

CARIBBEAN ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS

Puerto Rico & Virgin Islands



Factbook 2024-2025

TRIO PROGRAMS IMPACT REPORT

TRIO PROGRAMS ARE FUNDED BY GRANTS
FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



ASOCIACIÓN CARIBESA DE PROGRAMAS
DE OPORTUNIDADES EDUCATIVAS

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Within these pages, you will find the heart of TRIO stories of perseverance, opportunity, and success. TRIO has been a lifeline for countless Puerto Ricans, opening doors to education and helping students achieve what once seemed impossible. It's more than a program; it's a movement that empowers individuals to dream bigger and reach higher.

The numbers tell a powerful story. TRIO programs in Puerto Rico have led to higher high school graduation rates and increased college enrollment, proving their lasting impact. But beyond the statistics are the people—students who have defied the odds, broken barriers, and changed the course of their lives through education.

This Factbook doesn't just highlight achievements; it celebrates the resilience of our participants and the dedication of the educators, mentors, and advocates who stand beside them. Together, we are not just shaping futures—we are transforming communities, ensuring that every student, regardless of their background, has the chance to succeed and thrive. Education in Puerto Rico is more than a path to opportunity; it is a promise of hope, resilience, and a brighter future for generations to come.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. Alejandro Morales".

PRESIDENT

TRIO HOST INSTITUTIONS

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY CENTERS

Interamerican University of Puerto Rico - Arecibo
Interamerican University of Puerto Rico - Barranquitas
Interamerican University of Puerto Rico - San Germán

MCNAIR ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

Interamerican University of Puerto Rico - San Germán

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Interamerican University of Puerto Rico - Aguadilla
Interamerican University of Puerto Rico - Barranquitas
University of Puerto Rico - Arecibo
University of Puerto Rico - Humacao
University of Puerto Rico - Río Piedras
Universidad Ana G. Méndez - Cupey
Universidad Ana G. Méndez - Gurabo
Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico - San Juan (Regular)
Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico - San Juan (English as a Second Language)
Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico - San Juan (STEM)
Antillean Adventist University - Mayagüez (Regular)
Antillean Adventist University - Mayagüez (English as a Second Language)
Universidad Del Sagrado Corazón - Santurce (Regular)
Universidad Del Sagrado Corazón - Santurce (Disabled)
San Juan University College - San Juan

TALENT SEARCH

ASPIRA Inc. De Puerto Rico - Carolina
Interamerican University of Puerto Rico - Ponce
Universidad Ana G. Méndez - Gurabo
Universidad de Puerto Rico - Río Piedras

UPWARD BOUND/

UPWARD BOUND MATH & SCIENCE

Academy of Medical Directors of Puerto Rico, Inc.
ASPIRA Inc. de Puerto Rico - Carolina
Interamerican University of Puerto Rico - Barranquitas
Interamerican University of Puerto Rico - Ponce
Interamerican University of Puerto Rico - San Germán
LULAC National Education Services Centers, Inc.
Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico - Regular
Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico - SITE
Universidad Ana G. Méndez - Cupey
Universidad Ana G. Méndez - Gurabo
Universidad Del Sagrado Corazón - Santurce
University of Puerto Rico - Humacao
University of Puerto Rico - Río Piedras
Interamerican University of Puerto Rico - Aguadilla UBMS

