

# THE COLLEGE BOUNDER



## FIRST GENERATION COLLEGE BOUND, INC.

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### MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

## THINK "COLLEGE BEST FIT & AFFORDABILITY," NOT FREE!

This is the time of year when students are in the process of applying to college. In partnership with their parents, thinking "Best Fit and Affordability" must be a priority. Why is this important? For many reasons, families are often unable to save financially for their child to attend college. Parents are excited and supportive of their child's desire to attend college, and hopeful that their child will receive academic, athletic, or private scholarships to cover costs. However, after being accepted, disappointment sets in as many students and parents realize they did not receive the financial aid or scholarships needed. Many of those students, who do find a way to attend college, end up returning home because the annual costs are not affordable.

Since founding FGCB 29 years ago, I have observed that affordability continues to be the greatest challenge for students, low income families, and those who have been unable to save. Recently, I viewed a commercial on television promoting the Virginia 529 plan concerning the Loan Monster vs. Tuition Monster. The message informs students and parents of the importance of saving for college (<https://vimeo.com/200273324>).

This commercial caused me to consider those families who are unable to save due to life's challenges or circumstances. Should families just not encourage their child/children to attend college despite their desire to do so? Should the student put their desire on hold and get a job? Many of these

students, especially those from low income families, find themselves taking on necessary financial responsibilities at home or duties in their community. These additional responsibilities often distract or prevent them from attending college.

It is equally important to note that just to graduate from high school, many low income students have used their life skills to overcome challenges at home, school and beyond. This has served to further ignite their desire to attend college, and beat the odds. But the result of this difficult journey through high school is that students have not been able to reach their academic



**Joseph Fisher**  
FGCB CEO & FOUNDER

*Message from our CEO continued on page 7*

### GREAT MINDS GREAT FUTURES ACADEMY

## MARYLAND LEADERSHIP ONE DAY WORKSHOP



The staff of Great Minds Great Futures Academy (GMGFA) started their 2018 Summer Enrichment program with a one day Leadership workshop facilitated by Maryland Leadership Workshops (MLW).

Pictured are students enrolled in GMGFA from Duval HS, Laurel HS, and Parkdale HS all representing the class of 2021.

The Leadership workshop allowed students to embark on an amazing journey; learning more about themselves by reflecting on their values, beliefs, and experiences, applying self-awareness to leadership contexts, understanding group interaction roles and strategies for motivation and empowerment and discovering creative ways to address and solve problems that leaders encounter.

*Great Minds Great Futures Academy continued on page 5*

## OUR IMPACT ON EDUCATION

**2018 COLLEGE MATRICULATION: 142**

**TOTAL COLLEGE GRADUATES: 739**

**2018 FINANCIAL AID: \$1,813,727**



# STUDENTS MOVING FORWARD



## Peter Iwuh

Freshman at Morgan State University

I learned self advocacy on my journey to becoming more independent. I knew in high school that I wanted to attend college however I did not have the best grades. To tackle this challenge, I spoke with my College Access Coach Ms. Cobbs who gave me several tips to follow such as aiming for a GPA range of 2.6 or 2.7. She advised me to talk to each of my teachers explaining that I wanted to attend college and to ask for suggestions in order to pull my grades up. My teachers provided me with extra credit work and my grades slowly got better. Because of the hard work I was accepted to Morgan State University. This experience taught me how to problem-solve through my challenges as well as learning who to talk with in my network that can provide vital information.

During my first semester at Morgan State University, adapting to college life was a challenge. I left home where my mom cared for me, and now would have to learn to live on campus and care for myself. In advocating for myself I sought out resources that could teach me about college life. I attended Freshman Week and learned to get around campus, how to use my meal plan, and to participate in student activities. Ms. Cobbs also prepared me for my first college semester by sharing tips to stay organized. She provided a scheduler that assisted tremendously. It helped with my time management--waking up on-time, completing homework, laundry, and other activities. After just three months of school, I have adapted well to my independence, and I am proud to

be the first member of my family to attend college. I have also accepted my first leadership role as the president of the APICS Student Chapter which is an association for Service and Supply Chain Management.



