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More Than Bootstraps Encourages First-Generation Students to Consider Study Abroad Opportunities

PASSAIC, NEW JERSEY – March 8, 2021. [More Than Bootstraps \(MTB\)](#), a New Jersey non-profit, supports first-generation students, the majority of whom are students of color from low-income communities. Studies indicate that those students are less likely than more affluent peers to be aware of, and to take advantage of, study abroad opportunities. We are excited that two members of the MTB community are helping to break down these study-abroad norms.

Jocelyn Gonzalez, one of the college student Leaders for MTB, has been accepted into [The College of New Jersey \(TCNJ\) Global Student Teaching Program](#). She will complete half of the student teaching requirement for her major at an international school and the other half at a local school district in New Jersey. Jocelyn was selected because of her excellent academic performance and because she possesses the professional and personal disposition to represent the United States as a student ambassador. More Than Bootstraps is proud to have helped Jocelyn pursue this opportunity.

We also applaud **Claudia Severino**, a More Than Bootstraps founding board member, who will be a presenter at the [We Represent 2021 Virtual International Exchange Conference](#). The two-day conference (March 10-12, 2021) is designed to build awareness of U.S. government exchange programs through information sessions and panel discussions and to facilitate networking between advisors, alumni, and potential applicants. Claudia, a first-generation college graduate herself, was a norm-breaker. She studied abroad during college in Peru as a Gilman scholar, and she taught in Colombia as Fulbright fellow.

Despite the obstacles of the pandemic, economic disruption, and remote learning, More Than Bootstraps celebrates the groundbreaking members of our community of success and their dedication to helping others follow in their footsteps. “With the benefit of near-peer mentoring and role-models, the sky is the limit for first-generation students.” said Audrey Fisch, president of More Than Bootstraps.

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[More Than Bootstraps](#) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping first-generation students access and succeed in higher education. MTB builds on the strengths and resources of first-generation college students, the majority of whom are students of color from low-income communities. Students in More Than Bootstraps will succeed not just through their individual efforts and grit but through their membership in and contribution to a peer community, engaged in a shared enterprise focused on success in getting to and succeeding in college. **More Than Bootstraps is a 501(c)3 organization, Tax ID 83-2245008.**



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