



## MOMMY GRADS FACT SHEET

**Mission:** To improve the quality of life for families, by providing single mother college students with resources and supports designed to ensure academic success and economic mobility.

**Need:** Single mothers and their families have a greater than average instance of poverty. In the year 2000, female-headed, single parent families represented 52% of all poor families in the US. Studies indicate that a major reason for the low economic well-being of female-headed households is a low earning capacity found among single mothers. These studies have also shown dramatic increases in the annual income of single mothers as their level of education increases. Consider that while the poverty rate for mothers without a high school diploma is 47.5%, the poverty rate of children living with mothers who possess a bachelors degree or higher is 8.8%.

Although obtaining a four-year degree is one of the best things a single mother can do for her economic well being and that of her family, this population faces many barriers in the completion of postsecondary education. These include: insufficient or unsteady income; a lack of financial support from the absent parent; an inability to pay tuition and expenses in the face of emergencies; insufficient access to healthcare; unreliable and expensive childcare; a lack of access to quality food and housing; and unreliable transportation. These barriers -- in conjunction with the loneliness and isolation that comes with being a nontraditional student -- can act as a deterrent to educational success.

**The Program:** Mommy Grads will address these issues for up to twelve single mothers as they pursue a college degree. The program's services are as follows:

- Assessment of participants to determine utilization of available subsidies and benefits
- Assistance in applying/utilizing available benefits
- Assistance in applying for part-time or full-time employment
- Creation of a supportive social network for the single mother students. Through this network, participants will:
  - Receive peer support from other single mother students
  - Receive support and mentoring from professional, working mothers
  - Learn useful skills in areas such as time management, study skills, budgeting
- Provision of small grants (\$800 per academic year) to participants

**Expected Outcome:** Participants successfully complete a four-year degree program

**Expected Impact:** Beyond the completion of a four-year degree, the impact of this program is expected to be as follows:

- Dramatic increase in participants' earning potential
- Proof that with adequate supports, a high rate of single mothers can obtain a four-degree
- The program will stand up as a model for the creation of other such programs within universities

*For more information, please contact Jamie Gauthier at 267-439-4021 or [Jamie@mommygrads.com](mailto:Jamie@mommygrads.com)*