WHERE STUDENTS CONNECT TO THEIR PURPOSE

ANNUAL REPORT
July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021
MISSION

Project Success motivates and inspires young people to dream about the future, helps them take steps to get there and gives them the tools they need to achieve their goals.

VISION

Every child entering middle school will graduate high school with a plan for their future and have the skills and confidence that will take them through the rest of their lives.
At the beginning of 1994, we set forth with a promise of putting students first, no matter what. Needless to say, nothing could have prepared any organization for the COVID-19 pandemic, and social justice movement that awoke from tragedy in the place we call home. Students needed caring adults and mentors to show up for them, to help them learn and grow from their experiences. Project Success didn’t miss a beat in continuing to connect students to their purpose.

Our greatest assets that we have built over 27 years were put to the test - our long-term supportive relationships with our school communities, innovation and creation of programs of excellence, and most importantly, our professional, caring, and culturally competent staff willing and able to provide a safe and engaging learning environment for our students.

While our students spent almost an entire school year in distance learning, it was our mission to bring the world to them. We provided students with opportunities to spark curiosity, explore their interests, build skills, connect with each other, and set goals and take steps for their futures. We witnessed students learning, laughing, and dreaming together in the spaces we created for them. It wasn’t always easy, but every moment was worth it.

These past few years have tested our community to its core. Project Success too, has been tested. Instead of letting the pandemic define us – we evolved to become better than ever for our community.

Together, as we navigate our “new normal” and continue to be faced with the hard truths of racial inequality and economic disparity throughout our communities, we are moving forward and remaining focused on our young people, our community’s future, and our place in connecting students to their purpose. Project Success was founded on those values of action - putting students first, ensuring equitable access to opportunity, and the ability for students to dream and plan for their future.

This annual report covers our 2020-2021 school year, the year that indelibly changed not only the landscape of education in our community, but our lives as a society together. The challenges we faced would not have been met without the generosity and support of our community partners, teachers and school administrations, foundations, corporations, and supporters like you. Your support helped us to transform our programming to meet the needs of our students, families, and school communities.

Looking towards the future, if we continue to dream and plan with our students, we will create a tomorrow that is equitable, just, and prosperous for all. If this is what we can accomplish in moments of uncertainty and challenge – imagine what we can do together for our students and their families for years to come.

On behalf of our students, families, staff, and Board of Directors – thank you.

With Gratitude and Love,

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Retail Consultant

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Diversity and Inclusion Strategist  
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Project Success Programs result in a statistically significant increase in attendance, GPA and on-time graduation.

90% of teachers report that Project Success helps students to be better problem solvers, self-aware of their strengths, more motivated to succeed, and to set goals for the future.

90% of students report that Project Success helps them think about their futures, set goals, and create a plan for after graduation.

What I love best about Project Success and what it has always meant for us is engagement and connection for our students. It is a very comprehensive way of meeting students where they are, helping them learn to think about their future and plan for their future to get a window into the world in ways that they wouldn’t have had the opportunity to otherwise.

— Eryn Warne, Principal, Edison High School
CURRICULUM

Our proven curriculum, delivered by our professional facilitators both in-class and as a part of other experiences, helps students dream, ignite and grow.

ARTS

We utilize the power of theater and the arts to inspire, build community, act as a springboard for discussion and encourage students to tell their own stories.
EXPEDITIONS

Local & global expeditions allow students to explore the world, or see something familiar in a new way, opening doors to new possibilities for them.

CERTIFICATES

Certificates in computer coding, financial literacy, performing arts and cooking ignite possibilities for students and prepare them for life after high school.
Students participated in 16,000+ hours of Project Success programs outside of the classroom workshops.

**WORKSHOPS**
Facilitated more than 1,000 workshops in students’ virtual classrooms.

**PROGRAMS**
500 students and families connected with the arts through PS virtual programming.

**CERTIFICATES**
More than 200 students earned a certificate of learning at the PS Institute – three times more than last year.

