

REPORTER



Current events and updates happening in St. Olaf TRIO Educational Talent Search (ETS)!



HELLO ETS FAMILY! WINTER IS HERE AND WE'RE EXCITED TO SHARE EVERYTHING WE'VE BEEN WORKING ON WITH YOU!

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AND MORE!

Director's Note

Greetings TRIO ETS Community, Message from the Director

This past Fall, the St. Olaf TRIO ETS team went right to work to make connections with ETS participants, recruit new participants, and explore ways to build stronger partnerships with our schools. They also had one-to-one meetings with the 12th graders to prepare them for college applications and to complete their FAFSA. The mentor program had 2 mentor/mentee visits, and we are partnering with two classes (7th & 9th grade) from Humboldt High School in St. Paul. Again, this year, we partnered with the Physics course taught by Eric Hazlett at St. Olaf College to bring ETS students to campus to experience the Physics labs and participate in the 2nd-year students' Physics projects. This has become a great Annual Event!

I am very proud of our progress this year. I am also proud of the St. Olaf TRIO ETS team for their dedication to the program and hard work!

This spring, we look forward to providing more college visits and bringing the mentees to St. Olaf College so they can experience what it is like to be a college student.

This Spring, contact your St. Olaf TRIO ETS advisor for an update on what's happening in your school. Stay warm!



Joe | Admin. Asst.



Antonio | Sr. Advisor



Juan | Director



Aztlan | Advisor for Edison H.S. & Northeast M.S.



Kali | Advisor for Humboldt H.S.



Gabrielle | Advisor for Community of Peace Academy



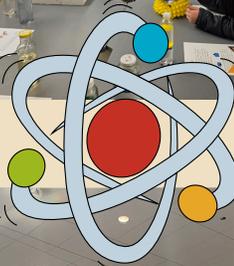
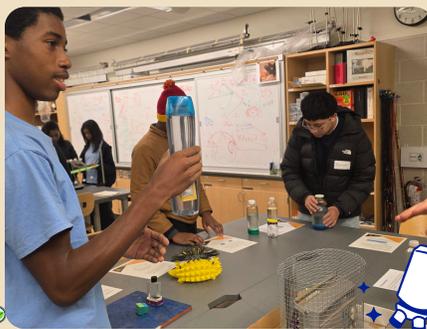
ETS Students Explore Science at St. Olaf's Physics Fair



By St. Olaf College TRIO ETS Academic Advisor Kali Hickman

On November 20th, 2025 ETS students from Community of Peace Academy and Humboldt High School spent the day at St. Olaf College for an exciting Physics Fair experience. Students participated in hands-on, science-based workshops and demonstrations led by St. Olaf faculty and college students. They had the chance to ask questions, try new experiments, and see how science shows up in real life beyond the classroom.

Students also received a tour of the St. Olaf campus, giving them a closer look at college life and what a campus community can feel like. It was a fun day of learning, curiosity, and exploring future possibilities. We loved seeing students engaged, trying new things, and representing their schools so well.



Mentoring Program Highlights



By St. Olaf College TRIO ETS Academic Advisor Antonio Moore



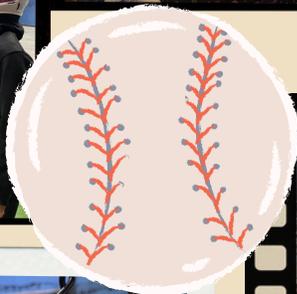
The St. Olaf TRIO ETS Mentoring Program has already made an exciting impact this school year, with mentors and mentees exchanging three heartfelt letters and participating in two memorable events. These exchanges and gatherings are designed to spark meaningful relationships between St. Olaf College students and their mentees at Humboldt High School, inspiring younger students to see college as a real and attainable option. Each letter and event has helped strengthen bonds, creating a foundation of trust, encouragement, and joy.