## Capri Lanier

Bowie State University - Major Biology

The process of going to college has taught me how to make many independent decisions for my life, including to speak up for myself. As a self-advocate my greatest challenge came with finding scholarships for school. Once I was accepted to Bowie State University, I went online to complete the FAFSA in an attempt to get financial aid for school. I received my orientation notice a week before class in Aug 2018, which caused me to panic because I didn't know how much my classes or room and board would cost. At orientation I got a chance to go to the financial aid department to inform them that I had completed the FAFSA application. Initially, I was told I owed money in order to attend school. I explained I should not have to pay money and to please check the records again. I also reached out to my College Access Coach Ms. Cobbs to discuss the issue and she helped me to calm down. She informed me of how the process works, and assisted with applying for scholarships.

The school eventually informed me that I did not owe anything for my tuition, however, I was not awarded room and board. I decided to commute to school. Overall, I learned to look at my achievements, and becoming more

independent—as advocating for myself. I adjusted to college life, scheduled classes, coordinated my commute, met friends, planned meals, and navigated class size. By remaining persistent, and taking on the challenges of the financial aid process and college life, I now attend college through grants and scholarships.



## Elaine Obahiagbon

Bowie State University - Major Nursing

This is an exciting time in my life where I am learning to advocate for myself as I set goals and meet them. My goal to attend college came with ups and downs but I am proud of how I moved through each step to enter college. My first challenge came when I submitted my college application. Although my application went to the school on time, the school was short staffed which created processing problems. I panicked because I did not know if I would be accepted or would have to wait another year to be enrolled into Bowie State University. In the end I was accepted, and this challenge taught me how to have patience and to trust the process.

Advocacy often comes through team work and my College Access Coach Ms. Cobbs helped me in many ways with life tools such as encouragement, persistence, and confidence. When challenges came she would always say that things would work out and offer suggestions. After I was accepted, my next challenge came when completing the FAFSA for financial aid. Because I used my middle name rather than my first name on the application, an immigration investigation was



# STUDENTS MOVING FORWARD

triggered. It took persistence and perseverance to make the correction. In the end I received my Pell grant! I am proud that I met both challenges head on—now whenever I must face challenges, I know that I can do so. I have learned many life tools through my experiences with FGCB.



**Thomasina Smith**  
University of Maryland College Park  
Major Psychology

The process of entering college taught me to be a self-advocate. I learned to understand my strengths and weaknesses. In making decisions and developing personal goals, I learned to be assertive. In learning more about myself, I had to determine how I would meet my needs for school. I had two goals as a senior in high school--to be the first in my family to receive a high school diploma and be the first to attend college. When FGCB came to my high school to discuss going to college, I signed up for the workshops. It was there that I learned about time management, filling out college applications, and overall planning for college. The workshops made me feel that college was possible for me because they provided the necessary steps to achieve my goal of attending college.

Before I received my acceptance letter to the University of Maryland, my College Access Coach Ms. Conboy would come to my high school and discuss any concerns that I had regarding the process of entering college. Ms. Conboy and Mr. Fisher encouraged me to take the necessary steps in order to enroll in college. Ms. Conboy pushed me as well as

others in the same boat with me--aiming to enter college with confidence, perseverance, patience, and the belief that I can achieve. She also helped me complete my FAFSA. We determined which schools were in my reach based on my SAT and GPA scores, and I applied accordingly. Once I was accepted to college, Mr. Fisher showed me how to complete the GA Grant application. This grant gave me money to pay for books and provided for additional expenses. It is a proud feeling to know that I have the capabilities to make life choices which will in turn empower me. Knowing that I am currently in college because advocated for myself has made me very independent. This has also made my mom proud of me because I completed both goals of graduating from high school and entering college.



