

INNOVATORS LEAD THE WAY TO

UNLOCKING
AMERICA'S
POTENTIAL



MOVING AMERICA FORWARD

- A PUBLICATION OF -





THE SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS
THAT FACE OUR NATION ARE WAITING
TO BE TAPPED.

HERE'S HOW.



MOVING AMERICA FORWARD

ABOUT

Moving America Forward: Innovators Lead the Way to Unlocking America's Potential is a briefing book intended for candidates and policymakers at all levels of government who aspire to unlock the potential of all Americans and make our nation, once again, the land of opportunity. The transformational ideas presented in this book grew out of the experiences of social innovators who are solving America's biggest problems in communities across the country every day. Their insights shaped the ideas presented on these pages and offer a wealth of opportunities for policymakers to scale local results into national impact.

AMERICA FORWARD

ABOUT

America Forward is a nonpartisan policy initiative of New Profit, a national venture philanthropy fund that seeks to break down the barriers between all people and opportunity in America. America Forward unites social innovators with policymakers to advance a public policy agenda that champions innovative and effective solutions to our country's most pressing social problems. We lead a Coalition of more than 70 social innovators who foster innovation, identify more efficient and effective solutions, reward results, and catalyze cross-sector partnerships. Our Coalition members are achieving measurable outcomes in more than 14,500 communities across the country every day, touching the lives of nearly 8 million Americans each year.

Since 2007, America Forward's community of innovators has played a leading role in driving the national dialogue on social innovation and advocating for lasting policy change. America Forward played a critical role in the creation of a federal tiered-evidence fund aimed at scaling high-impact organizations and significantly leveraging federal dollars; our community influenced the creation of the White House Office of Social Innovation; and we continue to advocate for the inclusion of provisions focused on outcomes in key pieces of federal legislation. Together, we have leveraged \$1.5 billion for social innovation and have driven millions of federal resources toward programs that are achieving measurable results for those who need them most.

America Forward believes that our nation's social innovators can lead the way to unlocking America's potential — and help move all of America forward.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

09 - 11 **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

13 - 38 **MOVING AMERICA FORWARD**

39 - 60 **POLICY IDEAS**

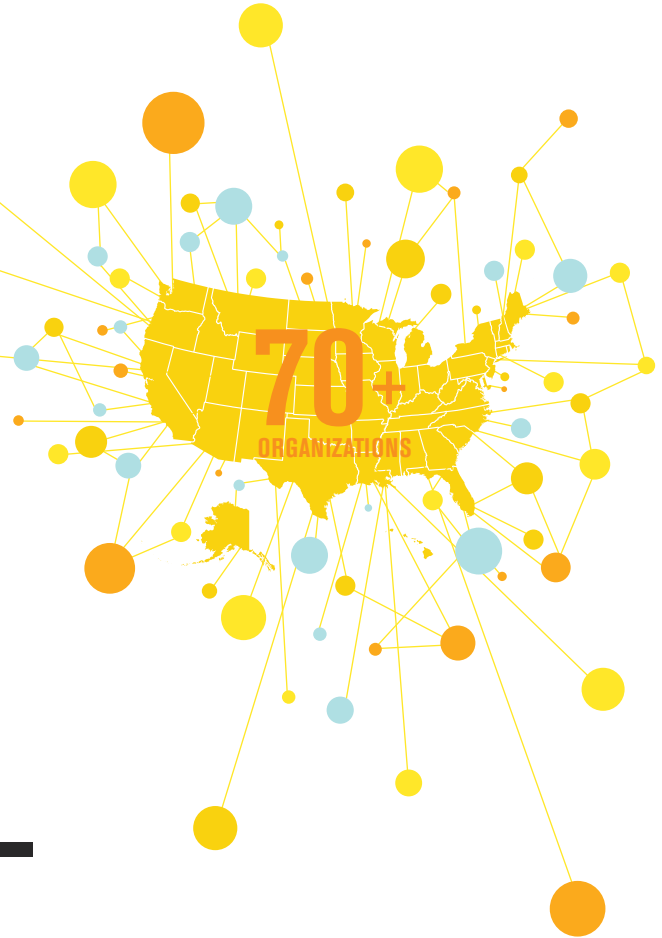
43 - 49 GOVERNMENT THAT WORKS
50 - 53 EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE
54 - 56 "MARKET-ABLE" AMERICA
57 - 58 FIRST JOBS
59 - 60 SECOND CHANCES

61 - 96 **HIGH-IMPACT ORGANIZATIONS**

97 - 98 **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



AMERICA FORWARD IS A COALITION OF MORE THAN 70 LEADING SOCIAL INNOVATORS

who share an audacious vision: an America where every child growing up has the opportunity for a successful life and where anyone who falls off a path to opportunity gets a second chance at a better future.

THANKS TO THE PERSISTENCE OF SOCIAL INNOVATORS across the country, every day we see strategies that are working and delivering results in a rapidly changing world. Technology, globalization, immigration, demographic shifts, and many other forces have altered the business landscape, the way we communicate, how we learn, and the jobs we do. All around the country, communities are responding to this transformative change by finding better ways to solve new — and old — problems. Resourceful problem solvers are:

- Coming together to align efforts, using data to measure results and make course corrections;
- Using technology to make it easier for people to find the help they need;
- Harnessing market forces by combining social missions with business strategies;
- Applying scientific advances to improve our delivery of education and health care; and
- Leveraging the efforts of ordinary citizens who are motivated to help.

But unfortunately, they are operating on too small a scale relative to the big problems they aim to address.

What we learn from our organizations' successes — and failures — informs our public policy priorities. Over the last eight years we have partnered with leading policymakers on both sides of the aisle to make better use of taxpayer dollars, leverage innovation, and improve outcomes for the low-income communities we serve.

While the federal government ought to be lifting up these successful efforts, in too many cases government is getting in the way by creating barriers and red tape, using cumbersome policy tools that stifle innovation, and investing in programs that do not work. So much of America's social policy is rooted in an earlier era and muddled by complicated rules and politically determined preferences. Inertia, political divisiveness, and overemphasis on compliance have frozen in place ineffective and inefficient systems designed decades ago.

We challenge America's policymakers to spark a new era of problem solving that transcends partisanship. By activating America's problem solvers — the inventors, the entrepreneurs, the organizations that get things done in their communities, the people who want to make a difference, the businesses that provide jobs and are willing to work with communities to solve problems — we can ensure that every child will grow up in America with the opportunity to create a successful life, and that every person trying to turn his or her life around will be given a second chance.

The good news is that the tools we need exist — in pilot form, in the private and nonprofit sectors, in communities across the country — operating on a small scale. Our challenge is to make these solutions extensible — to scale them in a cost-effective way so that they match the scope of the problems they address. But we also fear that important national ideals are being eroded because our society is failing to mobilize our collective resources effectively to keep people from falling off the path to opportunity.

POLICY REFORM

THE NEXT PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS will write a new paradigm that might well last for the next eight years, or the next fifty. We propose that this paradigm acknowledge that no problem can be solved by government alone — we need the active engagement of all parts of society, from nonprofits, philanthropy, education, and faith-based institutions to business, social enterprise, and citizen volunteers. It should recognize that the only certainty is the certainty of change, necessitating more flexible frameworks, opportunities for experimentation, and reliance on the ingenuity that America has deployed throughout history to find better and better ways to solve our problems. And it should direct investments to what works to solve our problems, rather than what works politically, which means we need better data measurement systems and the ability to tie federal funding to performance. Specifically, it should:

IDENTIFY INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS

1

Innovation is an ongoing process that is essential to improving, continuously, the way we solve problems. This process begins with invention, which must be implemented and tested, and improved or discontinued as the results warrant. If successful, investment should enable the invention to take hold on a large scale, continuously improved through subsequent innovation cycles until the system is disrupted by an even better solution. To embrace innovation, more intentional investment in social sector R&D is essential in order to bring the way we solve America's problems up to date and prepare the workforce we will need for the second half of the 21st century.

INVEST IN WHAT WORKS

2

We must find ways to spread the best solutions across government and to public problem solvers across the nation. We can do this if we adopt an outcome focus rather than a compliance-oriented system; put in place measurement systems to determine effectiveness relative to goals; embrace flexibility coupled with accountability for outcomes; integrate services to reduce duplication and inefficiency; and maximize the use of technology. Promising experiments that scale solutions and make government operate more effectively include the Corporation for National and Community Service's Social Innovation Fund, Pay for Success, and social innovation financing. Pay for Success encompasses a wide array of pay for performance-based contracting between government and social service providers in which impact is measured rigorously and government makes "success payments" or increases a provider's market share only when positive results are achieved within a specific timeframe. Social innovation financing is a related model in which private funders, using various financial instruments and Pay for Success contracts, provide working capital to service providers and take on the financial risk of the provider not meeting the level of success necessary to trigger performance payments.

impact, in which cross-sector leaders unite around common goals and align resources; "human centered design" — design focused on users' needs with frequent feedback loops, rather than requiring them to adjust their behavior to accommodate design; national service — including full-time, full-year "service year" positions — which can uniquely and cost-effectively address human and social capital deficits; and social enterprise, for-profit businesses or nonprofit organizations that have a social purpose supported by revenues earned through commercial activities.

CONCLUSION

WE NOW KNOW THAT neither the private sector nor the government can do it alone. All of us have critical roles to play — nonprofit organizations, philanthropy, academia, business, civic groups, religious institutions, volunteers, and the government. This is true now more than ever, as we face tremendous resource constraints. We need to find dramatically better ways to nurture the productive potential of the American people and use public resources with greater accountability by funding what works and defunding programs that do not. It is time to activate America's problem solvers and work across sectors, party lines, generations, and all that divides us to solve the urgent challenge of our time — to **make America once again the land of opportunity and move all of America forward.**

ENGAGE EVERYONE

3

There are few problems in America that government can solve on its own without the engagement of other sectors. Federal policy should leverage whenever possible the contributions of entities outside of the federal government, including nonprofit and faith-based organizations, business, social enterprise, state and local government, and the time and talents of ordinary citizens, including those people who are the focus of their efforts. Tools include: aligned action or collective

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PHOTO BY

JUMPSTART FOR YOUNG CHILDREN, INC.

Since 1993, Jumpstart has served 76,000 children in low-income neighborhoods nationwide.



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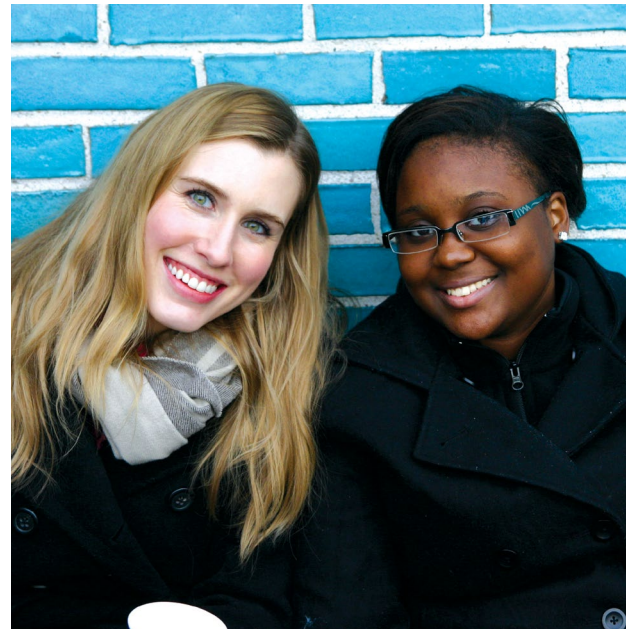


PHOTO BY

TURNAROUND FOR CHILDREN

Applying the science behind the impact of stress
on child development to turn around struggling schools.