The first major event took place in October, when St. Olaf mentors traveled to Humboldt High School to meet their 7th and 9th grade mentees in person. The day was filled with laughter and connection as pairs played board games together, shared stories, and began building relationships beyond the written word. This visit was more than just fun, it was a chance for mentees to see that their mentors are committed to showing up, listening, and supporting them in their academic and personal journeys.

The second event brought even more energy and excitement as mentors and mentees headed to Grand Slam for a day of relationship building through play. From arcade games and laser tag to bumper cars, mini golf, and batting cages, the activities offered countless opportunities to strengthen bounds between mentees and mentors. The group had pizza for lunch, creating a relaxed space to continue conversations and deepen connections. This outing highlighted the program's unique blend of fun and purpose, showing mentees that mentorship can be both supportive and enjoyable. As the program takes a short break in January, letter writing will pause before resuming in February with three more letter exchanges planned. The consistency of both letters and events demonstrates the mentors' dedication, leaving a lasting impression on their mentees by showing up in meaningful ways.

Looking ahead, the program has one final event where mentees will visit St. Olaf College campus to spend time with their mentors and experience college life firsthand. This visit will include engaging activities and opportunities to explore what higher education can offer. The ultimate goal of the TRIO ETS Mentoring Program is to motivate and empower mentees, sparking the belief that college is within reach, while also giving mentors valuable experiences in leadership and connection. Together, these exchanges and events are shaping a community of encouragement, growth, and possibility.

Mentoring in Action: Photo Highlights



Paying for College: A Simple Guide for ETS Families

By St. Olaf TRIO ETS Academic Advisor Kali Hickman

Paying for college can feel overwhelming, but you do not have to figure it out alone. Most students and families use a mix of these options:

Ways students pay for college

- **Grants** (free money you usually do not pay back)
- **Scholarships** (free money from schools, communities, organizations)
- **Savings** (family savings or student savings)
- **Working** (part-time jobs, summer jobs, work-study)
- **Loans** (borrowed money that must be repaid)



Start Early: Scholarships Add Up

Even small scholarships make a difference. Many scholarships are open to middle school and high school students, so it never hurts to start looking now. Each month, ETS advisors should have a flyer containing all the scholarship deadlines for that month- make sure to check in! For high school students, things like grades, activities, leadership, and community service can also help you qualify for more scholarship opportunities.



High School Families: Do Not Skip the FAFSA

The **FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)** is one of the most important steps for paying for college. It helps students qualify for **federal and state aid**, and many colleges use it to decide what financial help you can receive. It can feel confusing, but ETS can help you understand what you need, keep track of deadlines, and make sense of your financial aid offer when it comes in.

ETS Can Help



If you want help with scholarships, FAFSA, or understanding your financial aid letter, reach out to your ETS advisor. We are happy to help you make college feel more affordable and realistic.

Senior Winter To-Do Checklist

By St. Olaf TRIO ETS Academic Advisor Aztlan Thao

Hello ETS Seniors! With graduation in just a few months, we want to remind you of where we'd like you to be in the college and FAFSA application process! Remember, applying to colleges and filling out your FAFSA doesn't mean you have to go to college, but doing so ensures that you have that option available to

you! All of the ETS advisors will continue to call seniors to our office to fill out college applications and FAFSA with you!

Below is a brief timeline of deadlines:

December

If you haven't already, submit your college applications!

Many institutions have January deadlines for applications, so make sure to get those in as soon as you can. Ideally, you will at least apply to a safety, target, and reach school.

Check your school email frequently to get updates from your ETS advisors.

January

Complete the FAFSA process.

Before sitting down to complete your FAFSA, be sure both you and your parent/guardian have created an FSA ID. This login will be what you both use to sign the FAFSA, and takes up to 3 days to process.

ETS advisors will be available to complete the entire process with you.

February

If you are selected for FAFSA verification, complete the necessary paperwork as soon as possible. You can reach out to your ETS advisor if you are unsure if you have been selected for verification.

Start researching different scholarships and their deadlines.

