

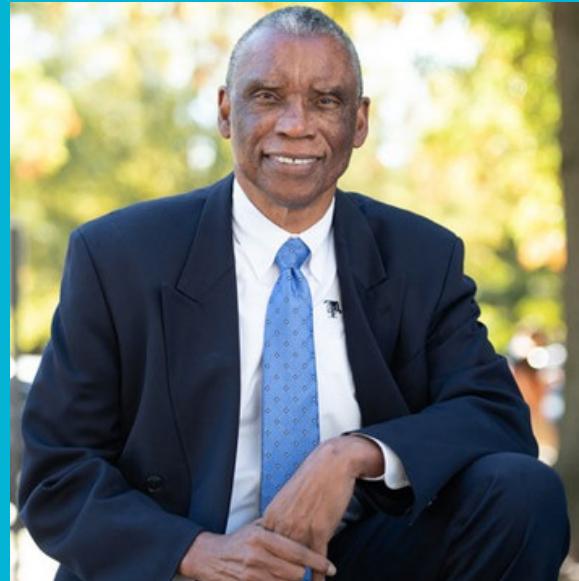
First Generation College Bound Impact Report 2024 - 2025



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Letter from the CEO & Founder

Dear Friends and Supporters:

As CEO of First Generation College Bound (FGCB), I am both humbled and inspired by the incredible progress we made in 2025. Last year was a testament to the power of education, community, and perseverance. Our impact reinforces why FGCB has made a long-term commitment to a mission that promotes college success and transforms lives.

The achievements we celebrate in this report represent much more than numbers—they reflect the lives of young people who have broken barriers to achieve their dreams of higher education. From expanding our reach to supporting more students through college acceptance and financial assistance, we have seen firsthand the transformative power of belief and opportunity.

We are proud that FGCB's "debt-free philosophy" model extends beyond college entry, providing ongoing retention support through mentorship, financial aid guidance, care packages, and advocacy.

As we look ahead to 2026 and beyond, our commitment to ensuring that first-generation students have the resources and support they need to succeed remains unwavering. Thank you for your continued trust and partnership. Together, we are changing lives and shaping futures.

With gratitude,

Joseph Fisher

Founder and CEO, First Generation College Bound



GAVIN BROWN

Executive Director

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends and Supporters,

It is with great pride and gratitude that I share with you the 2024-25 Annual Impact Report. We have made remarkable strides in our mission to inspire first-generation students to earn college degrees, and it is because of your generosity and dedication that we continue to thrive.

As the first Executive Director and an alum of FGCB, this organization holds a special place in my heart. I know firsthand the challenges and triumphs of being a first-generation college student, and I am deeply honored to lead an organization that opened doors for me and so many others. It's incredibly fulfilling to see our students achieve the goal I once dreamed of—applying and being accepted to college and securing opportunities that will transform their futures.

Our students have shown incredible resilience, and we are proud to play a role in helping them realize their potential. From navigating the college application process to securing vital financial assistance, our students are now on their way to achieving academic and professional success.

In this report, you will see the tangible results of your support—each story, each success, represents a future transformed. Together, we are creating opportunities and making a lasting impact in the lives of these young scholars.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to our work. Together, we will continue to break down barriers and open doors for future generations.

Sincerely,

Gavin Brown

Executive Director & FGCB Alumnus
First Generation College Bound

Our Team



Joseph Fisher
Founder and CEO



Gavin Brown
Executive Director



Deja Cobbs
Director of Program Services



Patricia Fisher
Director of Administration



Kierra Winston-Onokoko
College Access Coordinator



Mark Gasbarro
College Access Coach



Josue Melgar
College Access Coach



Renae Whittington
College Access Coach



Fatima Molina
College Access Coach



Edwing Reyes
College Access Coach



Jennifer Gonzales
College Access Coach



Gabriela Lopez
College Access Coach



Marquis Pritchett
College Retention Specialist



Judith Baylor
Program Specialist



Morgan Cobbs
Data & IT Specialist

Contractors

Nickole Conyngham
Grants Manager

Nneka Unonu Penn
Homework Club Coordinator

Michelle Winstead
Finance Manager



**\$3.2
million**

in financial aid to students



Executive Summary

The First Generation College Bound (FGCB) 2024–2025 Impact Report reflects another year of meaningful growth, deepened impact, and sustained commitment to ensuring first-generation students not only access college but persist and succeed through graduation and beyond. With the steadfast support of our donors, partners, and community, FGCB continued to deliver comprehensive, student-centered programming that removes financial, academic, and systemic barriers to higher education.

