

# YOUR FUTURE, YOUR CHOICE

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Charting the Path After  
High School

Dr. Chaka Felder-McEntire  
*Executive Director*



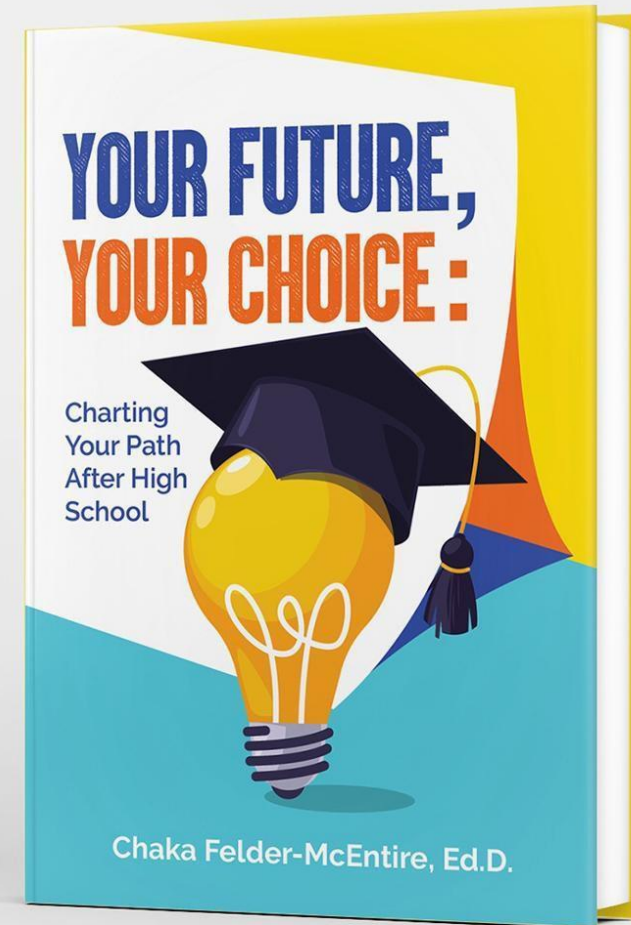
# EMPOWERING STUDENTS

## With College & Career Readiness Tools

**Many students graduate without a clear plan for what comes next.** *Your Future, Your Choice: Charting the Path After High School* equips educators, families, and students with practical, hands-on tools to navigate college and career decisions with confidence.

This interactive session integrates college access, financial literacy, and career exploration to help participants guide young people in identifying their “**why**,” building thoughtful college and career lists, and understanding **true affordability**.

Grounded in over 20 years of experience supporting first-generation and underserved youth, this session provides ready-to-use, culturally responsive strategies that make postsecondary planning engaging, relevant, and achievable—**one choice at a time**.



# The Challenge

National research shows that postsecondary planning disparities are driven by inconsistent advising, limited exposure to pathways, and gaps in financial literacy.

Students need structured support to:

- ✓ Clarify their interests, strengths, and long-term goals
- ✓ Explore aligned college and career pathways
- ✓ Understand affordability, financial aid, and loan implications
- ✓ Build confidence in navigating complex postsecondary systems

Sources: NCES, Lumina Foundation, NCAN

## 01.

Students are receiving less than 20 minutes of one-on-one college and career advising per year (ASCA).

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## 02.

Research shows that first gen and low-income students often underestimate their abilities, overestimate college costs, and lack guidance on aligning their interests with viable a career pathway..

