

Student Support Services



GREETINGS FROM THE DIRECTOR

Hello from SSS!



The TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) team continues to enjoy our work in helping students succeed at USF. Since the publishing of our last newsletter, we have welcomed 2 new team members and you will meet them in this newsletter edition as part of our Meet the SSS Staff feature. I appreciate the continued support of SSS from Dean Allison Crume and Assistant Dean Tony Delgado of Undergraduate Studies during this exciting time. The SSS team remains focused on ensuring the continued success of SSS students as we meet our grant funded objectives and contribute to the strategic mission of USF. Thus,

I am happy to share that we have again exceeded our funding objectives in our most recent Annual Performance Report (APR) submitted to our funding source, the U.S. Department of Education. For the 2021-2022 academic year, data from the APR show SSS achieved a slight increase in persistence rate to 98% and a strong 92% good academic standing rate among served students. The SSS 6-year graduation rate also significantly increased to 70%, which reflects a positive impact of moving to a new 4-year model of serving students through graduation. We moved to this new model in 2020 in order to maintain our student support from their transition into USF during our summer bridge program all the way through to their graduation from USF. While our new model has positively impacted some metrics, it also necessitated a move to admit fewer students into SSS at USF in order to serve participants for a longer period. Consequently, in the coming year I hope to engage in further conversation about how the SSS model might be formally expanded at USF to serve more students from first-generation and low-income backgrounds. Let's build on our success!

In addition, new SSS initiatives began this year – including partnering with the Office of Multicultural Affairs to celebrate the inaugural First Generation Day at USF for first generation college students, faculty, and staff to network and engage in resource sharing. SSS also enjoyed enhanced collaboration with the New Bulls Scholars program, ACE, and Student Athletics in helping our respective student populations acclimate to USF, network with their peers, and receive motivational words of encouragement. Newer initiatives such as the SSS Connects Live sessions held on MS Teams for newly admitted students and the SSS Canvas page to help newly admitted students complete their onboarding requirements also continue to be successful in helping SSS reach its goals.

Thank you to our campus partners who provide support to the success of SSS students. We are happy to work with partners who provide SSS students with key resources such as scholarships, employment, internships, mentorships, and information about college success. Please feel free to contact me with new ideas of how we can be partners in student success!

In this newsletter, I am delighted to share stories of student success and program updates – you will meet outstanding SSS students who are making a positive impact on the USF campus and in the surrounding community, participating in internship and study abroad opportunities, and hear the voices of students as they reflect on their SSS experience. With the help of our USF community, we can continue providing students from diverse backgrounds with a positive college experience and a sense of belonging at USF. I remain optimistic that we will continue to build on our legacy of inclusive excellence by ensuring all students reach their personal, academic, and career goals – we are deeply committed to this goal and hope you will join us on the journey. As you read our newsletter, I invite you to celebrate the success of SSS students at USF – GO BULLS!

LaTosha C. Thomas

LaTosha C. Thomas, Ph.D.

SSS Director

#OneUSF | #TRIOWorks

Annual Newsletter

2022-2023 Edition

Inside This Issue

■ Director's Greeting.....	1
■ Student Spotlight: Jaelyn Wise.....	2
■ SSS Ambassadors.....	3
■ SSS Celebrates Academic Achievements.....	3
■ Students Share How SSS Has Helped Them Be Successful.....	4
■ College Success Workshops Promote Life Skills.....	6
■ SSS Celebrates Scholarship Winners.....	7
■ Collaborative Efforts Are Key to the Success of SSS.....	8
■ USF Celebrates First-Generation Day.....	9
■ SSS Students Selected As USF Ambassadors.....	9
■ SSS Engages With Local Community.....	10
■ SSS Encourages High Impact Practices: Study Abroad.....	12
■ Student Success: Internships.....	14
■ SSS Celebrates Pageant Winner.....	15
■ SSS Engages Students in Culturally Enriching Activities.....	15
■ Financial Advisors Network Symposium.....	16
■ Heritage Leadership Luncheon.....	16
■ Graduate School Tour.....	17
■ SSS Graduation Celebration.....	17
■ Congratulations to SSS Graduates.....	18
■ Meet the SSS Team.....	20
■ SSS Team Retreat.....	21

Student Spotlight: Jaelyn Wise

Congratulations to Jaelyn Wise for being an outstanding SSS student – we are so proud of all that you have accomplished and look forward to seeing your next chapter at USF!

