

**RICHMOND**

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**2022**

**ANNUAL  
REPORT**

**PROMISE**

## A Note from Our Executive Director



**Christopher  
Whitmore**

Dear Community,

It is with great pleasure that my colleagues and I present you with Richmond Promise's 2022 Annual Report.

Like many people and organizations around the world, 2022 presented Richmond Promise an opportunity to reconnect with our community in ways that we had not fully been able to since the start of the pandemic.

The year marked the return of in-person College Access programming in high schools which played an important role in increasing financial aid completion rates after a decline during COVID-19. We held our first in-person Scholar Celebration since 2019 and sent students off to college with a crowd of community members cheering them on. And we returned to college campuses to engage with our Scholars and key campus partners who help our students succeed in higher education.

While 2022 was the year that we returned to important in-person work, it was also a year filled with new ventures and opportunities. We hosted our first-ever 5k Fun Run which attracted hundreds of Scholars, families, and supporters who helped us raise awareness for our work. Our organization launched a new partnership with the City of Richmond's Employment and Training Department that helps Richmond Promise alumni gain career-building experience by working in city offices. We also made important investments in our organization's future by creating several new staff positions that will help build our public relations presence, expand fundraising and development initiatives, strengthen our internal operations, and deepen our impact and engagement with students.

Personally, 2022 was significant because it was my first full year as executive director of our organization. As Richmond Promise's new leader, I dedicated much of my time to learning about the students we serve and the higher education community that we are a part of. Some of my favorite moments of the year include calling students on the phone to introduce myself as the new executive director, hosting group dinners with students to get to know about them and their experiences in college, and connecting with higher education partners locally and around the country.

I remain incredibly grateful to serve Richmond Promise Scholars everyday, and for the opportunity to advance higher education access and success in my hometown. I hope you enjoy reading our updates from 2022.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Whitmore', written in a cursive style.

**Christopher Whitmore**

*Executive Director, Richmond Promise*

## A Note from a Scholar



**OZMAR  
HUERTA**

### To the Richmond Promise Community,

My name is Ozmar Huerta. I am currently a third-year student at George Washington University in Washington, D.C., where I am pursuing a B.A. in Political Science with a dual minor in Spanish and Philosophy. In taking a leap and leaving the only home I've ever known –Richmond, CA– and traveling across the country to begin to lay the foundations for a career in politics and law, I have come to learn how difficult and isolating the transition into post-secondary life can be, as well as how incessantly the possibility of failure looms. In confronting my fears, I have come to appreciate the friends, family, and support programs that form my support system and allow me to take a chance on myself. I've grown to value and admittedly miss the people, places, and experiences that made Richmond my home; I now relish the familiarity of it.

Challenging oneself is an inherent part of the human condition. It keeps us alive, prompting us to stay put for our safety, away from a world that might frighten and unsettle us. Often, however, that challenge is the impetus that pushes us to leave our comfort zone. It encourages us to relinquish the security of the known and optimistically confront the potential of the unknown in the pursuit of something better.

Every day, countless talented and inspiring youth take a chance on themselves. We take chances in where we go to school, what we study, and where we work.

These proverbial gambles, big or small, require a tremendous amount of courage, especially for someone who isn't even legally old enough to gamble. To these individuals, I extend my heartfelt congratulations. Whether you've ventured far from home for college or stayed close by, whether you've attended a vocational program, a two-year college, or a four-year university—whatever you've done to bravely choose your goals—congratulations. **Every day, you're proving to the world, to your predecessors, and to yourself that you did it, and you can do it again. Congratulations on breaking the mold and showing the world that a kid from Richmond can be a scholar and can accomplish whatever they set their mind to.**

Thank you to all the people who have taken a chance on me before I could take a chance on myself. To my loving and intelligent mother, who selflessly left her home country and committed her entire working life to provide my siblings and me the luxury of an education, it is through your sacrifice that I may even dream of a collegiate education. To my teachers, from preschool through high school, thank you for seeing the potential in me that I couldn't see in myself and for guiding me on the path to post-secondary education. To my mentors and peers, thank you for helping shape me into the person I am today. Your perspectives and experiences have left an indelible mark on me, and I carry a piece of you in all my endeavors. Finally, thank you to the amazing team at Richmond Promise! It is through your financial support, robust mentorship, informative workshops, comprehensive resources, and endless encouragement that I am able to make my college dream a reality. From the bottom of my heart, thank you to everyone who took a chance on me, it is because of all of you that I have been able to go from the streets of Richmond to the Capitol Rotunda.

