



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES

FIRST STAR BRUIN GUARDIAN SCHOLARS ACADEMY

2024

IMPACT REPORT

UCLA


ABOUT FIRST STAR UCLA BGSA ACADEMY



UCLA BRUIN RESOURCE CENTER

The mission of the UCLA Bruin Resource Center (BRC) is to support students' development, well-being, and academic success and to foster an inclusive and socially just campus community.

Academy Director: Markeith Royster, PhD.

 **Email:** mroyster@ucla.edu

 **Phone Number:** 310-825-5415

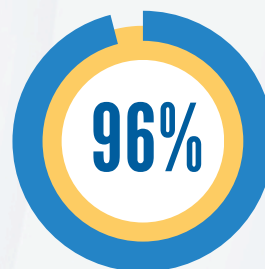
 **Website:** www.bgsa.ucla.edu

 **Instagram:** @fsbgsa



FIRST STAR 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



**HIGH SCHOOL
GRADUATION
COMPLETION**

COMPARED TO 50% NATIONALLY

UCLA

FIRST STAR BGSA ACADEMY IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Op-Ed written by First Star BGSA Alumni,
Andi (Cohort 4), on EdSource



First Star BGSA Alumni, Wilmer (Cohort
6) on Univision News!

THE ACADEMY MODEL

ACADEMY PROGRAMMING INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING:



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.

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.



STEAM ACADEMY

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



SCHOLAR ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAC)

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



ALUMNI PROGRAM

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



BRIGHT FUTURES AHEAD

CELEBRATING SCHOLAR SUCCESS



FIRST STAR ALUMNI PROGRAM

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.



81% of the 2024 graduating class enrolled in the Alumni Program

79% of enrolled Alumni engage with the program via resources, newsletters and events

18% of peer mentors are First Star Alumni

FIRST STAR STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAC)

First Star encourages advocacy and engagement in social justice through the Scholar Advisory Committee (SAC). SAC is composed of current scholars from across the First Star Academy network and from the Alumni Program. SAC allows scholars to build community, freely share their ideas and opinions, and dialogue about important issues!



80% of SAC scholars were returners from last year

100% of SAC scholars stated they felt more confident taking on leadership roles.

100% of SAC scholars stated they felt more confident in advocating for themselves

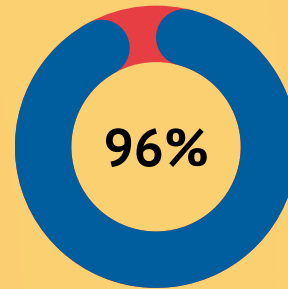
 **REFER A STUDENT**



NATIONAL FIRST STAR CLASS OF 2024

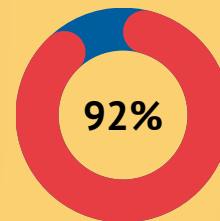


National Graduating Class



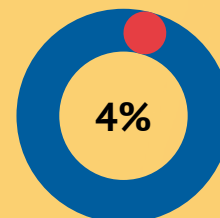
H.S. Diploma: 96%
Credit Recovery: 4%

Post-Secondary Pathways



4-year: 55%
2-year CC: 33%
Vocation/Trade School: 4%

Workforce Pathways



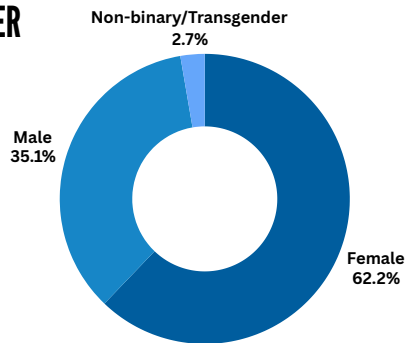
Apprenticeship/Union: 0%
Full-Time Employment: 4%
Military: 0%



