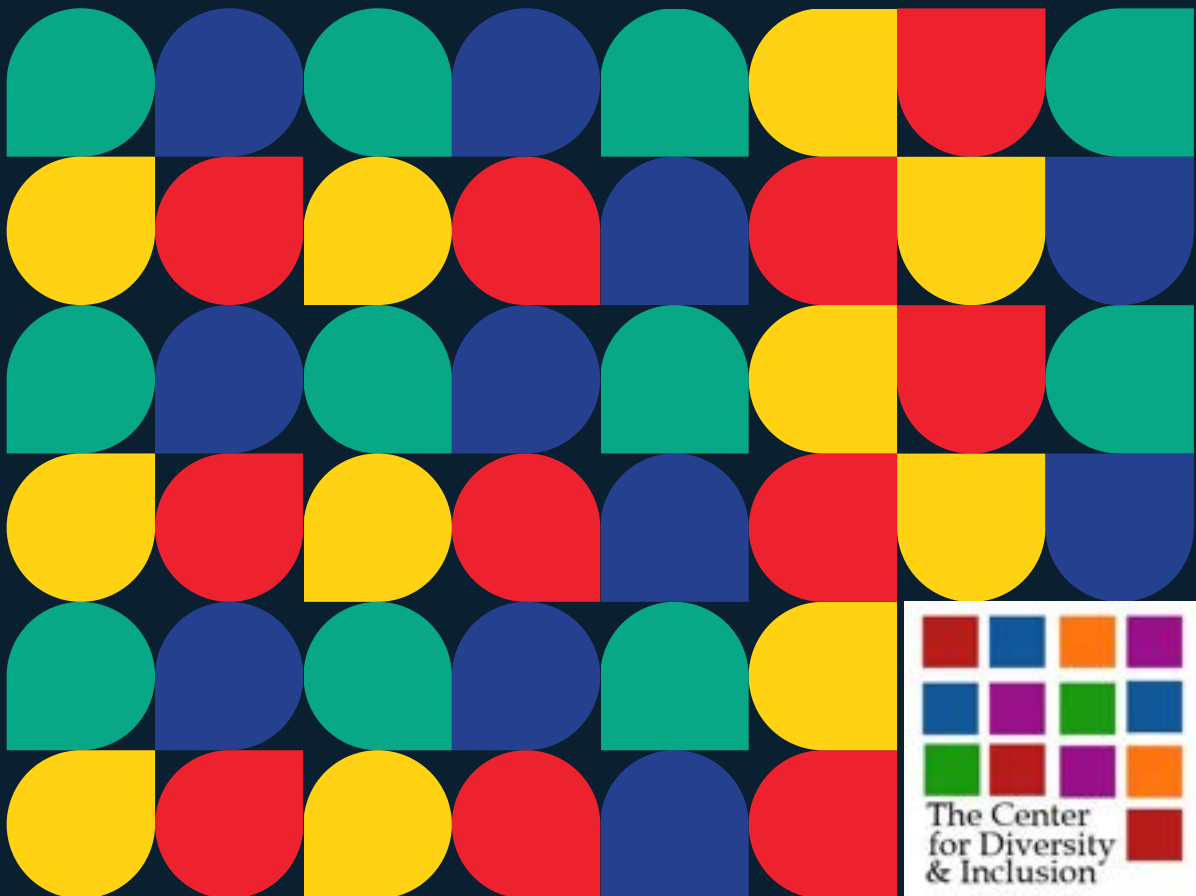


AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY

FIRST-GEN
YEARBOOK

first generation

24' - 25'





A LETTER TO YOU

THE POWER OF BEING FIRST!

Welcome to American University!

As a First-Generation student myself I am excited to welcome you as well as a staff member of the Center for Diversity & Inclusion or CDI, as it is commonly known as.

You are a part of a growing identity of students who are making their mark as the first in their family to seek out a post-secondary degree. This journey will be full of success and areas of challenge, but you have a wonderful support in the Center for Diversity and Inclusion as well as a sea of other First-Generation professionals listed in this document that you can go to receive all the support you need to make this time at AU the best it can possibly be.

This is the First-Generation Yearbook an initiative that was started in 2019 that brings First-Generation professionals to one place for students to use as a directory. This Yearbook also contains information on the various student organizations such as the First-Generation Student Union, The First-Generation Graduate Society, and our newest First Generation Honor Society, Eta Sigma.

As you continue to make your mark here at American known that they are so many people that are championing your overall success. You do not need to look too far to reach out for assistance.

However, remember that, "Being a first-generation student is a powerful experience that brings unique skills and perspectives. It requires practical guidance to help these students navigate their journey from acceptance to commencement"

Remember you don't need luck you just need to be you!

Best,
Quin

Pictured here:
Quintenilla
Merriweather,
Associate Director for
Student Equity,
Access, & Retention



CONGRADUATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2024

FIRST-GENERATION HONOR SOCIETY



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY ACCEPTED THE CHARTER TO ESTABLISH A TRI ALPHA CHAPTER NAMED ETA SIGMA

FIRST GENERATION STUDENT UNION FGSU



American University First-Generation Student Union

Who we are: American University First Generation Student Union (FGSU) is an undergraduate student organization that is a community of dedicated students who work together to promote and advocate for the goals of first-generation students here at American University. FGSU aims to support and reaffirm students by offering a diverse range of events, professional opportunities, and a place to make friends! We are hoping to continue growing on campus and create more connections with our first gen community on campus.

