

IMPACT REPORT

**FIRST STAR
OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY ACADEMY
2023- 2024**

ACADEMY DIRECTOR: DR. TASHARA BAILEY





First Star's Mission:

First Star provides high school youth in foster care with the opportunity, tools, and support to successfully transition to self-sufficiency through higher education or other viable pathways.

First Star's Vision:

We envision a world where youth in foster care have equitable opportunities to acquire education and skills to achieve fulfilling and productive adult lives.

First Star's Academies are long-term college-prep programs for high school foster youth. We keep our scholars on track for high school graduation and prepare them for higher education and adulthood by providing specialized programming that addresses the academics, life skills, and adult supports unique to students in foster care.



Want to get involved or become a partner? Please reach out to the Academy Director using the contact information below!

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OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT:

Old Dominion University (ODU) is a preeminent public research university located in Coastal Virginia. Our world-class faculty fosters dynamic on-campus and global online learning for undergraduate and graduate students that enriches their lives, promotes insightful and perceptive leadership, and motivates the pursuit of excellence in dedicated fields and professions. We collaborate with strategic partners to address challenges and propose solutions that impact the economy, environment, health and wellness, and social justice. In pursuit of equity and inclusion, ODU provides opportunities for educational, artistic, and professional growth to our diverse Monarch community.

Student Engagement & Enrollment Services (SEES) Mission: As a student-centered educational partner, **Student Engagement & Enrollment Services** impacts the learning environment through an innovative signature experience that seamlessly connects recruitment, engagement, active learning, and student success.

The Academy Model

ACADEMY PROGRAMMING INCLUDES...



MONTHLY ACADEMIES

Monthly programming over four years for youth in foster care focused on academics and life skills while they are in high school.

CAREGIVER ENGAGEMENT

Seminars and workshops that provide tools to caregivers to become advocates for their youth.

STEAM ACADEMY

Virtual Tech Talks and access to labs that focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math.

ALUMNI PROGRAM

Offered to scholars who graduate the Academy as a resource during their transition to adulthood.

SCHOLAR ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Leadership opportunity for scholars focused on becoming civically engaged and enacting change in their local communities.

SUMMER ACADEMY

Intensive 2-4 week residential enrichment program on a university campus.

VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENT

Weekly mentoring and tutoring sessions, as well as an open environment to connect and build community through virtual hangouts.



Media Handles

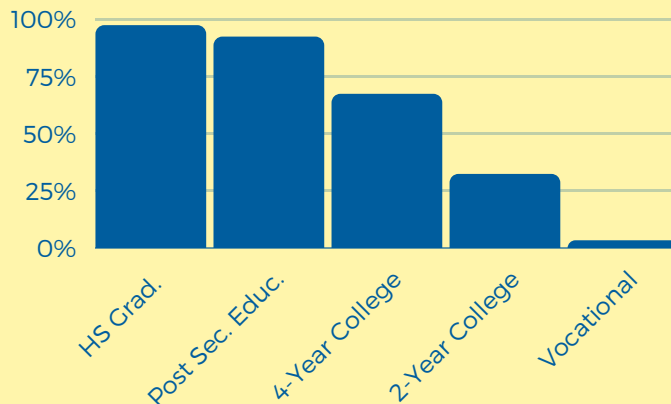


@FirsStarInc | @FirstStar_Alumni | @FirstStarSteam | @fs.scholaradvisorycommittee

FIRST STAR SCHOLARS ARE BEATING THE ODDS

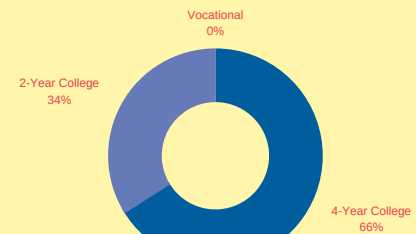
NATIONAL GRADUATING CLASS

2023-2024 ACADEMIC YEAR

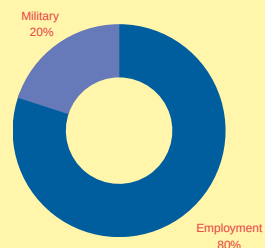


All data above and to the right is representative of internal data collected by First Star National and all data is self-reported by Academy Directors.

