

# The College Bounder

Volume 13 Spring 2012

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FIRST  
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COLLEGE  
BOUND

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**Anita Johnson** graduated from Howard University and works as a White House intern.



## FGCB HELPS INSPIRE STUDENT TO SUCCESS

Anita Johnson emailed the following message to FGCB founder Joseph Fisher in January 2012.

I am pretty sure that you do not remember me. My mother is Regina Johnson, single mother of five and high school dropout. I remember when you would come to the recreation center in Kimberly Gardens to talk about college and have homework club. Although I still was in elementary school, I had older siblings that were preparing for college during that time. I remember you and my mother having many conversations about preparing for college.

Anyway, I just wanted to say thank you! I really believe that although I did not receive much direct help from First Generation College Bound in my college process, your presence stuck with me and made an impact on my life. Because of organizations like First Generation College Bound, I am now a first-generation college graduate of Howard University. During the spring of 2011, I graduated cum laude with a Bachelor's of Art in Anthropology. I believe that it is now my duty to set high standards of educational excellence for my family

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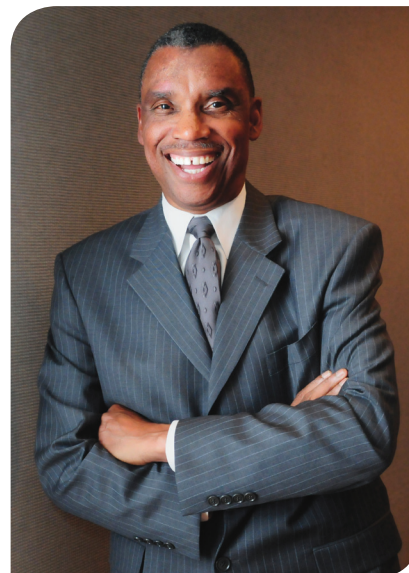
## TAX BENEFITS INCREASE FOR FGCB DONATIONS

Individuals and businesses can now reap greatly enhanced tax benefits from donations of \$500 or more to First Generation College Bound.

The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development has approved FGCB for its Community Investment Tax Credit program through December 2013. In addition to receiving the normal charitable deduction for their FGCB donation, individuals and businesses can now receive a much more valuable tax credit of 50 percent of the contribution amount on their state and federal income taxes. For example: An individual or business making a \$1,000 donation to FGCB would receive a CITC tax credit of \$500 in addition to their state and federal tax deductions. This is a great chance to benefit FGCB – and yourself or your business! **Call Nickole Conyngham for more details at 301-490-0911.**

FGCB CEO & Founder  
*Joseph Fisher*

If you are a parent  
of the class of 2013,  
this message is for **YOU!**



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\*FGCB Alumni

As the cost of a college education has increased dramatically over the years, it is critical that you are involved in the college-bound process of your son or daughter who is dreaming of attending college. Due to the cost of a college education as stated by Ric Edelman in his book "The Truth about Money," you need to be prepared to override your child's college choice if the cost is too much for your family.

Of course, if you have saved the funds for your son or daughter to attend college or they truly can afford it on their own, this message does not apply to you. Otherwise, you should take the statement seriously.

There is no doubt that parents want to support their son or daughter in attending the college of their choice. But despite their excitement when their child is accepted, many are not prepared for the responsibility when they receive the financial aid award package. This disappointment occurs quite often because they have not understood the process and their child's academic and financial profile.

Have a dream school and a collegiate back-up plan. In other words, apply to more than one college. Knowing and following through are critical. I am in favor of you supporting your child's dream of attending college, but not at the expense of your retirement. A Washington Post article on April 2, 2012 noted that many baby boomers are unable to retire due to collegiate loan debt (see [http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/senior-citizens-continue-to-bear-burden-of-student-loans/2012/04/01/gIQA4s47lpS\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/senior-citizens-continue-to-bear-burden-of-student-loans/2012/04/01/gIQA4s47lpS_story.html).) Most students and parents have no clue of the financial responsibility until after the fact.