**PS PEN PALS**
200 students connected and sent 600 messages to pen pals to more than 12 countries.

Created more than 1,700 hours of virtual content for students.

85% of partner teachers reported their students have been engaged with highly relevant content in PS virtual workshops.

PS programs inspired 1,000 visits to our program web pages each week, resulting in more than 30,000 visits this year.

90% of students report that Project Success helps them think about their futures, set goals, and create a plan for after graduation.
“[PS] Gives me the opportunity to step away from the curriculum and get to know our students as people and get to see them work together, see them try to achieve goals with one another, and it lets us be a participant so that we can get to know our classes in a different way than we do when we are in the instructor role.”

- Kristin Wolf (Teacher)
Project Success Expeditions: Connecting Students to the World

Since 1994, Project Success has invited students to challenge their comfort zones through local-to-global expeditions such as college and career tours, outdoor adventures and global experiences. While students were in distance learning in the 2020-21 school year, PS rose to the occasion and brought the experiences to them.

Our Outdoor Adventures programming brought the outdoors in with virtual events that focused on outdoor experiences, like Voyage to Antarctica. We also brought the indoors out, through middle school Outdoor Clubs that encouraged students to meet weekly on Zoom, then get outside in their own backyards and neighborhoods. Through virtual events like Live Safaris and Guided City Tours, students travelled across the globe from their own homes.

Though students weren’t able to visit campuses in-person, PS developed College Connect Admissions and Student Panels, our College Conversations podcast, 30+ pre-recorded admission chats in a library on our website, and more so they could continue to explore their options after high school.

Whether it’s getting students outside, on campus, or around the world, PS expeditions evolved significantly during the pandemic, continuing to give students opportunities to gain confidence in trying new things, visiting new places and formulating new dreams.
In the spring of 2021, Project Success partnered with the Minnesota Vikings and GEAR UP to honor and celebrate the class of 2021 seniors in a live, virtual dialogue that featured current Vikings players and legends. Students from multiple Minneapolis Public High Schools attended the event.

In a year unlike any other, there were times that seemed impossible to overcome. This event allowed us to engage in a powerful conversation with Vikings players and legends to acknowledge the challenges our seniors have faced, recognize their resilience and celebrate all they have accomplished this year and will accomplish in the future.

Open and honest conversation during the event provided inspiration for our seniors. They were able to submit questions in advance of the event as well as during the event which fueled a meaningful discussion. The Vikings passed along lessons they’ve learned, which often involved overcoming obstacles along the way. They shared openly about challenges, failures, successes and encouraged the students to chase their dreams. [Read More on our Project Success Blog]
In spring 2020, we had to cancel our Global Experiences trip to Mexico due to the beginning of the pandemic but we were able to continue the pen pal relationships students were building with our partner schools in Mexico. Students were eager and excited to meet one another through their letters as the world around them shut down. Seeing the impact of connection via pen pals and an opportunity to connect even more students to potential new friends, the Project Success team innovated the program to include more students during our year of distance learning.

During the 2020-2021 school year 200 students participated globally, resulting in 600+ correspondences between our students in Minneapolis and students from numerous schools located in Mexico, Sweden, Brazil, Senegal, South Africa, and the Czech Republic. Students interacted with each other predominately in English via video, audio recording, letter, and email. This allowed students to connect in their preferred format of communication, whether it was writing or speaking. This was especially important because many students abroad were practicing their English, a foreign/non-native language, with their new friends. However, if our students could speak in the same language as their pen pals, they were encouraged to express and explore communication in the language they both preferred. After months of exchanging letters back and forth, pen pals had a chance to meet each other via PS supervised Zoom celebrations. The pen pal programming fostered friendship and understanding between students and brought a new level of global citizenship for all those involved in the pen pal exchanges.
In the midst of distance learning and a global pandemic, Project Success stuck to our mission, values, and the approach that has always served us well: Ask students what they need, meet them where they are, build relationships, and form meaningful connections. Project Success staff have delivered more than 1,000 workshops to students in their virtual classrooms, and that’s just one of the ways we connected with students and families last year.

