Dear Friends,

As we prepare to welcome our third class of scholars into the Richmond Promise family, it is hard to believe that this fall over 900 scholars will be representing Richmond at over 79 different college and universities across the country.

The purpose of this report is to celebrate what we’ve accomplished Spring 2017-18 and map where we plan to go. Our second year was full of reflection and action. Fueled by a commitment to continuous improvement, we’ve learned from our students by listening to them and by digging into the data we’ve collected.

The Richmond Promise was founded with the vision that it could be a catalyst to build a college going and graduating culture throughout the City of Richmond. In the following pages, you will see this in action by hearing from our students: about their challenges, their successes, and their needs beyond the scholarship to reach their college dreams.

You will also learn that the Richmond Promise is harnessing the momentum and the potential that already exists in our students and our partners. Thank you to our partners, principals, teachers, counselors, funders, and the City of Richmond who keep the Promise alive every day through their unwavering commitment to student success. Last, thank you to our students who inspire us every day and remind us that, without a doubt, the future is bright.

Jessie Stewart
OVERVIEW

Launched in January 2016, the Richmond Promise is a community-wide college success initiative in Richmond, California. Through a college scholarship, collaborative and effective partnerships, and intentional programmatic interventions, the Richmond Promise aims to ensure all students in Richmond excel from high school to higher education, attain a post secondary degree, thrive in the field of their choice, and become a leader of positive change in their community.

The Richmond Promise is made possible by the Chevron Corporation’s Environmental and Community Investment Agreement with the City of Richmond.

THE SCHOLARSHIP

Richmond Promise Scholars receive up to $1,500 each year for up to four years. The scholarship is available for any student who lives in Richmond and attends a not-for-profit 2-year or 4-year college, or Career Technical Education Program. Scholars must meet the minimum eligibility criteria:

- ✔ Live in Richmond or North Richmond
- ✔ Graduate from a public, private, or charter high school within the WCCUSD boundary area
- ✔ Complete a financial aid application [FAFSA or Dream Act] by the Cal Grant Deadline
- ✔ Enroll full-time and maintain good academic standing through college

Our students tell us that the Richmond Promise Scholarship is not only financially impactful, but it is a powerful symbolic commitment from their community – a vote of confidence and a motivation for students to come back and give back to Richmond.

DID YOU KNOW?

69% of Richmond Promise Scholars are first-generation college students.

What the Richmond Promise means to me is that my city and government officials care about me and the other students of my community.

Richmond Promise Scholar,
Kennedy High School, ’17
Our mission of college success necessitates a strategy that is **reflective, responsive, and collaborative**. Based on our learnings the past two years, our work aims to address barriers to college access and success for Richmond students **through 4 main strategies**:

**PILLARS OF OUR PROMISE**

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**COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY**

*Community-Wide Scholarship:*
Up to $6,000 over four years for 2-year, 4-year, or CTE post-secondary education. Available to any student from Richmond who attends a local public, private, or charter school for at least all of high school.

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**COLLEGE AWARENESS**

*Near-Peer Ambassador Program:*
Richmond Promise college students are compensated and trained to talk to 9th graders at Kennedy High School through a series of classroom-based college and career conversations and activities.

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**COLLEGE ACCESS**

*Community-Wide Financial Aid Workshops & Office Hours:*
Richmond Promise staff offer weekly office hours at local high schools and workshops throughout the community to build college knowledge and support students with financial aid completion.

*High School to College Transition Supports:*
Richmond Promise holds College Success Workshops over the spring and summer to build students’ agency and capacity to navigate the summer to full-time college enrollment in the fall. Workshops build knowledge around key deadlines, interpreting financial aid, peer tips for college success, enrollment support, and more.

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**COLLEGE SUCCESS**

*College Partnerships:*
Richmond Promise is building and formalizing partnerships with colleges and universities to warmly welcome and strategically support scholars their first year of college through degree attainment. Formal partnerships include Contra Costa College, Berkeley City College, Diablo Valley College, SF State and UC Berkeley.

