Extraordinary Achievements

Extraordinary Times

Spring 2020 Update
We are still Making Waves

Dear Making Waves community,

We believe every student deserves access to high-quality educational opportunities and the support and tools to achieve success. We are relentless in this pursuit. Making Waves’ record of impact is a powerful indicator of – and catalyst for – our future. We remain committed to serving as many students as we possibly can. Over the next several years, we are taking our strong results at Making Waves Academy (MWA) and CAP to the next level by further strengthening our college access and success programming. Then, we will strategically expand our reach, and our impact. Our goals are as ambitious as those of our students.

Did you know that Contra Costa County has more low-income students than Oakland and San Francisco combined and an extremely low college persistence rate of just 14%? We see this as an opportunity to invest in the future of Contra Costa County, serving its students through educational and career pathways.

But we cannot do it without the continued support of our contributors and volunteers. This is where you come in. With you by our side, we can gather the resources needed to grow our high-functioning, high-impact public charter school (MWA) and college success program (CAP).

With your help, Making Waves is making a measurable difference in the lives of thousands of underserved and underrepresented students. Our results are unparalleled. We have the potential to generate system-level impact that truly matters and with all of us working together, prepare the next generation of students for success.

From all of us at Making Waves,

Patrick O’Donnell  
CEO, Making Waves Foundation

Melissa Fries  
Executive Director, CAP

Alton B. Nelson, Jr.  
CEO, Making Waves Academy

“"The ability for me to go to college has been one of the greatest experiences of my life. I have been able to meet wonderful people, learn how to be a responsible adult, and pursue a major in which I enjoy learning about.

I want to say thank you so much for your support of CAP, as this program has granted me the financial stability as well as the support in making crucial decisions within my life that has allowed me to grow as a person.”

- Jonas  
University of California, Irvine

CAP Scholars 2019–20

683  
# of CAP students

98%  
Identify as students of color

82%  
First-generation

83%  
Pell-eligible

86%  
On track to graduate in 6 years

97%  
Borrow less than $5K in loans per year

85%  
GPA greater than 2.5

Updated 6/30/2020
Welcoming the incoming class of young scholars to CAP

Making Waves Academy’s 17th Wave

Nearly 100% of MWA 17th Wavers will graduate and have committed to college.

17th Wavers will be attending all nine University of California campuses next year.

Two 17th Wavers have received Regents’ Scholarships to UC Berkeley – a first for MWA!

A 17th Waver received a Posse Scholarship to Boston University – another first for MWA!

CAP Bay Area’s 5th Cohort

96% of Cohort 5 students will be first-generation college students.

Nearly 100% of Cohort 5 students identify as students of color.

100% of Cohort 5 students are Pell-eligible.

3.75 Average cumulative high school GPA for Cohort 5 students.

“[This opportunity] will provide me a coach to guide me through the perplexing pathways of obtaining a college degree, paving the road for me to obtain a higher education. I am determined to work hard because I do not want to continue saying my success is impossible because of financial reasons. I want to pay back the sacrifices my family made escaping Vietnam to pursue the American dream and a better life for me. I aspire to give my all and to not let my low-income status define who I am while letting my leadership, resourcefulness, and resilience do so instead.”

- Warren

Princeton University

Nearly 100% of Cohort 5 students identify as students of color.

Updated 6/30/2020
“I didn’t seriously apply to graduate programs because I just figured someone like me had no chance of being accepted. I got into my top choice for grad school. I finally feel like I’m a thousand steps closer to my goal in life.”

- Onyekachi
Carnegie Mellon University

Graduate School Announcements
More than 50 CAP alumni are pursuing or have completed a graduate degree or higher. Here are some highlights from this year’s enrolling alumni:

Jasmine - Columbia University, Nursing
Alice - Keck Graduate School of the Claremont Colleges, Biology
Nicolai - University of California San Francisco, Pharmacy
Jackie - Stanford University, Education
Enrique - Harvard University, Education Policy and Management
Shaneen - University of Wisconsin-Madison, PhD in Biochemistry
McKenzie - University of La Verne, PsyD
Onyekachi - Carnegie Mellon University, Human–Computer Interaction
Yessenia - University of California San Francisco, Nursing

Employment Highlights
While the pandemic has significantly impacted the economy and job market, Wave-Makers are still receiving job offers that will set them up for a strong career.

Marcos
Electrical Engineer
Gayner Engineers

Mariam
Pre-Doctoral Fellowship
Dept. of Ethics at NIH

Jorge
Software Engineer
Microsoft

Marco
Immigrant Rights Fellow
SIREN

Sally
Financial Analyst
Johnson & Johnson

Flore
Assistant Transit Planner
Union City

Lucy
Software Engineer
Workday

Sophia
Business Analyst
Robert Half International

Kitty
Engineer
IBM

Nancy
Engineer
PG&E

Luis
Police Officer
Calistoga PD

“‘I managed to get to college and I was succeeding academically, but I wanted to make sure that other people had that opportunity too. I realized if people hadn’t helped me as mentors, or through programs like CAP, I wouldn’t have had those opportunities.’

- Jacqueline
2020 Recipient of the President’s Medal, Education, Sacramento State University