Eduardo Franco is an excellent student. He loves to learn, asks questions and is not fearful of feedback, all while maintaining a 3.8 grade point average. He has also been involved in several campus positions, including Weber State University Student Association, and as adviser through the TRiO program trying to get junior and senior high school students interested in attending WSU in their future. TRiO is a set of federally-funded college opportunity programs, which began in the 1960s, that motivate and support students from disadvantaged backgrounds in their pursuit of a college degree. Eduardo is bilingual and has several volunteer hours with various organizations, including Trinity Mission Wide Horizons, Latinos in Action, Project Lead and Uintah Elementary School. He is an excellent WSU Social Work & Gerontology representative.

“When I first arrived at Weber State University,” Eduardo Franco said, “I wasn’t sure what I wanted to study so I bounced around until I was able to narrow my interests down.” Now, he is on the cusp of graduating with a bachelor’s degree in social work. He’s excited to embark on a career that will allow him to talk to people and to analyze their life situations, which often provide unspoken cues as to what is happening in their lives, in order to provide solutions. Eduardo found his way to the Department of Social Work & Gerontology after taking some courses in psychology but determining that it wasn’t the field of study for him. He wanted to focus on providing holistic solutions to social, economic, or health problems rather than contributing to the dangers of labeling a client.

He noted that almost every student who enters the Department of Social Work & Gerontology has a pretty good idea of the populations they want to, or don’t want to, work with. Eduardo said he is leaning toward working in the Aging/Gerontology field of social work, because, “Aging is often inadequately addressed by policies governing different populations.” Such work considers how aging affects the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of individuals and communities; focusing on how long-term holistic support can provide different populations with the resources and care they need to thrive.

While his courses in social work and gerontology have prepared Eduardo for the services he will offer to future clients, he recognized that participating in the WSU Student Association helped prepare him to transition from student to professional. Eduardo credited the roles he held in his first three years at Weber State – Student Leader (Freshman year), Special Events Co-Chair on the Activities Team (Sophomore year), and the Taboo Talks Chair on the Diversity Team (Junior year) – as having been instrumental in teaching him how to network and in gaining leadership experience in a variety of ways. After graduating in April, Eduardo will start his career in the social work field and, once he’s established, will most likely apply for admission to a Master of Social Work program – the new MSW here at Weber State, starting with its first cohort in Fall 2020, might be a great fit.