MARCH

Check your school email and make an appointment with your ETS advisor to review your financial aid letters until you understand them completely

Start applying for scholarships! Even if you don't think you'll get it, apply anyway! The more scholarship money you get, the fewer loans you'll have to take out.

April

Decide which, if any, college you want to attend, notify the school of your decision, and send in a deposit by MAY 1st!

Note: A deposit is needed to secure your place in the class. If you are planning to live in dorms or other campus housing, another housing deposit may be required. If this is a hardship on your family, you can call the college to make different arrangements. They are flexible! If you are not planning on going to college, make sure you have an alternate plan set. Be sure to talk this over with your caretakers and your ETS advisors! We are here to help regardless!

Meet with your academic or ETS advisor to make sure you are on track to graduate high school!

MAY

Celebrate! Despite everything going on in your life and everything that has happened with covid, virtual learning, and many other road bumps, you still managed to accomplish so much!

Figure out what high school transcripts will be sent to your future college, and how they will need to be sent. Find out about any TRIO SSS, multicultural, or student support programs at your future college and find out how to get involved! Let your ETS advisor know if you need help with this.

Tutoring Resources: Tutor.com

By TRIO ETS Academic Advisor Kali Hickman



Hello TRIO ETS Scholars!



Do you want FREE, ANYTIME, ANYWHERE, ANONYMOUS homework or classwork help???

We have just the thing you: [tutor.com/stolafets](https://www.tutor.com/stolafets)! This is a great resource that is free because you are a TRIO ETS student. With [tutor.com/stolafets](https://www.tutor.com/stolafets), you can have:

- One-to-one anonymous homework help and tutoring online in real-time
- Availability 24 hours/7 days/week online and on-demand access to get connected with an expert tutor in just a few minutes
- 200+ subjects are available including Math, Science, Computer Science, Social Studies, Language Arts, Foreign Languages, AP (Advanced Placement), & more!

Bilingual tutoring (Spanish & English) available for math, science and social studies. Drop-off review service for writing assignments and self-study practice quizzes are also included

Your username is the first half of your **SCHOOL** email address. Example: `hickma2@stolaf.edu` my username would be hickma2

Password: Your password is **TrioeTs9I?**

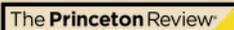
Please login and check out the website: www.tutor.com/stolafets



Please do not hesitate to contact your ETS advisor if you have any questions!



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Meet Our New ETS Advisor!

Hi everyone!

My name is Gabrielle Agbenyiga, and I am excited to be joining the TRIO ETS team as an Academic Advisor! I graduated from St. Catherine University in 2024 with a Bachelor of Science in Economics and Women and International Development. I am currently completing my Master's degree in International Development at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities, Humphrey School of Public Affairs. I have experience working with middle and high school students in the Twin Cities as a Girls Getting Ahead in Leadership mentor with the organization Women of Wise.

I have also worked on research teams focused on economic development for black women and children in the US and developing growth mindsets for students, particularly in STEM-related fields. Additionally, I have experience working with a global organization in West Africa to support access to education and opportunity for students in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Togo.

In my free time, I love to travel, practice photography, and cook. I also enjoy music and am almost always listening to something to keep me motivated! I am incredibly honored to be a part of the TRIO ETS team and am excited to begin working with students. I will be at Community of Peace Academy on Tuesdays and most Fridays during the beginning months of my time at CPA, with more scheduled hours starting in May 2026. I look forward to a wonderful year ahead!



