



# First-Generation@Scripps

Scripps College

April 01, 2014

Edition 1, Volume 6

## *Letter from the Editors*

Dear Readers,

Here it is—our final installment of the first edition of the First-Generation @ Scripps Program newsletter! We have so many feelings about our journey here to the end. Happiness, sadness, excitement...nostalgia. With this year coming to a close, we are reminded of our origins. For us, it only makes sense to pay homage to the founders of our program and give them the opportunity to address the flourishing community of which they once only dreamed. For this reason, we revisit the beginning. Joining us for this issue are voices who paved the way for all that we have accomplished this year. Without them, there would be no us.

Speaking of us, we'd also like to take a moment to wax about the crazy and wonderful ride that this all has been. We cannot express how much we have enjoyed serving as interns for this innovative and growing program. Thank you for giving us an outlet to be ourselves. From random rants to selfies, this newsletter has been a space of pure expression and joy. Here, we write out our passions, our hopes, and share our dreams of what Scripps could be if we simply communicated with one another what it is that we need in order to be successful, strong, and inclusive.

We hope to have done our small part in this and that those who come after us will be empowered to do the same. We are beyond excited for what is to come. Because of this, we bow out and give way to the future interns of this program. We are not so much leaving as giving others a chance to love the First-Generation @ Scripps Program as much as we do.

As Always,  
Shane and Maria

**Shane Zackery '14**  
**Maria Ceja Rodriguez '14**  
*Program Co-Interns*



## *In This Issue*

Letter from the Editors



April Showers: Gratitude  
for First-Gen @ Scripps  
by Mary Hatcher-Skeers



Oh, Nostalgia: Melissa  
Mesinas '12



The Bigger Picture: First-  
Generation News in  
Higher Education



Calendar of Events

## **We Want to Hear From You!**

To inspire our readers and recognize your accomplishments, we would like to feature your story in one of our upcoming newsletters.

Please send us a personal article or poem depicting your experience as a first-gener to:

[firstgeneration@scrippscollege.edu](mailto:firstgeneration@scrippscollege.edu)

## April Showers:

### Gratitude for First-Gen @Scripps

Is it April already?!?!?

I cannot believe that we have already reached that point in the semester where it all feels like a crazy race to the finish. We tasted the freedom of spring break and are having a difficult time focusing while dreaming about summer. However, there are still papers to write, projects to finish, and theses to complete. First years are realizing that they are no longer new to campus and have successfully navigated their first year of college. Seniors recognize that it is almost time to say goodbye and begin their new lives. It can all feel a little overwhelming, but also a bit exhilarating.

It is for these seniors that I write this essay. This May, we will be graduating the Inaugural Class of the First-Generation @ Scripps Program. Their graduation can be viewed as a culmination of the dreams and hard work of many who wanted to do more to help First-Generation students make Scripps their home. The program began in the Scripps College Academy Office with past SCA scholars, facilitators, and staff wanting to expand the empowerment work that SCA began to all incoming First-Generation Scripps students.

Kelly Hewitt, Ashley Pallie, and Melissa Mesinas poured their hearts into developing a pre-orientation program with little or no funds for food or housing. They recruited faculty and staff to discuss study habits, tips for navigating CORE, and how to utilize campus resources. The program faced many challenges, and yet turned out to be a huge success. Chris

*"They carry with them the dreams of Melissa, Kelly, and Ashley — young women who had the audacity to challenge the status quo and demand more from Scripps."*

*-Mary Hatcher-Skeers*

Guzaitis and I were recruited as faculty liaisons and plans for year round programming were developed. More and more students, faculty, and staff stepped up to be a part of something we believed would make Scripps better for all students.

The administration came to recognize the amazing value the First-Gen @ Scripps Program provides and its need for institutional support. Today, the program has a budget, Sonia de la Torre, and real housing (you first years have *no idea* how good you



Mary Hatcher-Skeers  
First-Gen Faculty Liaison

have it!). We even have two spectacular First-Gen Interns!

Working with Shane and Maria has been a highlight of my year. I have known them since that first pre-orientation program and can honestly say that I have learned much more from them than they have from me. Their commitment to the First-Gen @ Scripps Program and to each of the students they serve is beautiful to experience. They carry with them the dreams of Melissa, Kelly, and Ashley — young women who had the audacity to challenge the status quo and demand more from Scripps. They, along with the entire inaugural graduating class have done much to make Scripps more welcoming to all students. Still, this semester has taught us that there is much more work to be done. I will miss Shane and Maria, but am grateful for their legacy. I look forward to working with new interns and all of you who read this newsletter to continue this important work.