During the 2024–2025 year, FGCB supported nearly 2,600 students across college access, retention, and early academic pipeline programs, while also reaching an additional 500 students outside of FGCB programs through financial aid education and outreach. As a result of customized coaching, family engagement, and financial aid guidance, FGCB seniors who enrolled in college collectively secured more than \$3.2 million in financial aid in one year, representing a projected \$12.8 million over four years.

FGCB's impact spans the full educational continuum. Through on-site programming in nine high schools, a robust College Success and Retention program supporting 2,057 current college students, and the Homework Club, which serves students from first grade onward, FGCB is building a sustainable pipeline to higher education. Since its founding,

In 2024–2025, FGCB also strengthened its role as a field leader. As a founding member and chair of the Maryland Alliance for College Affordability and Equity, FGCB advanced statewide efforts to reduce financial and administrative barriers to college access, amplifying impact beyond direct student services and strengthening pathways for future generations.

As FGCB looks ahead to 2025–2026, the organization remains focused on expanding program reach, strengthening alumni engagement, increasing financial literacy, and deepening partnerships that support first-generation students from early education through college completion. Together with our supporters, FGCB is opening doors to higher education and helping students walk through them with confidence, resources, and a community behind them.

Thank you for being a part of this transformative journey.



Origin Story

FOUNDED 1990

First Generation College Bound (FGCB) was founded by Joseph Fisher, himself a first-generation college student who grew up in public housing. During his own college journey, he discovered the power of need-based financial aid and wanted other young people to have the same opportunity. In 1990, he went door-to-door in the Kimberly Gardens and Cherry Branch communities in Laurel, MD, speaking with more than 300 families and offering to help their children pursue higher education. Ten students enrolled that year, and with them, FGCB was born.

MISSION

First Generation College Bound (FGCB) exists to inspire low-income and first-generation youth to achieve social and economic success by providing advice, encouragement, and support to obtain a college degree.

VISION

One day every Marylander will have access to an affordable college education.

2025 Impact by the Numbers



2592

Students Served: First Grade thru College



54

Homework Club Participants



9

On-site school programming



481

College Access Participants

A+ 2057
College Retention Students
(currently in college)



\$3.2M

Financial aid awarded

Cumulative Impact

The totals shown represent FGCB's lifetime impact.

Degree figures are unduplicated and represent the highest degree attained.

 **3697**
**Students Who
Enrolled in College**

1207 
**Higher education
achievements**

 **186**
Associate degrees

 **838**
Bachelor's Degrees

 **162**
Master's degree

 **21**
**PhDs / Professional
Doctorates**

In the most recent fiscal year, FGCB demonstrated robust performance, reflecting its strong commitment to assist students in maximizing financial aid and minimizing college debt.

Type of Financial Aid	# of Awards	Amount
Guaranteed Access Grant	47	\$640,050.00
MD Community College Promise Scholarship	17	\$46,227.00
MD Senator/ Delegate Scholarships	13	\$19,775.00
Scholarship (Private)	1	\$500.00
Institutional Financial Aid	91	\$1,044,661.00
Federal Grant funds	115	\$770,262.54
Federal Work Study	34	\$99,189.00
Federal Student Loans	79	\$583,195.00
Total Financial Aid	150	\$3,212,859.54
Total over 4 Years		\$12,851,438.16

