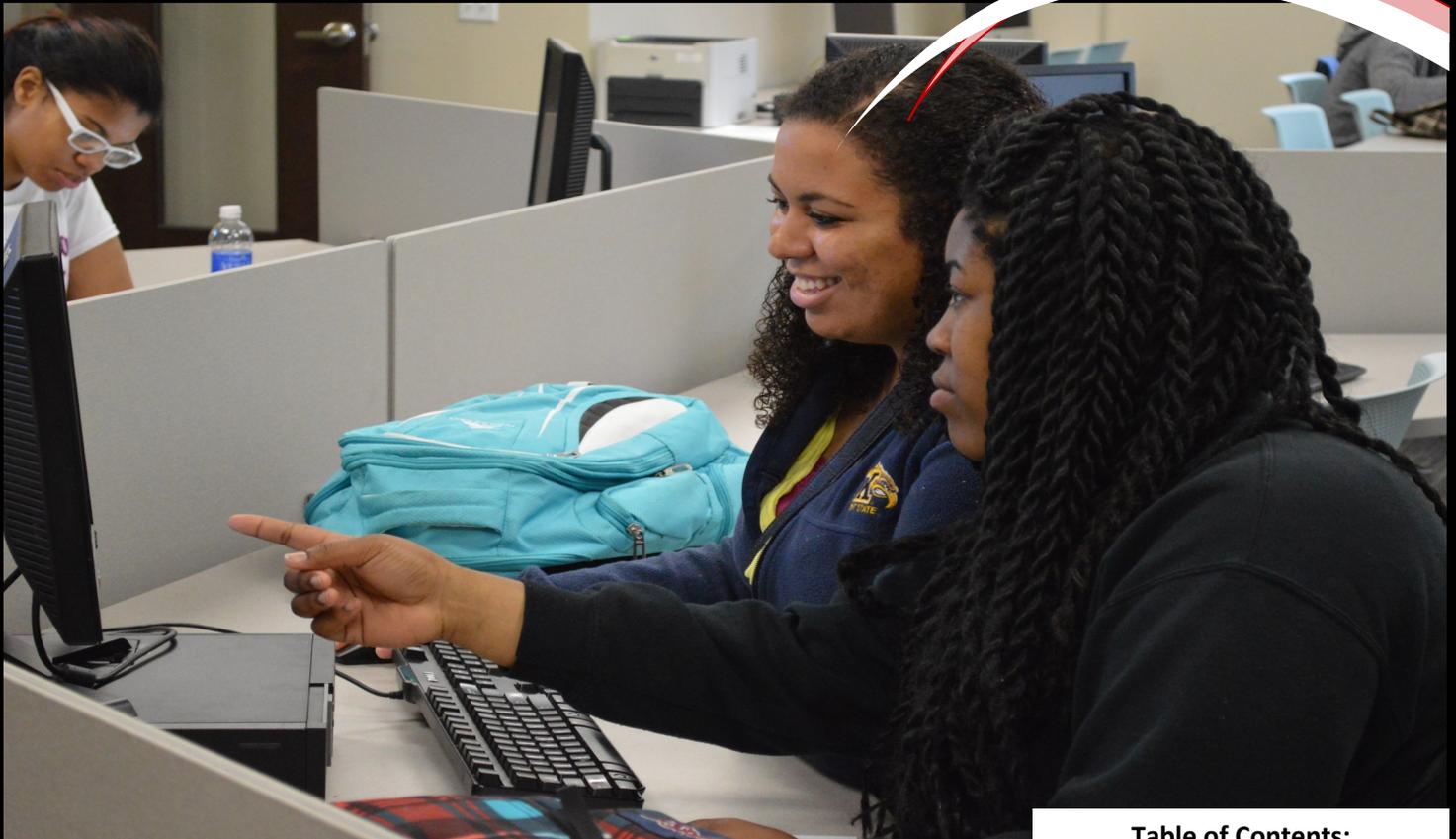


# TRIO SSS & McNAIR

TRIO STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES AND MCNAIR SCHOLARS PROGRAM AT KENT STATE UNIVERSITY  
ISSUE 02 Winter 2015-2016



## TRIO Programs

TRIO Student Support Services is a community of underrepresented students pursuing academic success. Students who persist through TRIO SSS are encouraged to continue in TRIO and become a McNair Scholar. The McNair Scholars Program is part of the TRIO Program Authority serving the same population SSS serves. With multiple components, the McNair Scholars Program prepares students to pursue graduate degrees.

