



For College, Community, and Justice

HOPE4COLLEGE.COM

ANNOUNCEMENT: **The Hope Center Announces the Inaugural #RealCollege Student Leadership Advisory Council**

January 11, 2021

As higher education confronts a global pandemic and widespread declines in college attendance, The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice thinks it's time to start getting real about helping students succeed. That's why we're elevating the leadership of 23 students and launching the inaugural #RealCollege Student Leadership Advisory Council (SLAC).

The #RealCollege movement is a five-year-old effort to center college students as humans first and increase the availability of supports for their basic needs. The #RealCollege SLAC gives students making [“good trouble”](#) to improve higher education a key to the room where real systemic change happens. It also gives colleges and universities neglected by mainstream media a chance for the public to get to know their amazing students.

The 2021 SLAC cohort is comprised of 23 #RealCollege students from coast to coast, including 19 from public institutions, 8 from community colleges, and 4 attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Three-quarters of the students identify as female, and 87% are people of color.

Their stories reflect the diverse experiences of today's students. They are parents of young children, immigrants, former fostered youth, survivors of domestic violence, and many have experienced food and/or housing insecurity—even homelessness. They come to the #RealCollege Movement and to the SLAC with strengths developed from those experiences, rather than in spite of them.

“The #RealCollege Movement was created because of students who gave voice to overlooked issues. With the SLAC, we aim to support students providing leadership in communities around the country and center them in efforts to create structural change,” said Hope Center Founder and President Sara Goldrick-Rab.

#RealCollege SLAC members will help set The Hope Center's #RealCollege agenda by bringing new issues and interests for discussion with our team to monthly meetings. Students will provide feedback on our key initiatives in the areas of applied research, institutional transformation, policy and advocacy, and communications. In exchange, we'll provide opportunities to represent The Hope Center via traditional and social media, join in networking and other professional development opportunities, and develop a SLAC alumni program focused on building a robust experience for future SLAC cohorts.

SLAC students face many competing demands on their time and financial precarity is common. We therefore offer them \$1,000 stipends each semester to help make their participation possible. Your support is critical to ensuring that they have a robust experience enhancing their leadership skills. If you'd like to sponsor a #RealCollege SLAC member, you can make a donation [here](#).

MEET THE 2020 SLAC MEMBERS:

- Aleina Dume, Swarthmore College
- Barbara Gooch, Volunteer State Community College
- Catherine Cueva, Cypress College
- Ciara Terry, Spelman College
- Collin Kazu Lewis, Mt Hood Community College
- Denisha Anne Jones, North Seattle College
- Destney Johnson, Grambling State University
- Diana Benitez, University of Florida
- Freda Bridges, Montgomery College
- Frederick Shegog, West Chester University
- Heather Atherton, Lake Forest College
- Jasmine Rao, Delaware County Community College
- Joqsan Nakor Albaladejo-Soler, Florida State University
- Kesare Mowrer, Temple University
- Liliana Cruz, Dallas College
- Lydia Ashenafie, Western Washington University
- Marco A. Flores, Paul Quinn College
- Michael Wiafe, University of California, Berkeley
- Nakwari Rodgers, Bowie State University
- Ronsard Mondesir, Miami Dade College
- Rosalia Armas, California Polytechnic State University at Pomona
- Thamee Htwe, Amarillo College
- Victoria Rocha, Fresno State University