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**Media Contact**

Mai Tran

213-335-4336

MTran@imaginablefutures.com

## **15 Winners Awarded \$1.55 Million Rise Prize to Advance Innovative Solutions for Student Parents in Higher Education**

*College Unbound wins \$100,000 Risers' Choice award, selected by student parent judges; Morehouse College's Fathers to the Finish Line wins Rising Star award for its rising innovative solution*

**REDWOOD CITY, Calif. July 8, 2020** – [Imaginable Futures](#), a venture of The Omidyar Group, and [Lumina Foundation](#), along with a [group](#) of leading partner organizations and seven prominent judges, today announced the 15 winners of the Rise Prize, awarding \$1.55 million in combined prizes to the most innovative ideas for supporting the postsecondary success of student parents.

Winners range from early-stage pilots to mature solutions across for-profit and nonprofit organizations, as well as higher education institutions.

[College Unbound](#), a bachelor's degree program designed for working and parenting adults, won the \$100,000 Risers' Choice award. This program was selected by two student parent judges who brought an authentic understanding of the barriers that student parents face.

"We were honored to be part of the selection committee that judged all of the incredible entries," said Lesley Del Rio, one of two student parent judges. "We selected College Unbound because it is an extraordinary program showcasing the strengths of our student parent community. It empowers us to succeed."

Additional winners include [Prison University Project](#), a college for currently incarcerated individuals, and [Edquity](#), a technology-enabled emergency aid platform, both within the mature stage category; [American Indian College Fund's](#) "Ina wa wounspe pi" (Mothers who are learning), a coaching program for Native American students, within the early stage category; and [Morehouse College's](#) Fathers to the

# RISE PRIZE

Finish Line initiative, which was awarded the Rising Star prize for its unique, holistic support services for fathers enrolled in the private historically black men's college.

More than 300 applications were received since the [Rise Prize launched](#) on February 12, 2020. Twenty-six [finalists were announced](#) on June 10, 2020. Each finalist was paired with a [leading expert](#) and received advising and coaching before virtually presenting to a panel of [judges](#) who selected the final 15 winners.

## Winners include:

### Risers' Choice: \$100,000 (1 winner selected by student parent judges)

- [College Unbound](#)

### Rising Star Award: \$50,000 (awarded to a rising innovative solution)

- [Morehouse College](#) – Fathers to the Finish Line

### Mature Stage: \$200,000 each

- [Edquity](#)
- [Family Scholar House](#)
- [Jeremiah Program](#)
- [Prison University Project](#)
- [Rivet School](#), formerly known as Concourse Education

### Early Stage: \$50,000 each

- [American Indian College Fund](#) – “Ina wa wounspe pi” (Mothers who are learning)
- [Arizona State University](#) – The ASU Sunnybot Student-Parent Program
- [BestFit](#)
- [Bristol Community College](#) – Parenting Advancement Pathways
- [Cell-Ed](#) – 1M Parent Learner Challenge
- [Everett Community College](#) – Weekend College
- FutureGrad by [Yenko](#)
- [Women's Foundation of Southern Arizona](#) – Pathways

Details on the winners can be found at <https://theriseprize.com/winners>.

“Accelerating the success of student parents has a ripple effect that extends to the whole family, creating a path for families that leads to careers with family-sustaining wages and overall better life outcomes for parents and their children,” said Vinice Davis, a venture partner at Imaginable Futures.

“Unfortunately, this population often faces significant barriers to success. These winning solutions have the opportunity to scale to address these barriers and support the unique needs of student parents.”



“Student parents are by far some of the best and brightest. They are resilient and resourceful, but often are left out of the higher education conversation, and therefore lack support,” said Wayne Taliaferro, strategy officer for finance and federal policy at Lumina Foundation. “If we’re truly going to foster a system of higher education that centers equity in every way, then we have to prioritize student parents. At close to 4 million, they need and deserve a reimagined system that truly works for them.”

A report detailing the Rise Prize applicants, finalists, and winners and how they address the systematic barriers of student parents will be published this fall.