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# TRIO SSS Welcomes A New Director!

We would like to announce the appointment of Cason Brunt as Director of TRIO Student Support Services and Director of Academic Diversity Outreach for University College. Cason started on January 4, 2016. He comes to us from Purdue University, where he formerly served as Assistant Director for Academic Success within Horizons Student Support Services.

Cason originally hails from Chicago, Illinois. He earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Organizational Communication from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and a Master of Arts Degree in Communication Management from LaSalle University. Prior to his time at Purdue, he lived in Philadelphia and served in administrative roles at both Saint Joseph's University and Rosemont College.

Cason has experience in the areas of Academic Success, Leadership Development, Diversity and Inclusion, and Residence Life. Notably within this experience, Cason created and coordinated the *Black Male Excellence Network Academic Success and Leadership Development Program* sponsored by the Office of the Provost at Purdue. In 2014, Cason was appointed to the *Council for Manager Development*, an institutional program that champions the managerial success of Purdue Leaders. Most recently, he earned a Certificate of Applied Management Principles from the Purdue Krannert School of Management.

His passion lies in championing the success of students and helping them to achieve the highest, truest expression of themselves.



I am so pleased to join the vibrant community of TRIO here at Kent State! I look forward to sharing our vision for TRIO Student Success. We're creating a trail and hope that you will follow along the path. Please feel free to visit me anytime, I am located in CUE 169-S and would love to meet you! Best wishes for a successful semester.

Cason G. Brunt  
Director, Trio Student Support  
Services and Academic Diversity  
Outreach

## HELLO, FROM N.J. AKBAR, ASSISTANT DEAN FOR ACADEMIC DIVERSITY SUCCESS

It is my pleasure to welcome each of you to the Student Support Services family! I have long admired the work of our TRIO SSS program and am so grateful to have joined the family. As Assistant Dean, I oversee TRIO McNair Scholars, Success Coaching and Academic Diversity Outreach along with the TRIO SSS office. It is important to me that we provide you with a welcoming and affirming space for your intellectual and social growth. In the spirit of thanksgiving, our staff is thankful to have the opportunity to help each of you define what success means for you as an individual. We are here to help remove any roadblocks as you are on your path to success and to help you create detours when necessary.



Come see us; we are excited when you come visit. Come by often and let us get to know you better. As I have said before, it is our job to help see you on to graduation and we are eager to do so. For your success is our mission! I love meeting and seeing students, so do not hesitate to come see our staff in CUE 111 or stop my office in CUE 151. If you are one of the first five SSS students to come by my office, I will treat you to lunch sometime.

Thank you for being a member of the TRIO Family, and in our family, we rely on one another. Our family is a real community of success. In SSS, we already see you as a success and we invite you to join us by proclaiming, "I am Success!"

~N.J. Akbar

# STUDENTS OF THE MONTH



**Jaaziah Rookard**

“Jaaziah is a hardworking student that always comes early and prepared for [tutoring] sessions. She’s been an active program participant for a few semesters now. She always makes [tutoring] sessions enjoyable and full of learning new things. She has taught me a lot about myself as a tutor and always challenges me to think outside of the box for student strategies and examples.”

**Tiandrea Fields**

“She always comes to her [tutoring] sessions prepared and with something to do. She never says ‘I have nothing to do today.’ Almost always on time too”

“Tiandrea is dedicated to her [tutoring] session. The professor consistently assigns difficult assignments with little clarity, but it doesn’t detour her from coming and supporting TRIO. I commend her for her tenacious demeanor.”





