

# PROJECT SUCCESS™

ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023



# 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.

# PROGRAMS



## WORKSHOPS

In-class activities **guide** cumulative development, gaining tools, purpose, and confidence.



## ARTS

Theater experiences **create** a springboard for discussion, inviting risk-taking and possibility.



## EXPEDITIONS

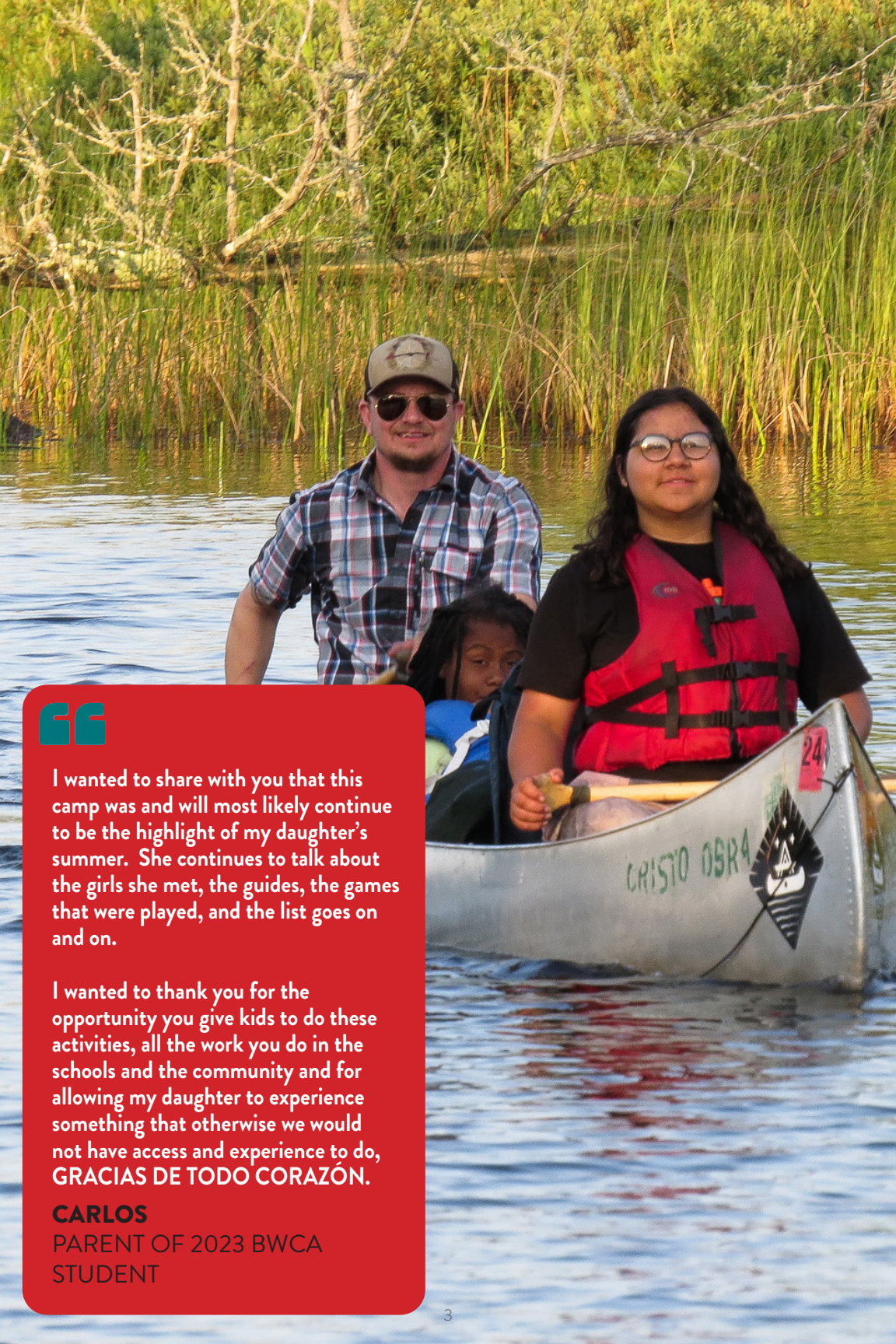
Adventure trips to colleges, workplaces, cities, and nature settings **open** new perspectives for one's potential in the world.