SSS Senior student **Jaelyn Wise** from Sanford, Florida, is featured as this year's outstanding student. Jaelyn graduated spring 2023 with a B.S. in Public Health and plans to attend graduate school in the fall semester. Jaelyn plans to remain at USF and enroll in the Curriculum and Instruction Master's program with a concentration in Student Affairs while also working full-time in the SSS office as a Counselor/Advisor to incoming first generation and/or low-income students. Jaelyn says "Upon graduating from the CSA program I plan to get my Doctorate degree. Then I'd like to start my own first generation and/or low-income college support program for high school and/or college students in my hometown, as many people from my area do not get the opportunity to attend or graduate from college." Jaelyn is very proud to graduate from USF in 3 years with zero debt with close guidance from SSS Director, Dr. LaTosha Thomas who Jaelyn believes is "the glue that continues to help this program grow and flourish on the USF campus."

Jaelyn credits the SSS program as the reason for attending USF because the financial aid package she received paid for the cost to attend the summer program. She learned from Shamease Cooper, a former SSS student and Peer Coach that the program supports its students in a caring family atmosphere, which was important to her given the large size of USF. Jaelyn says Cooper not only shared the benefits of the program and connected her to SSS, but also became "a mentor to me and a big reason on how I knew how much SSS was going to change my life for the better." In her spare time Jaelyn enjoys being with family and friends, watching TV, and reading self-enrichment books to become the best version of herself. Jaelyn is dedicated to helping others as can be witnessed through her love of community service, student success, and student organizations such as Students Striving to be Successful Vice President (S-Club), Sisters Inspiring Success (SIS), National Council of



Negro Women (NCNW), Blackish in Public Health, and Black Student Union. A hard worker, Jaelyn was employed with SSS as the Summer Program Assistant and as a Peer Coach. Working in these roles helped Jaelyn solidify her career choice and enhanced her desire to work in higher education. Jaelyn also served as a Teacher Assistant for the Academic Foundations Seminar course and interned for Planned Parenthood while completing her undergraduate degree. In addition, Jaelyn volunteered with Rebuilding Tampa Bay where she conducted home assessments and identified and taught residents how to reduce and remove asthma triggers. Jaelyn clearly believes in working hard while also giving back to the community and helping others. Jaelyn says, "SSS has helped me achieve success in so many ways from breaking out of my shell during COVID, being able to graduate in less than 3 years, getting involved and active within the USF community, and helping me find my job of passion when I had to change majors. SSS was there for me through all my highs, lows, and in-betweens serving as a bridge to help me get to where I am today."

SSS Ambassadors

Congratulations to **Patricia Brutus** and **James Forrester** for being selected as the SSS Ambassadors for 2022-2023. These two students were selected for this honor because of their commitment to SSS, leadership skills, and positive attitude. The SSS Ambassadors were formerly called “Mr. & Miss SSS” and the name has been changed to reflect the inclusive nature of SSS. The SSS Ambassadors represent SSS at special events, such as the Academic Award Ceremony and the SSS Graduation Celebration. Both Patricia and James are also active in campus life – James serves as an executive board member for Students Striving to be Successful (S-Club) and Patricia created the Sisters Inspiring Success (SIS) student organization and has also been recently selected to serve as a USF Ambassador for the coming year.



Thanks to Patricia and James for representing SSS and making a positive impact on the USF community!