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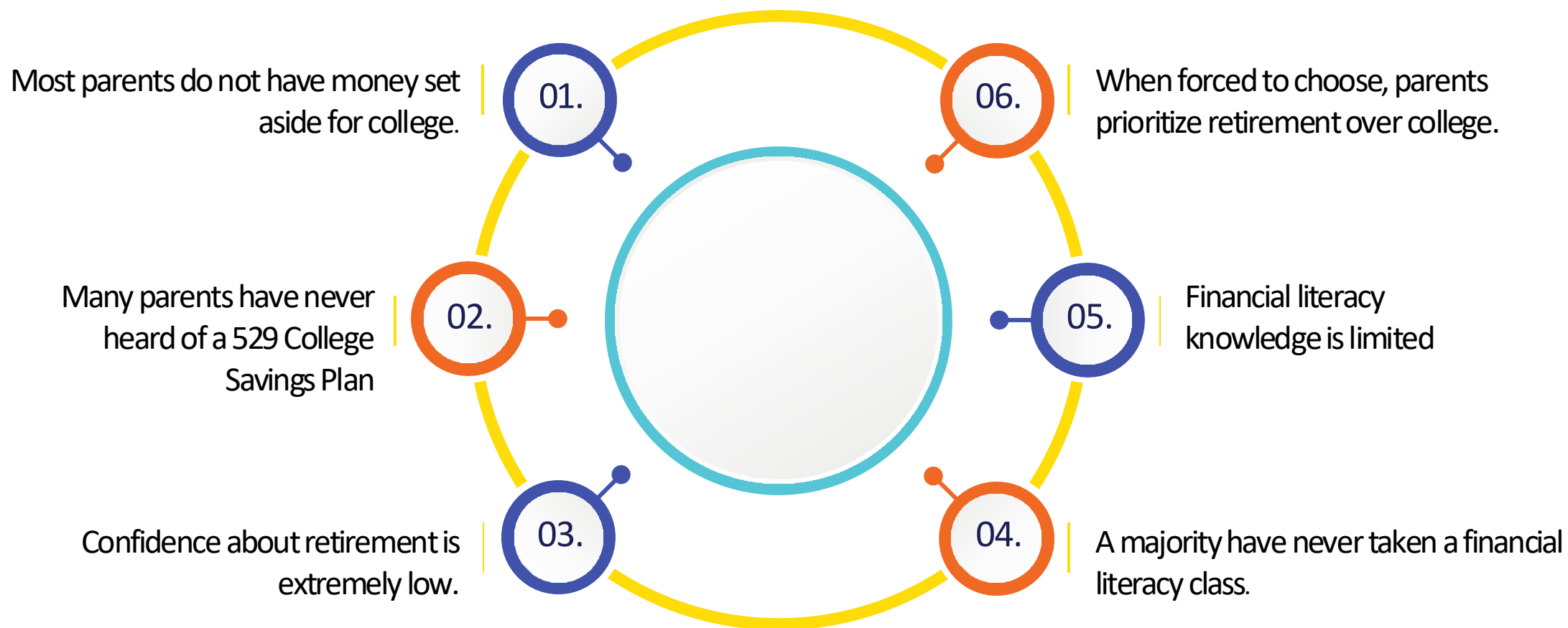
## 03.

Nearly 40% of students rule out colleges because they believe the cost is too high; without knowing about grants, scholarships or net-price.



# Parent Financial Literacy

## What our data shows



*Data Collection: 2025 Higher Heights Parent Financial Readiness Survey*

# PARENT FINANCIAL LITERACY SNAPSHOT

## LIMITED COLLEGE SAVINGS & AWARENESS

- 68.5% have no money saved for college
- 44.4% have never heard of CHET 529

## LOW FINANCIAL CONFIDENCE

- Only 5.6% feel very confident about retirement
- 66.7% not confident in banking, credit, savings
- 64.8% never taken a financial literacy class

## STRONG DESIRE TO LEARN MORE

- Budgeting (82.7%)
- Saving for college (71.2%)
- Understanding credit & debt (44.2%)