*Campus Peer Networks:*
Richmond Promise launched the Richmond College Scholars Network at UC Berkeley and UC Davis. Student driven and designed, these networks leverage young leaders from Richmond to lead monthly events for other on-campus Richmond students.
Richmond Promise assures students that the option to go to college is for everyone. It gives students the opportunity to go to college, grow, and contribute back to the community.

Richmond Promise Scholar, Leadership Public School, ’18
Richmond Promise Scholars attend high school at 18 schools across the West Contra Costa Unified School District. We are proud and privileged to work with incredible partners, staff, teachers and administration across each school site.

Scholars by School

**WCCUSD:**
- De Anza: 62
- El Cerrito: 87
- Gateway to College: 1
- Hercules: 11
- Kennedy: 69
- Middle College: 22
- Pinole Valley: 8
- Richmond: 79
- Vista: 2

**Charter Schools:**
- Aspire Richmond Ca. Prep: 1
- Leadership Public School: 106
- Making Waves Academy: 64

**Private Schools:**
- El Sobrante Christian: 2
- Salesian: 29
YEAR 2 HIGHLIGHTS

Scholars Celebration draws over 1,000 community members to Richmond to celebrate Promise Scholars

448 Scholarships awarded to graduating Class of 2017

100+ College Access Workshops and Office Hours

543 Richmond Promise Scholars attend 79 Colleges & Universities across the country!

Developed a Salesforce platform to provide data-informed support for student success

Summer Success Workshops contribute to a 20% decrease in summer melt!

130 more Richmond Promise Scholars enroll full-time in college the fall after their senior year of high school.

4 New College Partnerships formed

130 First Year Experience with Contra Costa College sets the Class of 2017 on a path to success!

Richmond Promise receives UC Berkeley Chancellor’s Community Leaders Award

17 College Students served as Near-Peer Ambassadors

590 students from the high school Class of 2018 applied to the Richmond Promise Scholarship
**OUR SCHOLARS**

Demographics

- **69%** First-generation college students
- **64%** Hispanic or Latino
- **15%** African American
- **11%** Asian
- **6%** Other
- **4%** White
- **56%** Female
- **44%** Male
- **70%** eligible for free or reduced-price lunch

High Schools Attended

- **63%** Public
- **32%** Charter
- **5%** Private

College Plans

- **94%** Stay in California for college
- **65%** 4 Year
- **35%** 2 Year

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Our scholars are future professors, scientists, doctors, lawyers, aerospace engineers and musicians, majoring in fields like Public Health, Engineering, English, & African American Studies.
Cali is a business major, a hip-hop dancer, and a paranormal fiction fan. She’s also laser-focused on her goals and why she’s at college. “All of the hardships that I’ve gone through just made me really push myself to go to college because I want a better life for myself and my family.”

At UC Berkeley, Cali is learning the foundation of being an entrepreneur and creating her long-term goals – working at a tech company and eventually starting her own company. To her, the Promise means, “continued support...to go to college and pursue our dreams.”

She continues, “We can do it, and we will do it, and we will succeed and bring it back to Richmond.”
LEARNING FROM OUR STUDENTS

Our students are our most valuable resource in our goal to provide the best support for current and future scholars. Over the past two years, we have established systems to collect more robust student data through a database, student surveys, and focus groups. As a team, we aim to be reflective and responsive by analyzing student data and listening and documenting student voice. Our students have taught us that the Promise is much more than a scholarship. Here is what we have learned...

1. **High School to College Transition Supports are critically important.**

In our first year, we saw that many of our students, particularly our community college students, struggled to enroll in college full-time the fall after their senior year of high school. Along with academic preparation, students highlighted challenges navigating the process from college acceptance to enrollment. We committed to taking collective action around this challenge, and in 2017, implemented spring and summer workshops to support a successful college transition and piloted the Contra Costa College First Year Experience.
LEARNING FROM OUR STUDENTS CONT’D.

Early findings suggest that **summer interventions matter.**
In Year 2, we saw a 20% increase in the number of students who enrolled in college full time the fall after their senior year. At Contra Costa College, our top receiving institution, we saw an increase of 23%. Moving forward, we aim to work collaboratively with our college partners to offer more robust spring and summer interventions that set a strong foundation to support students through degree attainment.