SSS Celebrates Academic Achievements

SSS acknowledged the outstanding academic accomplishments of its high performing students in an awards celebration for students with exceptional GPAs. Students were honored for their achievements and presented with certificates of achievement. SSS Ambassadors Patricia Brutus and James Forrester III welcomed the attendees with celebratory words of inspiration. The awards ceremony also included motivational videos and words of wisdom from the SSS team. We are proud of the success of our hardworking students!



Students Share How SSS Has Helped Them Be Successful



“SSS has helped me with so many life skills and given me valuable information and advice to optimize my chances of achieving my ideal career, from financial literacy to graduate school.”

-Mason Eliyoon, Senior, Health Sciences major, Public Health minor

“Working at the Alumni Center, I talk to hundreds of USF Alumni. Many have told me how much they love SSS and that it was a highlight of their college experience, something that I specifically relate to. I am grateful to SSS because they vouched for me to be accepted and without their support, this degree would not be possible without them and it made my college experience less stressful. I’m grateful that I am part of such a diverse and intelligent group of students and staff, something I will always admire. Through my college lows, SSS was always there to support me. Without their efforts, my college experience would not have been as fulfilling as it has. SSS helped me become a better student while allowing independent growth.”

-Amanda Souza, Senior, Communications

“I loved the support system I had with SSS. I felt like I always had people in my corner rooting for me even in my loneliest times.”

-David Canderó, Senior, Health Sciences

“I love the push that SSS has had on me these past 4 years. The encouragement but also the tough love, long talks that I have had with the counselors. I appreciate their listening ears....it’s always good to have someone to just listen. And even know that I felt lost, they still helped me regain focus. As the years continued, it became more difficult for me but SSS was still here --- and that’s every counselor, they were still here. And I hope that after graduation and as I am still in Tampa, I can still pour the same effort and energy into SSS as they did for me.”

-Rebecca Jean-Louis, Senior, Biomedical Sciences

“I learned that it’s okay to ask for help and that you don’t always have to know what the next step is in your life. Also, if you have a plan/goal and you put in the work and have the right people in your corner anything is achievable.”

-Kimbria Robinson, Senior, Health Sciences major, Public Health minor



“I owe my life to SSS. Life is hard and I grew up with a single mother who had a stroke when I was 7, I raised myself and had no father figure. Mr. Williams gave me the male role model I always needed but never had. Dr. Thomas, Mrs. Bristow, and Mrs. Garth (former SSS Director) are strong independent and courageous women that I aspire to become. I was given so much help, support, and opportunities because of this incredible organization. I met my best friend as my random roommate during freshman year because of this organization. It made this huge school feel small, and I am forever grateful for this program.”

-Skyler Granat, Health Sciences

“I have gained both financial and academic support by being in the SSS program. The experiences of having a counselor and academic advising were very valuable to me as they improved my experience here at USF. Getting a headstart in the curriculum helped me with graduating on time, honestly much quicker than I was supposed to.”

-Maliha Akter, Senior, Health Sciences

College Success Workshops Promote Life Skills



the workshops engage students in learning various life strategies that will help them navigate their college experience and prepare for their future careers.

In collaboration with various campus partners, the workshops are designed to teach students about campus resources, academic skills, financial literacy, wellness, healthy relationships, and non-cognitive skills such as time management.

The SSS Workshops are also a great way for students to maintain community and provides peer-to-peer networking opportunities in a group setting.

The USF Bull-2-Bull office is one of many departments that partners with SSS to provide invaluable financial literacy information and increase financial awareness to students. For some SSS students, this is their first time being formally introduced to budgeting and saving money. Through this partnership SSS students are encouraged to implement good financial habits while in college rather and provides strategies for minimizing loan debt. SSS is grateful for all of its partnering offices at USF and their dedication to the success of students!

The fall and spring semesters were an exceptional time of growth and development for SSS students. A benefit of being in the SSS program is being privy to the information presented in College Success Workshop series held every semester. Led by the SSS Counselors,



SSS Celebrates Scholarship Winners

Congratulations to SSS students **Kiana Burke**, **Franceline Jeanty**, and **Adrianna Grant** who received scholarships at the Joyce Russell Kente Awards & Scholarship Ceremony. The Kente Awards celebrates the academic excellence and achievements of Black/African-American USF students and Tampa Bay community leaders.

