



# more than bootstraps

We have a new logo!

*Thanks to MTB Board Member and graphic designer **Shannon Yau** for creating something that so fantastically represents our mission and our students! Watch for our new logo on all our social channels!*

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## MTB College Success and Access Program in Passaic Expands

For AY 2022-2023, we welcomed 14 new High School Fellows, all rising juniors in the Passaic Public Schools, to start their journey towards higher education with the support of a Leader from their own community.



We gathered at the beautiful Passaic Boathouse Cafe to welcome our newest and largest cohort of MTB High School Fellows. Computers from Revivn were distributed, ice cream was eaten, and near-peer mentoring was initiated.

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Our new High School Fellows will be mentored by six awesome new Leaders, our largest cohort to date. The new MTB College Student Leaders for the 2022-2023 academic year are **Evelin Cabrera Acosta** (Kean University), **Michelle Carpinteyro** (Emory University), **Lisberma Peralta Aquino** (Vassar College), **Nereida Delgado Garcia** (Montclair State University), **Parth Rana** (Princeton University), and **Ashley Delgado** (William Paterson University).

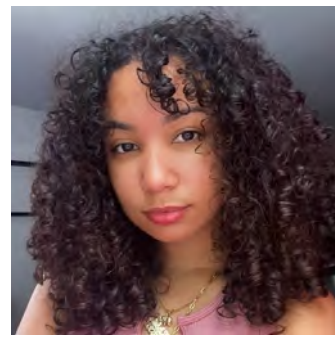
**Exciting fact:** **Ashley** is our first College Student Leader in MTB to have first completed two years as a High School Fellow in the program before becoming a Leader!



Evelin Cabrera-Acosta



Michelle Carpinteyro



Lisberma Peralta Aquino



Nereida Delgado Garcia



Parth Rana



Ashley Delgado

The new cohort of Leaders joins returning Leaders **Lizbeth Coliente** (Passaic County Community College), **Melissa Reyes** (Dartmouth College), and **Lisbeth Kamila Gell** (Kean University) who, based on the relationships they have built over the last year, will guide their now-senior Fellows through the college and financial aid process.

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### MTB Leader Training Summer 2022

New and returning MTB College Student Leaders all participated in our third, intensive summer training program, learning from experts and returning Leaders about imposter syndrome, financial aid, under-matching, and stereotype threat. The training also focused on relationship-building and networking as the new College Student Leaders take on the responsibility of empowering their younger peers while continuing to balance the demands of work, school, and family responsibilities.



This year, we were lucky to have our graduate social work intern, **Ayana Goodwin** (black mask, white shirt), with us for all of training, which enabled us to center **wellness**. Ayana will continue with us throughout AY 2022-2023, supporting the mental health of our students at a time when we know anxiety and depression are rampant among young people and under-addressed among underrepresented student populations.



## MTB Summer Program for High School Seniors



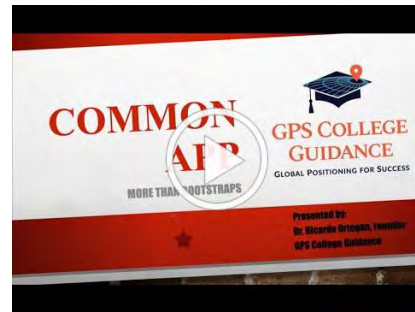
Our seniors participated in a summer program that included a **book discussion**, ably led by new Leader **Ashley** together with returning Leaders **Melissa** and **Lizbeth**.

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**STUDENT TESTIMONIAL:** *"I hope they love the book as much as I do and I hope this book helps them understand some struggles first-gen students go through. I know all of the new fellows are going to be successful and being here today is just the beginning."* (Ashley)

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We also had sessions on financial aid and verification preparation led by MTB Board Members **Margarita Fuentes** and **Cindy Goldman**; college essay writing with MTB volunteers (thank you!) – professionals in education and college counseling; and a Common App Bootcamp led by MTB Board Member **Ricardo Ortegon**.



Our seniors are ready to take their next steps!

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During Leader Training, all of our College Student Leaders, together with Passaic native, MTB Board Member, and recent Wesleyan grad **Margarita Fuentes**, held a session to support our rising Senior High School Fellows. Pictured below, our Leaders discussed going away to school, undermatching (when high-achieving students attend less-selective colleges), and finding a good college fit with Fellows.



