Postsecondary education affordability remains a challenging issue in Virginia and the United States. According to a recent report from the National College Attainment Network (NCAN) on college affordability in Virginia, only 13% of 4-year colleges and 18% of 2-year colleges are considered affordable, meaning there would be no gap between financial aid, family contributions, work earnings and the cost of attendance.

The cost of a four-year college education has grown tremendously, especially in relation to the lack of growth in wages for young people. Studies show that the cost of a college education has increased more than healthcare, childcare and housing (“A New Study Investigates Why College Tuition Is So Expensive," Preston Cooper, Forbes, August 31, 2020) Forbes and that college costs have increased by 169% since 1980—but pay for young workers is up by just 19% (Anthony P. Carnevale, Artem Gulish, and Kathryn Peltier Campbell. If Not Now, When? The Urgent Need for an All-One-System Approach to Youth Policy. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 2021). The old adage “working your way through college” is not as feasible as it once was.

Barriers still exist to obtaining financial aid including a confusing financial aid system, a complicated FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), and a lack of knowledge of the resources available to students in lower-resourced communities.

It is projected that within the next decade 65% of jobs will require a postsecondary degree, yet only 54% of Virginians age 25 and up have an associate degree or higher. We know that a postsecondary degree or credential will lead to greater economic mobility and quality of life.

GRASP advisors help students determine an affordable pathway to a college degree or a workforce credential. In the 2021-2022 academic year, GRASP worked with more than 6,400 students in 90 high schools. GRASP also awarded more than $300,000 in scholarships in 2022.

We are committed to being a part of Virginia’s goal of being the best state for education. Thank you for what you do to support the GRASP mission and vision.

TODD MARTIN
President & CEO
**MISSION**

Helping all students and their families, with a focus on financially disadvantaged households, by:
- Giving inspiration and hope that their goals are attainable;
- Assisting them with the financial aid process and awarding scholarships; and
- Supporting them in the attainment of their post-secondary goals at the lowest possible cost.

**PROGRAMS**

- In-school Advising
- Early Commitment (SOAR)
- Summer Texting
- College Success
- Early Awareness for Middle Schoolers
- Scholarships

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**Our Story...**

77% of high school students served were from financially challenged households.

---

**77%**

Of high school students served were from financially challenged households.

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**HOME OF A GRASP SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT**

www.GRASP4VA.org
Thank you for your generosity and support of the community program that makes this scholarship opportunity possible. I also thank my GRASP advisor for her guidance. She was extremely helpful and always willing and available to answer my questions.

Anthony Rodriguez (George Wythe High School)

By selecting me for with the Last Dollar scholarship, you have reduced my financial load, allowing me to concentrate more on my academic studies at VCU. Your kindness has inspired me to help others and contribute to my community in the future. I am incredibly grateful for this gift and your desire to assist me in reaching my goals.

Harita Agarwal (Code RVA, VCU)

It is because of your time and assistance that have allowed students like me to fulfill their plans for higher education, no matter what backgrounds they come from. GRASP also has helped me to become more involved as a student through community service, as well.

Anthony Rodriguez (George Wythe High School)

As a first generation child of a single mother, this scholarship means a lot to me. I make it my goal to do anything and everything to help my mother. A part of that is helping her pay for college. I could not be more grateful for the freedom this scholarship has given us. Thank you all at Grasp for broadening my horizons and giving me access to more opportunities.

Tionna Ellis (J.R. Tucker High School, UVA)
I am originally from Egypt and English is my second language. At times, schooling has been quite difficult for me, but I continue to push through my adversities. I have enrolled in John Tyler Community College to start on my path towards becoming a Registered Nurse. Once I graduate from John Tyler, my desire is to continue in a nursing program at Virginia Commonwealth University. This scholarship will help me finance this dream.

Youssef Sahuon (Clover Hill High School, Brightpoint Community College)
THE GRASP 2021-2022 FOOTPRINT

109 total schools  50 school divisions

OUR FINANCIAL YEAR

REVENUE

- Individual: $508,337 (27%)
- Corporation/Foundation: $577,601 (31%)
- PPP Loan: $150,000 (8%)
- Fees & Other: $136,961 (7%)
- Government: $500,000 (27%)

EXPENSES

- Advising: $857,843 (55%)
- Fundraising: $60,058 (4%)
- Administration: $272,281 (17%)
- Scholarships: $380,638 (21%)
2021-2022 PROGRAM RESULTS

About GRASP

GRASP is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose advisors help high school students and parents navigate the financial aid world, complete the FAFSA form, understand the college aid award letter, and serve as mentors during the college application and acceptance process.

Help us ensure career and college access for all! Support GRASP online at www.grasp4va.org/givenow

In-School Advising

- 6,398 high school students were assisted in accessing financial aid for post-secondary education.
- 1,285 of these students were mentored through SOAR Virginia®. SOAR students obtained $558,000 in scholarships funded by Virginia529 in the 2021-22 school year.
- 77% of students were from low-income households.

Financial Aid & Scholarships

- Advisors helped students secure an average of $8,790 per student in financial aid.
- Awarded $116,500 in Last Dollar Scholarships to 113 seniors. Awarded $74,000 in Community College Pathway Scholarships to 74 students seeking a transfer degree or career certificate.

College Success Program

- 108 college students supported on their path to degree completion through email programs, financial aid advising, problem-solving support, and summer college prep sessions.
- $100,000 in College Success Scholarships awarded to participating students during the 2021-22 school year.
**Thank You To Our Donors... We Appreciate You!**

Recognizing gifts received from July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022

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