



FIRST STAR CSU SAN BERNARDINO ACADEMY

2025 IMPACT REPORT



ABOUT FIRST STAR CSUSB ACADEMY



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


CSU San Bernardino Office of Pre-College Programs

With nine different programs within our department, we provide services to more than 5,000 students from San Bernardino, Rialto, and Colton Joint Unified School districts and students in the Coachella Valley. Our programs are designed to help provide participants and their families with educational and personal support services that will increase high school graduation, college enrollment, persistence and college completion.

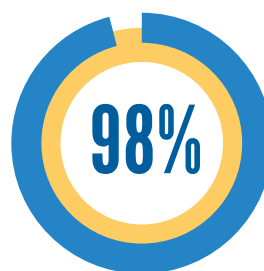
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 **Instagram:** @firststarcusb



**HIGH SCHOOL
GRADUATION
COMPLETION**

COMPARED TO 50% NATIONALLY

FIRST STAR CSUSB ACADEMY IN THE SPOTLIGHT



New Video on YouTube!



Finding Happy Book Talk

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.

SUMMER ACADEMY

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

CAREGIVER ENGAGEMENT

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

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.



100% of the 2025 graduating class enrolled in the Alumni Program

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

22% 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

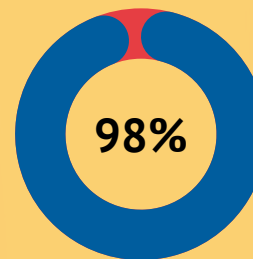
100% of SAC scholars stated they felt more confident taking on leadership roles

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

NATIONAL FIRST STAR CLASS OF 2025

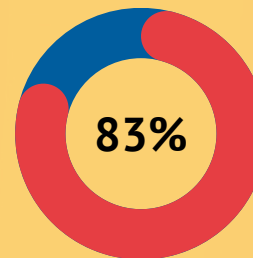


National Graduating Class



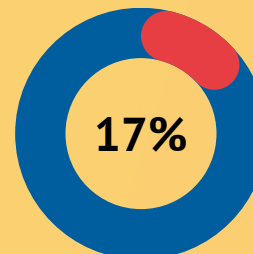
H.S Diploma: 98%
Credit Recovery: 2%

Post-Secondary Pathways



4-year: 46%
2-year CC: 29%
Vocation/Trade School: 8%

Workforce Pathways



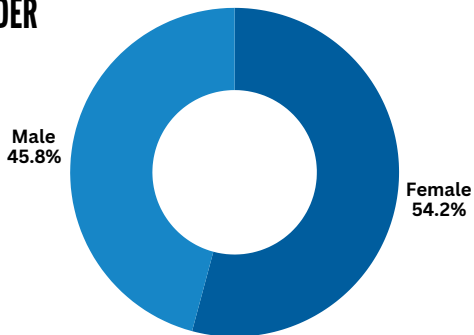
Apprenticeship/ Union: 0%
Full-Time Employment: 17%
Military: 0%



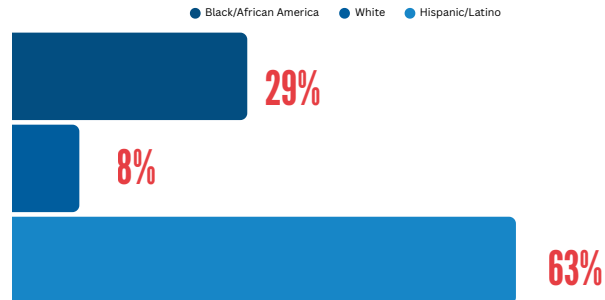
FIRST STAR CSUSB ACADEMY

SCHOLAR PROFILE

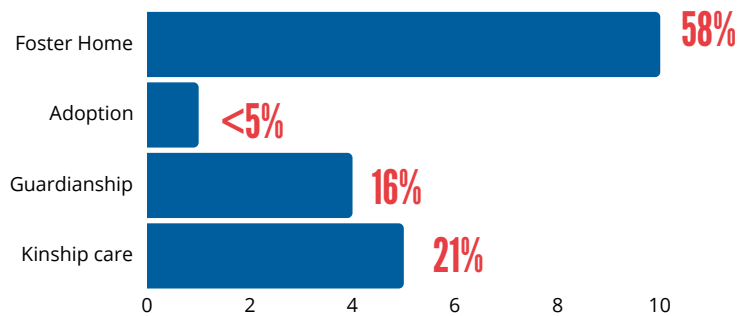
GENDER



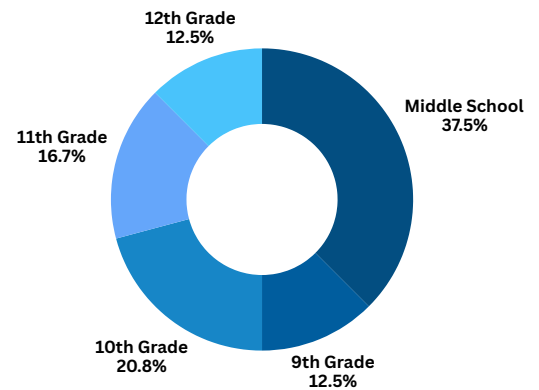
RACE AND ETHNICITY



PLACEMENT STATUS



GRADE LEVEL



Celebrating Class of 2025

100%

of First Star CSUSB scholars graduated High School on time!