Never be afraid to take a chance on yourself. Remember always, "Si se Puede, Si se Pudo."

**Ozmar Y. Huerta**

**George Washington University, 2025**

## COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY

- Richmond Promise Scholarship
- Financial Aid Completion

## COLLEGE PREPAREDNESS

- Early College & Career Awareness Curriculum
- Peer-led Summer & College Success Workshops

## SCHOLAR SUCCESS

- College Partnerships
- Coaching & Personalized Digital Support
- Peer-led Campus Networks
- Weekly Office Hours & Live Texting Support
- Resiliency Fund

## CAREER & ALUMNI SUCCESS

- Paid Student Leadership Opportunities
- Career Mentoring & Networking
- Career Hub
- Alumni Association

# OUR MISSION

**Richmond Promise aims to ensure all students in Richmond excel to and through higher education, reach their career goals, and become leaders in their community.**

Richmond Promise is a community-wide postsecondary access and success initiative that is actively building a college graduating culture in Richmond, California. We believe that all Richmond students should have the opportunity to develop their skills and reach their full potential, regardless of race, family income, or background. That belief is central to our work and guides us everyday.

Our efforts are driven by the desire to meaningfully and intentionally support Richmond youth to help them achieve their dreams. Richmond Promise engages with students as early as middle and high school — facilitating college awareness and access programming in classrooms — to and through their postsecondary education, and as they prepare to enter the workforce. Our wraparound services include: financial aid and admissions workshops, an annual \$1,500 scholarship (renewable for up to six years of a student's postsecondary education), college success programming that incorporates one-on-one coaching and access to on-campus support to help ensure they persist to earn their degrees and certificates, basic students needs supports, and mentorship and paid internship opportunities to build professional skills and develop their resumes.

By creating pathways to and through college, we are working toward a future where Richmond supports its young people to learn, grow, and thrive as positive leaders who can excel in the world and give back to the community that shaped them.

# Staff

**Executive Director:** Christopher Whitmore

**Chief Operating Officer:** Anjanine Bonet

**Director of Programs & Partnerships:** Miguel Molina

**Director of Development:** Maya Kamath

**Director of Communications:** Ben Enos

**Scholar Success Manager:** Dariana Zermeño

**College Access Manager:** Minhal Hanif

**Scholar Success Coordinator:** Celina Espinoza

## Board of Directors

**AnnMarie Baines**, Founder & Executive Director, The Practice Space

**Nicole M. Barnett**, Chief Operating Officer/Chief Nurse Executive, Kaiser Foundation Hospital/Health Plan, Richmond Medical Center

**Jeff Butler**, Senior Vice President, Commercial Banking, City National Bank

**Linsi Crain**, Public Affairs Manager, Chevron Richmond Refinery

**Shasa Curl**, City Manager, City of Richmond

**Ilaf Esuf**, Senior Field Representative, Assemblymember Buffy Wicks

**Dr. Kenneth "Chris" Hurst**, Superintendent, West Contra Costa Unified School District

**Michael Littleton**, former Senior Vice President of Finance, Gu Energy Labs (Board Chair)

**Mojdeh Mehdizadeh**, Executive Vice Chancellor of Education & Technology, Contra Costa Community College District

**Linda Schmid**, Chief Financial Officer, CSW/Stuber-Stroeh Engineering Group, Inc.

**Ree'shemah Thornton**, Dean of Enrollment Services, Merritt College

# Scholarship Update

We are deeply honored and grateful to have extended the opportunity of joining the Richmond Promise community to over 3,000 Scholars to date! The Richmond Promise Scholarship allows us to directly invest in our Scholars' futures at any not-for-profit two-year college, four-year college, and/or Career Technical Education program in the United States. Our scholarship of \$1,500 per academic year for up to six years may be used to cover any and all costs of college attendance.



In 2022, we awarded

**419 scholarships**

and celebrated a **92% claim rate** following student participation in our summer bridge program.