## INSTITUTE

Certificates and programs **build** critical life and career skills that enrich one's independence.





I wanted to share with you that this camp was and will most likely continue to be the highlight of my daughter's summer. She continues to talk about the girls she met, the guides, the games that were played, and the list goes on and on.

I wanted to thank you for the opportunity you give kids to do these activities, all the work you do in the schools and the community and for allowing my daughter to experience something that otherwise we would not have access and experience to do, **GRACIAS DE TODO CORAZÓN.**

**CARLOS**  
PARENT OF 2023 BWCA  
STUDENT

As **Project Success concludes its largest year** (our 29th!) of programming with Minneapolis students and families, we are reminded of the **power of a collective group of people partnering to serve the lives of young people**. The impact of this Project Success collective – students, families, staff, board, teachers, alumni, volunteers, school communities, supporters – continues to have measurable impact for youth as they become the curators of their own lives, manifesting what they have envisioned for themselves.

We know our students continue to grapple with hope for their futures, as “40% of Minneapolis Public Schools’ students reported that they rarely or only sometimes feel in control of their lives and their future.” Our students are telling us what they need: to feel **safe and supported**, to feel **belonging**, and to have **agency** in their lives. We build our programs and practice alongside them as they develop and grow from 6th through 12th grade – and beyond.

**Our annual report acknowledges the 2022-2023 school year with notable outcomes that deserve mentioning. During this school year we:**

- provided countless experiences of excellence for our students using our proven methodology of experiential learning called DIG (Dream. Ignite. Grow.) – through four program components: Workshops, Arts, Expeditions, and Institute.
- collaborated with **ALL** Minneapolis Public School 6th-12th grade students and their families.
- hosted Student Innovator Gatherings at our headquarters, learning from youth about what they love and what else they need from Project Success.
- realized that students feel happy, comfortable, and accepted in our Institute certificates program, and the classes are meaningful and relevant to real-world scenarios.
- understood that access to quality food, transportation, and space and time to decompress, are growing needs.

We continue to utilize all of these learnings (and new ones each day, too!) to ensure our programs are responsive to the needs and desires our students and families.

In January 2023, we received a transformational gift from Andy Zoltners and Moira Grosbard. This gift challenged our team to consider how we can take our proven model and expand our impact to even more students outside of Minneapolis. With these funds, we hired an Expansion Team and began building programs that will launch in new communities in subsequent school years to create more positive impacts for more young people.

**We remain committed to supporting the dreams and futures of our Project Success students and their families.** We know that if we inspire even one young person to feel in control of their life and their future, it is worth it. The fact that we have an expansive vision to motivate and inspire thousands sustains our hope beyond belief.

You – our beloved supporters, partners, and community – continue to demonstrate your belief in this work. On behalf of our students, families, staff, and Board of Directors, thank you for being a part of the Project Success collective.

With love, hope, gratitude, and excitement for the future,  
Adrienne & Shana



**ADRIENNE DIERCKS**  
Founder, Executive Director



**SHANA MOSES**  
Board Chair



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# 90%

of teachers report that Project Success helps students to:

**Be better problem solvers**



**Be self-aware of their strengths**

**Be more engaged in school**



**Be more motivated to succeed**



# 90%

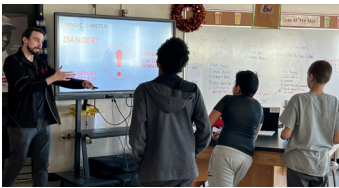
of students report that Project Success helps them:

**Set goals**



**Think about their futures**

**Create a plan for after graduation**



## RESULTS:

Project Success programs result in a statistically significant increase in attendance, GPA, and on-time graduation.

“It’s a great experience. I really enjoy my time that I have with Project Success. I would encourage anyone who hasn’t been involved with Project Success yet to be involved because they provide a lot for you.”