MOVING AMERICA FORWARD



AMERICA FORWARD is a Coalition of more than 70 leading social innovators who share an audacious vision: an America where every child growing up has the opportunity for a successful life and where anyone who falls off a path to opportunity gets a second chance at a better future.

We are inventors and disrupters, not bound by business as usual. We are nimble, quick to create ways to solve challenges that arise as populations shift, technologies emerge, and new rifts fracture society and cut off whole communities from opportunity. Through our work in communities across the country, we are successfully strengthening our nation's human capital, making sure that America remains the land of opportunity and the engine of enterprise it has always been.

What we learn from our organizations' successes — and failures — informs our public policy priorities. Over the last eight years we have partnered with leading policymakers on both sides of the aisle to make better use of taxpayer dollars, leverage innovation, and improve outcomes for the low-income communities we serve.

Every day we see evidence that the future we believe in is at our fingertips. Against the odds, we enable children who start life economically and educationally disadvantaged to achieve in school and apply to — and graduate from — college. Against the odds, we help youth who are out of school and out of work — or stuck in the vicious cycle of incarceration — rejoin the path to self-sufficiency through education and training. Against the odds, we empower families facing devastating challenges to make their way out of poverty and into the middle class.

Yet, despite the success we see, we are a nation that is failing to meet its full potential by relying on outdated policy strategies that do not work in 21st century America, and failing to invest in those that do. Every year, the America Forward Coalition collectively helps more than 7.5 million Americans forge paths to a better future. But tens of millions more need help — including the two out of three students who read below grade level,¹ the one in five who don't graduate from high school,² the 1 million who graduate each year but don't go on to college,³ and the 45 million Americans who live in poverty, many without hope of a better future.⁴

The financial cost of the status quo is high.

The human cost is even higher.

As a society, can we afford not to invest in innovative strategies that work?

The cost of these failures is high: to families for whom the American Dream is an illusion, not an attainable reality. To businesses and democratic institutions that depend on schools to educate citizens and pay the price when our education system doesn't succeed. To communities coming apart from a lack of social and institutional trust. And to an America that has been the land of equal opportunity, but is no more.

We challenge America's policymakers to spark a new era of problem solving that transcends partisanship. By activating America's problem solvers — the inventors,

the entrepreneurs, the organizations that get things done in their communities, the people who want to make a difference, the businesses that provide jobs and are willing to work with communities to solve problems — we can ensure that every child will grow up in America with the opportunity to create a successful life, and that every person trying to turn his or her life around will be given a second chance.

Fortunately, we have everything we need to change course and secure our future as a nation — if together, we make the right choices.

America is a nation of ingenuity. We innovate. We invent solutions. This entrepreneurial spirit is part of America's character and we see it in technology advances across every field. So as the world evolves around us, why wouldn't we embrace new strategies that respond to emerging challenges and opportunities?

America is a nation of excellence. We want to be the best. So at this time of big data and limited resources, when we're seeking to expand opportunity, why wouldn't we reward results and invest in what works?

America is a nation of doers. We roll up our sleeves. We take responsibility for ourselves and our families, and we help our neighbors. We don't expect government alone to solve our problems. In the face of government or public shortfalls, why wouldn't we make public investments in community solutions that leverage private resources and local action to make a difference?

We believe that America's best days are ahead of us, but we also fear that important national ideals are being eroded because our society is failing to mobilize our collective resources effectively to keep people from falling off the path to opportunity.

HERE'S WHY.

The world is rapidly changing. Technology, globalization, immigration, demographic shifts, and many other forces have altered the business landscape, the way we communicate, how we learn, the jobs we do.

Around the country, communities are dealing with this transformative change by finding new ways to solve new — and old — problems. Resourceful problem solvers are:

- Coming together to align efforts, using data to measure results and make course corrections;
- Using technology to make it easier for people to find the help they need;
- Harnessing market forces by combining social missions with business strategies;
- Applying scientific advances to improve our delivery of education and health care; and
- Leveraging the efforts of ordinary citizens who are motivated to help.

Thanks to the persistence of social innovators, all around the country, we see strategies that are working. But unfortunately, they are operating on too small a scale relative to the big problems they are aiming to address.

While the federal government ought to be lifting up these successful efforts, in too many cases government is getting in the way by creating barriers and red tape, using cumbersome policy tools that stifle innovation, and investing in programs that do not work.

So much of America's social policy is rooted in an earlier era and muddled by complicated rules and politically determined preferences. Inertia, political divisiveness, and overemphasis on compliance have frozen in place ineffective and inefficient systems designed decades ago. We are relying on policy strategies framed at a time when electric typewriters were revolutionary and a single computer took up an entire room.

These top-down systems are costing us too much and giving us too little in return. If there is any doubt that we need a radical reframing of American social policy, consider these facts.

Today, a child born into a poor family is unlikely to move into the middle class, and has only a small chance of moving into the top 20 percent. Sadly, failing schools in poor neighborhoods, de facto segregation, and a lack of bridging social capital leave whole communities without a path out of poverty. This opportunity gap is dragging America down.

WHAT AMERICA NEEDS: SOLVING FIVE CHALLENGES OF OUR TIME

1



GOVERNMENT THAT WORKS.

Across our nation, America's innovators are creating new and better ways to solve old, intractable social problems. Communities are using technology tactically, aligning action, and making markets work for the common good. They are investing for impact, tracking results, and mobilizing ordinary citizens around a common purpose. These pockets of progress offer incredible promise — and the federal government can and should accelerate and amplify this progress to achieve better results for taxpayers. **We challenge the next President to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of taxpayer dollars, and move government fully into the 21st century by investing in innovation, making data accessible, measuring outcomes, breaking down silos, investing in technology, and leveraging private action.**

2



EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE.

In every sector of the economy, technology and individualization have transformed the way we work and engage with each other. But the way our students are taught in schools is stuck in the last century. Education — from the earliest years through postsecondary degree attainment — is the key both to individual opportunity and to building a shared future for our nation. Closing achievement gaps requires a reimagining of the way that schools and systems work and measure their success. Innovations in human capital, data, and technology have the potential to reshape the way learning happens and harness the skills and talents of every student. **We challenge the next President to secure the future of the nation by helping states, communities, schools, early learning programs, and their nonprofit partners accelerate improvements that can expand opportunity, achievement, and success for all.**

3



“MARKET-ABLE” AMERICA.

For decades — and as recently as 1990 — America led the world in the percentage of citizens with higher education degrees. Today, not only are we falling in the international ranks, employers are struggling to find workers with the skills they need. Tremendous national progress on high school completion will be hollow unless all those graduates can connect to career pathway programs that lead to marketable experiences and credentials. Innovations in higher education access, supports in and out of the classroom, experiential learning through apprenticeships, internships, and service, credit for learning outside the classroom, a focus on competency and mastery of skills rather than seat time, and increased attention to outcomes could transform higher education. To reclaim our place in the international ranks and prepare the workers we need, **we challenge the next President to support more ladders to help students attain a marketable postsecondary credential — and ensure that they are developing the skills they need to succeed in the economy.**

4



FIRST JOBS.

Regardless of background, getting a first full-time job starts a young person on a path to becoming economically successful. A first-time employee learns workplace behaviors and skills, experiences a specific field, makes connections, and develops the pride that goes with a paycheck. Unfortunately, time spent unemployed as a young adult leaves a “wage scar” that lasts well into middle age. Even as the economy recovers, unemployment among young adults remains disproportionately high. The difficulty most young adults have launching themselves into stable jobs and career paths has led to nearly 60 percent of adult children receiving financial support from parents, with significant numbers of parents taking on debt or deferring retirement. We can make sure that every young adult has access to that important first job by calling on private employers to hire opportunity youth, grow apprenticeships and on-the-job training — including service year positions, and invest in social enterprises offering first jobs that can be a bridge to traditional employment. **We challenge the next President to mobilize America to open first job opportunities for every young adult to step onto a pathway to a career.**

5



SECOND CHANCES.

Millions of Americans hit rock bottom with no path back to self-sufficiency. They may be formerly incarcerated, experiencing homelessness, struggling to beat substance abuse or address mental illness — or all of the above. For some, doors to education and employment are slammed shut. For others, the help that's there is too hard to find. These challenges have a ripple effect impacting families and in some cases, whole communities. We can use innovative technology, human capital, community collaborations, and systems reform to give a fresh start and hand up to all people looking to change their lives. **We challenge the next President to build on-ramps to opportunity for all Americans, giving citizens who have turned their lives around or paid their dues a second chance at a better future.**



INNOVATING TO HELP STUDENTS GET TO AND THROUGH COLLEGE

A postsecondary degree or credential is critical in today's economy, but the path to college, even for academically qualified students, is fraught with obstacles. The challenge of navigating the admissions process, selecting an appropriate institution, preparing for the admissions tests, securing financial aid, and going on to matriculate keeps millions of qualified students out of higher education.

One might assume that the public school guidance office plays the role of helping students navigate the admissions process. But in fact, the typical high school counselor now has an average caseload of 239 students — and even more in many urban schools. While students with college-educated parents can draw on their families' help, or pay for the assistance of private counselors, first-generation college applicants often get lost in the process. As a result, even class valedictorians from low-income communities are less likely to attend selective colleges than average students from wealthier backgrounds.

The good news is that we know how to fix this problem. Innovative programs such as **College Summit** (pg. 84), which builds a college-going culture and navigation supports in low-income high schools; **College Possible** (pg. 84), which engages AmeriCorps members to coach students; and **10,000 Degrees** (pg. 82), which plants college awareness seeds early and follows on with mentors, scholarships, and other supports, are making it possible for tens of thousands of low-income students to apply to college, receive financial aid, and earn a postsecondary degree. However, millions more need this help. Because College Summit, College Possible, and 10,000 Degrees are multi-state nonprofits, none of these innovative programs are eligible to apply for the college access funds set aside by Congress.

During the first three-quarters of the 20th century, America developed an enormously successful middle class through education programs and growing college degree attainment. But since 1980, although we've doubled our spending on education, we've failed to innovate effectively and have slid rapidly in international education rankings as a result.⁵ We now face a shortage of qualified workers for skilled jobs. A 2014 Gallup poll of youth in grades 5 - 12 showed that 50% lack hope for the future.

While second chances are a long-standing American value, youth who have dropped out of school find few pathways back into education or family-sustaining jobs, putting a drain on government social programs. Failing to reconnect these youth to school and work costs taxpayers \$93 billion in lost revenues and increased social services every year.⁶ Disconnected youth are also likely to pass their disadvantage on to their children — a missed opportunity to groom a new generation that is able to contribute to a productive society.

Ex-offenders face even greater barriers to employment and education. Inability to find a job that offers steady, legitimate income can lead to further crime. Four in ten adult offenders return to prison within three years of release,⁷ and the United States currently has the dubious distinction of having the highest incarceration rate in the world.⁸ Tragically, one in eight American men is an ex-felon,⁹ and African-American men are now incarcerated at six times the rate of their white counterparts.¹⁰

These challenges cut at the core of who we are as a nation, dividing us as a people and squandering the human and productive potential of millions of Americans.