Franceline received the Drs. Richard & Eva Pride Endowed Scholarship awarded to a USF Upward Bound student. Kiana and Adrianna received the Dr. Israel "Ike" Tribble, Jr. Endowed Scholarship awarded to outstanding disadvantaged and/or minority students.

We are proud of our students for their academic success and for embodying the spirit of SSS!



Collaborative Efforts Are Key to the Success of SSS

SSS appreciates the collaborative spirit of campus and community partners. These partners contribute to SSS in a variety of ways, such as donating promotional items, presenting at workshops, and providing student employment, internships and mentoring. We look forward to sustaining these partnerships and creating more across ONE USF. Thank you to the departments and organizations who contribute to the success of SSS students!

- Academic Success Center
- Black Faculty & Staff Association
- Black Leadership Network
- Bull2Bull Financial Education
- Campus Recreation & Wellness
- Career Services
- Center for Leadership & Civic Engagement
- Center for Student Involvement
- Center for Student Well-Being
- Center for Victim Advocacy & Violence Prevention
- College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP)
- College Reach Out Program
- Corporate Mentor Program, USF Muma College of Business
- Counseling Center
- Dining Services
- Education Abroad
- Global Citizens Project
- Housing & Residential Education
- Joint Military Leadership Center
- Latino Scholarship Program
- New Bulls Scholars Program
- New Student Connections
- Office of Academic Advocacy
- Office of Admissions
- Office of Community Engagements and Partnerships
- Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Office of Graduate Studies
- Office of High Impact Practices & Undergraduate Research
- Office of Multicultural Affairs
- Office of Orientation
- Office of the Registrar
- Office of Veterans Services
- SchoolHouse Connection
- Student Conduct & Ethical Development
- Student Health Services
- Student Accessibility Services
- Summer ACE Program
- Take Stock in Children
- The Students of Concern Assistance Team
- University Scholarships & Financial Aid Services
- USF ID Card Center
- TRIO Upward Bound Program
- TRIO Upward Bound Math Science Program



USF Celebrates First-Generation Day

The National First-Generation College Student Day is celebrated every year on November 8th in honor of the signing of the Higher Education Act of 1965. This Act helped create opportunities for students who were first in their family to complete a college degree to have access to higher learning. With the support of the Office of Multicultural Affairs, Undergraduate Studies, and Student Support Services, USF was able to host the first annual First-Generation Day. Hosted in the OMA Tampa office in the MSC, the event welcomed students to play games, grab snacks, and share why they are proud to be a first-generation college student. This was a fun and engaging event to celebrate first-generation students and appreciate how hard they have worked to accomplish their goals. A special thank you to SSS Counselor Ms. Taylor Turner for helping to coordinate this event. SSS looks forward to continued collaboration as we continue celebrating and support first-generation students. We are proud to celebrate all first-generation college students that are attending USF!



SSS Students Selected As USF Ambassadors

Congratulations to **Nya Menoze** on serving as a USF Ambassador. Nya exudes the qualities required for the position of USF Ambassador, namely academic success, student engagement, commitment, and USF pride. The position of an Ambassador is a prestigious honor, as they typically work closely with the president's office and participate in many university activities. It is common to see Ambassadors wearing the signature green jacket that brings smiles to our faces as they represent USF at important events. Nya graduated in May with a degree in Social Work and is now working at USF in Undergraduate Studies as the Student Programs Coordinator for the New Bulls Scholars program. In this role, Nya plays an important part in helping new freshmen students transition successfully into USF and provides student support to help the scholars be successful.

SSS has two more students that were selected as USF Ambassadors for the next school year and we will share an update in our next newsletter.

We are extremely proud of Nya for her accomplishments in serving as a USF Ambassador, graduating from USF, and starting her career in Undergraduate Studies. Nya is an outstanding student who strives for greatness and we have all confidence that she will continue to represent SSS and USF well!



