



DSLCC... It's all about Where You're Going!

Dear TRiO Colleagues:

It is time for the annual Western VAEOPP Drive-In Conference and we are happy to invite you to attend this event at Dabney S. Lancaster Community College in Clifton Forge. The conference will begin with registration and refreshments at 9:30 A.M. on Friday, April 23, 2010, with our welcome and introductions beginning at 10:00 A.M.

The theme of our conference is ***"Today's Reality—Tomorrow's Vision"*** and we want to not only have candid discussions about the difficult situations we all are facing now, but also to look with hope to the future as we continue to positively impact the lives of students across the Commonwealth.

I am thrilled to announce that Senator Creigh Deeds (D-VA) will be our keynote speaker. I know that many of you know Creigh and he is excited to come and speak to us. He is well aware of the challenges we face and is a huge TRiO supporter. In addition to our keynote speaker, we will have an update from Tom Wilson, TRiO Director at VT and our VAEOPP President, Constance Kelly-Rice, who are both attending the "Walk on the Hill" and policy seminar in Washington, DC in March.

We will also have our usual break-out sessions by program; an important time for sharing concerns and best practices. Since we all want this conference to be a real forum for sharing of ideas, I am asking each of you to forward me at least one copy of a game, an activity, an informational sheet, or description of an innovative idea prior to the conference. We want to help and encourage each other as we meet new challenges and find ways to do "more with less." We will compile anything that you send by program and give a copy of each to all attendees. Hopefully, you will come away inspired by a new idea or a new way of doing something!

We will also have a special session for support staff at this conference. Sandra Capps, administrative assistant for Talent Search at DSLCC, will lead a breakout discussion that will focus on the effective office management of TRiO programs. With our goal of highlighting best practices and sticking to practical topics, examples of specific forms, student files and other records will be available for review and discussion by participants. I strongly urge all of you to encourage your administrative assistants to attend this conference. I feel certain that it will be a positive learning experience well worth their time, and serve as a reminder that having a highly organized support staff is invaluable to the successful implementation of our programs.

We have a beautiful campus, especially in the spring, and it should be a lovely drive for you, so please plan to attend and share this important event with your TRiO colleagues. For those who prefer to come the day before, we have arranged lodging for a reduced rate at two nearby motels for the night of Thursday, April 22. Also, in light of the difficult budget situations we are all facing, we have made a concerted effort to hold costs down for this event and the cost per person has been reduced from previous years.

Hopefully, all of this will entice you to attend the Western VAEOPP Drive-In Conference on Friday, April 23, 2010 at Dabney S. Lancaster Community College. The registration form is attached; please remit fees (payable to VAEOPP) and registration to Christie Hardbarger by April 14, 2010.

I hope to see you in April!

Christie Hardbarger, Director of DSLCC Educational Talent Search