The good news is that the tools we need already exist — in pilot form, in the private and nonprofit sectors, in communities across the country, operating on a small scale. Our challenge is to make these solutions extensible — to scale them in a cost-effective way so that they match the scope of the problems they address. And using the power of markets, technology, networks, purposeful human capital, R&D, and better investments, we can set America on a new course in which government is nimbler and more effective and America is once again the nation of opportunity.

If we don't take this path, we'll pay a high price. Each young adult not in school or working presents an immediate taxpayer burden of \$13,900 per year, and imposes a future lifetime taxpayer burden of \$170,740.¹¹ The U.S. now spends more than \$80 billion annually on state and federal corrections — the second fastest growing area of state spending behind health care — and that number climbs to \$260 billion when you include judicial, legal, and law enforcement expenditures.¹²

Survey data suggest that more than half of released ex-offenders remain unemployed up to a year after their release, and studies show that the impact on the economy of ex-offender unemployment is as much as \$65 billion dollars annually in lost productivity.¹³ The profound human cost, and the price of degrading our nation's values, is far greater.

On the other hand, if we cut the high school dropout rate in half, we could generate \$45 billion annually in tax revenue.¹⁴ If we could bring minority students' college participation in line with that of white students, we would create an additional \$231 billion in GDP and at least \$80 billion in tax revenues.¹⁵ If we could cut unemployment of ex-offenders in half, we could add more than \$25 billion to the U.S. economy annually.¹⁶ Today, we are leaving that money on the table, and leaving Americans behind.

Fortunately, we have everything we need to change course — if we make the right choices together as a society.

LOCAL SOLUTIONS ADDRESSING NATIONAL PROBLEMS



Low-income students typically start school a year behind their more advantaged peers...¹⁷

But low-income preschool students in communities served by **Jumpstart for Young Children, Inc.** (pg. 72) increase their readiness at twice the rate of other Head Start students and start kindergarten on track.¹⁸

If we could achieve these results for all at-risk preschoolers, we could

SAVE AS MUCH AS \$100,000 PER AT-RISK CHILD OVER HIS OR HER LIFETIME.¹⁹



Only one in ten low-income students graduates from college, compared with three out of four upper-income students...

However, nine out of ten low-income **College Possible** (pg. 84) students not only make it to college, but are ten times more likely to graduate than their peers.

If we could achieve these results for all low-income students, we could

INCREASE THEIR ANNUAL INCOMES BY \$21,000 AND COLLECT \$5,000 PER YEAR MORE IN TAXES PER GRADUATE.



One out of ten ex-offenders is rearrested within a year of release...

But 9 out of 10 ex-offenders served by **Roca** (pg. 92) don't reoffend and are employed two years after release.

If we could reduce the recidivism rate by 10 percent, we could

SAVE \$635 BILLION ANNUALLY IN PRISON COSTS.

POLICY REFORM

IN THE 2016 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, the American people will take a stand about the future we choose for our country and the direction we chart to get there. As in past open elections, the voters will not only choose a President, but speak to the right role of government for our times.

In the last several years, with budgets tight and needs great, we have begun to experiment with ways to do more with less, focus on results and accountability, break down silos, engage lower-cost technology and human capital resources, and actively engage with the for-profit and nonprofit sectors. We have seen, and in some cases helped to create, new ways to measure results and drive resources to high-impact interventions, incentivize local partnerships, leverage public and private resources, mobilize communities through service, and harness market forces to support programs.

However, the partisan dysfunction in Washington has limited progress to a significant degree. With a few notable exceptions, rather than reimagining programs for an era of new technology and rapid change, policy makers have left in place social policy frameworks designed 20, 30, even 50 years ago regardless of their results.

The next President and Congress will write a new chapter for our country. This new paradigm might well last for the next eight years, or the next 50. We propose that this paradigm acknowledge that there is no problem that can be solved by government alone — we need the active engagement of all parts of society, from nonprofits, philanthropy, education, and faith-based institutions to business, social enterprise, and citizen volunteers. It should recognize that the only certainty is the certainty of change, necessitating more flexible frameworks, opportunities for experimentation, and reliance on the ingenuity that America has deployed throughout history to find better and better ways to solve our problems. And it should direct investments to what works to solve our problems, rather than what works politically, which means we need better data measurement systems and the ability to tie federal funding to performance. To be successful, as a nation we must learn from

experience — embrace what works, explore new solutions, and confront the weaknesses of long-standing policy. We ask the next President and Congress to reimagine the apparatus of opportunity by embracing and taking to scale new models to leverage federal resources, including innovation labs, pay for success, collective impact, service, and social enterprise. In addition, we call on policymakers to embrace:

A lifetime perspective, with no magic bullets. Children and young adults need education and support at every stage, regardless of their income or background. Making kids school-ready by kindergarten will not enable them to succeed if they enroll in a failing school. Reading by third grade is important, but not sufficient to ensure school success. Graduating from high school is essential, but most people will need additional education in order to become financially self-sufficient. Being accepted to college is not the same as graduating from college. And graduating from college with massive debt may set a young person back for decades. There are no shortcuts.

Prevention — and second chances. There is no question that prevention is less costly, more effective, and more humane, than remediation. Unfortunately, our societal investments too often focus on the end result of neglect and trauma rather than early-stage supports that could render later, more costly interventions unnecessary. We support strategies that incentivize prevention. At the same time, we cannot afford to deny second chances to people who made mistakes and paid their dues or were victims of circumstance. And sometimes those second chances are also a form of prevention — they help ensure that the children of these struggling adults have the opportunity to grow up in a more stable home and break the cycle of poverty and unmet potential.

The individual instead of “one size fits all.” While it is easier, and cheaper, to offer a standardized service than a custom product, it is not always effective or even efficient. Individuals have different abilities and

PHOTO BY
READING PARTNERS



A LIFETIME PERSPECTIVE

An intact, supportive, high-functioning, well-connected, and adequately resourced family is a child's most important asset, but not every family is equally able to give their children everything they need from their earliest years until they complete their education and begin a career. That's why programs like ours are needed to close the opportunity gap.

We know that early learning lays the foundation for school success — and innovative programs such as **AppleTree Institute for Education Innovation** (pg. 71), the **Waterford Institute** (pg. 73), and **Acelero Learning/Shine Early Learning** (pg. 71) are advancing the pre-literacy skills of tens of thousands of low-income children. But millions more need their help.

We know that learning to read by third grade is essential to equip children to learn in later grades — and innovative programs such as **Reading Partners** (pg. 80), **BELL** (pg. 74), and **Save the Children** (pg. 73) are enabling low-income children to increase their reading ability at faster rates than their peers. But millions more need their help.

We know that students have wide-ranging abilities, challenges, and learning styles — and innovative programs such as **Turnaround for Children** (pg. 81), **Eye to Eye** (pg. 76), and **New Classrooms Innovation Partners** (pg. 78) are enabling traumatized, marginalized, or disengaged students to identify their strengths and succeed in school. But millions more need their help.

We know that helping youth persist to graduation is essential for their futures — and innovative programs such as **City Year, Inc.** (pg. 75), **iMentor** (pg. 85), and **BUILD** (pg. 75) are doing just that. But millions more need their help.

We know that having a four-year college degree makes someone born into the bottom quintile of income three times more likely to climb all the way to the top as an adult — and innovative programs such as **Bottom Line** (pg. 83), **College Forward** (pg. 84), and **Single Stop** (pg. 85) are helping thousands of youth beat the odds. But millions more need their help.

We know that reconnecting unemployed out-of-school youth can save America billions of dollars and add to the productive workforce of the nation — and innovative programs such as **Year Up** (pg. 90) and **The Corps Network** (pg. 89) are changing the lives of hundreds of thousands of youth. But millions more need their help.

We know that we can help ex-offenders make a fresh start — and innovative programs such as **Roca** (pg. 92) and **YouthBuild USA** (pg. 91) are enabling thousands of formerly incarcerated citizens to turn their lives around. But millions more need their help.

BREAKING THE CYCLE OF POVERTY THROUGH TWO-GENERATION APPROACHES

We know that children's success in life is closely tied to their parents' ability to overcome the obstacles that limit families' economic success. Unfortunately, few federal programs use this two-generation lens — children are treated in a manner disconnected from families. These programs, however, take a different approach:

AVANCE, Inc. (pg. 71), founded by Dr. Gloria Rodriguez in 1973, strives to empower families to break the cycle of poverty through a proven two-generation approach combining early childhood development and parenting education. A long-term study found that not only did children graduate from high school at rates far higher than their peers — mothers increased higher education degree attainment by more than 200 percent.

Kirsten Lodal founded **LIFT** (pg. 94) as a student in 1998 after volunteering with low-income preschoolers. She observed that while the children's needs were addressed through the program, their parents still struggled to provide the safe and stable futures they wanted for their children. This insight prompted her to recruit college student volunteers to help parents make the connections they needed to secure critical services. Today LIFT engages volunteers, with the support of AmeriCorps, to work one-on-one with 10,000 community members annually to help them establish the personal, social and financial foundation they need to achieve stability.

Youth Villages, Inc. (pg. 92), founded in 1986 by Patrick Lawler, similarly takes a two-generation approach to helping troubled children. Placement of a child into foster care, juvenile justice, or a mental health setting can be avoided by providing an array of evidence-based social and mental health services to help the child, family, and community. By doing so, fewer children are placed out of their homes, entire families — parents and children — are provided with the array of services they need to succeed, and long-term impacts are realized. In fact, more than 80 percent of the youth who come to Youth Villages in crises are in school, crime free, and living with their families two years later.

challenges, and a uniform solution may do more harm than good. With more than half the students in public schools struggling with poverty, and one in five navigating a learning disability, we must find ways to meet the real, and varying, needs of children from all families so that every child can find a productive path.

Identification — and removal — of bias in systems. The science is solid — racial, ethnic, and other forms of bias are real, very hard to eliminate, and contribute significantly to education and economic inequality.^{20 21} We need to acknowledge unconscious bias in order to address and eradicate it. We can look at data to see systematic differences across different demographic groups, and determine what works to reduce racial, ethnic, and other differentials. These are solutions we need to even the playing field in schools, the justice system, and the workplace.

Human-centered solutions. We have evolved a system that treats every need separately, ignoring the interrelated nature of many challenges and the need for personalized services, not siloed systems. Health affects education. Housing affects access to healthy food. Poverty affects criminal justice involvement. We must find ways to put people at the center of systems and build systems that are multi-faceted, easy to access, and devoid of duplication, inefficiency, and silos.

The relationship of social capital to opportunity. A loving, functional, well-connected, and well-resourced family is the best social program — but not every child has one. Unfortunately, too many families have nowhere to turn for the advice and connections that could send a child to college or find an adult a well-paying job. We must invest in building the social and knowledge capital of those who have less, or forever suffer the consequences of a divided society.

SYSTEMS CHANGE

AMERICAN POLICY reflects in many ways how government itself is designed to operate. The next President should take on the challenge of creating a government for the 21st century and implementing new social policy paradigms.



PHOTO BY
FAMILY INDEPENDENCE INITIATIVE

FII unlocks the potential and power of low-income families
and helps them increase their savings by 120%
and their earnings by 24%.