POST SECONDARY EDUCATION



NON POST SECONDARY EDUCATION



2023 STEAM

This summer First Star hosted the summer campaign First Star "STEAM in the Summer" Day, a fun, collaborative, interactive day of scholarly engagement in science, engineering, technology, arts, and mathematics. 100 % of our participating academies accessed the grant funding to support scholar participation in STEAM programming for Spring or Summer programming. **ODU scholars participated by doing the bridge challenge where they attempted to build a sustainable bridge with provided materials.**



CELEBRATING SCHOLAR VOICE



The First Star Scholar Advisory Committee created a podcast series titled "The Scholar Voice Podcast" where they engaged in dialogue around youth advocacy and leadership development in order to build community with other foster youth across the network. **The podcast is located in our Youtube page, check it out!**

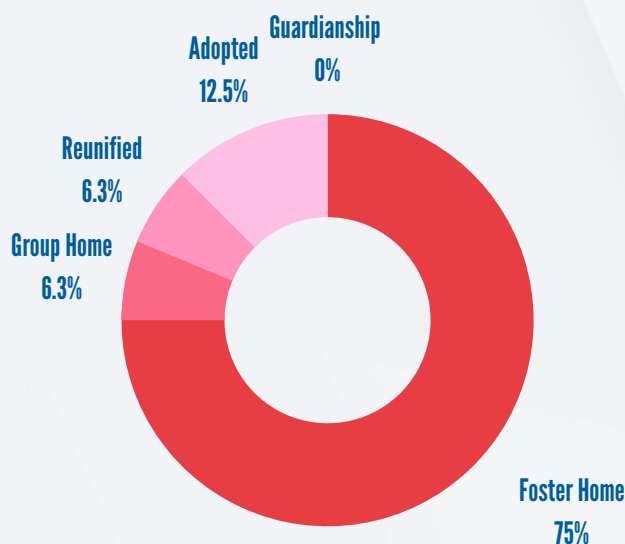


The First Star Alumni Program's goal is to remain connected and ensure Alumni have access to resources and the First Star network as they transition into adulthood, career, and advanced education.

- **63% of the 2023 graduating class enrolled in the Alumni Program**
- **The 2023 Alumni Awards Show awarded our largest graduating senior class and almost 30 Alumni during our annual community celebration in June 2023**

FIRST STAR OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY ACADEMY

SCHOLAR DATA



Foster Home	75%
Group Home	<1%
Reunified with Biological Parents	<1%
Adopted	<1%
Guardianship	0%
Kinship Care	<0%
Indep. Living / Emanc.	0%

GENDER IDENTIFICATION

50% ♂ 50% ♀

RACE/ETHNICITY

94%	<1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
African Amer.	Latino/a	White	Amer. Indian	Multi-Racial	Asian/Pacific Isl	Other

GRADE LEVEL

Middle School	9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade
25%	31%	31%	13%	0%

Academy Launch : Overall Growth

2022-2023 Landscape

The First Star ODU Academy Director regularly engages with NDHS caseworkers for referrals and attends Family Assessment and Planning Team meetings. These meetings are conducted by the NDHS Children's Services Act Office regarding educational mentoring services provided by the Academy to enrolled scholars. Of the referrals, 12 scholars participated in at least one Saturday Academy (September 2022 - June 2023), 16 were enrolled in the Academy for the July 2023 session, 2 did not have open cases with NDHS, and 4 are not participating due to medical conditions, placement, or other non-given reasons.

Planning Ahead for 2023-2024

ODU Academy hosted 22 scholars for monthly programming at their first Summer Academy. Two of the 22 scholars were unable to participate due to placement status changes. ODU Academy will hire a part-time Program Coordinator and Peer Mentors with the support of in-campus partners. ODU has plans to recruit in Norfolk community schools based on referrals from the site coordinators, and is looking to further cultivate relationships with social services to build out a thorough referral process.



Data above is representative of both the national organization and the First Star Old Dominion University. Collected data was submitted by the Academy Director using the First Star Data Dashboard and by scholars through an anonymous Survey developed by Tiller Inc.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Academics - Literacy instruction with ODU's Tidewater Writing Project and weekly TFFC tutoring sessions with certified teachers.

Caregiver Engagement - Facilitated by SEES Inclusion Services offered in-person and online.

Life Skills - Culturally responsive social-emotional learning (SEL) curriculum for grades 6-12 provided by "We Do It For The Culture"; Personal Finance program by Junior Achievement of Hampton Roads.



