COLLEGE BEYOND | IMPACT REPORT

A LETTER FROM OUR

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

I hope this letter finds you and your family in good health. The previous two letters that I have penned have been in the context of the pandemic and a major hurricane. While we are back to meeting in person without masks or mandates, I hesitate to say we are back to normal. In every facet of our lives, we are all navigating the changes, impacts, and challenges of this epic time in history. How we move forward as a society will be the hallmark of this time. Will we fight against the tide to restore old norms? Or will we embrace the opportunity to create something new? College Beyond has a keen eye on the effect the pandemic has had and will continue to have on systemic inequity in education. Our team has chosen to use this time when the pandemic has laid bare the gross inequities in higher education to challenge the status quo and create a new normal, one in which all students have a path to economic mobility through post-secondary education. Our new normal must start now.

While we await the studies of the long-term impact of the pandemic on education, our team is seeing the cumulative effects now. Our students are exhausted from the financial, mental, and emotional gymnastics necessary to cope with the lack of resources and loss of family to covid and friends to violence. Imagine doing all of this while trying to successfully matriculate and navigate the college experience. And, particularly for the Greater New Orleans region, doing this while trying to rebuild after Hurricane Ida. This is the reality for our students. And, the data will show that students wanted to pursue an education even through the pandemic. However, this recent year proved to be too much. College enrollment is down city-wide which mirrors a national decline in enrollment.

However, we find hope that College Beyond continues to be a guard against the attrition of students from disadvantaged backgrounds. While our 2021-2022 retention rate is below our three-year average, it is five points greater than campus-wide rates at local universities for the same year. For context: the College Beyond rate includes Pell-eligible students only, while campus-wide rates reflect the entire campus population. This reinforces the idea that financial and social-emotional support is necessary to help students persist, especially in difficult times.

As 2022 comes to a close, we would be remiss not to celebrate our wins. We are so happy to welcome two fantastic people, Destiny Brown and Carolyn Le, as new success coaches on our team. You can read more about them on page 13. We also entered a new phase of growth for College Beyond as we have opened registration for our first Masterclass in Coaching in 2023. We cannot wait to share our model with passionate professionals across the country. You can learn more about this endeavor on page 14.

We are also beaming with pride at the amazing accomplishments our students are making. Jamyre Patrick, a senior International Studies Major, participated in the Junior United Nations Summit this spring in New York City with students from around the world. And, Mahogany Keen, a senior Marketing major, accepted a marketing internship with our new corporate partner, Cytiva. Imad Abdelmajeed, a senior Electrical Engineering major, completed a summer internship as a utility intern with our long-time corporate supporter, Entergy. These are just a few of the examples of our students making their mark and carving out their futures.

None of these achievements can be done without you. We truly appreciate your support and your commitment to being a part of the village that cares for our students. Thank you!

To. Through. Together.

Erin R. Wheeler, PhD
Executive Director

MEET OUR BOARD OF

DIRECTORS

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We'd like to thank outgoing board members, Gina Rachel and Malana Joseph Mitchell, for their board service and outstanding contributions to College Beyond.

OUR MISSION

COLLEGE BEYOND IS A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO HELPING UNDERSERVED STUDENTS ENROLL IN AND COMPLETE COLLEGE

OUR APPROACH

PREVENT SUMMER MELT

STUDENT ASSISTANCE FOR COMPLETING PRE-COLLEGE CHECKLISTS & FINANCIAL AID FOR SUCCESSFUL ENROLLMENT

COACH FOR SUCCESS

PERSONALIZED & STUDENT-DRIVEN COACHING ON ACADEMICS, SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT, & FINANCES

AWARD MICROGRANTS

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR ESSENTIALS LIKE FOOD, BOOKS, & TRANSPORTATION

COLLEGE-TO-CAREER

CURRICULUM TO BUILD STUDENTS' SOCIAL & CULTURAL CAPITAL IN PREPARATION FOR THE TRANSITION TO CAREER

CREATE STRONG PARTNERSHIPS

WITH STUDENTS, FAMILIES, & INSTITUTIONS

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

College Beyond is built around the insight that the college completion gap stems not just from inequalities in economic capital (money), but from inequalities in social and cultural capital as well.

