SEE INSIDE:
IN THEIR OWN WORDS
AMY & NASIRA SHARE LETTERS ABOUT THE POWER OF THE LGR COACH AND STUDENT RELATIONSHIP!
CEO MESSAGE

2023 marks LGR’s 25th year of impactful work, and our 50,000th student enrolled! Over these 25 years, LGR has been consistently dedicated to ensuring that first-generation students and those from disinvested communities with lower incomes have the necessary tools to access and persist in college. As we have grown and evolved, what has remained is the idea that young people have all the empathy and wisdom needed to support their younger peers through all the complexities of navigating post-secondary education, and the belief that all students are entitled to assume that their most personal and expansive aspirations are within their grasp. Our job is to capture the expertise and energy of our young leaders, and create a structure for near-peer mentoring to flourish and these incredible aspirations to be reached.

Over this last quarter century, a central part of our ethos has been to be strategically responsive to the environment in which we operate, and in which our students make critical decisions about their future. Over the last several years, this has meant investments in culturally-responsive mentoring, exploration of new technology to support scale and quality, partnerships with community colleges and rural communities, building a national footprint, and learning how to work and build community remotely. This also means staying vigilant in our awareness of the policy issues impacting our students, and being equipped to support them as they navigate the changing ecosystem affecting everything from DACA to Affirmative Action, college financing to standardized testing. This year in particular requires that we reaffirm our commitment to building equitable systems for access to higher education.

The bottom line is that LGR works in so many ways: students become coaches who become staff members and board members, institutions receive critical partnerships to build their capacity for student support, coaches take their experience into their professional journeys in the education sector, and our students graduate from college at double the rate of their peers across the country.

We could not achieve what we have in the last 25 years without our community of student leaders, dedicated staff and partners, Board of Directors and supporters - your continued commitment to Let’s Get Ready and our mission is invaluable and we thank you deeply.

Here’s to another 25 years of students helping students to and through college!

With gratitude and in partnership,

LENA EBERHART
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
A college coach is one of the best things a student can have while in their academic journey because they can be guided in many different aspects aside from the education. Having a coach like Amy is one of the best things a student can receive in their college process. She has been helpful with every part of my academic journey through college and even a helpful part in my personal journey. Her patience, intelligence and passion show through the way she coaches, and it motivates me to be better as a student.

There was a time where I had struggles with my major and deciding what I am passionate about. She was able to give me tips and help me through her journey with her major, ways I could decide how to find what I love and what resonates best with me. The fact that she was able to share that part of her journey with me to be able to guide my decision is one of the qualities in her that I admire which is the ability to go above and beyond. Aside from her advising me in college and being a college coach, we have developed a respectful and delightful bond. I am able to share things with her without feeling judged and able to confide my problems with her. I am glad that I am graced with Amy being my coach and developing a friendship with her.

NASIRA
LGR STUDENT
IMPACT OVERVIEW

For 25 years, Let’s Get Ready (LGR) has developed expertise in near-peer coaching strategies that support students’ college aspirations, leveraging virtual tools and harnessing the power of young people to increase college enrollment and degree attainment rates for over 50,000 students across the country. As a national leader in college access and success, LGR has a proven track record of working with local communities to implement our national virtual model at scale — and as a result, 88% of LGR students enroll in college, and our students graduate at DOUBLE THE RATE of their peers from similar backgrounds.

Above all else, we envision a future where students from all socioeconomic backgrounds have the support they need to attain a college degree. Through our paid opportunities, college students are empowered to become leaders and serve as mentors and role models to their peers, providing the information, inspiration, guidance and support students need to gain access to, navigate and thrive at college and beyond.

2021-22 SNAPSHOT

- LGR served over 17,000 students
- Over 100 college students served as near-peer mentors
- Our students were in 29 states and nearly 1,200 zip codes
- 91% of students identified as people of color
- 75% of students came from low-income communities and/or were the first in their family to go to college
MEASURING OUR SUCCESS

Students that participate in Let’s Get Ready’s programming exceed national averages across the board. Our students, coaches, and partners build bonded communities to ensure that the college experience is one that is culturally responsive, community-centered, and inclusive. Our success is largely attributed to the power of our students’ collective voices, inspiring each generation that comes after them through intentional knowledge sharing.

What LGR has meant to me is the importance of community and having someone rooting for you. Having been through all of the programs LGR provides and experiencing each step with them by my side has helped me navigate my journey thus far in a smoother transition. What LGR means to me today is that persistence combined with meaningful connections creates a ripple effect in every which way. It allows for students to turn to their coaches in a transparent way. It allows for coaches to feel good about themselves and realize the impact they have. Having been both, I’m just grateful for the full circle moment & opportunities that allow me to impact more lives while impacting my own as I start realizing that the possibilities are truly endless. The dreams become reality, doubts turn to confidence, and outreach turns to community. As I continue to embark on my journey whether professional or educational, I remind myself that I am equipped with the skills needed, have more sense of myself and my ambitions - all with the influence and assistance of LGR. Trust the process!

AMY
LGR COACH
We measure the success of our programs with both qualitative and quantitative indicators. These reports reflect data from high school and college students served in our most recent program year, and they examine college enrollment and graduation rates for our students who graduated from high school between 2016 and 2022.

**FUN FACT**

63% of LGR coaches are former LGR students that have been inspired to mentor others.

