In early August 2010, we at Carleton’s TRIO/SSS program heard the good news that we were once again fully funded for the next five years through a competitive grant sponsored by the US Department of Education. With that great news, we were able to hire a new full-time Assistant Director, Tina Lugo. Although new to our TRIO program, Tina is not new to the Carleton or Northfield community, as her husband Dan works in the Admissions Office, and they have lived in Northfield for several years. In addition to an energetic personality, Tina brings to her position years of experience as a social worker in the Twin Cities, and a wealth of knowledge and skills to help connect TRIO students to a variety of resources both on and off-campus. As our TRIO program continues to evolve and we explore the new and changing support needs of our students, Tina will play a vital role in helping to meet student needs in accordance with the goals and objectives stated in our grant. So look for new ideas and events that will better connect our students to people and places both on and off campus!

Tina Lugo and her son Michael
TRIO’s Winter term Class Act discussion was held on Friday, February 11th. Students, faculty, and staff came together for a thought-provoking discussion about how students’ concept of home and their roles at home have changed since coming to Carleton. Conversation began with everyone participating in a silent discussion on paper in response to questions posted around the room. After writing and responding to others’ comments, members of the group reflected about what everyone saw and wrote.

More information about the topic can be found at:

http://www.theamericanscholar.org/the-disadvantages-of-an-elite-education/

http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/06_09/b3973087.htm

TRIO’s Health and Fitness event featured a presentation about the Recreation Center led by Mikki Showers and staff. In addition to a dance competition using Tina’s Wii Just Dance 2 video, we also developed suggestions for being healthy at Carleton:

- Get some form of exercise at least 4 days per week
- Attend MindBodySpirit group Classes
- Play Frisbee!
- Explore the Arb—running & snow-shoeing
- Eat small meals
- Make your Carleton password something that makes you laugh

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Pennies for Change

For this year’s TRIO National Day of Service, our TRIO program put cans around campus to raise money for the Community Action Center—an organization that works to provide basic needs for the Northfield Community.

In response to feedback from TRIO participants needing non-alcoholic fun, we put together a community building night. TRIO provided the games (some which dated back to the 80’s and possibly and 70’s) and the Peer Leaders provided the delicious crepes, coffee, and competition. Though we had an abundance of games, the night ended off with two battles: Monopoly and Uno. Both games went on for about an hour and a half. The house was filled with tension and impatience, as players awaited the end of their games. The length of the games even drove some players to quit. However, the night ended with laughter, new friendships, and a motivation to work out after eating so many crepes.
Textbooks provide a vast array of knowledge, but they cannot replicate the experience of being immersed in another culture. That is something unique that can only be gained through experience. What does it mean to have a more global perspective? It is not difficult to grasp that people around the world view things differently, whether it is something as large as political outlook or as small as social mannerisms. My high school English teacher, Julianne Herbert, who graduated from Carleton in 1987, said that studying abroad is invaluable because it reveals cultural differences that may otherwise be overlooked and unexamined.

However, this experience does have its price tag, and The Gilman Scholarship makes the opportunity to study abroad more affordable. Up to $5,000 is awarded to each recipient based on financial need. (The application is available online if you are interested in pursuing a Gilman.)

I put my scholarship towards my airfare to France, where I attended a photography program at Parsons Paris. An art school, Parsons offered me many opportunities not available to me in Northfield. As a crescendo to my stay, I earned a solo exhibition at the end of the program. Through taking the photographs I exhibited, I acquired the most valuable piece of knowledge gained during my study abroad: I discovered the connection between my obsession with photography and my fascination with philosophy.

Art is one of many ways of thinking, and my thoughts are always reflected in my works. There are the elements I have put in my art consciously, but there are also elements waiting to be realized. Every crafted image has the potential for growth and self-discovery. Not only is it a means for me to articulate my thoughts to others, but to myself as well. As it is with studying abroad, some things cannot be taught, but only learned.

To see more of Hai’s photography, go to: http://hai-lights.blogspot.com/
Dear people with good advice,

I am a freshman, and when I first got to Carleton, I was really focused on academics — not so much into the social life. After the first term, I feel that most people have found their niche, but I do not know where I can fit in. I really want to push myself to be happy at Carleton, but I don’t know how.

So, it is that time of year when you reflect back on your first term here on campus and you are asking yourself, what have I done this year and who are my friends? You may think that everyone has found his or her niche, and you don’t know where you fit in. Don’t stress. Finding a group of friends is like choosing a tie: every one is appealing, but the decision comes down to picking the ones that complement you the most.

