RICHMOND PROMISE

YEAR 1 PROGRESS REPORT
PUBLISHED 2017
Dear Friends,

It has been an absolute privilege to step into the role of Executive Director for the Richmond Promise and to work alongside amazing students, schools, and community partners to realize the potential of this investment for Richmond.

In the first year of the scholarship, the Richmond Promise has awarded over $320,000 in college scholarships to 255 students attending 55 colleges and universities across the country. At its core, the Promise is about creating a cycle of opportunity: 73% of our scholars are the first in their family to attend college.

In the following pages, you will learn about our students: who they are, where they are going to school, and their aspirations for the future. You will also read about our highlights and early learnings from year one, and how we aim to activate our mission as a true college access and success initiative to support all Richmond young people realize their potential, complete postsecondary education, thrive in their field of choice, and become leaders in their communities.

Last, the Promise is daylighting the truth that creating a college going and graduating culture must be an “all-in” effort within and beyond the classroom. We all have a powerful role to play to ensure every student is ready to access and take full advantage of the Promise. A sincere thank you to the City of Richmond for prioritizing education as central to building a healthy, equitable, vibrant Richmond for generations to come.

In partnership,

Jessie Stewart, Executive Director

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OUR PROMISE

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 and the world.

Launched in January 2016, the Richmond Promise is a community-wide college scholarship fund and college success initiative to build a college graduating culture in Richmond, CA. The Richmond Promise scholarship is made possible by a 10-year, $35 million seed investment from the Chevron Corporation’s Environmental and Community Investment Agreement with the City of Richmond.

INTENDED IMPACT

We aim to create a college-graduating culture by increasing the number of students, particularly those who are low-income and first in their family to go to college, who are:

- Aware of college resources, and exposed to college-going role models and experiences from a young age
- Able to afford college by accessing financial aid and minimizing student debt
- Ready to transition successfully to an accredited university/college directly from high school
- Successful through completion of an associate’s degree, bachelor’s degree, or career and technical education

THE SCHOLARSHIP

The cornerstone of the Richmond Promise is a community-wide scholarship. Richmond Promise Scholars can receive up to $1,500 each year for up to four years (maximum award of $6,000).

Eligibility Criteria

The scholarship is available for any student in Richmond who attends a 2-year or 4-year college, or pursues a Career Technical Education Certificate and meets all of the following criteria:

- Resident of Richmond or North Richmond
- Graduate of a public, private, or charter school within the WCCUSD boundary area
- Attend eligible school since the 9th grade (see pg. 20)
- Complete financial aid application (FAFSA or Dream Act) by the Cal Grant deadline
- Enroll full time and maintain good academic standing through college

“THE RICHMOND PROMISE MEANS I CAN!”

– RICHMOND PROMISE SCHOLAR, KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL
The City of Richmond and Chevron agree to the Environmental and Community Investment Agreement (ECIA), which provides $90 million dollars to the Richmond community over the next ten years. $35 million is pledged to the Promise.

Jessie Stewart is hired as Executive Director.

The Promise embarks on six weeks of outreach & engagement, including over 50 college access, financial aid, and information workshops and in-class office hours to answer questions from Scholars.

The City of Richmond leads a comprehensive community engagement initiative to inform the programmatic and policy development of the Promise.

The Richmond Promise launches and the 2016 scholarship application opens.
The Promise holds a Summer College Success Workshop for the Class of 2016 Scholars. Students networked and prepared for the transition to college with workshops and a panel of college-going peers.

The 2017 scholarship application launches.

The Flora Family Foundation supports the launch of the Richmond Promise Near Peer Ambassador Program at Kennedy High School.

Over 500 students apply to the Richmond Promise Scholarship.

Contra Costa College receives the CA College Promise Innovation Grant to establish the Summer Bridge & First Year Experience for Richmond Promise Scholars.

The first class of Richmond Promise Scholars receives over $320,000 in scholarships with $1.5 million pledged. The 255 scholars are attending 55 colleges across the country.