VETERANS UPWARD BOUND

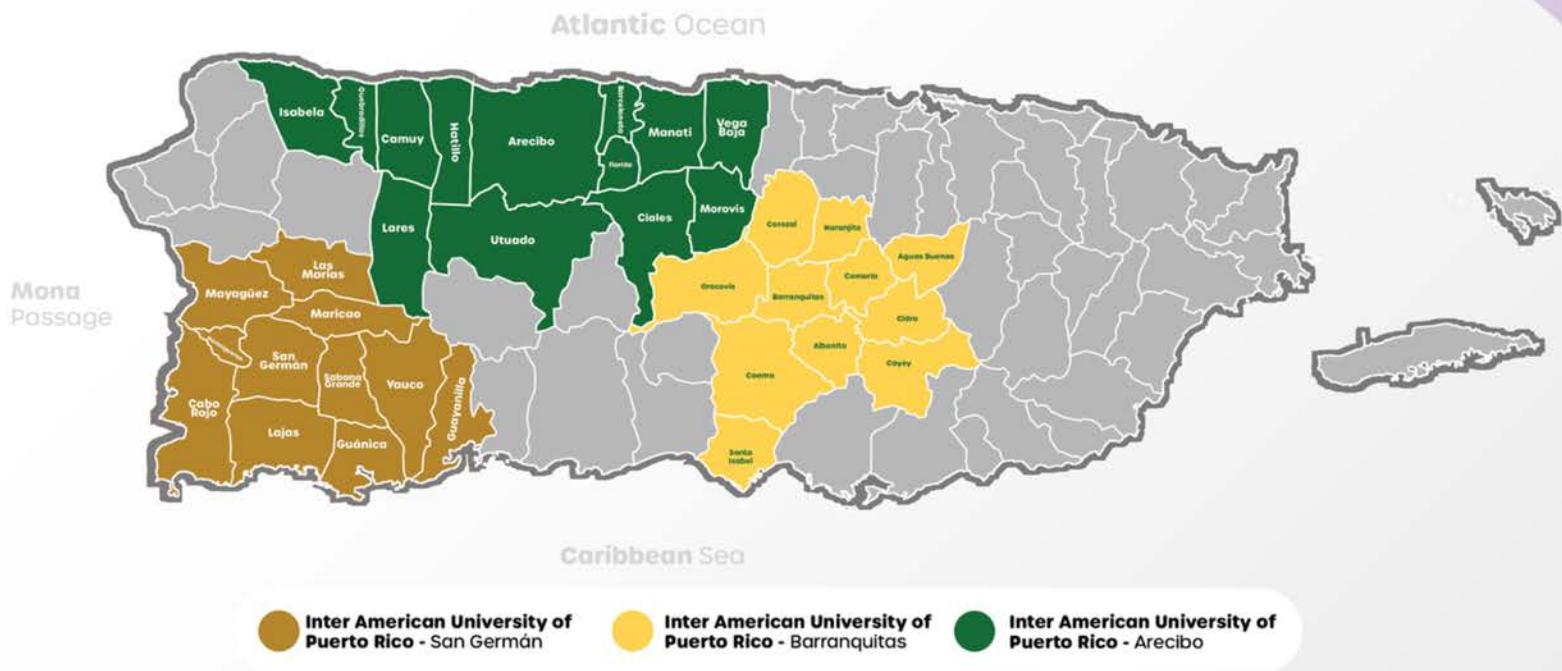
ASPIRA Inc. de Puerto Rico - Carolina

TRIO PROGRAMS, # SERVED, AND FUNDING IN PUERTO RICO

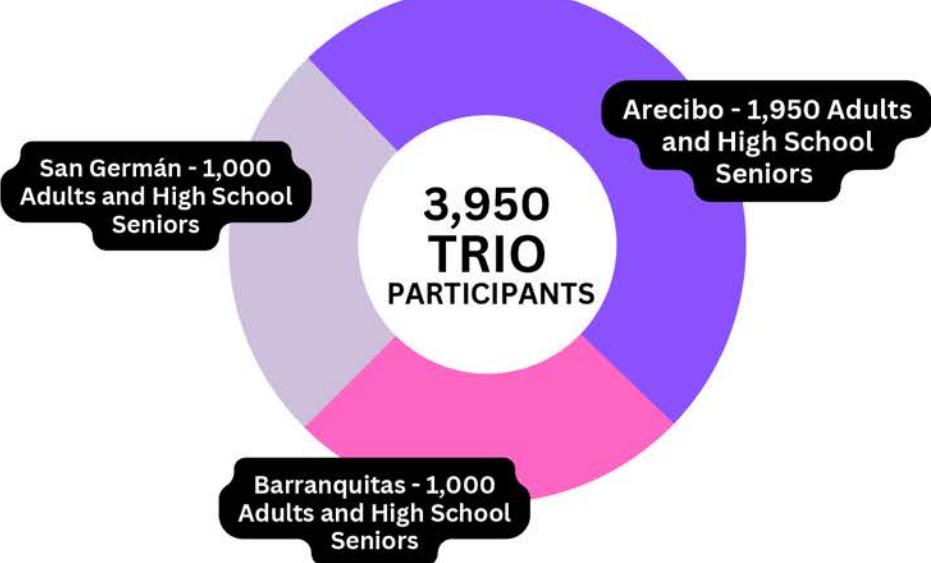
TRIO PROGRAM	# OF PROGRAMS	# OF PARTICIPANTS	2024-25 FUNDING
ALL TRIO PROGRAMS	37	12,847	\$ 14,849,607.00
EOC PROGRAMS	3	3,950	\$ 1,194,857.00
MCNAIR PROGRAMS	1	33	\$ 311,980.00
SSS PROGRAMS	15	3,632	\$ 5,486,076.00
TS PROGRAMS	4	4,046	\$ 2,262,102.00
UB PROGRAMS	12	986	\$ 4,911,034.00
UBMS PROGRAMS	1	60	\$ 309,505.00
VUB PROGRAMS	1	140	\$ 374,053.00



Educational Opportunity Centers



Serve **3,950** Seniors and Adults through **3** projects which provide services to participants in **34** counties across the Island.



