



# Annual Report 2023



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# Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we reflect on the remarkable journey of the academic year 2022-2023, we are thrilled to share the impactful strides we've made together. This year, we proudly celebrated 45 years of Fulfillment Fund, a milestone that inspired us to embark on an exciting rebranding initiative. Our refreshed logo and new look and feel pay homage to our rich history and set the stage for the dynamic future ahead. To unveil this evolution, we partnered with the incredible Ed Helms, who lent his voice to an animated video capturing the essence of our mission and the impact we've had over four and a half decades.

In-person events returned with renewed vigor, marking a pivotal moment in our journey. College admissions representatives were welcomed back into schools, fostering crucial connections between our students and institutions of higher learning. Our commitment to personalized engagement reached new heights with a fresh approach to delivering our Career Speaker Series at the Robert F. Kennedy Community Schools campus. We also rejoiced in the return of cherished in-person student events, including our Northern California College Tour for high school juniors. We brought together our alumni, volunteers, and supporters for a networking event to deepen our community bonds.

Embracing change, we established a Fulfillment Fund College Advisor onsite at Los Angeles City College (LACC), to ensure that LACC students navigating their transfer to four-year institutions could readily access their Fulfillment Fund Advisor on campus. Our dedication to innovative student engagement led to the launch of the High School Ambassadors, empowering students to become advocates within their own communities and to help create a college-going culture at their schools.



## MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

Additionally, we extended our Peer Mentoring Program to our community college students, providing invaluable support as they face the complexities of the transfer process.

As we navigated a world in flux, our community remained steadfast in its support. We are profoundly grateful for your unwavering commitment during challenging times. In response to the shifting landscape, we took proactive steps to ensure that our office remains accessible to those we serve. This included preparing to move our headquarters to align with our commitment to providing a supportive environment for our students.

In a year where economic uncertainties lingered, our dedication to securing a debt-free education for our students became more crucial than ever. For the first time in our history, we could quantify our impact in dollar values — helping secure a staggering \$5.5 million in debt-free aid for our four-year college-bound high school seniors, ushering them into a future unburdened by financial constraints.

Looking ahead, we are poised for continued growth and impact. Our collective journey is a testament to the strength of our community and the transformative power of education. As we contemplate the Fulfillment Fund of tomorrow, let us carry forward the spirit of collaboration and resilience that defines us. Together, we are not just shaping futures; we are shaping a legacy of empowerment, advocacy, and fulfillment with student-centered support.



**Wendy Spinner**  
Board Chair, Fulfillment Fund

**Joanne Reyes, MA**  
CEO, Fulfillment Fund

ABOUT FULFILLMENT FUND

**Fulfillment Fund stands as a transformative force, dedicated to realizing the college dreams of first-generation and lower-income students.**

## ABOUT FULFILLMENT FUND

Since our inception in 1977, we have been firm in our commitment to empowering Los Angeles students to access and afford higher education. Through strategic partnerships with local high schools and community organizations serving educationally and economically disadvantaged communities, we provide comprehensive support to guide our students from enrollment to college graduation, equipping them with essential life skills for successful transitions into the workforce.

Our programs are meticulously crafted with a holistic approach, delivering tailored, high-quality support to those who need it most. Many of our students embark on their journey with us in high school, remaining under our guidance until they proudly step into their careers post-college. This steadfast commitment ensures that our students receive unparalleled support as they strive to fulfill their dreams and drive economic mobility.



# Who We Serve



STUDENTS

**3,660**

We served 2,987 unique students across six partner high schools and three community partnerships, and 673 college students through our core programs last year.



PEOPLE OF COLOR

**99%**

Our students identified as Latinx (90%), Asian (5%), Black (2%), Native Hawaiian/P.I. (1%), White (1%), Other (1%).



LOW-INCOME

**94%**

Nationally, 15% of low-income youth attain a degree compared to 59% among high-income peers



FIRST-GENERATION

**90%**

1 in 3 first-gen students drop out in the first 3 years of college, nationally.