The first Annual Richmond Promise Award Ceremony honors the Class of 2016 at the Civic Center Auditorium. Students were honored by Mayor Tom Butt, Congressman Mark DeSaulnier, and members of the Richmond City Council and WCCUSD School Board.
STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: OMAR MENDOZA

Class of 2016 Richmond Promise Scholar
College: Contra Costa College
Activities: Near Peer Ambassador, Student with the Puente Project, Works at Shoe Palace

What have you learned in your first year of college?

“The content we cover in class is interesting because it’s focused on today and the future. Don’t be afraid to ask for help. There are a lot of people on campus who are willing to offer helpful resources that will benefit you.”
OUR STUDENTS

...are awesome! They are attending 55 colleges and universities in the Bay Area and beyond. The Class of 2016 has been awarded over $320,000 in scholarships.

DEMOGRAPHICS

- 46% Male
- 54% Female
- 14% Asian
- 4% White
- 19% African-American
- 63% Latino/a
- 73% first-generation college students
- 65% eligible for free or reduced-price lunch

HIGH SCHOOLS ATTENDED

- 29% Charter Schools
- 70% WCCUSD
- 1% Private Schools

COLLEGE PLANS

- 38% Two-Year Schools
- 25% UC Schools
- 24% CSU Schools
- 12% Other Four-Year Schools
- In total, 82% of our scholars are at four-year schools

TOP FIVE COLLEGES

The majority of our Scholars are attending colleges in the Bay Area.

- CONTRA COSTA COLLEGE
  49 Scholars
- SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY
  21 Scholars
- DIABLO VALLEY COLLEGE
  13 Scholars
- COLLEGE OF MARIN
  13 Scholars
- BERKELEY CITY COLLEGE
  11 Scholars

Richmond Promise is building and formalizing partnerships with institutions of higher education to create pathways to bridge the high school to college transition, and holistically support first-generation college students.
OUR OPPORTUNITY

Getting a college education is a strong predictor of employment and the ability to earn a family wage. By 2020, 65% of jobs across the nation will require some level of postsecondary education and the state of California is projected to face a shortage of 1.1 million workers with bachelor’s degrees by 2030.¹ This national trend holds true in Richmond, where the median worker with a bachelor’s degree earns nearly twice as much as the median worker with a high school diploma.²

AS THE IMPORTANCE OF HIGHER EDUCATION GROWS, ACCESS TO AND PERSISTENCE THROUGH COLLEGE REMAINS INEQUITABLE.

Among recent high school graduates nationally, only 60% of low-income students enroll in college, compared to 87% of high-income students.³ Not only are low-income students less likely to enroll, they are less likely to succeed in college once they get there. Nationally and locally, these disparities also persist by race and ethnicity. Nearly half of Richmond’s white residents have a bachelor’s degree or higher, compared to only 17% of African American residents and 8% of Hispanic or Latino residents.⁴ In the West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD), 70% of students are low-income, and 90% identify as students of color.⁵ Only 42% of the Class of 2015 met A-G college entrance requirements, indicating that many students are not 4-year college eligible or ready by high school graduation.⁶

YEAR ONE LEARNINGS

Our first year of implementation has provided a view into larger systemic challenges many students face when it comes to accessing college. It has also created the foundation and a call for collective action around two key challenges:

1. MANY STUDENTS WHO ASPIRE TO ATTEND COLLEGE OR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION DO NOT MAKE IT TO CAMPUS ON TIME OR FULL TIME.

Of the 384 students awarded the scholarship, 255 enrolled in college full time the fall after their senior year. 129 (33.6%) of scholarships were left unclaimed. These were students who completed the Richmond Promise application, were awarded, but did not follow through with paperwork or show up on campus full time or at all.

2. TWO-YEAR STUDENTS NEED THE MOST SUPPORT IN THE HIGH SCHOOL TO COLLEGE TRANSITION.

This is demonstrated by the difference between our 2-year college bound and 4-year college bound claim rates. Specifically, 51.6% of 2-year college bound students claimed the Richmond Promise scholarship, while 80.9% of their 4-year college bound counterparts claimed the scholarship by enrolling on time and full time.