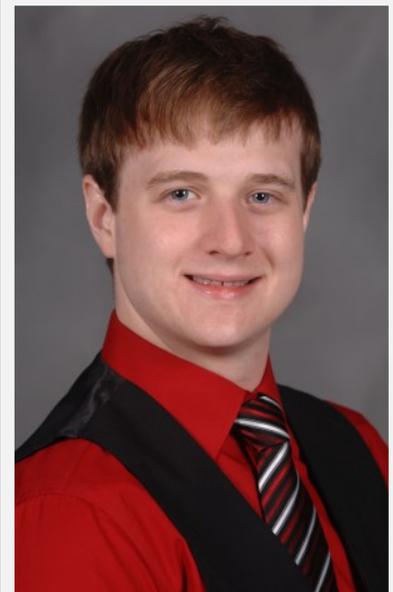
**Adam Cinderich** recently became Assistant Director for TRIO Student Support Services in November! In addition to fulfilling his responsibilities coordinating Math Tutoring and Community Outreach, Adam will be taking on a lead role regarding our student tracking database, intake and student outreach efforts, as well as the Annual Performance Report.

Adam earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Earth Science from California University of Pennsylvania and his Master of Science degree in Geography from Michigan State University. He also has completed much of the coursework for a Ph.D. in Geography at Kent State University.

Along with performing his responsibilities in an exemplary fashion, Adam recently began serving as the Secretary for Ohio TRIO and is also currently serving as the Co-chair of Professional Development for the EOA (Midwest) region. In June, Adam was also honored as the recipient of the statewide Louis M. Brownlowe New Professional Award.

**Jim Piascik** has been promoted to Project Operation Coordinator with both TRIO Student Support Services and TRIO McNair Scholars Program in November.

He will serve as lead for overseeing both TRIO grant budgetary and operational functions. He played a substantial role in the renewing of the 5-year TRIO SSS grant that we received this summer. As we go into a new grant writing year to renew the McNair Scholars grant, we are confident his skills will lend itself well to that project's continued success.



Jim completed his Master of Arts in Reporting/Editing from Kent State in 2014. Prior to joining the SSS Staff last year, Jim served as a Graduate Assistant in the Academic Success Center.



**Kristin Carvajal** is the Program Coordinator for Science Tutoring and Peer Mentoring for the TRIO SSS program. Kristin graduated Summa Cum Laude with a Bachelor of the Arts degree in English Literature and a Bachelor of Science in Communication and Media from the State University of New York at New Paltz. Kristin has worked in many diverse areas in Higher Education throughout her college experience, which inspired her to pursue a Master of Education in Higher Education Administration and Student Personnel, which is she is currently finishing at Kent State University. Kristin loves working in the Academic Success Center and being a part of the TRIO SSS team! This is Kristin's second year with the Academic Success Center, as she was a graduate assistant for this department for the 2013-2014 academic year. As a first-generation college student, she recognizes the challenges students may face while transitioning from high school to college. She is passionate about helping others navigate the college environment and wants to aid and encourage students to reach their full academic potential.

**Peter Jeffy** is the Kent Core/Humanities and Student Involvement Coordinator. He is a proud Liberian-American, the youngest of six children and the first person in his immediate family to be born in the United States. He is enrolled at Kent State University in the Cultural Foundations of Education Master's degree program. He has dedicated a large portion of this educational pursuit to understanding and conceptualizing concepts such as power, agency, and freedom as well as analyzing race, culture, and capitalism and using the aforementioned to establish my perspective and critiques of the goals for education (primarily higher education) and initiatives aiming to increase human flourishing through education.

In terms of hobbies and interests, he likes to play sports and stay active. He is the second-best dancer in the office next to Kristin and the third-best rapper behind Jim and Adam. He enjoys reading manga and watching anime. He is currently working on an action fantasy light novel series with hopes to publish someday and he thoroughly enjoy board games.



**Breana Buckner** is the new Science and Peer Mentoring Graduate Assistant for the TRIO SSS program. Breana graduated from Kent State University with a Bachelor of Science in Public Health with a concentration in health education and promotion. Currently, Breana is pursuing her Masters of Education in Higher Education Administration and Student Personnel. After graduation, Breana hopes to become an academic advisor. Her



passion is to guide students to their own passions, ensuring their goals, aspirations, and dreams are recognized. Breana's favorite show is *The Walking Dead* and thoroughly enjoys home buying and renovation shows and HGTV.