100%

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

FIRST STAR CSUSB IMPACT

2024-2025 ACADEMIC YEAR



LIFE SKILLS AND SELF DISCOVERY

Life Skills development was seamlessly integrated across core program activities, strengthening scholars' communication, collaboration, and self-advocacy skills through the storytelling and writing workshop, speaking engagement series, group project, and SEL sessions.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Students participated in a four-day "Building a Healthier You" workshop with Dr. Nicole Arkadie that promoted physical and mental well-being by fostering healthy relationships and effective coping skills. In addition, lead staff member Shannon Ryan, an MSW student and CSUSB Renaissance Scholars alum, facilitated two SEL workshops focused on creating safe spaces, building healthy coping strategies, and strengthening time management and self-efficacy.



CAREER EXPLORATION

Students participated in a business and entrepreneurship speaking series featuring local entrepreneurs who shared their experiences and insights. The series was designed to expose students to the world of business while reinforcing essential life skills such as communication, problem-solving, and adaptability—skills that will support them in any career path they choose.

LEADERSHIP AND SELF ADVOCACY

Leadership and advocacy development were intentionally woven throughout program activities, including the storytelling and writing workshop, the speaking engagement series, and the collaborative group project, providing students with meaningful opportunities to strengthen their voice, confidence, and teamwork skills.



COLLEGE READINESS

CSUSB Campus Engagement included a two-week residential stay in the Coyote Village dorms, giving students the opportunity to experience on-campus living and access student amenities such as the pool, bowling lanes, and affinity centers. Scholars also participated in a full CSUSB campus tour, as well as a field trip and campus tour at USC, expanding their exposure to university environments. Additionally, students engaged in a four-day Storytelling and Writing Workshop designed to empower them to share their personal narratives while strengthening written and verbal communication, public speaking, and self-advocacy skills. By the end of the workshop, students produced an outline or draft they can use for personal statements and personal insight questions on college applications.

FIRST STAR CSUSB 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!

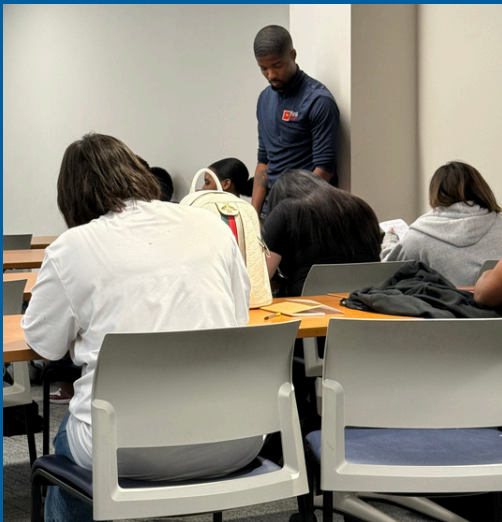


70%

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

SUMMER ACADEMY

The Summer Residential Program, held **July 13th to July 25th, 2025** gave scholars a transformative weekend of growth, connection, and new experiences that built skills to support their future success.



SAC Podcast Workshop



Career Readiness Workshop



USC Field Trip

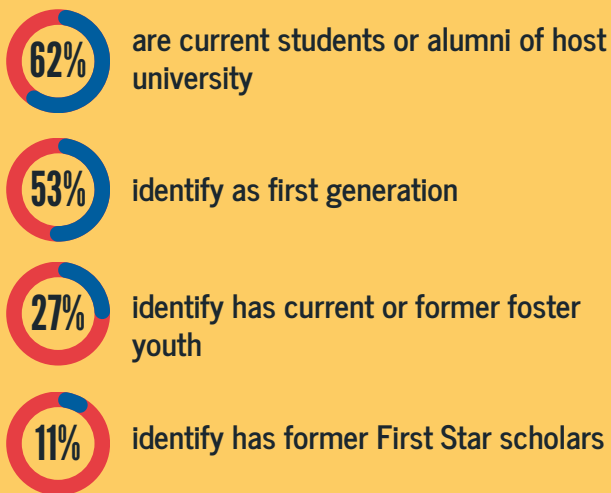
FIRST STAR ODU ACADEMY

COMMUNITY IMPACT



PEER MENTOR RECOGNITION

First Star recognizes the positive impact peer mentos have on our scholars. The First Star ODU Academy awarded ____ for their 2 years of service and unwavering support of the academy.



Thank you to Mr. Empowerment himself, soon to be Dr. Kevon for bringing the energy to both the CSUSB Summer Academy and the First Star Creation Conference

CAREGIVER ENGAGEMENT

First Star ODU Academy hosted Caregiver Orientations and other engagement events on campus during the year.

100% of families at ODU Academy receive monthly reports on their scholar's participation in the program and are involved in their student's academic case management meetings.

2025 CREATION CONFERENCE



First Star Hosted the first-ever nationally broadcast creation conference. This Conference was a student-centered opportunity for students to engage with speakers and feel connected to the entire First Star network. During the conference, scholars experienced:

- A nationally recognized keynote speaker sharing insights on resilience and leadership
- An interactive storytelling workshop led by the showrunner and cast of Marvel's Runaways
- Education sessions, team games, and networking opportunities
- Access to valuable resources and ongoing support from First Star's national network

FIRST STAR CSUSB ACADEMY

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS



SAN BERNARDINO CITY
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Making Hope Happen



Community Stakeholder Acknowledgments

Academy Programming Partners

UCR Guardian Scholars
CSUSB Cal-Soap
UCR Residential Life

Scholar Recruitment Partners

San Bernardino County School Districts

Apple Valley Unified
Barstow Unified
Hesperia Unified
Oro Grande Unified
Snowline Unified
Victor Valley Unified
Morongo Unified
Rialto Unified
Upland Unified
Yucaipa-Calimesa Joint Unified
San Bernardino City Unified

Funding Acknowledgements

First Star
San Bernardino School District
BEIS -in Kind donation



HOW TO GET INVOLVED



REFER A STUDENT.



VOLUNTEER.



DONATE.