



THE COLLEGE CRUSADE of Rhode Island

Inspire. Support. Believe.

Who we are

The College Crusade of Rhode Island, founded in 1989, is the state's most comprehensive college-readiness and scholarship program for middle school and high school students in low-income urban school districts. We reach out early to motivated students and encourage their commitment to learning.



THE MISSION OF THE COLLEGE CRUSADE OF RHODE ISLAND is to increase high school graduation, college and career readiness, and college completion for youth in our state's low-income communities.

We provide college-readiness programs and services to approximately 4,200 students per year. From the time they join our program in grade 6, through grade 12 and into their early college years, Crusaders experience the steady, nurturing presence of caring adults and participate in activities that focus on **academic enrichment, social and personal development, career awareness and exploration, and postsecondary preparation.** We provide:

- **Caring adult advisors** to guide and assist students along the pathway to college. Advisors are young, highly trained college graduates who are representative of our student population and who often live in the same urban neighborhoods.
- **Innovative college-readiness programming** for seven straight years, including summers. Middle school Crusaders build academic skills while learning how to develop strong interpersonal relationships and become active members of their schools and communities. High school Crusaders focus on college-prep coursework, explore career and college choices, and develop their leadership skills.
- **A scholarship opportunity** for Crusaders admitted to postsecondary degree programs, apprenticeships, and other certified higher education programs.
- **College completion initiatives** that support Crusaders who attend the University of Rhode Island, Rhode Island College, and the Community College of Rhode Island.

"The College Crusade is an outstanding organization that helps young people from low-income families prepare for college and succeed once they get there."

— U.S. Senator Jack Reed

"High school was a challenging time in my life. I could always count on my Crusade advisor to provide straightforward, honest feedback. He showed me how to make the best of every situation and inspired me not only to stay on track but to always push myself to the next level. He motivated me to dream big and be the best I could be."

— Apryl Silva '05

Caring adult advisors

Consistent interaction with a trusted adult can make a huge difference in a young person's educational attainment. Our organization was founded on this philosophy. Crusaders think of their advisors as trusted friends who are always there when they need them.



“What I like most about working as an Advisor is being able to interact and bond with Crusaders. I'm here to have a positive effect, to be that role model that a lot of them need. I rejoice in their successes every June at graduation time. The smiles on their faces and seeing their proud parents is rewarding for me.”
– David Miya, Middle School Advisor

“I have helped Crusaders achieve goals they never thought they would, whether it is being the first in their family to graduate high school, or being accepted into the college or university of their dreams, even when the odds are against them. Having direct impact as their Advisor is the most rewarding part of the job.”
– Lorena Arango, High School Advisor

WE CREATED OUR COLLEGE CRUSADE ADVISORY to personalize the college-bound experience. Many things can derail a promising student. Family problems may make it hard to finish homework or to concentrate in class. Students may feel pressure from peers who disparage academic success. The sheer amount of paperwork involved in applying to college can seem overwhelming. Our Advisory is a seamless system of caring contact for seven years, from sixth grade through twelfth grade. Throughout these years, College Crusade advisors forge relationships with Crusaders and encourage them to pursue high academic goals.

College Crusade advisors work in many of Rhode Island's most low-income schools – Central Falls, Cranston, Pawtucket, Providence, West Warwick, and Woonsocket. They interact with Crusaders daily in school and during our afterschool, weekend, and summer programs. Compared to other types of student counselors, College Crusade advisors are special in four important ways:

- They can share more of their personal experience in guiding students than would be appropriate for school employees.
- They deliver our highly interactive college-readiness programs directly to students, as well as offer guidance and personal support.
- They connect students to a rich array of services that we have developed specifically for them and that our entire program services team supports.
- They provide a seamless advisory approach over seven years as students transition from middle school to high school.

A scholarship opportunity

Scholarships help our students succeed. Since the first class of Crusaders graduated high school in 2001, The College Crusade has awarded scholarships to more than 5,000 Rhode Island students to help make college more affordable.