**Jamia Tiamiyu**  
Bowie State University - Major Nursing

Living with a disability makes you a natural advocate for yourself because you teach people what your needs are and how they can assist you. I started my journey for college by being introduced to the common black college application, which is used by many different colleges. Although I had begun the preparation I had reservations about attending school because of my disability. I was not sure how living on campus would be. In March 2018, I was invited to attend an on-site admissions college fair at Bowie State University. The college fair was very insightful and made me feel at ease with the reservations that I was having regarding school. The staff answered my questions

about housing, safety, campus life, smoking, and school routines. The questions also included disability accommodations. Having this experience made me feel better about attending college and living on campus.

About two weeks after the college fair I received an acceptance letter to attend Bowie State University. Mr. Fisher assisted my mom, and high school counselor with my financial aid application to ensure that it was completed properly. He also advised me to apply for the senatorial and delegate scholarships. This assistance helped my school funding to be in place on time. I was then able schedule time to speak with the director of Disability Support Services. He has been instrumental in getting me tutoring, guidance, and how to move through obstacles that come from being a college student. The key to my successful advocacy has been knowing where to access information and having people in my life who want me to succeed. I am most proud of my achievement to secure funding for school and live on campus independently with a learning and physical disability.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

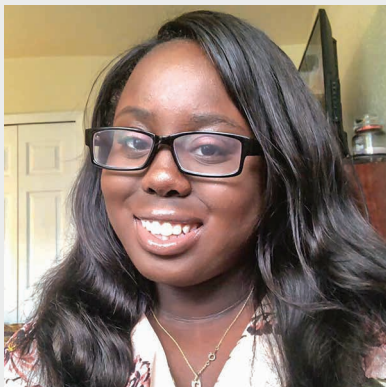
**EACH DOLLAR YOU GIVE IS DIRECTLY CORRELATED TO THE SUCCESS OF A STUDENT IN OUR COMMUNITY.**

While no level of support is too small, your extended generosity **changes lives.**

You can contribute by sending a check made out to "FGCB" in the provided envelope or by clicking the **"Donate"** button on our website, [www.fgcb.org](http://www.fgcb.org).

We are excited about the FGCB Alumni Corner, and are always “looking” for our alumni to know...

## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



### Giovanna Baisie-Arthur

Giovanna Baisie-Arthur, a woman of few words, enrolled in College Access in 2013 during her junior year at Parkdale High School. After graduating in 2014 from Parkdale, she continued her education at Stevenson University. Giovanna graduated in 2018 with a BS degree, and is currently enrolled in graduate school at Loyola University Maryland. Her field of study is Clinical Psychology, and she also works as a graduate assistant with ALANA Services.

***WE WANT TO KNOW MORE--KEEP US POSTED GIOVANNA!***



### Benjamin Mbou

Benjamin Mbou sought out the FGCB College Access program at Central High School in 2010. He graduated with the class of 2011, and continued on to the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES). Benjamin graduated in 2015, as an Exercise Science Major with a Clinical concentration. Over the next two years, he worked as a caregiver for persons with autism, while applying to physical therapy (PT) schools. It was this experience that motivated him to further research occupational therapy (OT) as a profession. This past summer, after much thought, he applied for acceptance to the Masters Program in occupational therapy at Trinity Washington University in Washington DC.

He is now in his first semester of OT school at Trinity Washington University, class of 2021. Benjamin is still thinking ahead and says, by the grace of God, upon completion of his program, he plans to do an online doctorate program in OT. He is forever grateful to FGCB. Benjamin's message to FGCB is "We really cannot thank you enough for all the things you have done for us. May God bless the entire FGCB team. Thank you."