SSS Engages With Local Community

SSS students are an important part of the USF campus and surrounding community. Through SSS sponsored student organizations S-Club, SIS, and BRUH SSS encourages community involvement as it is a rewarding experience that promotes service to others, builds leadership skills, and promotes a sense of belonging. SSS students can often be seen giving their time and energy at USF sponsored events and local events around Tampa Bay.

Paint Your Heart Out Tampa Bay

SSS students volunteered with Paint Your Heart Out Tampa, a one-day volunteer event which paints the homes of low income, elderly residents within the Tampa Bay community. The students felt a sense of pride in giving back to the community and helping to improve the lives of our local neighbors.



Clean The Bay Community Event

SSS students participated in a volunteer community service event at the Florida Learning Garden near the Tampa fairgrounds. The students helped to remove weeds, chop down trees and rehabilitate and beautify the gardens.



Habitat for Humanity

SSS students volunteered to clean and organize at Habitat for Humanity's Restore in Tampa. Habitat for Humanity is a non-profit organization that partners with corporations, community groups, faith groups, and private humanitarian organizations to renovate and build affordable housing for families.



SSS Encourages High Impact Practices: Study Abroad



Study abroad programs provide a great opportunity for students to study in locations around the world, expand their world view, learn a different language, and immerse in a new culture. SSS senior student **Zaynab Ali-Salahuddin**, traveled to South Africa and enrolled in the 'Seasons of Protest' course, which examined the history of protests in South Africa and the United States. Zaynab says her academic expectations were exceeded by the program and excitedly shared these words "Thank you South Africa for the experience of a lifetime!"

She further explained, the course provided a synopsis of approaches to protest and social movement and "Rigorously analyzed the United States Civil Rights movements of the 1960s, the international anti-apartheid movement, #RhodesMustFall, #FeesMustFall, and the #BlackLivesMatter campaign. We broke down some of the key debates in sociology, anthropology, and political science that pertains to forms of resistance. The course explored various texts and included various excursions including the Slave Lodge in South Africa, Muizenberg Beach, and a South African Broadway-like play. While abroad, my outlook on life pivoted. Studying

abroad really allowed me time to slow things down in my life as I was once rushing through before with zero direction. I learned to embrace others and not always judge others by what they may have or how they look because we all hold a story, and that story is part of the human's journey. My goals used to be marked by material items, but that is no longer because, in the end, those things have done nothing to improve the quality of life for human beings on this planet. I realized that it is up to us to save humanity through generosity, compassion, and sensitivity. As I move closer to graduating in Spring 2023, I am preparing for my next journey of life which will hopefully be graduate school."

Zaynab says the people of South Africa were welcoming and the cuisine was fresh and rich in flavor. She describes her experience in this way "Living and studying abroad was scary at first but the people around me and in my program made me feel comfortable."

We are proud of Zaynab for her spirit of adventure and her personal growth through education abroad!"



SSS Encourages High Impact Practices: Study Abroad



SSS senior student and Psychology major **Yelianys Remedio** participated in the education abroad program and traveled to Florence, Italy with the help of the Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship. Yelianys chose the USF in Florence Psych/Social Behavioral Science Program and states “It was a dream come true”. She attended classes at Florence University of the Arts (FUA) and explored places like Lake Como (the third largest Italian lake) and the Amalfi Coast. She also experienced a gondola ride in Venice, shopped in Milan, and visited the Colosseum and Trevi Fountain in Rome. Yelianys states “One of my dreams was to study abroad and thanks to the Gilman Scholarship I was able to do just that and in my dream destination. I chose the USF in Florence Psych/Social Behavioral Science Program, and it was the best experience/summer ever. I would also like to thank SSS and all the wonderful counselors because without them I wouldn’t be where I am today”.



We are proud of Yelianys for achieving her goal of being a global citizen!

