



**first
star**
putting students first



FIRST STAR IMPACT REPORT 2023



PUTTING STUDENTS FIRST



OUR 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.



OUR 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.

A LETTER FROM OUR CEO



We are thrilled to share the exciting impact of our work with our incredible university partners, alumni, coalition partners, and supporters across the nation. Over the past decade, First Star has maintained an outstanding 98% high school graduation rate and a near 90% college enrollment rate, compared to the national averages of 50% and 10%, respectively. We have been privileged to support thousands of youth on their educational journeys, witnessing firsthand the transformative power of connection in the lives of teenagers in foster care.

With your generous support, we have expanded our national team and increased the number of youth we serve to better capture the profound 'First Star effect.' Each year, our programs positively impact a diverse range of individuals connected to child welfare. These connections are forged among our scholars, the young adults who serve as peer mentors in our Academy program, our exceptional alumni, youth impacted by our outreach events, as well as caregivers and foster care allies. Together, we have helped First Star scholars navigate the complexities of post-pandemic education and career, foster self-awareness, and provide critical life skills. **As a result, we have witnessed remarkable achievements and milestones, from eight of our Academies with seniors graduating 100% of their youth from high school to impactful legislative advocacy in numerous states.**

It is my hope that as you read through this report you'll get a feel for the profound effect the First Star Family has on the young people we are privileged to serve. You'll witness the joy of connection during summer sessions, the pride of accomplishment of each alumnus, and the overall efficacy of our work.

Looking ahead, our commitment to uplifting communities and creating change remains steadfast. We will continue to advocate for policies that support youth in foster care, expand our network of partners and supporters, and innovate new strategies to enhance our programs, including a greater emphasis on workforce development. Together, we will continue to build a brighter future for these young individuals and empower them to reach their full potential.

Thank you for your unwavering support and dedication to First Star!

Lyndsey C. Wilson

Lyndsey C. Wilson MA
CEO, First Star, Inc.



WE MAKE LONG-TERM INVESTMENTS IN YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE

First Star highlights the power of community and connectedness in creating change. The First Star Academy program centers academics as a pathway into achievement, and achievement is impossible without the uplift and support of community.

11 FIRST STAR ACADEMIES ACROSS THE NATION



SERVING OVER
2100
SCHOLARS SINCE
INCEPTION

ACTIVELY SERVING
220
ALUMNI

OUR ACADEMY PROGRAM

WE INVEST IN EDUCATIONAL ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY

IN 2023,

97%



OF FIRST STAR SCHOLARS
GRADUATED HIGH SCHOOL

First Star's Academies are long-term college-prep programs for high school students in foster care that includes immersive residential summers on a university campus and monthly sessions during each school year. 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 support needed by students in foster care. Our innovation lies in our holistic model embedded within a university community that also supports self-determination, social and interpersonal skills, career preparation and advocacy.

First Star scholars maintained a high school graduation rate of 97% while increasing the number enlisting in post-secondary education

COMPARED TO LAST YEAR, THE CLASS OF 2023 HAD AN:

1% Increase in post-secondary education enrollment

3% Increase in vocational school enrollment



Oh, the Places They'll Go

Some of the colleges and universities our recent alumni were accepted to:

Arizona State University
Bowie State University
Cal Poly San Luis Obispo
CSU Los Angeles
CSU Northridge
CSU Sacramento State
CSU San Bernardino
Delaware State University
Fairmont State University
Florida State University

Howard University
Illinois Central College
Illinois State University
Kent State University
Loyola Marymount University
Morehouse College
Northern Arizona University
Rollins College
Rowan University
San Francisco State

Southern Utah University
UCLA
University of California, Riverside
University of California, Santa Cruz
University of Central Florida
University of Illinois, Chicago
University of Miami
University of Utah
Utah State University