***WE WERE GLAD TO ASSIST BENJAMIN!***

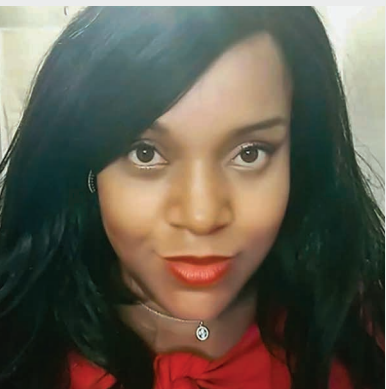


### Eun Oh

Dr. Eun Oh graduated from Laurel High School in 1992, in only the second ever College Access class! A very accomplished student, Dr. Oh received his B.S., M.S. and Ph.D. from Swarthmore College, Johns Hopkins University, and University of Virginia, respectively. He spent 5 years as a research scientist at NASA/GSFC, 14 years with US Naval Research Laboratory, and 2 years at the US Naval Academy as an Assistant Research Professor. He is currently a Scientific Advisor for the DoD. A prolific writer, Dr. Oh has over 70 publications in science and engineering journals.

Appreciating the tremendous value of education, he is a strong advocate of young people seeking higher education. Dr. Oh is married and his two daughters currently attend high school in Howard County, MD and they are both looking forward to attending college.

***BIG CONGRATS ON YOUR MANY ACCOMPLISHMENTS EUN!***



### Aliecia Shepherd

Graduating high school in 1996, Aliecia Shepherd began her journey with FGCB in 1991, when she was in the 7th grade! She graduated from Virginia Union University in 2000 with a BS degree in Biology, and a minor in Math. Her career path has landed her at the National Institutes of Health, NIDDK, Division of Kidney, Urologic, and Hematologic Diseases, where she was recently promoted to Management and Program Analyst. Aliecia is married with five children, and has plans to attend graduate school in 2019.

***WAY TO GO ALIECIA!***



## WHERE ARE THEY NOW? *continued from page 4*



### Angel Tillery

Angel Tillery enrolled in the FGCB College Access program in 2012 during her junior year at Laurel High School, and graduated from Laurel in 2013. She then went on to receive a BS degree in Visual Communication and Digital Media Arts from Bowie State University in 2018, graduating Magna Cum Laude, with a concentration in Advertising Design.

After concluding summer internships in New York City, Angel was offered a full time job beginning in November with Wall Street English Training Institute in Beijing, China, as a foreign trainer. She is currently raising money to help fund her way to Beijing. Having faced financial obstacles before, Angel continues to stay positive and excited for this next huge step into her future career. She asks if you are interested in supporting her in making this solo move across the world, please email [angeltillery95@gmail.com](mailto:angeltillery95@gmail.com) for inquiries.

**SAFE TRAVELS ANGEL!**

## GREAT MINDS GREAT FUTURES ACADEMY *continued from page 1*

### MARYLAND LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP CAMP AT UMBC



**Jaslyn Blanco**, a current sophomore at Duval HS, went through a selection process to participate in the MLW Leadership Camp this past summer. Jaslyn was selected from a group of 25 students who applied to participate in a week long Leadership training at UMBC. Jaslyn is pictured standing in front of her first dorm room located in Patapsco Hall. The week-long residential program allows high-school students to immerse themselves in all aspects of leadership. MLW delegates discover and develop their own unique strengths in daily workshops, practice their leadership skills in team projects, and are mentored by skilled staff through MLW to find their passion, their voice, and their path. Jaslyn's positive smile represents her response when asked, "How do you feel about starting your journey?" and she replied, "I am a little nervous, yet excited!"

### MARYLAND LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP LEADERSHIP CAMP AT UMBC



**Yann Mbiango**, also a current sophomore at Duval HS, was selected from a group of 25 students to participate in the MLW Leadership Camp this past summer. Yann is pictured sitting at the Closing Ceremony for the MLW Camp. Each student that was selected had to write a synopsis at the end of the week and Yann's synopsis stated, "I would recommend my fellow peers to attend this leadership camp because it's a great experience and you learn a lot from it." Some of the workshops covered during the week were; Leadership styles, communication skills, diversity, ethical decision-making, group dynamics, and more. When Yann was asked whether he would change anything about the experience he stated, "I was upset that the camp was only one week, it would be great if it was longer, so we would have more time to do more activities!" The overall result of attending MLW Leadership is a life transforming experience for all participants involved.