**ENROLLMENT RATE**

- Let’s Get Ready: 88
- Below-median Family Income (National Rate): 59
- National Average: 62
- Highest Family Income Quartile (National Rate): 74

**GRADUATION RATE**

- Let’s Get Ready: 66
- National Average (All Students and Schools): 62
- Low-income (National Bachelor’s Attainment Rate): 30


*Any 2- or 4-year degree; 61% of LGR students earn a bachelor’s degree within six years

TESTIMONIALS

“Throughout my college career LGR, my coaches, and this community of diligent supporters has helped me make sense of my education and make smart decisions. For example, as I was preparing for college I received support from LGR that created a pathway for debt-free education. Because of my LGR support system and my coach I was able to ensure that I received all [local] grant opportunities, various scholarships, and other debt-free funding, which made obtaining my college degree easier. In fact, as I embark on my graduate degree the tools that I learned through my coach at LGR have ensured that I will again have a debt free graduate school education as well.”

– LUVONDA, LGR Student

“Let’s Get Ready has been part of every step along my path. It helped me get into college, nurtured me as a leader, and stoked my passion for educational equity, a cause to which I have devoted my professional life.”

– ANDREA LOPEZ-SALAZAR, LGR Alum, Founder of LGR Associates Council & Recipient of LGR’s Inaugural Founder’s Legacy Award
AN INNOVATIVE MODEL

As early as 2015, LGR recognized the important role that text messages could play in providing timely reminders and resources to college students navigating the critical milestones and deadlines associated with persisting in college. Leveraging technology to deliver our programs gives Let’s Get Ready a high-quality, scalable and sustainable way to support students throughout their educational journey – which means that more young people can connect with a near peer mentor who is able to role model success, provide motivation and personalized advice to overcome barriers, and empower students to become self-advocates as they work toward attaining a college degree.

- 2015 LGR begins to explore virtual programming and texting as a tool to provide ongoing support to students beyond the SAT program
- 2019 LGR significantly intensifies rigor of text-based curriculum in alignment with nudging research and stakeholder input
- 2020 LGR programming goes fully virtual (from junior year of high school to college graduation)
- 2021 LGR pilots and launches AI/bot enabled texting work (AI monitors work behind the scenes while coaches work directly with students via text)
- 2023 LGR recognized as a leader in text-based student support and is invited to participate in a Hybrid Advising learning co-op with other leading national non-profit organizations

“Working with Let’s Get Ready has been incredibly helpful to help bridge the gap for graduating seniors who are entering college during that important transitional phase. It’s especially important working with partners like LGR who have a deep understanding and commitment to Furness student population, with the strengths and needs brought by first generation and undocumented student populations.”  

– CARMEN RODI, Furness High School, LGR Partner
What makes our virtual programming unique and impactful is that we work to achieve the efficiency benefits of text-based programming while maintaining students' access to the substantial and personalized support we know students need to thrive in college and beyond. To accomplish this balance, we prioritize:

**FLEXIBILITY AND STUDENT CHOICE:**
Students drive the level of support they receive from their Let's Get Ready coach - allowing the program to meet the needs of students from a wide range of backgrounds and with a wide range of needs and preferences.

**TRUST AND HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS:**
Coaches are trained to build meaningful relationships virtually that will help their students see them as trusted experts who care about them and who will work hard to support them.

**COMPREHENSIVE AND INDIVIDUALIZED GUIDANCE:**
Even in our text-only program, we use student data to segment students in ways that allow us to tailor the weekly text curriculum they receive for their unique needs.

**STRATEGIC USE OF AI TECHNOLOGY:**
We drive program innovation through extensive testing and scale with quality and efficiency without disrupting the human to human mentoring relationships.
GEOGRAPHIC EXPANSION

Through LGR’s nimble, high-impact partnership model, we provide necessary scaffolding to open access points into college and ensure that guidance counselors, college advisors, academic advisors, and campus leaders can focus on the most critical components of their work. Community-based organizations, high schools and post-secondary institutions rely on Let’s Get Ready’s reliable, human-centered virtual advising model to implement high-quality programming for entire cohorts of students or based on the specific needs of their students.

“We are so proud of the growth that we have had nationally, predominantly in major cities across the country and this new era of growth in rural communities is deepening our mission of connecting college attainment to students within some of our most vulnerable communities.”

– JORDAN WESLEY, Managing Director of Partnerships at LGR

By working in state-wide colleges and universities and through system-wide partnerships, we have QUADRUPLED the number of newly recruited students in rural communities who are connected to a Let’s Get Ready coach in only two years. Partnerships with institutions like Southern Maine Community College and the University of Maine’s Early College Program have been catalytic in our understanding of how to scale rural programming, become a large-scale driver of rural student success, and extend the advising pipeline into high school to ensure that rural students have support from junior year of high school through to college graduation.
We especially want to thank Let’s Get Ready’s National Board of Directors, the New England Advisory Board, and the Associates Council for their leadership, guidance, and hard work — and for their contributions of time, talent, and treasure to ensure that our students and staff had the support and resources necessary to navigate and succeed in these ongoing unprecedented times.

As we embark on an ambitious strategic plan to double the number of students we serve by 2025, we are grateful for your continued support and are looking forward to the successes ahead!

"The mission of Let’s Get Ready, for me, just hits my key passion area, which is making sure that all students get what they need and deserve from our system of schools. Let’s Get Ready is focused on serving first generation students, students of color, low-income students and helping them navigate what is often a very challenging college process. I give to Let’s Get Ready because I believe in the work and I know how important this work is. Whatever we can do to help our kids succeed, I personally don’t think there’s anything more important than that."

– MARY TAMER, LGR New England Advisory Board
CONTRIBUTORS LIST

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Zoe Smolen
Zulema Seligsohn
STAY CONNECTED

MARVIN VILMA
Managing Director of Development
mvilma@letsgetready.org

DENNIS MAURICE DUMPSON
Chief External Affairs Officer
ddumpson@letsgetready.org

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