Our participants typically come from low-income households where no one has previously completed a college degree. We are proud to serve each student and adults. With continued funding for our programs, we are eager to serve many more!



EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY CENTERS

Educational Opportunity Centers (EOC), serving adults, provide counseling and information on college admissions to qualified adults who want to enter or continue a program of postsecondary education. The program also provides services to improve the financial and economic literacy of participants. An important objective of the program is to counsel participants on financial aid options, including basic financial planning skills, and to assist in the college application process. The goal of EOC is to increase the number of adult participants who enroll in postsecondary education institutions.

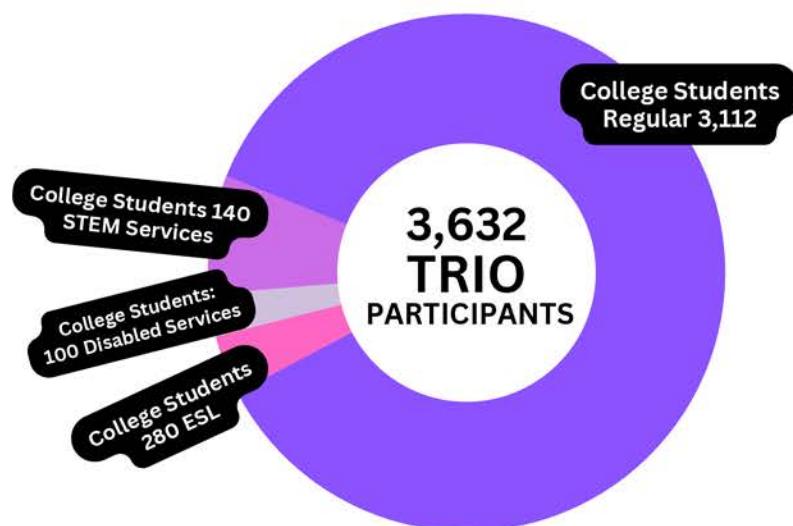


"Educational Opportunity Centers assist with FAFSA Completion and provided me academic and vocational guidance, personal counseling and career selection, orientation, among other services. I completed a Bachelor's degree in Industrial Psychology. At the moment I'm in the process of completing a Doctoral degree in Clinical Psychology in Ponce Health Sciences University" - José Luis Colón Interamerican University of Puerto Rico, Arecibo Campus

Student Support Services



Serve **3,632** freshmen students through **15** projects which provide services to participants in **7** counties across the Island.



Our participants are disabled, low-income, and first generation where no one has previously completed a college degree. We serve college students and provide services to retain and guide them to complete a Bachelor's Degree. We need continued funds for our programs to serve more!



STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Student Support Services (SSS), serves college students providing opportunities for academic development, assists students with basic college requirements, and motivates students toward the successful completion of their postsecondary education. Student Support Services projects also may provide grant aid to current SSS participants who are receiving Federal Pell Grants. The goal of SSS is to increase the college retention and graduation rates of its participants.



"Thanks to the comprehensive support of TRIO SSS, I completed a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, continued with a Master of Science in Nursing, and obtained a professional certification as an oncology nurse. I currently work at the Department of Veterans Affairs in San Juan, Puerto Rico". - Alfredo O. Morales Morales, Antillean Adventist University