*Data Collection: 2025 Higher Heights Parent Financial Readiness Survey*



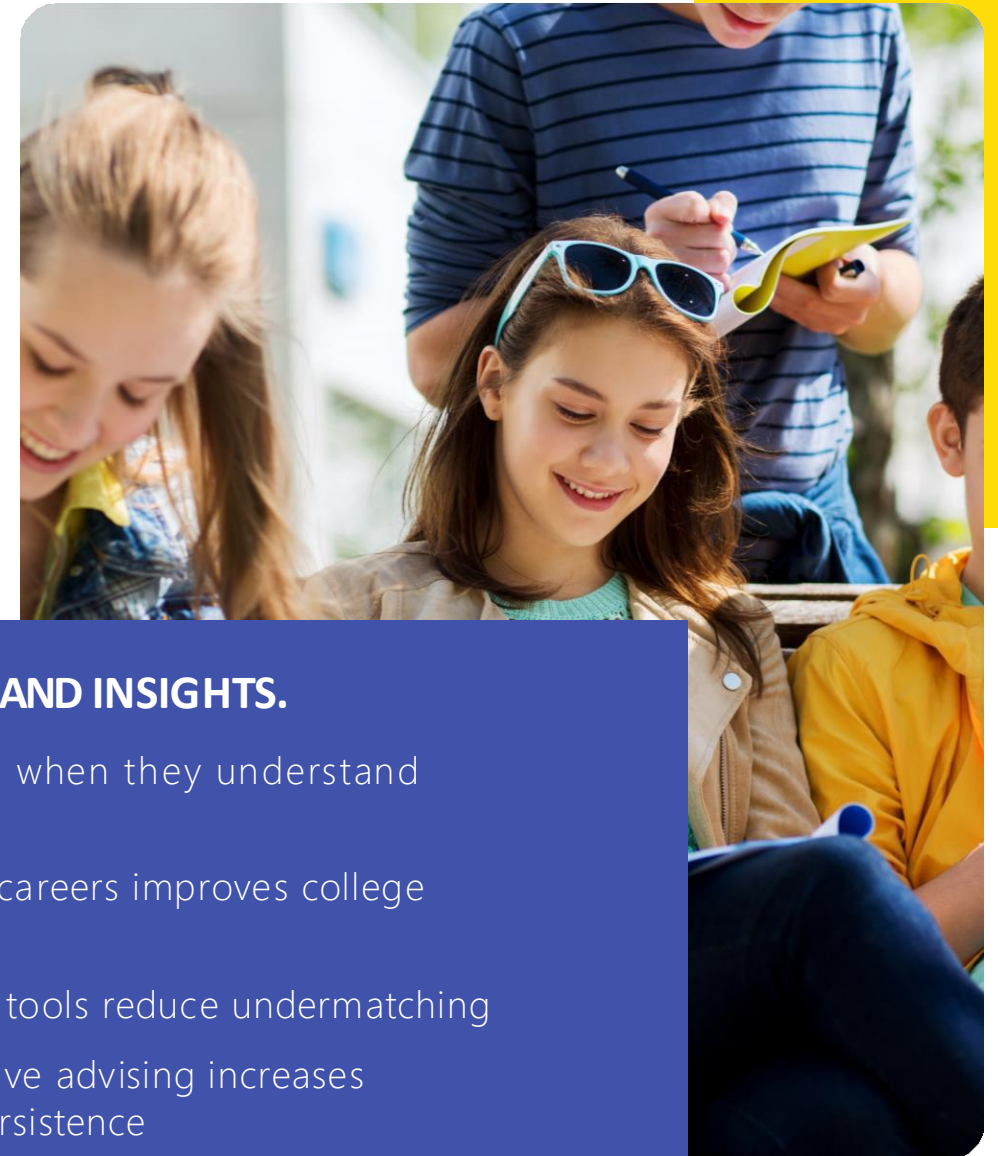
# THE SOLUTION

Provide a structured, equity-focused framework for college & career planning. Equip educators and families with practical advising tools. Strengthen student self-awareness, goal-setting and pathway exploration. Increase access to financial literacy and affordability guidance.

## RESULTS

- Higher FAFSA completion & reduced summer melt.
- Stronger clarity around majors & career interests
- Increased scholarship awards and on-time college enrollment
- More engaged families and better post-secondary decision-making

Higher Heights has supported 10,000+ students and secured over \$800M in scholarships



## KEY LEARNINGS AND INSIGHTS.

Students succeed when they understand their "why"

Early exposure to careers improves college completion

Clear affordability tools reduce undermatching

Culturally responsive advising increases engagement & persistence

# TODAY'S OBJECTIVE

01.