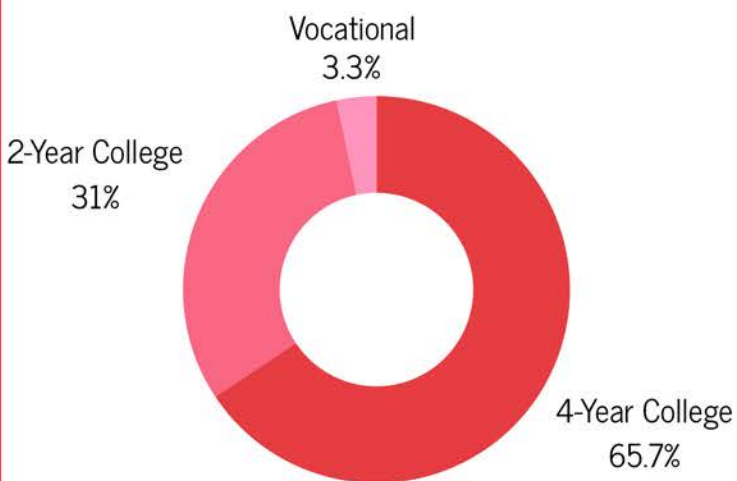
We are very excited to announce that 30% of our 2022-2023 scholars have chosen to attend their host University!

2023 FIRST STAR SCHOLAR GRADUATION REPORT

2023 SCHOLAR OUTCOMES

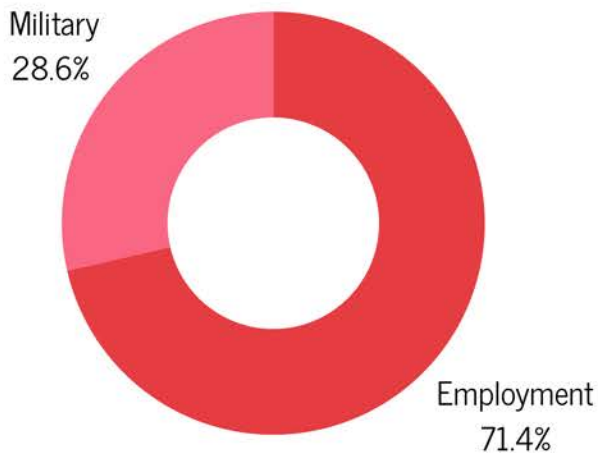
POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION TRACK

Of the scholars who graduated in June of 2023, 92% enrolled in post-secondary education. Post-secondary education includes universities and colleges, as well as trade and vocational schools.



EMPLOYMENT OR MILITARY TRACK

Of the scholars who graduated in June of 2023 who did not enroll in higher education, the majority entered the workforce.



FIRST STAR VS. NATIONAL OUTCOMES

97%

graduated from high school in June 2023 compared to **50%** of foster youth nationwide



92%

are pursuing higher education compared to **10%** of foster youth nationwide



67%

are pursuing higher education by enrolling in four year colleges



FIRST STAR ACADEMIES



First Star Arizona State University Academy

Phoenix, AZ



Paloma Delgado,
Academy Director



First Star CSU San Bernardino Academy

San Bernardino, CA



Kurt Manio,
Academy Director



ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

First Star Illinois State University Academy

Normal, IL



Stacey Wiggins,
Academy Director



First Star Kent State University Academy

Kent, OH



Danielle Green-Welch,
Academy Director



First Star KVC West Virginia Academy

Charleston, WV



Valerie Nichols,
Academy Director



First Star Old Dominion University Academy

Norfolk, VA



Alexia Hargrove,
Academy Director

KEY ELEMENTS OF A FIRST STAR ACADEMY



ACADEMY PROGRAM

4 year college preparatory program for youth in foster care focused on academics and life skills



VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENT

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



PEER MENTOR ENGAGEMENT

Peer mentors are comprised primarily of undergraduates at the host university who are former youth in foster care or first generation college students

2023 FIRST STAR ACADEMIES



**First Star Sacramento
State Academy**
Sacramento, CA



Latrice Madkins,
Academy
Director



**First Star UCLA Bruin
Guardian Scholars Academy**
Los Angeles, CA



Markeith Royster,
Academy Director



**First Star University of
Miami Academy**
Miami, FL



Maria Pia
De Castro,
Academy Director



**First Star University of
Utah Academy**
Salt Lake City, UT



Jerry Stott,
Academy Director

**South Jersey First Star
Collaborative**



New Jersey



Isaiah Showell,
Academy Director

KEY ELEMENTS OF A FIRST STAR ACADEMY



CAREGIVER ENGAGEMENT

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



SUMMER ACADEMY

Immersive residential enrichment program on a university campus focused on building academic, life skills, and healthy relationships.



