

COLLEGE LIFT



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MISSION AND VISION

“College Lift exists to empower students and their families with comprehensive academic and social supports, activating equitable economic mobility through postsecondary attainment.”



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

College Lift is an intensive, seven-year program for students from low socioeconomic backgrounds that is designed to prepare them for post-secondary academic success.

The program is predicated upon the idea that providing additional assistance to low-income, first-generation students so that they may achieve post-secondary success upon arrival at Forsyth Tech is necessary, but insufficient. In order for Forsyth Tech to fulfill its vision as “a catalyst for equitable economic mobility, empowering lives and transforming communities,” the college, along with other institutions of higher learning, must leverage its institutional knowledge and resources to equip local at-risk students before they set foot on a college campus.

College Lift does just that – through a series of holistic, wrap-around programs that provide support to the scholars and their caregivers.

First-generation students from low SES backgrounds often require additional, rigorous academic support to be prepared to excel upon arrival at college. With this need in view, College Lift provides its students, identified in the program as scholars, with 6 – 12 hours of weekly, college-preparatory-centered academic instruction (in the form of a Saturday Academy and afterschool tutoring) from sixth grade through high school graduation.

Caregiver engagement is indispensable in supporting a student’s development, which is why College Lift facilitates a comprehensive, family wraparound program designed to provide families with the support they need to push their students to postsecondary success. Educational resources (such as ESL classes, professional development seminars and even standard curriculum courses) are also available to the parents of College Lift Scholars, providing opportunities for career and economic advancement as they accompany their children through the seven-year journey to program completion.

The psychological and emotional duress that often accompanies a childhood in a low-income household can represent just as meaningful a barrier to postsecondary achievement as any other factor; College Lift seeks to counter this challenge by making counseling and psychological support available to all College Lift scholars and their family members. College Lift's model is predicated on the University of Southern California's (USC) Neighborhood Academic Initiative—a program which has produced 99% college attendance and 72% baccalaureate completion among low-income student in Los Angeles since 1997—and has been developed in Forsyth County in consultation with program leaders at USC.

College Lift makes attending college an expectation and a reality, rather than an unattainable dream. That is why the program has worked with local institutions of higher education like Salem College, Carolina University and Forsyth Tech to provide full tuition scholarships to College Lift Scholars. Students and their families also receive extensive education on postsecondary options and detailed assistance in the process of applying to college itself. Through dual enrollment in Career and College Promise courses, College Lift students begin earning college credit in their junior and senior year, graduating high school with up to two full semesters of college credits already completed.

College Lift began as a nonprofit, called Piedmont Renewal Network, in Winston-Salem in 2017 and became a part of Forsyth Tech's Educational Partnerships Department in 2020.

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College Lift prides itself in providing experienced, vetted teachers in each subject...to ensure that quality, student-centered instruction is provided week after week.

SATURDAY ACADEMY

The flagship component of College Lift's academic intervention is Saturday Academy, held 21 Saturdays a year on the campus of Forsyth Tech. Through Saturday Academy, scholars are provided with an additional day of instruction, delivered by experienced educators using state-aligned science, math, and English Language Arts curricula. College Lift prides itself in providing experienced, vetted teachers in each subject, complimented by a group of assistant teachers to ensure that quality, student-centered instruction is provided week after week. College Lift scholars sit under the same, committed Saturday Academy teachers every weekend. This consistency enables the Saturday Academy team to develop a deep understanding of each student's needs, and optimize instruction for maximum individual results. The day runs from approximately 7:30 a.m. – 1 p.m., and scholars are provided with breakfast and lunch.

TUTORING

Central to College Lift's longitudinal approach to postsecondary preparedness is a system of rigorous afterschool tutoring support provided to all scholars .

At the middle school level, this support consists of small group remedial instruction in math, science, and English Language Arts, coupled with recreation and activities designed to cultivate social-emotional wellness and growth. This afterschool programming for sixth through eighth grades is held on location at College Lift's partner middle schools, and is specifically targeted at scholars who are less than proficient in any area of core subject matter.

At the high school level, one-on-one tutoring check-ins are provided to every scholar , every week. These weekly check-ins function as a platform for additional instruction, as well as furnish an accountability structure for the completion of key assignments and test prep. Scholars meet with the same College Lift team member on a weekly basis throughout the school year, creating a consistent environment able to give rise to impactful mentoring relationships.

Tutoring at both the middle and high school levels is facilitated by a dynamic team of experienced teachers and non-certified tutors, consistently delivering high-quality instruction in their subject area(s) of expertise.

FAMILY ACCOMPANIMENT

Over the course of their seven-year journey, College Lift scholars will spend less than 5% of their time at Saturday Academy or in after-school tutoring. The vast majority of their time will be spent in their homes and communities. This module deliberately makes it impossible to empower these scholars without empowering their families.


