

College Visions
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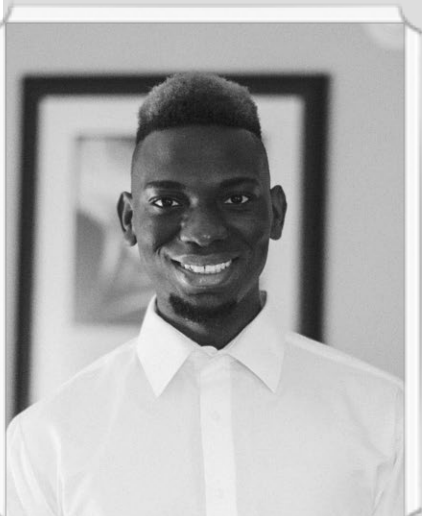
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COLLEGE VISIONS

Enrollment | Persistence | Graduation

370 COLLEGE GRADS AND RISING! | FALL 2020



DERMERKERSAL KARBAN, MUHLENBERG COLLEGE '20

Dermerkeral (DK) recently graduated from Muhlenberg College with a major in business administration, a concentration in marketing and management, and a minor in sustainability studies and entrepreneurship. DK wants to enter the marketing industry post-grad and to get started he is:

“currently serving as a digital communications intern for Drabenstott Communications Group. I’ve been working with Michael Drabenstott, the owner of the company, since late August of 2019 and it’s been nothing but enjoyable. This professional experience has been essential in further enhancing my marketing knowledge outside of the classroom.”

YOUR SUPPORT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

“To the wonderful donors constantly giving to College Visions, without your assistance, students such as myself would not have the opportunity to attend and succeed at many of the great colleges and universities across the nation. I am grateful to be a CV student. They helped my older brother through college and they are currently doing the same for me. Thank you for your continuous support!”

- Dermerkersal Karbah, Muhlenberg College '20

Thank you for investing in our collective future and supporting low-income, first-generation students throughout Rhode Island as they persist through their educational journey and earn their college degree. Your support makes the difference!

Enrollment

98%

CV students enroll in college compared to 49% of high school students in Providence.

Persistence

94%

CSP students persist to their second year of college compared to 67% of Providence students.

Graduation

68%

CSP students graduate from college within 6 years compared to 38% of low-income RI students.

All student statistics provided by RI Kids Count



DARIELIZA POLANCO UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND '20

What does being a first-gen college student mean to you?

Being a first-gen student means I have the opportunity to provide my family with a better life and be the first to go to college and accomplish my dreams. It means I'll be the first in my family to have a degree, which is something they can be proud of. And, it means I'll be able to help out future generations with my knowledge. It's amazing to be the first person to accomplish all of this.

TRANSITIONS THROUGH THEIR COLLEGE JOURNEY

COLLEGE ACCESS PROGRAM



Angel Pichardo
E-Cubed Academy '20

"It's been a long journey with CV. I love going into the office because everyone is so happy to help us, whether it's college related or not. If it wasn't for CV I didn't think I would've been accepted anywhere. School resources are limited because you have over 80 seniors flooding the guidance counselor's office. They don't offer that 1-on-1 that CV offers or those workshops which help you during the college application process. CV also offers a lot of information and resources like college visits, information sessions like how to manage time which was our January workshop and many other things!"

COLLEGE SUCCESS PROGRAM

and up to par with what I was looking for academically. With their support, I am currently a junior at the College of the Holy Cross majoring in Psychology and also the co-chair of Students of Color in STEM. My friends and I decided that my school needed a better support system for POC who were in the STEM field, so we set out to create our own space. We saw a lot of students struggling to get through their classes and adjust to a predominantly white institution so we believe that setting up a community would be beneficial."

"If it wasn't for CV I wouldn't have found the schools that were the best for me financially



Gaytrix Solo
College of the Holy Cross '21



Christina Ayrassian
University of Rhode Island '14

COLLEGE VISIONS ALUMNI COMMUNITY

"College Visions helped me so much with the college application process, writing a resume, answering all my questions and concerns, writing a good essay and making sure everything got sent in on time. Without CV, I would have struggled with the entire process. I received acceptances to every college I applied to and job offers, thanks to their help and guidance. I am so thankful and appreciative to CV for all that they did for me and I don't know where I would be without them."

EMERGENCY GRANTS ARE CRITICAL TO STUDENTS!