I recommend you discuss the following with your son or daughter if they are planning to attend a four-year college:

1. Cumulative GPA from 9th to 11th grades
2. SAT and ACT scores if they have taken them. If not, they should take them as soon as possible, especially if they are applying for early decision. For example, the University of Maryland College Park early-decision deadline is Nov 1.
3. Researching colleges (state and private). I recommend three to five colleges that match their academic and financial profile (GPA and SAT/ACT scores).
4. College-award funds based on merit (GPA and SAT/ACT scores) and those based on financial need. The formula for making these awards varies from college to college.
5. The government's Free Application for Federal Student Aid. The FAFSA does not award money. Many people think it does. It calculates an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) – the amount a parent should be able to afford to pay for his or her child's education. Colleges use the EFC when preparing financial packages for accepted students. It is important to understand most colleges do not have the funds to bridge the financial gap and are not required to bridge it. Only "full need" colleges can fully make up the difference between college cost and your EFC, and obviously it is competitive to get into them. You can review full need colleges at <http://rmec.dadeschools.net/Documents/CAP/2009-2010/Colleges That Meet Full Demonstrated Need.pdf>
6. What you can afford or are willing to pay (many students believe parents have endless pockets).
7. That community college can be, not the last option, but the affordable option.

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# FORGING WINNING ATTITUDES IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

First Generation College Bound is inspiring middle-school students and their families to begin planning for college through a three-year partnership with the University System of Maryland.

The University System sought out FGCB for the pilot project, said Anne Moultrie, system vice-chancellor for communication. “I had been discussing with Joe Fisher my respect and applause for what First Generation College Bound had been doing with students at the high school level. I wanted to figure out how to provide some one-on-one (college-bound) support for middle-school students.”

The project calls for FGCB to provide motivational talks at three Prince George’s County middle schools, to engage 8th-graders at those schools in a college-bound research project and to hold an end-of-the-year celebration for participating students and their families. The schools are Dwight D. Eisenhower in Laurel, William Wirt in Riverdale and Benjamin Stoddert in Temple Hills.

The students will then be encouraged to enter FGCB’s College Access Program in high school and be tracked to see how many enter and complete college. The matriculation rate for FGCB’s College Access

Program participants in the past has been 94 percent, compared to the overall U.S. average of 63 percent.

A teacher at each middle school will oversee the college-bound research projects, which involve students researching a career in which they are interested and then contacting colleges to see if the schools offer such programs. Three students will present their findings at an event sponsored by the University System of Maryland’s Way2GoMaryland campaign taking place on June 2nd at Bowie State University. Way2GoMaryland provides college-planning information and encouragement to middle-school students across the state.

The partnership kicked off in January and February 2012, when FGCB CEO & Founder Joseph Fisher spoke about “a winning attitude for education” to a total of 222 students at the three middle schools.

“We’re very excited about what we can learn from First Generation College Bound,” Moultrie said.



## Grant Pays for Strategic Study

The Community Foundation for Prince George’s County has awarded First Generation College Bound a “capacity-building” grant to improve its strategic planning and diversify its sources of funding.

Through the grant, consultant Beth Blanchard Schaffer of Washington, D.C., is spending 10 months studying the organization, interviewing its staff and board of directors, and facilitating the development of a strategic plan and fundraising plan.

Schaffer led a board of directors retreat on March 24 that produced the following mission and vision statements for FGCB.

Mission: “First Generation College Bound exists to empower youth from low and moderate income families to achieve social and economic success by providing guidance, encouragement and support in obtaining a college degree.”

Vision: “One day, every Maryland student will have equal access to achieving a college degree.”

Schaffer has experience as a nonprofit development director, director of major gifts and volunteer management director. She also has taught courses on nonprofit management and is a consultant to the Maryland Association of Nonprofit Organizations.

Among the goals of the consultant’s study is to assess the feasibility of creating an endowment fund to support FGCB’s work well into the future.





## Alumna Gives Back through Leadership Program

A First Generation College Bound alumna is reaching back, and bringing others with her, to help young people succeed.

Charmaine Wilson-Jones profited from FGCB's College Access Program at Parkdale High School in Riverdale, Md. "I was the first in my family to go to college, so I didn't know how to navigate financial aid." FGCB steered her away from applying only to out-of-state colleges, and she ended up at the University of Maryland with lower costs and more financial aid.

Now a freshman, Charmaine participates in the university's Public Leadership Scholars program. For a required community-based learning project, Charmaine proposed helping with the FGCB Homework Club for middle-school and high-school students at Alden Berkley Apartments in College Park. "My idea was to help First Generation because they had done so much for me."

Starting in January, Charmaine and three other Leadership Scholars have attended the Homework Club each week, talking to the students about college and tutoring them in math and other subjects. "It's very much a pleasure," she says. "They're smart, bright kids. They just need a bit of a push."

Charmaine Wilson-Jones helps FGCB Homework Club students as a freshman at the University of Maryland.

