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**Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
September 27, 2010**

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TRiO Students and Staff
California State University, Fresno
Student Support Services
TRiO CenCal Chapter, WESTOP
Frank W. Thomas 122, M/S TA35
5241 N. Maple Avenue
Fresno, CA 93740

Dear TRiO Students and Staff,

As a new school year begins, it is important to recognize the work being done to support student success at our Valley's colleges and universities. TRiO student programs have consistently promoted student achievement and contributed immensely to the quality of education that students receive in our Valley.


Hearing from students who have benefited from federal educational programs is always appreciated. Thank you for writing to me on the importance of TRiO services to your educational careers. I am proud to see what this program has accomplished and the success of its participants; several members of my staff are alumni of TRiO programs. Programs which have such proven records of success and strong student support deserve our recognition and support.

TRiO is one of the nation's most important educational initiatives designed to advance equal education opportunities for all of our Nation's students. Since TRiO programs were created, they have served as exemplary educational opportunity outreach programs and have motivated and supported students from disadvantaged backgrounds. This includes large groups of students coming from the rural communities of my district such as Firebaugh, Mendota, Avenal and Arvin to name just a few. Ensuring that these students have an equal chance at attaining a college degree is essential to the development of our Valley.

As a member of the bipartisan Congressional TRiO Caucus, I am proud to work with my fellow members of Congress to support and advocate for federal TRiO funding for local institutions such as California State University of Fresno, California State University of Bakersfield, Fresno City College and West Hills Community College. This includes funding for several programs such as the TRiO Upward Bound, Talent Search and Student Support Services programs. By funding these programs, we continue to increase retention and graduation rates of low-income and first-generation college students and put them on a path to success. As a first-generation college graduate, and Fresno State alumnus, I am pleased to see the great work TRiO is doing to assist students.

Please accept my congratulations on the success of the many students who have participated in TRiO programs and my thanks to the program staff for their dedication and service to the Central Valley. I wish you the best of luck during the school year and continued success with your inspiring program, and pledge to continue working hard for all the students of our Valley.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jim Costa". The signature is stylized and written over the word "Sincerely,".

Jim Costa
Member of Congress