



GREAT EXPECTATIONS

SUCCESS STORY

Silvia Yamileth Garcia graduated from John Tyler Community College in May 2015. She was in the inaugural class of Great Expectations Student Leaders and is now attending the University of Richmond on a full scholarship with plans to enter the medical field. Silvia credits coach Vicky Muensterman for helping her to reach her dreams.



Great Expectations is an initiative of the Virginia Community College System and funded by the Virginia Foundation for Community College Education.

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2015-2018

STRATEGIC PLAN



Great Expectations
FOSTERING POWERFUL CHANGE

What is Great Expectations?

Great Expectations Education Program for Foster Youth (GE) helps youth who have experienced foster care gain access to a community college education, achieve success in college, and transition successfully to living independently. Campus coaches work closely with students to help them enroll and succeed in Virginia's Community Colleges.

History

In 2007, VFCCE Board member Mark Fried offered a \$1 million challenge grant to begin Great Expectations with the idea of improving the outcomes for youth who had experienced foster care. Without interventions, this population may have dire outcomes, including incarceration and homelessness. The Midwest study of former foster youth found that by age 26, 46% had been incarcerated, and 37% had become homeless by age 24.

Only 8% had obtained a college degree. Great Expectations began in 2008 at five colleges with a goal of eventually reaching students at all 23 community colleges. GE served 120 students in its first year. By 2011, the program had been expanded to 15 colleges and had raised over \$6 million. By 2015, Great Expectations had served 3,000 students and was in place at 18 colleges.

Recruitment

By the end of fiscal year 2018, Great Expectations will be serving half of all eligible foster youth in the Commonwealth (approximately 2,500 annually).

- * GE staff will establish a formal referral program with high school career coaches to increase high school student participation by 10%.
- * GE and IA staff will launch a social media campaign to communicate with current and potential students, friends, the Virginia Department of Social Services, and donors, increasing current contact by 20%.

- * GE staff and GE coaches will establish a social media campaign at the system office and at each college as a method of communicating with current and potential students, to include Facebook, Instagram, and/or Twitter.
- * GE staff will develop a Great Expectations app.
- * GE staff will pursue becoming providers of independent living services with the Virginia Department of Social Services.

Retention

By the end of fiscal year 2018, Great Expectations students will have retention rates comparable to non-system involved community college students, raising fall to spring rates from 64% to 72% and fall to fall rates from 42% to 51%.

- * GE staff and coaches will implement a summer bridge program to increase retention of students from high school to 1st year and from 1st year to 2nd year at no fewer than 5 colleges.
- * GE coaches will use social media to communicate with students, enrolled and not enrolled, via Facebook, Instagram, and/or Twitter.
- * GE coaches will use emergency funds and incentives to help retain students.
- * GE staff will promote and support colleges to hire Great Expectations students for work study positions.

Student Success

By the end of fiscal year 2018, Great Expectations students will receive 20% more credentials than in FY15.

- * All GE coaches will use the early alert system at each college to encourage early intervention when students experience academic difficulties.
- * GE coaches will use tutors to help struggling students, for developmental courses as well as general courses at no fewer than 3 schools.

- * GE staff will grow the student leadership program, training at least 12 student leaders per year.
- * GE staff will create an alumni network in order to support new GE students and expand the program.

Data

By the end of fiscal year 2018, the program staff will have accurate and consistent access to data.

- * GE staff will put regular data collection processes in place.
- * GE staff will create data sharing and recruitment agreements with the Virginia Department of Social Services.
- * GE staff will put a case management system in place.

Sustainability

By the end of fiscal year 2018, Great Expectations will be serving students at all 23 community colleges with full-time coaches.

- * VCCS Great Expectations and Institutional Advancement staff will work together to develop GE programs at DSLCC, VWCC, RCC, ESCC, and PDCCC.
- * VCCS IA staff will coordinate with college IA to create fundraising plans for each school.
- * VCCS staff will formalize Great Expectations policies and guidelines and publish an updated procedure manual.
- * VCCS GE and IA staff will strategically pursue public and private funds for which the program is eligible.
- * College Great Expectations staff will develop relationships with their regional Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act representatives through presentations, program alignment, shared clients, and other opportunities as appropriate.