¹: Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce, 2014
²: US Census Bureau, 2015
⁴: US Census Bureau, 2015
⁵: California Department of Education, 2011
⁶: California Department of Education: Data Reporting Office, 2015
Our Strategy

Our work aims to address four main barriers to college access and success. Particularly for low-income students who are the first in their family to go to college, barriers to college access and degree attainment begin at a young age, persist until graduation, and fall into four main categories.

**Awareness**

Building college knowledge to to begin academic and financial preparation well before they graduate from—or even enter—high school.

**Readiness**

The academic preparation, skills and knowledge to be ready to enter and succeed in college on time and full time the fall after senior year of high school.

**Affordability**

Accessing financial aid, building financial literacy, knowing college options, and being able to pay for college.

**Success**

Ensuring students are supported to begin college on time and full time after their senior year of high school and stay enrolled in college through degree completion.
Last year, nearly $3 billion dollars of financial aid went unclaimed nationally. While the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion rate has increased across WCCUSD in recent years, there is a continued opportunity to promote college access and affordability through higher utilization of financial aid. This is demonstrated by the fact that in the WCCUSD graduating Class of 2016 only 64% of students completed the FAFSA.

While the cornerstone of the Richmond Promise is a comprehensive, community-wide scholarship fund, the Promise also serves as a powerful incentive and resource hub for students to leverage multiple sources of financial aid. Completion of the FAFSA or Dream Act application is a prerequisite for eligibility, ensuring that our scholars receive the college funding they need and deserve.

CORE ELEMENTS OF OUR COMMUNITY-WIDE SCHOLARSHIP

- Creating systems for data-informed students support and longitudinal tracking
- Richmond Promise Scholarship: Up to $1,500 for up to 4 years for 2-year or 4-year colleges/universities, or Career Technical Education
- Grow and sustain the scholarship fund to be a full “last dollar” scholarship (one that meets any remaining financial need) to last in perpetuity
- Student and family financial aid access and completion support in and out of the classroom

WHY IS TRACKING STUDENTS THROUGH COLLEGE SO IMPORTANT?

Knowing whether or where our students are going to college is an important yet challenging data point. Through data-sharing agreements with WCCUSD and colleges and universities, Richmond Promise aspires to gather and share knowledge around student access, retention, and persistence through college and career.
Richmond Promise means that there is an opportunity for me regardless of where I am from.
I want to go to college because I want to be an example for my brothers and make my parents proud. I want to see what the future has for me, not only as a woman, but as a Latina and first-generation student. Being part of the Richmond Promise means we can finally show others that Richmond is not just full of violence and that we prioritize education.
94% of 9th grade students at Kennedy High School indicated an efficacy and a desire to attend college. However, only 41% of these students indicated they know someone in college who reminds them of themselves.

To prepare for college, students and their families must build “college knowledge” and begin academic and financial planning well before they graduate from—or even enter—high school. This includes understanding entrance requirements and the admissions process and early exposure to college role models from a young age who can be critical in guiding students through the high school to college transition.

With funding from the Flora Family Foundation, the Richmond Promise launched the Near Peer Ambassador Program at Kennedy High School in partnership with WCCUSD and Students Rising Above in January 2017. By recruiting and training current Richmond Promise/WCCUSD college students as Near Peer Ambassadors, the program builds college knowledge while exposing students to college-going and community-giving peer role models in whom 9th grade students can see themselves.

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THE CORE ELEMENTS OF THE RICHMOND PROMISE AMBASSADOR PROGRAM INCLUDE:

**CLASSROOM-BASED COLLEGE CONVERSATIONS**
Richmond/WCCUSD college students engage 9th graders in college conversations to build college knowledge and confidence.

**AMBASSADOR RECRUITMENT & TRAINING**
Richmond Promise/WCCUSD college students are trained to facilitate college conversations effectively and appropriately with 9th graders.

**COLLEGE TOURS & IN-CLASS COLLEGE INFORMATION WORKSHOPS**
College tours from a first-generation college student perspective; workshops on college options and financial aid.

**COLLEGE FAIR FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS**
Kennedy High School 9th graders conduct college research and host a college fair for DeJean Middle School 8th graders.
We support the work of the West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) and complimentary services and initiatives to build students’ academic preparation and readiness for college.

