



## NEWS RELEASE

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Aug. 7, 2020

### **Palo Alto College awarded \$1.3 million grant to support eligible students in their pursuit of higher education**

Alamo Colleges District-Palo Alto College has been awarded a five-year, \$1.3 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) program to offer academic, personal, and professional support to increase college retention and graduation rates of participants.

Effective in the 2020-2021 academic year, the SSS program will annually provide intensive support services to eligible first-year students who are low-income, first-generation, and/or have a verified disability. In addition to one-on-one academic support and tutoring, the program will connect students to career exploration and financial literacy resources necessary to sustain them through college and plan for the future.

“Since our founding 35 years ago, Palo Alto College has remained dedicated to ensuring everyone in our community has equal opportunities and resources to continue their education and earn a college degree,” said Dr. Robert Garza, president of Palo Alto College. “Not all students come to Palo Alto College equally equipped with the tools for success. With the support of this grant, we are eager to provide more intentional support to help our students achieve academic success and attain their educational goals.”

In prior years, approximately 65 percent of Palo Alto College students meet the criteria for the SSS program. When compared to non-eligible students, this population shows a direct correlation between high financial risk and lower academic performance, persistence, and completion. Even as students may be facing higher financial risk as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, this grant will provide the College with the resources to implement high-impact practices to help this population navigate higher education and empower them for success.

Palo Alto College, part of the Alamo Colleges District, is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges and a recipient of the 2015 Texas Award for Performance Excellence, a finalist for the 2016 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, and a Rising Star winner of the 2019 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence. With over 10,000 students, Palo Alto College is accredited to offer associate degrees and short-term certificates. The College is located on the south side of San Antonio at 1400 W. Villaret Blvd. at I-410 and Texas Hwy 16 and online at [alamo.edu/pac](http://alamo.edu/pac).

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