ONE NATION, INDIVISIBLE

Racial and ethnic disparities have long been present in every part of the system our nation counts on to even the playing field. African American and Latino children as a group start school less prepared than white children, do less well in school, go to college at lower rates, and are less likely to earn a degree. They are disproportionately represented in the prison population, live in poverty at higher rates, and have poorer health and lower life expectancies than other racial and ethnic groups. These disparities are passed from generation to generation, leaving large segments of the population without a shot at the middle class.

Effective public policy strategies to increase opportunity in America could help eliminate these disparities. Given significant demographic shifts on the horizon — by 2040 minorities are projected to become the majority of the U.S. population — it is more important than ever that we tackle these challenges. Without changing the way we invest as a nation to bring about equality of opportunity, we can't come close to realizing America's true potential as a nation — indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

HERE'S HOW:

IDENTIFY INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS

DESPITE THE EXISTENCE of robust innovations across the nation, the concept of “innovation” itself is poorly understood in the context of education and other human service programs. Most often, it is talked about as a state of being with an emphasis on novelty — for example, a new program or organization — rather than an ongoing process that is essential to improving, continuously, the way we solve problems. Such a process requires several interrelated components:

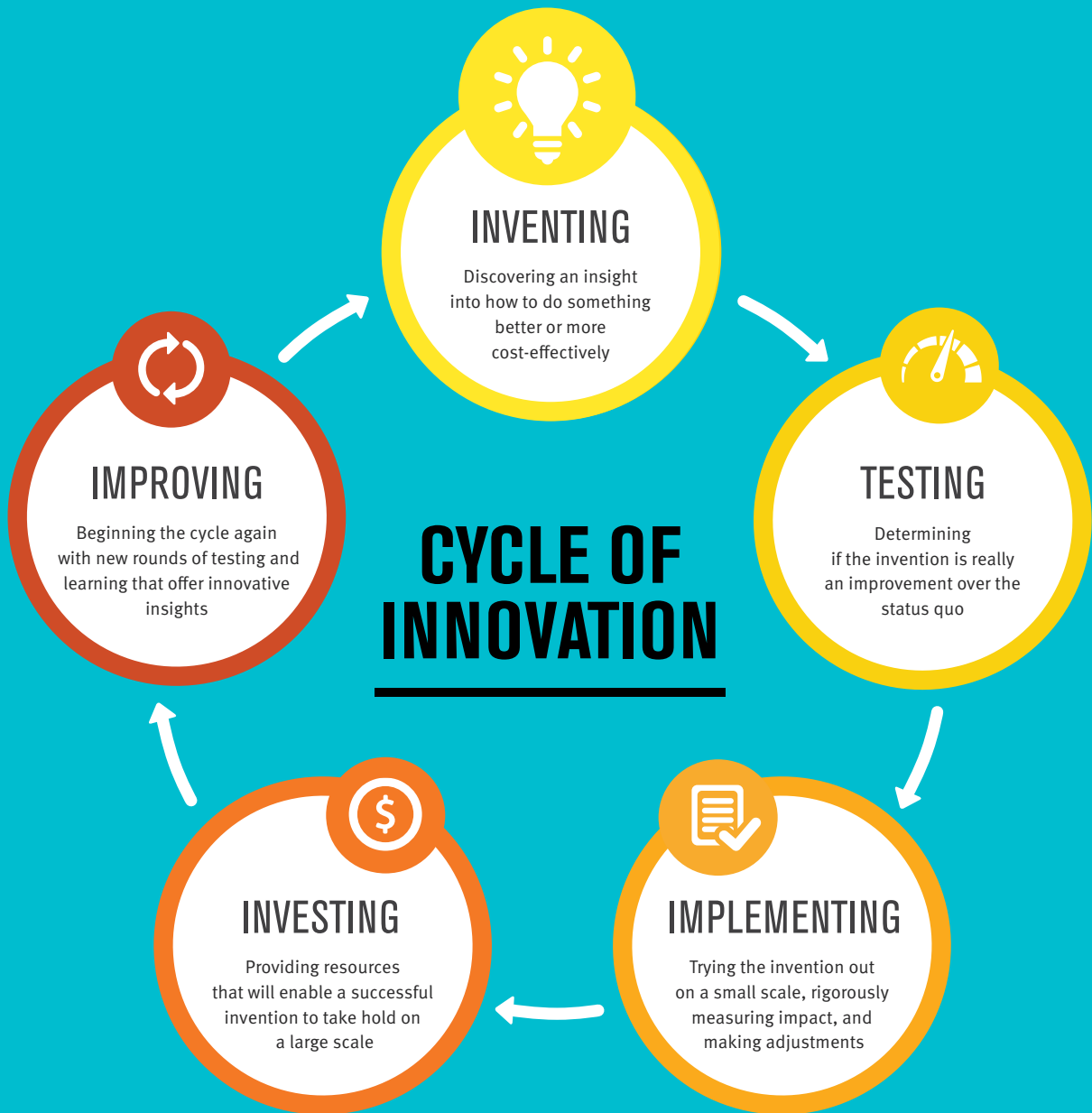
1. **Inventing** — discovering an insight into how to do something better or more cost-effectively;
2. **Testing** — determining if the invention is really an improvement over the status quo;
3. **Implementing** — trying the invention out on a small scale, rigorously measuring impact, and making adjustments;
4. **Investing** — providing resources that will enable a successful invention to take hold on a large scale; and
5. **Improving** — beginning the cycle again with new rounds of testing and learning that offer innovative insights.

This process may be better understood in the business world, where new value is created every day through innovation and market forces. There, the concept is simple: a product, service, or process is invented and tested. If successful, it attracts investment to take it to market, and then to expand its reach. Profits gleaned from the invention can be reinvested in research and development efforts that will result in continuous learning and improvement or inventions that will displace the original one. In fact, the federal government is so committed to advancing private sector innovation that it spends billions on business R&D every year through tax credits and a wide range of spending programs. In similar fashion, the federal government invests hundreds of billions of dollars in medical research and defense technology to ensure that the nation benefits from the best tools and interventions.

Now consider the social sector, where education, youth development, workforce training, and other human service organizations are charged with unlocking the productive potential of the American people. Across America, innovations occur every day in new, established, large, and small organizations alike. Some of these innovations will be breakthrough strategies, while others will be failures. Yet we rarely have a way to tell which is an improvement over current practice because evaluation dollars are scarce, assessment tools and methodologies are frequently deployed in ways that fail to produce the most useful learning, data collection systems are limited, and channels for communication about innovations are underdeveloped.

Today, problem-solving innovators create local programs as “demonstrations” to prove that their ideas can achieve results. All across the country, in big city neighborhoods, suburban centers, and rural counties, innovators are creating programs, and sometimes whole organizations, to confront the problems they see. They may scrape for resources, depend on volunteers, and operate out of a basement, church, or storefront. Some will eventually close their doors for want of funding; many will never grow beyond a single site; most will not have a formal evaluation to tell them if they are succeeding — although they may know through observation and limited data that they are making a difference, at least in part. As a result, organizations across the country are continually reinventing solutions that already exist, and even the most promising ones face obstacles to scale.

In recent years, promising government program models have been launched to foster innovation in recognition of some of these challenges. For example, the Corporation for National and Community Service’s **Social Innovation Fund** and the Department of Education’s **Investing in Innovation (i3)** Fund support both the scaling of effective solutions as well as early-stage investment in innovative programs. And grant amounts are dependent on the level of evidence of success.



At the state level, Utah has broadly embraced the integration of data, evidence, and outcomes in its policy and budget processes. Utilizing the capacity of state and local leaders, the private sector, and university partners, Utah developed multiple pay for success projects and created the Policy Innovation Lab at the University of Utah to support the growth of innovative and data-driven approaches to difficult social problems across the Western United States.

We should encourage efforts like these and weave them into a learning system to impact the far larger funding streams aimed at the problems they address. More intentional investment in social sector R&D is essential to bring the way we solve America's problems up to date and prepare the workforce we will need for the second half of the 21st century.

INVEST IN WHAT WORKS

THE INNOVATIONS described above are an essential first step toward building better policy. But they are of minimal value if their results cannot be scaled.

In today's world, even those demonstrations and models that document strong positive impact rarely spark broader efforts that result in scaled solutions, spur market development for new approaches, or ignite large-scale reform movements. Instead, organizations with effective programs struggle to spread their innovations. Even when a nonprofit or government program is wildly successful, achieving results far beyond its counterparts at a fraction of the cost, there is no guarantee that it will receive growth funding. It may struggle for resources and have little impact on the field in which it operates. And, even if it grows, it is unlikely to achieve the scale it deserves or have the lessons learned spread to other programs. The American social sector is filled with thousands of examples of big ideas trying to solve big problems through small organizations with limited reach. At the same time, we are spending billions of public and private dollars on untested programs, or worse, those that have been tested and demonstrate no positive effect.

The reasons for this dysfunction are many. Social sector organizations operate in highly regulated fields in which variations in programming are not supported. Solutions may be designed by a political process, determined by the dictates of a foundation, or crafted by committee, leaving little room for unconventional thinking or the risk-taking that is inherent in innovation. Often, programs are the result of compromises and deal making as opposed to bold and relentless vision and execution. In the social sector, no market signals identify effective programs, particularly those developed by smaller organizations. And government and philanthropic funding are often insufficiently focused on impact and results, rarely offering the flexibility, amount, and duration of support necessary for an organization to undergo substantial growth.

We must find ways to spread what works across government and to public problem solvers across the nation. To date, however, these systems are woefully underdeveloped or nonexistent.

These critical elements must be present if we are to take solutions to scale:

1. **Outcome-focus.** Too many programs lack clear outcomes. Their productivity instead is measured based on inputs (did they comply with the rules?) or outputs (how many people were served?). Every federal dollar ought to be spent with specific long-term and short-term positive outcomes in mind so that its productivity can be fairly measured against these goals.
2. **Measurement systems.** To determine effectiveness relative to goals, measurement systems must be in place that tell us what works for which populations. Tiered evidence models make larger grants to organizations that have greater degrees of evidence and smaller grants to those that are more risky. Large-scale data can be used to measure progress, and in some cases, track outcomes and measure one intervention strategy against another for specific populations. Government databases are already being used for this purpose to some degree. Greater investment in such systems, including developing

ways for organizations to use such data subject to privacy safeguards, should be a high priority.

3. **Flexibility.** Many programs were designed with — or evolved to have — extensive rules that determine who can be served, how they can be served, who can serve them, and many other factors that are unrelated to either quality or efficiency. As better solutions are developed, government must be able to adopt them and adapt the rules. Flexibility, coupled with accountability for outcomes, is a more effective means for communities to adopt the solutions that are right for them, ensure positive outcomes, and promote efficient spending than is dictating quality and compliance through rules.
4. **Service integration.** As long as multiple agencies, and even multiple programs within agencies, operate in an entirely independent manner, it is impossible to put people at the center. The silos in the federal government not only result in duplication and inefficiency, but lead to complexity at every other level of government and in service delivery at the local level. Ways to integrate or merge programs at the federal level, with incentives to do the same at the state and local levels, are badly needed.
5. **Up-to-date technology.** Technology can enable many elements critical to scaling solutions, from spreading information, providing open source tools, enabling streamlined enrollment, searching for services, building online communities, and many other functions that are commonplace in every other area of our lives. Massive investment is needed to modernize government's use of technology not only to help scale solutions, but make programs operate more effectively.