SCHOLAR ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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

WHAT SCHOLARS ARE SAYING

HOW FIRST STAR HAS CHANGED THEIR LIVES



89%

Say getting good grades is important to them

94%

Believe attending college is possible for them

87%

Feel like they have a plan for the future

76%

Feel like they are stronger because of their experience as a foster youth

70%

Feel like First Star has helped them DREAM BIGGER!

Source: All Data above is reflective of a report compiled from an Internal scholar survey that was developed by Tiller Inc. First Star Survey Key Findings, Tiller Inc. June 2018

WHAT THEY WANT YOU TO KNOW ABOUT FOSTER CARE



"I wish people understood how much it hurts to be taken from your loved ones and that when you're in foster care you have no voice."

87%

FEEL LIKE THERE IS MORE PEOPLE CAN DO

"Being in the system feels more like they are punishing you for the mistakes that your parents made. You are constantly reminded that you don't belong."

68%

FEEL LIKE THEY HAVE TROUBLE TRUSTING ADULTS

74%

FEEL LIKE FOSTER PARENTS NEED MORE HELP

72%

FEEL LIKE FOSTER YOUTH LACK A VOICE

65%

HAVE FELT ALONE

"We are all different and have gone through different things in life that you can't imagine. So don't mistreat us, love us."

"We aren't helpless. We don't want pity. We want support and resources."



OUR ALUMNI PROGRAM

WE INVEST IN CONTINUED SUCCESS



The continued success mindset is why community, belonging, and long-term relationships are central to First Star programs.

We hope to be a family our scholars rely on while in the program and after they graduate.

The Alumni Program is an extended First Star family for our high-school graduates, a resource connecting our alumni throughout the country via social media, newsletters, reunions, and more. Our goal is to remain connected with alumni to ensure they have access to resources and the First Star network as they transition into adulthood, career, and advanced education.

First Star has always been there for me. I'm extremely happy to wake up every day realizing that people are rooting for me and I'm rooting for myself.



The First Star Alumni Program saw an 11% increase in enrollment this year for graduating First Star scholars!

A growing network of alumni from our Academies - we've seen a 45% increase in enrollment with new members enrolled from all First Star graduating classes since 2015. The Program partners with over 10 organizations to provide direct service and resources including micro-grants, laptops, financial literacy courses, mentorship, internships, and more. 63% of the 2023 graduating class enrolled in the Alumni Program!

We connect youth with scholarship opportunities, jobs, internships and professional development. Our Alumni program assistant is herself a First Star Alumna and alumni representation has been added to the board with two voting members and two ex-officio members who help represent and advocate for youth in care as we refine our programs and set our strategies. Our goal is not simply to keep foster youth in postsecondary education, but to equip them with the tools they need to succeed.





“

I'd like to thank the First Star Community for making a huge turn for me in my life. Every day you guys give me opportunities left and right that have been a huge success for me, and for that I am extremely grateful to be part of this First Star Family.

Beth Martinez Class of 2021

”

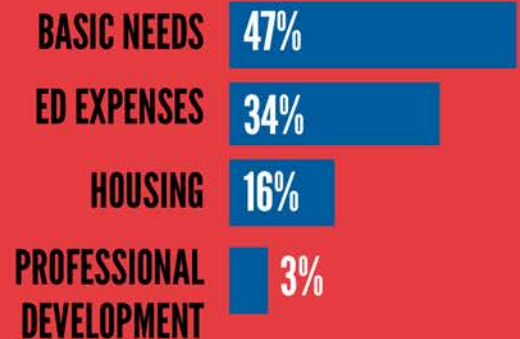
ALUMNI PROGRAM MICRO-GRANTS

Alumni Program Micro-Grants support scholars and alumni who experience resource barriers as they pursue their post-secondary goals. Micro-grants are awarded for educational expenses, professional development, basic needs, and technology. Through the Alumni Program, our grantees receive free financial literacy courses from Mana Money School.

