



FIRST STAR ACADEMY OVERVIEW

WHAT IS FIRST STAR CSI ACADEMY?

First Star College of Staten Island (CSI) Academy is a four-year, college preparatory program for up to 30 male and female youth in foster care entering the 9th grade and live in the NY Metro Area.

First Star CSI Academy keeps the students on track for high school graduation and creates a successful transition into higher education and adulthood. First Star graduates have an overall 98% high school graduation rate and 87% of First Star graduates enter higher education.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

First Star CSI Academy serves a cohort of approximately 30 youth.

Academy eligibility includes:

- Open foster care case
- At least a 2.0 GPA
- Ability to succeed in a classroom setting without significant specialized academic resources or behavioral supports
- At least 92% attendance, unless caused by placement changes

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

First Star CSI Academy Director Senemeht Olatunji at senemeht.olatunji@csi.cuny.edu or visit www.firststar.org.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

First Star CSI Academy prepares each participant for higher education and adulthood by providing specialized programming that addresses college/University immersion, academics, life skills, and long-term case management.

University Immersion:

During annual Summer Academies, participating youth spend 4 weeks living at the College of Staten Island each summer throughout high school. During the school year, the youth return to campus one day each month for non-residential workshops, and other enrichment activities.

Academics:

First Star works to keep all participating youth on track for high school graduation and prepares them to successfully transition to higher education through remedial and college-prep curricula. Academy staff works with each individual youth to know their educational rights as a foster youth, and monitors their academic progress during each school year until they graduate.

Life Skills:

We prepare youth to successfully transition from foster care into adulthood. Life skills workshops include: career readiness, financial literacy, social justice, health and wellness, study skills, and access to foster care specific resources. The Academies provide ongoing consultation to the youth as they implement these skills in their daily lives.

Long-Term Case Management:

Throughout all four years, the Academies provide individualized case management that supplements and reinforces the lessons learned during the university-immersion components of the Academy. The Academies work with the youth's caregivers, schools, social workers, and attorneys to ensure the youth receive the necessary supports and services to succeed in school, remain in the same placement and move towards permanency, and gain the skills needed to successfully transition to adulthood.

BENEFITS

An individualized education and transition plan with personal goals is developed for each participant based on specific needs and interests. These goals include promoting intellectual, emotional and physical strength, endurance, and health that lead to a new understanding of the relationships between the brain, the body, and the learning processes.

To enhance programming and exposure to real world industry trends, the First Star Academy highlights the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). Students engage in STEM coursework, participate in workshops where they learn from STEM professionals and are exposed to STEM through various field trips in the NYC Metro area. The Academy seeks to expand this exposure by creating an opportunity for students to see STEM in action on college campuses and as viable college major and career opportunities.

Through various community partnerships students are provided SAT preparation courses, financial literacy, business & entrepreneurship design and visual arts for a well-rounded academic experience.

The Academy presents students with a preview of the collegiate experience through participation in an annual four-week residential summer immersion experience on a university campus.