Student Success: Internships

SSS encourages its students to seek out and engage in high impact practices for college success. Internships are one such experience that can enhance student success and help students gain first-hand work experience. Internships are beneficial opportunities which provide students with skills, information, and connections that will help them become more marketable in the workforce. Here are two examples of the internships that SSS students have completed recently.

National Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Association



Alma Hernandez a junior SSS student, interned the summer of 2022 in Washington, DC with the Child Labor Coalition through an internship program organized by the National Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Association (NMSHSA). Alma who is from Plant City, Florida, is also a participant the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) at USF. CAMP is designed to assist eligible participants from migrant and seasonal farmworker backgrounds in completing their first year of college and transitioning to complete their bachelor's degree.

Alma's duties while interning included writing emails to officials for their support and retweeting any posts relevant to the Child Labor Coalition. The internship program is offered to college students from around the country who participated in a Migrant &

Seasonal Head Start Program. Students who are selected to intern with the program are given a stipend, housing, and work placement in the Washington, D.C. area. Alma details her internship experience in weekly blogs that can be seen here: <https://www.nmshsa.org/alumni/alma-hernandez-de-la-cruz>.



Read Alma's amazing story [My Path from Strawberry and Blueberry Fields to College](#).

Disney College and Internship Program

Toni Hardy, an SSS rising senior majoring in Veterinary Science is gaining on-the-job experience in Disney's College and Internship Program, a national paid-internship program owned and operated by the Walt Disney Company. Through the program Toni is preparing for her future by gaining professional experience and building her skills while working with Disney leaders. The program focuses on building skills, networking, problem solving, teamwork and effective communication.



SSS is proud of its students for taking advantage of internship opportunities to prepare for their future careers!



SSS Celebrates Pageant Winner

SSS student **Chaunisty Smith** is a Senior Psychology major who won the title of Miss Young Woman of Excellence in The Black Female Development Circle's When I Grow Up Pageant. Founded in 1994, The Black Female Development Circle (BFDC) was established to serve as a support system where women with similar experiences could come together to discuss current events and find comfort from women who could relate to them. BFDC has been at USF for nine years and has made a difference in the lives of hundreds of women regardless of their background and/or ethnicity.

*SSS congratulates **Chaunisty Smith** on her excellent achievement!*

SSS Engages Students in Culturally Enriching Activities

SSS believes in creating new opportunities for its students and challenges students to explore new experiences in order to grow. To reach this goal, SSS engaged students in a trip to the Dali Museum in St. Petersburg, Florida. For some, it was the first time learning about Salvador Dali, a Spanish artist whose work impacted the world in the 20th century. Students viewed some of the world's most beautiful oil paintings, watercolors, drawings, graphics, photographs and sculptures. The SSS cultural trip provided students with an opportunity to learn about history and diverse cultures. We are proud to help SSS students broaden their horizons by exposing them to new experiences!



We are proud to help SSS students broaden their horizons by exposing them to new experiences!

Financial Advisors Network Symposium



The USF Black Leadership Network (BLN) sponsored SSS students, **LaTrell Pryor**, **Serina Cox-Adams** and **Michelle Cherry** to attend The Raymond James Black Financial Advisors Network Symposium held at the Innisbrook Golf Resort in Palm Harbor. The event was an opportunity for students to learn more about careers in finance. The students were also able to network with high level finance executives and with other students interested in finance careers. A special thank you to Mr. Walter Jennings of BLN for providing this unique opportunity to SSS students.

We are grateful to our BLN campus partners for their support of SSS students!

Heritage Leadership Luncheon

SSS students, **Sachenley Fortune**, **Patricia Brutus**, **Angela Villafranca**, **Hannah Clanton**, and **Jason Frazier** attended the Tampa Bay Black Heritage Festival's Heritage Leadership Luncheon courtesy of Dr. Tony Delgado, Assistant Dean of Academic Inclusion in Undergraduate Studies. Dr. Delgado sponsored a table at the event and graciously invited SSS students and staff to attend. SSS Director Dr. LaTosha Thomas and SSS Counselor Mr. Brian Williams also attended the event.