In recent years we have seen promising experiments scaling solutions and making government operate more effectively. America Forward helped to develop the Corporation for National and Community Service's **Social Innovation Fund** (SIF) authorized under the bipartisan Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act in 2009. The SIF (pg. 45) provides federal dollars on a competitive basis to match the investments of

experienced private-sector funders to grow innovative, community-based solutions that have compelling evidence of improving the lives of people in low-income communities.

Pay for success (pg. 46) encompasses a wide-array of pay for performance-based contracting between government and social service providers in which impact is measured rigorously and government makes “success payments” or increases a provider's market share only when results are achieved within a specific timeframe. **Social innovation financing** is a related model in which private funders, using various financial instruments and pay for success contracts, provide working capital to providers of social, health, housing, community development, and similar services, and take on the financial risk of the provider not meeting the level of success necessary to trigger performance payments.

These models are beginning to be implemented at the federal, state, and local levels. For example, in 2013, New York state launched a **social impact bond**, a specialized form of social impact financing. Utilizing government funding, philanthropic support, and commercial investment, the state, working with **Social Finance US** (pg. 96) and other partners, is aiming to improve economic outcomes and decrease recidivism risk among 2,000 men recently released from jail or prison and who are on parole. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts recently launched the largest financial investment in a pay for success project in the United States focused on the reduction of recidivism among at-risk youth (pg. 48).

The recently reauthorized Workforce Investment Act, now the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), includes unprecedented support for pay for success by incorporating, within all three formula funding streams, the option to utilize **Pay for Performance** contracting in allocating resources at the state and local level for employment and training activities. The amount of funding allowable under this authority, initially proposed by America Forward, totals more than \$600 million annually and could rapidly increase the impact of federal workforce funding.

ENGAGE EVERYONE

THERE ARE FEW PROBLEMS in America that government can solve on its own without the engagement of other sectors. Bringing private sector partners into public problem solving is essential. Uniting around common goals, cross-sector leaders can align their resources and increase the impact of their organizations. However, too often, attempts to incentivize local collaborations bring complex rules and limited ability to shape strategies in ways that would most leverage community assets while addressing unique community needs. Rather than shape solutions from the top down, programs should be designed to put people at the center. “Human-centered design” focuses on designing services around users’ needs, rather than requiring them to change their behavior to accommodate the design. By incorporating user research into program design process, and then creating feedback loops to improve performance, public problem solvers can expect better results than with a top-down approach to programming.

Families, neighbors, volunteers, and informal community groups are supporting successful pathways to adulthood in many places across the country. And low-income community members have important roles to play improving their own lives and the lives of those around them. But in those places where important forms of capital are limited — from the social capital that connects people to well-paying jobs to the financial capital that pays for services — additional investment is needed, especially in racially segregated communities. Policy should address social-sector market failures — where essential institutions (such as schools or youth development organizations) are weak or nonexistent, where evidence-based practices and systems for outcome measurement and feedback are not built, or where certain populations need extra supports to even the playing field.

PHOTO BY

LIFT

Combating poverty and expanding opportunity,
LIFT helped their Members obtain
\$7 million in wages in 2014.



21ST CENTURY PROBLEM SOLVERS

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS play critical roles in delivering services, often working in close partnership with government and philanthropy to garner financial resources. Nonprofits receive nearly one-third of their revenue from public sources and are responsible for delivering a significant share of publicly funded services.²² Nonprofits also play a bridging role to engage business, philanthropy, and community volunteers in public problem solving. They may lead or staff collective impact strategies and participate in partnerships that unlock the assets of their business partners. Finally, nonprofit organizations are employers themselves, providing paid employment opportunities to 10 percent of the American workforce. The nonprofit sector is larger than many other sectors, including real estate and manufacturing, and has been the fastest growing sector, even during the Great Recession.²³

FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS are central to communities, providing significant supports to help both congregants and community members. Although underrepresented, faith-based organizations also receive government grants to deliver social services. While faith-based organizations sometimes choose not to participate in public programs, they should be included in local collaborations and national calls to action.

BUSINESS The role that business plays in advancing opportunity in America is often left out of strategies to increase opportunity. Yet, businesses provide jobs and benefits to employees that are essential to families moving out of poverty. They also provide billions of dollars of training every year to employees to enable them to remain employed and advance their careers and work in partnership with nonprofit providers and community colleges on appropriate pipelines from education to careers. They are part of the philanthropic pie, providing approximately five percent of all donations, and they offer expertise, in-kind products, and volunteers to support nonprofit organizations.²⁴ Government can benefit from close partnership with the business community in efforts to advance opportunity.

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE combines earned income with social missions. They may be nonprofit or for-profit. In recent years, several states have created new corporate forms for for-profit social enterprises. The number of hybrid organizations is growing, and they hold great potential for scaling solutions.

HIGHER EDUCATION institutions, of course, provide essential opportunities for learning. But they also offer research, evaluation services, innovative ideas, and knowledge we need to determine what works, along with community education, student volunteers, work experience, and other opportunities. As anchor institutions in many communities, they are critical to advancing opportunity for a broad swath of society.

PHILANTHROPY While philanthropic resources in America are dwarfed by public spending, foundations and other private donors nonetheless play essential roles, particularly those not well-suited for government, including supporting early-stage innovation and proof points, investing in thought leadership, research, and advocacy, and enabling organizations that do receive public dollars to diversify their funding bases so they can engage in activities not supported by government. Private philanthropy is an essential partner in collective impact efforts focused on opportunity at every level of government.

INDIVIDUALS Building a stronger system to increase opportunity in America is a human capital-intensive process. As in many for-profit businesses, high-growth nonprofit and education organizations point to the challenge of finding highly qualified individuals at every level — from entry level line workers to top managers — as a serious impediment to expansion. Volunteers also provide essential supports for many nonprofits, and those organizations that engage volunteers at a high level and in direct support of their missions typically spend less but have equal or greater effectiveness. To increase bridging social capital — the kind that provides networks that help people find jobs, navigate the education process, and pursue other important pathways to opportunity — volunteer mentors, tutors, and advisors are particularly valuable. A third category of human capital — individuals performing a year of full-time service — offers significant potential in its own right as well as a means to address the talent question (many people, after a year of service, go on to become professionals in the field) and to recruit and manage volunteers.



SOLVING COMMUNITY CHALLENGES WITH CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

Most challenges facing American communities require the engagement of more than one sector. Unfortunately, typical responses rely on a single organization to deliver a solution.

Nowhere is this more true than in our workforce development and higher education systems where employer demand is too often decoupled from the supply chains of the talent pool. Innovators like Gerald Chertavian, the CEO and Founder of **Year Up** (pg. 90), are breaking down that market failure, which they call the Opportunity Divide. Gerald began his career in business, but became passionate about youth when he volunteered for the Big Brother mentoring program. In 2000, Gerald founded Year Up, which provides a one-year, intensive training program for low-income young adults (ages 18-24) that combines hands-on skill development, college credits, and corporate internships in high-potential sectors like IT. Since its founding, Year Up has trained more than 10,000 Opportunity Youth and placed them in internships with more than 250 corporate partners with impressive results: despite their disadvantaged backgrounds, 85% of Year Up's graduates are now employed or attending college full-time and earn an average of \$32,000 a year, and employers have a pipeline of middle-skilled talent for high-demand occupations. Year Up is focused on achieving transformative impact, beyond its own direct footprint, by broadly shifting national perceptions, employer practices, and government policies, and catalyzing market solutions to the Opportunity Divide, through efforts such as the Grads of Life PSA campaign.

The federal paradigm for the foreseeable future ought to be to leverage whenever possible the contributions of entities outside of the federal government, including nonprofit and faith-based organizations, business, social enterprise, state and local government, and the time and talents of ordinary citizens, including those people who are the focus of their efforts.

Service

In many cases, the challenges low-income communities face are really human and social capital deficits, which could be addressed by investment in service programs. Full-time, full-year service, or “service years,” represents a powerful tool for organizations looking for cost-effective human capital, often offered by energetic young adults on their path to college or career or older adults with time and talents to share.

Federal support for AmeriCorps through the Corporation for National and Community Service provides an essential core of funding for a network of tens of thousands of organizations offering service year positions. AmeriCorps dollars provide education awards for those who complete their service terms and offer grant support for high-impact national programs, corps that enable “opportunity youth” to serve, and grassroots organizations across the country.

Other federal agencies have begun to support service programs as a cost-effective strategy to achieve their missions and build the future talent pool. For example, in 2012, FEMA sponsored a residential AmeriCorps program through the National Civilian Community Corps to engage young adults in disaster response and recovery assistance. Not only does FEMA expect that the program will save taxpayers \$60 million a year when fully implemented — it leveraged the technology skills, idealism, and flexibility of young corps members to provide excellent service to survivors of Hurricane Sandy and other disasters.²⁵ Following the successful implementation of FEMA Corps, the Corporation for National and Community Service led a Presidential Task Force to create agency corps, enabling other federal agencies to utilize cost-effective service strategies to address important challenges. And those agencies have followed suit. At the state level, Governor Terry Branstad created the Governor’s Council on National Service in Iowa to perform a similar function as the federal Task Force.

Complementing these public efforts, the Congressionally chartered National Conference on Citizenship launched the “Service Year exchange” to enable any nonprofit or public agency to create positions and have them certified as full-time service year opportunities that can be searched online by prospective corps members. Designed to dramatically increase the number of service year positions, the Service Year exchange offers an alternative for organizations that could put young people into service for a year but are ineligible for or do not want to apply for government support.

In recognition of the growth of private support for service year positions, the Corporation for National and Community Service issued the AmeriCorps Partnerships Challenge, a call to action to the private sector, nonprofits, philanthropies, and public agencies at every level to develop proposals to expand AmeriCorps service opportunities to meet critical national and local needs. AmeriCorps provides education awards to corps members while program costs are borne by non-federal partners.

These efforts represent significant potential for public-private partnerships to dramatically expand the resource represented by Americans willing to spend a year serving communities in need.

Collective Impact

A group of actors from different sectors aligning on a common agenda to solve a complex social problem is known as collective impact. A significant shift from the social sector’s current paradigm focusing on the impact of individual organizations or programs, collective impact presumes that no single entity can create large-scale, lasting social change alone — there is no “silver bullet” solution to systemic social problems, and these problems cannot be solved by simply scaling or replicating one organization or program.

Perhaps the best-known example of collective impact is that of urban school districts in Cincinnati, Ohio and Northern Kentucky, which formed the StrivePartnership in 2006. By bringing together local leaders to improve education in the region’s urban core, the partnership sought to increase student success throughout three public school districts. More than 300 cross-sector representatives joined in the effort, including school district superintendents,



CREATING ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS TO COLLEGE AND CAREER WITH SERVICE

Full-time service offers a double benefit: cost-effective human capital to improve communities and the opportunity for those who serve to build their skills, work experience, knowledge of potential careers, workplace connections, and motivation and self-confidence to achieve personal goals. Because of this, innovators look to service year programs to benefit diverse populations who need to be connected, or reconnected, to the workforce. For example, youth corps like **The Corps Network** (pg. 89) Green City Force and **YouthBuild USA** (pg. 91) help unemployed youth, including ex-offenders and youth recovering from addiction, to develop construction and other job skills while tackling projects in their communities. **Public Allies** (pg. 88) places diverse young adults in community-based nonprofit organizations to serve while they develop leadership skills. And **The Mission Continues** (pg. 90) helps wounded and disabled veterans ease their transition to civilian life through full-time service with nonprofit organizations.