ENGLISH LEARNERS

**87%**

Only 13% of our students speak English at home and the other 87% prefer to speak a foreign language ranging from Spanish and Korean, to Bengali and Tagalog.

# College Access Program

Fulfillment Fund's College Access Program bridges the gap between aspiration and reality for students across six partner high schools and three community hubs. Our comprehensive services, delivered by dedicated College Counselors, empower students from diverse backgrounds to navigate the complexities of college applications and financial aid. Cultural expectations, family responsibilities, and geographic limitations can pose significant barriers for low-income and first-generation students. Our program provides inclusive support and overcomes obstacles, ensuring all students have equal access to college readiness opportunities.





COLLEGE ACCESS PROGRAM



353

College Prep Workshops  
and Lessons

2,587

1:1 College  
Counseling Sessions

Our  
Support

19

Financial Aid Events



# Our Impact

**96%**

high school graduation rate compared to 83% for LAUSD overall

**89%**

of our high school graduates enrolled in college compared to less than 70% of LAUSD graduates in recent years.



**\$5.5M**

in debt-free financial aid for our outgoing high school senior class of 2023

# College Success

Our College Success Program seamlessly extends our support beyond high school graduation, empowering recent high schoolers to excel in and ultimately graduate from college. Students gain entry into Fulfillment Fund University — an impactful summer melt initiative — and receive personalized one-on-one advisement, access to Fulfillment Fund scholarships, invaluable peer mentorship opportunities, and a series of professional development workshops and webinars meticulously crafted to prepare them for the transition into post-college life. For upperclassmen and alumni, our program extends to encompass career readiness initiatives. Through these strategic offerings, we aim to equip our students with the necessary tools and support to thrive academically and professionally, ensuring their continued success beyond their college years.



COLLEGE SUCCESS



**387**

Peer Mentoring Meetings

**1,500+**

1:1 College Success  
Advising Sessions

**Our  
Support**

**26**

Events and  
Workshops



# Our Impact

**94%**

of our college students persisted, whereas nationally, only 66% of first-gen students persist.

**86%**

graduated with a BA in six years or less, vs. only 25% across LAUSD in recent years.



**\$400K**

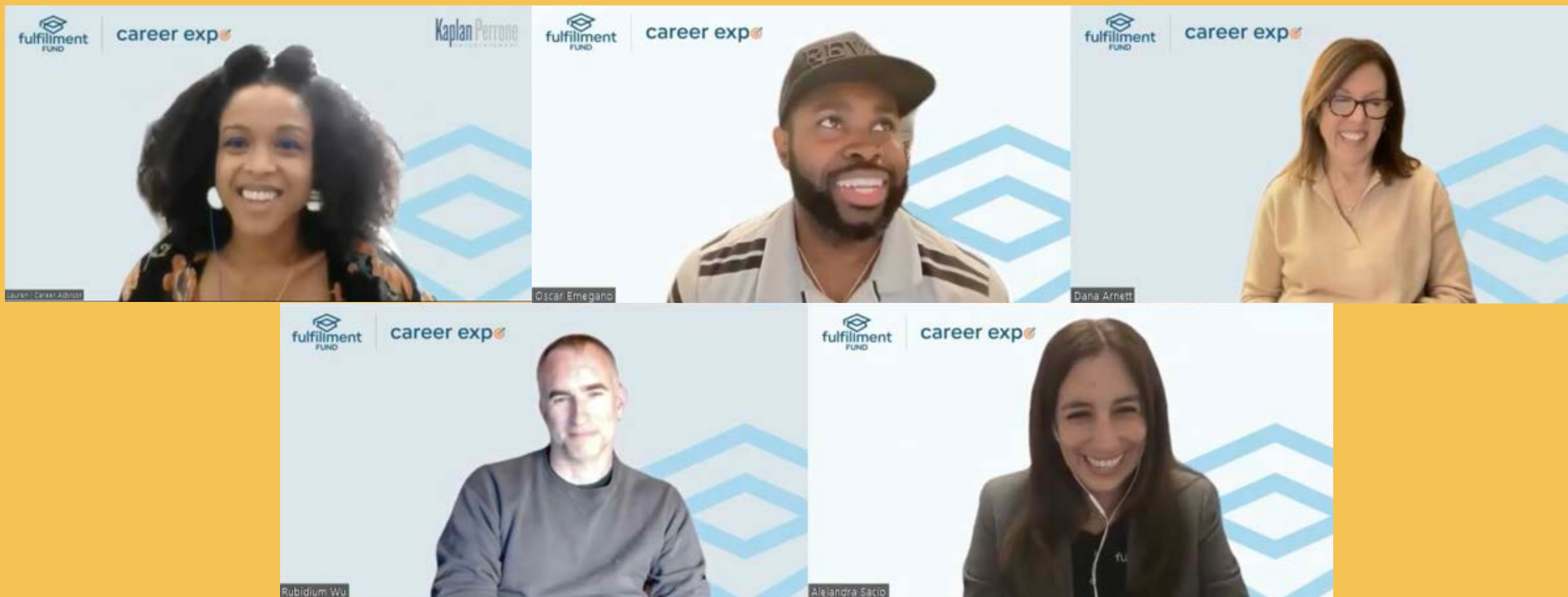
in Fulfillment Fund Scholarships help 267 students pay for college.