- Engage: [First Generation Student Union \(FGSU\) | Organization - Engage AU](#)
- Instagram: [AU First Gen Student Union \(@aufgsu\)](#)
- GroupMe: [The memories with us from school will be kept forever.](#)



- LinkedIn: [American University First Generation Student Union | LinkedIn](#)

Executive Board

- President: María Jiménez
- Vice-President: Rodrigo Velasco-Hernandez
- Secretary: Jacob Alejandro
- Treasurer: Leslie Martinez
- DEI Director: Ayawni Ohamuo
- Co-Events Coordinator: Kayleigh Hendy
- Co-Events Coordinator: Elizabeth Garcia
- Co-Communications Director: Emelyn Sanchez Calzada
- Co-Communications Director: Evelyn Margarito Casas

FIRST GENERATION GRADUATE SOCIETY FGGS



The First-Generation Graduate Society (FGGS) is an affinity community at American University dedicated to advocating for the unique needs and challenges faced by first-generation graduate students.

Mission Statement

The First-Generation Graduate Society (FGGS) is dedicated to advocating for the unique needs and challenges faced by first-generation graduate students at American University. Our mission is to foster a supportive community that empowers first-generation graduate students to thrive academically, professionally, and personally. Through advocacy, mentorship, and resource allocation, we aim to cultivate an inclusive environment that celebrates the diversity of experiences among first-generation scholars. By amplifying their voices and providing access to opportunities, FGGS strives to ensure equitable representation and success for all first-generation graduate students as they pursue their educational and career goals.

Objectives:

1. To offer mentorship and support to first-generation graduates as they navigate the challenges of transitioning from college to the workforce or further education.
2. To provide educational resources and workshops tailored to the needs of first-generation graduates.
3. Advocate for financial inclusion of first-generation graduates.
4. Battle imposter syndrome/underrepresentation and advocate for first-generation graduates.

How Can First-Gen Grad Students Join?

- Students including online grad students can join FGGS and participate in our events by first joining our WhatsApp community or request membership via the AU Engage website.
- Information and relevant updates are regularly shared via WhatsApp.
- Students can participate in our in-person and virtual events.
- Events will be livestreamed via Zoom.
- Follow FGGS on LinkedIn, and Instagram to get the latest updates.

FGGS Executive Board Members:

- Colleen Cohen – President
- Johnnie Lee Fielder – Vice President
- Mohammed Ali – Events Coordinator
- Thahira Cader – Treasurer
- Michael Cruz – Director Communications
- Rebecca E. Coughlin – Staff Advisor

ETA SIGMA FIRST GENERATION HONOR SOCIETY



Tri-Alpha, also known as Alpha Alpha Alpha, is a national honor society for first-generation student. This honor society is a way to celebrate the academic achievements of our first-generation students and is open to undergraduate, graduate, and professional students. Faculty and staff may also be inducted. We hope that you will join! To learn more about the Tri-Alpha Honors society and its history, [visit their official website](#).

Eta Sigma Chapter

American University's Tri Alpha First Generation Honor Society

The Eta Sigma Chapter of Tri Alpha here at American University was officially Installed in November 2023. This was a part of our annual National First-Generation Celebration Week. Each year during the week of November 8th we celebrate our First-Generation students that include a formal dinner and induction of the newest Eta Sigma Chapter.

History

Tri-Alpha was founded on March 24, 2018, at Moravian College in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, with the induction of 100 members of the Alpha Chapter. Moravian College then took steps to incorporate Alpha Alpha Alpha as a not-for-profit organization so colleges and universities across the country could start their own chapters of the society.

Leadership

American University Chapter Student Executive Board

Our elected chapter officers for 2024-2025:

- President: Alexei Habermehl, B.A | Kogod 2025
- Vice President: Rodrigo Velasco-Hernandez, B.A | SPA 2027
- Treasurer: Hanna Hajdu, B.A | SPA 2027
- Secretary: Emelyn Sanchez Calzada, B.A. | SPA 2026
- Historian: Jessa Holton, B.A. | CAS 2025



Ash Boltrushek

Assistant Dean of Students



Danielle Koon

Associate Director for Education & Support Programs
Center for Diversity & Inclusion



Quintenilla Merriweather

Associate Director for Student Equity, Access, & Retention
Center for Diversity & Inclusion



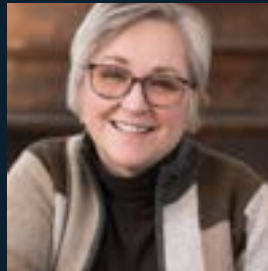
Maura Fox

Assistant Director, Student Involvement
Center for Student Involvement



Nadir McCoy

Assistant Director for Fraternity & Sorority Life & Leadership
Center for Student Involvement