The majority of students you meet will admit that finding happiness is a good thing to pursue to balance the rigorous Carleton curriculum. Winter term is not too late for you to meet new and wonderful people on campus. Interacting with new people is an ongoing process that you will experience throughout life. So, where to start? When I was a first-year, one of the recurring tips I received from upperclassmen is that you should start getting to know your roommate and floor mates better. Attend the weekly floor dinner and study break hosted by your Residential Assistants. You can take a step forward by putting yourself in a situation where you feel comfortable.

This year I made the extra effort to reach out to other great individuals because of some words of encouragement. I joined the Men of Color group, and I really enjoyed being around a group of individuals I can identify with. Although I haven't met everyone in MOC, the members that I have interacted with are unique in their own Carletonian ways. The events that we do together and discuss are amazing, and I am glad to be part of MOC. We performed a poem for the Martin Luther King Jr. dinner celebration, and I won’t be the first to say that it was an awesome experience being up there with a group of diverse men. So, take the initiative to join a club and it may be one of the best decisions you make here on campus.

You should know that Carleton provides students with many opportunities to turn their minds away from the demands of academics. Participating in extracurricular activities is a good way to interact with people you don't converse with on a daily basis. Initially, it may be hard, but identifying one or two familiar faces from the crowd will help you feel that you do in fact have a niche of your own here at Carleton. You can ask people out to lunch or dinner to get better acquainted. Realize that every day brings new opportunities and you have to make the effort to make the most of them.
Happiness is a state of mind, first and foremost. Trying to please yourself in a meaningful and exciting way can be difficult in a tough academic environment like Carleton. Regardless of our stress levels the question still stands: what makes me happy? When you prioritize finding what makes you content, the rest is easier because then you feel more comfortable meeting other people who enjoy the same things you do.

One of the aspects of Carleton’s social life that I found incredibly difficult was wanting to hang out with certain people, but not feeling like I was included in the “group.” It seemed like this group of friends hung out all the time, ate dinner together all the time, and were always together on the weekend. I kept trying to get into the circle but found that the more I tried the more out of place I felt, and the more insecure I got about whether or not I would be able to fit in. So I decided to throw myself into a club. I signed up and showed up. I memorized people’s names, we did the same activities, met up with each other for dinner dates, and while deep inside me I still felt like I wanted to fit in with the initial group of friends, I found that being present with this new group was very satisfying to me. The new group kept me on my toes and asked me questions, and while we did not study together, it was comforting to know that we would be meeting up again later in the week.

Wanting to be a part of a particular group is normal. We went through it in high school, and the need to fit in never quite ends. However, you can choose to focus on those people who don’t accept you, or you can accept and nurture what people are offering. It can be kind of scary to make new friends. You never know how they’re going to react to what you have to say about life, but unless you take the chance, you’ll never find out.

If you’re looking for more personal help, your TRIO Peer Leaders are a great source of advice. Not only are they willing to meet with you one-on-one, but they also plan events for you so you can meet other people. It all starts with a spontaneous event where you realize you have similarities with other people. From there, it’s your choice to keep friendships going. If people don’t meet you halfway, pull a Jay-Z and say “On to the next!” Life is stressful at Carleton already. You don’t need to be around people who make you feel insecure about who you are. Be around people who uplift you, enjoy the same things you do, and above all are willing to hear you out.

A quotation from my father I will never forget:

“There are two kinds of friends, the people who run to you and the people you run to. Only a precious few can act as both.”

I triple dog dare you...

To write a warm fuzzy for someone who has been there for you either this past week or last term. Tell them in a short and sweet note that you appreciate them and put it in their mailbox.
Meet the Peer Leaders

Greetings Everyone! I'm a sophomore planning to major in International Relations. I'm proud to be one of your TRIO Peer Leaders!

Hey, the name is Robin and I will be your goofy and outgoing Peer Leader. If you need advice about anything or just want to laugh...come find me.

Hi everyone! I'm excited to be working with you all this year. I love to listen to whatever people have to say, so don't be shy!

Hey! I’m Isabel or Izzy. I love cooking and making coffee for people willing to eat/drink my creations, so stop by TRIO sometime!

Hello :) I’m so glad to be a peer leader again! As for who I am, I’m a chocolate loving, hippo fanatic, scrabble champion :-P Can’t wait to get to know you all!
Where have the years gone?
Can you figure out who is who?
### February/March

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**Get your books in!**

Make sure that you return your books to TRIO house before leaving for spring break. That way we can get them shelved in time to give you textbooks for Spring Term!