The Tampa Bay Black Heritage Festival (TBBHF) promotes African and African-American culture, talent, and art and advocates for diversity and equitable opportunities for all within the Tampa Bay community. It builds on the philosophies and teaching of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The theme for the Heritage Leadership Luncheon was "Mental Health: Addressing the Stigmatism and Promoting Self Care and Wellbeing". The keynote speaker was USF Assistant Professor **Dr. Micah E. Johnson** who delivered an engaging, relatable, and research-based talk about wellness. Dr. Johnson is a professor, author, and award-winning performance artist who has also provided mentorship and research opportunities for SSS students.

In addition to a focus on well-being and self-care, the luncheon was also a wonderful way for SSS students to network with USF faculty and staff and engage with community leaders. A special thank you to Dr. Delgado for his support of SSS and the wellness of students and staff!

We are grateful to our BLN campus partners for their support of SSS students!

Graduate School Tour

The SSS grant is funded in part to expose students to graduate school and funding opportunities. SSS encourages its students to expand their awareness and consider attending graduate school. To fulfill this objective, SSS



students engage in a presentation from the USF Graduate Studies office to learn about programs and funding opportunities. In addition, the SSS Counselors accompanied students on a tour of the University of Central Florida's (UCF) campus and attended a presentation highlighting graduate school programs offered at the university. The presentation and tour gave students an opportunity to speak with UCF staff and obtain information on programs that interest them. Students were then treated to lunch before leaving campus and returning to Tampa.

SSS is proud of its students for thinking ahead to the future and seizing opportunities to learn more!

SSS Graduation Celebration

SSS celebrated graduating students with a fun celebration that included festive balloons and music. Each student was individually recognized with a certificate of honor. Each graduate also proudly received a TRIO SSS graduation stole that signified a successful end to their SSS undergraduate journey. The graduation ceremony included words of advice from the SSS team, inspirational videos, and cheers of celebration from other SSS students, family, and friends. This achievement is especially memorable for first generation college students who are setting a new path for their family. SSS congratulates each of its graduates for attaining the academic goals that were set at the onset of their college career!



SSS congratulates each of its graduates for attaining the academic goals that were set at the onset of their college career!

CONGRATULATIONS TO SSS GRADUATES

(since summer 2022)



- Abraam Abdalla, Health Sciences
- Alondra Sotomayor, Health Sciences
- Angulina Wilson, Public Health
- Arik Denmark, Information Technology
- Ashley Accius, Psychology
- Brandon Marshall, Integrated Public Relations & Advertising
- Brianna Burnsworth, Health Sciences
- Bryce Humphrey, Health Sciences
- Celina Florival, Health Sciences
- Chanita Belcher, History
- Cherokee Torres, Health Sciences
- Chloe Sartorio, Integrative Animal Biology
- Demaria Wheeler, General Studies
- Destiny Dixon, Health Sciences
- Dezmond Booker, Communication
- Dylan Murphy, Criminology
- Gabriel Rostek, Political Science
- Gracen Cenal, Communication
- Jade Gipson, Health Sciences
- Jaelyn Wise, Public Health
- Jahimarie Santana-Poggy, Criminology
- Jasmine Arroyo, Psychology
- Jonathan Quach, Cybersecurity
- Joshua Williams, Integrated Public Relations & Advertising
- Juan Garcia, Health Sciences
- Kameelah Williams, Communication
- Kamia Martin, Cybersecurity
- Kendra Saint-Elus, Psychology
- Kendra Galarza Rivera, General Studies
- Kianna Pintado-Adames, Elementary Education
- Laylah Baptiste, Finance
- Maisha Sikder, Health Sciences
- Maliek Parker, Behavioral Healthcare
- Maliha Akter, Health Sciences
- Marvella Morales-Lopez, Health Sciences
- Megan Escurra, Marketing
- Mia Buckley, History
- Milca Agenor, International Studies
- Natalia Bari Suarez, Public Health
- Nya Menoze, Social Work
- Onika Griffiths, Biomedical Sciences
- Raul Lopez, Supply Chain Management