IN 2023, ALUMNI REQUESTED AND RECEIVED ASSISTANCE FROM THE ALUMNI MICRO-GRANTS PROGRAM MEETING THESE NEEDS:

TOTAL AMOUNT AWARDED TO ALUMNI: \$46,577

MICRO-GRANTS USAGE



2023 ANNUAL EVENTS

The Alumni Program hosts an annual award ceremony and holiday reunion to celebrate the achievements of our alumni. The June 2023 Alumni Awards Show awarded our largest graduating senior class and almost 30 Alumni during our annual community celebration.

“

Thank you for the continued support you have given me along the years. I couldn't be where I am today without this program. My appreciation is too much to even express in words.

Tadae King-Williams Class of 2019

”



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

First Star alum Isael Andrade has been in foster care since middle school.

He was introduced to the First Star Academy at UCLA during his freshman year of high school.

"First Star is a village," he says. "You never feel lonely when you're at First Star."

During his time in the academy, he recalls the first two years of monthly meetups focused on academics, the occasional field trip, and guest speakers. The summer residencies gave students a chance to try new things like filmmaking with the help of UCLA staff. It was also his first taste of advocating for youth in foster care as a speaker at a national summit on behalf of First Star. His last two years of the academy concentrated on college preparation, restorative healing, and bonding with other SEFCs about shared experiences.

"At a high level, the first two years are spent building up the kids, making them individuals, building their self-efficacy, making sure they know they're loved, and that they have a voice," Andrade recalls.

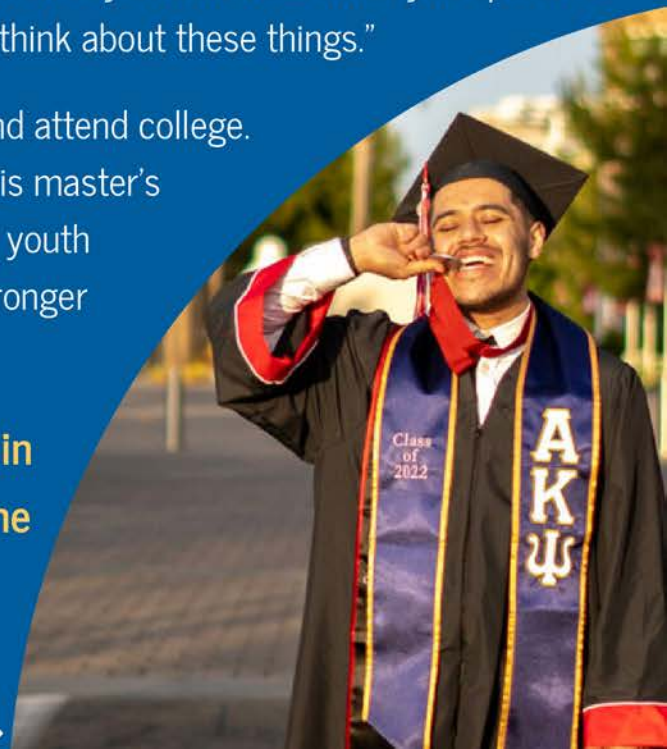
"The last two years is putting that self-efficacy to the test. Preparing for college. [First Star] gave you the drive. Helped you believe in yourself. Now let's put it to work."

Ultimately, he earned a full scholarship to Chapman University, even though he had never considered college to be a possibility. "I had no idea what college was. I didn't know that was a concept. I didn't know that was a thing people did. I knew you went to high school and I thought that was it," Andrade says. "Foster care is interesting because you feel very removed from world. Add to the fact that I grew up very poor, so I didn't have technology until high school and you feel removed from the cultural mainstream. So up to that point, I didn't understand what any of that was. When you spend so much time in survival mode, you don't really have time to think about these things."

Andrade was the first in his family to graduate high school and attend college.

He became a First Star alumni mentor and is now pursuing his master's degree. He says his love of storytelling to advocate for foster youth continues to be his passion. And his loyalty to First Star is stronger than ever. He was just named to the organization's board.

"If it wasn't for First Star, I don't know where I'd be in life," Andrade says. "I don't think I'll feel like I've done enough until First Star... is a household name."