After everything changed in March 2020, Project Success staff united and saw these challenges as an opportunity that could reach more students in deep and meaningful ways. From offering workshops live through Google Classrooms or prerecorded for teachers, to the introduction of new programs like PS Pen Pals and our College Connect and College Success Workshops, it was a year of innovation for Project Success.
Our students and families faced great challenges this past year. The challenges in our community have only strengthened our commitment to our number one value here at Project Success: *Kids First.*

**WE DELIVERED**

Since we could not meet our students and their families in person for programming, we brought programming to them. We began with virtual delivery of PS programs: Outdoor Adventures, Global Experiences, College & Career Tours, the Institute, and more. We knew it was important to provide all of the tools needed to fully participate in our program, so we listened to our students. We launched “PS2U,” a delivery service to ensure access to PS programs by bringing what students needed to participate right to their door.

**WE IGNITED**

To ignite is to unleash potential. At Project Success, we believe that each and every student has that ability within themselves and when that is combined with opportunity, dreams are realized. This past year, Project Success built avenues of creativity and opportunity so students could take steps each day to build confidence, resilience, perseverance, creativity, teamwork, and community.
FINANCIAL REPORT

FINANCIAL POSITION

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<th>Description</th>
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SUPPORT

Grants and Contributions                          | $4,466,104   | $2,819,440   |
In-Kind Contributions                             | $198,987     | $936,263     |
Total Support                                     | $4,665,091   | $3,755,703   |

REVENUES

School Fees                                       | $330,000     | $373,700     |
Program Service Fees                              | $300         | $17,618      |
Interest Income                                   | $2,261       | $4,035       |
Rental Income                                     | $33,752      | $34,118      |
Other Income                                       | $1,052,268   | -            |
Total Revenues                                    | $1,418,581   | $429,471     |

Total Support and Revenues                        | $6,083,672   | $4,185,174   |

EXPENSES

Program Services                                  | $2,527,282   | $3,381,185   |
General Operations                                | $410,210     | $278,050     |
Fundraising                                       | $544,182     | $669,743     |
Total Expenses                                     | $3,481,674   | $4,328,978   |

Fund Balance: Beginning of Period                  | $2,574,545   | $2,718,349   |
Fund Balance: End of Period                        | $5,176,543   | $2,574,545   |
Change in Fund Balance                            | $2,601,998   | $(143,804)   |

Revenue and Other Support

![Revenue Pie Chart]

Expenses

Program Services                                  | 76%          |              |
General Operations                                | 9%           |              |
Fundraising                                       | 15%          |              |

1 Financial activities as a result of purchase of 1 Groveland Terrace in June 2021 are included in this report.
2 Donor Restricted gifts are primarily gifts made to the Dreams to Futures Campaign.
3 In-Kind Contributions include generous donations of theater tickets, program supplies, printed materials, facility usage, and more. See page 21 for a list of donors.
4 Program-specific expenses as reported in the 990 for 2021 are as follows: Curriculum $1,812,175, Expeditions $168,070, Arts $389,508, and Certificates $101,746.
When Project Success launched the PS Institute as a pilot project, the Social Impact team at Best Buy was excited about the potential for more Minneapolis teens to have access to learn about technology in a welcoming place with people they trust. In 2018, Best Buy Foundation Board approved a leadership grant to support the expansion of the Institute.

Best Buy’s support of the Institute expansion has made it possible to double the classroom space, purchase more of the latest technology, and provide more students with access to take certificate courses in subjects such as Coding, Filmmaking and more. In 2021, Best Buy granted additional capital support to continue expansion of the Institute and meet the demand to serve even more students.