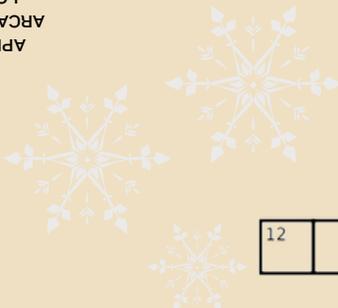
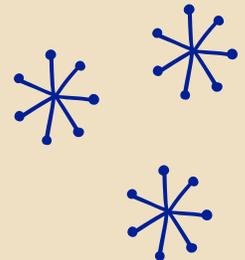
TRIO ETS Winter Word Challenge



Answer Key:

Across:
 SCHOLARSHIP, PHYSICS,
 ADVISOR, STOLAF, TRIO,
 GRANT, COLLEGE, FAFSA,
 TUTOR

Down:
 APPLICATION,
 ARCADE, MENTEE,
 LOAN, TOUR



Down:

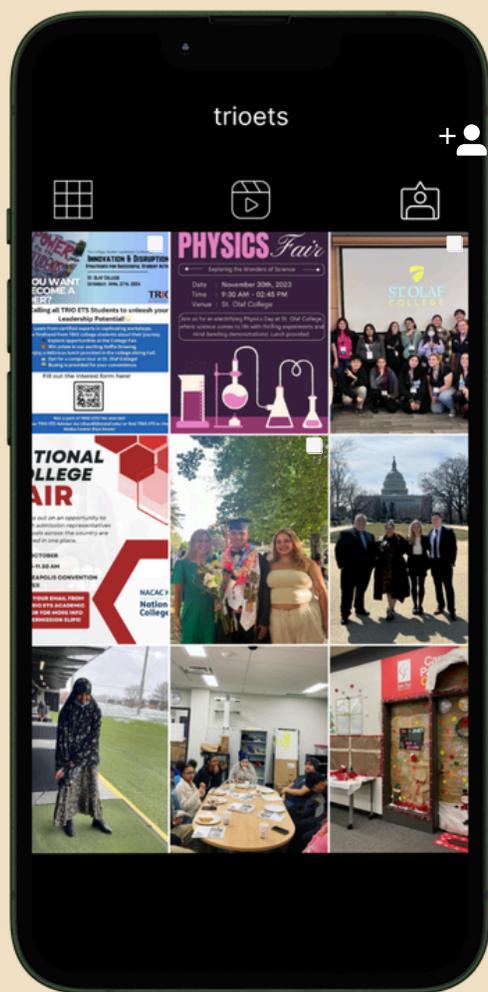
- 2. The process of applying to colleges
- 8. A place where mentors/mentees went for fun relationship-building
- 9. A student who is matched with a mentor
- 11. Money you borrow for college and repay later
- 14. A guided visit around a college campus

Across:

- 1. Free college money from schools/organizations for college
- 3. Subject featured in the ETS science fair event
- 4. Staff member who helps ETS students with school/college plans
- 5. The college ETS students visited for the Physics Fair
- 6. Program name that supports ETS students
- 7. Free money for college you usually don't pay back
- 10. The next step ETS helps students prepare for after high school
- 12. Financial aid form students must complete
- 13. Website ETS students can use for free homework help



Follow St. Olaf TRIO ETS On All Our Social Media Pages!



-  **Stay Updated on Events & Opportunities**
Get the latest info on college tours, workshops, and deadlines right on your feed!
-  **Explore College & Career Resources**
Learn about scholarships, financial aid, and tools to help you prepare for life after high school.
-  **Be Part of a Supportive Community**
See success stories, connect with peers, and stay motivated with TRIO ETS by your side!



Use your Cell Phone Camera to Scan the QR Code and follow us on Instagram and Facebook!





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COLLEGE

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Educational Talent Search (ETS) is a TRIO program



funded by the U.S. Department of Education and

sponsored by St. Olaf College. The ETS program

annually assists 700 middle and high school students

as they explore their academic and vocational options and set goals

for the future. ETS Academic Advisors, in cooperation with school

counselors and teachers, provide preparatory services

through workshops, classroom activities, and group and individual

counseling sessions. St. Olaf College Educational Talent Search

works at the following five schools: St. Paul Community of Peace

Academy, St. Paul Humboldt High School, Minneapolis Northeast

Middle School, and Minneapolis Edison Senior High School.