Federal support for service programs comes through the AmeriCorps and YouthBuild funding streams, as well as federal agencies that contract with corps to undertake projects. However, only a fraction of the young adults who could benefit from full-time service are able to participate. Recognizing full-time service as a postsecondary learning and workforce development system similar to on-the-job training and apprenticeship would provide opportunities for Americans who need them, new talent for the nonprofit and public sectors, and valuable help for communities in need that could benefit from their service.

IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES THROUGH COLLECTIVE IMPACT

While policymakers often think of parents and public schools as the main parties responsible for educational success, almost every part of the community could play a role helping youth achieve these goals. Over the last decade, an increasing number of communities have taken on the challenge of aligning around goals and implementing multi-organization plans to improve education outcomes.

For example, **America's Promise Alliance's** (pg. 74) GradNation campaign has mobilized more than 100 communities to create plans to reduce the dropout rate. Local leaders host GradNation Summits and utilize evidence-based tools provided by America's Promise to build solutions that work for unique community circumstances and engage in learning communities to share their experiences.

Say Yes to Education (pg. 80) helps communities organize around the goal of post-secondary success. Say Yes brings together every stakeholder in a community — city and county government, the school district, parents, teachers, businesses, unions, philanthropic and faith-based organizations, and colleges and universities — and arms that coalition with the tools to boost post-secondary participation and success.

In addition to helping ensure that financial resources are available to pay for higher education for students who cannot afford to go, Say Yes and its partners ensure that students and their families have the resources outside the classroom — such as tutoring, after-school and summer programs, medical care, counseling, and legal help — to clear the path to academic success. Students' progress toward college readiness is tracked through the Say Yes Postsecondary Planning System, through which social service agencies and other partner organizations are able to provide particular resources to children and families in need of assistance. This support and enrichment can help give students from all backgrounds the educational experiences and positive outcomes that more affluent communities demand.

nonprofit practitioners, business leaders, city officials and university presidents. StrivePartnership did not create a new program or raise more money. Instead, the partners agreed on a common set of goals, outcomes and 53 success indicators, including kindergarten readiness, fourth-grade reading and math scores, graduation rates and college completion. They aligned resources and continuously analyzed and shared data to track progress. They used continuous quality improvement, a methodology often used in engineering and healthcare, to coordinate practices and direct resources to what was proven to work for kids. Together, the partnership improved 34 of the 53 indicators in the first four years, and they continue working to improve education for students throughout the city.

Other jurisdictions have begun similar partnerships — for example, Memphis is aligning community efforts to reduce crime, groups in Georgia have come together to tackle teen pregnancy, and rural communities in Massachusetts, Wisconsin, New Hampshire, and other states have taken on substance abuse.

Social Enterprise

Across the country, social enterprises with dual bottom lines of business and social missions are bringing new resources and innovative approaches to solving problems. Social enterprises:

- Address basic unmet social needs, through products and services or the employment of marginalized individuals;
- Generate earned revenue from their commercial activities to supplement contributions and, in some cases, fully sustain operations; and
- Make social impact their core purpose, reinvesting most or all revenue in efforts that advance their social mission.

While many social enterprises are actually nonprofits that utilize earned income to advance their social missions, many states have created new corporate forms for for-profit social enterprises. States are also utilizing tax breaks and other subsidies to attract social enterprises as a job creation strategy.

At the federal level, the Small Business Investment Company program, created in the 1950s to unlock capital to fund businesses that are driving measurable impact in targeted geographies or sectors, was recently expanded to so-called

hybrid organizations such as “for benefit companies” as well as conventional businesses with an impact orientation. Additional investments in social enterprises are warranted to unlock market forces in support of social aims.

CONCLUSION

ALL OF THESE EXAMPLES demonstrate how America, at its best, comes together across its many divides — racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, political — to solve problems big and small. In recent years, Americans have worked together to reduce the dropout rate, put people to work, recover from floods, fires, and hurricanes, and emerge from the Great Recession. Harnessing this spirit, we can come together to restore opportunity for all.

Conversations about how we should approach large problems frequently get trapped in a debate. Should we spend more or less? Should government play a large role or none at all? The results of America’s highly effective innovators create an opportunity for a different conversation. Their successes challenge us to ask how we can make government an investor and catalyst rather than simply the entity that delivers or controls services.

We now know that neither the private sector nor the government can do it alone. All of us have critical roles to play — nonprofit organizations, philanthropy, academia, business, civic groups, religious institutions, volunteers, and the government. This is true now more than ever, as we face tremendous resource constraints. We need to find dramatically better ways to nurture the productive potential of the American people and use public resources with greater accountability by funding what works and defunding programs that don’t.

The America Forward policy platform provides the tools we need to recalibrate our roles. Public budgets at every level — federal, state, and local — are limited, so effective programs that leverage private resources and community engagement become ever more essential. As policymakers explore better ways to prepare Americans to face the challenges ahead, America Forward offers impact-oriented solutions and resources to support them.

UNITING BUSINESS AND SOCIAL MISSIONS TO SOLVE PROBLEMS

Working to bridge the gap between education and business for inner city youth, **Genesys Works** (pg. 87) provides intensive training to students entering their senior year and then assigns them to part-time, year-long meaningful internships with one of nearly 200 corporate partners - companies concerned with the diversity of their talent pipelines yet missing a direct opportunity to engage with the education system. Founded by *Fortune 50* corporate strategist Rafael Alvarez, Genesys Works recruits professional adults to mentor and serve as role models for low-income youth, who in turn become examples for other students. The program has demonstrated that professional mentoring coupled with the chance to experience life as professionals, prompts students to perform better and begin to view themselves as capable professionals with college aspirations. Ultimately more than 95 percent of Genesys Works graduates go on to college.

This innovative program is largely funded by earned income from the businesses that partner with the organization, which makes it a leading example of “social enterprise.”

At a time when government and philanthropic resources don’t go far enough to solve our country’s biggest problems, social enterprise offers an appealing way to leverage market resources to support social goals. For example, every dollar spent by a social enterprise results in \$2.23 of return to society according to the recent Mathematica Jobs Study (MJS) of social enterprises in **REDF’s Social Innovation Fund** (pg. 88) portfolio. **REDF** (pg. 88) invests capital and expertise in the growth of social enterprises that have collectively earned \$140 million in revenue and provided employment to 9,500 individuals — all of whom faced significant barriers to work. MJS data showed that, on average, for the people who are employed, income from government benefits decreased by 65 percent while 481% more came from work. They increased their wage and salary incomes by 268% and the percentage of those in stable housing more than tripled. By stimulating the growth of social enterprise, policymakers can similarly increase opportunity in a cost-effective manner.

The America of the American Dream is a place where people from diverse backgrounds find common ground. Where we come together to get important things done in our own communities and big things done for the nation. A place where everyone can be great because everyone can serve. A place where no matter where you start, if you work hard and play by the rules, you can have a good life and a second chance. This vision lives in the hearts of Americans and is realized in communities across this great country.

We can do better. It is time to activate America's problem solvers and work across sectors, party lines, generations, and all that divides us to solve the urgent challenge of our time —

**TO MAKE AMERICA ONCE AGAIN
THE LAND OF OPPORTUNITY AND
MOVE ALL OF AMERICA FORWARD.**





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POLICY IDEAS

MOVING AMERICA FORWARD



PHOTO BY

READING PARTNERS

89% of Reading Partners students accelerate their progress in reading, with most more than doubling their rate of learning.

POLICY IDEAS



BIG CHALLENGE: GOVERNMENT THAT WORKS

ACROSS OUR NATION, America’s innovators are creating new and better ways to solve old, intractable social problems. Communities are using technology tactically, aligning action, and making markets work for the common good. They are investing for impact, tracking results, and mobilizing ordinary citizens around a common purpose. These pockets of progress offer incredible promise — and the federal government can and should accelerate and amplify this progress to achieve better results for taxpayers. **We challenge the next President to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of taxpayer dollars, and move government fully into the 21st century by: investing in innovation, making data accessible, measuring outcomes, breaking down silos, investing in technology, and leveraging private action.**

CATALYZE SOCIAL INNOVATION

DEVELOP A CROSS-AGENCY R&D INNOVATION LAB

The social sector lacks the strong early-stage innovation investment engines that have transformed other sectors. The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), for example, develops emerging technologies for the military, including many significant technological developments of the past few decades, such as the Internet, speech recognition, GPS, and virtual reality systems. DARPA has an agile, autonomous structure that accepts failure as a necessary step on the path to successful invention. A cross-government R&D Innovation Lab should be created to apply a similar approach to the social sector. This Lab would engage with the private sector to seed early-stage innovation, identify promising solutions, and rapidly test approaches to determine effectiveness. The Lab should be funded through a set aside from existing social programs and include a strong focus on technology as

a strategy for scale and citizen engagement, and on human-centered design to find solutions to problems that traditional government programs have failed to address effectively.

BRING INNOVATION TO EVERY FEDERAL AGENCY

Too often, federal agencies search for solutions by looking internally to legacy grantees or institutional knowledge and archaic processes that can stifle innovative thinking. A required five percent set-aside for an “Innovation Fund” at each agency would require the federal government to look to outside experts, innovators, and entrepreneurs for solutions to our most pressing problems. Each “Innovation Fund” would allocate one percent to the Cross-Agency R&D Innovation Lab and include dedicated funding for prizes or grand challenge competitions, harnessing the ingenuity of the private and nonprofit sectors to come up with creative answers to longstanding problems.

FUND WHAT WORKS

TAKE THE SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND TO SCALE

The Social Innovation Fund (SIF) has leveraged the expertise of experienced evidence-based funders across the country by providing those funders with matching grants that are then further matched by grantees. As a result, every federal dollar is matched by at least two private, state, and local dollars to enable high-performing organizations to reach and serve millions of additional people and deliver desired outcomes. Based on the success of this experiment, the SIF should be incorporated into a cross-agency entity dedicated to expanding the reach of the interventions that have demonstrated results by using them as the basis for reforms in a variety of programs across government. Further, programs that have not fit the SIF model, due either to their low cost structure (such as those requiring less than \$100,000 per site, the minimum grant size) or limited access to philanthropic capital (such as programs operating in rural areas), should be incorporated into the SIF.