**MIANNA, EDISON HIGH SCHOOL '23**



Project Success' impact on my life is one of the most monumental experiences of my developmental years. My experience with Project Success spans from my elementary years of school to current where I partner with Project Success to offer bicycle maintenance classes to Minneapolis high schoolers. From the very first time I was introduced to Project Success I was shown countless ways to discover my personal passions. Now as an adult I reflect on Project Success' impact on my life. Because of how much it did for me, I now give back by volunteering with the organization in the Institute and by leading BWCA expeditions for the very group I was once a part of. I cannot stress the amount of positive impact Project Success has with the students that engage with the program; Project Success truly makes sure every student is heard, engaged, and passionate about their future.

**DARROW JONES**  
PS ALUMNI



## Highlights through the 2022-2023 school year

The programming for our 15,000+ students centered around our four components: Workshops, Arts, Expeditions, and Institute.

### 1 4,000 In-Class PS Workshops

This school year, **15,000+** MPS middle and high school students collectively received 4,000 in-class workshops. Students engaged in one workshop per month with our highly trained facilitators. Our proven DIG curriculum helps students dream, ignite, and grow.



### 2 PS Credit Recovery

For the second school year, Project Success continued to work with our partner schools to provide experiential learning opportunities where students can also earn credit to support their path to graduation.

### 5 Students Learned Life and Career Skills through PS Institute Certificates This Year!

**178** high school students earned certificates in Cooking, Coding, Money Management, Bike Tech, and entrepreneurship in the Project Success Institute. This program is designed to give students a deeper dive into the professional and technical life skills they need to make their way in the world. Students also received mentorship and learned from leaders and professionals in relevant career fields.



### 6 28 Institute Students Earned Mini-MBAs

The Project Success Institute partnered with Girls With Impact to offer their Harvard-designed online class which encourages students to learn how to turn their passion into entrepreneurship. From building a business/nonprofit or engaging within a traditional career path, students “graduated” from this course with confidence in themselves and their futures. Upon the completion of this course, students presented their entrepreneurial plans to their peer and received a laptop.



### 9 Build a Canoe at the Zoo

**Ten** MPS middle school students built a kayak from scratch at the Minnesota Zoo, hiked the Lebanon Hills Regional Park trails, and paddled the lakes – exploring the birdlife, wildlife, and insects that inhabit the area. Students also explored the Minnesota Zoo with a naturalist zoo instructor, received a lesson on dragonflies and damselflies, and learned how to build enrichment environments to ensure snakes have spaces to keep their brains and bodies active.



WORKSHOPS



ARTS



EXPEDITIONS



INSTITUTE

3

**High School Students Explore College with PS**

426 high school students from our partner schools attended more than 16+ PS college tours. Students traveled locally and nationally to a variety of 2-year and 4-year colleges, universities, and trade schools, with Project Success.



4

**Spring Break College Conversations workshops**

Project Success hosted in-person and virtual college workshops over spring break. The workshops covered topics on how to finance post-secondary education, thrive academically, and connect with others to build community.



8

**Outdoor Adventures, the BWCA, and the Apostle Islands**

220+ middle school students this summer went on a week-long adventure with a group of their MPS district peers to the Boundary Water Canoe Area. 12 middle school students explored the Apostle Islands on an outdoor experience open to students of all abilities, where they received additional support to engage with the outdoors. From hiking, kayaking, connecting with nature and each other, students learned self-confidence and ignited curiosity of the world around them while participating in activities in the great outdoors.

7

**Celebrity Chefs at Our PS Institute**

Food is culture, connection, and, ultimately, community. At the Project Success Institute, our students, volunteer coaches, and staff are no strangers to exploring the diverse flavors and histories of the dishes students learn to create. This year we had numerous well-known local and national celebrity chefs teach cultural dishes to our students during the cooking certificate.



10

**Representation in STEM**

As part of our partnership with the Science Museum of Minnesota, students and families engaged with **Science Fusion: A Celebration of Diversity in Science** events! Students were able to engage with science professionals, explore potential career pathways, and participate in exhibits of history across four events: African Americans in STEM, Asian Americans in STEM, Latinx Americans in STEM, and Native Americans in STEM!

