



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## COUNCIL FOR OPPORTUNITY IN EDUCATION, CENTER FOR FIRST-GENERATION STUDENT SUCCESS ANNOUNCE 2<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL FIRST-GENERATION COLLEGE CELEBRATION FOR NOVEMBER 8<sup>TH</sup>

*1965 Act made way for low-income, first-generation students to break chain of poverty, become first in their families to earn college degree*

WASHINGTON, D.C. (October 15, 2018) – Stemming from the success of the 2017 event, the [Council for Opportunity for Education \(COE\)](#), in partnership with the [Center for First-generation Student Success](#), an initiative of [NASPA](#) and The Suder Foundation, is pleased to announce the continuation of the [First-Generation College Celebration](#) on November 8, 2018. This date marks the 53<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the signing of the [1965 Higher Education Act \(HEA\)](#), which has helped millions of poor students become the first members of their families to earn college degrees.

On November 8, college campuses around the nation are asked to hold rallies, panel discussions, listening sessions, celebrations, and more in recognition of their first-generation students. Institutions can use **#CelebrateFirstGen** to share their events and join in conversations with colleagues and students.

“Millions of students who have benefitted from the programs created by the Higher Education Act have subsequently helped shape our country as astronauts, judges, scientists, politicians, scholars, writers, business leaders, and more,” said Maureen Hoyler, COE President. “We saw great success with the 2017 celebration and it’s especially important to continue recognizing these accomplishments because, even in 2018, campuses and communities can overlook the academic capabilities that lie dormant within so many first-generation students.”

In the months leading to November 8, both COE and the Center will release resources for planning celebrations and share success stories from campuses who participated in 2017. In addition to celebrating first-generation students, this event is intended to bring campus and community awareness to the prevalence of first-generation students currently enrolled in higher education and the outstanding contributions these students are making to society. Institutions are encouraged to also recognize first-generation faculty and staff as well as those who serve as outstanding advocates for the first-generation community.

“Celebrating the accomplishments of our first-generation students across the country not only sheds light upon their vast abilities but fosters an environment of asset-based approaches to serving this student population. First-Generation College Celebration creates an intentional conversation about this important population, recognizes institutional commitment to fostering student success, and creates a platform for campus collaborations” said Sarah E. Whitley, Ph.D., senior director, Center for First-generation Student Success.

To share plans for your 2018 celebration, email [kimberly.jones@coenet.org](mailto:kimberly.jones@coenet.org), complete this [short form](#) or Tweet @COETalk and @FirstgenCenter and use #CelebrateFirstGen across social media platforms.

*The Council for Opportunity in Education (COE) is a nonprofit organization, established in 1981, dedicated to furthering the expansion of college opportunities for low-income, first-generation students, and students with disabilities. Through its numerous membership services, the Council works in conjunction with colleges, universities, and agencies that host Federal TRIO Programs that help approximately 828,000 low-income students and students with disabilities each year receive college access and retention services.*

*The Center for First-generation Student Success, an initiative of NASPA and The Suder Foundation, serves as the premier source of evidence-based practice, professional development, and knowledge creation for the higher education community while advancing innovation and advocacy for the success of first-generation college students.*