

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT:**

Bill Barker (NASPA)

[bbarker@naspa.org](mailto:bbarker@naspa.org)

(202) 719-1188



## **Center for First-generation Student Success releases comprehensive summary of research on first-gen students**

**Washington, DC (December 6, 2021)** - The [Center for First-generation Student Success](#), an initiative of NASPA and The Suder Foundation, announced the release of annotated bibliography summarizing available research on first-generation students from 2008 to 2019.

“The purpose of this annotated bibliography was to comb through a decade of material—from traditional research to nontraditional channels like social media and popular culture—to help us figure out how we got to our current understanding of first-generation students and graduates,” said Dr. Amy Baldwin, the University of Central Arkansas’ former director of student transitions, current senior lecturer of academic success and literacy, and co-lead author of the bibliography.

“We entered this project with a central question, ‘How did we get here?’ and found that, while there is extensive research and practice related to the first-generation student experience, there is so much more we can and should be studying and sharing.”

[An Annotated Bibliography on First-generation College Students: Research from 2008-2019](#)

examines hundreds of entries, placing each into chapters centering on eleven topics: career readiness; classroom teaching and pedagogy; graduate and professional school students; intersections of identity; low-income & working-class students; student refugees; mass media and popular culture; memoirs and fiction; parents and families; social and cultural capital; and student success. Each chapter contains both a summary of the research or other material as well as recommendations for future research.

“We have been able to identify a shift from a deficit-based lens to strengths-based approaches to the research as well as a recognition that first-generation students are not monolithic. And, we have discovered, much remains to be done,” said Dr. La’Tonya Rease Miles, co-lead author and dean of student affairs at Menlo College. “Our hope is that this project sets the tone and tenor for future research. Our goal is to usher in a new era of thought leadership, strengths-based research, and true innovation that provides systemic change that truly recognizes, celebrates, and supports first-generation students on campuses.”

“The annotated bibliography provides a timely and accessible resource for higher education practitioners and scholars, non-profit professionals, and all advocates of first-generation student

success,” said Dr. Sarah E. Whitley, assistant vice president with the Center for First-generation Student Success, NASPA. “Enhancing access to existing and emerging scholarship about first-generation student identities and experiences was a driving factor in this project and one that will foster deeper understanding across our community. We are grateful for the leadership of Dr. Amy Baldwin and Dr. La'Tonya Rease Miles, along with the contributions of Dr. Whitnee D. Boyd, Dr. Dawn L. Bruner, Dr. Stephanie M. Foote, and Mike Gutierrez.”

The annotated bibliography adds to a growing list of evidence-based research and reporting from the Center for First-generation Student Success. Among the recent publications:

- [First-generation Student Success: A landscape analysis of programs and services at four-year institutions](#)
- [First-generation students in community and technical colleges: A national exploration of institutional support practices](#)
- [National Data Fact Sheets on First-generation College Students](#)
- [National Data Facts Sheets on First-generation College Graduate and Career Preparation](#)
- [Journal of First-generation Student Success](#)

###

## **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.