NATIONAL STEAM ACADEMY

WE INVEST IN INNOVATION AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

To extend our reach outside of our traditional academy program, we created The First Star National STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) Academy, an enrichment program for youth in foster care led by technology and grounded in social justice. This curated approach includes culturally responsive content and workshops from professionals who have similar life experiences and/or backgrounds and validates and affirms each participant's experiences.

FIRST STAR NATIONAL



ACADEMY

**LED BY TECHNOLOGY,
GROUNDED IN SOCIAL JUSTICE**



In the summer of 2023, 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 of this year. Scholars participated by doing the bottle rocket challenge, bridge building activity, and more! First Star ASU Academy scholars explored the Edson College of Nursing and Health Innovation.

OUR COALITION BUILDING

WE INVEST IN COLLABORATION



First Star leads a coalition of seven California nonprofits called the Foster Youth Pre-College Collective (tFYPC). tFYPC's mission is to ensure youth in care have access to meaningful and engaging educational support programming grounded in best practices and focused on achieving high school graduation and post-secondary matriculation rate that match or exceed those of their peers in the general population.



Compared to other middle and high school students, youth in foster care require more intensive, frequent, and individualized supports to help them graduate high school, prepare for college, and compete in the workforce. There is no mandate for child welfare systems to ensure youth in their care complete high school and receive the skills and supports they need to prepare for post-secondary programs. In the absence of prescriptive oversight and dedicated funding, the educational progress of thousands of young people in the custody of the state is at risk. The Destination Graduation Report (authored by tFYPC) outlines the persistent challenges facing youth in foster care, shares reflections about their educational journeys, reviews prior attempts to address the issue, and proposes collaborative solutions to close the opportunity gap for this high-needs student population.

The Destination Graduation report will be officially released in 2024!

2023 NATIONAL CONFERENCE

THE POWER OF CONNECTION



The First Star National Conference serves as our annual convening, bringing together National and Academy staff for networking, professional development, connections, and learning. For this year's National Conference, the theme **"We are First Star, The Power of Connection"** was chosen to acknowledge our network's collective impact in supporting the educational paths of young people in foster care.



ROOTED FOR GROWTH

During our strategic plan overview session:

- We assessed growth using the Academy Matrix
- We determined the top focus areas
- We developed Shared Key Results that will improve our overall efficacy in those focus areas

Leaving the 2023 national conference, each Academy team identified two Individual Academy Key Results and Community Stakeholders to address missing and in-process areas from their Academy Matrix, as well as established areas to advance throughout the 2023-2024 academic year.

The Power of Connection



THE ACADEMY MATRIX FOR IDENTIFYING KEY RESULTS

University Partner
Engagement



Research, Data,
and Assessment



Engaged Community
Stakeholders



Scholar Engagement
and Retention



Academy Financial
Sustainability



NATIONAL CONFERENCE RECAP

During the national conference, network attendees learned from three Academy Director's experience in expanding their Academy at their respective institutions:



- **Foster Care to College Pipeline: Developing Foster Youth Support Programs and Services on a College Campus** by Danielle Green-Welch, First Star Kent State University Academy Director
- **Working with University Partners to Maximize Funding and Granting Writing Resources** by Maria Pia De Castro, First Star University of Miami Academy Director
- **Re-Launching a First Star Academy: Engaging On Campus & Community Stakeholders for Scholar Recruitment** by Kurt Manio, First Star California State University (CSU) San Bernardino Academy Director



The Alumni Program shared its **early outreach initiative** to strengthen our scholar's transition to the alumni program for continued support post high school graduation. Scholars from across our Academy network may join the Alumni program as early as their junior year of high school.

For this academic school year, the Academy Engagement team introduced the **Student Advisory Committee digital medium project** that will enable scholars across the national network to discover their voice through various writing prompts housed in their own personal digital journal.

Our Grants Manager shared their initiative to **create a living document of prospective funders** to easily identify opportunities, share resources with individual Academies, and highlight opportunities for cross-academy collaboration.

the 2022 Brilliance Award Winner, Danielle Green-Welch from Kent State Academy, closed the conference with a powerful speech on our collective impact supporting young people in care.