In January 2023, scholars had the opportunity to tour and engage in gaming at the Monarch Esports Arena (MEA), a multi-purpose facility with 2,400+ sq. ft. of gaming space located in the Webb University Center.



INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

A new internship experience was created for ODU and EVMS students interested in completing their service hours with pre-college scholars experiencing foster care. The First Star ODU Academy Director is the internship site supervisor and provides feedback to the internship instructor.

ODU RESOURCES & SUPPORT FOR OUR SCHOLARS

ODU resources are aligned from the Division of Student Engagement & Enrollment Services (SEES) and Academic Affairs to support youth participating in the First Star ODU Academy. These include Career Development Services, Center for Major Exploration & Mane Connect Success Coaching, College of Sciences, Counseling Services, Educational Accessibility, Darden College of Education and Professional Studies, Health and Physical Education, Intercultural Relations, MonarchTeach, Recreation and Wellness, Student Health Services, Tidewater Writing Project, and the Women and Gender Equity Center.

The First Star ODU Academy participated in a national campaign to incorporate STEAM labs into monthly academies for scholars by using online First Star National STEAM Academy resources (e.g., tech talks and labs). On February 18th, the Academy collaborated with ODU's MonarchTeach student organization to host a two STEAM workshops.



ACADEMY SPOTLIGHT



ODU ACADEMY IN THE NEWS



EVMS
Eastern Virginia Medical School

UTeach Institute

SCHOLAR TESTIMONIALS

Check out what our scholars are saying!



"I enjoyed exploring the campus." - 9th grader

"I found a new friend." - 8th grader

"I enjoyed rock climbing." - 9th grader

"I love this group." - 9th grader

SUMMER ACADEMY HIGHLIGHTS

ODU hosted Monthly Sessions

June 17th
July 15th
August 19th



Crop Circle Gourmet

Scholars had the opportunity to learn about cooking organic meals outdoors with Chef Theo Gumbs. This hands-on experience granted them perspective on not only outdoor cooking but also managing cross contamination.



Heart Health and CPR Training

Dr. Lyttle led scholars as they learned essential CPR techniques. The scholars actively participated in training and gained confidence in the performance of life saving maneuvers to effectively respond to life-threatening situations.



Special Visitors

Thank you to Dr. Johnny Young (AVP for Inclusion at ODU) and a few ODU undergraduate students who visited our scholars during summer sessions! We were all able to get to know each other as we prepared for another incredible year.



ACADEMY PARTNERSHIPS

The ODU Academy is excited for the ongoing partnerships with NDHS and social services for supporting the recruitment of potential scholars. Additionally, for Fall Monthly Academies & Programming the ODU Team is **establishing ongoing stakeholder meetings focused on sustainability and community engagement** (e.g., Hampton Roads Community Foundation - Affinity Groups). Furthermore ODU **will continue hosting caregiver engagement & community building events** to engage foster youth from across counties, ages, and placements (e.g., The Reech Foundation) and **expanding community partnerships** to serve more scholars (e.g., Aviation Institute of Maintenance).



TIDEWATER FRIENDS OF FOSTER CARE(TFFC): FOSTER CARE AWARE 2023 COMMUNITY SUMMIT

In recognition of National Foster Care Month, TFFC's Summit was held in partnership by First Star ODU Academy and The Barry Robinson Center: A Behavioral Health System for Youth. The Teen Time event on May 20th at ODU was for foster and adopted teens. Attendees had an informative and fun afternoon filled with workshops designed to explore available services for those entering adulthood.



The First Star ODU Academy Director regularly engages with NDHS caseworkers for referrals and attends the Family Assessment and Planning Team meetings. These meetings are conducted by the NDHS Children's Services Act Office regarding educational mentoring services provided by the Academy to enrolled scholars. A highlight was participating in ODU's Homecoming Parade on October 22nd with campus-based student organizations and child welfare services!



FIRST STAR ODU ACADEMY & ODU MONARCH TEACH COLLABORATION

To facilitate the hands-on STEAM labs, MonarchTeach, a student organization at ODU, received a "STEAM in the Spring" grant for lab materials (\$250) from First Star National.

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

Efforts to collaborate will continue with Virginia's child serving agencies to support shared goals and objectives, permanency and case planning, trauma-informed education, and life skills training.