TIE PAYMENTS TO PROVIDERS FOR RESULTS ACHIEVED

Pay for Success initiatives condition government payments for service providers on the outcomes they achieve. This innovative financing strategy targets taxpayer dollars to programs based on effectiveness, achieving better results for communities and allowing flexibility for providers to choose the best strategy. As Pay for Success pilot programs are beginning to take root across the country — addressing challenges from recidivism to housing to early childhood education — these initiatives should be expanded to new promising focus areas, including veterans, federal assistance programs, disability insurance, health care, aging in place, and child welfare. In order for the government to further take advantage of this outcome-focused social policy, barriers must be removed and incentives created, including:

- Expansion of dedicated Pay for Success grant competitions
- Flexibility within existing federal programs to enable Pay for Success approaches
- Financial support for service provision if upfront payments are not made, such as federal loan guarantees for nonprofits, a revolving loan fund, and extending CRA credit to all bank investments in Pay for Success
- Expansion to include “collective impact” strategies with multiple organizations aligning efforts to achieve a common goal
- Development of low-cost, rigorous outcome measurement systems
- Training and technical assistance on Pay for Success for federal, state, and local government, as well as potential providers

INCREASE FLEXIBILITY AND DECREASE BUREAUCRACY IN RETURN FOR RESULTS ACHIEVED

The federal government directs funding to states and communities to address a wide array of needs, from education to housing to public health, often with federally defined mandates on how to spend funding but without sufficient accountability for outcomes. The federal government should offer increased flexibility and reduced compliance bureaucracy for states and communities willing to clearly define outcomes and demonstrate success serving those most in need. In addition, more federal funding should be structured based on a tiered-evidence system, with the biggest grants going to programs with the highest levels of evidence and the smallest to those that are promising but unproven.



PHOTO BY
iMENTOR

iMentor's technology-enabled mentoring program helps low-income high school students get into and persist in college.

LEVERAGING IMPACT THROUGH THE SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND

Recognizing that government alone cannot be expected to generate the evidence-based, positive outcomes we need to see in America, in 2008, America Forward proposed a new public fund to leverage private resources to grow the impact of innovative, community-based solutions. In 2009, Congress passed and the President signed a law enacting the Social Innovation Fund (SIF), housed in the Corporation for National and Community Service.

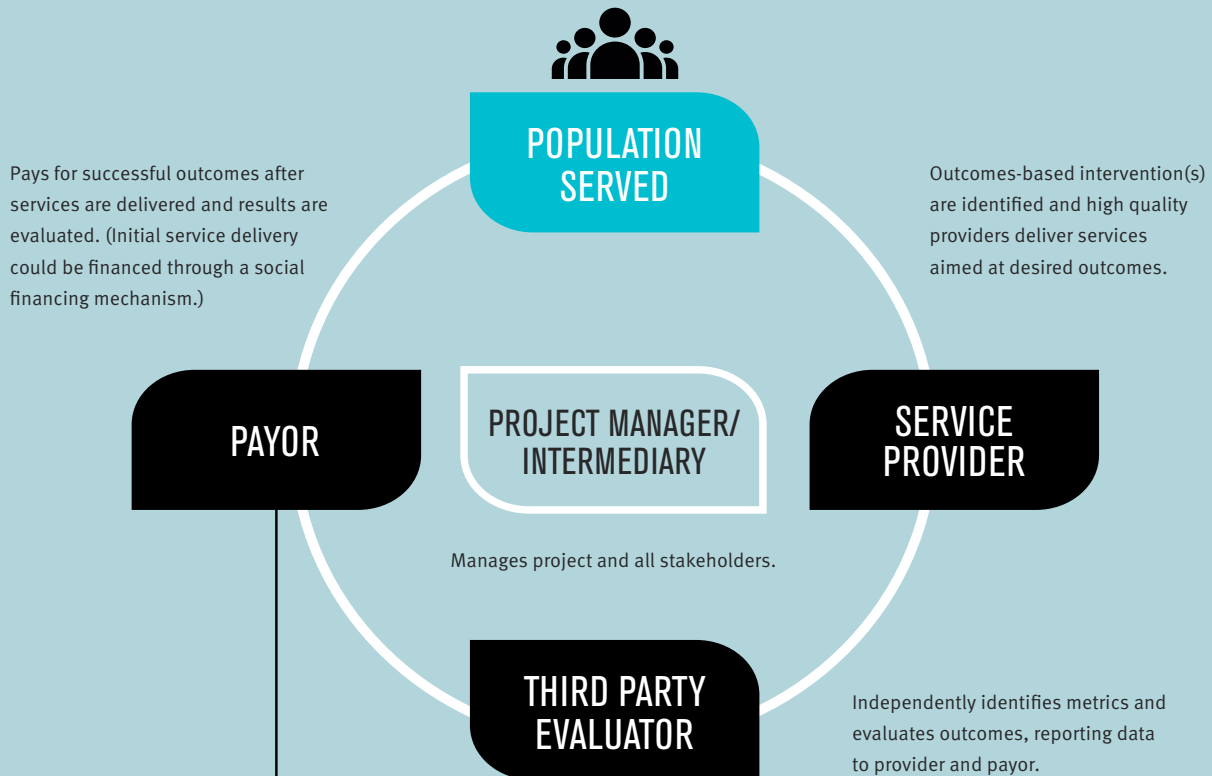
The SIF invests in intermediaries (experienced grantmaking organizations) that are well-positioned within communities to identify the most promising programs and guide them toward greater impact and stronger evidence of success. These grants range from \$1 million-\$10 million annually for up to five years. The intermediaries then match the federal funds dollar-for-dollar and hold open competitions to identify high-performing nonprofit organizations working in low-income communities that have innovative solutions with evidence of compelling results. Once selected, these nonprofits must also match the funds they receive, and participate in rigorous evaluations of the impact of their programs. The nonprofits share data, lessons learned and results — helping to build the capacity of the social sector and lift up solutions that can transform lives and communities. Through this grant structure, the federal government can ensure that results-driven organizations are able to bring their effective programs to scale at minimal expense to the federal taxpayer.

For example, at a time when only 60% of America's low-income youth graduate from high school, the Pathways Fund, a SIF-funded initiative at New Profit, invests in our nation's most promising social innovations that successfully transition youth to postsecondary education and productive employment. Each of the six Pathways subgrantees — **College Advising Corps** (pg. 83), **iMentor** (pg. 85), **Year Up** (pg. 90), **College Summit** (pg. 84), **Single Stop** (pg. 85), and **YouthBuild USA** (pg. 91) — provides a set of comprehensive, targeted supports for vulnerable, high-risk youth transitioning from high school to and through postsecondary education and into productive employment.

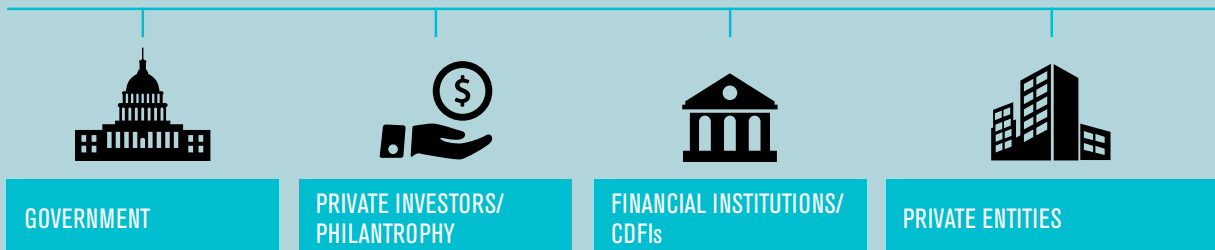
The goal of Pathways is to improve measurable outcomes in high school graduation, postsecondary education access and persistence, and living wage employment. Over the course of the five-year initiative, the Pathways Fund will leverage its \$25 million investment from SIF to help more than 250,000 people in 30 regions gain the skills, knowledge, and networks they need to engage in meaningful work, while providing technical assistance around growth, strategy, and the development of effective financial management and measurement and evaluation systems to the nonprofits delivering these interventions. Together with its diverse private funders - Blue Ridge Foundation New York, Carnegie Corporation of New York, Kresge Foundation, Oak Foundation, Robin Hood Foundation, and State Street Foundation — the Pathways Fund and its six subgrantees will leverage a total of \$88 million in government and philanthropic resources.

PAY FOR SUCCESS

Target population and desired outcomes are clearly identified.



TYPES OF PAYORS



PAY FOR SUCCESS

A type of pay for performance-based contracting between government and service providers in which impact is measured rigorously and government makes “success payments,” or increases a provider’s market share, only when results are achieved within a specific timeframe.

SOCIAL INNOVATION FINANCING

A tool designed to address the payment delays and uncertainties inherent in Pay for Success contracting. In Social Innovation Financing, private funders, using various financial instruments, provide working capital to service providers with Pay for Success contracts to deliver social, health, housing, community development, and similar services, and those private funders take on the financial risk that the service provider will not meet the level of success necessary to trigger performance payments. Social Impact Bonds are one form of Social Innovation Financing (but are not actually bonds in a traditional sense).

PAY FOR SUCCESS: CONNECTING RESOURCES TO PROVEN RESULTS

The Federal Government allocates upwards of \$1.6 trillion for social services annually but only about one percent of that funding is allocated in a way that its impact on those being served is known. Pay for Success flips this paradigm, by tying public dollars to results that will measurably improve people's lives rather than allocating funding based on the cost of delivering programs or the number of people proposed to be served.

In some cases, private sector funders may provide up-front financing, taking on the risk that the intervention will not succeed and recovering their investment if it does. This up-front funding, or "social innovation financing," pulls private funding in to offset the costs of the program, paid back when the program proves successful at meeting its goals. Social Impact Bonds are one form of Social Innovation Financing. Other arrangements are emerging such as Human Capital Performance Bonds (HUCAPs), which consists of State AA "annual appropriation" bonds that support high impact organizations. The State of Minnesota is using this type of arrangement to fund workforce development and housing programs and the city of Richmond, California is using a similar bond structure focused on the issue of housing blight in the area.

This public-private partnership approach to allocating limited public resources helps to lift up effective and innovative services provided by organizations such as Massachusetts-based **Roca** (pg. 92). Roca is focused on disrupting the cycle of incarceration and poverty for young people, but has faced barriers growing its evidence-based intervention due in part to the traditional way government contracts — focused only on inputs and outputs, not outcomes. Through the largest financial investment in a Pay for Success project in the United States and the first state-level project, Roca is tasked with providing its high-impact intervention to a cohort of 929 at-risk young men aged 17 to 23 who are in the probation system or exiting the juvenile justice system to reduce their recidivism risk and improve their employment outcomes. Massachusetts will repay funders only if Roca's services are proven to produce positive societal outcomes and savings for the Commonwealth.

Third Sector Capital Partners (pg. 96), **Social Finance US** (pg. 96), **Institute for Child Success** (pg. 72), and **Corporation for Supportive Housing** (pg. 93) are leading Pay for Success projects that address the health care needs of children suffering with asthma, increase the school readiness and academic performance of young children, and provide the housing and social services families and their children need in order to decrease foster care placements. These projects are taking place across the country and more than 30 others are on the horizon, set to impact different populations and issue areas.

DATA SMART GOVERNMENT

MEASURE WHAT MATTERS

The ability to innovate and invest in what works depends on the availability of outcome metrics and data that accurately and comprehensively assess impact. Unfortunately, adequately judging the success of social programs and providing programs with useful feedback is currently constrained either by inaccessibility of data or lack of meaningful data. In some cases, data is collected but not made available. For example, workforce programs are often judged by outputs, such as the number of unemployed individuals served, rather than trainees' long-term success in the workforce. However, employment outcomes for workforce development and higher education programs could be tracked, in part, if providers had access to earnings data maintained by state and federal agencies that could be used as part of evaluations of the long-term impacts of workforce, higher education, and other similar programs. Low- or no-cost access to such public databases can make the most rigorous methods of outcomes evaluations much more affordable.