Our Financial Impact for Students



VALUE OF STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

\$3.2M

OR

\$12.8M

OVER 4 YEARS



Financial Stewardship

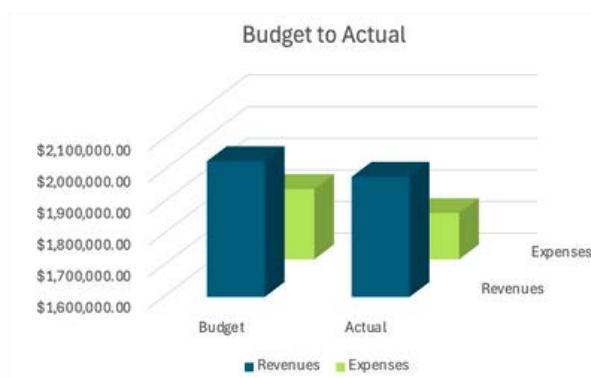
Our Financial Stewardship

At FGCB, every dollar raised is an investment in the success of first-generation students. Our financial stewardship ensures resources are directed where they matter most—supporting students on their path to and through college. Behind every student success story is the trust our community places in us. These financials reflect not only our commitment to transparency but also the impact that our supporters make possible.

Revenue & Support (FY2025)

Total Revenue: \$1,979,835.11

- Federal Government: 3%
- State Government: 55%
- Local Government: 10%
- Foundations: 3%
- Corporations: 1%
- Nonprofit Organizations 1%
- Individual Donors: 3%
- Earned Income (fees, interest): 4%
- Carryover Funds: 20%



Budget vs. Actuals

We raised 97% of our fundraising goal. By carefully managing resources, FGCB adjusted spending to 95% of budgeted expenses, while still fully meeting program needs.

- Budgeted Revenue: \$2,029,138.00 | Actual Revenue: \$1,979,835.11
- Budgeted Expenses: \$1,822,259.00 | Actual Expenses: \$1,746,296.44

FGCB ended the year with a positive balance, strengthening our long-term sustainability.



HOMEWORK CLUB

Program Highlights

In 2024-25, the **Homework Club** had a significant impact on the academic and personal growth of its participants from the Kimberly Gardens housing community. Here are three notable outcomes which helped bridge the gaps in education and to allow more access to higher learning:

1. Improved Academic Performance and Engagement:

Students benefited from consistent homework assistance and academic support provided by certified teachers. This led to noticeable improvements in grades, attendance, and engagement, aligning with the Club's mission to reduce absenteeism and ensure students meet high academic standards.

2. Exposure to Positive Role Models and Leadership Development:

The program included interactions with community leaders and mentors, fostering leadership skills and inspiring students to set and achieve higher educational goals. These engagements helped to build a strong foundation for their future academic and career pursuits.

3. Enhanced Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities:

FGCB provided students with access to supplemental education, cultural activities, and exposure to post-secondary education pathways. Activities such as field trips and case management services enriched the participants' learning experiences and aspirations.



Program Highlights

In 2024-25, First Generation College Bound (FGCB) continued its impactful initiatives under its **College Access Program**, which aims to support students from underserved communities in achieving higher education. Here are three key examples of the work of the program:

- 1. College Coaching and Mentorship:** Through the personalized and customized College Access Coaching Program, FGCB offered one-on-one coaching to assist students in navigating the college application process, securing financial aid, and preparing for academic success in higher education.
- 2. Financial Aid Workshops and Guidance:** FGCB conducted workshops to help students and families understand financial aid options, complete the FAFSA, and secure financial aid, ensuring that financial barriers do not hinder college attendance.
- 3. Community Partnerships:** FGCB maintained strong collaborations with schools and organizations to extend its services, ensuring that more students could benefit from its programs.

These initiatives highlight FGCB's commitment to empowering first-generation students and their families in achieving their educational aspirations.

COLLEGE ACCESS



Program Highlights

COLLEGE RETENTION

FGCB's **College Retention** Program provided support to students as they navigate the academic, financial, and personal challenges of college life. During the 2024–2025 academic year, 2,057 students were enrolled in the College Retention Program.