**Katie Wilkinson** is currently a graduate assistant with the TRIO Student Support Services program at Kent State University, studying to receive her Master's in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. She also attended Kent State as an undergraduate student,

majoring in Human Development and Family Studies with a concentration in Youth Development and minoring in Human Sexuality. After she graduates in May 2016, Katie plans to become a counselor.

In addition to her on-campus involvement with the counseling fraternity CSI, Katie enjoys the downtown life Kent offers. When she is not working or at school, Katie likes to spend her time hanging out with her friends.

**Emily McClaine** is a graduate assistant with the McNair Scholars Program, previously serving as a graduate assistant with TRIO SSS. She will graduate in May 2016 with her Master of Education degree in Higher Education Administration and Student Personnel and certificates in College Teaching and Career Advising. Emily earned her B.A. in English with minors in Public Relations and Digital Media Arts at Duquesne University.



As an Upward Bound alumna, Emily can personally testify to the value of TRIO. Upon graduation, Emily will pursue a career in academic support and achievement opportunities for college students.

"I still cherish the support that I received from my first TRIO family in Clarion, PA, and I couldn't be more blessed to serve the students in Kent's TRIO programs. Our students are incredible and I love the work I do as I share with them in their college journey!"

# McNAIR SCHOLARS



**Congratulations!** **Dondrea Brown** is now the Associate Director of the McNair Scholars Program. Dondrea Brown transferred to Kent State University in the fall of 2008, so he has been at KSU for almost seven years. He graduated with his Bachelors of Arts, majoring in political science with a concentration in American politics. As an undergraduate student, he worked for the Kent State University Library. In 2013, he graduated with a Master of Arts in Teaching secondary education with a focus in social studies. As a graduate student, he worked for the EXCEL living-learning community as a graduate assistant. Now, he is working toward his Ph. D. in Cultural Foundations.



**Samantha Broaddus** is the Program Assistant for McNair Scholars Program. She began working for McNair in April 2014. This is her second stint working in TRIO programs, as she previously worked as a mentor and student

worker for Kent State's Upward Bound Programs. Sam attended KSU as an undergraduate, receiving degrees in English and Pan-African Studies, then went on to receive a Master of Education in Cultural Foundations in December 2014. When Sam is not working, she enjoys spending time with her family and friends, watching sports, drawing/painting, and participating with her sorority, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

"My experience working in TRIO programs has been extremely rewarding. I have watched many of my current and former students achieve so many great things, and while I hope that they are learning from me, they are also teaching me new things every day."

**Maria Acevedo** is the new graduate assistant for the McNair Scholars Program at Kent State



University. She is currently studying to receive her Master's in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at Kent State. Maria previously studied at Hiram College where she obtained her Bachelor's degree in Psychology with a concentration in Spanish and fine arts. After obtaining her Masters, Maria plans on becoming a therapist specializing in early childhood therapy. She is interested in serving underrepresented populations where she can influence and motivate others. In her spare time when she is not working or studying Maria enjoys photography and painting.

# GRADUATE SCHOOL VISIT: THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME



The graduate school trip to Notre Dame provided an interesting perspective for my interest in Africana Studies and Philosophy. Programs that attract my skill-sets are within the field of Liberal Arts and Counseling, so an interdisciplinary approach composed of the two provides a synthesis of experiences. This was not my first time out of state, but was my first time visiting The University of Notre Dame. The campus was beautiful, a

certain layer of prestige was evident, and the academics seemed very conducive to students' ambitions and goals. Meeting with the graduate school coordinator of the History department along with his two cohorts enriched my experience because I was able to develop a rapport. Each of them had interesting research backgrounds: Africana Studies, Tracing the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, Women Wealth Accumulation along the Western African coast, and wild wolves, just to highlight a few.

I also enjoyed the panel of scholars, who provided their advice on the graduate school process. They delved into research opportunities that aligned with your passions, how to network your topic, and other professional benefits. I felt the students' stories resonated with my own and others I have heard, especially among diverse populations. The level of dedication our panelist had in their eyes modeled the sheer determination necessary to acquire a graduate diploma.

