

More Than Bootstraps First-Generation Student Graduations!

More Than Bootstraps students, families, and board members gathered to celebrate First-Generation Student Graduations on May 21. The event was hosted by **Passaic County Community College** and **PCCC President Steve Rose** and sponsored by **PNC Bank**. Guest speaker and thought leader on the first-generation experience **Ingrid Renderos** offered words of wisdom to our students and families in Spanish and English.



Pictured from left to right are Marisol, Catherine, our speaker Ingrid Renderos, Rogreka Clayton (our graduating College Student Leader), Ashley, and Audrey Fisch, our President. (One additional Fellow, Jennifer, is not pictured.)

All of our initial cohort of College Student Leaders have now graduated from college! Congratulations to Reka (William Paterson University, '22) and to other inaugural leaders Johana (Rutgers University, Newark, '21), Jocelyn (The College of New Jersey, '22), Dhruvi (Wesleyan University, '22), and Michelle (William Paterson University, '22).

Our graduating high school seniors are off to college: Ashley (William Paterson, Criminology and Criminal Justice), Catherine (Passaic County Community College, Business), Jennifer (Montclair, Psychology), and Marisol (Passaic County Community College, Studio Arts).

We couldn't be more proud of how our first-generation students have supported each other on the journey to and through higher education. Near-peer mentoring is powerful! Thank you for investing in More Than Bootstraps and these wonderful students.

STUDENT TESTIMONIAL: "Seeing people who were in the same position as I will be in a couple of years is exciting. I congratulate all the students who graduated from MTB because what they accomplished takes a lot of hard work and dedication."

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Governor's Hispanic Fellows Program

Two of our college student Leaders have been selected for the New Jersey Governor's Hispanic Fellows Program for Summer 2022. The eight-week paid internship program, sponsored by the New Jersey Center for Hispanic Policy, Research and Development, provides leadership and professional development opportunities. **Lizbeth Coliente** has been assigned to the Plainfield Public Schools Office of Community Relations and **Melissa Reyes** will be interning at the Immigration and American Citizenship Organization in Passaic.

More Than Bootstraps, a partner in the Hispanic Fellows Program, is hosting one intern this summer. **Joseph Batista**, a proud Dominican and first-generation college graduate of Fairleigh Dickinson University, will be completing his Master's Degree in 2023.



STUDENT TESTIMONIAL: "I feel like MTB has made me more brave in reaching for my dreams."

MTB Summer Program

Over the summer, our rising senior high school Fellows will be reading about and discussing the first-generation college experience, preparing for financial aid and college applications, and writing essays.



STUDENT TESTIMONIAL: *"Because of MTB I was able to turn my hard experiences into teaching moments for my mentees."*



We are busy preparing for the third year (already?!) of MTB programming in Passaic. Ashley, one of our graduating high school Fellows, will be among our new Leaders, joined by other continuing and new college student Leaders from Passaic. Leaders will engage in extensive training this summer in order to be ready to welcome and support the newest cohort of rising juniors from the Passaic high schools to the MTB family.

STUDENT TESTIMONIAL: *"I joined MTB because I really want to focus on my future. It's an opportunity that was presented to me that I felt the need to take advantage of. It has presented with me with so many resources. It also gave me the opportunity to build relationships with people who are more experienced."*

**We couldn't do it without your support.
Help us continue the work of More Than Bootstraps!**

DONATE TO MTB

Even if you can't afford a direct donation, you can still support MTB through your purchases on **Amazon Smile**. Not sure how to set this up? Watch the brief video for guidance!



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MTB was founded by educators who understand the significant obstacles that first-generation college students face on their journey into and through higher education. To succeed, they need **More Than Bootstraps**