



CAREER COMPASS

Louisiana's Nonprofit Authority on College and Career Access





our **STORY:**

From Our Co-founders

Twelve years ago, we took a leap of faith and founded Career Compass of Louisiana, an educational nonprofit aimed at helping students overcome the obstacles that would prevent them from pursuing post-secondary education. Both teachers in a public school, we loved our students like they were our own children. We knew deep down that we were called to make a different kind of impact in kids' lives and to work on another level to make Louisiana a better place to live and work. Our goal is for every student in Louisiana to have a caring, knowledgeable, Career Compass coach who sits next to them and helps them understand their options and achieve their goals.

Our services have evolved over the years. We started out by offering one-on-one coaching for 12th graders. We learned that if we started earlier, we could help our students be better prepared for their high school years. We now offer early college awareness seminars and boot camps for 6th-11th graders. A new paradigm for our state's college and technical education programming was rolled out of the Louisiana Department of Education, giving rise to our Jump Start small-group mentoring program. When FAFSA completion became state mandated, we knew that the overwhelmed students, parents, and professional school counselors in our service areas needed help, so we took that on, too. Because of these needs, we have developed a parent-focused app to help them make informed decisions with their student.

As a college and career access organization serving youth in an ever-changing political, educational, and social landscape, we are morally compelled to continually reflect upon whether our slate of services is meeting our students' needs, if what we are doing makes a difference, and what we can do to improve our offerings. We can ALWAYS learn, improve, and grow.

This 2017-18 annual report features the stories of four of our students who took on big, scary challenges this year with the help and support of Career Compass college and career coaches. Looking ahead we encourage all of you—students, stakeholders, educators, funders—to take on the big, scary challenges in life. These four students did it, we did it, and you can do it, too! You may change more than your own life; you may impact someone else's for the better.

In service,

Kacy Edwards and Julie Scott
Co-Founders, Executive Directors

our MISSION:

To remove the obstacles that keep students from pursuing a post-secondary education.



our SERVICES:

- One-on-One College & Career Coaching for 12th grade
- FAFSA Completion for 12th grade to apply for federal financial aid
- Jump Start Small-Group Mentoring to build technical career paths
- College & Career Awareness Seminars & Boot Camps to foster early understanding in 6th–11th grade

New in 2018-19

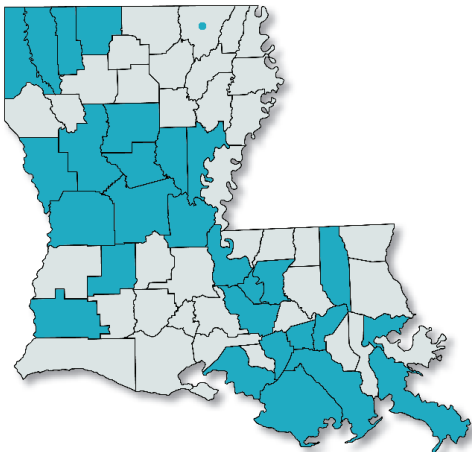
- Parental Engagement App & Support Services
- Professional Development for educators & counselors

our VISION:

To ensure every student has the opportunity to meet with a caring, knowledgeable college and career coach to help them overcome obstacles keeping them from post-secondary success.

We are committed to serving high school students at no cost to them or their families. We are able to do this because we rely on a mix of support from partners that believe, like we do, that effective college and career coaching should be widely available to all students. We partner with school districts, post-secondary systems, corporate and private philanthropy, and individuals.

Where We Are



130 Louisiana public schools served

30 school districts across Louisiana

75 coaches with **60** hours of annual training each



One-on-One Coaching

Career Compass coaches are trained to address obstacles in real-time for 12th grade students through one-on-one college and career coaching. Working one-on-one with high school seniors, coaches equip them with regionally-relevant workforce and post-secondary information. From exploring career options, to test scheduling and college application prep, Career Compass coaches complement school counseling staff and take students from uncertainty to confident action. Coaches can even cover or obtain waivers for the ACT exam fee and college application fees.

Mikayla Scaife's Story



Mikayla Scaife grew up around animals on her grandfather's farm. Now, she's getting ready to embark on a career in veterinary medicine, thanks to her hard work in high school and a little boost from the adults who are cheering her on, like her Career Compass college and career coach.

"I love the personal relationship I got to build with her," Mikayla said. "I was going through a rough time and she pushed me and checked up on me, and I thank her for that."

During Mikayla's senior year at Natchitoches Central High School, her grandfather had a heart attack. But, Mikayla pushed through with a full slate of extracurriculars at school. She managed to graduate with a 4.18 weighted GPA. Now, she's headed to Louisiana Tech University to study animal science and take pre-vet courses.

