

Stories of first generation college students celebrated in online story slam

Written by

Wednesday, 02 April 2014 14:52

College Possible, an organization working in the Twin Cities and across the country to coach low-income students to and through college, launched "First Person" last week, an online story project focusing on low-income first-generation college students. Highlighting the unique barriers overcome by these students and the community-wide importance of their contributions, stories from every stage of the college journey are being collected. The stories are shared on CollegePossible.org and with nonprofit Center for Student Opportunity's *I'm First* project.

"The widespread impact of these trailblazers is too often unrecognized," said Jim McCorkell, College Possible CEO and first-generation college graduate. "These are not just feel-good stories about the power of education; these kids have followed the surest path out of poverty and will change their families, communities and the country as a result. Making college accessible to every talented student – regardless of their income or parents' education level – is the right thing to do and it is the only way to maintain our country's strong workforce in a competitive global economy."

"Finding my own path and creating a path for others to follow is what being the first means to me," says Huy, a current student at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities pursuing an engineering degree to provide for his family. "I feel a strong sense of responsibility...It's a lot for me. I was clueless at the beginning, but I've had a lot of help from College Possible along the way."

College Possible's approach is designed to connect students to the college that best matches their abilities. The organization's successful efforts to address "undermatching," the pervasive funneling of low-income, first-generation students to colleges that do not challenge them, is a core element of the program's success.

College Possible received [attention](#) in November when Harvard University released historic results from a study using randomized controls, considered to be the gold standard of evaluation. The findings show that College Possible's approach to unlocking the potential of low-income students is effective and that students served are significantly more likely to enroll in a four-year college. This means that more first-generation, low-income students can graduate with the help of College Possible.

"Dr. Chris Avery's study provides evidence that College Possible is effective in helping students make smart choices in where to enroll," said Dr. William Bowen, former President of Princeton University and current President of the Andrew Mellon Foundation and editor of *College Access: Opportunity or Privilege?*



Stories of first generation college students celebrated in online story slam

Written by

Wednesday, 02 April 2014 14:52