Guide students in identifying their personal "why"

02.

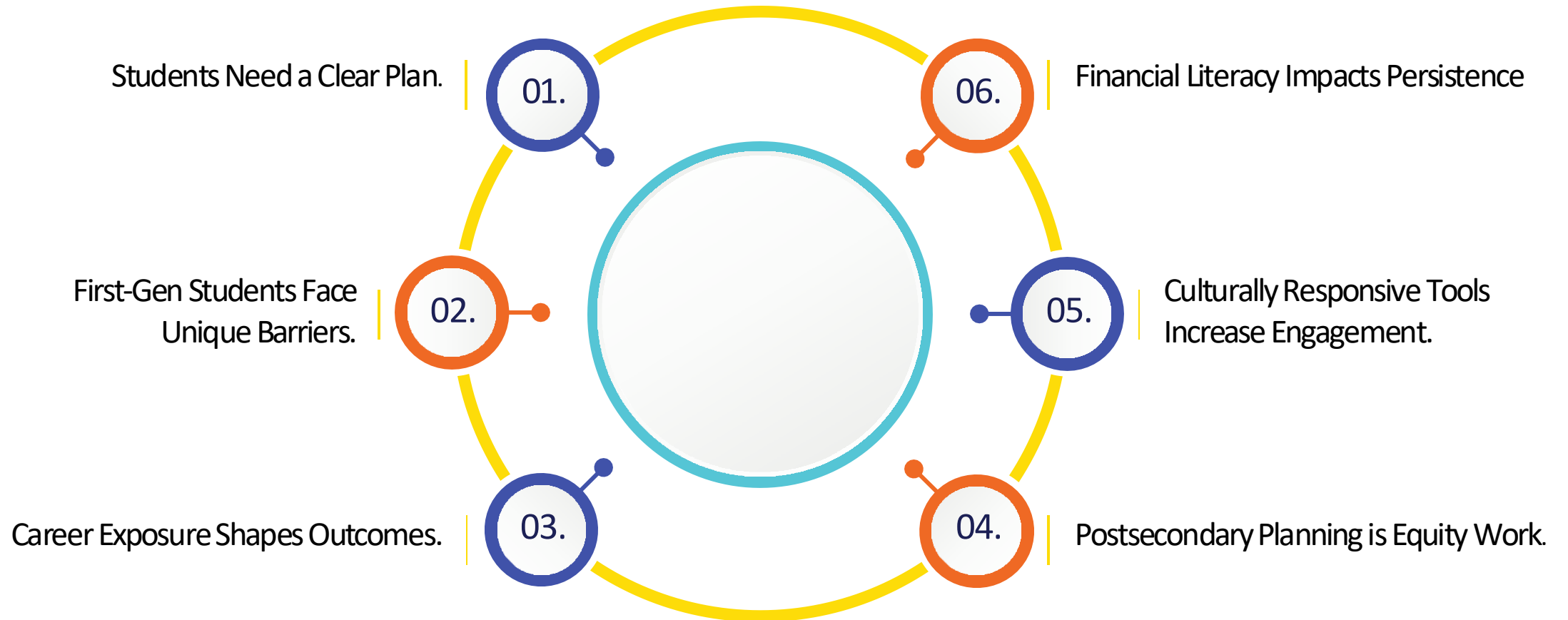
Introducing tools for accessing affordability.

03.

Use hands-on strategies rooted in more than 20 years of proven practice.