PUERTO RICO TRIO PROGRAMS



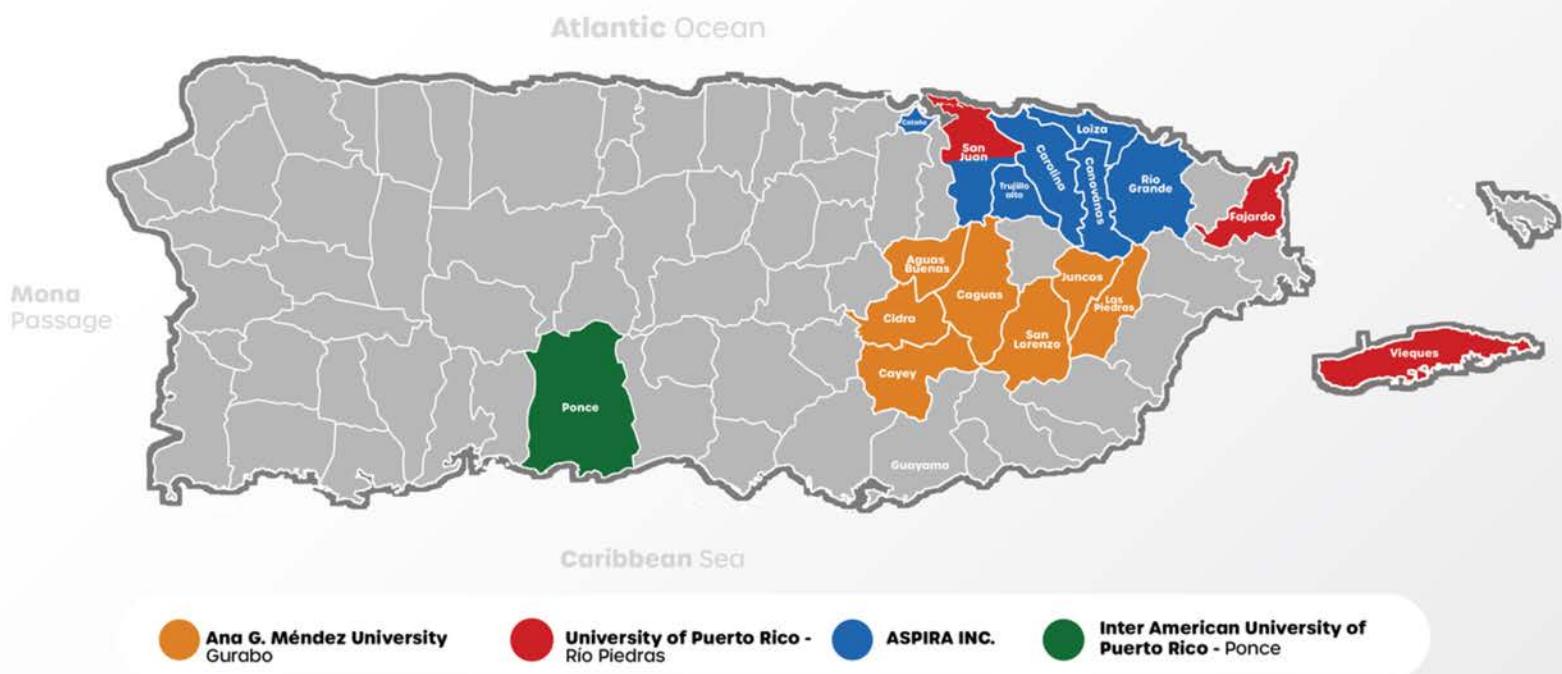
"I am grateful to TRIO SSS that provided me the skills to master public speaking, experiences on PRSSA Sagrado and to obtain a Peace Corps Prep Certification. Today, I work as a Public Relations Professional at Kinesis Foundation".
- Lisandra Vélez Figueroa



STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Student Support Services (SSS), serves college students providing opportunities for academic development, assists students with basic college requirements, and motivates students toward the successful completion of their postsecondary education. Student Support Services projects also may provide grant aid to current SSS participants who are receiving Federal Pell Grants. The goal of SSS is to increase the college retention and graduation rates of its participants.

