

FIRST-GENERATION FEATURE

JANICE STOVER



Associate Vice President of Academics
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#CelebrateFirstGen
#IAMFIRST

“Being a first-generation student means educational goals are achievable with self-motivation and determination despite economic and other personal challenges.”

1 Out of Every 3 Undergraduates Identify as First-Generation

We are proud to introduce our first, first-generation feature, Janice Stover. Janice is the Vice President of Academics & Secondary Partnerships at Cowley College and an inspiration to many. As a first-generation student herself, she has accomplished a Master of Curriculum & Instruction degree. Here's a brief insight from Janice into what it means to be a first-generation student and how it shapes one's experience.

What does being a First-Generation student mean to you?

Being a first-generation student means educational goals are achievable with self-motivation and determination despite economic and other personal challenges. I am one of eight children in my family and every one of us has gone on to graduate from college, with six of the eight of us having earned a Master's degree or higher.

WHY CELEBRATE ON NOVEMBER 8TH?

FGCC is celebrated every year on November 8th in observation of President Lyndon B. Johnson signing the Higher Education Act of 1965. This act strengthened educational resources and established federal financial aid programs to support students in postsecondary and higher education. Federal TRIO programs like **IMPACT** are HEA programs and play a large role in encouraging postsecondary access, retention, and completion for first-generation college students from limited-income backgrounds.

What memories do you have of being a first-generation college student? What challenged you and what surprised you?

There wasn't a great advising system in place when I initially attended a community college and then transferred on to a four-year university, so I needed to find the resources to help me develop a plan for degree completion. I had little understanding regarding college majors and how those tied into career opportunities. I worked several jobs while attending college and needed to balance class and study time with work and extracurricular activities. I found being involved in student organizations helped me gain leadership experience and connect with other students.

What do you wish first generation students knew when they come to Cowley?

Ask questions and seek guidance from your instructors, advisors, college staff, student peers, and others in order to gain understanding and perspective on topics and processes. There is a great network within the college to help you achieve success.

Any advice you would add for first-generation students?

There will be difficult and challenging times, but you can overcome those if you stay motivated and keep your end goal in mind.

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