- Sachenley Fortune, Psychology
- Samantha Olivera, Nursing
- Sheebensh Prophilien, Health Sciences
- Shyde Emile, Health Sciences
- Skyler Granat, Health Sciences
- Sofia Cabrera, Criminology
- Stephanie McGee, Health Sciences
- Sufiyah Samnani, Behavioral Healthcare
- Sujei Coloma, Global Business

- Tori Brown, Interdisciplinary Social Sciences
- Trevor Lucas, Interdisciplinary Social Sciences
- Weiqian Zhang, Computer Science
- Wendy Benavides, Health Sciences
- Yelianys Remedio, Psychology
- Zaid Chefchaoui, Environmental Biology
- Zaynab Ali-Salahuddin, Africana Studies
- Zion Baisden, Health Sciences



Meet the SSS Team

- Dr. LaTosha Thomas, Director
- Taylor Turner, Counselor/Advisor
- Brian Williams, Counselor/Advisor
- Jaelyn Wise, Counselor/Advisor
- Eirleene Bristow, Administrative Specialist
- Bertrise Alford, Student Office Assistant
- Kristian Galloway, Student Office Assistant
- Julie Bone, Peer Coach
- Jason Frazier, Peer Coach
- Adrianna Grant, Peer Coach
- Zayd Siddiqui, Peer Coach



*Team Outstanding Staff Award Recipients (2022)
Dr. LaTosha Thomas, Mr. Brian Williams, Mrs. Eirleene Bristow, Nick Cullen
(former SSS Counselor/Advisor, not pictured)*

STAFF SPOTLIGHT



MS. WISE
Title: Counselor
Hometown: Sanford, FL
Hobbies: Watching TV, spending time with family and Reading
What TRIO Program were you apart of: Student Support Services at USF
Advice to Summer 2023 Cohort: Trust the SSS Process! SSS is a family and will have your back even when you don't think you need it! Utilize your resources and get active on campus!

Welcome to the New SSS Team Members!

SSS is pleased to welcome two new team members this past year. Ms. Taylor Turner, M.Ed. joined SSS in a dual role as an SSS Counselor/Advisor and Academic Success Coach for First Generation Initiatives. Ms. Jaelyn Wise joined SSS as an SSS Counselor/Advisor and begins the USF College Student Affairs graduate program this fall. Both Ms. Turner and Ms. Wise are TRIO SSS alumni themselves and are dedicated to student success.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT



MS. TURNER
Title: Counselor
Hometown: Englewood, FL
Hobbies: Spend time with my dog Ivy at the dog beach! (She loves the water)
What TRIO Program were you apart of: Student Support Services (SSS) (At FGCU)
What do you love about working with SSS: I love being able to help students grow and succeed during their time at USF. Being able to give back to a program that helped me greatly during my time in undergrad is so rewarding.

Welcome to the SSS Team!

SSS Team Retreat

Engaging in team retreats is a new tradition for the SSS team to help sustain positive work relationships, engage in professional development, and improve work wellness. Over the past year, the SSS professional staff placed a special emphasis on team-building and wellness. The SSS team retreats included visits to Top Golf in Brandon and the Breakout Games escape room in Tampa. These activities promoted camaraderie, teamwork, and problem-solving. Over lunch, the SSS team discussed professional successes from the previous semester and planned goals for the upcoming semester. The SSS team also discussed readings about recent trends in higher education, such as serving first-generation college students and best practices for summer bridge programs. The fall retreat also served as a farewell to a teammate whose journey has ended as a USF employee. The SSS team continues to work hard on behalf of students and enjoys the retreats as a way to celebrate a successful semester!

The SSS team continues to work hard on behalf of students and enjoys the retreats as a way to celebrate a successful semester!





**Student Support Services
Office of Undergraduate Studies**

4202 E. Fowler Avenue, SVC 2049 • Tampa, FL 33620

Phone: 813.974.4301 | Fax: 813.974.8208