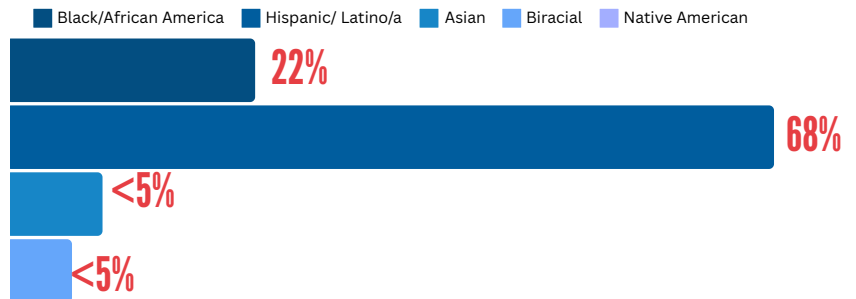
FIRST STAR UCLA BGSA ACADEMY

SCHOLAR PROFILE

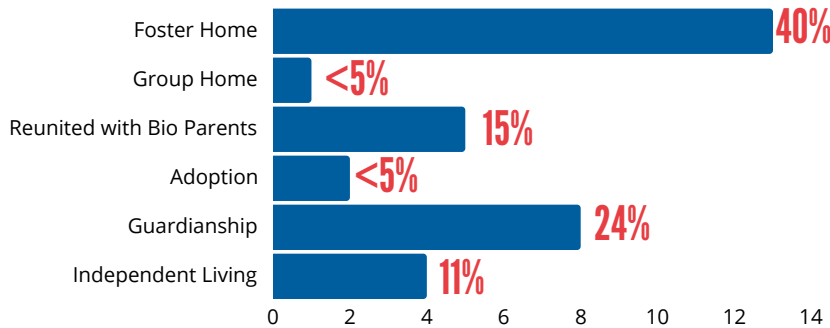
GENDER



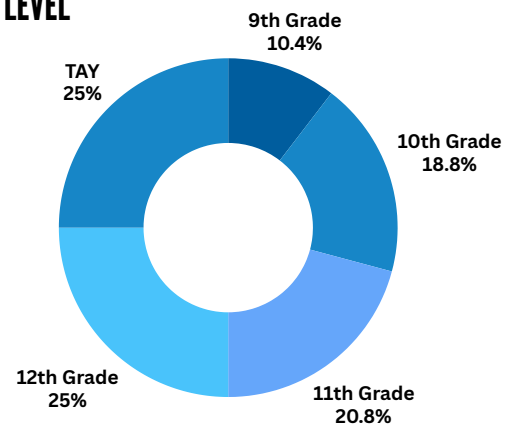
RACE AND ETHNICITY



PLACEMENT STATUS



GRADE LEVEL



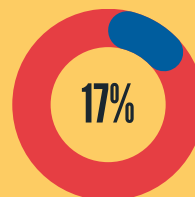
Celebrating Class of 2024



of First Star BGSA scholars graduated High School on time!



of First Star BGSA graduates submitted the FAFSA and are pursuing post-secondary opportunities.



of First Star BGSA graduates will attend UCLA in the fall!



FIRST STAR UCLA BGSA IMPACT

2023-2024 ACADEMIC YEAR



LIFE SKILLS AND SELF DISCOVERY

- Peer Mentors led workshops that focused on time management, healthy relationships, Independent Living, and signing up for resources.
- The Academy hosted an Alumni speakers series where scholars were able to learn and share their personal stories and experiences transitioning out of care.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- Summer Academy focused on physical activity, health and nutrition, and overall well-being. Programming included experiences in the University teaching kitchen, sound bath meditation, and multiple scholar vs. staff challenges in volleyball, basketball, and dodgeball.
- Peer mentors also curated workshops that allowed for open and honest conversations about their experiences utilizing resources and health and mindful practices.