2. **A Promise is a powerful catalyst for student participation and developing leadership in our community.**

Our students have reflected to us their desire to give back to their community both because of their pride in being from Richmond and because they want to share with younger students all of the things they did not know before going to college. As one student put it, “What Richmond Promise means to me is that our community is giving back to us, so we have to do whatever it takes in order to give back to it as well."

In response to this desire and in an effort to generate early college awareness as well as support our current scholars find community on campus, the Richmond Promise:

- **Expanded Near-Peer Ambassador Program at Kennedy High School:**

  In the 2017-18 academic year, all 200 Kennedy High School freshmen met with our 12 College Student Ambassadors twice a month during class to have college and career conversations. Ambassadors share their experiences and tips with young students who are just beginning to think about their future and who may, like many of our students, not know anyone who has graduated from college.

- **Richmond College Scholars Networks at UC Berkeley and UC Davis:**

  Five of our students at UC Berkeley and UC Davis built and led on-campus support networks of students from Richmond. These peer networks hold regular social events, workshops, and plan a student-designed community giveback project in Richmond. These networks serve to welcome incoming students and ensure they are connected with the resources and knowledge on campus to make the most out of their college experience. As one campus leader said, the peer network “feels like home.”

  “My biggest challenges in my first year in college was that I felt I went in blindfolded. I didn’t know anything about college because I don’t know anyone who has been to college. I couldn’t get advice from my parents or relatives... I felt lost.”

  - Richmond Promise Scholar

- ✔

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3. Students who access on-campus resources feel supported and successful.

This winter, we held focus groups with our students at Contra Costa College. We learned that they feel supported by their campus when they actively and regularly access on-campus resources. Although the transition from high school to college was expectedly bumpy, particularly around picking classes and deciding a major, one student shared that once they met with a counselor and got enrolled in EOPS things got easier. As they put it, “It’s like an essay. It’s hard to start, but once the ball gets rolling, it’s pretty easy.”

On many college campuses, there are an abundance of resources that are often underutilized or that students don’t know about. As the Richmond Promise continues to grow in the number of students we serve each year, it is of the highest priority that we ensure our students are actively accessing impactful resources on campus, like Educational Opportunity Programs (EOP)/Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS), learning communities, and counselors. We hope to do this by continuing to expand and deepen our college partnerships in a meaningful way, like we have done at Contra Costa College. To do this would mean that our students know from day one about their on-campus resources and feel incentivized through our scholarship to regularly use them.

When students feel supported, they also feel successful because they know and feel like there is a community bigger than them that is invested in their future and success.
Lavonntay has learned a lot in his first year of college and will finish a successful first year more motivated and focused than ever. After starting at Sacramento State this fall, he made the important decision to continue his spring semester at Berkeley City College to ensure he was 100% focused on school and to save money. It was not an easy decision and many doubted he would be able to refocus.

Now, he hopes to transfer to a UC - maybe UC Berkeley. During his first year journey, he has also discovered a love for STEM, especially in his computer science classes, and can see a future possibly working in biotech. Lavonntay understands the importance of continuing to reflect and discover his interests, and equally important, believes “he can learn anything” as long as he’s taught. To younger Richmond students, he offers, the advice, “take it one step at a time” and keep going no matter what.
Alabama A&M University
American River College
Arizona State University
Azusa Pacific University
Berkeley City College
Berklee College of Music
Brigham Young University-Hawaii
Butte College
California Maritime Academy
California Polytechnic State University-San Luis Obispo
California State Polytechnic University-Pomona
California State University-Chico
California State University-Dominguez Hills
California State University-East Bay
California State University-Long Beach
California State University-Los Angeles
California State University-Monterey Bay
California State University-Northridge
California State University-Sacramento
California State University-Sonoma
California State University-Stanislaus
Chabot College
Chapman University
City College of San Francisco
Clark University
College of Alameda
College of Marin
Columbia University
Connecticut College
Contra Costa College
Diablo Valley College
Dillard University
Dominican University of California
Fisk University
Holy Names University
Hope College
Humboldt State University
Laney College
Las Positas College
Los Medanos College
Louisiana State University
Loyola Marymount University
Merced College
Merritt College
Middlebury College
Mills College
Notre Dame de Namur University
Pratt Institute
San Diego State University
San Francisco State University
San Jose State University
Santa Barbara City College
Santa Clara University
Santa Monica College
Santa Rosa Junior College
Sierra College
Sonoma State University
Southern University and A&M College
Spelman College
St. Mary’s College of California
Texas Southern University
Tuskegee University
University of California-Berkeley
University of California-Davis
University of California-Irvine
University of California-Los Angeles
University of California-Merced
University of California-Riverside
University of California-San Diego
University of California-Santa Barbara
University of California-Santa Cruz
University of Chicago
University of Hawaii at Manoa
University of Nevada-Las Vegas
University of New Mexico
University of Oregon
University of San Francisco
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Williams College