Among affluent students, it is not only wealth itself that enhances a student's chances of college success. The social and cultural capital associated with wealth also makes a difference.

Through traditions, policies, and processes, higher education explicitly and implicitly values the cultural and social know-how associated with higher socioeconomic strata. This can leave students from marginalized groups feeling unsupported, disconnected, and undervalued.

College Beyond acts on this theory of interlocking economic, social, and cultural capital with connecting supports:

ECONOMIC

- FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR BASIC NEEDS LIKE BOOKS, FOOD, & TRANSPORTATION
- MICROGRANTS IN EMERGENCIES

SOCIAL

- TRUSTED & KNOWLEDGEABLE COACHES & MENTORS
- COMMUNITY, PROFESSIONAL, BOARD, & DONOR CONNECTIONS
- VALUING NETWORKS STUDENTS ALREADY HAVE

CULTURAL

- VALUING SKILLS STUDENTS ALREADY HAVE, BUILDING RESILIENCE & SELF-AWARENESS
- SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SKILLS FOR CLASSROOM, CAMPUS, & WORK
- ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT: EXPOSURE TO PERSONAL FINANCE & ENTREPRENEURSHIP
- SUPPORT TO EXPLORE NEW CULTURES & EXPERIENCES
- STUDENT COLLEGE KNOWLEDGE: POLICIES & PROCESSES
- PARENT COLLEGE KNOWLEDGE: COLLEGE CULTURE & SUPPORTING STUDENTS

WHO WE SERVE

College Beyond is designed for an underserved middle majority of college students: capable youth who have earned admission to college but generally are not eligible for top merit-based financial aid or selective college persistence programs.

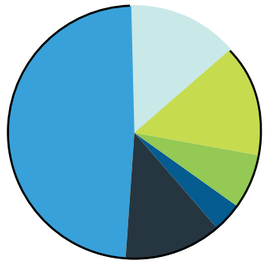
We are committed to bringing excellent, holistic resources to students who face the longest odds of college graduation.

OUR ONLY ELIGIBILITY CRITERION IS NEED.

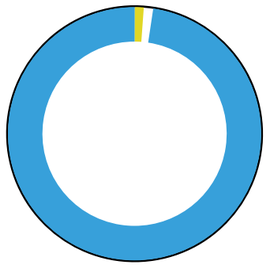
We serve all Pell-eligible first-year students at our partner campuses.