Celine-Marie Pascale

Professor Emerita
Department of Sociology



Tara Flakker

Director of Undergraduate Student & Academic Affairs
School of Communication



Sherri Williams

Assistant Professor
School of Communications
Journalism



Kimberly Araya

Director for University Conference & Guest Services



Andrew Toczydlowski

Director, Graduate Student Success & Office Management



Vicky Wilkins

Acting Provost & Chief Academic Officer



Christine Gettings

Director of International Programs and Partnerships
School of International Service



Robin Adams

Director for The Center for Diversity & Inclusion



Khouri Lassiter

Assistant Director for Education & Support for LGBTQIA+



Claudine Kuradusenge-McLeod

Professorial Lecturer Peace, Human Rights & Cultural Relations



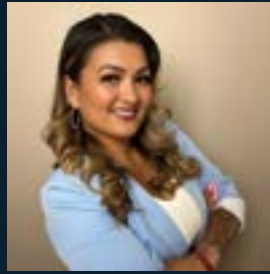
Antoaneta Tileva

Professorial Lecturer Peace, Human Rights & Cultural Relations



Rose Shinko

Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education Global Inquiry



Patty Medina

Associate Director Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging NCAA Athletics Administration



Saagar Gupta

Assistant Director Community-Based Learning & Special Programs | Center for Leadership and Community Engagement



Claudia Blount

Assistant Director, Admission and Marketing Online Programs, SIS | Online Partner Programs



Mike Rosenberger

Assistant Director, Graduate Academic Advising SIS



Shannon Telenko

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) Consultant Office of Human Resources



Wendy Anderson

Program Coordinator American University Center on Health Risk and Society



Dayne Hutchenson

Assistant Vice President for Student Engagement & Success



Alison Corbett

Director of Administration, Special Assistant to the Dean School of International Service



Felicia Parks

Career Advisor AU Career Center



Ken Conca

Professor of Environment, Development and Health, School of International Service



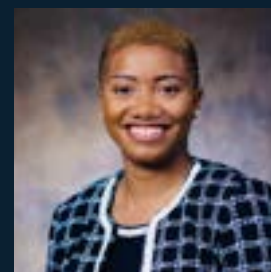
Lori Felton

Assistant Director Office of Merit Awards



Johni Amos

Assistant Vice President, Finance & Administration



Chasity Cooper

Executive Assistant, Office of the Provost



Alexis Fuentes

Assistant Director, Program Initiatives | Center for Student Involvement



"Your journey as a first-gen college student is the canvas; paint it with the colors of determination and resilience."

"Your story inspires others to defy the odds and reach for the stars."

"Embrace your roots, for they hold the strength that will propel you through any challenge as you pursue your dreams."

"Strive not to prove others wrong, but to prove to yourself that you are capable of greatness."

QUOTES

FOR OUR FIRST GENERATION

"First-gen pride is the fuel that lights the fire of success; let it burn bright in your heart."

"As a first-gen student, you possess the strength to break barriers and redefine possibilities."

"In the face of uncertainty, remember that you possess the courage to pioneer your path to greatness."

"Believe in your ability to achieve, for it is the foundation of your accomplishments."





"As a first-gen student, your story is not defined by your past, but rather by the unwritten chapters of your future."

"Never forget the power of your dreams; they are the compass guiding you to success."

"Every step you take in pursuit of knowledge sets an example for generations to come."

"Doubt may knock on your door, but let your determination answer and show it the way out."

QUOTES

FOR OUR FIRST GENERATION

"You are the embodiment of possibility, turning dreams into reality with every step towards your degree."

"Let the passion of your pursuit fuel the engine of your ambition."

"Celebrate the uniqueness of your journey, for it carves a trail for others to follow."

"Your thirst for knowledge will lead you to waters that quench not only your own thirst but that of your community."



“

“Your passion and perseverance are the keys that unlock doors others thought impossible.”

“The first step on your educational journey is the beginning of a remarkable legacy.”

“Success is not limited by your background; it’s built upon the foundation of your determination.”

“In the realm of knowledge, you are an explorer, discovering uncharted territories.”

QUOTES

FOR OUR FIRST GENERATION

“Your journey may be unorthodox, but it is filled with the potential to make a significant impact.”

“Forge ahead boldly, for you carry the torch of progress as a first-gen college student.”

“Embrace the challenges, for they are the stepping stones to your future achievements.”

“Cherish every obstacle, for they sharpen the blade of your resilience.”

”

I AM

FIRST

GEN

FACEBOOK

[HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/AUCDI](https://www.facebook.com/AUCDI)

INSTAGRAM

@AUCDI
@TRIALPHA_AU
@AUFGSU
@FGGSAU
@WCLADVANCE

TWITTER

@AUCDI

WEBSITE

[HTTPS://WWW.AMERICAN.EDU/STUDENT-AFFAIRS/CDI/FIRSTGEN-FAQ.CFM](https://www.american.edu/student-affairs/cdi/firstgen-faq.cfm)

CONTACT US

(202) 885-3651
CDI@AMERICAN.EDU

VISIT US

MARY GRAYDON CENTER
ROOM 329
M-F 9-5PM

A Proud First-Gen

