TRiO is proud of its graduating seniors! 21 students are on track to graduate this June, representing a 100% retention rate of the incoming class besides those few students who transferred to other colleges for non-academic reasons. Our seniors have made their mark on Carleton, assuming leadership roles in a wide variety of campus programs and organizations, and winning an impressive array of awards. Six of the class of 2010 are Mellon Mays Fellows, and several students participated in the McNair Scholars program. Other achievements include distinction on Comps and College-wide achievement awards and fellowships. Many of our seniors are on track to graduate with Latin honors. We celebrate all your hard work and wish you the best of luck in your future pursuits!
Summer Plans

This summer I will be interning here at Carleton with Professor Susan Singer in the Biology department and assisting in her ongoing research in legume genetics and physiology. Singer’s work mainly focuses on exploring the genetics of a model prairie legume species called Chamaecrista fasciiculata, which can be found growing wild in the Carleton Arboretum. Researchers are interested in this type of plant because it is evolutionarily distant from some of the other model legume species, and has great potential to be used in poly crop agriculture and bio-fuels. Through comparing C. fasciculata’s genetic information with other model legume organisms, we can help answer many evolutionary and physiological questions. Singer’s work generally focuses on the origins of nodulations, differences in floral development and flowering time, and genomic evolution in legumes. This summer in particular we will be focusing on how flowering time is regulated in C. fasciiculata, and comparing it to other model legume organisms to determine if the same or different genes and molecular pathways are being employed.

This summer I will be conducting biological research through the Columbia University Amgen Scholars Program in New York City for ten weeks. While I don't know exactly what I will be working on at this point, the most likely project will be to test out which parts of the T-box transcription factor Tbx3 is responsible for the various activities that it does. Transcription factors are proteins that control the expression of specific genes by binding to specific DNA sequences. T-box transcription factors such as Tbx3 have been shown to be involved in the regulation of development processes. It is known that T-box binds DNA, but beyond that, there is little known, especially from experiments within an organism (in vivo). Since I have some mouse embryonic stem cell experience from my research last summer, and there is a lot of new interest in Tbx3 and pluripotency, there is a chance of incorporating my skills into a project, but we shall see.

I'll be heading to francophone West Africa this summer through the Peace Corps. After 3 months of training, orientation, and vastly improving my French skills, I will be working to educate communities on health-related topics. My teaching will likely include HIV/AIDS as well as nutrition. I'll be gone for just over two years total. I look forward to meeting new people, new cultures, and new challenges!
I’m on a Train in Japan
日本で電車に乗っていた僕

I have spent the past school year living in Japan and I must say it has been one of the most valuable experiences in my life. Just making friends, walking around the neighborhoods, and talking to random people I learned so much and am truly grateful. In light of that I want to share one of my experiences with my fellow TRiO members.

One of my favorite things about Japan is the ability to get on a train and just go wherever. While on the train you can meet so many different types of people, many of whom you would have never expected to meet. It is really nice because there is always a surprise in store for you when you are riding the trains in Japan. So my train story goes: on my way to Yokohama for the first time, my friends and I decided to take to the local trains all the way there. After about 10 minutes of riding our first train we met a person I like to call “Happy Stick Man.” This man told us that he had just finished a pilgrimage to all the Buddhist temples in a certain area. Happy Stick Man was very interested in talking to anyone he could. Eventually he found his way to us and started to tell my friends and I what we embodied to him. My female friend was beauty, my tall friend was intelligence, and I was strength. He told us of his hatred of war and his love of peace then he introduced us to his “Happy Stick,” a large wooden pole that had a lot of charms attached to it. This stick, he said, had the power to make whoever it touched happy. So he used this stick to tap my friends and I and make us happy. I know it wasn’t the stick that made me happy, it was the atmosphere, his smile, and his want for peace that gave me that sense of happiness. It was then I finally realized “Hey, I actually live in Japan right now,” taking trains, meeting people, and seeing the culture on my own. This is only one of the fun experiences I had in Japan, but it is one that I will always remember.

Three TRiO Students Win Mellon Mays Fellowships!

Some of you may have heard about your friends applying and stressing out about writing their Mellon Mays proposals. The benefits of the Mellon Mays program are certainly ones to be valued. The Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship (MMUF), established in 1988, works to achieve its mission by identifying and supporting students of great promise and helping them to become scholars of the highest distinction. Mellon Mays’s main goal is to increase the numbers of scholars of color in doctoral degree programs and in the professoriate of America’s higher educational institutions.

