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More Than Bootstraps Announces New Board Member: Cassandra Crawford

WESTFIELD, PLAINFIELD, and PASSAIC, NEW JERSEY – February 17, 2026.

The New Jersey non-profit organization, More Than Bootstraps, is thrilled to announce that **Cassandra (Cassie) Crawford** has joined the MTB Board.



Cassie is a purpose-driven senior graphic designer who has worked in the fields of design and branding for over 16 years. She has a passion for social welfare and community impact and has worked with more than 16 nonprofits across the country, many on a volunteer basis. Cassie contributes her time and skills because she believes in the collective power of community support. She also likes to spend some of her free time crafting goods that spread joy and are donated to local animal sanctuaries to raise funds.

Cassie started volunteering with MTB in August 2022 and joined the MTB Advisory Board in March 2024. Since then, she has been an active board member, helping build a community of first-generation, underrepresented students who empower each other to access and succeed in higher education. Highlights of her service to MTB include creating cohesive guidelines for the MTB brand, creating our annual impact reports, designing visuals for use across social media platforms, and helping to develop the MTB communications strategy.

Cassie understands firsthand the complexities of navigating higher education as a first-generation college student. She notes, "As the first person, and still the only person in my family to go to college, I didn't know anything about what it meant or what the experience would be like. I ended up making a lot of decisions I would do differently if I were able to talk to my past self. An organization like More Than Bootstraps would have made my college experience less stressful and far more impactful for my future. We tell students that they need college degrees, but we don't set them up to successfully deal with everything that college entails. MTB's work directly impacts student success so that they have better experiences than I did."

"We are enormously grateful to Cassie for her commitment to MTB," said **Audrey Fisch**, president of More Than Bootstraps. "She has been instrumental in helping us tell the story of our work."

Now underway with its sixth year of programming, MTB employs a near-peer mentoring approach. The organization matches high school students with near-peer mentors. To date, MTB has worked with graduates of the Passaic Public Schools currently enrolled in institutions from Princeton to William Paterson University who have led their younger high school peers, following a curriculum that focuses on knowledge about higher education and financial aid, communication with families, holistic student development, and the promotion of student well-being and agency. MTB began work with the Plainfield Public Schools in January 2026.

Grants and donations to More Than Bootstraps fund the monthly stipends that allow the high school and college students some time and space to come together and create a community of success while still meeting their financial responsibilities.

Interested donors are invited to visit the MTB website: www.morethanbootstraps.org/donate.

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About MORE THAN BOOTSTRAPS

More Than Bootstraps builds a community of first-generation, underrepresented students who empower each other to access and succeed in higher education. *More Than Bootstraps is a 501(c)3 organization, Tax ID 83-2245008.* For more information, visit www.morethanbootstraps.org or call (908) 397-0893.

MTB DIGITAL PRESS KIT: www.morethanbootstraps.org/mtb-digital-press-kit