- 1. Individualized Support and Student Advocacy:** FGCB works with students to address financial aid, transfer planning, and navigating campus resources, and similar challenges. FGCB advocates with college and university offices and connects students to available resources to resolve issues that might otherwise disrupt academic progress.
- 2. Financial Aid Guidance:** FGCB provided financial aid guidance, including one-on-one assistance, reminders to complete forms on time, and financial literacy workshops to help students stay informed, prepared, and supported.
- 3. Connection, Community, and Transitions:** FGCB hosts an annual College Retention and Alumni Social that brings together current students and alumni to share insights, encouragement, and lived experience.
- 4. Practical Support:** College students received fall and spring care packages to help meet basic needs during the academic year. FGCB began early outreach to graduating high school seniors to introduce them to college support services ensuring they enter college knowing FGCB's support continues beyond high school.

FGCB's College Retention Program affirms that college success is not a solo journey.



Partnership Highlight

The Maryland Alliance for College Affordability and Equity

FGCB has joined forces with other leading organizations to form the Maryland Alliance for College Affordability and Equity (MACAE), a powerful coalition dedicated to expanding college access for all Maryland students. The Alliance's primary mission is to remove systemic, administrative, legal, and regulatory barriers that limit low-income students' access to college.

The Maryland Alliance is chaired by FGCB's Founder and CEO. As Chair of the Maryland Alliance, Fisher has taken an active role in advocacy, including testifying before the Maryland Assembly in support of key legislative initiatives aimed at removing barriers to college access for low-income students.

FGCB actively participates in:

- Legislative Advocacy: Working with state lawmakers to create and support policies that increase college accessibility.
- Barrier Removal: Identifying and addressing institutional obstacles that prevent low-income students from pursuing higher education.
- Resource Sharing: Collaborating with partner organizations to maximize impact and reach.
- Policy Development: Contributing to statewide initiatives that promote college affordability and access.

This collaborative effort strengthens FGCB's ability to create lasting change in our community and amplifies our voice at the state level. It also extends FGCB's impact beyond direct student services, helping shape the broader landscape of college access in Maryland and ensuring more first-generation students have the opportunity to pursue higher education.

THE MARYLAND
ALLIANCE

Student Success



Cesia Turcios

From Struggling Student to Honor Society Graduate

Cesia Turcios – High Point High School Graduate, Class of 2025

When Cesia Turcios started high school, she struggled academically and emotionally, finishing her freshman year with a 1.4 GPA. She worried her future was already over—until a counselor connected her with FGCB. Through workshops, guidance, and the steady support of her coach, Cesia rebuilt her confidence and learned how to navigate the path to college. FGCB's holistic approach—focusing on both academics and emotional well-being—helped her transform her outlook and performance. By senior year, Cesia had raised her GPA to 3.4, earned induction into the National Honor Society, and gained admission to Trinity Washington University, where she will study psychology with the goal of becoming a psychologist. Reflecting on her journey, Cesia urges, “Never stop pushing yourself. Even if it feels like one bad year defines your whole future—don’t give up.”



Jasmine Blanco Ventura

Breaking Barriers, Building a Future in Social Work

Jasmine Blanco Ventura – Bowie State University, Class of 2025

As the oldest of six children, Jasmine Blanco Ventura wasn't sure if college was within her reach. Her parents hadn't studied beyond sixth grade, and she often doubted her own path. That changed when she discovered FGCB at a Parkdale High School event. Encouraged by their mission and support, Jasmine enrolled and gained the confidence to pursue higher education. At Bowie State University, Jasmine faced moments of deep loneliness and self-doubt, especially during her first year away from home. With encouragement from FGCB coaches and mentors, including Joseph and Pat Fisher, she pushed through and found the resilience to succeed. Jasmine graduated in 2025 with her bachelor's degree and began a master's program in Social Work at the University of Maryland, Baltimore in the fall, 2025. “Through First Generation College Bound, I didn't just gain the tools to navigate higher education—I gained a family. I gained mentors whose impact I will carry with me for life, and who have inspired me to pay it forward.”