College Lift's university, K12 and nonprofit partnerships pale in comparison to the importance of partnership with the parents and guardians of our scholars. Approximately twice a month, an adult caretaker representing each scholar (parent, grandparent, guardian, etc.) will meet during Saturday Academy for the Family Accompaniment program. Family Accompaniment is designed not only to boost caretaker involvement in their scholar's academics, but also to lower educational barriers in the home through soft skills training and domestic support.

Scholar's caretakers are given access to seminars on relevant topics ranging from parenting adolescents and conflict resolution to homework facilitation and applying for financial aid. Family Accompaniment meetings also serve as a platform for the dissemination of key information from guest speakers (e.g. school principals, leaders of educational nonprofits, college representatives), while also functioning as a connection between families and the important services they may need (emergency financial/legal/nutritional support, representation to local K12 authorities in matters such as discipline and school placement, etc.).

Family Accompaniment is caretaker-directed, meaning that program content is not prescribed, but rather collaboratively developed by those that it is designed to serve. This joint administration is facilitated by College Lift's Family Council, a group of parent leaders elected by their peers to represent the perspective of College Lift families in the deliberation of key issues related to Family Accompaniment and the College Lift program as a whole.

Educational resources (such as ESL classes, professional development seminars and even standard curriculum courses) are also extended to the parents of College Lift students, providing opportunities for career and economic advancement as they accompany their children through the seven-year journey to program completion. These classes are provided on the weekends during and after standard Family Accompaniment meetings, as well as on weeknights and at other times accessible for the parents and family members of College Lift students.

Family Accompaniment builds a holistic, wrap-around model of support for College Lift scholars and their caretakers, providing community, support and stability for these families on their journey to a better future.



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BY THE NUMBERS

College Lift is an intensive program for students, parents and educators. Here are some snapshots of the time invested to realize a better future:



Hours in Saturday Academy:

Per year: 147 hours
Over the course of seven years: 1,029 hours
Hours in Family Accompaniment Programs:
Per year: 30 hours
Over seven years: 210 hours



Hours Spent Tutoring:

High school: over 38 hours per year one on one tutoring, (possibly much more, determined by a scholar's need)
Middle school: between 228 to 456 hours per year

Over seven years, the "average" College Lift scholar will participate in **1178 hours of afterschool tutoring**



Summer Programming:

The average College Lift scholar can expect to participate in approximately 50 hours of summer programming enrichment per summer.



Hours in Family Accompaniment Programs:

Per year: 30 hours
Over seven years: 210 hours
hours of summer programming enrichment per summer.

Many College Lift students will participate in some **200 unique College Lift programming experiences per year.**



Total service time:

Over the course of seven years the average individual College Lift family can expect to receive some 2,767 hours of service. This does not include many of the wrap-around services that College Lift provides, like counseling, additional tutoring, HRD classes for parents, and more.



Number of Saturday Academies:

21 per year, 147 over seven years
(nearly the equivalent of an entire extra year of school during their time in the program)
Number of tutoring sessions: 38 (high school)
Between 76 – 152 (middle school)

1:3
middle school
student teacher ratio
(small groups peer instruction)



1:1
high school tutoring
student teacher ratio

1:10
student teacher ratio
Saturday Academies in the
classroom



University of Southern California Neighborhood Academic Initiative Statistics:

College Matriculation: 99%
College Completion: 72%
(four year degree completion in five or less years)

WRAPAROUND SUPPORTS

Children are selectively enrolled in College Lift on the basis of need; the average College Lift student lives in a low-income situation and would be the first in their family to attend college. These students come to the program not only with academic setbacks, but also attended by the economic, social, and psychological challenges of a childhood lived in under-resourced conditions. If these students are to successfully navigate the journey through middle and high school and matriculate into college, it is necessary to provide comprehensive support both to the whole child and their family throughout the seven year course of College Lift programming.

With this need to furnish longitudinal stability in view, College Lift provides a variety of wraparound services to the families it serves, including nutritional support and other types of emergency monetary assistance, connection to legal aid, and exposure to a variety of key resources available in the community. A particularly central element of this holistic approach to student support is the provision of counseling services. Counseling professionals affiliated with Forsyth Tech are made available to College Lift students and their families for consultation, therapeutic sessions, and referrals to partnering third party providers as needed.

DUAL ENROLLMENT

One reason that College Lift fits so well into a community college framework is that it enables the scholars to participate in programs already designed to accelerate student success. One such program at Forsyth Tech is dual enrollment, which provides college credit to students, free of charge, while they are still in high school.

Dual enrollment aligns perfectly with the mission and vision of College Lift, since the program's ultimate purpose is to set students up with the expectation that they'll attend college following high school graduation. Beginning in eleventh grade, College Lift scholars have the opportunity to enroll in college level course work, fulfilling core K12 requirements while simultaneously earning college credit. Upon high school graduation, this earned credit may be transferred to any participating institution of higher education, including all colleges and universities within the University of North Carolina system.