## What types of support are Scholars receiving?



Richmond Promise Scholarship



Wraparound Support

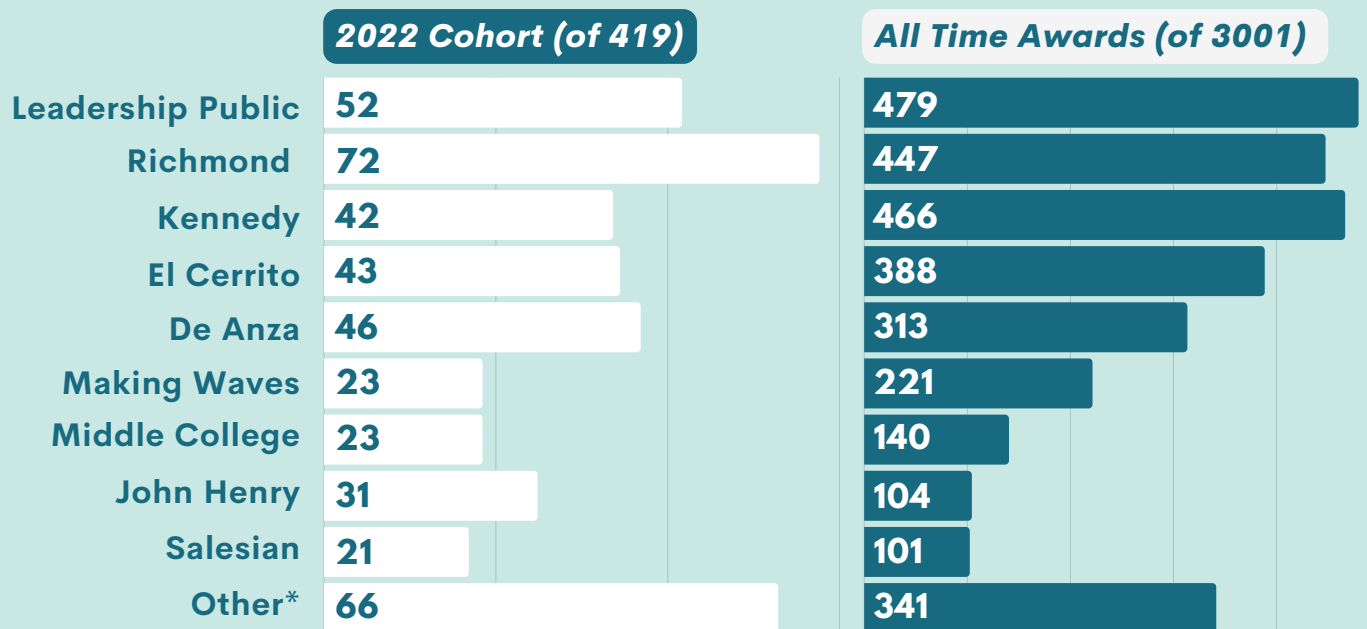


Technology Access & Connectivity



Individualized Coaching

# Richmond Promise Awardees by High School: 2022 Cohort & All Time Awards\*



\*List highlights schools with more than 20 RP awardees represented in 2022's cohort. Other 2022 high schools include:

- Aspire Richmond
- Berkeley High School
- Gateway to College
- Golden Gate Community School
- Hercules High School
- Pinole Valley High School
- Summit K-2
- Summit Tamalpais
- Sylvester Greenwood Academy
- Vista High School

**64%** are the first in their family to pursue higher education.

**91%** identify as Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color:

- 65% Latinx Identifying
- 14% Black/African American Identifying
- 12% Asian Identifying



# College Access

## Turning Classroom-Based Engagement into Results



Working directly in the classroom is a key part of Richmond Promise's approach to college access. The arrival of **College Access & Scholarship Operations** coordinator Minh Hanif (an RP alum herself) in 2022 allowed RP to return to **100% in-person programming for the 2022-23 school year**, and her work helped to yield immediate results as each school that received in-classroom instruction showed an increase in financial aid applications completed.

"The process for applying to college and financial aid seems like such a difficult and confusing process that many students don't even think to try. Richmond Promise's presentations and information do a fantastic job at explaining the process to the students in a way that is both accessible and relatable."

- Kennedy High teacher and RP partner Tanner Kamphefner.

### % of students RP serves who completed their financial aid requirements

(comparison between 2022-23 and 2021-22 school years)



	2022-23	2021-22
De Anza	79%	66%
El Cerrito	78%	58%
Kennedy	75%	58%
Sylvester Greenwood	73%	20%
Richmond	69%	63%



## Our Near-Peer Model in Action



# 192

**Students  
hired to date**  
to facilitate Near  
Peer Ambassador  
programming

" [The Near-Peer Ambassador program] gave me a lot of skills for the jobs I was applying for. That was a key reason as to why I landed the job that I'm going into, because I was already talking to my managers and sometimes that can be really difficult. Getting out of college, you don't have a lot of experience under your belt. Richmond Promise gave me a lot of that experience that helped me learn."

