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Triton College

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Triton College's SURGE Symposium Inspires Women of Color *EmpowerHER Conference Featured Speakers and Discussions*



Certified life coach and author Sandra Hinojosa Ludwig was the keynote speaker.

RIVER GROVE, Ill. – Triton College's SURGE (Sisterhood of Undergraduate Representing Great Excellence) Program aimed to inspire women at the SURGE Symposium: EmpowerHER Conference on Thursday, March 23, in the Student Center Cafeteria (B Building).

The symposium featured certified life coach and author Sandra Hinojosa Ludwig as the keynote speaker, as well as breakout sessions and a panel discussion.

The symposium began with welcoming remarks from Stephanie Townsend, Triton's director of Student Support Initiatives.

"We hope this symposium will help gain knowledge and insight," said Townsend. "We aspire for your cup to be filled until it overflows."

Following Townsend was keynote speaker Sandra Hinojosa Ludwig, author of *Chica, Why Not?* Hinojosa Ludwig's book coaches women to manifest their desires.

Hinojosa Ludwig explained to the audience how to find happiness and live an intentional life.

“Every action and every decision you make should align with the vision you have for yourself,” she explained. “Always be in an intentional space.”

Hinojosa Ludwig shared how she overcame many setbacks, such as being a woman of color and not fitting into traditional beauty norms. However, she realized that she could find happiness by showing gratitude and believing in the power of oneself.

“We are all deserving, powerful and capable,” she said. “You are the main character in your story.”

The remainder of the symposium included breakout sessions with Danata Andrews, vice president of Client Development, and Triton’s Dr. Purva DeVol, assistant vice president of Institutional Initiatives, Planning, and Accreditation.

The symposium concluded with a panel discussion with successful women from several professions, ranging from career services to mental health. Jeannie C. Alexander, vice president of Rail Operations, shared with the audience her views on confidence.

“I deserve to be in every room I walk into,” she said. “If the chair is not at the table, I’ll bring my own.”

Everyone in attendance received Hinojosa Ludwig’s book as well as two journals, in their swag bag.

Tangela Griffin, the student success advisor for SURGE, wanted the symposium to inspire both Triton students and staff.

“The SURGE Symposium provides students with women to look up to,” she said. “Young women should realize what they want in life and work hard to achieve it.”

SURGE was designed to increase college persistence and graduation rates for women of color. The organization provides mentoring, coaching, career development and other opportunities for women considering attending a four-year university or transitioning into the workforce.

For more information, please contact surgeprogram@triton.edu.

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ABOUT TRITON COLLEGE

Triton College is a two-year college dedicated to helping members of the 25 Western Cook County communities in our district and beyond to achieve educational, professional and personal success. Located in River Grove, Ill., Triton offers more than 120 degree and certificate programs on its 110-acre campus, featuring a comfortable, friendly and diverse atmosphere. Triton also holds classes at satellite locations and offers online learning opportunities. Triton's dedicated faculty and staff work to provide high quality, convenient and affordable educational opportunities to more than 14,000 students each year. Triton College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. Learn more at <http://www.triton.edu/>.