



THE COLLEGE BOUNDER

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THANK YOU

First Generation College Bound honored the graduating class of 2013 at its 23rd Annual Celebration. We celebrated **157 students** graduating, of which one hundred twenty-five were high school seniors heading off to college, 30 graduating from college and two earning graduate degrees. The event raised over \$22,000, money that will help send more students off to college in the future!

Special thanks to our sponsors for making this a successful event!

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Standing on My Family's Shoulders



Sherri Goodall, Community Outreach Manager for DTLR, a fast-growing apparel retailer, spoke at FGCB's 23rd Annual Celebration on June 19, 2013. The celebration took place at the Samuel Riggs IV Alumni Center at the University of Maryland. Here is an excerpt of her remarks.

Not once had I thought that I was making history: that I was the first person to graduate from college on my mom's side of the family. That I was the embodiment of the many hopes, dreams, sweat, tears and sacrifices made for me to walk across the stage and get my diploma. That despite my mother, who started college and soon left to join the workforce with the federal government; despite my mother's brother, Uncle Lewis, who chose to go work in the automobile factory straight from high school; and my grandfather who had been a truck driver for Exxon and my grandmother who retired from the drapery department at Hutzler's, I was first!

It was with tears in my eyes that I finally knew why my grandmother was so very proud to see me graduate, and why she was hard on me when I complained and asked to drop out of college. I also understood why when I would go whining to my grandfather about my professors or work being too hard, he would always look at me and say, "I know, Buzz (my granddad's nickname for me), but I know that you will be okay." He used to make me so angry because I wanted his sympathy or anything other than "you will be okay." Now, having been out of college for more than 20 years and having a daughter of my own, I understand why my family would look at me with such pride and joy.



Riverfest 5K Run and 2-Mile Walk Ninety-two walkers and runners participated in the Riverfest 5K race sponsored by FGCB on Sept. 29, 2013. Marco Rosas-Galicia, 38, won with a time of 20:02:27, while the top woman, Catherine Kitz, 18, finished at 20:40:75. It was Rosas-Galicia's first time running in the event, and his entire family ran with him. Kitz is a member of the Catholic University women's cross country team. **The event raised \$6,000 for FGCB programs.**

Save the Dates!

2nd Annual College Retention & Alumni Social
Jan. 4, 2014, 4-8 p.m.
Outback Steakhouse, 15107 Sweitzer Lane, Laurel

24th Annual Celebration
June 18, 2014, Samuel Riggs IV Alumni Center,
University of Maryland, College Park

11th Annual 5K Run and 2-Mile Walk
Fall 2014, date TBD

For information on how you can be a partner or sponsor, contact Nickole Conyngham at 301-490-0911.

With FGCB's help, our 2013 college-bound students obtained over **\$1.1 million** in financial aid. Special thanks go to the Maryland Higher Education Commission for their efforts in helping our students to secure over **\$100,000** in state grants and scholarships.

What an Honor!

First Generation College Bound is proud to be included in the 2013-2014 **"Catalogue for Philanthropy: Greater Washington"** as one of the best community-based nonprofits in the region. FGCB was one of 74 organizations selected out of 220 applicants. Selected organizations undergo a rigorous evaluation and financial review process. Since 2003, the catalogue has raised more than \$21 million for featured nonprofits.

Visit www.cfp-dc.org for additional information.



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*Indicates FGCB Alumni

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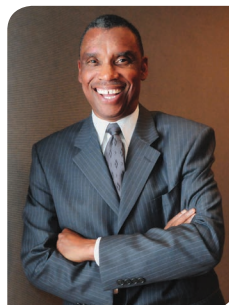
The Honorable Alexander Williams, Jr.

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Schools Can't Do It All

Joseph Fisher

FGCB CEO & FOUNDER



The expectations we have for our public schools are greater today than ever before, especially serving our communities that are economically challenged.

While the pressures on our schools are to improve test scores and more, do the schools have the needed resources to do so successfully? It has been proven over and over again that environment impacts learning. Students who come from homes that have the resources to reinforce what they have learned in school have a greater chance of success.

As traditional family structures change, students who do not have the educational support system after school are truly challenged to succeed. Our public schools have always been challenged, but were successful in previous generations due to the traditional family structure. Today, families are more dependent than ever on our public schools.

Many of us can recall when we attended school. Our parents' expectations for us to attend school and to respect the teacher were high. To reinforce and evaluate our character development, we received a grade for citizenship. Today we often hear about the demand for high test scores, but what about the academic expectations and attitudes of discipline being reinforced at home?

The two are critical for the success of our students. While schools have expectations for students to succeed, the discipline needed must be reinforced at home and school.

You can reinforce your expectations as a parent by making a class visit to let your son or daughter know you are serious. When the word gets out that you visited the school, your child's peers will take you seriously too. Peer pressure is greater than ever before due to technology and more.

Regardless of your child's grade level, write a "Visit My Child's School Today" on your calendar. Trust me, your child will thank you later. Our schools need your support.

Our Funders

Thank you to the following for providing funding during the 2012-2013 academic year:

- Arbor Management
- Community Foundation for Prince George's County
- CarMax Foundation
- Freddie Mac Foundation
- Hattie M. Strong Foundation
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- Path to Greatness
- Prince George's County Bar Association
- Prince George's County Council Members
- Prince George's County Department of Housing and Community Development
- Prince George's County Office of the County Executive
- Prince George's County Government
- University of Maryland Foundation

Your support has allowed us to have another successful year!

