

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: [Audrey Fisch, Ph.D.](mailto:audrey@morethanbootstraps.org)

President, More Than Bootstraps

908-397-0893

audrey@morethanbootstraps.org



More Than Bootstraps Celebrates Graduation and College Signing Day

WESTFIELD and PASSAIC, NEW JERSEY – May 18, 2023. The New Jersey non-profit organization, More Than Bootstraps (MTB), celebrates the graduation of our second cohort of High School Fellows with a **Graduation Event** and **College Signing Day** on Saturday, May 20, hosted by **Passaic County Community College** and **President Steve Rose**.

Jacqueline Arteaga, Yessenia Garcia, Joana Molina, Roselyn Muñoz, and Alyssa Tentle joined More Than Bootstraps as high school juniors in 2021. Over the last two years, they have worked with MTB “near-peer” mentors from Passaic who are currently enrolled college. With the help of **Lizbeth Coliente** (Ramapo ’24), **Lisbeth Kamila Gell** (Kean ’25), and **Melissa Reyes** (Dartmouth ’25), these five graduating High School Fellows gained confidence, communication, and leadership skills; navigated the world of college applications, financial aid, and scholarships; and shared their goals and ambitions with their families.

Jacqueline has committed to Wellelsey College, where she will pursue her interest in dentistry. **Yessenia** will begin her higher education career at Montclair State University, pursuing her ambition to become a speech pathologist. **Joana** has matriculated at Seton Hall University, where she will study nursing. **Roselyn** will attend Fairleigh Dickinson University to study criminal justice. **Alyssa** has committed to the College of New Jersey, studying to become a psychologist.

The May 20 celebration will feature words of wisdom delivered by **Enmanuel Mercedes, Ph.D.**, President of the Latino Mental Health Association of New Jersey.

PNC Bank is a corporate sponsor for the event which celebrates the success of the 2023 graduates. The gathering also brings together and congratulates the families of MTB’s graduates and welcomes MTB’s newest cohort of 15 rising high school juniors. “PNC’s generosity has made our celebratory College Signing Day and Graduation Event truly special,” said **Audrey Fisch**, president of More Than Bootstraps.

More Than Bootstraps is also thankful to **Amanda Racanati** and [Mint Sprig Décor](#) for generously supplying decorations to help the students mark College Signing Day.

“Higher education is both attainable and transformational for first-generation college students,” commented Fisch. “It is unreasonable, however, to ask first-generation students to face the challenges of higher education alone – to try to lift themselves by their bootstraps. Together, our high school and college graduates demonstrate the power of More Than

Bootstraps and their ability to lift each other as they rise. We hope several of our graduating seniors will now become College Student Leaders themselves.”

###

Donations to More Than Bootstraps fund student stipends, educational expenses, and emergency funds for students. Interested donors should visit the MTB website:

www.morethanbootstraps.org/donate.

MTB DIGITAL PRESS KIT: www.morethanbootstraps.org/mtb-digital-press-kit

About **MORE THAN BOOTSTRAPS**

More Than Bootstraps builds a community of first-generation, underrepresented students who empower each other to access and succeed in higher education. *More Than Bootstraps is a 501(c)3 organization, Tax ID 83-2245008.* For more information, visit www.morethanbootstraps.org or call (908) 397-0893.

About PNC Bank

PNC's Regional Community Banking group is comprised of 80+ dedicated employees who work to boost the quality of life in low and moderate-income neighborhoods through financial education, consumer products, community development lending, investing and economic development.

<https://www.pnc.com/en/about-pnc/corporate-responsibility/community-dev-banking.html>



www.facebook.com/morethanbootstraps



www.Twitter.com/mbootstraps



www.linkedin.com/company/more-than-bootstraps/



<https://www.instagram.com/morethanbootstraps/>