"It is no secret financial hardships pose a huge barrier to degree attainment among first-generation low-income college students. It is one of the main reasons many drop-out or stop-out of college each year. Although a growing number of higher education institutions are establishing emergency aid programs, they're the minority and the funds are limited. The CV Emergency Grant is a powerful resource that enables us to support students with textbooks, tuition, travel expenses, healthcare, and other financial burdens. It demonstrates to our students that we're here for them and committed to their success. As a CV alum and staff member, I'm so grateful for the support we receive that makes the Emergency Grant possible!"

- Susan Anderson, College Success Program Director

I AM BEYOND THANKFUL

"The Emergency Grant Fund was like a miracle to me. I am beyond thankful because some of my financial burdens were taken care of thanks to College Visions. I often feel discouraged because I am struggling financially, but I was able to overcome the discouragement through the CV support system. Thank you so much."

Lina De La Cruz
Providence College '22



YOUR SUPPORT LIFTED THE BURDEN FOR STUDENTS

"Omg, thank you so much for the support you all have sent me! I can not explain how much this has helped me for the months that are to come. I'm honestly speechless as I never thought to be able to receive as much aid as I have. I'm so grateful and this has extremely lifted so much heaviness that I was carrying in worry about paying the rent. Thank you so much and everyone who made this possible."

Maria Marin
Guilford College '20

Will you make a gift to support CV students with the highest financial need?

Please use the enclosed envelope or go online to www.collegevisions.org/donate

Questions? Contact us at collegevisions@collegevisions.org or 401.490.3996

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STUDENT LIFE DURING COVID-19

I'M HOPING I CAN PULL THROUGH

How have things changed for you?

I feel like everything has changed in a short span of time. Living at school felt like a safe space for me where I only had to focus on school and work without any distractions, but now living at home there are many more distractions and more things to worry about.

What are you most worried about?

I am most worried about completing school with good grades. Online learning is tough for me because I cannot stay focused and it's hard to feel motivated since I'm not in a school setting.

Have you gotten help from CV?

CV has helped me a lot ranging from college admissions to financial support. CV has made it possible for me to afford books and school in the most desperate times and I am very thankful.

If you are doing distance learning, how is that going?

It took a lot of energy to get up and get ready to sit in front of a laptop all day. Even though there are more distractions I think I will be okay. It's not my ideal method of learning, but I'm hoping I can pull through.

Anonymous CV Student
College Success Program

THIS HELP MEANS A LOT TO ME

How have things changed for you?

I believe the coronavirus has helped me detach from extra stress, such as commuting, eating out because I didn't have time to cook, and constantly looking for spaces where I could study. But, I can see how the weeks away from school affected my focus, and now moving to online education is sort of all over the place.

What are you most worried about?

Obtaining the help I need from my professors, losing track of school and not having enough food to eat due to depletion.

Have you gotten help from CV?

I've received an emergency grant that'll help me pay my rent and food expenses. This help means a lot to me. It allows me to focus on my final semester without having to worry if I am going to have a place to stay or if there is enough food for me. Also, knowing that there is a group of people supporting and believing in me. It's not one person, but a group of staff, board members and donors who are making sure I have what I need to be successful.

Emi Escobar
Rhode Island College, Class of 2020



COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY & BUDGETING

COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY

Summer workshops introduce 65 College Access Program (CAP) 12th graders and their parents to financial aid basics and choosing affordable colleges. In the fall, advisors and volunteers support financial aid form completion and renewal during 5 weekend and evening workshops. With CV support, 100% of eligible CAP students complete the FAFSA before the state grant deadline of March 1st.

To ensure students make financially well-informed college choices and secure strong, affordable financial aid awards. Our goals are:

- 100% of eligible students complete the FAFSA before the state grant deadline. [100% in FY20]
- 100% of undocumented students earn a private scholarship [100% in FY20]
- 85% of families participate in at least one on-site program activity, such as CV open house, college planning workshop, financial aid workshop, or an individual meeting with their child's advisor. [85% in FY20]

COLLEGE ACCESS PROGRAM

Awards

91%

demonstrated financial need is met by financial aid awards at students' college choices.

FAFSA

100%

eligible students complete the FAFSA before the state grant deadline of March 1st.

Grants

65

Students received a CV emergency grant to cover college expenses such as tuition, books, or travel.

COLLEGE BUDGETING

Before CSP students head to college, they participate in finance workshops that touch on positive budgeting practices, student loan repayment, and investment. During college, advisors check in with CSP students 3-5 times/semester. Each session includes a financial aid planning component.