In order to support this goal, selected Mellon Fellows are provided with the opportunity to do independent research on a subject of their choice with the support of a faculty member. Hence Mellon fellows are selected according to Mellon Mays’s mission to diversify the professoriate and on the quality of the proposed research. The fellowship lasts throughout the junior and senior year and a term stipend often replaces work study. In addition to this there is also a stipend for summer research and a repayment of up to $10,000 in undergraduate loans if a fellow pursues doctoral study. Students may apply the spring term of their junior and sophomore years. Congratulations to Ray Nelson, Bessie Kelati, and Oumar Diallo on their achievement!
Dear Mari,

I have been unhappy, and I don’t know what to do. It’s been pretty challenging to find friends here at Carleton. This school is also so different than my hometown. I really want to be happy here at Carleton, can you help me?

-Antonymous

I’m really glad someone finally asked me this question. Happiness is something that affects everyone on this campus and has very interesting consequences that no one expects or can control. This is an issue that many college students face when they come to a new place that is not familiar and does not resemble home – as you have properly mentioned.

This question reminds me of an old saying, home is where the heart is. I remember asking myself what does that even mean? I know where home is, but I’m not there right now and happiness always seems to be just out of my reach, and everyone else around me seems to be having a jolly good time! Lesson #1: You’re not the only one who struggles in the pursuit of happiness.

The best image I can think about when it comes to personal happiness is to maintain motions like a river. A river has many appropriate phases in its life span as it moves to the ocean. There are moments where it must be steady and calm and moments where it must be wild and rampant; there are moments where it must change directions and moments where it must fall and crash into a new place. It may stay and carve itself as deep as the Grand Canyon or create a new path. Recognize the phase your life’s “river” is flowing through and follow it, otherwise you risk getting stuck on the shores of insecurity and will cease to continue to grow, wonder, and explore.

Okay, that’s enough about nature, but I hope you can see what I’m trying to get you to understand. Happiness, and how we access it, changes from day to day. What made you happy while you were eight years old, may not work at the moment, and what made you happy last weekend may not work this weekend. You have to keep in constant communication with your body, mind, and soul. A way to keep track of how you’re feeling is to ask yourself three different questions: 1) How is my home life? 2) How’s my personal image? 3) What’s my social scene? These are three very important parts of your life that should be part of your daily reflections, because when one is not in order, the rest tend to be pulled down to the same level.

How is my home life? It is very difficult to justify having a good time if your home life is not in some kind of predictable order. When a student is trying to pursue happiness, activities that usually work tend to stop working when the mind is worried about what is going on back home. I can’t tell you how to fix this when you have a problem, I don’t have all the solutions. I know that some people feel better when they talk to their family constantly, and for other people that only makes the situation worse; some people find their peace distancing themselves from their families through limited phone conversations, others can’t imagine trying.

How’s my personal image? People sometimes think I mean physical image when I’m talking about personal image. (If you want some ideas I have on physical image, please refer to my article in the Fall ’09 newsletter.) Personal image is not the same as physical image. Personal image is all about self-esteem, positive thoughts, optimism mixed with a healthy sense of realism, feeling smart, and feeling accomplished. If you are not feeling confident, you have to ask yourself what you need to start embodying it. Some people find their healthy personal image when they do something
nice for someone else, other people find their healthy personal image when they give themselves some alone time throughout the week, whether at breakfast, at lunch, or dinner, at an intramural sports game, a group activity, a long shower, a nap, or a journal entry – these are some of the many activities you could use to find your healthy personal image. Personal image should be attached to something, not someone. Friends make mistakes, and sometimes they can be a huge disappointment, which is why you shouldn’t attach your personal image to any individual. Attach it to a journal, a skill, a song, something that is independent of any individual at home or at college – because when friends walk away, your personal image won’t because you kept it attached to something that could not leave.

One of my biggest lessons during my freshmen year was recognizing that my academic life went hand in hand with my personal image. Knowing the material and taking the time to understand it made my days flow easier and made classes more enjoyable. It is when you fall behind that you stress out and eventually end up feeling very vulnerable and insecure – regardless how good your friends are or how great your home life is.