12,996

Career Compass seniors who applied to post-secondary schools in 2017-18 overcame obstacles

89,594

Career Compass seniors have applied to post-secondary schools since 2006

\$24,705

College application fees covered by Career Compass or waived by Career Compass partners

\$30,750

ACT exam fees covered by Career Compass or waivers secured by Career Compass

98%

of students who completed Career Compass services applied to a post-secondary school that they could successfully complete

Where our students apply:

41%

four-year college or university

45%

technical or community college program

14%

private, military, or out-of-state

JayCorey Fowlkes' Story

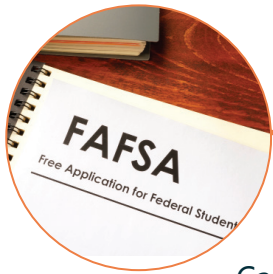


After growing up watching his grandmother care for others as a nurse, it's no surprise that JayCorey Fowlkes is ready to follow in her footsteps. He's headed to Bossier Parish Community College next year to pursue a career in neonatal nursing.

But, like many of his classmates, when it came to completing the FAFSA, he didn't even know where to start.

"I had no idea what it was," JayCorey said. "But my Career Compass coach helped me put stuff in order, showed me where it should go, got all the right schools on there." JayCorey says he's thankful she was there to keep pushing him and others forward.

"I could tell that my coach wanted to see everyone succeed. She brought lots of excitement to our faces."



FAFSA Awareness & Coordination

Career Compass coaches work with school-level personnel to coordinate FAFSA completion events, develop customized student strategies, and use data to drive FAFSA completion rates. New in the 2018-19 school year, FAFSA completion services will be rolled into our one-on-one college and career coaching services. Students will be able to meet their high school graduation requirements, and more importantly take proactive steps to finance their college education.

We want success!



12,784

Career Compass seniors educated about the importance of FAFSA completion

#1

Louisiana ranked first in the nation for high school FAFSA completion this year, in part due to Career Compass programs

90%

of high school seniors nationally who complete the FAFSA proceed directly to college, versus only 55% who don't complete the FAFSA (National College Access Network, 2017)

(Source: www.collegeaccess.org)

Thomas Johnson's Story



Thomas Johnson's advice for 9th graders: "Take your future seriously. Really look into what you want to do." As a participant in the Jump Start Small-Group Mentoring program through Career Compass, Thomas took his own advice and started planning early.

In high school, where the academics were tough but his classmates were like family, Thomas set his sights on a career in process technology. He saw his cousins working in plants and was intrigued by the hands-on nature of their jobs.

So, when his senior year came around, Thomas worked with his coach to apply to three different schools, and he was accepted to all three! Thomas starts at Baton Rouge Community College this fall.



Jump Start Small-Group Mentoring

Whether students need help deciding on a Jump Start pathway, or need extra guidance, small-group coaching can help them get their college and career bearings. At the end of their sophomore year, Louisiana students must make a crucial decision on their college and career plans. This early intervention is designed for high school freshmen, sophomores, and juniors, to help get students on the right track toward earning their diploma.

our **CALL TO ACTION:**

By 2022, we aim to be in every parish in the state, while deepening our footprint in the communities we already serve. **You can help by being:**

- **Our champion in your community.** Help us generate awareness for our cause and the impact we make on students in your area.
- **A voice for your community.** Bring community feedback to us and help us assess and meet changing community, business, and workforce needs.
- **A connector.** Help us develop community connections and new partnerships by leveraging your network.
- **A fundraiser.** Encourage others to contribute funding or help us improve our funding model.
- **A host.** Help us host an outreach event, training event, or fundraiser.
- **A funding partner.** Donate to a school, district, or region of the state.

Cheyenne Ockmand's Story

College & Career Awareness Seminars & Boot Camps

Even as early as middle school, students encounter obstacles that might prevent them from pursuing post-secondary education. College and career awareness seminars and boot camps reach students in grades 6-11 to begin the conversation about career choices and post-secondary options. Building a college-going culture early on can help students better structure their high school experience to reach those goals. Armed with the right information, students can be proactive in addressing future obstacles.



When Cheyenne Ockmand first started working with Career Compass, she was a carefree 9th grader who wasn't too concerned about school or her future. Then, in 10th grade, her world fell apart. Her father passed away and every day became a challenge.

"I wanted to give up, but I knew that wasn't an option," Cheyenne said. "I decided I'd make him proud, show him I could do it, and I put all I had into school." By 12th grade, she was on the honor roll for the entire year and excelling!

"Working with Career Compass helped me feel more and more sure about what I wanted to do," Cheyenne said. "The best part was being able to talk to someone about what I want to do. I never really had that with anyone."

She worked with her coach to outline a path to her future career as an ultrasound technician. The best part? Getting to work with soon-to-be-moms and seeing their joy.



Every Student. Every Community.
Transforming lives through the power of education.

2,471

9th, 10th, and 11th graders were mentored on Jump Start college and career pathways by Career Compass

2,649

12th graders selected Jump Start pathways

18,099

6th-11th graders improved their college and career knowledge through college and career awareness seminars

1,438

college and career awareness seminars were provided statewide.

showing the way for students every day



providing **STUDENT FOCUS** for college and career



www.CareerCompassLA.org