2023 BRILLIANCE AWARD

We are proud to present **First Star University of Miami Academy Director, Maria Pia De Castro**, with our annual First Star Brilliance Award honoring those who have gone above and beyond to serve our scholars. Maria has served as Academy Director at the University of Miami for over six years. Throughout her tenure, Maria has expanded her reach to include transitional age youth to her Academy's impact. Her dedication and commitment to our mission of supporting younger people in care is unparalleled and an inspiration for us all.



FIRST STAR 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

2023 brought First Star in-person programming, full of hugs and laughter. We are so excited to continue to foster excellence and joy in scholars across the United States and are thrilled to have you on this journey with us!



UCLA

Our **First Star UCLA Bruin Guardian Scholars Academy** had the unique opportunity to present at the 2023 CA Foster Youth Education Summit. Their presentation was entitled: "Beyond College & Career Preparation: Creating Space for Identity-Based Exploration and Self-Empowerment." Students shared the amazing work they were involved in with their program committee, talked about the importance of peer mentorship, and raised awareness for the need for more self-exploration opportunities in education spaces.



First Star CSU San Bernardino Academy received funding from the CSU system to continue its effort to positively impact the educational and early adulthood outcomes of youth in foster care. In collaboration with Cal-SOAP and the Office of Pre-college Programs, First Star Academy will be coordinating efforts to recruit a cohort of 30 students this new school year.



KVC West Virginia scholars toured the internationally recognized West Virginia University's LaunchLab, a comprehensive, one-stop commercialization and innovation center. They learned how products are developed from concept to launch and worked on prototypes. They met with Dr. Carrie White, Executive, and Carla Posey, Prototype Engineer.





KVC West Virginia scholars spent a week at Experience Learning located at Spruce Knob, West Virginia. They participated in orienteering and learned how to navigate to the top of Spruce Knob using only a compass and relying on teamwork. Other activities included canoeing, river snorkeling, mountain biking, fly fishing, cave spelunking, cooking classes, team building exercises, capped off by a talent show on the last night.



This year, **First Star University of Utah Academy** went camping for the first time since 2019. The team took students out the first weekend of Summer Academy '23 to brave the wilderness. The crew stayed three nights at East Canyon Reservoir where students swam, hiked, made many s'mores and even canoed out on the reservoir!



First Star University of Utah Academy partnered with several local artists and artisans to provide a slew of workshops for our students to engage with daily. These included: sushi-making; drama/improv; painting; and several STEM-related workshops, including two First Star STEAM workshops. We found that the best workshops allowed our youth to learn something and express themselves while bonding with their peers and mentors.



First Star Kent State University Academy scholars embarked on a journey exploring creative ways to heal from trauma. During their 4-week experience, scholars participated in a variety of activities focused on different forms of expression and storytelling. The Summer Academy featured a 1-Day Film School and two days of dance therapy, exploring how to use movement as expression. During the residential component, scholars participated in a workshops hosted by the Wicks Poetry Center, the College of Communication & Information, the Pan-African Studies Department and the College of the Arts.



In 2023, the **First Star UCLA Bruin Guardian Scholars Academy**, worked with Tiffany Haddish's She Ready Foundation. At their end of summer showcase, the scholars screened their film that was created with the guidance of Dr. Thyonne Gordon the Executive Director of Tiffany Haddish's She Ready Foundation. Pictured here with US Congressperson Sydney Kamlager-Dove, Peter Samuelson and Lyndsey C. Wilson. Congresswoman Sydney Kamlager-Dove is a member of the Foster Youth Caucus, and she is currently supporting a resolution for youth in care, to receive an education, receive necessary health services, and be free from abuse and neglect.



South Jersey First Star Collaborative scholars had the exciting opportunity to go behind the scenes of NJ Academy Director Isaiah Showell's "What's Good With Isaiah" show, which highlights positivity in South Jersey. On Stockton University campus, scholars contributed to a "What's Good" segment by helping set up cameras and microphones and even capturing shots!



A new internship experience was created for **First Star Old Dominion University Academy** 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. Heart Health and CPR Training: Dr. Lytle 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.



First Star Illinois State University Academy scholars had the opportunity to collaborate with the City of Bloomington career exploration programs. Scholars got to explore various careers such as electricians, firefighters, and ambulance EMT's.