CAREER EXPLORATION

- Our program established a workshop series entitled "Possibility Talks" over the summer where guest speakers shared their narrative and journey to their career path. These talks featured a dietitian, owner of a tattoo company, the producer of Black Panther among others. The scholars were able to ask questions about their personal narrative and journey to their respective positions.

LEADERSHIP AND SELF ADVOCACY

- Our Summer Academy hosted several workshops on community activism and civic engagement. One of the "Possibility Talk" presenters was a social justice activist who spoke to the scholars about the power in their voice and demonstrated how to safely and intentionally participate in art activism.



COLLEGE READINESS

- Our program spent intentional time in the university computer lab researching university choices, college majors, and scholarships. The scholars in the academy also took an intentional tour of the university campus.
- Youth Coach led workshops included presentations on community college, studying abroad, and effectively navigating the college application process.

FIRST STAR UCLA BGSA ACADEMY

BRIGHT FUTURES AHEAD

The National Bright Futures Survey was developed in partnership with Dr. Philip Hong from the University of Georgia to better understand our scholars' hopes and aspirations as it relates to their academic and future goals. In creating this survey and collecting feedback from scholars, we are embracing the challenge young people face and how we can be better stewards of their emotions and feelings as we support their growth in our Academies!

80%

of First Star scholars are feeling hopeful about the future and expect to complete further education after high school!



70%

of scholars feel a sense of belonging and connection since joining First Star!

70%

of scholars are confident that they have the necessary skills to succeed in college since joining First Star!

SUMMER ACADEMY

Summer Residential Program: (4 weeks) July 7, 2024 to July 27, 2024

Summer Academy Showcase: Saturday July 27th, 2024



Sailing with Life Sail



UCLA's Cooking Kitchen



Community Service Day on Campus

FIRST STAR UCLA BGSA ACADEMY

COMMUNITY IMPACT



Peer Mentor Recognition

First Star recognizes the positive impact peer mentos have on our scholars. The First Star BGSA Academy awarded peer mentors and alumni for their years of service and unwavering support of the academy.



are current students or alumni of host university



identify as first generation



identify has current or former foster youth



identify has former First Star scholars

Community Service & Civic Engagement

First Star BGSA scholars and peer mentors participated in a food drive during Summer Academy in partnership with **FoodCycle LA!**



Caregiver Engagement

First Star BGSA Academy hosted virtual and in-person Caregiver Orientations and other engagement events on campus during the year.

100% of scholars and their families at UCLA BGSA Academy receive monthly check-ins and academic advising support throughout the school year.



Foster Care Awareness Month Advocacy

This spring First Star scholars and peer mentors from the UCLA BGSA and Sacramento State Academies attended the California Foster Youth Education Summit in Sacramento, California.



FIRST STAR UCLA BGSA ACADEMY

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

University of
California, Los
Angeles

UCLA

Department of
Children and Family
Services



Los Angeles
County of
Education



Community Stakeholder Acknowledgments

Academy Programming Partners

UCLA Bruin Resource Center
UCLA Bruin Guardian Scholars Program
UCLA Residential Life
UCLA Bruin Corps
California College Corps
UpRooted Academy
UCLA Teaching Kitchen
Life Sail

Scholar Recruitment Partners

Los Angeles County of Education
Los Angeles Department of Children and Family Services
Los Angeles Unified School District

Funding Acknowledgements

Angell Foundation
Los Angeles County of Education
Hilton Foundation
Parsons Foundation

First Star is a member of the Foster Youth Pre-College Collective, which released a report called **Destination Graduation** in 2020. The report discusses the challenges faced by foster youth and the practices that can help them succeed in education and beyond.



Possible Selves: Overcoming the Odds in Foster Care is a PBS documentary that follows two foster youth as they navigate high school and college. The film was directed by Shaun Kadlec and features First Star BGSA Alumni Alex Ballantyne and Mia Derisso (Cohort 2).

HOW TO GET INVOLVED



REFER A STUDENT.



VOLUNTEER.



DONATE.