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More Than Bootstraps Announces New Advisory Board Members

PASSAIC, NEW JERSEY – April 8, 2022 - The New Jersey non-profit organization, [More Than Bootstraps](http://MoreThanBootstraps.org), has added two new advisory board members to help build a community of first-generation, underrepresented students who empower each other to access and succeed in higher education.



Juan Rengifo is an AVP and Branch Manager for Citizens Bank (formerly Investors Bank of New Jersey). He is a graduate of Rutgers University, where he received a Bachelor of Science in Business Management. Juan's previous work experience includes managerial roles at PSEG, Jersey Central Power & Light, Merrill Lynch, Popular Community Bank, PNC Bank and Acme Markets.

No matter where he has worked, he has always enjoyed customer service. He works best when he knows that he is assisting others in achieving or accomplishing something that will make a difference in their life. His own personal experience of being a first-generation student is what makes his work with More Than Bootstraps most meaningful for him.



Margarita Fuentes, a first-generation and low-income college graduate from Passaic, New Jersey, majored in American Studies and minored in Caribbean Studies at Wesleyan University with a concentration in Race and Ethnic Studies. She has a passion for community building, having been a Resident Advisor for the Social Justice house on campus.

Margarita's Passaic background and immigrant parents have influenced much of the work she has taken part in, including an immigrant grassroots organization in Connecticut. Margarita plans to use her skills to provide support and community to students and families in More Than Bootstraps.

"We welcome Juan and Margarita to our board," said **Audrey Fisch**, president of More Than Bootstraps. "With their experience and expertise, we continue to build out our capacity to support our students as they buoy each other instead of trying to lift themselves individually by their bootstraps."

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About More Than Bootstraps

MTB is a non-profit created by educators seeking to level the playing field and remove some of the substantial barriers that first-generation college students encounter in accessing and succeeding in higher education. More Than Bootstraps employs a near-peer mentoring model to create a community of success. College students from the community return to guide their younger peers in the community

through the college search, application, and assimilation process. These leaders, working as a mentoring cohort, in turn strengthen their own college-going identities and improve their own chances of success in higher education.

Students are selected based on their desire to attend college and their commitment to the program rather than grade point average or test scores. All students in the MTB program receive stipends, laptop computers, and access to emergency resources to help them with the many non-tuition expenses of higher education.

More Than Bootstraps is a 501(c)3 organization, Tax ID 83-2245008

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