



*If given a  
**Chance**  
To Rise Above*

*If Given A Chance*  
*If Given A Chance identifies Napa County high school students who have been faced with extraordinary social, medical, and economic challenges, and provides them with mentoring and financial assistance to support their efforts in completing a college degree or vocational training program.*

October 2021



Dear If Given A Chance Supporter,

We invite you to join us in our ongoing program to transform the lives of high-potential but disadvantaged Napa County students. Your financial support has directly affected hundreds of students who have experienced profound, traumatic challenges through no fault of their own, so they can navigate their lives towards rewarding successful futures.

### Why Is This Important?

The Napa County visionaries who founded If Given A Chance (IGAC) in 1995 understood the importance of helping promising students thrive. They knew the profound impact of post-high school education on life skills, emotional balance, professional advancement, annual income, and family stability. They could see that high school students whose lives had been turned upside down by financial hardship, mental and physical abuse, extreme physical challenges, and an unstable home environment were less likely to pursue either a college education or vocational training. They were determined to engage with students who, if given a chance, could reach their full potential. We have helped transform the lives of over 500 students and their families.

### How Can You Make A Difference?

Your donations make a difference, as evidenced by the success of our alumni:



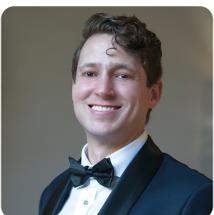
Gianna Peralta, MPH, CIC, Infection Prevention Manager at Providence Queen of the Valley Medical Center in Napa, and IGAC board member, who once was told she wouldn't graduate high school if she didn't get away from an abusive father. A graduate of UC Berkeley School of Public Health.



Oralia Catalan, MSW, PPSC, Diploma Counselor in East Los Angeles, is a daughter of immigrants who broke the cycle of poverty by relentlessly pursuing her dreams. She now has the privilege of dedicating her life to helping students graduate from high school. She received her bachelor's degree from UCLA and her master's degree from USC.



Cinthya Cisneros is a graduate of Sonoma State University and became a high school science teacher. Currently, she is a brew-master, entrepreneur, and restaurant owner of La Cheve, who entered this country as an immigrant and experienced unspeakable personal trauma.



David Diaz graduated from Stanford University with a double major. He is the global expansion lead for mobile game developer Supercell and a recent new father, who was raised by a single mother battling cancer. Watch his inspirational May 2021 keynote speech on our website, [ifgivenachance.org/may24](http://ifgivenachance.org/may24).

Celebrating  
**26**  
Years  
Supporting Napa County Students

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Celebrating **26**  
**Years**

Supporting Napa County Students

Our new Strategic Plan is to scale up to 100 promising students each year, and provide them with the financial, emotional, and educational resources they need as they move through college or other educational endeavors. To reach this goal, we need your continued support.

IGAC identifies Napa County high school juniors who have determination, resilience, and courage to rise above the circumstances that could hold them down. Throughout their post-secondary education, once selected by IGAC, we teach them independent life skills that will serve them as they move through their education, careers, and beyond, for example:

- Tools necessary for success in school, by providing computers and printers
- Financial literacy instruction and help negotiating and managing school and car obligations
- Techniques to budget time and money
- Skills to advocate for themselves
- Professional mentoring assistance in building strong professional resumes and refining interview techniques for the best chance to secure their chosen jobs
- Help with food and housing insecurity
- Guidance in nutrition, shopping, and cooking

Our alumni have chosen careers in law, criminal justice, hospitality, filmmaking, medicine, medical support, marketing, entrepreneurship, and many more. IGAC tapped into their personal self-determination and guided them as they became responsible, caring, community-connected, and contributing members of society. Many alumni are now in leadership roles giving back to IGAC and the community.

This past year we launched both our Starlight Society and the William S Chiat Scholarship Fund in honor of community leader William Chiat. For information on these opportunities visit [ifgivenachance.org/donate](http://ifgivenachance.org/donate) or by reaching out to us by email at [info@ifgivenachance.org](mailto:info@ifgivenachance.org) or phone, 707-260-5656.

Your investment in the future of these promising and resilient students is an investment in the future of our community. [Please help us transform lives.](#)

With gratitude,



Michael Mulcahy, Executive Director



Alison Haley, IGAC President

**Become a Starlight Society Member**

The Starlight Society is the principal giving circle of If Given a Chance and consists of individuals and organizations who donate \$2,500 or more annually. The Starlighters philanthropy is critical to realizing our mission to help resilient Napa Valley students who have faced adversity in their lives succeed in their post-secondary education. A \$5,000 gift provides the financial award, mentoring and program costs for one year for one student.



*If Given a Chance is a 501c3 not-for-profit organization, ID#91-1852336.*  
*Your donation may be tax deductible as allowed by law.*

**707.260.5656 • [www.ifgivenachance.org](http://www.ifgivenachance.org)**