# Student Events



## Alumni and ScholarBridge Mixer

On Saturday, Aug. 13, we brought Fulfillment Fund Alumni and ScholarBridge Board members together for a happy hour mixer at the Truly LA Tasting Room. Our College Success team hosted the event to foster networking opportunities amongst our volunteer professionals and 30 alums who attended. Boston Beer/Truly LA generously donated food and refreshments for this event.



## Career Expo 2022

Fulfillment Fund holds its annual Career Expo to help college students and alums navigate the job market after graduation. 2022's virtual event in November presented four webinars to 179 participants, focusing on career pathways, grad school opportunities, hiring qualities, and resume marketing. Attendees also engaged in four panels with career professionals from Capital Group, FOX 11's Good Day LA, Sony Pictures Entertainment, and more. Kaplan Perrone Entertainment, LADWP, SoCalGas, and Sony Pictures Entertainment sponsored the event.

## Holiday Homecoming

On December 20, we hosted Fulfillment Fund's Holiday Homecoming for returning college students. Our students filled the theater to capacity for the screening of the new Avatar movie. Many in attendance reconnected with former classmates and met their College Advisors in person.



## Financial Aid Days

In December, we hosted our first Financial Aid Workshop of the season at the Robert F. Kennedy Community Schools campus and had an impressive turnout of more than 200 high school seniors and their parents. This series of workshops continued for students at our partner high schools and organizations, taking place through the March deadlines of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application and the California Dream Act Application (CADAA)—the local option for undocumented students to help them secure critical funds to make college a reality.



## Career Speaker Series

In March and April of 2023, we held our third annual Career Speaker Series for our high school students. With ten different sessions ranging from Arts and Entertainment to Business Operations, over 500 students attended and were engaged with professionals discussing their fields of expertise. These panels help high school students think about their future majors in the context of possible career paths. Our speakers included professionals from Netflix, Riot Games, Spectrum News 1, City of Hope, and more.



## NorCal Overnight Trip

In early April, we took 50 eleventh graders on a two-night trip to tour colleges in Northern California. This event marked the first overnight trip with students post-pandemic. Experiences such as these would otherwise not materialize for many low-income, first-generation students and can be instrumental in helping them decide where to apply. Students envisioned themselves as future college-goers at Cal State Channel Islands, UC Santa Barbara, UC Santa Cruz, UC Berkeley, and UC Davis.

## Decision Day

On April 28, we celebrated a major milestone with 2023's senior class at the Robert F. Kennedy Community Schools campus. Students shared their college decisions while making memories at our photo booth with their classmates and new school flare.



## Picture Your Perfect Career

We hosted our first Picture Your Perfect Career event on April 29 at the Fulfillment Fund office. Students edited their cover letters and resumes with the help of volunteers. Both students and alumni received free headshots and graduation photos from a professional photographer. This workshop helps prepare participants for future employment prospects, creating a bridge between graduation and obtaining their first meaningful job.