Special thanks to Passaic Mayor [Hector C. Lora](#) and his staff for providing us with some awesome air-conditioned space to meet on a particularly hot day!

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**STUDENT TESTIMONIAL:** *"This meeting was very helpful because I have been having a difficult time looking for the college where I feel I [will] belong. The leaders' advice really helped me, and I will keep that in mind when searching for schools."*

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### Summer Program Success

MTB actively encourages students to pursue pre-college programs and summer internships. We help identify opportunities and provide support during the application process.

On Friday, July 29, we were excited to celebrate the graduation of **Lizbeth** and **Melissa**, two MTB Leaders, and **Joseph**, our MTB summer intern from the [Governor's Hispanic Fellows Program](#). We couldn't be more proud of them, their hard work, and their accomplishments.

Melissa and Lizbeth both enjoyed their summer placements at, respectively, the [Immigration and American Citizenship Organization, Inc.](#) (IACO) in Passaic and the Office of Community Relations, [Plainfield Public Schools](#).

In addition, **Yessenia**, one of our High School Fellows, attended the [Hispanic Student College Institute](#) at Montclair University this summer, where she lived on campus, connected with Hispanic students from across New Jersey, and was buoyed in her higher education and career ambitions.



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### MTB Graduation Cap Contest and Planners

**Joseph** organized and ran the first MTB graduation cap contest. (FYI - he was awarded special recognition by the [New Jersey Center for Hispanic Policy Research, and Development-Dept. of State](#) (CHPRD) for his leadership.)

Some of you supported the contest by voting on entries or helping spread the word (thank you!). **Nicole**, a first-generation college student herself, a graphic

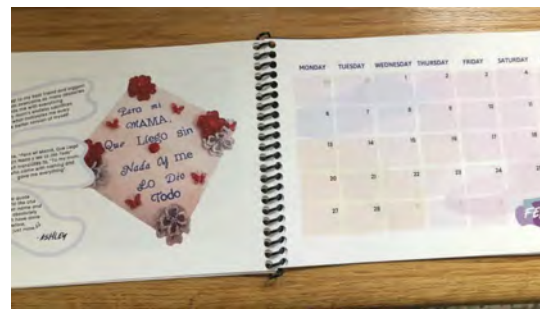
design major, and an intern with MTB, took these amazing caps and the stories the students wrote about them and created an awesome, inspirational planner, which we were able to share with all the high school and college students in our program. When they record their upcoming MTB meetings or their college application deadlines or as they practice their time-management and organizational skills, they will be inspired by others who, like them, succeeded in education.

Congratulations to Mariah, our first-place winner.

If you want to buy a planner for yourself, a student, or a class of students, we are happy to share them at \$13 per planner, including shipping. Please order by the end of the day on Sunday, September 18. The margins are quite tight on these, but we want to share them, so we are selling them at near cost. We ask you to use Venmo to cut down on processing costs, if possible.



Purchase MTB Graduation  
Cap Planners



## New Advisory Board Members

More Than Bootstraps has been fortunate to continue to grow our board and involve people who share our vision and passion. This year, we have added five new Advisory Board members. Our students will benefit from their broad range of expertise and experience. Read more at [MTB Board of Directors and Advisory Board](#).



Juan Rengifo



Margarita Fuentes



Ricardo Ortégón





Dr. Jayashree (Jay) Shivamoggi



Cindy Goldman

### We couldn't do it without your support.

As we grow and thrive, we are grateful to the many individual and institutional donors who have supported us. Our #DreamHigher2022 campaign raised more than \$30,000 and attracted more than 95 new donors. This summer, we received an anonymous \$10,000 donation from a generous family foundation, grant support from **PNC Bank** and the **Provident Bank Foundation**, and a \$15,000 grant from the **New Jersey Center for Hispanic Policy, Research, and Development**.

Thank you for sharing our vision of how first-generation students can support each other on the journey to and through higher education. Near-peer mentoring is powerful!

### 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!



Audrey Fisch, Ph.D., President, More Than Bootstraps  
audrey@morethanbootstraps.org | (908) 397-0893



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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**