OUR STUDENTS ARE

2021 - 2022 COHORT



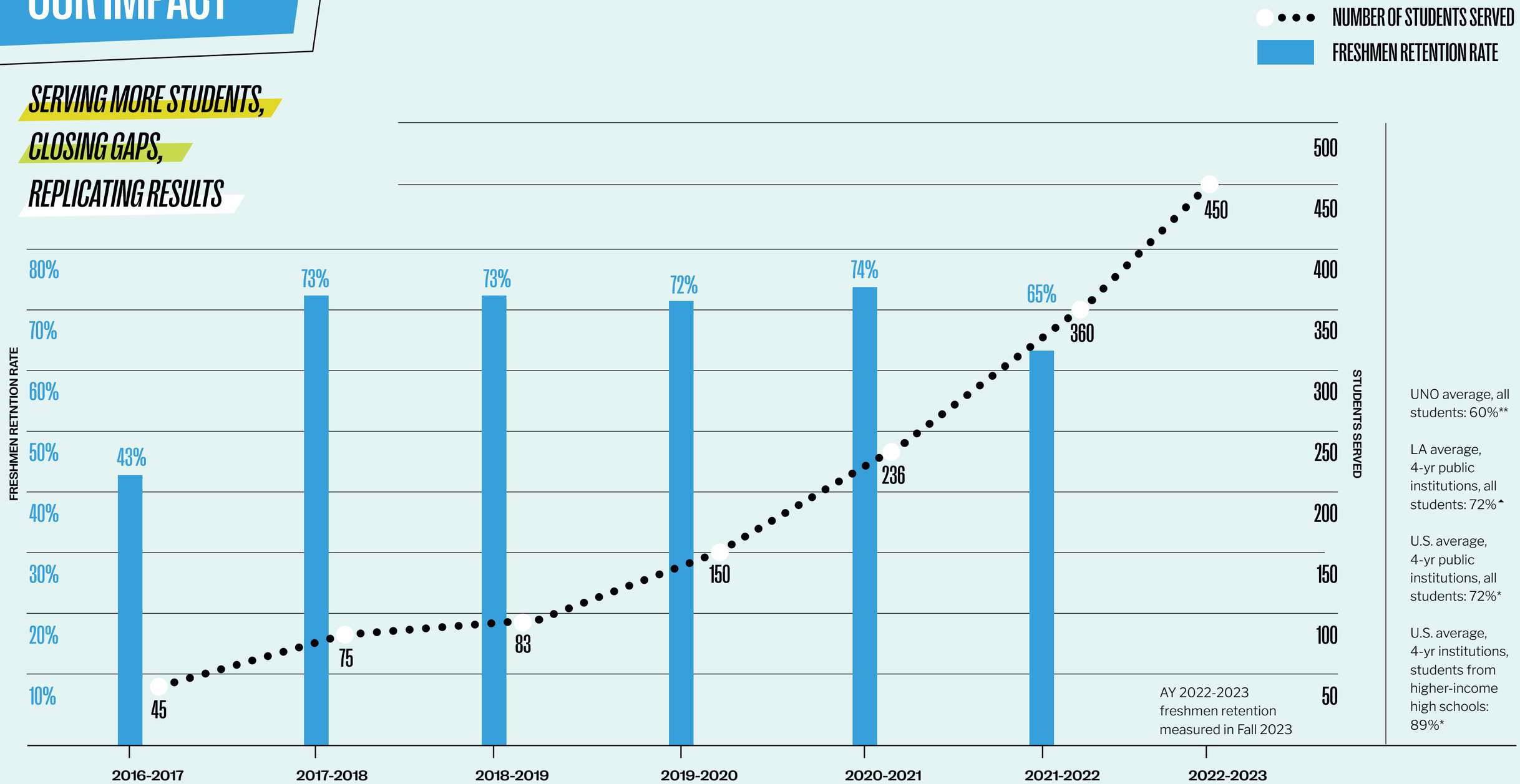
- 85% POC
- 47% Black/AA
- 15% White
- 14% Hispanic/Latinx
- 7% Asian
- 4% Middle Eastern
- Everyone else is multi-racial [selected multiple races]



- 98% PELL GRANT RECIPIENTS [1% DACA]

OUR IMPACT

SERVING MORE STUDENTS, CLOSING GAPS, REPLICATING RESULTS



*National Student Clearinghouse, 2020 Cohort
**University of New Orleans, 2021 Cohort
▲ Louisiana Board of Regents, 2020 Cohort
National and statewide benchmark retention rates for 2021 Cohort was not available at the time of publication.

