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### Morris Awarded U.S. Department of Education TRiO Student Support Services Grant

University Relations

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### [Morris Awarded U.S. Department of Education TRiO Student Support Services Grant](#)

*Summary: The grant will increase the number of low-income college students, first-generation college students, and college students with disabilities who complete postsecondary education programs.*

MORRIS, Minnesota (September 10, 2015)—The University of Minnesota, Morris was awarded a \$1.1 million TRiO Student Support Services (SSS) grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The purpose of SSS is to increase the college retention and graduation rates of participants.

Beginning this fall, the SSS grant will support 140 Morris students each year for five years. Eligible students include low-income students, first-generation college students, and students with disabilities, with special focus on students from rural backgrounds, American Indian students, and students of color: populations facing the greatest barriers to retention and graduation at Morris and throughout Minnesota.

“Given that more than half of our students are SSS-eligible, we chose to focus the Morris SSS project on our eligible sub-populations where data shows the greatest success gaps,” says Hilda Ladner, assistant to the chancellor for equity and diversity and director of equity, diversity, and intercultural programs.

The Morris campus serves a diverse student body: 29 percent are students of color, 38 percent are first-generation, 40 percent are from rural areas, and 90 percent receive financial aid. With 18 percent American Indian students and 9 percent international students as well, it is the most ethnically diverse in the University of Minnesota system.

“The University of Minnesota, Morris is known for its ability to graduate a diverse student population at a higher rate than predicted,” says Chancellor Jacqueline R. Johnson. “We are very pleased to be able to offer even more support for our deserving students through this highly competitive award.”

Through a highly competitive grant competition, SSS funds are awarded to institutions of higher education to provide opportunities for academic development, to assist students with basic college requirements, and to motivate students toward the successful completion of their postsecondary educations. Participants will receive assistance in the form of academic-success coaching, peer mentoring, holistic advising, tutoring, workshops, and activities—from the first year through graduation.

The SSS grant competition received more than 1,400 submissions this year. Of those submissions, only 160 new proposals were funded. A total of 1,071 projects are currently funded by the program.

#### **About TRiO**

The Federal TRiO Programs are outreach and student services programs designed to identify and provide services for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds. For more information, visit [www2.ed.gov](http://www2.ed.gov).

[View this story electronically.](#)

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow intellectually, engage in community, experience environmental stewardship and celebrate diversity. A renewable and sustainable educational experience, Morris prepares graduates for careers, for advanced degrees, for lifelong learning, for work world flexibility in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at [morris.umn.edu](http://morris.umn.edu) or call 888-866-3382.

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