To ensure students access the necessary financial resources to persist semester-to-semester and minimize total loan debt. Our goals are:

- 95% of eligible students complete the FAFSA by March 1st. [96% in FY20]
- At least 60 students received a CV emergency grant to cover college expenses such as tuition, books, or travel. [65 in FY19]
- 50% of students enroll in college through an on-campus support program. [65%, Class of 2020]

COLLEGE SUCCESS PROGRAM

**MESSAGE FROM OUR
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:
TINA MEETRAN**

With your help, first-generation, low-income students will apply to college and work toward degrees this fall. So many of you responded with incredible generosity last spring. Our students continue to need you. If you are able, we hope you will make a gift today!

You can support CV students by going to www.collegevisions.org/donate or use the included envelope.

THANK YOU!

YOUR GIFT SUPPORTS:

\$30 - Noise-cancelling headphones

\$50 - Grocery gift card

\$100 - Textbook support

\$300 Chromebook

\$1,000 - Undocumented student support

\$1,200 - A full year of college success support

\$1,750 - CV office space for a month

\$3,000 - A full year of college access support

*Donations of functional computers and tech accessories also needed!

I am honored to be appointed Executive Director for an organization that has impacted hundreds of students in Rhode Island, including myself. My journey to this position has been challenging, but also so beautiful. Growing up low income in the Smith Hill area of Providence, my family had our share of adversity. It is surreal for me to be here today as your Executive Director. My heart is extremely full, because this is more than a job. It means looking at my family and at my ancestors to say: we made it. It is an opportunity to ensure that College Visions continues to support other young people in Providence—and beyond—to get to that moment as well.

At College Visions we provide our students with a community of people in their circles that will root for them to succeed. That's what our first generation, low income students - especially students of color - will ALWAYS need: a community to trust and believe in them and their growth. We empower students in realizing the promise of higher education, even beyond the degree. We give them the language and tools to think critically about their environments and their aspirations. We show them college is not only about the classes, but a place to explore and widen your perspective.

I am ready and excited to lead College Visions in ensuring that students seek and receive the resources, information, and care they need to move forward. As a leader, I am committed to listening to the voices of our students and our community, learning how our practices can evolve and improve, building relationships and partnerships that strengthen this work, and advocating for the needs of our students and investment in our community.

In Community,
Tina Meetran
Executive Director

COLLEGE VISIONS PREP



“Having been a part of the CV Summer Prep program for the past two years, last year as a teacher and now as the director, has reinforced my belief in the dynamic power that mentorship has for our youth. I am so proud of the work the CV Summer Prep instructors have done, their dedication of time to mentor our students, their challenging our students to believe in themselves, and their pushing of our students to fulfill their potential. While I can go on about how great and necessary our program is, I will allow the voices of our youth and instructors speak for themselves as to the power of our program.” Edmicelly Pena, CV Prep Director

“In general, my experience here has changed me. There are things I didn't care about before that I do now. I would like to thank my teacher for that. Although I may not always be cheerful and positive, all of the teachers were always there to lift our moods and give us positivity. All of the teachers also helped me focus on myself. Their work and motivation has helped me focus on my physical and emotional health and my intellectuality. It was really heartwarming having adults who showed that they cared about us and our well-being. I'm gonna miss having adults and leaders who make me feel this way.” -*Student, CV Summer Prep*

“Thanks to this program I feel more proud of my roots. This summer I didn't just learn how to write an essay or cover letter, I also learned and realized the power I have and how important I am.” -*Student, CV Summer Prep*

“I was surprised to learn so much about myself. During the program, we had various assignments like “Who Am I” and “Why My Life Matters” which made me reflect and learn more about myself. But none of this would be possible without our group leader/mentor who guided us through these assignments, making us think for ourselves instead of giving us the answers. Not only that, but our mentor also taught us a lot of life lessons about believing in yourself, doing more than what is expected, and learning how to express ourselves.” -*Student, CV Summer Prep*

“Because of the CV Summer Prep Program, I feel more confident and finally get to feel how important I am and the power I have in me.” -*Student, CV Summer Prep*

“My teacher taught us that we should never be afraid to speak up and let our voices be heard. Our teacher would always start and/or end the class with the phrase, “I see y'all, I hear y'all, and I love y'all.” Our teacher let us know that we were important and was an amazing mentor for the past six weeks.” -*Student, CV Summer Prep*

“The diversity in each classroom was incredible, it made me realize that there are many people that may look different than me, but have gone through what I went through. All the activities that were done to keep us entertained during a pandemic and set our minds to something else during these harsh times was amazing, and it was a great experience to not only meet new people, but get to know them during these activities. Finding out so many interesting yet amazing things about people is what makes the program good, and this program did a great job at doing such things.” -*Student, CV Summer Prep*

“It gave me a stage to let my voice be heard and it was a safe space for everyone.” -*Student, CV Summer Prep*