4-YEAR GRADUATION RATES

3X HIGHER — *LA AVERAGE, LOW-INCOME (PELL-ELIGIBLE) STUDENTS*

3X HIGHER — *LA AVERAGE, BLACK STUDENTS*

1X MATCH — *LA AVERAGE, WHITE STUDENTS*

2X HIGHER — *LA AVERAGE, ALL STUDENTS*

2.5X HIGHER — *U.S. AVERAGE, LOW-INCOME STUDENTS*

*Complete College America
‡National Center for Education Statistics

WHAT IT TAKES

- **42,380** TEXT MESSAGES
- **632** MEALS
- **1,900** BUS RIDES
- **207** GAS CARDS
- **804** COACHING MEETINGS
- **$25,007** IN BOOKS, BOOK RENTALS, & BOOK CODES
- **85%** STUDENTS UTILIZING MICRO-GRANT SUPPORT
- **$2,864,295** IN FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID GRANT DOLLARS COLLEGE BEYOND HELPED STUDENTS ACCESS

GRADUATE SPOTLIGHT

DIANA NGUYEN & EMILY BERTHELOR

"College Beyond was an essential part of our success in college. It can be very hard to transition into a college setting: learning how to study, how to handle stress, how to speak with professors, etc. College Beyond made that transition so much smoother and helped us to learn accountability and how to advocate for ourselves! The monthly meetings helped us to stay on track and have a safe space to voice our concerns and talk through them. College Beyond is a great program because it gives you the ability to grow yourself and your academics with the support of a hands-on team who truly has your best interest at heart!"

Diana Nguyen completed her Bachelor of Science degree in Biological Science with a Minor in Chemistry at the University of New Orleans (UNO). She is currently a graduate student at UNO working towards a Master's in Biological Sciences with plans to apply to dental school.

Emily Berthelor completed her Bachelor of Arts degree in English at the University of New Orleans. She is currently working at a law firm preparing to attend law school.

2022 Graduates, we salute your accomplishments! We are honored to have supported your journeys. You have beaten the odds, including crossing the college finish line during a global pandemic.

WHAT OUR STUDENTS ARE SAYING

"College Beyond has positively impacted me because in a way it makes me feel secure about college after a pandemic."

TARAE JACKSON
SELU 2022 STUDENT

"College Beyond is like having the best big sister you could ever imagine. They support me through every season of life, whether it be a high or low. No matter what circumstances I go through, I can always count on the amazing qualified coaches to help guide me through my situations. It has always been one of the best decisions I've ever made when I've joined college and I'm so glad to have unwavering support from College Beyond."

MELANIE ROS
UNO 2020 STUDENT

"College Beyond has given me a sense of community and support."

EIAN BAILEY
UNO 2022 STUDENT

"I love it! My coach Katerline is excellent!! She is such a big help and makes my college experience wayyyy smoother!"

JONNA KING
UNO 2021 STUDENT

CONNECTING WITH FAMILIES

Connecting with families is an important part of our work.
Here's what some of our students' family members have said about College Beyond:

TONYA SMITH
UNO 2022 PARENT/SUPPORTER

"College Beyond has not only impacted my college freshman but has impacted me as a parent. You all have been very knowledgeable of different subjects that went on throughout the year which you have informed me of. Along with positive notes of encouragement. Y'all ROCK!!! Keep up the great work!!"

STEPHANIE MONTGOMERY
UNO 2022 PARENT/SUPPORTER

"College Beyond has been a wonderful experience for my daughter...! She is able to stay focused and grounded with everything she comes across for her success at UNO!"

KATEEKA LEE
UNO 2021 PARENT/SUPPORTER

"College Beyond has helped tremendously with my daughter. They have been there for her whenever she is unsure of anything in school and I am grateful for the support over the past year and a half that you all have provided for [my student]."

NATHALIE MONTGOMERY
UNO 2021 PARENT/SUPPORTER

"College Beyond goes above and beyond for my daughter to help her reach her academic goals."

FRANCES CENANCE
UNO 2022 PARENT/SUPPORTER

"College Beyond has impacted my student in a great way. They have been performing great and socially have been blossoming into an individual. The additional assistance has been most needed and appreciated. I'm excited to hear from my student that their grades are soaring as they are [doing] socially as well. Thank you."