First Star ISU Academy scholars were also given the opportunity to volunteer with the Special Olympics.



ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY



PLUS
FOUNDATION

ASU
Arizona State University

During the last week of summer, **First Star Arizona State University Academy** seniors were given lessons on longboarding. At the conclusion of the workshop every senior was able to keep the longboards as a gift from Swappow. Thank you Swappow Foundation for their generous donation this summer!



Over their spring break, **First Star University of Miami Academy** scholars embarked on a 5 day college tour, which included visits to eight different college campus, including, University of Central Florida, Florida State University, Miami Dade College. The tour included community colleges and public universities within the state, since Florida offers a tuition waiver for youth who aged out of foster care, or were adopted while in foster care, until the age of 28.



In addition to their college tour, our **First Star University of Miami Academy** seniors attended the Floyd Mayweather Gloves for Fun exhibition.



The **First Star Sac State Academy** scholars spent a day focusing on STEAM-centered careers at the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco, visiting the Steinhart Aquarium and the Morrison Planetarium.

DREAM

A Spoken Word Poem by Sam, First Star Alumni



8 year old Sam has no dreams.

When I was younger when I heard the word dream, it would bring a tear to my eye because from my background and people I grew up with a dream wasn't something attainable it was an escape. A dream was the way you close your eyes and shut reality out and forget about all the negativity surrounding you. When people would ask me what I want to be when I grow up, I would always tell them "I don't know" - because when an eight year old tells you "I don't think I'm going to grow up," it's really concerning.

For 15 years that was always my answer. "I don't know," "I'm not going to grow up," "I'm sorry," I know I meant I don't dream - except I did.

Two years ago (when I was 15), I was at the lowest point of my life because with my background stability is not promised. But then I met the two people who changed my life. Sam and Ben came to my school, to introduce the First Star program.

These people are real people. A lot of times when you go to these programs, it's a small, dark room with a bunch of old people (kindly); it's very unwelcoming. A lot of the time they are acting like they want to get rid of me. A lot of the people I had working my case just wanted to get rid of me. Everything having to do with foster care I took a step back because it was always "we don't care" - close this case, get our money, move on to the next person... the demand is so huge. That's why organizations like this are so important. "We are not like that - come try it out."

I went to a Saturday academy. I met Marlene and Paloma. They told me that I was allowed to dream. They told me and every other scholar that you are allowed to be yourself and that is enough. When I heard this I was like "wow!" I didn't know what to do with myself. No program has told me "you're allowed to be yourself, your background does not define you." Use it as a reason, not an excuse. I finally felt free. There was this weight that was on my chest for a long time before I joined First Star. Because I never had anybody - Like I said earlier, First Star is a family "a familia" - so when I joined, it was the first time I felt a connection. Before I met Ben and Sam, there were two people in my life that I knew who weren't family. Now I have a family at First Star and now I am allowed to dream.

I became a spoken word poet, that's why I'm here today doing a speech. I can confidently say that this program has positively influenced and changed my life.

Without First Star, I wouldn't have spoken nationally in front of thousands of people.

Without First Star I wouldn't have put out my own album.

Without First Star I never would have graduated high school - I might not even be alive.

Without First Star I definitely wouldn't be in this room.

Without First star I would not have a dream.



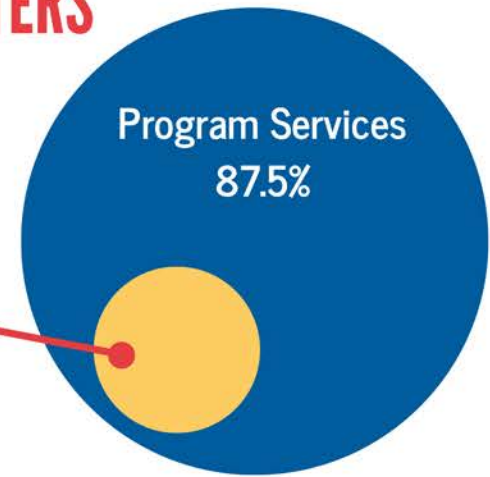
FINANCIAL SPOTLIGHT

WE APPRECIATE OUR COMMUNITY OF SUPPORTERS

Expenses
Fiscal Year 2023

For the fifth consecutive year, First Star has received a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator and a Platinum Seal of Transparency from Candid (previously GuideStar). Thank you for trusting us with your donations, your time, and your goodwill.

