

A low-angle photograph of graduates in black gowns and caps, throwing their caps into the air against a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. The graduates' arms are raised, and their faces are visible, looking upwards with expressions of joy and accomplishment.

SYSTEMIC CHANGE INITIATIVE: Getting Ahead Programs EVALUATION REPORT



Society of St. Vincent de Paul

Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston

2403 Holcombe Blvd. Houston, TX 77021

I. Systemic Change Initiative: Getting Ahead Program Goals

Getting Ahead in a Just-Gettin'-By World is a curriculum for motivated individuals to change their life by acquiring the tools and support necessary to "get ahead" despite the obstacles in their life and community. Since the Fall of 2021, **171** people have enrolled in the program.

2022-2025 Society of St. Vincent de Paul Archdiocese of Galveston Houston Strategic Goal outcomes:

- **178** total graduates from Phase I: Getting Ahead Program
- **75%** of Phase I graduates move into Phase II: GAP Graduates
- **50%** of Phase II graduates move into the Phase III: GAP Alumni

Since Inception until June 30, 2025:

- **140** total graduates from Phase I: Getting Ahead Program
- **72%** of Phase I graduates move into Phase II: GAP Graduates
- **69%** of Phase II graduates move into Phase III: GAP Alumni

II. Phase I - Getting Ahead Program Outcomes in FY25 Q3



- **31** graduates from **Cohort #8** received their certificates on Saturday, May 17, 2025
- **4** sessions conducted by volunteer members and Council staff.
 - Monday morning
 - Tuesday afternoon
 - Wednesday morning and Wednesday evening
- **4** sessions are planned for **Cohort #9** starting July 2025
- Anticipate enrolling **60 new participants in Fall 2025**
 - Monday morning
 - Tuesday evening
 - Wednesday morning and Wednesday evening

After completion of Cohort #8 participants' survey results revealed:

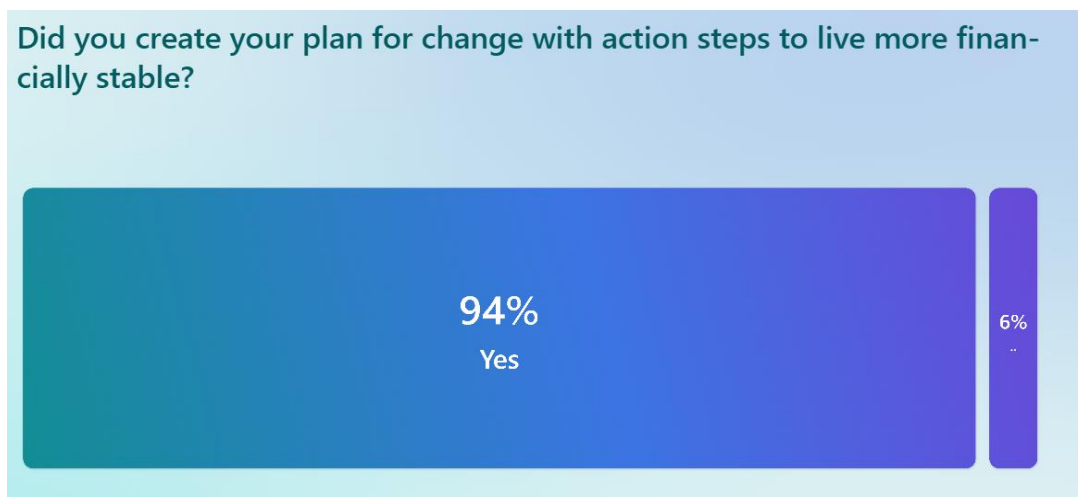
77% displayed an improved housing situation and increased stability



56% increased self-efficacy to obtain non-material support to overcome poverty.



94% created a plan for change; thus, shifting the mindset from "reactive" to "proactive".



III. Phase II - Getting Ahead **Graduate** Program Outcomes in FY25 Q3

The six-month program shifted the focal point toward helping participants grow and expand on the resources learned in phase I.

Evaluation results revealed the need to adjust four target areas to increase behavioral change.

1. Financial Literacy - *Human Resources for Workplace Readiness* material was added to the program.
2. Workplace readiness
3. Emotional Intelligence
4. Spiritual Resources



Program practitioners observed decreased attendance and contacted Cohort 7 graduates to help identify barriers they were encountering that prevented them from continuous commitment. Several stated occupational work schedules prevented attendance. To counter this challenge, session dates and times were adjusted and a graduation from Phase II was planned for July 2025.

IV. Phase III - Getting Ahead **Alumni** Program Outcomes in FY25 Q3

Previous evaluation results revealed time and commute were an ever-present issue for many participants.

Monthly events and workshops were designed and conducted to expose alumni participants to other community partners and continue their education process to overcome poverty.

3 activities conducted between April 2025 - June 2025

- Alumni were invited to support the graduation event of Cohort 8
- [SER Jobs](#) presented their workforce employment assistance and occupational training programs
- Sander's Hand presented financial literacy programs for youth and young adults to address generational poverty



By serving as a volunteer member of the program's activities, the Society's Vincentians grow spiritually through these remarkable friendships.

Recognizing it takes an average of **7 years** to overcome poverty, the *Getting Ahead Program* is promising for creating the generational changes families need.

By empowering them to dream, set goals, build resources, and establish a network of support, this program honors the Society's mission to address the systemic conditions that contribute to the cycle of poverty.

On May 18, 2025, Valencia (graduate of cohort #1) received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing from the University of St. Thomas. She now has a sustainable career path to provide for her lifestyle!