New Employee Reflects on Work of FGCB



Wrenn Skidmore is FGCB's new College Access Case Manager. She earned a joint B.S. degree in Psychology and Sociology at Southern Methodist University and a M.A. degree in Forensic Psychology at Marymount University. She is now working on her Master's in Social Work through the University of Southern California. Before FGCB, she was a Crisis Case Manager for QCI Behavioral Health, a health-care company providing psychiatric services to the state of Maryland. Here she reflects on her current work.

It's been great watching the students realize that college is a real possibility for them. Many have been told outright by their community, by their families, by teachers and counselors that college isn't an option. They've been told they're not smart enough, they don't have the GPA, they don't have the SAT scores, the family can't afford it. In actuality, they're being given false information that is not only damaging to their educational future but to their self-confidence.

By giving them correct information and educating them on their possibilities, you can see the change and the confidence. Their faces light up when they realize, "This is something I can do, this can be for me!" It's been so fulfilling – it's such positive work that we're doing.

TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A CHANGE



Alonzo Washington

Project Manager, Redevelopment Authority of Prince George's County, and Maryland State Delegate. B.A. in Criminal Justice, University of Maryland.

My 8th-grade year, we moved to a low-income housing project in Laurel. A month later, Mr. Fisher came knocking on our door telling us about his organization. My mom was excited, but I was a little skeptical. I already was doing well in school, and I knew I was going to go to college – no one was going to stop me! But no one in my family had been to college.

I went to homework club, I went on college tours. They had the financial aid workshops. They helped me find a lot of money: the Pell Grant, the Guaranteed Access Grant, and a scholarship from the University of Maryland. And when my family was evicted from our home, Mr. Fisher welcomed me into his home to finish out my high school career.

If it wasn't for First Generation College Bound, who knows where I would be. There's a possibility I wouldn't be a state delegate right now, or I wouldn't have graduated from college, or I wouldn't have graduated from high school. Having an organization that shows constantly that they care about you and they want you to be successful – that's empowering.



Cindy Cruz

Licensed Social Worker, University of Maryland School of Social Work. B.S. in Family Studies and a B.A. in Spanish, University of Maryland; Master's, University of Maryland School of Social Work.

I was born in the U.S., but when I was a baby, my mom took me back to El Salvador. When I was 14, El Salvador had two earthquakes, and my mom decided it was best for my brother and me to come back to live with an

aunt. My mom didn't have the proper documentation to come.

My family didn't know how the college system worked. I went to FGCB college orientations, and they helped me with my resume and school applications. Through First Generation, I got a Maryland Higher Education Commission grant that I had no idea existed. I also was accepted into the University of Maryland Academic Achievement Program – a six-week bridge program before I started college.

Mr. Fisher kept up with me through college and graduate school. Sometimes on winter or summer break, I would get this random phone call and it was Mr. Fisher. "How are you? How is school? What are your plans?" He was always excited hearing about what I was doing.

I don't know how I would have gone to school without First Generation College Bound. I really felt like God put them there. I really wanted to go to school and I didn't know how. First Generation College Bound was my "how."

Dontra Scott

Dentist and Resident in Endodontics, New York University School of Dentistry. B.S. in Biology, University of Maryland; Doctor of Dental Surgery, Howard University School of Dentistry.



I was in middle school when Mr. Fisher introduced himself to me. At the time I was unfocused and influenced by my friends – you know, the typical 7th-grader. He pulled me to the side and got me straight.

As a junior in high school, he spoke to me about the importance of taking the standardized tests and getting my college applications in on time. He helped me make sure I met the criteria for the schools I wanted to apply to. I always wanted to study medicine. When I got into college, he talked to me a lot about managing my time, managing my money, and making the

right choices in my life. He always talked to me about giving back, so I was heavily involved in community service activities. I still give back my time; I just came back from a mission trip to Nicaragua where we performed dentistry for people who can't afford anything there.

I love going to things like that, and Mr. Fisher instilled that in me. He came from a challenging community, as did I. He always said that we could make a change, and that's why I respect Mr. Fisher so much.



Kevin Palma

Freshman, Columbia University.

My mom went to college in her country, Guatemala. She was a special ed teacher. My dad had moved to this country when he was 13. He got his GED. No one in my family had gone to college in the U.S. In 2012, we were living in Miami, and my father was reaching tenure at his job, 20 years, when they laid him off. Our home was foreclosed on and we were evicted.

My mom's brother in Laurel took us in, and I started going to Laurel High School. I met Mr. Fisher at a program he had. He and (Program Manager) Raymond Harrod were with me the entire time – through the application process, keeping me on the right track to get everything done on time. I told Mr. Fisher I wanted to apply to Columbia but didn't know if I would have the financial means. He encouraged me, I pursued it and here I am.

I'm taking five classes, and I'm loving it all. It's very rigorous. You wonder, "Am I going to be able to stay here?" But Mr. Fisher has been calling me, he's been asking me how I've been doing, do I need any help. I've been doing fine.



FIRST
GENERATION
COLLEGE
BOUND






























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Laurel, MD 20707
www.fgcb.org

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

We Love Our Colleges & Universities!

We would like to extend a special thank you for:

**Presenting at our workshops • Organizing on-campus events for our college students • Navigating us to the correct office for helping our students
Providing objective advisement to our students beyond high school • Advocating for our students**

	Allegany College of Maryland		Hood College		Prince George's Community College
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	Capitol College		Mary Baldwin College		Stevenson University
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	Community College of Baltimore County		Middlebury College		Towson University
	Coppin State University		Montgomery College		University of Maryland Baltimore County
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