Additional Rise Prize partners include Achieving the Dream, American Association of Community Colleges, American Council on Education, Ascend at the Aspen Institute, Association of Community College Trustees, College Promise Campaign, Institute for Women’s Policy Research, Jobs for the Future, United Negro College Fund, and University Professional and Continuing Education Association.

Learn more at [www.theriseprize.com](http://www.theriseprize.com).

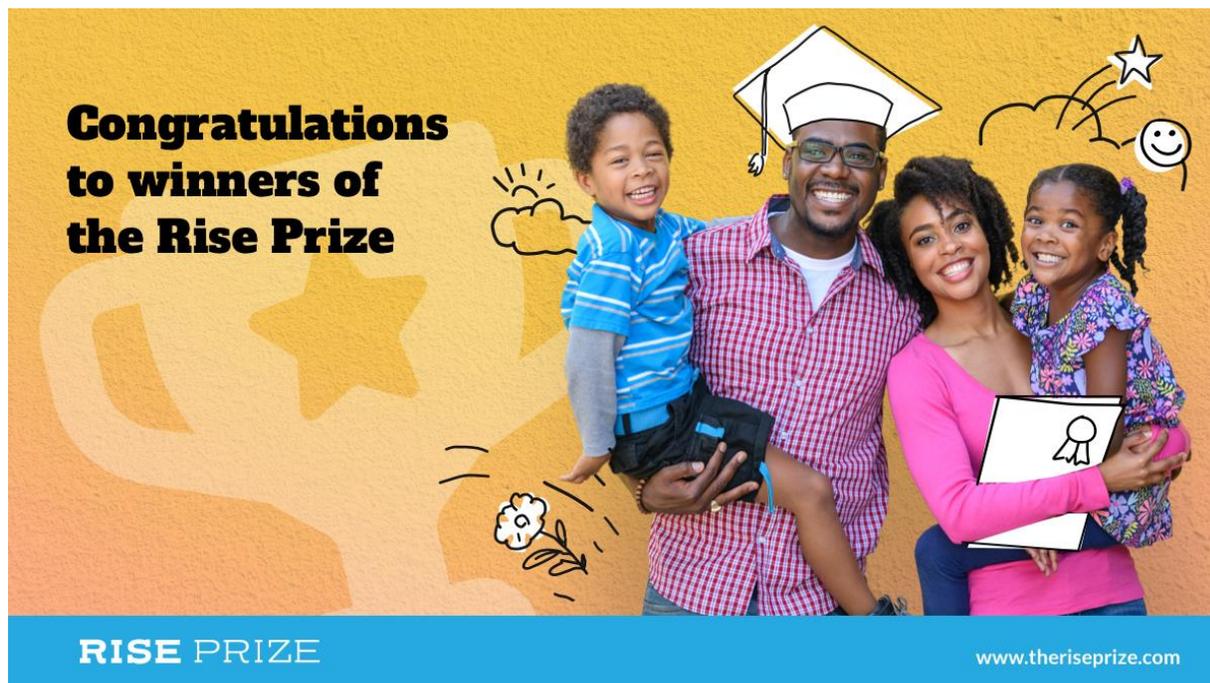
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**About the Rise Prize:** The Rise Prize awarded \$1.55M in combined prizes to 15 organizations to implement and scale solutions accelerating postsecondary success for parents. The prize was created by Imaginable Futures – a venture of The Omidyar Group – and Lumina Foundation, along with a group of leading partner organizations, to leverage direct investments in innovative solutions supporting student parents. To learn more about the Rise Prize, visit [www.theriseprize.com](http://www.theriseprize.com).

**About Imaginable Futures:** Imaginable Futures (IF) is a global philanthropic investment firm that believes learning has the power to unlock human potential and aspires to provide every learner with the opportunity and the tools they need to imagine, and to realize, a brighter future. By taking a systems approach to solving complex education challenges, IF works across public, private and social sectors to bring to life transformational ideas in local, national and global contexts for learners of all ages. With a deep commitment to on-the-ground partnership and co-creation with those we serve, Imaginable Futures is empowering learners, families and communities to be the changemakers of the future. Imaginable Futures is a venture of The Omidyar Group, and is founded and funded by Pierre and Pam Omidyar. Learn more at [www.imaginablefutures.com](http://www.imaginablefutures.com).

