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**More Than Bootstraps Awarded \$2,000 Micro-Grant from IECA Foundation**  
**The grant will support stipends for students in the MTB College Access and Success Program**

WESTFIELD and PASSAIC, NEW JERSEY – June 13, 2023. [More Than Bootstraps](#) (MTB), a New Jersey non-profit organization, has received a \$2,000 mini-grant from the [IECA Foundation](#), the charitable arm of the [Independent Educational Consultants Association](#) (IECA), to support its college access and success work in Passaic, New Jersey.



More Than Bootstraps was nominated by MTB Board Member and IECA Associate Member Dr. Ricardo Ortegón for this grant, which highlights small, lesser-known programs that produce pragmatic, measurable results for young people whose needs are often not met. Ortegón, founder of [GPS College Guidance](#), commented “As a first-generation college graduate and a strong advocate for education, it’s great to see organizations align to provide much needed support for students who will be the first in their family to attend college.”

Now completing its third year of programming, MTB employs a near-peer mentoring approach to address the challenges first-generation, low-income students face in getting to and succeeding in higher education. Working with underrepresented students in Passaic, NJ, the organization matches high school students with near-peer mentors – graduates of the Passaic Public Schools currently enrolled in institutions from Princeton to Passaic County Community College. College Student Leaders meet weekly with their high school mentees and follow a curriculum of activities focused on personal and professional development, college and financial aid awareness, and communication with families. Once a month, the full group convenes for workshops and guest presentations.

Grants and donations to More Than Bootstraps fund the monthly stipends that allow the high school and college students in the program some time and space to devote to their professional development and college-going activities while still meeting their financial responsibilities.

“As we wind down our third year of programming and gear up for our fourth year, we are enormously grateful for the recognition of our program’s contribution to increasing access to and success in higher education for first-generation college students,” said **Audrey Fisch**, president of More Than Bootstraps. “This grant from the IECA Foundation will allow us to continue to increase the number of students we serve.”

Interested donors are invited to visit the MTB website: [www.morethanbootstraps.org/donate](http://www.morethanbootstraps.org/donate).

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#### About MORE THAN BOOTSTRAPS

[More Than Bootstraps](http://www.morethanbootstraps.org) 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](http://www.morethanbootstraps.org) or call (908) 397-0893.

#### About the IECA Foundation

For twenty-five years, the IECA Foundation has served as the charitable arm of the Independent Educational Consultants Association, the nation’s leading professional organization for educational advisors in private practice. The Foundation leverages knowledge, professional skills and funds provided by IECA members, sponsors, and donors to help underserved students map pathways to success.

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