# WHY THIS WORK MATTERS

Building Equitable Pathways for all Students







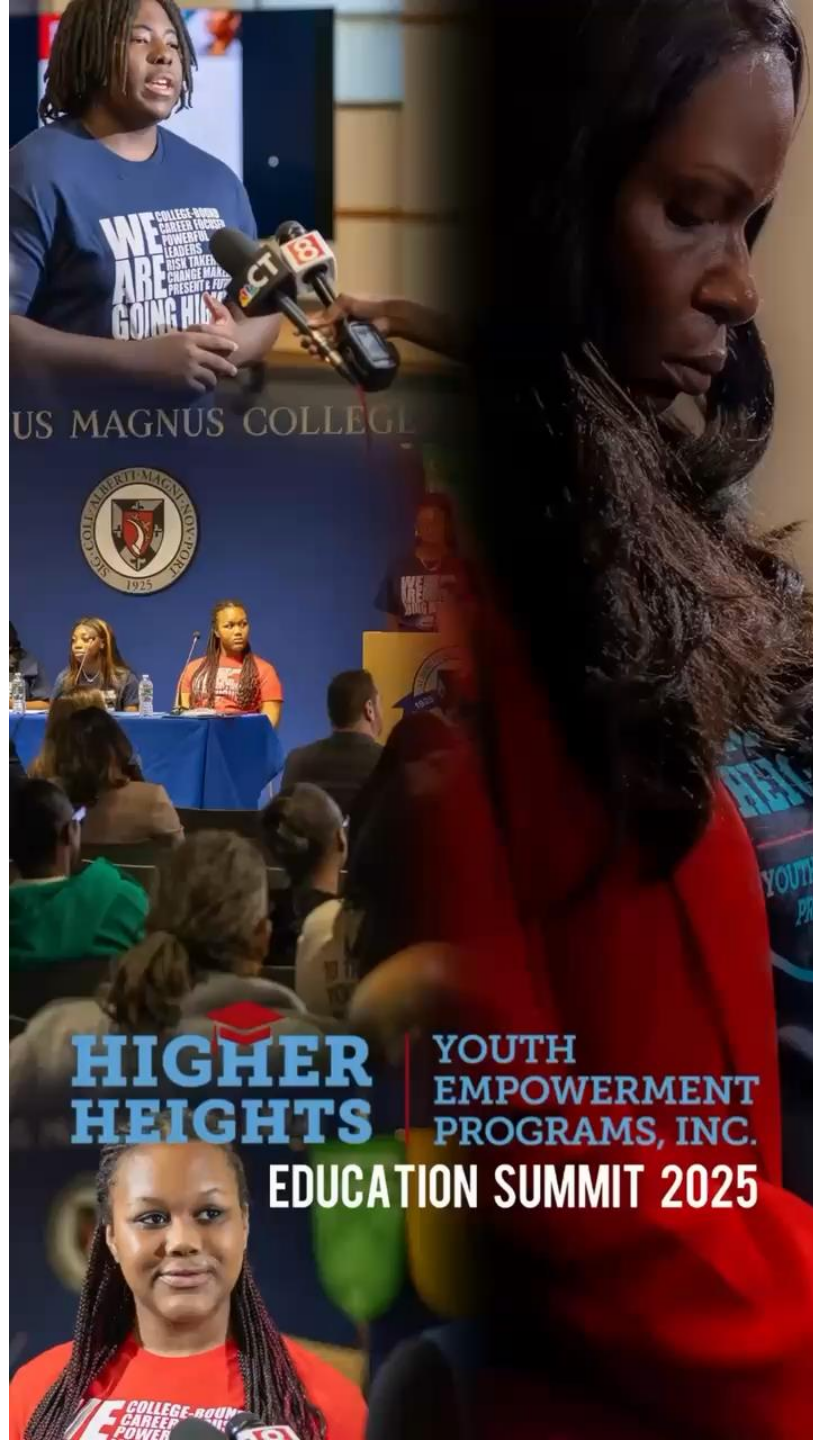
# RELEVANT STUDENT EXPERIENCES



# FAMILY EXPERIENCES







# STUDENT VOICE



# Your Future, Your Choice

## CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

Identity &  
Purpose (“Your  
Why”)

01.

College Search &  
Requirements.

03.

Application Steps  
& Next Moves.

05.

02.

Exploring Majors  
and Careers.

04.

Affordability &  
Financial Literacy.

THANK  
YOU

LET'S STAY CONNECTED

SCAN ME!



SCAN ME!



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