Looking around at the architecture of the campus attested to the Gothic, Renaissance design coupled with arches and imagery of Catholic Saints brought a calming awe. The influence of art added an inspirational feeling to the campus overall. I appreciate TRIO SSS for this opportunity because this graduate school visit gave me exposure to new ideas and topics that further expanded my knowledge of the process. –Bobby Whipple

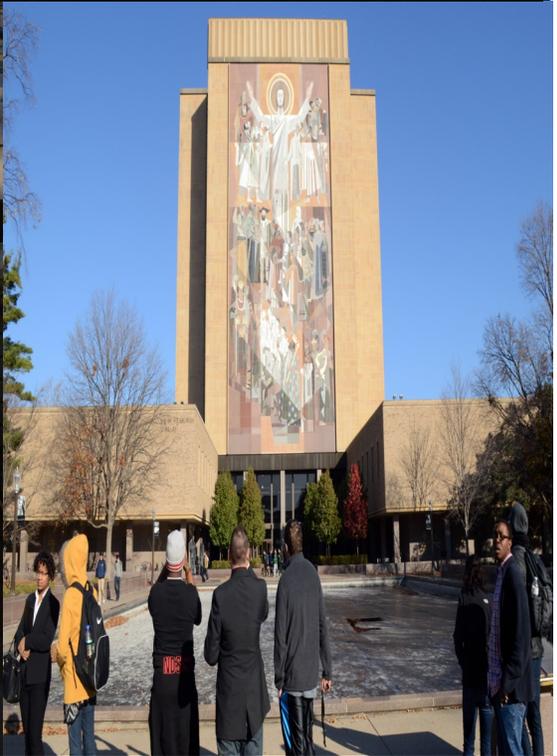
# GRADUATE SCHOOL VISIT: THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME



Indiana is the seventh state that I have ever visited. What made visiting this state so exceptional was the exciting tour of The University of Notre Dame. Something that really captured my attention about this prestigious institution was their well-defined Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering graduate program. Like many of the other great graduate programs, I learned it offers an openness that rewards you for diversity. The most memorable places were certainly the two lakes that ran deep on both side of campus and a little grotto where candles burn bright at all hours for prayer. What impressed me most about the University's values were its deep-rooted tradition with military personal and the high catholic population in and around campus. Due to the fact that we were visiting on Veterans Day, it instilled a commutative sense of tradition in me as well. This heightened the experience of the overall tour and added a key component of comradery. To my pleasure there was a changing of the guard in front of a statue known as "Stonehenge" — or the center of campus — which fondly dramatized how deeply Notre Dame's roots tie in with the military.

Afterward, we explored the campus' expansive basilica and heard all about its history. Then we had the pleasure of learning from and having lunch with real-time graduate students, all currently studying at Notre Dame. Through introductions on what it takes to study and do research at a graduate level, as well as finding ways to fund your research, my interest in moving on to explore graduate school was only increased. Once lunch ended, I was lucky enough to see the campus library and hear about all it had to offer students. This ranged from free 3D printing, endless links to books, and top notch research assistance.

If asked now if I would recommend this university to someone, I would first ask them, "Do you see graduate school in your future?" If yes, then quoting our 16<sup>th</sup> president, Abraham Lincoln, "the best way to predict the future is to create it." So create your future. —Kyle Weaver



# Cultural Event: A Servant of Two Masters

Attending cultural events is important because I believe it aids in the process of becoming a truly globalized citizen. It is important for all students to understand the world around them at an interpersonal level. The best way to do so is to engage in interactions with individuals from different cultures. This can be done by interacting with people of different cultures or by attending cultural events.

Recently, I engaged in such an interaction on campus. I did so by attending the production *A Servant of Two Masters*. This was a play that took place in Italy during the late 1700s. It tells the story of a young woman by the name of Beatrice on her quest to save her lover from being arrested for murder. She does so by disguising herself as her dead brother and fulfilling his previous engagement to a woman named Clarice in order to obtain her dowry. Beatrice's plan was to use the dowry money to hire a lawyer to defend her lover from the murder charges. Little did she know, her lover was guilty of the murder charges and was also responsible for the death of her brother! However, this is not discovered until the end of the play.

There are many themes in this play that are consistent with some cultures and are very different from others. For instance, the fact that Beatrice set out to obtain a dowry indicates that an arranged marriage was established before-hand. This may be common of some Italian cultures, but is very different from American culture. In America, most women marry for love and are not expected to pay the groom's family for their hand in marriage. This is not always the case in other cultures as indicated by the play.