## Oh, Nostalgia:

Melissa Mesinas '12

I remember browsing through the CollegeBoard website as a high school senior and reading the words “First-Generation college student” under the “very important” criteria of various colleges. I thought to myself, “Oh yea, I am *totally* that!” and felt my nerves calm a bit. However, at the tender age of seventeen I didn’t realize that a few things were beginning to happen.

I had never really labeled myself as “First-Generation” or even “Latina,”

although the reality of such labels, at least in the context of Lynwood, CA, which is a predominantly Latino community, was not new to me. Almost a year after reading the term “First-Generation” online, I was getting ready to embark on my journey at Scripps and learn what First-Gen meant in college and beyond.

My first semester at Scripps was arguably the hardest. I was learning the ropes and was adjusting to academic shock (reading 400 pages a week for CORE and my other classes was not something that I was used to). Although I felt incredibly overwhelmed, I did not say a word to anyone for fear of

appearing weak and not “cut out” for college. As a Scripps College Academy Scholar, I had a support system in staff, faculty, and fellow students and thought that was all I needed to succeed in college. Though these resources helped, I still felt something missing. It wasn’t until the Café con Leche retreat

*“I remember the students’ reactions of joy and awe as they met fellow First-Gen members in their professors and administrators who would be a part of their new community.”*

*-Melissa Mesinas '12*

during a group sharing session that I finally voiced my frustration. To my surprise, other first-year students felt the same way. At that moment I realized that I wasn’t the only one struggling in one way or another. I immediately thought: “Why isn’t there any formal support for First-Generation students?”

During my sophomore year at Scripps, funding was available for diversity projects and a couple of staff members and I thought it would be a great idea to propose a pre-orientation program to help First-Generation students transition to Scripps. Our project was approved and in the summer of 2010 we began



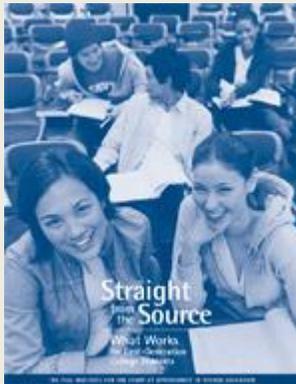
Melissa Mesinas '12  
Student Founder of the  
First-Gen Program

preparing *First-Generation @ Scripps!* This was such an exciting time because we had so many students, staff, and faculty participating in workshops, panels, and social activities.

A very cool thing happened when the students arrived and the program was underway—so many staff and faculty came out as “First-Gen” themselves! Four years later, the First-Gen Program is going strong. After having the privilege of running the program for three years as a student and staff member, I am happy to see it grow with Shane, Maria, and Sonia, along with the rest of the First-Gen community at Scripps. Seeing the pre-orientation workshops grow into year-round programming, along with an awesome newsletter, not only brings a diverse group of people together, but creates a much needed transparency of First-Generation awareness to not only the Scripps community but to the world of higher education.

# The Bigger Picture: First-Generation News in Higher Education

It is vital that we frame the work done here at Scripps within the broader context of conversations surrounding first-generation issues, initiatives, and triumphs in higher-education. The following articles showcase the work being done in our community at universities all over the nation.



*The Pell Institute*

## [\*\*Straight From the Source – What Works for First-Generation College Students\*\*](#)

**The Pell Institute**

**Council for Opportunity in Education**

With so much attention focused on this population, it is important to consider how first-generation students respond to the messages and services targeted to them. With funding from the Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation, the Pell Institute conducted a research study about the transition from high school to college for first-generation students in Texas.



Kristina Scott, executive director of Alabama Possible

## [\*\*FAFSA: The most important college document you have never heard of...\*\*](#)

**Kristina Scott, AL.com**

While 85 percent of undergraduates use financial aid to cover the cost of higher education, low-income and first-generation students like Micah are the least likely to know how to access it.



Photo by Peter Simins

## [\*\*Poor at Princeton, Strapped at Stanford: Being a Low-Income Student at an Elite College\*\*](#)

**Heather Schwedel, Teen Vogue**

Girls from the country's best schools speak out.