Talent Search



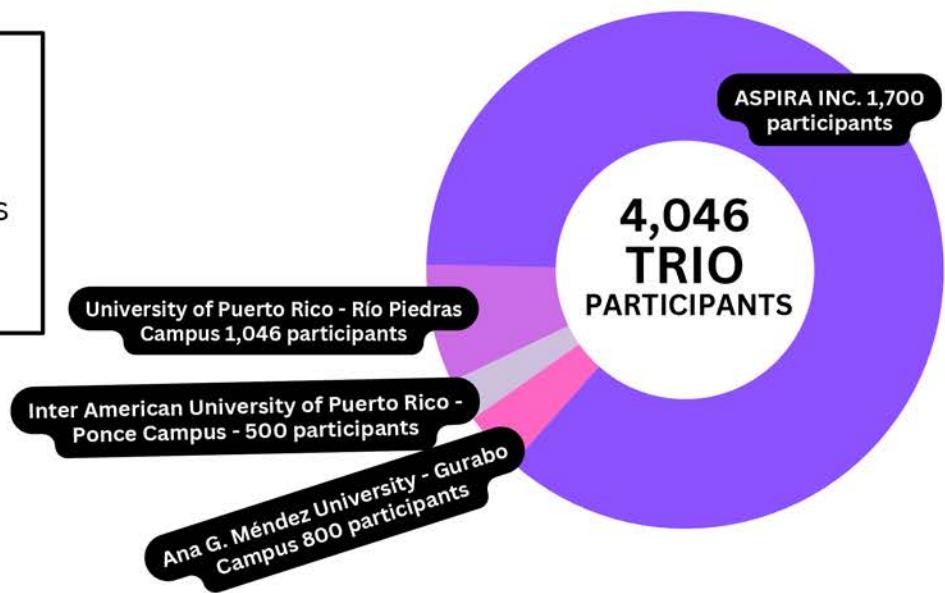
● Ana G. Méndez University
Gurabo

● University of Puerto Rico -
Río Piedras

● ASPIRA INC.

● Inter American University of
Puerto Rico - Ponce

Serve **4,046** 6th to 12th grade students as well as adult high school dropouts through **4** projects which provide services to participants in **17** counties across the Island.



These participants typically come from low-income households where no one has previously completed a college degree. We are proud to serve each student from six grade through 12th grade as well as adult high school dropouts. We need continued funding to provide educational opportunities to our participants from an early stage.



TALENT SEARCH

Talent Search (TS), serving middle and high school students, provides academic, career, and financial counseling to its participants and encourages them to graduate from high school and continue on to and complete their postsecondary education. The program publicizes the availability of financial aid and assists participants with the postsecondary application process. Talent Search also encourages persons who have not completed education programs at the secondary or postsecondary level to enter or reenter and complete postsecondary education. The goal of Talent Search is to increase the number of youths from disadvantaged backgrounds to complete high school and enroll in and complete their postsecondary education.



"Thanks to TS I am a Doctor in Pathology Translational Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The Talent Search Program was the element for university transition tutorials that helped me to achieve my academic goals and also strengthen my confidence". - Dr. Christian Agosto Burgos - Universidad Ana G. Méndez Gurabo Campus

PUERTO RICO TRIO PROGRAMS



"Thanks to Talent Search at the Inter American University of Puerto Rico Ponce Campus, I learned about my academic options upon graduation from high school and chose a university program from which I earned a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice and Forensic Investigation. It also helped me develop skills that will be very useful in my graduate studies at the Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico School of Law". - Abdiel A. Wilkes Machado



TALENT SEARCH

Talent Search (TS), serving middle and high school students, provides academic, career, and financial counseling to its participants and encourages them to graduate from high school and continue on to and complete their postsecondary education. The program publicizes the availability of financial aid and assists participants with the postsecondary application process. Talent Search also encourages persons who have not completed education programs at the secondary or postsecondary level to enter or reenter and complete postsecondary education. The goal of Talent Search is to increase the number of youths from disadvantaged backgrounds who complete high school and enroll in and complete their postsecondary education.

McNair Post - Baccalaureate



Inter American University of
Puerto Rico - San Germán

Serves **33** college students
through **1** project which
provides services to
participants in **1** county.

College Students:
33 participants

33
TRIO
PARTICIPANTS

Our participants typically come from low-income households where no one has previously completed a college degree. We are proud to serve each college student by providing the skills, knowledge, and investigation experience necessary to complete their Doctoral Degrees. With continued funding for our programs, we are eager to serve many more!



MCNAIR PROGRAMS

Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Programs (McNair), serving college students interested in Ph.D. studies, prepare eligible participants for doctoral studies through involvement in research and other scholarly activities. Participants are from disadvantaged backgrounds and have demonstrated strong academic potential. Grantees work closely with participants as they complete their undergraduate requirements, encouraging participants to enroll in graduate programs and then track their progress to the successful completion of advanced degrees. The goal is to increase the attainment of Ph.D. degrees by students from underrepresented segments of society.