During the first two years of high school, the academic support College Lift scholars receive centers on the objective of securing a GPA of 2.8 or higher—the minimum requirement for participation in dual enrollment coursework through North Carolina's Career and College Promise program. College Lift seeks to support its scholars in the completion of at least two semesters of college credits by their high school graduation, enabling them to matriculate directly into participating two- or four-year institutions as sophomores.



Placeholder

COLLEGIATE PARTNERSHIPS

Essential to the success of College Lift is the promise that students will be able to attend participating colleges and universities debt-free, thanks to scholarships. Thanks to the generosity of equity-minded colleges and universities, scholarships are available specifically for College Lift students to a growing list of partner institutions.

The ability to afford college is a major obstacle to many College Lift students; identifying that the obstacle has been removed is critical to the success of the program, and lets students know that post-secondary education is attainable. While granting scholarships has a direct and obvious benefit to the student, the argument could be made that the institution awarding the scholarship also sees a direct benefit. College Lift students are more likely to succeed: every student has been taking college-level courses through dual enrollment (also called Career & College Promise), which enables them to earn college credit while in high school, tuition-free. Data also shows that students who participate in dual enrollment are more likely to succeed in college than their peers.



CROSBY SCHOLARS

Beginning in 2019, Crosby Scholars and College Lift entered into a partnership in which all College Lift students would also be enrolled in Crosby Scholars from 6th through 12th grade. The purpose of Forsyth Tech's College Lift program—to assist low-income students from area Title I schools become the first in their family to attend college—aligns directly with Crosby Scholars' mission to ensure that every student in Forsyth County has an opportunity to go to college.

Through this partnership, the Crosby Scholars team works jointly with College Lift to facilitate Crosby Academies for College Lift students, and information sessions for College Lift parents, with the goal that College Lift students will complete requirements in Crosby Scholars each year they are enrolled in College Lift. This means that College Lift students graduate high school as college-bound Crosby Scholars. This collaboration maximizes each organization's set of core competencies, combining Crosby Scholar's comprehensive set of college-focused, extracurricular enrichment and soft skills curriculum with College Lift's rigorous college-preparatory academic interventions.





K12 PARTNERS

Indispensable to the efficacy of College Lift programming is meaningful partnership with the K12 institutions serving College Lift scholars in their home schools throughout the week. College Lift partners with select area Title I middle schools, seeking to establish deep connections with each school's administration, faculty, and neighborhood service area. As scholars matriculate into high school, College Lift seeks a continuation of this robust involvement with their respective high schools. College Lift leverages these partnerships in collaboration over key matters such as scholar engagement and recruitment, curriculum alignment, student discipline, the facilitation of on-site tutoring and more.

A crucial aspect of College Lift's partnership with Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools (WSFCS) is its participation in the Data Sharing Project. The Data Sharing Project is a collaboration between Forsyth Futures, WSFCS, and the Forsyth Promise to provide select local agencies with data on the efficacy of their interventions and consultation on continuous improvement. College Lift's interaction with the Data Sharing Project began in 2018, when the program was among the first agencies to begin receiving these impactful data and evaluation services. As the parents of College Lift scholars provide their consent, College Lift receives access to crucial information—data ranging from class grades and school attendance to quarterly and yearly progress reports—that program leadership is able to utilize in the enhancement of instructional services. This unique partnership is central to College Lift's ongoing effort to maximize the role of data-driven analysis in the optimization of its programming.

"The College Lift program with Forsyth Tech allows all students the tools and access to be ready for college and career opportunities. By participating in Lift, our students will benefit greatly and as a result so will our community."

- Tricia McManus, WS/FCS Superintendent

SCHOLAR DEMOGRAPHICS AND RECRUITMENT

Thanks to partnerships within the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools District, and the Data Sharing Project, College Lift receives information about the incoming roster of students at select Title 1 middle schools, which drives decisions about recruitment efforts.

As with all aspects of College Lift, there is a high-touch, bespoke effort with regards to recruitment. Nearly all of the families of rising sixth graders are contacted via phone and text first, and then by home visits over the course of the summer. These visits are made by staff, teachers, assistant teachers, Forsyth Tech leadership and personnel from partnering schools.

After the initial home visits occur, interviews are scheduled with students and families that may be a good fit for the program. Conducting these home visits and interviews during the summer, rather than in a school setting, offers the interviewers the change to see students outside of an academic setting, and better assess their level of interest in the program. The interview also provides time to ensure that the parent and child understand not only the opportunities that College Lift provides, but the intensive time commitment required of the family and student, too. As each interview concludes, if both the student and caregiver want to participate in College Lift, the seven-year journey to successful post-secondary attainment begins.



