Great Expectations
FOSTERING POWERFUL CHANGE

PROGRAM UPDATE: SPRING 2026

The Great Expectations (GE) program supports young people who have experienced foster care by providing access to higher education, financial support, workforce training, and employment opportunities.

QUICK STATS

FALL 2024 TO FALL 2025 GE PERSISTENCE RATE:
68%

2024 TO 2025: ASSOCIATE DEGREES
47

2024 TO 2025: TRANSFERS
19

2024 TO 2025: FASTFORWARD CREDENTIALS
9

COLLEGE GRADUATION RATES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH FOSTER CARE EXPERIENCE:

NATIONALLY
8%

GE STUDENTS
25%

GE STUDENTS WITH HOUSING STIPEND
47%

HOUSING STIPEND PROGRAMS

Joe and Linda Daniel Student Success Fund/Commonwealth Savers:
114 students are currently receiving this stipend from 17 colleges

Gilliam Family Foundation:
40 students are currently receiving this stipend from 3 colleges–Mountain Empire, Southwest Virginia, and Virginia Highlands

This housing stipend program provides consistent monthly support to enrolled GE students for this critical need. The program has been life-changing for participants, with success rates nearly 30% higher for GE students who receive the stipend compared to those who do not.

GE Gilliam Housing Students Fall 2023 to Fall 2025
Graduation or Credential Attainment Rate: 47%
Associate Degree Attainment: 40%

GE Housing Students Spring 2024 to Fall 2025
Graduation or Credential Attainment Rate: 42%
Persistence Rate: 74%

STUDENT SUCCESS

Inspired by her late husband's commitment to Great Expectations students, Linda Loy established the **Dr. Lee Gurel Endowed Student Success Fund** to honor his legacy and recognize the resilience and persistence of GE students. Thanks to Ms. Loy's generosity, the inaugural awards recognized students for academic merit, completion, and perseverance.

Ms. Loy shared, "Lee admired these students' courage and tenacity. He would be so proud."

Dr. Gurel immigrated to the United States from Poland as a young boy and went on to build a distinguished career as a psychologist. After earning his degrees, he

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STUDENT SUCCESS, cont.

worked for the Veterans Administration, including at the Washington, D.C. VA Medical Center, and later with the American Psychiatric Association. In 2008, Northern Virginia Community College recognized Dr. Gurel with the Chancellor's Award for Leadership in Philanthropy.

The awards will be presented again in June, continuing Dr. Gurel's legacy of supporting and celebrating the determination of Great Expectations students.

"The Great Expectations program has meant so much to me. It provided me with encouragement, resources, and support when I needed it most. Being part of the program helped me stay motivated, build confidence, and believe in myself academically and personally. Knowing that I had people who truly cared about my success made a big difference in my journey."

–Keona Beamon, Reynolds Community College 2026

RECOGNITION

STATE Since FY2023, Great Expectations has received $500,000 a year for distribution amongst the 23 colleges. This support has helped to sustain and institutionalize the program.

FEDERAL Westat Study: The Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) within the Administration for Children and Families selected Great Expectations as one of four programs to participate in the Chafee Strengthening Outcomes for Transition to Adulthood (Chafee SOTA) project. The study is wrapping up this spring, and preliminary data indicates significant positive results.

Thanks to generous funding from Anthem and the support of the Virginia Foundation for Community College Education, Great Expectations coaches and colleagues from several Virginia colleges and universities gathered for a professional development and collaboration program.

Support student success.

GIVE ONLINE:
Make a one-time gift or schedule recurring gift payments by using our secure online giving: **vfcce.org**

CONTACT US:
To learn more about how you can make an impact with the GE program through a planned gift or donor-advised fund, call Steven Jones at 804-819-4961.

GIVE BY MAIL:
Make a check payable to the Virginia Foundation for Community College Education/GE and use the enclosed envelope.

THE VIRGINIA FOUNDATION
for COMMUNITY COLLEGE EDUCATION