*Vanessa Crisostomo Garcia  
2022 RP Near-Peer Ambassador  
Program Assistant, Contra Costa College  
Welcome Center*

# 325

**1-on-1 Coaching  
Appointments**

**hosted by our Summer  
Associates alongside new  
Scholars to ensure  
understanding of higher  
education resources**

"I came back for a second year in the Richmond Promise Summer Associates program because of the comfortable work environment and my interest in working in education and supporting students. **The program was able to give me 1-on-1 communication skills through peer coaching along with meeting and working with people who wish to support the community I come from.**"

*Jason Earley  
2022 RP Summer Associate*



# Scholar Success

## College Promise 2.0 Update

As part of the College Promise 2.0 Initiative, Richmond Promise partnered with the Kresge Foundation to support equitable postsecondary pathways at community colleges. **This led RP to partner with the Contra Costa College First Year Experience (FYE) program and provide support to 73 students, 65 of which are part of the Kresge grant.**

*As part of this partnership, Richmond Promise and Contra Costa College staff collaborated to provide:*



Bi-weekly study sessions



In-class support for English & Math



Monthly campus resource workshops



One-on-one coaching



Beyond12 virtual coaching



Computers that ensure tech access

As a result of this partnership, **81% of participating Richmond Promise students completed the FYE program with an average unit count of 18.4 and an average grade-point average (GPA) of 2.88.**

89% of those students, as well as 94% of the Kresge cohort, persisted the following term.

## RP College Days

In the fall of 2022, Richmond Promise established College Days that featured campus visits to nearby colleges and universities. The team visited Scholars and campus partners at UC Berkeley, UC Merced, Berkeley City College, Contra Costa College, Diablo Valley College, San Jose State University, and San Francisco State University. Through College Days, we build community with Scholars, partners, and on-campus department heads. Campus visits include presentations by transfer centers, Educational Opportunity Programs (EOP), financial aid departments, tutoring services, and learning communities.



*"During my time as a member of the Richmond Promise Scholar Board, I aspire to help uplift marginalized and disadvantaged students in my community by ensuring they have a chance to achieve academic and career success."*

*Havah Aisha Isray*

## The RP Scholar Board

provides essential feedback on the Scholar experience and recommends programming opportunities from the Scholar point of view. Members serve two-year terms and meet regularly with RP staff.

## 2022 Members

- Judy Binalinbing, UC Berkeley
- Ammar Iqbal, UC Davis
- Havah Aisha Isray, UC Berkeley
- Marc Anthony Lopez, Fresno State
- Maria Montejano, Contra Costa College
- Ricardo Rivas, Berkeley City College
- Ryan Saechao, USC
- Megan Sanchez, UC San Diego
- Jonathan Valenzuela Mejia, UCLA

## Wraparound Support All Year Long

### Summer Bridge

Preparing Scholars to join the routines of higher education takes place through Summer Bridge programming. Richmond Promise-specific workshops and peer mentor conversations address essential document submission, RP resource awareness, financial aid, and more.

### Tech Exchange

Technological access serves as a core component of RP's basic needs support system. Participating Scholars are guaranteed device and connectivity access via 4CD's loaner program and services from RP's partnership with local tech-equity focused nonprofit Tech Exchange. **During the 2022-23 school year, 55 computers were provided to students who needed them.**

### Health Career Connection

**Richmond Promise collaborated with Health Career Connection to place 10 students into paid public health internships in Richmond.** Participants served for 10 weeks and provided support to organizations like Lifelong Medical Care Center, Healthy Contra Costa and Rotacare Clinic.

# Career & Alumni Success

## Meet RP Mentor David Padilla & Mentee Ramón Zermeño

*As a mentor, what have you learned and/or gained from your mentee while participating in the program?*

**David:** As a mentor, I have gained invaluable insights from my mentee while participating in the program. Ramón's passion and determination to better his community inspire me and reinforce the importance of providing mentorship to early career professionals. Through my participation, I rediscovered the joy of mentoring and the impact it creates for both mentors and mentees.

*From your perspective as a mentee, how impactful can a mentorship program be for Richmond Promise Scholars?*

**Ramón:** A mentorship program like this one can be impactful to Scholars because it can help them grow as they transition into their career life. This program helped me find balance between my career and my personal life. It can also help Scholars enhance different skills such as building your resume, knowing how to build a resume, and tailoring it to the job you are looking for, among other things!

*Why would you recommend an RP Scholar or professional engage in the mentorship program?*

**David:** Because of the lasting impact that this program has on participants, I highly recommend that community leaders, young professionals, and industry leaders join the program as mentors. This is an incredibly rewarding experience that allows you to give back, inspire, and join a larger effort towards positive community change. In doing so, you have the opportunity to help cultivate the future generation of Richmond leaders.

