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FGCB Outreach Testimony

I first found out about FGCB from a family friend. I was struggling with my financial situation and financial aid for college at the time, and my family friend, having had a similar situation in the past, knew exactly what I was going through. Once I explained everything to them they knew exactly who to put me in contact with to get me help that I needed and that was Mr. Fisher, the founder and CEO of FGCB. The day they connected me to Mr. Fisher was the same day that the FAFSA applications were due and Mr. Fisher did not hesitate to reach out immediately. I explained everything to him; I was very honest with the issues I was facing. Mr. Fisher was very understanding and did not judge me at all for those issues. I remember I got his phone call around 8pm that night on March 1st of 2021. He listened to my story and urged me to create an FSA ID and start my application. Mr. Fisher motivated me to get everything done that night. We were calling back and forth with Mr. Fisher's staff providing me with information and answers to the many questions I had during the entire application process. And despite all the technical issues I encountered that night, I managed to get my application submitted before the deadline of 11:59pm.

I would say that I have FGCB to thank for me going to college right now, being a full-time student, living on campus. Through FGCB, I was given the tools and information that helped me apply and receive the financial aid I needed for my education. The program assigned me a Coach, Ms. Cobbs, who helped me by laying out all my options on the table and explaining all of them to me in detail so that I knew what all these options included and what that meant for

me. She helped me decipher my financial awards, which in turn led me to select the university that fit best for me.

FGCB made sure to make me aware of all the opportunities I had. They informed me about the grants and scholarships that were available to me that I was not aware of before. They gave me tips on how to apply for things; how to reach out to the Senators and Delegates in my area to ask for the grants that they were offering to students like me. They showed me how to navigate the MHEC MDCAPS website, etc.

A program like FGCB should continue to receive funding for outreach because there are still many other students like me; helpless and unaware first-generation students with no one before them to guide them, that would really use the support provided at FGCB. Many have the potential and will to go to college but do not have the financial means to do so. And that is when a program like FGCB comes in and saves the day by providing the support that the student needs; mentoring, coaching, guiding them on their journey of transitioning to college. And it doesn't just end there, FGCB still follows up with the student even during their years in college to make sure they are alright and set in the financial situation for college.

I will forever be grateful to FGCB for the help and support that they provided me during the difficult time I was facing while transitioning to college. Being a first-generation student in the United States, I had no one to guide or orient me through this process. I felt utterly alone and helpless and my own parents could not help me even if they tried because they do not know how the education system is in this country. The support I received from FGCB will never be forgotten in my mind. When I was helpless and I didn't know where to go or who to ask for help they were there, genuinely helping me every step of the way. And for that I am forever grateful and I bless the family friend who first introduced me to the program.