The CCC First Year Experience:
Fueled by a $750,000 California College Promise Innovation Grant, Richmond Promise Scholars at CCC receive:
- Summer Institute
- College Success Coaches
- Foundational Cohort-Based Classes
- Targeted Education & Career Advising
- Peer Mentors
- Transfer Services
OUR TEAM

Richmond Promise Staff
Jessie Stewart – Executive Director
Jessica Rodriguez – Associate Director of Scholarships & Data
Gabriela Urías – College Access Coordinator

Richmond Promise Americorps VISTAs
Nancy DeVille – College Success
Sarah Hehrer – Scholarships & Data
Miguel Molina – College Access

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DID YOU KNOW?
The Richmond Promise is more than one organization? It is a movement with the City of Richmond, Contra Costa College, WCCUSD, and the Richmond community to create college success pathways.
NEAR-PEER AMBASSADORS

12 current college students serve as Near-Peer Ambassadors at Kennedy High School. They are trained to have classroom-based college and career conversations with Kennedy 9th graders.

Meet Our Ambassadors:

Merari Castillo, CSU East Bay ’21
Fredy Cruz, UC Berkeley ’21
Luis Gonzalez, CCC ’21
Edwin Guerra Beltran, FSU ’21
Linda Huerta, CCC ’21
Jennifer Jimenez, SFSU ’21
Alfred Machachon, CCC ’21
Jennifer Maradiaga, Merritt College ’20
Isabel Rodriguez, CCC ’21

COLLEGE LEADERS

5 current college students serve as College Leaders at UC Berkeley and UC Davis. They plan and lead monthly social events and workshops for other on-campus Richmond students.

UC Berkeley: Fredy Cruz, Cali Luke, & Tsion Tmariam
UC Davis: Arturo Castañeda & Andrea Hernandez
SUPPORT THE PROMISE

Give to the Richmond Promise:
Help us keep the Promise forever and give the gift of college today. $1,500 provides an annual scholarship to a student from Richmond. Establish a scholarship in the name of an individual or business, or contribute generally to the scholarship and college success supports.

Volunteer:
Contribute your time and expertise to support the growth and development of the Richmond Promise.

Become a Champion:
Officially endorse the Richmond Promise; contribute programmatic resources; and help spread the word to increase access.

DONORS & CHAMPIONS

Our Donors & Champions:
Thank you for helping us keep the Promise for generations to come. The Richmond Promise is a 501c3 corporation. All contributions support college success programming and college scholarships.

Foundational Donors

Businesses & Individuals
Chevron
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Alten Construction
The Eagle Foundation
Flora Family Foundation
Point Richmond Business Association
Republic Services
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Brian Gillis
Bill Lindsay
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Jael Myrick
Allen Uzzell

www.richmondpromise.org/donate
Para mi, Richmond Promise significa como una nueva oportunidad en la vida para poder salir adelante.

Richmond Promise Scholar, Kennedy High School ‘18
FINANCIALS

Fiscal Year 2017

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$1,574,691

- 93.75% Scholarship Program
- 5.52% Management & General
- 0.72% Fundraising
We see a day when all children in Richmond have access to high quality education, excel from high school to higher education, attain a postsecondary degree or certification, thrive in the field of their choice, and become a leader of positive change in their community & the world.

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