

## Ariel Ventura-Lazo



Photo Courtesy of Ariel Ventura-Lazo

Ariel Ventura-Lazo is a first-generation American and the first in his family to attend college. He currently studies Business Management, and is entering his senior year at George Mason University in Fairfax, VA.

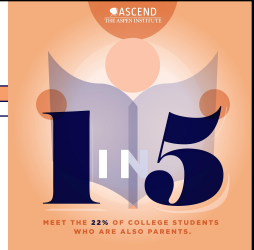
## Ariel's Story

Ariel returned to Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) as a student parent in the fall of 2014 after a five-year hiatus. After returning, he earned a spot on the Dean's List for four consecutive semesters and earned six scholarships

that covered the entirety of his tuition at NOVA. Ariel also works at NOVA part-time. Most recently, he served as an advisor with The Pathways to Baccalaureate program.

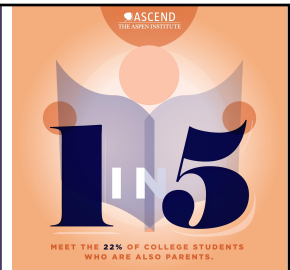
Beyond school and work, Ariel is an advocate for postsecondary education, student parents, and first-generation Americans. He has shared his experiences as a working student parent on many platforms nationwide including former First Lady Michelle Obama's Beating the Odds Summit in July 2019.

Ariel is passionate about higher education and wants to continue advocating for students to make sure that access and postsecondary completion is attainable and feasible for all who wish to pursue it.



## Resources

- [Generation Hope](#) uses a two-generation approach by surrounding motivated teen parents and their children with mentors, emotional support, and financial resources that they need to thrive in college and kindergarten.
- [Lumina Foundation](#) believes that education provides the basis for individual opportunity, economic vitality, and social stability. By awarding grants, Lumina's outcomes-based approach focuses on helping to design and build an equitable, accessible, responsive, and accountable post-high school education system for all.
- [The Annie E. Casey Foundation](#) is focused on creating grants that are geared towards developing a brighter future for millions of children at risk of poor educational, economic, social and health outcomes.



Hear the episode [here](#).

Read the episode transcript [here](#).

For more, [click here](#).

### Did you know..?

[More than 1/5 of undergraduate students are parents](#) and [30% of those parents are fathers](#), making up over one million students. Student parents are more likely to be people of color, they tend to be older, and have nearly twice the student loan debt than students who are not parents.

## Helpful Links

- [Federal Student Aid](#)
- [ECMC Foundation](#)
- [TANF](#)
- [Ascend National Partners](#)