**What’s my social scene?** This is looking at the people you hang around with. Finding friends to connect with can be a very exhausting. There are a lot of nice people in college, but where are the people that understand you just like your friends at home do? Be patient. There is no way you can find friends in college that are like your friends at home. You can find similarities, strong connections, and common interests – but overall your friends at home have a connection to your past that your friends in college can’t have. Equally so, your friends in college have an understanding of your constant reality that your friends at home will never identify with. What you have to understand as an individual is that friendship is a very strong connection that can be felt with anyone but only grows with certain people during specific parts of your life.

You need to view trust and friendships as building blocks. One piece at a time and the tower grows; some are meant to grow far beyond your expectations and others are meant to stay short and sweet. Either way, learn from the people around you and be patient! The ones who care for you will stick around.

You will grow, you will learn about yourself, you will surprise yourself, but I won’t lie and say that college is not a painful process. I’ve learned to call it growing pains. I define them as moments where you really wish you could change it, take it back, make it better; and having an understanding that you simply can’t. No matter how smart, how brave, how nice, how strong, or how weak you are, the pain comes from understanding that there is nothing you can do – and out of that pain comes adulthood. Don’t be afraid of this pain. Embrace it and let it lead you where you are supposed to be at this point in your life, and recognize it as temporary. Pain heals, friendships are lost and new ones are gained.

There is a natural process that we are a part of and sometimes we can control the direction it runs in – other times we simply can’t. Either way you should measure your life by the grace you have in getting back up, because everyone falls sometime or another. Happiness is like a river – don’t be afraid of the journey.

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**Class Act: Retention Rates at Carleton**

Whether or not a person feels happy at Carleton is one of many reasons that a student might choose to leave or stay. Did you know that one the most important factor in determining whether a student will graduate from a four year college or university is their socioeconomic status? Come talk with us about retention rates and ways to make Carleton a more welcoming and comfortable place for EVERYONE on Friday, May 14th.

Time: 4:30-6:00PM  
Place: Trio House (216 North College Street)  
**There will be homemade Mexican food, courtesy of our very own Isabel Rodriguez!!**
Pictures, laughter, incredible food and a shocking and beautiful play sum up this year’s TRIO dinner and theater night. We started at a restaurant in Minneapolis called Sawatdee where we enjoyed delicious (and for many of us new) tastes of Thai food. After our feast, we made our way to the Guthrie Theatre to see the wonderful play, *M. Butterfly.*
Goodbye to the Old and Hello to the New Peer Leaders!

Peace Out! We’re going to miss you!!!

Clockwise from top left: Megan Braddock ‘12, Catrice Carter ‘11, Angela Kim ‘12, Ray Nelson ‘12, and Mahal Burr-McNeal ‘12

All I have to say is TRIO is going to eat well when I’m there!

Isabel Rodriguez ‘12

Are you ready for me?!

Robin Wonsley ‘13

Guess What!? I’m Back!!

Say hello to the new girl in town!

Mahal Burr-McNeal ‘12

Allie Cardiel ‘13

Say hello to the new girl in town!
A Last Word from one of our beloved SENIORS!

Most people when they hear about TRIO either do not know much about the program or think it is just a place that lends students their books for the term. But, of course, there is far more to this place than what the average person can tell. As I look back at my time here at Carleton, TRIO has played a HUGE role in my experience here. The most amazing part about the TRIO program at Carleton, to me, is the writing program, the individual meetings with staff, and the exposure that TRIO provides. I was a horrible writer before coming to Carleton and my fall term grades reflected that. But Susannah diligently worked with me to help me find the writing skills that I thought I did not possess and that I needed to become a better writer. The individuals meetings that I had with Rietta, Mitchell, Sarita, and Lacey (and Susannah) have been really helpful in helping me deal with social issues, academic issues, and personal issues. If I needed anything, I could always count on the caring and wonderful people here to help me in some form. Beyond being a place that provides students with moral and academic support, it is also a place to gain more experience, knowledge, exposure, and understanding of various social issues, whether through a Class Act discussion, going on graduate school visits, or even going out to a play. I really appreciated TRIO and especially the staff. As a former TRIO peer leader I learned more about this program and even more what it has to offer after Carleton. Thank you all. My experience here would have been the same if it was not for your caring support!

Chantel V. Johnson

Don't forget to return your BOOKS!

Please make sure that you return your books to TRIO house before leaving for summer break!

The Lending Library will be open Saturday, June 5th and Sunday, June 6th for your convenience.