# Calendar of Events

## APRIL

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
		1	2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Muralism- Live Art Workshop with Liliflor Art, Mujeres de Maiz, 2:00pm, Brant Tower Lawn</li> <li>❖ Holistic Healing Workshop, Mujeres de Maiz, 4:00pm, Fletcher Hall</li> <li>❖ Evening Performances, Mujeres de Maiz, 6:30pm, Benson Auditorium</li> </ul>	3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Christina Romer The Aftermath of Financial Crises: It Doesn't Have to be That Bad, 7:30pm, Garrison Theatre</li> </ul>	4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Black Arts Festival, 12:00-3:00pm, Seal Court</li> <li>❖ Class of 2018 Info Session, 3:30-4:30pm, Vita Nova 100</li> <li>❖ Black Arts Festival, 7:00-9:00pm, Motley</li> <li>❖ Black Arts Festival: Wanawake Weusi Birthday Party, 10:00-12:00pm, Margaret Fowler Garden</li> </ul>	5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Movement Building: "Calling In" Intersectionality and the Nuances of Liberation, Ngoc Loan Tran, 10:00am-5:30pm, SCORE Living Room</li> <li>❖ Honoring the Elements Powwow, 10:00am-9:00pm, Hammer Throw Field, Pomona</li> <li>❖ Relay for Life, 11:00am-11:00am, CMC Track</li> <li>❖ ICC A cappella, 7:00pm, Bridges Auditorium</li> </ul>
6	7 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Fellowship Information Session, 6:30pm, Hampton Room</li> </ul>	8	9	10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Medieval Mystery Plays- Modernized, 8:00pm, Allen Theatre, Pomona</li> </ul>	11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Medieval Mystery Plays- Modernized, 8:00pm, Allen Theatre, Pomona</li> <li>❖ Scripps Dances, 8:00pm, Garrison Theatre</li> </ul>	12 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ International Festival, 12:00-4:00pm, CMC Quad</li> <li>❖ Medieval Mystery Plays- Modernized, 2:00pm and 8:00pm, Allen Theatre, Pomona</li> <li>❖ Scripps Dances, 2:00 and 8:00pm, Garrison Theatre</li> </ul>
13 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Medieval Mystery Plays- Modernized, 2:00pm, Allen Theatre, Pomona</li> </ul>	14 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ I Got Soul, Culture and Politics Discussion Series, Big Piph, 2:45-5:30pm, Vita Nova 100</li> </ul>	15	16	17	18	19
20	21 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ I Got Soul, Culture and Politics Discussion Series, Dr. Gaye Johnson, 2:45-5:30pm, Vita Nova 100</li> </ul>	22	23	24 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Cesar Chavez Celebration: Carne Asada BBQ, 4:00-6:00pm, Walker Beach</li> </ul>	25 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Cesar Chavez Celebration: Brown Boi Project, 4:30-6:40pm, QRC</li> </ul>	26 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Cesar Chavez Celebration: Brown Boi Project, 8:30am-5:00pm, QRC</li> </ul>
27	28 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ I Got Soul, Culture and Politics Discussion Series, Dr. Shana Redmond, 2:45-5:30pm, Vita Nova 100</li> </ul>	29	30			

\*First-Gen Approved Events

# Parting Words

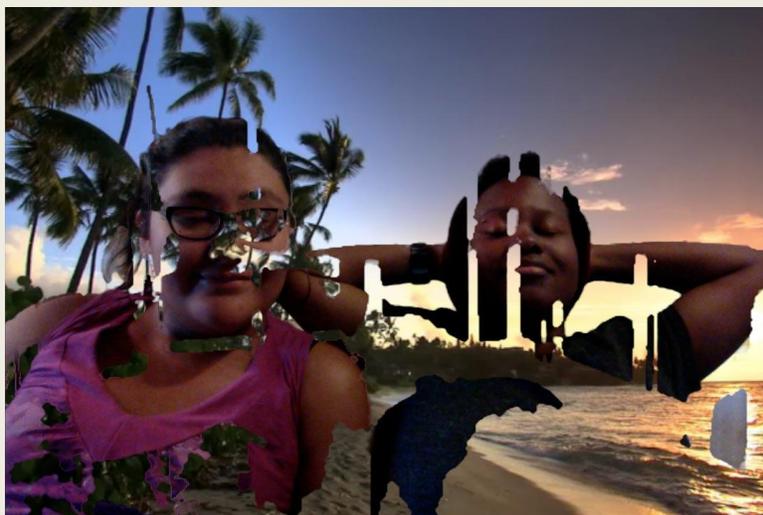
And now we shall flood you with selfies as our parting gift to you!



Being Classy



Staring into your soul



Relaxing after work



BEING EPIC SHINY COMIC BOOK SUPER HEROES!!!



Loving you very much!

Good bye, friends. We will miss you dearly.

Love our Newsletter? [SUBSCRIBE HERE](#) to receive subsequent issues or email us at [firstgeneration@scripps.edu](mailto:firstgeneration@scripps.edu)