Dear CSN Community:

Happy May! This month we have some exciting news to share with all of you.

CSN Congratulates all recent graduates! 🎓

CSN offers ABC Advocacy Program, celebrates CSN End of Year Celebration and EY Awards, and more!
Read more below to explore with us & stay informed about upcoming events and opportunities!

CSN End of Year Celebration and EY Awards

CSN was thrilled to celebrate FGLI Students on Saturday, April 23rd, for the CSN End of Year Celebration and EY Awards Ceremony. Through the
generous support of EY, CSN asked FGLI college students to write a short essay or send a video about what being first generation means to them and/or what they have gotten out of being part of the CSN network. We had many wonderful applicants from a broad range of Philadelphia-area colleges, including some from our new virtual Consortium Chapter. Many students spoke about how CSN helped them gain confidence, even motivating them to go on to apply for competitive scholarships and internships. Students also talked about the power of mentorship, the visibility they felt being part of a campus chapter, and all that they had learned about leadership through CSN programs. Students also emphasized how much they wanted to give back to FGLI students and the CSN community when they become professionals.

While all the students had strong applications, the final winners were Angelica Pinon (first prize); Cheryl Zhang, Caspar Nguyen, and Ekram Ibrahim. Here are some short quotes from their submissions.
“I strongly believe in my mission to help first generation students, to end generational trauma and to inspire and to lead as a proud CSN leader.” – Angelica Pinon, First Prize Winner

“Being part of the Collective Success Network Mentorship Program meant being part of a community that was dedicated to my success and wellbeing. I look forward to serving as a mentor when I become a professional.” – Ekram Ibrahim
“For the first time, I didn’t feel alone in my journey to reach my goals. I learned how to be an effective leader. I truly believe that I left behind a legacy and it started with Temple First and CSN.” – Cheryl Zhang

“I became part of the founding leadership of Drexel’s chapter. With luck, assurance, and well-intentioned trouble-making, I hope that we continue to highlight the stories of being a first-generation student.” – Caspar Nguyen
The Collective Success Network (CSN) supports and empowers first-generation and/or low-income (FGLI) college students to achieve their potential by providing mentoring, professional development, networking, and leadership opportunities.

We are excited to announce that through the generous support of RSM we are offering a new program designed to support FGLI students as they transition from college to the professional workplace. No matter what career they are aspiring to, navigating the workplace can be especially difficult for FGLI students who do not have role models and networks in place to support them. Given that FGLI students are more likely to be people of color, immigrants, and ELLs, it is also not unusual for them to feel isolated, to be the subject of racial or ethnic stereotyping, and/or to experience imposter syndrome at the start of their careers. It’s also hard to find your comfort zone as you serve as an advocate in the workplace. How do you define and support the issues you care most about? How do you facilitate crucial conversations, when emotions run high? How do you advance DEI while maintaining a work-life balance and professional stance? How do you use feedback for growth and inspiration? How do you get people to listen to you when you speak up?
CSN’s ABC Program is designed to help FGLI students learn to advocate for themselves and their peers while learning about issues of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in the workplace. The six-week program includes sessions on:

- Activist, Ally or Something In-Between: What does Advocacy Mean?
- Belonging, Owning Your Voice & Utilizing Your Leadership Skills
- Understanding and Defining the Issues You Care About
- Being an Advocate in the Workplace: Facilitating Crucial Conversations
- Appreciating the Big and Small Wins: Feedback & Assessing Progress
- Writing Policy Briefs and Public Speaking

Sessions run virtually every Thursday, 6:30 – 8:00 PM from July 7 – August 18, 2022
Students can earn a $500 stipend by completing the course! Register before June 15th at: bit.ly/CSNAdvocacy2022

MLCC Opportunity Knocks: Acing your Virtual Interview

Join The Conversation
May 11, 2022
4:30-6pm
Zoom Video Conferencing
Making a good impression while virtual can present unique challenges. Learn how you can highlight your skills to employers and leave an impression.

RSVP To: Lissa@LissaHilsee.com

The Main Line Chamber of Commerce welcomes students to join on May 11th, 4:30-6 pm to hear from hiring managers on the topic of Acing Your Virtual Interview while also connecting with employers.

To RSVP, email Lissa@lissahilsee.com

Welcoming Keith Willis to the CSN Advisory Board
Keith is the President and Founder of Core Management Training, a Management Training and Consulting company working with a variety of clients. He has been a successful coach and pharmaceutical executive for over 25 years working with several pharmaceutical companies. His experience includes sales, sales leadership, operations, and sales training in diverse therapeutic areas.

Keith is a past board member of the Legacy of Love Foundation, a former Scout Leader and currently serves as Mentor for American Corporate Partners, helping service members transition to Corporate America.

Keith is a graduate of Northern Illinois University with a BA in Sociology and was an ROTC Distinguished Military Graduate. He served in the United States Army for six years where he reached the rank of Captain!

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Welcoming Rick Horner to the CSN Advisory Board
Rick Horner was awarded his Associates Degree from Bucks County Community College about a year after an honorable discharge from the United States Army. Rick then began his working career, going on to be a successful salesperson and effective leader in various industries (electronics, bedding, and computers, to name a few). While learning valuable experiences as both leader and a follower, Rick discovered improvisational theater (improv for short). Improv is the art of performing without a script and is a mindset that encourages agreement and collaboration, empathy, and diversity.

Rick has 25 years of experience teaching, performing, directing, and coaching improv to human beings of all types. He has taught many classes and workshops both online and in Philadelphia and Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. Rick founded the improv incubator fifteen years ago. The improv incubator is a weekly evening of improv exercises and games for performers of any level of experience. At the improv incubator, folks of all kinds meet, learn, and play together. Rick has also developed, produced, and organized improv festivals as well. Rick studied improv at The Second City Training Center in Chicago. Rick has studied improv, both in-person and virtually with incredibly talented improvisers: David Razowsky, Keith Johnstone, Anne Libera, Joe Bill, Ali Farahnakian, Tim O'Malley, Liz Allen, Ari Voukydis, Michael Gellman, Deana Creiss, Chris Gethard, and Matt Besser, among many others.
Rick was awarded his Bachelors Degree from Delaware Valley University in 2020 and is eager to use his Communications skills. In 2021, Rick volunteered his time to CSN in the Pilot program, by leading a session using the combination of Rick's skills and talents as a leader and an improv facilitator. The session was both interactive and fun and provided a safe space for CSN students to explore leadership styles and practice working together as a team. Rick volunteered again in 2022, again facilitating an improv session that gathered the students together as a group and focused on addressing some of the aspects of being a leader and advocating for equity, diversity and inclusion. Rick is dedicated to advancing the art form of improv. He also really likes Planet of the Apes.