

Ms. Fleming

A Returning Aggie

Ms. Fleming, a South Carolina native, started her journey of personal and professional growth, leading her to become the TRIO Executive Director at N.C. A&T.

She moved to North Carolina to pursue a bachelor's degree in psychology at N.C. A&T. After graduation, she moved to New York City, where she dedicated fourteen years to work as a rehab consultant and program counselor for agencies serving physically disabled clients. She made sure they received their proper services.

Seeking further growth, Ms. Fleming returned to South Carolina to pursue a master's degree in counseling at Webster University. Her career path led her to work at a high-security prison, where she managed clinical cases as a prisoner counselor. A few years later, Ms. Fleming became employed at a community college. At the college, she was introduced to TRIO programs and served as an academic advisor for first-generation college students. After three years she moved to another college where she was appointed director of TRIO, a position she held for two years before receiving an unexpected opportunity in 2010. Around Christmas, she received an email about an opening position to become the executive director of TRIO programs at N.C. A&T. Therefore, she quickly applied and has been at N.C. A&T ever since.

Each career transition required not only a change in job responsibilities but also a mental adjustment. Ms. Fleming shifted from working in an intense environ-

ment at a high-security prison to a more relaxed setting in higher education, where she focused on supporting students in their academic and personal growth.

Throughout her career, Ms. Fleming faced challenges. In her early years, she lacked the necessary training, limiting her ability to deliver services. In addition,

Ms. Fleming confronted discrimination, limitations to accessing support, and promotional opportunities. However, she persevered and accomplished many things.

One of Ms. Fleming's proudest achievements is becoming the executive director of TRIO at N.C. A&T. Her unexpected promotion came as a result of her excellent performance as a TRIO SSS staff member at the community college. Furthermore, she takes pride in earning her EdS from Appalachian State University in 2023. Despite the challenges of balancing her duty as a full-time employee, overseeing four programs, and dealing with staff shortages, she still managed to excel. Above all, Ms. Fleming is a proud mother, emphasizing her son as her cherished achievement.

Her motivation starts with her love and passion to support and empower students, particularly first-generation college students. Ms. Fleming herself is not a first-generation college student. Both of her parents attended Morris College in South Carolina. However, what inspired her to support students was a professor in her undergraduate who became her mentor and supported her during hard times.

In the future, Ms. Fleming's goal is to expand TRIO programs at N.C. A&T. She is currently working on proposals to increase the number of TRIO programs to four to six. In addition, she aspires to build a strong staff team, help serve more students, increase campus partnerships, and provide students with more opportunities for success.

For students interested in following a similar career path as Ms. Fleming, she advises students to seek out mentors, be open to new experiences, and utilize available resources to gain diverse experiences globally.

Outside of her professional life, Ms. Fleming values family time, her faith, and traveling. Additionally, she is in a sorority, Delta Sigma Theta, where she engages in community service, voter engagement, financial literacy, and more.

By Jennifer Martinez