Over the past five years, there has been a 12% increase in high school graduation rates across WCCUSD. At the same time, less than half of WCCUSD students graduate A-G eligible.

We aim to support this positive momentum, shine light on opportunity for improvement, and collaboratively develop solutions.

While the Richmond Promise does not directly provide academic services, building partnerships is core to what we do. This includes collaborating with WCCUSD Counselors, College & Career Centers, and community partners to expand and deepen demonstrated best practices to effectively serve and prepare all Richmond students.

**SPOTLIGHT: UC BERKELEY EARLY ACADEMIC OUTREACH PROGRAM**

The UC Berkeley EAOP and Destination College Advising Corps works closely with administrators, high school counselors and community based organizations to provide support to high school students in their journey towards higher education. Within the six comprehensive high schools, EAOP/DCAC College Adviser Fellows provide intensive 1-1 college advising and college preparation support to a cohort of 150 students per school site.

Through advising, school-wide campaigns, and other activities in support of a college-going culture, EAOP/DCAC engages with the community and commits to providing all young people and their families quality support, opportunity, and preparation to further their college and career aspirations.

**SPOTLIGHT: ED FUND & THE KENNEDY COLLEGE BOUND NETWORK**

In 2016, the Ed Fund partnered with Richmond Promise, WriterCoach Connection and the Richmond Chamber of Commerce to form the Kennedy College Bound Network. In conjunction with UC Berkeley EAOP, these partners provided college workshops to all seniors at Kennedy, individualized writing sessions with all juniors, internships for sophomores, and a near-peer advising program for freshmen. The goal is for Kennedy students to receive targeted services to build the skills and complete the benchmarks necessary for high school graduation and postsecondary enrollment and success.

The Ed Fund also leads a successful campaign in partnership with WCCUSD. Over the past three years, financial aid completion among district seniors has doubled, bringing millions of dollars to our students to help pay for their college education.
Born and raised in Richmond, being able to work in my community has been an immense pleasure. As a College Adviser Fellow at Kennedy High School, I have been able to support and guide students towards the post-secondary journey of their choice.

—Devan McFadden, 2nd Year Adviser
Our goal is to build a sense of community for the scholars so that they aren’t lost when they get here.

—Vicki Ferguson, Dean of Student Services, Contra Costa College
Annually in the U.S., an estimated 10-40% of high school seniors who intend to enroll in college do not do so the fall after senior year. This risk is heightened among first-generation and low-income students, who are less likely to have peers and mentors who can guide them through the transition.

The difficulties of navigating the high school to college transition were reflected among 2016 Richmond Promise scholarship recipients, where 33.6% of students did not show up to campus on time or full time in the fall. Common challenges around transition include tuition and financial aid, placement exams, and class registration. Even for those students with a successful college transition, many often face barriers to attaining degrees. These barriers vary widely and may include academic challenges, financial costs, and competing work or family responsibilities.

With 255 students (and counting) already on college campuses, it is critical for the Richmond Promise to focus its resources on wraparound college transition and persistence services to ensure our scholars thrive through degree attainment. This work includes direct case management and formalized partnerships with institutions of higher education.

The cornerstone of this effort is our partnership with Contra Costa College, the primary receiving institution of Richmond Promise scholars. In February 2017, Contra Costa College was awarded the $750,000 California College Promise Innovation Grant that will support a summer bridge and first year experience pathway for Richmond Promise students.