Student Success



Daisy Velasco, JD

A Degree, A Bridge, A Promise

Daisy Velasco, Juris Doctorate, University of Baltimore, Class of 2024

For Daisy Velasco, earning her JD was not just a personal milestone—it was a transformational moment for her family and community. A member of FGCB since her high school days, Daisy says that FGCB has remained part of her extended family throughout her journey. Like other first-generation students, Daisy faced challenges navigating applications and financial aid without a blueprint, carrying the weight of expectations, and pushing through moments of doubt. With FGCB's guidance and the steadfast support of her family and mentors, she persevered. Daisy sees her achievement as a bridge—proving that barriers can be broken and showing younger siblings, cousins, and peers that higher education is within reach. "This degree is not just a piece of paper—it is a promise. A promise to break barriers. A promise to lift others as we climb—just as First Generation College Bound did for us."



Dionne Young

From Crisis to College: A Parent's Story

Dionne Young, Parent of FGCB College Student

When Dionne Young's daughter was accepted to her dream school, Spelman College, their family was overjoyed. But once they saw the cost, excitement quickly turned into a financial crisis. With just two weeks before classes began, Dionne turned to FGCB for help. Joseph Fisher and the FGCB team explained that her daughter had unknowingly declined the Maryland Guaranteed Access Grant by choosing an out-of-state school. Together, they worked against the clock to reinstate the grant and identify a Maryland college with space available. McDaniel College welcomed her daughter, who is now thriving with tuition, room, and board fully covered. Dionne calls the experience transformational, turning what felt like an impossible situation into a blessing. She encourages other families to lean on FGCB's expertise. "Trust the guidance of FGCB's College Access Coaches. They understand how to navigate both dreams and dollars." Today, her daughter is on track to become their family's first college graduate.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

2025 - 2026

First Generation College Bound (FGCB) has ambitious plans for 2025 to further our mission of supporting first-generation college students. Here are some key initiatives:

- 1. Expanding Program Reach:** FGCB aims to extend our programs to more underserved communities, ensuring that more students have access to the resources and support they need to succeed in higher education.
- 2. Increasing Financial Literacy:** FGCB will offer more workshops and resources focused on financial literacy, helping students and their families understand the financial aspects of college, including scholarships, grants, and loans.
- 3. Strengthening Alumni Network:** FGCB is working on building a stronger alumni network to provide mentorship and support to current students, helping them stay connected and engaged with the FGCB community.
- 4. Collaborating with Partners:** FGCB plans to collaborate with more organizations and businesses to create a comprehensive support system for first-generation students, from high school through college graduation.

These initiatives are designed to create a more robust and supportive environment for first-generation college students, helping them achieve their educational and career goals.



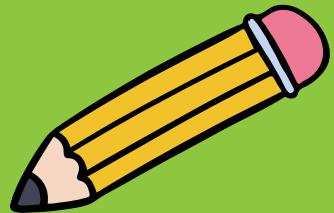


Funders & Partners

* Onsite in 9 High Schools

Baldensburg High School
Central High School
DuVal High School
Fairmont Heights High School
High Point High School

Laurel High School
Parkdale High School
Potomac High School
The International High School at Langley Park



* Partners

The Boule Group
Career Puppy
EveryMind
Maryland Charity Campaign
Maryland Higher Education Commission
Maryland Independent Colleges and Universities Assoc.
Maryland Leadership Workshop
My Dorm Room



National Student Clearinghouse
Prince George's Community College
Prince George's County Department of Social Services
Prince George's County Public Schools
United Way of the National Capital Area
University of Maryland at College Park
University System of Maryland

* Funders

City of Laurel, Maryland
Herb Block Foundation
iF Foundation
Impact100 DC
Maryland Higher Education Commission
Maryland State Dept of Education - Next Generation Scholars
Meyer Foundation
MGM Resorts Foundation

Prince George's County Council
Prince George's County Councilmembers
Prince George's County Department of Housing & Community Development
Prince George's County Local Development Council
Prince George's County Office of the County Executive
Scheidel Foundation
TowerCares Foundation



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