



TRIO ACHIEVERS: LIZVETTE VILLAFANA



TRIO

TRIO provided me with the support I needed as a first-generation college student. It helped me stay informed about college requirements and helped me apply. Waking up at six in the morning to catch the bus from Patterson to Modesto for the summer program was not always fun, but the people made it worth it. My favorite memories of TRIO all involve the amazing relationships I built with the tutors, instructors, and students from other schools.

Current Career: PhD Student in Astrophysics & Astronomy - UCLA

Education

Bachelor of Science in Astrophysics - UCLA

Master's of Science in Aerospace Engineering - USC

TRIO Program: Upward Bound

Patterson High School

“TRIO is part of the reason I ended up attending UCLA for my undergraduate studies”

One of my biggest challenges prior to starting college was gaining my father's support in my decision to move 300 miles away from home. My dad was always encouraging and a big motivation for me but when I started getting accepted to schools further away from home he couldn't understand why leaving Patterson was necessary.

“To this day, I thank TRIO for all of their support”

I couldn't visit UCLA at the time because I still did not quite have my parents' complete support at the time. **With TRIO, I was able to visit the campus and soon after fell in love and submitted my intent to register.** Eventually, I gained my father's support; for any students in similar situations, I encourage you to be patient with your parent/guardian(s).

“Take advantage of TRIO. All of it”

It's an amazing program, and good academic advising from people who genuinely care can unfortunately be hard to find. Enjoy the people and the program in it's entirety. Don't be scared to ask - ask for help because people won't know you need help if you don't ask. **Ask for and about opportunities in life because the answer will always be no if you don't ask.**