# 11 *High Schoolers Challenge themselves in The Beartooth Mountains*

In another first for Project Success, in July, **nine** PS high school students had the opportunity to explore the outdoors while backpacking in Montana and Wyoming's Beartooth Mountain Range. This expedition was a great opportunity for our young explorers to build upon existing skills and interests regarding nature and teamwork.

# 12 *Winter Adventure Day*

Partnering with the Loppet Foundation and the Friends of the Boundary Waters, **120** PS middle school students and families experienced all the engaging possibilities of fresh snow! Activities offered at this year's PS Winter Adventure Day included cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, tubing, winter camping tips and tricks, disc golf, face painting, roasting marshmallows, and more!



# 15 *Disney's Descendants: The Musical*

**88** Sanford Middle School students performed onstage and behind the scenes in the PS Disney Musical *The Descendants*. One student at Sanford asked PS to bring this production to their school, making this program even more unforgettable!

# 16 *Willy Wonka Jr.*

**71** Northeast Middle School students seized the day on and off stage, dancing, singing, and connecting with each other and the characters of Willy Wonka Jr. After last year's first ever PS musical at Northeast, we were excited to continue this program with their school community.



# 19 *PS Theater Residencies*

Around **400** students engaged with our theater artist residency program where we facilitate connection and curriculum between artists from our partner theaters and our students and teachers in meaningful ways. This year we partnered with VocalEssence, the Ordway, Cedar Cultural Center, Northrop, Yellow Tree Theater, and James Sewell Ballet. These partnerships can include artists coming into the classroom for multiple interactive workshops, students engaging with artists and crew at the theaters, and more. By the end of these educational and interactive programs, students have increased encouragement and creative tools to express themselves.



# 13

## **PS International Connection**

This winter, PS brought back its popular program Pen Pal Connections! **50** of our middle and high school students connected with students in the Czech Republic over an 8-week period. With letters and a final Zoom meetup video connection, PS students were able to learn what life is like for students in a different culture and country, and share their own experiences.

# 14

## **Traveling to Washington D.C.**

Project Success brought high school students from each MPS high school to Washington D.C. in June, thanks to our partnership with the Minnesota Vikings.



# 17

## **PS Free Evening and Weekend Theater Experiences**

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. This school year, more than **7,000** students and families experienced free theater **thanks to the generous support from our 50+ theater partners.** Free transportation and childcare was also provided to ensure accessibility.



# 18

## **PS Theater School Field Trips**

**5,000+** students and many of our partner teachers attended PS theater field trips throughout this school year. Theater performances inspire dialogue and allow students to have deeper conversations with peers about their identities and societal issues. Theater becomes more than just a show to take in: it broadens your world and connects you to others. Our team helps to prepare students with pre-show workshops, and facilitates reflections afterward.

# 20

## **"Play Ball!"**

In our 19th annual Fielding Dreams event, **1,300+** students and families attended a Twins game thanks to the donated tickets from the Minnesota Twins. Our Northeast Middle School musical students were able to sing on the field and lead the 7th inning stretch. This event is a reflection of our successful community partnership built on a shared belief in young people and their ability to ignite success from within.



Through the power of theater, students can experience a life different from their own. By stepping into the character's shoes and contemplating their choices, students can reflect on their own choices. With discussion questions and classroom activities, we encourage students to become active participants and use their stories to help them explore their understanding of what happened in the performance while reflecting on similarities to their own lives.

**KHARY JACKSON**  
CURRICULUM MANAGER  
- THEATER EXPERIENCES





# TRANSFORMATIONAL GIFT

In January 2023 Project Success received its largest single gift in history - \$3M from Andris (Andy) A. Zoltners and Moira Grosbard. Moira has been a Project Success board member since 2015 and an incredible champion of our mission. She and her husband Andy grew to love the work of Project Success and all we do with students. This gift was given for Project Success to take its proven program and methodology to expand outside of Minneapolis to support more students in connecting to their purpose and planning for their futures. In 2023, a portion of this gift was used to build an Expansion Team to support this growth and create exciting plans for new programming to launch in 2024 for more students to gain access to Project Success programming.

