



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Fifth Annual First-Generation College Celebration to honor
first-generation student and alumni accomplishments on November 8**

Washington, DC (November 1, 2021) - On November 8, 2021, the Council for Opportunity in Education (COE) and the Center for First-generation Student Success will lead the national efforts of the fifth annual [First-Generation College Celebration](#). This date marks the 56th anniversary of the signing of the 1965 Higher Education Act, which has helped millions of first-generation students persist to degree completion.

“The First-Generation College Celebration is an annual opportunity to celebrate the outstanding accomplishments of first-gen students, faculty, staff, and alumni,” said Maureen Hoyler, president of [COE](#). “At the same time, we can work together with K-12 and higher education institutions, non-profits, corporations, and interested stakeholders to bring awareness to the needs of this population.”

Launched by COE and the [Center for First-generation Student Success](#), an initiative of NASPA and The Suder Foundation, in 2017, the First-Generation College Celebration (FGCC) has united hundreds of college campuses across the country; holding rallies, panel discussions, listening sessions, and more in recognition of their first-generation students and alumni.

At the national level, COE and the Center for First-generation Student Success will co-host “A National Celebration Centering First-gen Voices,” featuring a panel of first-gen students and graduates sharing insight into their experience. This event is taking place on Monday, November 8, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. ET, and will be moderated by Dr. Quintin B. Bullock, president of the Community College of Allegheny County located in Allegheny Pennsylvania. [Registration](#) is free and open to all.

“The First-Generation College Celebration brings attention to the accomplishments of a population representing one-third of all currently enrolled college students,” said Dr. Sarah E. Whitley, assistant vice president of the Center for First-generation Student Success. “Not only that, but advancing an asset-based national narrative on first-generation student experiences and outcomes is one way to help first-gen students understand the tremendous strengths they bring to our communities.”

To learn more about the First-Generation College Celebration, view the Media Kit, or see highlights from past celebrations, visit the National First-Generation College Celebration [page](#). You can also track and view activities and events from across the country on social media by searching for #CelebrateFirstGen.

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ABOUT THE COUNCIL FOR OPPORTUNITY IN EDUCATION

The Council for Opportunity in Education (COE) is a nonprofit organization, established in 1981, dedicated to furthering the expansion of college opportunities for low-income, first-generation students, and students with disabilities in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., the Pacific Islands, and Puerto Rico. Its membership includes more than 1,000 colleges and agencies. Through its numerous membership services, the Council works in conjunction with colleges, universities, and agencies to help low-income students enter college and graduate. Over a million low-income students and students with disabilities each year receive college access and retention services through our member colleges and agencies.

ABOUT THE CENTER FOR FIRST-GENERATION STUDENT SUCCESS

The Center is the premier source of evidence-based practices, professional development, and knowledge creation for the higher education community to advance the success of first-generation students. Based in Washington, DC, the Center aims to acknowledge the intersectional experiences of first-generation college students. It offers an outlet for sharing cutting-edge research and current media conversations, opportunities for engagement through online learning, conferences, and events, and access to a bevy of programs and services intended to improve first-generation initiatives across higher education.

ABOUT NASPA

NASPA is a member-centered association supporting a diverse and passionate network of 15,000 professionals and 1,200 institutions across the globe. It is the professional home for the field of student affairs and is dedicated to cultivating student success in collaboration with the missions of its institutional members, a network of colleges and universities representing every sector of higher education.