## Summer Fest

On June 24, we hosted the second annual Summer Fest in Cheviot Hills for our college students and recent high school grads. This picnic-style event was a fun-filled sunny day with plenty of tacos, games, and chances for students to engage with our Fulfillment Fund College Advisors and their new cohort of peers embarking on a similar journey.



## Fulfillment Fund University

This year, we hosted Fulfillment Fund University at Los Angeles City College on May 20 and June 15. These events were full of insight into how incoming first-year students can stay ahead of their deadlines, connect to campus resources, and become better acquainted with their College Success Advisors. This summer bridge initiative is vital to helping students prepare for college in the fall and increases the probability of enrollment.

# Student Highlights



# Daniela

## A Guided Transfer



Daniela's path from Santa Monica College to UCLA is a testament to resilience and determination. In the fall of 2021, she became an incoming freshman at UC Santa Barbara. While the process of gaining admittance and moving away from home was exciting, it was not the right fit for Daniela. She quickly connected with her College Success Advisor to weigh her options to come back home and attend SMC with the ultimate goal of graduating from UCLA.

Daniela recalls thinking the transfer process would be daunting, but with support from Fulfillment Fund, she navigated the transfer process seamlessly, utilizing resources like one-on-one college advising and assistance with financial aid. "Fulfillment Fund was fundamental in my transfer process," Daniela reflects. "I received support every step of the way, from reviewing applications to navigating the complexities of FAFSA."

[Read more](#) about Daniela's transfer journey.

**// I hope to gain job security with my college education to be able to attain economic stability, and also the resources to give my parents access to better services such as healthcare. I want to be able to inspire my community to pursue higher education and be able to offer them the knowledge and tools I've gained to succeed. //**

# Andy

## Paying It Forward



Growing up in a low-income neighborhood in Los Angeles, Andy, the son of Salvadorean immigrants, was first introduced to Fulfillment Fund in high school. He excelled in school, and with the support of our College Counselors, Andy was accepted to almost everywhere he applied. He ultimately took an offer to go to Georgetown University due to their commitment to meeting his financial needs.

During his freshman year, tragedy struck. Andy's mom had a heart attack, and his world turned upside down. He told his College Advisor that he was considering dropping out because he struggled to stay afloat while working two jobs at school to make ends meet. Fulfillment Fund found a way to support him through our emergency student aid account, allowing Andy to focus on school. Now, as a UBS Wealth Management employee and Fulfillment Fund mentor, Andy pays it forward, empowering others with his story and expertise in financial literacy.

"I now work 15 minutes from where I grew up. When I was a kid, I used to pass my building on the highway. I wondered what those people did, who they were. Now, I'm swiping into that building. Security knows my name. I'm only able to do so because of all the right decisions, and the right people that were in my life."

[Read more](#) about Andy's road to graduation.

**// I knew that if I was going to get through college, especially with parents who did not speak English and did not understand the process, I would need a village to help me through. //**

# Our New Look

After almost two years in the making, Fulfillment Fund revealed its new look and brand to the public on September 30th as a part of our 45th-anniversary celebration. The centerpiece of the launch was an animated video narrated by Fulfillment Fund supporter, education advocate, actor, and producer, Ed Helms. Our rebrand and meaningful milestone garnered both local and national interest, with nearly 300 press pickups and 4.7K press views and hits, as well as coverage by affiliates such as CBS, FOX, NBC, and Yahoo!.

To create our updated brand, Fulfillment Fund partnered with Elephant, a marketing agency that has worked with well-known companies such as Beats by Dre, Apple, Peacock, and Google. Elephant began its relationship with Fulfillment Fund in 2020 when we first discussed updating our logo to refresh our look and feel to make our branding more accessible to the students we serve. The project kicked off in 2021 and wrapped up in the fall of 2022. Thanks to a strong partnership and Elephant's alignment with our mission, Elephant generously provided their services completely pro bono, delivering a new logo and brand assets that will help us reach more students and new donors.



