

# Kalos Academy 2021-2022 Annual Report



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## Letter from the President

Dear...

Kalos Academy has had a **successful 2021-2022 academic year focused on helping first-generation, low-income (FGLI) students achieve their college dreams.** Our organization was started during the summer of 2020 in response to the Covid-19 pandemic's particularly adverse effects on some of America's most vulnerable students. **It is with great pride that we continue to make an impact on the lives of our mentees, who have spent the past year learning how to succeed at the "hidden curriculum" of college life outside of their academics.**

I'm thrilled to share Kalos Academy's impact by the numbers this academic year:

- **On average, our mentees completed the equivalent of a one-credit course learning about college's "hidden curriculum" during the 2021-2022 academic year**
- **Grew our number of mentees by 50% compared to the 2020-2021 academic year**
- **Increased our student retention by nearly 10% compared to the 2020-2021 academic year**
- **Exchanged over 2,000 messages via email, text, and GroupMe over the course of the 2021-2022 academic year**

# KALOS ACADEMY Achieve Your College Dreams

As the world transitions to its post-pandemic normal, we're looking ahead to **continue fostering the strong sense of community within Kalos Academy, both online and in-person**. We're also looking forward to a number of improvements in the way our organization serves our mentees:

## 2020 - 2021

1. Piloted **in-person meet-ups** among mentors
2. Created the **Mini-Academy model** to foster a sense of community
3. Built out a robust **"hidden curriculum"** of college life
4. Used GroupMe, text, email, and Zoom to communicate



## 2021 - 2022

1. **Launch in-person kick-off events** for mentors and mentees
2. Decrease the size of Mini Academies to **foster even more engagement**
3. Continue to **adapt curriculum based on mentee feedback**
4. **Transition to a mix of Slack, text, email, and Zoom**

On behalf of all of us at Kalos Academy, we hope you are as excited as we are about our successes in 2021-2022 and for what is to come.

Bri Mirabile, President of Kalos Academy

## Addressing the Unique Challenges FGLI Students Face

First-gen students are nearly 20% less likely to graduate than are non-first-gen students, holding parental income equal.



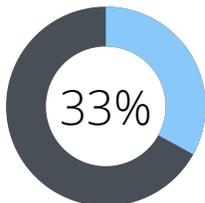
Kalos mentors are trained to help students navigate the challenges of college that could prevent them from graduating.



One in three young people do not have mentors to guide them as they grow up.



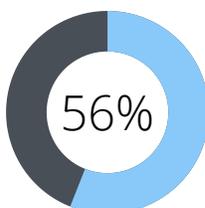
Kalos offers a personal mentoring relationship for each student that signs up.



Six years after they enter postsecondary education, 56% of first-generation college students had not earned any postsecondary credential.



Kalos Academy mentors often matriculate to graduate school and can connect mentees with students at top programs across the country.



## Our Model: Teaching the "Hidden Curriculum" of College Success

Kalos Academy has worked with dedicated college faculty to develop materials illustrating how professors expect students to analyze, argue, write, apply concepts, and think critically -- the sort of expectations that often are not stated explicitly. Mentors help mentees tackle social, institutional, and academic challenges.

During the fall 2021 semester, as our mentees were beginning their college experiences, we focused on **equipping them with tools to build strong foundations of academic success:**

- Four Year Plan
- Essay Planning
- Essay Writing
- Networking for Academic Success



To create a seamless transition into the spring 2022 semester, many of our mentors and leaders **checked in regularly over the winter break.** The second semester was the very first time many students were stepping onto their schools' physical grounds and walking the halls of their classrooms. For the first month, to facilitate an easier transition from online to in-person learning, **our mentors help students understand how to succeed in an in-person school environment.**



## Note Regarding Mental Health, Education, and COVID...

As 2022 began, after two years of the pandemic, **mental health and self care were top-of-mind for Kalos mentees**. As a result, Kalos Academy incorporated these topics into our curriculum and focused our second semester on well-being outside of the classroom. **Through our group chats and mentoring sessions, we started conversations among students and mentors to encourage them to protect and improve their mental state during stressful times.**

The second semester topics were structured to help students **build on their academic excellence to thrive beyond the classroom:**

- First Time on Campus Tips
- Self Care and Mental Health
- Time Management
- Resumes and Internships



As summer drew near, mentees shared that they were interested in **understanding internships and networking opportunities**. Kalos mentors drew from their experiences in the job search process to help their mentees address these challenges. Kalos Academy is working on **expanding its curriculum to focus more on career and networking advice** during the next academic year.

## In Their Own Words: What Kalos Academy Has Meant to Our Mentees

"My mentor was **extremely professional yet friendly and kind**. I expressed my goals and what I wanted for myself and she ensured that I was on the right track while also giving me the space I need to grow and mature. Our relationship went well because she inserted herself as **not only a mentor but as a listening and caring friend.**" - Amanda



Meet Amanda:



Amanda, Wells College

"My Kalos experience was great and my mentor was very helpful and thoughtful. She gave me tips relating to **career, college, and classes.**" - Mya, St. John's University



"[My mentor] listened to me vent about my life problems getting in the way of school, and helped me focus. She even **helped in my transition from working in one industry to another**. She truly gave me a support system that I never thought I needed. I am **forever in debt to her and the courage she gave me.**" - Arianna, Miami Dade College

## Meet Tina:



Tina, St. John's University

"I am having a really enjoyable experience with my Kalos mentor! Whenever I have a problem, my mentor will **take the time** to discuss it with me and help me work things out. I also liked how my mentor is **not afraid to share his experience**, whether it is academic-related, work-related, and more. Although he is still my "mentor", I am also **able to perceive him as a friend and a reliable adult**. Additionally, the resources my mentor provided that can **help me transition from a commuter to living on campus** or around campus, was also very helpful and thoughtful." - Tina



"My Kalos experience has been super helpful for me to keep track of my academic and career goals. With Kalos mentorship, I have been able to **understand my academic expectations** as a sophomore in college as well as **establish myself in the professional world.**"

- Razia, St. John's University

“Through Kalos Academy, **I got to connect with a profession I want to pursue, which made me solidify my choice.** My Kalos mentor helped me **work on time management** after my first semester which helped me **get my grades up** in the second semester.” - Sabrina, Wells College



Meet Gurusha and Antonina:



Gurusha, St. John's University



Antonina, Kalos Mentor

"My mentor was Antonina and she is an absolute delight to work with! We have our weekly meetings and we talk about anything that I'm struggling with and she helps me to the best of her ability. **Having weekly meetings with her has helped me to gain insight on how my future years will look.** She also helped me with my essays and resumes and gave me tips on how to improve them." - Gurusha

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Kalos Academy is a 501(c)3 organization and is entirely community-funded. We are incorporated as a nonprofit in the state of New Jersey as First-Gen Tutoring Org. 990 EZ available upon request.