CURRENT STUDENT SPOTLIGHT
APOLLONIA ESPIRITU

"College Beyond has been such a great support system for me. I was supposed to start college in 2021, but I did not feel prepared enough to start. Although I had taken the gap year, I still did not know much about what to do once I began college and how to make the most of my experience. Ms. Destiny, Ms. Karaline, and Ms. Carolyn are a big help to me in preparing and getting an early start on my career and personal goals. They helped me network, work on my resume, and build my confidence to approach employers at the Career Fair. Without Ms. Destiny, Ms. Carolyn, and Ms. Karaline constantly cheering for me and for giving me so much advice, I believe that my first semester would not have gone as smoothly as it has gone so far."

AN INTERVIEW WITH

KEDRIEKA ROBERSON

Tell us about yourself and where you're from.

I was born and raised in the New Orleans Metro area. I am a non-traditional student who came back to pursue my education after 15 years of being out of school. I made some negative choices in my youth that had a long-lasting impact on my adult life. I was determined to turn my struggles into lessons and improve my life day by day.

What's your major? What are your future plans after graduation?

I am currently a senior Interdisciplinary Studies Major with a concentration in Behavioral Studies. I am scheduled for graduation in the Spring of 2023. After graduation, I plan to enroll in a Master of Social Work program, while continuing to work as a case manager at a behavioral health facility. My short-term goal is to become a clinical social worker. In the future, I hope to open my own professional counseling practice.

Talk about what you do as Lead Ambassador/ Program Associate. Why did you decide to take on this role?

In this role, I plan and manage events for College Beyond students and support the coaches when needed. I also assist students with connecting them to resources and completing important tasks such as filling out the FAFSA or SNAP Benefits. I decided to take this role so that I could actively participate in all of the amazing things College Beyond provides for us.

What's been most fulfilling in your role as lead Ambassador?

Ensuring that my fellow College Beyond participants' needs are met is one of the most fulfilling parts of my role as an ambassador. I love building healthy relationships with the students and assisting the coaches in building community and providing support. I love engaging with College Beyond participants at events or chatting with them in the CB student lounge. When I see everyone having a good time, laughing and smiling, it is evident that my work is very appreciated by the students we serve and by the College Beyond team. I'm forever grateful for this opportunity.

How has College Beyond helped you? What would you say to convince a student to sign up for College Beyond?

College Beyond becomes a part of you and you make lifelong connections. The coaches provide support and resources throughout your entire college experience that position you for success. The team has kept me motivated and grounded through continuous support and ongoing accessibility to a multitude of resources. College Beyond has made this journey one worth taking. I would not be this far if it was not for this program. They have your back, your front, your left, and your right. I recommend College Beyond to every college student who is eligible. Take advantage!

WELCOME NEW STAFF

DESTINY BROWN

Destiny is a first-generation college graduate and holds a B.A. in Political Science from The Ohio State University. Through her activism work in different cities, she grew passionate about reimagining systems to be more equitable for historically excluded and underserved communities. Prior to joining College Beyond, she was a high school educator in New Orleans, which furthered her commitment to providing trauma-informed support for students seeking post-secondary opportunities and socio-economic mobility. When she is not supporting students, she is busy being a dog mom, eating sushi, and laughing with her loved ones.

CAROLYN LE

Carolyn is a native New Orleanian, hailing from the Westbank and Gentilly. She holds a B.S. in Chemistry from Xavier University as well as a double Master's in Social Work and Public Health from LSU and LSU Health Sciences Center. As a public health consultant and social worker, Carolyn aims to empower everyone she works with. She specializes in working with individuals living with dementia; trauma-informed care; and behavioral and community health. When not working, you can often find her at City Park, playing volleyball, traveling, exploring, or taking her car out for a joy ride.

STRATEGIC PLAN

College Beyond has identified a holistic, high-impact solution with strong potential for scaling and replication. While our early success has taught us a great deal about college persistence, we are excited to grow and explore in our quest to contribute an effective and efficient solution to improve college completion rates for underserved students.