**Ramón:** This mentorship program helped me realize that some of my weaknesses can be refined and tweaked to become strengths. It also helps you create a bigger network, and whether you use that for your career goals or just to get to know other people, this program definitely allows you to use your voice to engage with like-minded people in Richmond who all want to succeed and bring others with them!



## Interested in becoming a mentor?

Join an incredible, 11-month hybrid model program designed to support and guide **Richmond Promise Scholars**. Through monthly virtual connects, our professional mentors offer Scholars a new perspective, support, and advice as they navigate college.

Email [dzermeño@richmondpromise.org](mailto:dzermeño@richmondpromise.org) for more information.

# 95%

of Mentors & Mentees said they would recommend the RP Mentor Program to a friend

# 90%

of matches intended to connect even after the program ended

Most popular career interests among our Scholar population:

## Health & Medicine

## Business

## Biological & Physical Sciences

## Engineering & Computer Sciences



## Lifting Richmond's Next Generation of Leaders



In 2022, Richmond Promise entered into a new partnership with Richmond YouthWORKS that places Richmond Promise alumni and Scholars into local job opportunities. The job placement partnership will have an initial duration of three years and will include interview technique workshops, employment opportunity workshops, and other support services. Through the program, Richmond Promise Alumni have interned for the Richmond City Council, Richmond Fire Department, RichmondWorks and the City Attorney's Office.

# 2022 Operating Budget

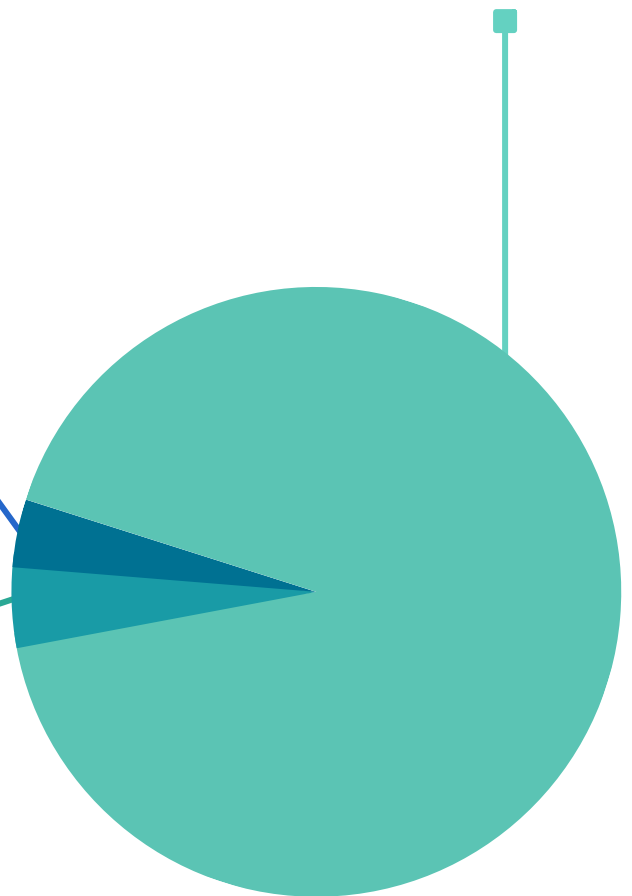
Below is a breakdown of Richmond Promise's 2022 organizational budget, allocated by expenditure category. This budget was developed by RP staff and approved by the Board of Directors in December 2021. Audited financials for 2022 will be published on our website in the fall of 2023.

**Total Budget:**  
**\$3,729,642**

**92%**  
**Scholarship &  
Program Costs**

**4%**  
**Management &  
General Operations**

**4%**  
**Fundraising**





**We are deeply grateful to all of our 2022 supporters:**

### **Individual Donors**

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Chamberlin Education  
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City of Richmond -  
Department of Children &  
Youth  
City of Richmond -  
Environmental &  
Community Investment  
Agreement*

*Flora Family Foundation  
Gap Inc.  
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Hellman Foundation  
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KNN Public Finance Charitable  
Fund  
Levin Richmond Terminal Corp  
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The Blackbaud Giving Fund  
The Dido Fund  
The Kresge Foundation  
The San Francisco Foundation  
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West Contra Costa Public  
Education Fund*

**Thank you!**

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**Our Scholars are  
leaders who will  
shape Richmond for  
generations to come.**

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