

# WE ARE First Generation

“ It can feel like you’re jumping off a cliff and learning how to fly on the way down. But life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you react to it. Commit to something you WANT to do, carve your own path and take ownership of your journey.”

**ZVON Casanova**

UW TACOMA  
CENTER FOR STUDENT INVOLVEMENT  
PROGRAM ASSISTANT  
and FIRST GENERATION GRADUATE  
BA, University of Washington Tacoma



# NAVIGATORS

[tacoma.uw.edu/firstgenvoices](http://tacoma.uw.edu/firstgenvoices)

# WE ARE **First Generation**

“ The journey as a First Gen has had an enormous impact on me. I draw support from all those around me: family, friends and the UW Tacoma community. **Being First Gen means so much because it’s giving me opportunities I never would have had.”**

**MIKEL Pircey**

UW TACOMA SENIOR  
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY  
GIVING GARDEN COORDINATOR  
and FIRST GENERATION STUDENT



# ASPIRATIONAL

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“ My biggest challenge has been to recognize the greatness within me and the potential to shape the world around me.

**Keep stretching your imagination about what is possible.**

Sometimes what seems like a failure today can be what defines your success tomorrow.”

**CHRIS Beasley**

UW TACOMA ASSISTANT PROFESSOR  
and FIRST GENERATION GRADUATE

PhD, DePaul University  
MA, Roosevelt University  
BAS, University of Minnesota-Duluth  
AAS, Lincoln Trail College



# RESILIENT

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“ Being First Gen means you are on a path to changing your family trajectory. I was forced to think differently. Being First Gen built dedication, grit, flexibility and commitment. Remember that **you are changing the landscape of your future.**”

## **LEVON Williams**

UW TACOMA EQUITY & INCLUSION  
STUDENT RETENTION & COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST  
and FIRST GENERATION GRADUATE  
BA, Fordham University

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“ If a voice whispers in your ear that ‘thou shalt not fail,’ do not fear failure and temporary setbacks.

**Don’t hesitate to ask what you don’t know!**

Be humble yet fearless, patient yet hustling.

Stay persistent in your efforts and at the same time be adaptive.”

**GURCHETAN Singh**

SOFTWARE ENGINEER  
and FIRST GENERATION GRADUATE  
BS, University of Washington Tacoma



# RESILIENT

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“I kept questioning myself and feeling I was not good enough. What kept me going was my family. I knew there were others looking up to me.

**Don't give up!**  
**Be the first!**

**MARIA Reyes**

PIERCE COLLEGE TO UW TACOMA  
ACADEMIC ADVISOR  
and FIRST GENERATION GRADUATE

MSW, University of Washington Tacoma  
BA, University of Washington Tacoma



**FAMILY+**  
**COMMUNITY**

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