A lot can be learned about the world just by simply attending an event that portrays how things are done in different cultures. Overall, I enjoyed my cultural event experience. I thought the play was both interesting and entertaining. Although this was not my first time attending a Kent State University theatre production, it was among one of my favorite.

-Tajee Anderson



## Research and Cultural Explorations: Bobby Whipple, TRIO SSS & McNair Scholar

Being a McNair scholar empowers you to pursue research on a topic that speaks to you. As such, I chose Rites of Passage as a particular area to dive into. It provides a framework that could establish a foundation in numerous disciplines because it focuses upon an individual's re-orientation towards their culture. Youth are the future and I see many instances of society failing to acknowledge that. This is where Rites of Passage step in.

I chose to research the identity formation of Puerto Ricans. Through their ancestry — Native American, Spanish, and African— I was motivated to pursue a short, study abroad project to Puerto Rico. Being a Pan-African Studies major provides you with sources to have global interests in the affairs of people of African descent and throughout the Diaspora. This was what led me to aspire to expand my personal knowledge of the global community.



# TRIO

## STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

### TRIO Student Support Services Spring 2016 Calendar of Events

Event	Day	Date	Time	Location
<b>January</b>				
Welcome Back TRIO Winter Soulfood Potluck	Fri	Jan 22nd	12:00pm-1:30p	CUE Conference Room
30th Commemoration Event	Sat	Jan 30th	1:00pm-2:30pm	KSC Ballroom
<b>February</b>				
FAFSA Drop-in Sessions	Wed	Feb 3rd	11:00am-3:00p	CUE 112
Financial Aid Fair	Wed	Feb 10th	10:30am-2:00p	KSC
Family Fued	Tue	Feb 16th	6:30pm-8:00pm	CUE Lounge
<b>TRIO Week:(TRIO Talks)</b>				
Intro to TRIO	Mon	Feb 22nd	5:00pm-7:00pm	CUE 113
First Flash: Campus Culture Shock	Tues	Feb 23rd	5:00pm-7:00pm	CUE 143
HandSpeak: Deaf Cultural Experience	Wed	Feb 24th	5:00pm-7:00pm	CUE 143
Ball'n On a Budget	Thurs	Feb 25th	5:30pm-7:00pm	CUE Conference Rooms
Voice of TRIO: Open Mic	Fri	Feb 26th	5:00pm-7:00pm	WiFi Lounge
National TRIO Day	Sat	Feb 27th	TBD	TBD
<b>March</b>				
Fit Challenge	TBD	March	TBD	Everywhere
Capture the Flag	Thu	Mar 10th	5:30pm-7:30pm	Field
Personal Development (Nutrition Workshop)	TBD	TBD	TBD	CUE 143
Alternative Spring Break	Sat-Wed	Mar 19-23rd	The Whole Tim	Meet in CUE 111
<b>April</b>				
TRIO Game Night/Lip Sync	Wed	Apr 13th	7:30pm-10:30p	CUE 112
TRIO Service Day	Fri	Apr 15th	TBD	TBD
TRIO Camping Trip	Fri-Sun	Apr 22nd-24th	Weekend	Meet: CUE 111
ALL That! 90's Themed Party	Fri	Apr 29th	6:00pm-10:00p	The CUE
Holidays Campus Closed: Important Events:				

# We are all in this Game



DIVERSITY OUTREACH  
& DEVELOPMENT



5-7 PM - Wed Jan. 27, 2016  
Kent Student Center-Ballroom



Division of Diversity, Equity  
and Inclusion

## Join us for the TRIO SSS Alternative Spring Break!



FREE TO  
Active SSS  
Students!

**Who:** You!

**What:** A community service project & cultural in Detroit, Michigan and a graduate school trip to Wayne State University

**Where:** Detroit, Michigan

**When:** Saturday, March 19<sup>th</sup> through Wednesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>

**Why:** Because it is important to give back!

McNair Scholar Program  
151 Center for Undergraduate Excellence  
[www.kent.edu/mcnair](http://www.kent.edu/mcnair)



TRIO Student Support Services  
111 Center for Undergraduate Excellence  
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