# THE HOMEWORK CLUB



**Elijah Manigault**

*Elijah*  
I like home work club because they help with homework. Homework Club goes on field trips and have pizza parties. homework club is a good place to do your homework. At the end of year there is a moon bounce.

The Homework Club (HWC), at the forefront of the pioneering effort of FGCB, is a neighborhood based program. Working with educators from the community school district, the Homework Club provides educational support, college awareness, and more, to students and parents alike. We are grateful for all the support from Kimberly Gardens, Alexandria Pearsall and especially Mrs. Nneka Penn for her many years of service!



**Shannon Heard 11th grade**

I never knew educational enrichment could be so enjoyable and rewarding until I joined Homework Club. Not only do I get help with work I'm struggling with, but I am also greeted by swell teachers that are always willing to help, and push-me to strive for my best. I was not aware that such behaviors were rewarded with incentives such as field trips to a manifold of places, parties, gifts, and much more than I ever expected, but I am delighted that they are a part of the program. The non-stop support and encouragement is something I truly value. Also the pencil sharpener is really good. Five stars!

## WELCOME & FAREWELLS



**Farewell to Mr. Raymond Harrod!** There aren't enough words to express our gratitude for your devotion to the mission of FGCB as our Program Manager. Your special leadership abilities, significant contributions, and great sense of humor will never be forgotten. We were fortunate to have your gifts and talents on our team. Thank you for all your time, commitment, and passion to FGCB for nearly 12 years!



**Farewell to Mrs. Melissa Mallory!** Thank you for all your hard work and leadership as the first-ever lead coach on our GMGFA team. Both your colleagues and your students will miss your upbeat personality, and cheery disposition. As you begin a new chapter in your life we wish you a bright future full of good things.



**Welcome to Ms. Janice Doyle,** as she rejoins the FGCB Board of Directors. Ms. Doyle recently retired from the University of Maryland System and will be putting her financial aid knowledge, and legislative skills and talents to work. Ms. Doyle is also an important part of FGCB history as she served as one of our first board members. During her absence she remained available and supportive of our mission, and we are delighted that she has returned as her talents, knowledge, and skills are needed.

MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO *continued from page 1*

## Think “College Best Fit & Affordability,” Not Free!

potential. However, this is not, and should not, be the end of their pursuit of higher education.

FGCB College Success Coaches identify and recruit these same students to think “College Best Fit and Affordability” in order to attend and graduate from college. College Success Coaches use the FGCB “Winning Attitude for Education”, advisement, encouragement, and support for students to stay focused and follow the College Best Fit and Affordability strategy. This empowers our students to manage their attitude as they complete the college bound process. This process includes meeting deadlines for college admissions and financial aid. Armed with admissions decisions and financial aid information, students can then decide to attend a college they can afford which will increase their likelihood of being able to remain in college and graduate.

If you are a parent who has not been able to save financially in order to fund your child's college education, don't allow the Tuition

Monster to void your child's dream of attending college. During the college bound process think “College Best Fit and Affordability, Not Free”. In collaboration with your child, discuss affordable college options, ie enrolling in a community college and then transferring to a four-year state school. It is also important to meet all deadlines in filing your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and completing your state financial aid requirements in order to receive maximum financial aid.

Employing the “College Best Fit and Affordability” strategy will enable you to manage the tuition savings and loan monsters. Attending and graduating from college IS possible and you don't have to put your dreams on hold!



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

## SAVE THE DATE!

### 7th Annual Alumni Social

Saturday, January 5, 2019

**Metro Points Hotel, Salon A/B Room**  
8500 Annapolis Road, New Carrollton, MD



### Annual Celebration

Wednesday, June 19, 2019

**Samuel Riggs IV Alumni Center**  
University of Maryland College Park

## 2017-2018 FGCB Funding Foundations & Partners

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Community Foundation in Prince George's County  
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