// **Fulfillment Fund is doing amazing things to help young talent in under-resourced communities.** Enabling talent equity is one of Elephant's core values, so it was a natural partnership for our team to work with Fulfillment Fund on their rebrand. I had the privilege of visiting one of their partner schools to experience their program in action. Seeing how strong of an impact the Fulfillment Fund team made on so many aspiring students firsthand, and that our brand work was able to play a part in such an awesome life moment - I was very moved. //

— Cara DiNorcia, President, Elephant



# Sip & Celebrate

Fulfillment Fund hosted its annual spring fundraiser, Sip & Celebrate, on June 3rd at the historic Citizen News in Hollywood. The event brought together philanthropists, educational leaders, and community members, raising over \$530,000 to support programs aiding under-served students in Los Angeles. Hosted by Michaela Pereira, former CNN anchor and Good Day L.A. host, the evening honored Lakeshore Learning for their longstanding dedication to education and partnership with Fulfillment Fund. Charlie Kaplan accepted the Leveraging Education to Advance Dreams (LEAD) Award on behalf of Lakeshore Learning and expressed gratitude for the enduring partnership and mutual commitment to education.

Attendees enjoyed a sit-down dinner catered by acclaimed chef Evan Funke of Mother Wolf and a special musical performance by the Flor de Luna Quartet, alumni of Youth Orchestra Los Angeles, a Fulfillment Fund community partner.



“ After all the help that I received from Fulfillment Fund, now I can say, I will be attending CSUN and majoring in computer science. As the first person in my family to graduate high school, and go to college, I have worked very hard.



**In the future, I want to develop my own application to help society, [and] be part of an organization like Fulfillment Fund in order to help students like me find a path to a successful life. //**

— Kevyn Lopez De Leon, Fulfillment Fund student, CSUN '28



# Fundraising

Throughout the academic year, Fulfillment Fund embarked on a dynamic fundraising journey, including a community-driven end-of-year campaign that garnered remarkable support from our generous donors. With unwavering dedication, we rallied together to raise vital funds essential for sustaining and expanding our impactful programs. This collaborative effort underscored the pivotal role played by our dedicated supporters, whose unwavering commitment enables us to continue providing essential services to students from under-resourced communities. It is through their steadfast support and unwavering belief in our mission that Fulfillment Fund can make a lasting difference in the lives of countless students, empowering them to pursue their dreams and achieve academic success.

**“Fulfillment Fund epitomizes one of the missions of the Max H. Gluck Foundation which is to support the facilitation of providing assistance to the underserved population seeking higher education. Ultimately, this benefits both the individual students being served and society as a whole.”**

—Dr. Jon Kaswick, Board President, Max H. Gluck Foundation

# Financials

## Statement of Financial Position Fiscal Year Ended 6/30/2023

<b>Assets</b>	
Assets Cash and Investments	5,641,850
Pledges Receivable, net	286,500
Prepaid Expenses, deposits, and other assets	676,060
Property and Equipment, net	79,762
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>6,684,172</b>
<b>Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	210,077
Other Liabilities	36,842
Net Assets	6,437,253
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>6,684,172</b>



GuideStar is the premier source of information on U.S. nonprofits and is trusted by reporting entities worldwide. Being awarded the Platinum Seal of Transparency signifies our commitment to responsible management of the generous resources granted to us by our donors.

## Statement of Activities Fiscal Year Ended 6/30/2023

<b>Revenues</b>	
Revenues Contributions	2,995,389
Special Events Income, net	402,778
Other Revenues	530,211
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>3,928,378</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Expenses Program Services	2,165,482
Development	634,163
Management and General	511,520
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>3,311,165</b>
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>617,213</b>



As the leading platform for community-sourced narratives on nonprofits, GreatNonprofits recognized Fulfillment Fund as a 2023 Top-Rated Nonprofit. This prestigious accolade reflects the multitude of positive reviews contributed by volunteers, donors, and students, showcasing their firsthand experiences and affirming the impact of our organization and services.

# Gratitude to Our Community

## Donors

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### In Memoriam

Gary Gitnick, M.D., F.A.C.G. - Founder