**About Lumina Foundation:** Lumina Foundation is an independent, private foundation in Indianapolis that is committed to making opportunities for learning beyond high school available to all. The foundation envisions a system that is easy to navigate, delivers fair results, and meets the nation’s need for talent through a broad range of credentials. Lumina’s goal is to prepare people for informed citizenship and for success in a global economy. Learn more at: <https://www.luminafoundation.org>.

## Rise Prize: Meet the 15 Winners and Their Solutions



### Risers' Choice: \$100,000 (1 winner selected by student parent judges)

#### College Unbound

College Unbound provides a bachelor's degree designed for working and parenting adults, where student passion drives learning and transformation, reframing life experiences and gaining real skills to



### Rising Star Award: \$50,000 (awarded to a rising innovative solution)

#### Morehouse College - Fathers to the Finish Line

Fathers to the Finish Line creates a platform for providing student parents with holistic support through access to resources, including mentorship, professional development/career readiness and leadership training.



# RISE PRIZE

**Mature Stage: \$200,000 each**

## **Edquity**

Edquity is an end-to-end provider of emergency cash grants and social services referrals for student parents, helping student parents overcome financial obstacles on their way to postsecondary credentials.



## **Family Scholar House**

Family Scholar House is ending the cycle of poverty and transforming communities by empowering student parents to succeed in post-secondary education and achieve life-long self-sufficiency



## **Jeremiah Program**

Scalable 2Gen programming that centers the full identity of single mom student parents, as both students and parents, and provides moms the tools and resources to surmount the systemic barriers they face in postsecondary education persistence.



## **Prison University Project**

Higher education for incarcerated parents provides a life-changing opportunity to break the intergenerational cycles of inequality and incarceration, improve employment opportunities and economic mobility post-release, and create a better life for parents and their children.



## **Rivet School, formerly known as Concourse Education**

Rivet School is college reimaged to serve post-traditional students like working adults and parent learners — delivering an accredited BA in 2-3 years and for \$10,000.



# RISE PRIZE

**Early Stage: \$50,000 each**

**American Indian College Fund - “Ina wa wounspe pi” (Mothers who are learning)**

A coaching program centered on Native students’ cultural identities, offering financial, academic progression and career readiness supports for Native, first generation, single mothers in higher education.



**Arizona State University - The ASU Sunnybot Student-Parent Program**

The Sunnybot Student-Parents Program enhances ASU's chatbot Sunny to support ASU student-parents by connecting them with resources with the goal of increasing postsecondary success and completion



**BestFit**

BestFit is a web platform that empowers student parents to design their own social safety nets—providing a one-stop shop for on-campus, community, government, and philanthropic resources.



**Bristol Community College - Parenting Advancement Pathways (PAP)**

Parenting Advancement Pathways promotes economic mobility by providing holistic supports and skills to help low-income single parents, from diverse backgrounds, move toward economic independence.



**Cell-Ed's 1M Parent Learner Challenge**

One Million Learners will gain essential skills for life, school & work for free with Cell-Ed - certifications & live coaching, co-created, used by, and designed with parent learners.



# RISE PRIZE

**Early Stage: \$50,000 each (continued)**

## **Everett Community College - Weekend College**

Weekend College for Parents is a holistic, 2-generational, approach that will help parents complete a degree or credential leading to economic mobility and stronger families by pairing weekend-only college coursework with access to essential student services, including drop-in child care.



## **FutureGrad by Yenko**

FutureGrad by Yenko is a financial aid eligibility platform that provides targeted and timely analytics, alerts and recommendations to ensure that student parents maintain financial aid necessary to keep college affordable.



## **Women's Foundation of Southern Arizona - Pathways**

A 2-generation program for single mothers to secure advanced educational attainment toward their economic self-sufficiency, lifting entire families.



**Learn more about the Rise Prize: [www.theriseprize.com](http://www.theriseprize.com)**