In an effort to codify, validate, and scale our solution, we must expand the number of students we serve and reach a critical mass for robust data outcomes and analysis. As a result, we are devoting the next two years to strategic growth and in-depth evaluation in order to create a data-informed plan to effectively scale our model and grow our impact by 2024.

TO MEET THESE GOALS, WE SEEK $2 MILLION IN INVESTMENTS OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS.

This year we made significant strides toward accomplishing our goals:

We have commissioned an external evaluation. With the support of the Kresge Foundation, we have secured an external evaluator to assist us in measuring our impact over the last six years. The final report will be published in early 2023. Here are the five major questions we are exploring:

1. How does College Beyond compare to other college access programs?
2. How do persistence and retention for College Beyond students compare to state and federal rates? How do College Beyond students compare to peers who are similar and to those from higher-income backgrounds?
3. How effective are College Beyond supports in terms of social-emotional health and college success? Which support makes the biggest difference?
4. What is the return on investment (ROI) for university partners investing in College Beyond?
5. What's the return on investment (ROI) on coaching compared to financial support?

WE 'RE HOSTING A COACHING MASTERCLASS

This Masterclass is our first step toward building a train-the-trainer program. The five-hour virtual course will focus on the essentials of coaching with a trauma-informed approach. Additionally, this professional development opportunity will feature six months of coaching to help participants apply principles in their daily interactions with students and learn additional coaching techniques. This opportunity is designed for any college access and success professional, educator, or mentor. Our team is excited to support passionate professionals from across the country and expand our impact outside of the Greater New Orleans Region.

Our team is excited to support passionate professionals from across the country and expand our impact outside of the Greater New Orleans Region. To learn more about our masterclass, visit

COLLEGEBEYOND.ORG/MASTERCLASS

OUR SUPPORTERS

College Beyond's work is possible due to the support of individuals and institutions who have invested in our mission and believe in the potential of the young people of New Orleans.

We are deeply grateful for their support. Together, we believe we can change the landscape of college persistence and post-secondary attainment in New Orleans.

$100,000+

BAPTIST COMMUNITY MINISTRIES
EDLOC BOULDER FUND
ENTERGY CHARITABLE FOUNDATION
GPOA FOUNDATION

$50,000-99,000+

KRESGE FOUNDATION
ROSAMARY FOUNDATION
ROSENTHAL FAMILY FOUNDATION

$20,000-49,000+

KELLER FAMILY FOUNDATION
PRO BONO PUBLICO FOUNDATION
BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD

$2,000-19,000+

CAPITAL ONE
LANG FAMILY FOUNDATION
MARY FREEMAN WISDOM FOUNDATION
NEW ORLEANS CITY COUNCIL-HARRAH'S NEW ORLEANS CASINO COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT PROGRAM
OSCAR J. TOLMAS CHARITABLE TRUST
SELLEY FOUNDATION
CITY FUND
BOEING
SINGER FAMILY FOUNDATION

JOIN OUR MISSION

BY SUPPORTING OUR WORK

Our team is deeply grateful for our growing community of students, families, partners, and supporters. As we look to the coming year, we ask you to stay involved and spread the word! Stay tuned to updates by joining our mailing list at www.collegebeyond.org.

In order to deepen our impact in the coming year and beyond, we actively seek support for program expansion and for our micro-grant fund.

An individual gift of $1,000 to our micro-grant fund buys books, transportation, and food, and can profoundly impact a student's college success.

If you or your institution are curious to know more, please be in touch.

Contact us directly at contact@collegebeyond.org.

VISIT US ONLINE.
TELL OTHERS ABOUT OUR MISSION.
SHARE THIS REPORT.

Special thanks to Heartsleeve for designing this report and to Dane Bachman, Jonathan Bachman, Cedric Dent Jr., and the Kresge Foundation for photography. Cedric Dent Jr. is a College Beyond alumnus.

IN MEMORIAM
Jemond Cador and Michael Florent
Two wonderful young men taken too soon.