Torres educational journey began at the Interamerican University of Puerto Rico, where he earned a Bachelor's Degree in Sports Technology with a Minor in Biology in 2013. He then pursued a Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) degree at the University of Puerto Rico, Medical Sciences Campus, completing it in 2021. "I'm grateful for the opportunity that McNair gave me to learn about research and all the mentoring provided to complete my degree. I currently work as a Research Coordinator for the McNair Program and as a faculty member at UPR San Germán Campus and at Ana G. Méndez University Ponce Campus".
- Luis Daniel Orlando Torres-Esteves

PUERTO RICO TRIO PROGRAMS



Natalia Quiñonez received a Bachelor's in Psychology at Inter American University San Germán Campus. Currently, she's pursuing a Master's in Mental Health Counseling at Marquette University. "The McNair program gave me the chance to challenge myself and set goals to go beyond the limits I often place on myself. Since research can be a daunting process, it provided me with the necessary tools to succeed. Earning a degree and working on research can be difficult, but setting submission deadlines with my mentor helped me build accountability and time management skills." -N.Quiñonez



MCNAIR PROGRAMS

Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Programs (McNair), serving college students interested in Ph.D. studies, prepare eligible participants for doctoral studies through involvement in research and other scholarly activities. Participants are from disadvantaged backgrounds and have demonstrated strong academic potential. Grantees work closely with participants as they complete their undergraduate requirements, encouraging participants to enroll in graduate programs and then track their progress to the successful completion of advanced degrees. The goal is to increase the attainment of Ph.D. degrees by students from underrepresented segments of society.

Upward Bound Regular

Upward Bound Math | Science



Upward Bound Regular

- Academy of Medical Directors of PR, Inc - Maunabo and Patillas
- ASPIRA, Inc De Puerto Rico - Carolina
- Inter American University of Puerto Rico - Barranquitas
- Inter American University of Puerto Rico - Ponce
- Inter American University of Puerto Rico - San Germán
- LULAC National Education Service Centers, Inc - Bayamón and Toa Alta
- Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico - Ponce (Regular)
- Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico - Ponce (SITE)
- Universidad Ana G. Méndez - Cupey and Gurabo
- Universidad del Sagrado Corazón - San Juan
- University of Puerto Rico - Humacao and Río Piedras

Upward Bound Math and Science

- Inter American University of Puerto Rico - Aguadilla

UB Regular serve **986** High School students through **12** projects and UBMS serves **60** High School students through **1** project across the Island.

UB-High School Students:
986 participants

1,046
TRIO
PARTICIPANTS

UBMS-High School Students:
60 participants

Our participants typically come from low-income households where no one has previously completed a college degree. With continued funding for our programs, we are eager to serve many more!



UPWARD BOUND REGULAR & MATH & SCIENCE

Upward Bound (UB) Regular and Math & Science (UBMS) provides fundamental support to participants in their preparation for college entrance. The program offers opportunities for participants to succeed in their precollege performance and ultimately in their higher education pursuits. Upward Bound serves high school students from low-income families and from families in which neither parent holds a bachelor's degree. The goal of Upward Bound is to increase the rate at which participants complete secondary education and enroll in and graduate from institutions of postsecondary education by providing the skills and motivation to do so. UBMS is designed to strengthen the math and science skills of participating students.



"Without TRIO UB IAUPR-Barranquitas Campus I may never have been able to even dream about a college education. Thanks to the guidance, skills and motivation received on the program I was able to complete a Bachelor's Degree in Industrial Engineering in IAUPR-Bayamón Campus".

- Dannyris Vega Santos

PUERTO RICO TRIO PROGRAMS



"All the exceptional academic experiences I had at UBMS IAUPR Aguadilla Campus, lead my path to earn a Bachelor's degree in Secondary Education in Mathematics from IAUPR San Germán Campus. I was able to demonstrate leadership and dedication working as a tutor and as an athlete, winning most of my competitions. Currently I'm working as a Mathematics teacher in a private school while also pursuing a Master's Degree in Applied Mathematics further advancing on my knowledge and career". - Ezequiel Soto Piñero



"The UBP at Pontifical Catholic University, Ponce Campus provided me with the tools to, firstly, grow confidence in my abilities to continue post-secondary education. It also gave me the leadership skills to finish my Ph.D. in clinical psychology. As a first-generation low-income student, it was a great achievement both personally and professionally. My journey in UB took me from being a tutor, then an instructor, a coordinator, and for the past 7 years, I've been the director of the same program". - Dr. Alejandro Morales

Veterans Upward Bound



ASPIRA, Inc. de Puerto Rico

Serves **140** Veterans through
1 project which provides
services to participants
across the Island.

140
TRIO
VETERAN
PARTICIPANTS

Veterans
140 participants

Our participants typically come from low-income households where no one has previously completed a college degree. We are proud to serve each veteran adult. With continued funding for our programs, we are eager to serve many more!



VETERANS UPWARD BOUND

Veterans Upward Bound (VUB), serving veterans, provides assessment and enhancement of basic skills through counseling, mentoring, tutoring, and academic instruction in the core subject areas. The primary goal of the program is to increase the rate at which participants enroll in and complete postsecondary education programs.