## Use the Envelope or the Web!

First Generation College Bound has been able to change the futures of more than 1,100 young men and women over the past 22 years. FGCB cannot do this alone, however. The organization depends on the **generosity of donors** like you to carry out its critical work. You can contribute by sending a check made out to "First Generation College Bound" in the **provided envelope** or by clicking the "Donate" button on our **website**, [www.fgcb.org](http://www.fgcb.org).

## FGCB Helps Inspire Student to Success continued from page one

and my community. I just wanted you to know that your organization is phenomenal, and I give you my utmost appreciation and sincere thanks.

This was a busy year for me! Completing college has transformed my entire life. During the summer of 2011 I did an internship with the Sutherland Asbill and Brennan law firm for a few months, and then went to New Mexico on an anthropology internship for three weeks with Dr. King to study the Buffalo Soldiers. Soon after I got back from New Mexico, I started a fall internship with The Congressional Black Caucus Foundation (CBCF). Through the CBCF I was in the Emerging Leaders internship program and was placed in the office of Congresswoman Marcia L. Fudge in the U.S. House of Representatives. My experiences with the CBCF were invaluable, lifelong experiences that will never be forgotten. I had the opportunity to draft policy legislation, attend briefings and hearings, meet countless congressional members; the president of Korea, Lee Myung-bak; First Lady Michelle Obama; and President Barack Obama!

Most recently I started my internship at the White House for the spring of 2012. I am in the Office of Presidential Correspondence. I am also enrolled in Kaplan's LSAT test preparation course at night at Howard University. I started my internship on January 17, 2012 and I absolutely love it. I recognize and acknowledge that First Generation College Bound, Inc. has had a huge part in my ongoing success and for that I wish to say thank you!

—Anita's mom **Regina Johnson** went back to school to receive her GED!

# Retention Committee Expands Outreach

A grant is helping First Generation College Bound's Retention Committee find new ways to reach out to FGCB students in college.

FGCB has received \$23,580 from the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation to support its retention efforts. The grant will pay part of the cost of a college retention coordinator, plus finance other new initiatives such as visiting students at their colleges and hosting a send-off event in late summer and a welcome-home event during winter break.

Launching the new campus visit program, Retention Committee head, Patricia Fisher, and FGCB Program Manager, Raymond Harrod, traveled to the University of Maryland Eastern Shore on Nov. 1, 2011 and to Towson University on March 27, 2012 to meet with FGCB college students.

Fisher and Harrod met with 15 FGCB students at Eastern Shore. They treated the students to pizza and homemade cookies, and chatted with them about their campus lives. Some of the students mentioned freshman challenges and adjusting to the social environment.

"It was good to have the upperclassmen there to tell how they survived their first year, and to make suggestions," Fisher said.

Dr. Anthony Jenkins, UMES vice president of student affairs and enrollment management, encouraged the students with reflections about his experience as a first-generation college graduate. Afterward he wrote to Fisher, "I know firsthand how profound mentors and support like that provided by FGCB can enrich one's educational experience. Please keep up the great work."

At Towson, Fisher and Harrod met with six FGCB



**Aiyana Dancy and Tristan Baboolal**, first-year Towson University students, participate in a FGCB luncheon at their college.

students. Also present were Raft Woodus, Towson's director of student success programs, and several Towson students involved in a campus mentoring program. "If you attend, but do not graduate, we have failed you," Woodus told the FGCB students. The students affirmed their determination to obtain their diploma.

In addition to campus visits, the Retention Committee will continue to mail care packages twice a year to FGCB college students at all schools; send reminders in January to students to file their new federal student aid forms; and keep tabs on students by phone and email.

## FGCB Joins National Network



**First Generation College Bound will keep up with the most recent developments and tools in the college access field through its new membership in the National College Access Network.**

The network is comprised of hundreds of colleges, school districts and organizations across the country that seek to help underserved students attend and graduate from college. FGCB will profit from NCAN's up-to-date information about the field through its website, webinars and newsletters, as well as gain contacts and ideas at regional conferences.

# Congressman Pays a Visit

U.S. Rep. Steny Hoyer of Maryland visited with First Generation College Bound staff, board members and alumni in September 2011 to hear their thoughts on the importance of the federal Pell Grant program. Pell Grants are financial awards of up to \$5,550 a year to help low and moderate-income students pay for college.



**Congressman Steny Hoyer** wanted to hear thoughts of First Generation College Bound alumni on Pell Grants

**H**oyer, the second-ranking Democrat in the House, said he had a very personal interest in federal help for low-income and first-generation college students, which he said was under budget-cutting attack. His parents had not attended college, and his mother had not completed high school. He worked a 40-hour-a-week job to get himself through the University of Maryland, and then depended on a federal loan to pay for law school.