In conversations with Executive Director, Adrienne Diercks, over the years, Andy shared his experience coming to the US as a child and wishing that he had something like Project Success to connect him to new friends and new opportunities. Andy died in April 2023 and this gift is now one of the many meaningful legacies he leaves behind. Andy cared deeply about all we do to help students feel included and have a sense of belonging along with Moira's passion for the work we do with students and families.



“For Andy, this gift was in honor of helping all kids to feel like they belong, and for me, this gift is in honor of Andy.”

– Moira Grosbard



# FINANCIAL REPORT

## FINANCIAL POSITION

	6/30/2023	6/30/2022
Assets	<b>\$11,511,151</b>	<b>\$9,553,286</b>
Liabilities	\$4,295,520	\$4,444,896
Fund Balance (without donor restrictions)	\$2,256,871	\$2,871,621
Fund Balance (with donor restrictions <sup>1</sup> )	\$4,958,760	\$2,236,769
<b>Total Liabilities and Fund Balance</b>	<b>\$11,511,151</b>	<b>\$9,553,286</b>

## SUPPORT

Grants and Contributions	\$6,026,265	\$2,632,076
In-Kind Contributions <sup>2</sup>	\$1,183,126	\$647,658
<b>Total Support</b>	<b>\$7,209,391</b>	<b>\$3,279,734</b>

## REVENUES

School Fees	\$300,500	\$1,057,500
Program Service Fees	\$79,921	\$114,590
Interest Income	\$75,345	\$2,287
Rental Income	-	\$26,311
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$455,766</b>	<b>\$1,418,581</b>

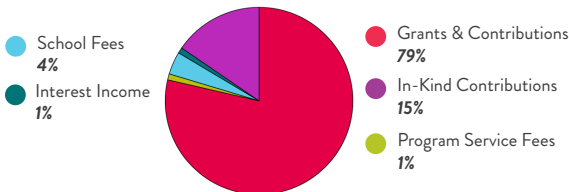
<b>Total Support and Revenues</b>	<b>\$7,665,157</b>	<b>\$4,480,422</b>
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## EXPENSES

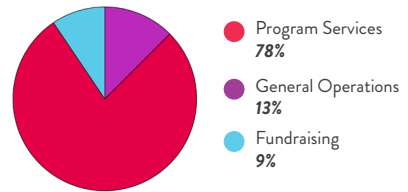
Program Services <sup>3</sup>	\$4,337,507	\$3,460,957
General Operations	\$695,523	\$477,972
Fundraising	\$524,886	\$609,646
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$5,557,916</b>	<b>\$4,548,575</b>

<b>Fund Balance: Beginning of Period</b>	<b>\$5,108,390</b>	<b>\$5,176,543</b>
<b>Fund Balance: End of Period</b>	<b>\$7,215,631</b>	<b>\$5,108,390</b>
<b>Change in Fund Balance</b>	<b>\$2,107,241</b>	<b>\$(68,153)</b>

## Revenue and Other Support



## Expenses



<sup>1</sup> Donor Restricted gifts are primarily gifts made for future-program expansion expenses as well as towards the building purchase and subsequent build-out of 1 Groveland Terrace.

<sup>2</sup> In-Kind Contributions include generous donations of: theater tickets, program supplies, brand and website expertise, facility usage, and more. See page 18 for a list of donors.

<sup>3</sup> Program-specific cash expenses as reported in the 990 for this fiscal year are as follows: Workshops \$2,422,050, Arts \$1,177,721, Expeditions \$357,898, and Institute \$217,623.

# THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS.

## ANNUAL FUND DONORS

July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

## CORPORATIONS AND FOUNDATIONS

### \$500,000+

Margaret A. Cargill Fund at the Saint Paul and Minnesota Foundation  
Peter J. King Family Foundation

### \$100,000 - \$499,999

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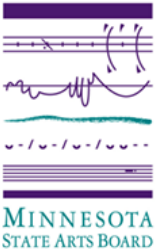


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