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SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY AWARDED \$4.2M TO HELP LOW INCOME, POTENTIAL FIRST GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENTS ACCESS HIGHER EDUCATION

Two TRIO Talent Search grants will each provide five years of funding to help 1,516 local students per year find their path to college.

San Diego, California. (December 6, 2021) – The U.S. Department of Education announced that SDSU's Pre-College Institute (PCI) has received two federal Talent Search grants of approximately \$4.2 million to help more low income students who would be the first members of their families to earn degrees to prepare for and enroll in college. Educational Talent Search (ETS) was first funded in 1991. Over the past thirty years, it has supported 36,000 students from middle school through high school to access higher education opportunities and to receive substantial financial aid. Talent Search also provided students with academic tutoring. Talent Search Mentoring (TSM) was approved for its second funding cycle. In the past five years it has supported 2,352 students with tutoring, mentoring, access to financial aid and enrollment in the college of their choice. Since 2016, both ETS and TSM have supported 790 students to graduate high school with a regular high school diploma.

One of the Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search identifies and assists middle and high school students who have the potential to succeed in higher education. At least two-thirds of the students in each local Talent Search program are from low-income economic backgrounds and families in which neither parent has a bachelor's degree. Talent Search provides these students with counseling as well as information about college admissions requirements, scholarships and various student financial aid programs so that they can better understand their educational opportunities and options. According to the U.S. Department of Education, 80% of Talent Search participants enroll in postsecondary institutions immediately following high school graduation. In FY20, more than 309,000 students are enrolled in 473 Talent Search TRIO projects in the U.S.

Many Talent Search alumni have gone on to great success, among them former U.S. Congressman Henry Bonilla from Texas and former Oklahoma State Senator and State Representative Kenneth Corn, one of the state's youngest in history.

Talent Search began in 1965 as part of President Lyndon Baines Johnson's War on Poverty. It was the second of eight federal "TRIO" programs authorized by the Higher Education Act to help college students succeed in higher education. It recognizes that students whose parents do not have a college degree have more difficulties navigating the complexity of decisions that college requires for success, bolsters students from low-income families who have not had the academic opportunities that their college peers have had, and helps remove obstacles preventing students from thriving academically.

"I am heartfully grateful to the Department of Education Office of Higher Education and to the United States Congress for continuing the financial support that enables the SDSU Pre-College Institute to assist low-income families guide their students to a better future through education," said Cynthia Park, PhD, Executive Director of the SDSU PCI, and professor in the SDSU School of Teacher Education.

"As systemic inequality and financial hardship discourage students from succeeding in college, TRIO programs like Talent Search take on new importance because they continue to help students who are low-income and first-generation to earn college degrees," said Maureen Hoyler, president of the non-profit Council for Opportunity in Education (COE) in Washington, D.C. COE is dedicated to furthering the expansion of college opportunities for low-income, first-generation students, and students with disabilities nationwide.

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