As a country, “if we don’t educate our young people, we won’t succeed,” Hoyer said. “We need to make sure in America that we do not price people out of an education.”

Joseph Fisher, FGCB’s CEO and founder, responded, “We are highly, highly dependent on Pell Grants, because without them, our kids wouldn’t be able to go to college. ... If it wasn’t for the Pell Grant, I wouldn’t have been able to leave my challenging neighborhood in

Southeast D.C. and go to college.”

Lonnie Moore, a FGCB alumnus who now works for IBM, said his grandmother raised a family of 10 children in a three-bedroom house. “My family was very poor. My grandmother was able to put food on the table.” When FGCB helped him get into college, Pell Grants were “crucial. I didn’t have the money.”

Alonzo Washington, who now works as a legislative aide to a Prince George’s County Council member, agreed. He said his mother raised six children on public assistance. “I can’t tell you where I’d be without (FGCB) and Pell Grants.”

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## If you are a parent of the class of 2013, this message is for you.

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We advise all parents and students to review award packages before making their college decision. Therefore, having the award package in hand is important. We do not want anyone to return home due to not being able to afford the cost. Parents, this is why your involvement is critical. Be pro-active in the college-bound process. Do not wait until the bill comes due. Remember that, due to the cost, you can make the decision of what college your son or daughter will attend.





**Brian Allen**, left, received the first-place ribbon for the fourth straight year. Presenting the ribbon is FGCB CEO and founder **Joseph Fisher**.

# 2011 Riverfest 5K Results

The following are award winners, by category, in the 8th annual First Generation College Bound Riverfest 5K Race on Oct. 1, 2011 in Laurel, Md.



Category		Name	HomeTown	Age	Time
Overall Male					
	1	Allen, Brian	Laurel, MD	22	17:44.55
	2	Pettit, Brian	Newark, DE	23	18:57.67
	3	Thomas, Ben	Columbia, MD	23	19:09.37
Overall Female					
	1	Laseter, Elizabeth	Washington, DC	23	20:24.20
	2	Radcliffe, Rebecca	Warham, NC	19	22:58.21
	3	Rayfield, Kristen	Marietta, GA	19	22:59.09
Masters Male					
	1	Fisher, Joseph	Laurel, MD	58	21:28.31
	2	Kirk-Davidoff, Daniel	Columbia, MD	43	21:31.31
	3	Williams, Patrick	Silver Spring, MD	51	22:38.74
Masters Female					
	1	Manney, Edith	Columbia, MD	40	28:38.14
	2	Hennes, Kathy	Annapolis, MD	59	28:47.58
	3	Kirk-Davidoff, Heather	Columbia, MD	44	31:23.46
1-13 Male					
	1	Bryant, Gerald	Odenton, MD	10	30:30.08
	2	Bedarel, Cameron	Vashon, WA	9	32:17.63
1-13 Female					
	1	Kirk-Davidoff, Rosa	Columbia, MD	12	30:58.09
14-19 Female					
	1	Mayfield, Camelia	Ashland, OR	19	23:00.62
20-29 Male					
	1	Roberts, Andrew	Silver Spring, MD	25	31:33.39
20-29 Female					
	1	Sacker, Katie	Catonsville, MD	21	22:59.45
30-39 Male					
	1	Foulds, Lance	Laurel, MD	38	27:45.74
30-39 Female					
	1	Speight, Mia	Randallstown, MD	30	26:52.44
40-49 Male					
	1	Simu, Frank	Laurel, MD	42	28:14.35
40-49 Female					
	1	Arbogast, Cynthia	Laurel, MD	47	32:10.53
50-59 Male					
	1	Arbelaez, Bill	Columbia, MD	54	22:43.84
50-59 Female					
	1	Sacker, Mary Jane	Catonsville, MD	55	31:51.75
60-99 Female					
	1	Fisher, Pat	Laurel, MD	63	32:33.84
60-99 Male					
	1	Murchison, Joe	Laurel, MD	60	27:38.80



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## *Annual Celebration*

Save the date! First Generation College Bound's 22nd Annual Celebration will be on **Wednesday, June 20, 2012** at the Samuel IV Riggs Alumni Center at the University of Maryland College Park. The festive event celebrates high school and college graduates as well as recipients of graduate degrees who have matriculated through the FGCB program. Hors d'oeuvres will be served at 5:30 p.m., with the celebration program beginning at 7 p.m.