Management &
Fundraising
12.5%



THANKS TO OUR GENEROUS 2022 & 2023 INDIVIDUAL DONORS & FOUNDATIONS

\$250,000 +

Conrad N. Hilton Foundation
Walter S. Johnson Foundation
CG Charitable

\$100,000- \$249,999

Angell Foundation
ASU Women and Philanthropy*
Bill & Deirdre Catuzzi
Children's Trust*
Citrus Health Network*
Diane and Bruce Halle Foundation
Julian Grace Foundation
Jessica & Steve Sarowitz
Patrick J. McGovern Foundation

\$50,000-\$99,999

Angell Foundation
Annenberg Foundation
Educate Tomorrow *
Hilda and Preston Davis Foundation
Sam Simon Charitable Giving Foundation
Norfolk Department of Human Services*
May & Stanley Smith Charitable Trust*
Steward Family Foundation
Wurwand Foundation

\$25,000-\$49,999

All Within My Hands Foundation
Akron Community Foundation*
Batchelor Foundation
Braitmayer Foundation*
Bryant Stibel
Dave Thomas Foundation*
Jay Paul Deratany
Dwight Stuart Youth Fund
Green Foundation
In-N-Out Burger Foundation
John Burton Advocates for Youth
Leeds Family Foundation*
Los Angeles County Office of Education
Our Kids of Miami-Dade and Monroe *
Our Little Light Foundation
Ralph M. Parsons Foundation *
RLC Family Foundation
Taco Bell Foundation

\$5,000-\$24,999

Anonymous
David Beugen
Change Reaction
The Columbus Foundation
Edison International

Glen & Elizabeth Friedman
Glenda G. Morgan Charitable
Foundation*
Brian Gray
Judith & Bruce Hackett
The Herman Foundation
Johnny Carson Foundation
Major Taylor Cycling Club Los Angeles
Marilyn S. Broad Foundation
McDonough Foundation*
Morton H. Meyerson Family
Foundation
Michael and Lori Milken Family
Foundation
Diane and Ron Miller Fund
Our Little Light Foundation
Joseph H. & Florence A. Roblee
Foundation
Rosenthal Family Foundation
Jen Sargent
Stephanie Sperber
Strotzman Family Fund
Vince & Jacklen Thompson
Thursday Nights

LEVERAGED FUNDING FOR FIRST STAR ACADEMY PROGRAMS

In addition to the financial support First Star has received directly over the past three years, our University partners have received over \$6M in direct public funding to support their First Star Academy programs. These gifts include:

\$3M in ESSER funds to the First Star ASU Academy

\$1.5M in the 22-23 California State budget to support First Star Academies within the California State University System

\$1M in annual investments from regional departments of child protective services partners, such as the City of Norfolk, Department of Child, Family and Adult Services, Sacramento and The Children's Trust of Miami-Dade County

\$1M from the US Department of Education to support the First Star University of Utah Academy and the Impact Scholars program



OUR CORE VALUES



EMPOWERMENT

We believe in providing the freedom and tools that support successful progression towards individual and collective goals.



COLLABORATION

We build relationships to collectively work as a community to support our scholars. We know we cannot do this work alone, and therefore we depend on our partners.



COMMITMENT

We are committed to achieving educational and early-adulthood success for youth in foster care. This is critical to inspire transformational change for our Network and scholars.



FAMILY

It takes a village to raise a child, and to that end we embrace the backgrounds and perspectives of all the individuals within the First Star Family. We foster a welcoming environment that honors and appreciates their individual experiences, beliefs, and values.



DIVERSITY

We strive to examine our own biases and privileges and the different voices from our community to focus on diversity, inclusivity, and equity. Every decision made with our stakeholders bears this in mind.



ACCOUNTABILITY

We embrace and integrate accountability into everything we do, individually and collectively, to honor our commitments to all stakeholders serving youth across the country who have experienced the foster care system.

FIRST STAR BOARD MEMBERS



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& Co-Founder



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