7: Social Science Quarterly, 2014

**CORE ELEMENTS OF THE CONTRA COSTA COLLEGE FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE PATHWAY**

**Summer Bridge**
- Week-long Math Intensive & Advising Courses

**Cohort Experience**
- Career Exploration
- & Transfer Success Courses

**Education & Career Planning**
- Development of Education Plan

**Transfer Services**
- Early connection to focused advising to prepare students for transfer to 4-year universities and career

**Near Peer College Success Coaching**
- Access to a dedicated point-person to support college success
OUR PARTNER SCHOOLS

HIGH SCHOOLS
WCCUSD
De Anza High School (45 recipients)
El Cerrito High School (60 recipients)
Gateway to College
Hercules High School (1 recipient)
Kennedy High School (31 recipients)
Middle College High School (12 recipients)
North Campus Continuation High School
Pinole Valley High School (9 recipients)
Richmond High School (31 recipients)
Sylvester Greenwood Academy
Vista High School (3 recipients)

CHARTER SCHOOLS
Aspire Richmond California College Preparatory Academy*
Leadership Public School (53 recipients)
Making Waves Academy (26 recipients)
John Henry High School

PRIVATE SCHOOLS
El Sobrante Christian School (2 recipients)
Salesian High School (9 recipients)

255 STUDENTS FROM 13 HIGH SCHOOLS.
PARTNERING WITH 55 COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.

What the Richmond Promise means to me is a chance to a first-generation college student after overcoming multiple obstacles and hardships.

–Class of 2017 Richmond Promise Scholar
## COLLEGES

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The Richmond Promise is a unified effort between the City of Richmond, West Contra Costa Unified School District, Contra Costa College, local organizations, and the Richmond community. These champion organizations and institutional partners will work together to exchange ideas, align and leverage resources, provide infrastructure, and set policy to create seamless pathways that support the postsecondary success of Richmond young people.

OUR TEAM

RICHMOND PROMISE STAFF

Jessie Stewart
Executive Director
Jessica Rodriguez
Program + Policy Manager

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University of California, Berkeley
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Patricia Canessa
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Program Director, Bay Area Community Resources

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Public Affairs Manager, Chevron
Bill Lindsay
City of Richmond City Manager
Mojdeh Medizadeh
President of Contra Costa College
A PROMISE IS ONLY AS STRONG AS ITS PARTNERSHIPS.

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: COLLEGE IS REAL

College Is Real (CIR) is a program that provides education, motivation, mentorship, and scholarship support to students at Richmond High School and De Anza High School in Richmond, CA. CIR students are those who demonstrate academic potential and have college aspirations, and most are the first in their families to attend college. CIR students gain confidence and challenge themselves with goals that previously may have seemed impossible to reach.

Starting in 2005 with 16 students, there are now over 250 students in the program with plans to expand to 350 by the end of the next school year. During the past two academic years, 90-100% of CIR’s seniors were accepted to four-year universities, and nearly every student attends college and graduates.

The Richmond Promise relies on a network of strong leaders to do our work and fulfill our promise to our scholars.
SUPPORT THE PROMISE

The Richmond Promise is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Your contributions support:

- **Richmond Promise Scholarship Fund**: $1,500 provides an annual scholarship to a student from Richmond for one year of college. In the fall of 2017, scholarships can be awarded in the names of individuals and business donors.

- **College Awareness**: Near Peer Ambassador Program, Richmond Promise Scholar Celebration, Financial Aid & College Knowledge Workshops for students and families

- **College Success**: Summer workshops, on-campus supports, personal outreach and coaching

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS!

INDIVIDUAL AND BUSINESS DONORS

JEFFREY BUTTERFIELD
MECHANICS BANK
POINT RICHMOND BUSINESS ASSOCIATION
TRAVIS CREDIT UNION
ALLEN UZZELL

GET INVOLVED

Donate to the Richmond Promise Scholarship Fund

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

Become a Champion
Officially endorse the Richmond Promise and contribute programmatic resources for Richmond Promise students
WHAT THE RICHMOND PROMISE MEANS TO SCHOLARS:

“As a low-income first-generation student, the Richmond Promise scholarship will be a great service of support on my journey to college.”

“It means my city supporting my endeavors for higher education and for me to use what I learn to create opportunities for those from Richmond as well.”

“The Richmond Promise makes my future look brighter!”

“Richmond Promise is the opportunity for students of color to break the two-fold of system barriers and ‘isms’ in education.”

“In my opinion, Richmond Promise means to me that my city has faith in its community that we will be successful, and will promise to be there to help.”

“Richmond to me means progress. The city is getting better and so am I.”

SUPPORT TODAY: RICHMONDPROMISE.ORG/DONATE