"My sincere gratitude for the positive impact that Aspira's Veterans Upward Bound program has had on my life. Between September and December 2023, I had the opportunity to participate in the program, which provided me with the necessary tools to resume my university studies and update my knowledge in key areas such as computer science, math, science, and English. Thanks to the support and structure the program offered me during those months, I not only managed to strengthen my academic skills, but also found renewed motivation to continue moving forward with my second year of Bachelor's in social work at Ana G. Méndez University, Aguadilla Campus."

- Randie Robledo Sánchez

WHAT OUR CURRENT TRIO PARTICIPANTS SAY...



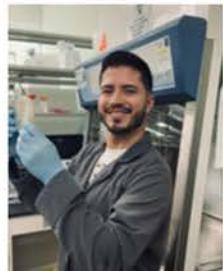
"I'm so grateful to Student Support Services of Universidad del Sagrado Corazón program because it gave me the opportunity to participate in a Legislative Internship that helped me confirm my career selection. It also helped me to manage my finances throughout my college years. " - **Tanairy Soto Rodríguez**



"One of the things that I like about Upward Bound IAUPR Barranquitas Campus is that I had the opportunity to participate from STEAM experiences such as underwater robots building and STEM career exploration at Universal Studios. Among other experiences that have helped on my career selection as I want to pursue architectural studies". - **Hannah S. Rosario Vázquez**



"I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Upward Bound Program at Inter American University of Puerto Rico, Aguadilla Campus for the incredible opportunity to be part of this experience. Thanks to Upward Bound, I have been able to develop essential leadership skills that will guide me in my future endeavors. I am deeply thankful for all the support and resources provided, which have helped me envision a brighter future". - **Sherliz Hernández Badillo**



"The McNair program at IAUPR San Germán Campus provided me with a unique experience outside the classroom. Thanks to this program, I was able to develop my passion for research in the field of sciences and contribute to solving current and future problems. McNair became an extended family forever. I am very grateful to the program and its excellent staff, who have been and continue to be vital in helping us achieve what we have accomplished through their mentorship and the opportunities they provided." - **Christopher A. Sambolín Pérez** (Doctoral Candidate in International Biotechnology)



"In 11th grade, I entered the Talen Search program at Universidad Ana G. Méndez, Gurabo Campus and I had the opportunity to go on field trips where I explored university options across the island. It helped me decide what major I wanted to pursue and where the best options were. I'm now in my second academic semester at UPR Río Piedras Campus, pursuing my bachelor's degree in psychology. Talent Search paved this path for me, and I'm truly grateful for all of this". - **Dali Santos Collazo**



"Joining Upward Bound Math and Science IUPR Aguadilla Campus, has been the best decision I have made, as it has provided me with the tools and support needed to progress academically and achieve my goals". - **Tyana M. Cruz Otero**

OUR TRIO ALUMNI



Carlos Javier Santos is an Upward Bound Alumnus. In 2006 he completed a Bachelor in Business Administration, in Business Law, Public Relations and Management and in 2025 completed a Master's Degree in Public Administration, specializing in arts administration. Both degrees obtained at Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico. Currently, he serves as an arts professor and communications coordinator at the same campus.



Dr. Ivelisse Acevedo Moreno is a TRIO SSS Alumna. She completed a Bachelor's Degree in Office Systems Administration with a specialty in Human Resources, a Master's Degree in Public Administration, and a Doctoral Degree in Leadership in Educational Organizations. All from UPR Río Piedras Campus. In 2023 she received the CAEOP TRIO Achiever Award. She currently serves as the Dean of Graduate Students Affairs at her alma mater, the UPR-Río Piedras Campus.



Damaris Pietri-Rodríguez is a TRIO UB Alumna. She graduated from IAUPR with a BA in Math Education in 2013 and in 2019 she obtained a Master's Degree in Applied Math. She is pursuing a doctoral degree in Math Education. She is giving back the services and guidance received from the program serving as Academic Coordinator in the Upward Bound program at IAUPR-SG Campus.



Edwin Johnson Cardona is a TRIO Upward Bound Alumnus. He completed a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work at Universidad del Sagrado Corazón. In 2023, he received the CAEOP TRIO Achiever Award. Currently he is working on his Master's Degree in Social Work with an emphasis in Community at the Beatrix Lassalle Graduate School of the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus.