College Crusade scholarships are powerful incentives that motivate students to take school seriously and to plan for higher education. Since 2001, The College Crusade has awarded over \$43 million in college scholarships to Rhode Island students.

We award cash scholarships to qualified students accepted to all public and private colleges and trade schools in Rhode Island. Crusaders may also receive donated scholarships that many schools, including colleges in other states, donate specifically for Crusaders.

Innovative college-readiness programming

We offer a wealth of programs and services for middle school and high school Crusaders. Our programs focus on academic enrichment, social and personal development, career awareness and exploration, and preparation for college.



Core Middle School Programs

- Advisory Services
- Middle School Orientations
- CAAP 101 (Crusade Adventure & Academic Program)
- ReadMore
- Critical Thinking & Writing
- STEM Programs
- Career Exploration
- Transition Activities
- Math Skills
- College Visits
- Wheeler Summer Program



Core High School Programs

- Advisory Services
- High School Orientations
- College Visits
- SAT Prep
- Math & Writing Intensives
- Getting to College Workshops
- FAFSA Assistance
- Robotics

College completion initiatives

Our state's economic future depends on a steady stream of college-educated young people. The goal of The College Crusade is not only to get students ready for college but to ensure that they are successful once they arrive on campus.



COMMUNITY COLLEGE
OF RHODE ISLAND



AS THE COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS FIELD EVOLVES, there is a growing emphasis on making sure that students persist in college and complete their degrees. Crusaders have very strong rates of persistence into their second year at Rhode Island's public and private institutions of higher education. First-year persistence rates are important because they are the best indicator of a successful transition to college.

The College Crusade's **postsecondary success program** offers support to students who are transitioning to higher education and to students who have already matriculated. Our College Advisors provide transition and success services to Crusaders enrolled in the state's public and private institutions by connecting Crusaders to resources and supports on their campuses. They meet with Crusaders regularly regarding financial aid, college readmission and transfers, placement exams, course registration, managing the add/drop period, and connecting to career placement. In partnership with Graduate! RI, we also help to re-engage students who started but did not complete college.

We pay particular attention to addressing the phenomenon of "summer melt," which is when high school graduates who have been admitted to a postsecondary institution encounter obstacles that prevent them from starting school in the fall. Our College Advisors assist Crusaders in overcoming those obstacles.

Family engagement

Family support is crucial to the success of every young person. Students need their families to take an active interest in their academic progress and their overall school experience. We encourage parents to do their part by listening to and supporting their child's interests and learning goals.

THE MISSION OF FAMILY ENGAGEMENT is to engage, empower, and educate all College Crusade parents so they can advocate for their child's academic success and social development and support their child's readiness for post-secondary education. We offer relevant, informative, and interactive workshops that are designed to provide families with a solid base of knowledge that will support them as they support their children. We also host regular Family Forums and offer leadership development through our Parent Council.



We also support families by:

- Conducting One-on-One meetings with all new families
- Offering a regular series of workshops for parents on how to support their children's path to higher education



What you can do

Young people join The College Crusade because they want to stay on the path to higher education. The majority of our students are from Rhode Island's most disadvantaged communities – Providence, Pawtucket, Central Falls, Woonsocket, Cranston, and West Warwick. Ninety-eight percent of these students come from low-income families, and 94 percent are from racial and ethnic minority groups. Three-quarters will be the first in their families to graduate college.



You can help

Go to www.thecollegecrusade.org and click on You Can Help. To learn about additional ways to support our mission, contact Robert J. Oberg, director of grants & senior advisor, at (401) 854-5500 ext 124, or go to www.thecollegecrusade.org/donate.



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The College Crusade of Rhode Island is funded by a federal grant from the U.S. Department of Education's GEAR UP program, by the State of Rhode Island, and by private corporations, foundations, and individuals.