Greetings TRiO Scholars!

My, how time flies! Summer school is over and it is almost time to start fall classes! We were busy this summer with programs and seminars. Opportunities were given to summer school Scholars and those in the area to attend “lunch and learn” which included topics on financial aid, financial literacy and graduate school. These proved to be an intimate talk with the presenters from Armstrong and Savannah State University. I would like to thank Armstrong staff working with TRiO this summer. Mr. Marvin Pope, financial aid counselor, for meeting with Scholars to discuss important issues with financial aid and for giving them tips on being a good financial steward. Ms. McKenzie Peterman, Asst. Director of Graduate Admissions led a very informative discussion on graduate school admission. Mr. Brian Dawsey, an Armstrong Alum and presently Director of Admissions at Savannah State University, visited with TRiO and spoke to Scholars about graduate admissions as well. In keeping with our summer tradition, we took the opportunity to visit two cultural treasures in the Savannah area, the Pinpoint Heritage Museum and Dorchester Academy. Scholars as well as staff were amazed at the historic significance of these areas and will forever be affected by what we learned.

On July 14th, I had the opportunity to surprise TRiO Scholar, Shanelle Dillon, at her graduation from the Science Enrichment Preparation (S.E.P.) Program at UNC Chapel Hill. Shanelle spent eight weeks at UNC and was able to complete coursework in Physics, Human Physiology, Organic Chemistry and Biostatistics for college credit. Networking, test prep from Princeton Review, clinical shadowing, visits to health professional schools in the area as well as a summer read also kept her quite busy. Shanelle joins the ranks of more than one thousand college students who have completed S.E.P. She received an award for the Most Inquisitive S.E.P. Participant. Her parents were also in attendance. We are so proud of you Shanelle! TRiO will be partnering with UNC to send more qualified scholars next summer!

Are you ready to re-engage? If not, we have just what the doctor ordered! First, if you live in the residence halls you get to “move in early”? Just think you get to skip the hassle and avoid the long lines that are prevalent on your regular “move in” day. TRiO staff will be available to help check you in and will have golf carts to pick up your things and deliver them to your residence hall. Early “move in” is Wednesday, August 9 from 9 am to 3 pm!

Kick-off is mandatory and is planned for August 10, 2017. Check in is from 9:15 am to 9:40 a.m. Lunch is free to all TRiO Scholars whether you live on or off campus. Our speaker this year is author and motivational speaker, Richard Taylor! Richard’s remarkable display of transparency enables him to connect with audiences beyond the surface of the subject matter and continues to be the hallmark of his career. His inspiring message of hope and perseverance delivered with undeniable authenticity has helped to establish him as one of the most influential voices of this generation. A dynamic speaker, thought-provoking author, and passionate mentor, whichever platform he uses, Richard continuously proves himself to be an agent for change and an advocate for life. We are very excited to have him with us. We also have awesome door prizes including $400 book scholarships, (that's more than one), to give away!

Our theme this year is ENGAGE. EMPOWER. EVOLVE! We are confident kickoff will serve to get your academic juices flowing so that you will once again ENGAGE with TRiO as well as your university. Before you know it, you are back into the swing of things. The programs and seminars we have planned for fall will serve to EMPOWER you in your academic journey so that by the end of the spring 2018 semester we have no doubt you will see yourself EVOLVE into that “scholar”, professional, teacher, mom, dad, or person you want to become! We guarantee if you work TRiO, TRiO “will” work for you! See you on August 9!

#TRiOWorks
During our spring Awards brunch, we recognized TRiO Scholar, Shanelle Dillion, for her acceptance into the Science Enrichment Preparation (S.E.P.) Summer Program at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Shanelle graduated from the program on July 14 but throughout her eight-week journey we checked in on her to see how her experience was going and this is what our scholar had to say:

The program is becoming less overwhelming, the more it winds down. These past two weeks have been very stressful and really hard, like one day I was up until 5am studying and had to wake up at 7am to be at class by 7:45 which turned out to be a rough day but I made it through. Although this sounds terrible, that is just the class part, on the other hand I have had a great time and made wonderful friends and connections.

I shadowed an Anesthesiologist at UNC hospital and she was a black female, which was an amazing experience. She definitely motivated me to continue to do my best, while also leaving me with her email and number so I can stay in touch. I discovered she is a part of the admissions board at UNC Medical School. Also, we had the honor to meet and talk to Dr. Damon Tweedy, author of “Black Man in a White Coat”. I highly recommend everyone read this very inspirational book that shows you that there will always be racial issues in medicine. He taught us that you can overcome them. We continue to tour schools which have included Duke Medical School, UNC Dental school, UNC PA school, UNC Nursing, UNC Medical School etc. This Friday we are having a recruitment fair for S.E.P., MED, and a program at Duke similar to S.E.P. where there will be a bunch of different medical schools. This will help us gain more insight and increase networking.

This program continues to teach me the importance of networking. It is not always about what you know but who you know. Graduation is July 14th and I am extremely ready to share my experience with others at Armstrong and motivate them to apply to the program. Overall, it is great, as it really is about family because there is no doing bad when so many people are helping to uplift you. Classes are hard but all the classes you take you have to take at your home school so I definitely have a head start and more prepared than others.