In recognition of this significant support, Project Success will be naming a space in our Institute the Best Buy Technology Commons. “We are thrilled to have Best Buy as our Teen Tech Partner at the Institute, where our students find support and access to the tools and training that can connect them to their purpose and prepare them for school and career success,” says Adrienne Diercks.

“More than 77% of jobs over the next decade will require tech skills,” says Andrea Wood, Head of Social Impact at Best Buy. “The Project Success Institute helps Best Buy meet our goal to build more interactive spaces where teens can develop critical skills, confidence and a foundation for success through hands-on activities that explore the latest technology with support from peers and adult mentors. We know this work is key, not only to help solve a skills gap, but to build a diverse talent pipeline for Best Buy and our partner companies.”
A Permanent Home for the Project Success Community

Project Success has called 1 Groveland Terrace home since 2010, when the organization began leasing the 3rd floor and serving 10,000 students. In 2018, Project Success launched the PS Institute to serve students and families in the centrally located space in the city. By 2019, Project Success had expanded programs to serve nearly 15,000 students in Minneapolis Public Schools, thanks to the generous supporters who committed $8M to the Dreams to Futures Campaign for Program Expansion over 4 years.

As Project Success marked the 10-year anniversary serving students in the building, with programs continuing to expand to meet demand and increase impact, and with the Institute at full capacity, they began to explore creating a permanent home for Project Success. Adrienne Diercks noted, “I have been working with the Project Success Board of Directors and after looking into other potential opportunities and locations in Minneapolis, evaluating the financial and sustainability impacts for the organization, and discussing what was best for our students, families, and programs, there was no better location than 1 Groveland Terrace.”

As our capstone to the Dreams to Futures Campaign, capital support from the Peter J. King Family Foundation, Best Buy, Aroha Philanthropies and the Wurtele family made this dream come true without having to pull funding from student programming. Project Success took over ownership of the building in July 2021, allowing us the opportunity to be anchored in the community and will continue to expand and deepen programming for all Minneapolis students.
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Peter J. King Family Foundation  
Aroha Philanthropies  
Anonymous  
Margaret and Angus* Wurtele  
The Margaret A. Cargill Fund at the Minnesota Community Foundation  
Pohlad Family Foundation  
Carlson Family Foundation  
WEM 2000 Foundation  
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Blanche and Thane Hawkins  
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Smikis Foundation on behalf of Lucy Hartwell**  
Minnesota Vikings Foundation/ Wilf Family Foundations  
Jim and Donna Pohlad  
West Fork Foundation  
Nancy and Rolf Engh

**MAJOR GIFT COMMITMENTS**

Grotto Foundation  
Michael Peterman and David Wilson  
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Scholarship Fund of The Saint Paul Foundation  
Bremer Bank

**ANNUAL FUND DONORS**

July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021

**CORPORATIONS AND FOUNDATIONS**

**DREAM MAKER $50,000+**

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Cargill Foundation  
Carlson Family Foundation  
Grotto Foundation  
Lifetouch Photography  
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Otto Bremer Trust  
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**STAR $25,000 - $49,999**

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U.S. Bancorp  
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Wells Fargo Foundation MN  
Winnebago Industries

*Commitments through June 30, 2021  
**indicates deceased
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- Nancy and Rolf Engh
- Richard Erickson and Bonnie Bottoms
- Moira Grosbard and Andris A. Zoltners
- Margaret V.B. Wurtele

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The Jungle Theater
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Minnesota Opera
Minnesota Orchestra
Mixed Blood Theatre
The Moving Company
MSP Film Society
Theater Mu
New Native Theater
Northrop Auditorium, University of Minnesota
Open Eye Figure Theatre
Ordway Center for the Performing Arts
The O’Shaughnessy at St. Catherine University
Pangea World Theater
Park Square Theater
Penumbra Theatre
Pillsbury House Theatre
Ragamala Dance Company
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Southern Theater
Stages Theatre Company
SteppingStone Theatre for Youth Development
Stuart Pimsler Dance and Theater
Ten Thousand Things Theater
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