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**More Than Bootstraps Awarded \$1,000 Grant from Westfield Rotary Club Foundation
The grant will support stipends for students in the MTB College Access and Success Program**

WESTFIELD and PASSAIC, NEW JERSEY – June 29, 2023. [More Than Bootstraps](#) (MTB), a New Jersey non-profit dedicated to helping low-income, first-generation students access and succeed in higher education, has received a \$1,000 community service grant award from the [Westfield Rotary Club Foundation](#), an organization of business and professional men and women in Westfield who value service above self in Westfield and throughout the world. This is the third award MTB has received from the Rotary Club.



Founded by Audrey Fisch, a long-time Westfield resident and college professor, More Than Bootstraps addresses the challenges first-generation, low-income students face in getting to and succeeding in higher education. MTB builds on these students' strengths to create a sustainable pathway to and through college. The organization provides first-generation high school students with near-peer mentors, current college students from their community. Mentors 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.

Grants and donations to More Than Bootstraps fund the monthly stipends that allow the high school and college students some time and space to come together and create a community of success while still meeting their financial responsibilities.

MTB launched in Westfield on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, 2020. Donations from Westfield residents and local organizations, such as Temple Emanu-El of Westfield, the Westfield Rotary Club Foundation, the Westfield-based Union Innovation NJ Alliance ([UNINJA](#)), and the Westfield Foundation, provided resources to support the initial five College Student Leaders and six High School Fellows. All of the initial cohort of MTB College Student Leaders graduated from college

in four years, vastly outpacing the 9% of first-generation, low-income students who earn a BA by age 24. In 2023-2024, the organization will serve 28 High School Fellows and 14 College Student Leaders.

“The Rotary Foundation’s continued support of MTB is fundamental to our work increasing access to and success in higher education for first-generation college students,” said **Audrey Fisch**, president of More Than Bootstraps. “Word of the success of our program has spread among students and families in Passaic and demand currently outstrips our resources. This grant from the Rotary Club enables us to continue to grow the number of students we serve.”

In May 2023, MTB celebrated College Signing Day for its second cohort of High School Fellows.



Pictured from left to right are Dr. Enmanuel Mercedes, Ph.D., (President of the Latino Mental Health Association of New Jersey), Alyssa (College of New Jersey), Roselyn (Fairleigh Dickinson University), Jackie (Wellesley College), Yessenia (Montclair University), and Dean Ashley Castiglia (Passaic County Community College). (One additional Fellow, Joana, Seton Hall University, is not pictured.)

Interested donors are invited to visit the MTB website: www.morethanbootstraps.org/donate.

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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.

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

About the WESTFIELD ROTARY CLUB FOUNDATION

The [Westfield Rotary Club Foundation, Inc.](#) is a 501(c)(3) charitable foundation supported by the donations of past and present Rotarians, and by donations of community members. The Foundation has provided millions of dollars in scholarships to local students and grants to local nonprofit organizations, all to make our community a better place to live and work. The finances of the Foundation are separate from the finances of the Rotary Club of Westfield. Donations to the Foundation are used exclusively to fund the charitable work of the Foundation.



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