Dr. Leidy E. Valerio Pérez is a TRIO SSS Alumna. She completed a Bachelor's in Natural Sciences in Integrative Biology from the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus and went on to pursue a Doctorate in Medicine at the UPR Medical Sciences Campus. In 2021 she received the Investigation Trajectory award. In 2024 she received the CAEOP TRIO Achiever Award. She completed a specialty in Internal Medicine and is currently pursuing a subspecialty fellowship in infectious disease at NYU Langone Hospital.



Sandy M. Borrero Hernández is an Upward Bound Alumna. In 2023, she completed a Bachelor of Arts Degree with a concentration in drama at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus. In 2024 she received the CAEOP TRIO Achiever Award. Borrero has worked in several theater plays and is currently waiting acceptance from NYU Tish School of Arts in NY, University of West London in England and UConn University in Connecticut.



Dr. Carmelo Cedeño De La Rosa is a TRIO Upward Bound and SSS Alumna. In 2015 he obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Public Administration with a minor in pure history and in 2018 he obtained a Master of Education with a specialty in Professional Counseling both degrees awarded at the Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico. In 2023 he received the CAEOP TRIO Achiever Award. He recently completed his Doctoral Degree in Educational Management at the same campus.



Daymar González is a TRIO Upward Bound Alumna from UAGM Bayamón. She obtained a Bachelor Degree in Science in Nursing from Caribbean University in 2022. Currently, she works as a specialized nurse at the Department of Health of Puerto Rico's COVID-19 division.

#TRIOWORKS

OUR TRIO ALUMNI



Yaritza Alvarado-Vega is an SSS Alumna. She graduated from Universidad Ana G. Méndez, Gurabo Campus, with a Bachelor's Degree (2016) in Criminal Justice and a Master's Degree (2018) in Public Affairs in Forensic Sciences. She worked with Fayetteville Police Department in North Carolina and currently works with the Puerto Rico Police Department's gender violence investigation department.



Juan D. Capeles Cordero is a TRIO UB and SSS alumnus. He completed a Bachelor's degree in Biotechnology with a minor in Pre-Med at IAUPR-Barranquitas Campus, a Master's Degree in Environmental Health at Ponce Health Sciences University of PR, and he is currently completing a Doctoral Degree in Public Health with a specialty on Environmental Health at UPR's Medical Science Campus. In 2021 he received CAEOP'S TRIO Achiever Award. Since 2021, he works at the PR Department of Health as an Auxiliar Regional Supervisor.



Fidel Anthony Avilés Minyety is a Gear Up and UBMS Alumnus from Inter American University of Puerto Rico, San Germán Campus. "Thanks to the Gear Up and UBMS programs, I received the right tools, guidance, and support, as well as numerous enriching experiences that equipped me with the knowledge necessary for success". Avilés completed a Bachelor's Degree in Mechanical Engineering. Currently he works as a Legislative Liaison for US Space Command in Washington DC.



Mr. Terry Lastra Cruz is a TRIO SSS and UB Alumnus. He completed a bachelor's degree in Social Sciences with a specialty in Political Sciences as well as a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling. He is currently working on his doctoral dissertation in Social Work. All of his degrees are from the UPR Rio Piedras Campus. In 2018 he was selected as a CAEOP TRIO Achiever. Since July 2023 he works as the Director of the San Juan Youth Office reinvigorating the services provided to students of the Capital city.



Gisella Burgos Soto is a TRIO Upward Bound Alumna from the Inter American University of Puerto Rico, Aguadilla Campus. In 1998 she completed a Bachelor's Degree in the Teaching of English to Speakers of other Languages and in 2002 she received a Master's Degree in Public Administration from Valdosta State University in Georgia. In 2021 she received a Master's Degree in English Education from Cambridge College. In 2020 she received the TRIO Achiever Award in Puerto Rico. She served for 28 years as a Park Ranger and Visitors Services Specialist in Puerto Rico and US for National Park Services and Fish and Wildlife Services.



Adrianis Paola Clemente Rivera was a student of Student Support Services (PSAE) at the UPR, Rio Piedras Campus. She worked for the program as a Spanish tutor during her last year of undergraduate studies. In 2024, she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Secondary Education in Spanish and Art in Education with a concentration in Elementary Level Education (K-5th grade). Currently, Clemente Rivera is pursuing a Master's Degree in Education with a major in Literacy and Children's Literature at the same university and she works at PSAE as an orientation official.

#TRIOWORKS



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ASOCIACIÓN CARIBEÑA DE PROGRAMAS
DE OPORTUNIDADES EDUCATIVAS



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