In other cases, outdated metrics need to be updated. For example, success of schools is often judged solely by student achievement on annual math and reading tests. This obscures the full picture of student learning, neglecting, for example, indicators of nonacademic skills that are key to the persistence and success of students in college and the workplace. Similarly, early learning programs have traditionally been rated based on inputs (such as compliance with government rules), rather than whether children are prepared to enter school ready to learn. The government should support and encourage development of new data sources and the study of emerging science to identify a next-generation set of metrics to more completely evaluate the success of programs. In all cases, technology should be harnessed to make program effectiveness data accessible, affordable, and easy to process, so that program providers as well as communities can best use this information to improve results, not only to ensure the financial integrity and efficient use of resources, but also to more clearly articulate what is being accomplished with the money being allocated.

PILOT OUTCOME AUDITS AT GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Audits serve an important purpose in reviewing the financial, programmatic, operational, and management systems and procedures of government to assess whether an agency is operating efficiently and lawfully. But they generally do not answer the question of whether the programs they administer are achieving important outcomes or the desired impacts. Audits instead are driven by a need to conform to a prescriptive compliance framework focused on risk mitigation and financial accountability. Outcome audits would instead incorporate a review of grantee evidence of impact and achievement of outcomes as part of the elements required in the audit. This approach to auditing would not only ensure the financial integrity and efficient use of resources, but also more clearly articulate what is being accomplished with the allocated money.

REDUCE DUPLICATION AND IMPROVE COORDINATION

USE DATA TO COORDINATE OVERLAP ACROSS POPULATIONS SERVED BY FEDERAL SOCIAL PROGRAMS

A first step in eliminating duplication and improving coordination is to determine where the overlaps exist. Subject to appropriate privacy protections, the federal government should work with local and state government to use data to find the intersection of our systems (foster care, mental health, health, juvenile and criminal justice, education, housing) and identify the degree to which the populations served by these systems overlap in specific communities. Analyzing the needs of the populations that are affected by multiple systems can enable policymakers to streamline and align services, reduce duplication, and fill gaps.

BUILD COHERENT, CROSS-AGENCY STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS LOCAL NEEDS

Numerous federal programs aimed at similar goals and populations are poorly coordinated and, in some cases, work at cross-purposes. Federal leaders of related programs should be charged with developing comprehensive strategies — with input from stakeholders — to achieve better results from Federal investments flowing to communities through multiple programs. Federal leaders should develop multi-year plans to streamline and integrate their programs and strategies, with recommendations for overcoming statutory, regulatory, and administrative requirements that impede effective program coordination. To further these objectives, experimental programs that enable local communities or states to combine federal funding streams and waive certain requirements should be expanded.

LEVERAGE PRIVATE ACTION

CREATE A “COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS TAX CREDIT” TO SCALE HIGH-QUALITY ORGANIZATIONS

The federal New Market Tax Credit rewards investors for focusing on low-income communities, and it has been shown to increase investment in those communities. A Community Solutions Tax Credit should be created to recognize the asset represented by private sector funders across the country that have developed highly sophisticated systems for identifying promising solutions to community problems and funding their expansion. These funders would compete for the opportunity to issue a specific amount of tax credits to individual donors who support evidence-based high-impact initiatives. The use of a tax credit offers greater potential for scale and sustainability, creates less bureaucracy, and puts the decisions for investment in the hands of experienced private-sector funders instead of the government.

EXPAND NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS' ACCESS TO CAPITAL

While many government programs and government-supported enterprises provide credit enhancement, loan guarantees, or other means to draw capital into defined markets, most of these incentives are not available to nonprofit organizations. Nonprofit organizations often need affordable support in order to undertake capital projects or capitalize potential earned income opportunities. The Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities is the rare federal program that offers credit support to the development of facilities for nonprofit organizations. This should be expanded to other nonprofit organizations that have needs for facilities and a likelihood of future fee-for-service or other earned income streams, such as child care centers, nursing homes, or performing arts organizations. In addition, the loan and loan guarantee programs at the Small Business Administration (SBA) should be opened up to nonprofit organizations or similar programs enacted to serve organizations ineligible for SBA support.

USE NATIONAL SERVICE TO ADDRESS THE GOALS OF GOVERNMENT AGENCIES COST-EFFECTIVELY

The results achieved by national service programs in increasing high school graduation rates, improving college access, increasing reading scores of low-income students, and in other federal priority areas are greater than many other higher cost interventions. In this spirit, federal agencies have begun to create national service programs to further their missions, including the Department of Education's School Turnaround Corps, the Department of Justice's Justice Corps, and FEMA's AmeriCorps. These national service programs advance key agency goals at a low cost — FEMA's program is projected to save taxpayers \$60 million when fully implemented. To build on these and other successful models, additional agency service corps should be created in partnership with nonprofit providers to engage more Americans in achieving departmental goals.



PHOTO BY
SAY YES TO EDUCATION

Say Yes partners with whole communities to increase college access and success for low-income students.

BIG CHALLENGE: EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE

IN EVERY SECTOR OF THE ECONOMY, technology and individualization have transformed the way we work and engage with each other. But the way our students are taught in schools is stuck in the last century. Education — from the earliest years through postsecondary degree attainment — is the key both to individual opportunity and to building a shared future for our nation. Closing achievement gaps requires reimagining the way that schools and systems work and measure their success. Innovations in human capital, data, and technology have the potential to reshape the way learning happens and harness the skills and talents of every student. **We challenge the next President to secure the future of the nation by helping states, communities, schools, early learning programs, and their nonprofit partners accelerate improvements that can expand opportunity, achievement, and success for all.**

BRING COMMUNITY PARTNERS INTO THE CLASSROOM

Schools cannot and should not be expected to ensure a secure future for all children and youth by themselves. Rather, the most effective schools work with community partners to leverage additional resources and expertise, catalyze innovation and problem-solving, and increase the rate and level of progress for all students. Federal dollars often don't support the work of these strong partners, due to limited flexibility and a lack of incentives for public schools to spend public dollars this way. Schools should be encouraged to partner with successful programs, and education funding streams should be opened up to high-quality organizations with track records of improving achievement.

TAKE PROMISING NEW EARLY LEARNING SCIENCE TO SCALE

We now know definitively that the first five years of a child's life have outsized influence on all that follows. But over one million young children born every year will have the odds stacked against them because they are living in poverty. As a result, they don't get what they need from health care, parenting support, and early learning programs for a fair start. At the same time,

research into early childhood development has led to the development of approaches with the potential to improve outcomes dramatically for young children. A research-based early learning innovation fund could leverage partnerships between early childhood researchers and high-reach operators, both within and outside the traditional early learning system, to take the latest science to scale and improve effectiveness and efficiency of early learning systems.

FOCUS EARLY LEARNING RESOURCES ON RESULTS

Too often, national programs for early learning focus on input measures and compliance rather than outcomes and success. National early learning funding should be expanded to new approaches that offer flexibility to providers in return for results. This should include increased investments in Pay for Success models to expand early screening and early intervention services as well as ongoing reform of Head Start to award a portion of grants each year to new partnerships focused on measurable, school readiness outcomes. In addition, existing federal pre-K expansion and enhancement grants should be leveraged and the federal charter schools program improved to provide incentives to states and communities to create high-quality charter preschools — especially for our most disadvantaged young learners. These charter preschools should be

PHOTO BY
**JUMPSTART FOR
YOUNG CHILDREN, INC.**

92% of Jumpstart participants
make gains in language
and literacy skills each year.



designed to improve school readiness outcomes and be held accountable for results. In all cases, program effectiveness data should be accessible and easy to process so that program providers can leverage information to improve results and spur new innovation.

MAKE EXPANDED LEARNING TIME AVAILABLE FOR ALL STUDENTS

More than 80 percent of a child's time from the ages of five to eighteen is spent outside of school. Traditional education systems, including early education systems, are focused on what happens inside the classroom. But a child's development and success is also significantly impacted by their time spent outside the classroom in all the places they learn. Studies show that by the time students reach 6th grade, students from middle class families have likely spent 6,000 more hours learning than kids born into poverty. All students — regardless of income or background — need access to high-quality,

real-world learning opportunities and mentorship that can help shape their vision for their lives, and help them develop necessary academic and non-academic skills. Schools in low-income communities should receive resources and flexibility to expand the learning day, and leverage partnerships to bring additional expertise and learning opportunities to all their students.

REIMAGINE LEARNING FOR ACADEMIC AND LIFE SUCCESS

The current educational system is not working well for far too many children, especially those with learning and attention issues or those impacted by poverty-related trauma and adversity. Despite spending more per student than nearly any other country, our nation's investments are not focused on solutions that adequately empower educators with capacity to meet students' academic and nonacademic needs. School communities can be laboratories of innovation, setting benchmarks for a new vision of how education



PHOTO BY

NEW CLASSROOM INNOVATION PARTNERS

New Classrooms' first-of-its-kind technology draws from high-quality lessons to help students achieve academic gains at higher rates than the national average.

happens inside and outside the classroom. Federal policy should support innovative community pilots that: fundamentally redefine student success to include skills beyond reading and math academic achievement; redesign systems to focus on mastery rather than seat time; and harness technology and build teacher capacity to personalize learning to meet the needs of all students. These communities should then receive incentive funding and waivers of federal requirements that serve as barriers to their work so that they can serve as essential proof points for other schools to follow.

UNLOCK THE SECRETS OF LEARNING THROUGH NEUROSCIENCE

Over the course of the last decade, research on neuroscience has provided new insights into how students learn, and has revealed inadequacies in an education system designed for the average learner. Neuroscientific research has established that children's brains continue to develop through adolescence and are shaped by environment and relationships. This presents an opportunity to transform how school, classroom, and community environments catalyze growth in achievement for all students. To unlock the secrets of learning,

research should be prioritized that will enable significant progress in brain science and unlock the full potential of all students.

TAKE LESSONS FROM HIGH-PERFORMING CHARTER SCHOOLS TO SCALE

High-performing charter schools across the nation have revealed that students thrive when school leaders and teachers are given the freedom and flexibility to make decisions and design programs that work best for their students and communities. But too often, federal, state, and local bureaucracy stands in the way of this flexibility. The federal government should provide incentives to states to create clusters of schools with the autonomy and accountability that have helped high-performing charter schools flourish. Within these school clusters, states and high-performing schools should provide supports to build the skills and capabilities of school leaders and teachers to develop the great schools all children and parents deserve.



PHOTO BY
KIPP SCHOOLS

KIPP prepares students in underserved communities
for college and life success.

A “LEARNER-OUT” APPROACH TO EDUCATION

There is an emerging consensus that our educational delivery system is outmoded. While our rapidly changing global society is moving toward customization and personalization in virtually every aspect of human life, today’s education paradigm remains largely the same as it was a century ago. Today, our educational system is tasked with educating all young people for college, career, and citizenship in an economy that is uncertain at best. The knowledge, skills, and dispositions that were once expected of the few are now required for all. We must also update our education system to align with the realities of modern life. Imagine what we could achieve if we took a personalized approach with every student — building from the learner out — by harnessing proven and cost-effective solutions to individualize education.

Nearly 40% of students in our public schools today face significant barriers to learning such as diagnosed learning disabilities, undiagnosed learning and attention issues, and chronic stress and trauma. At the same time, the economic imperative couldn’t be clearer; we need to ensure that all students are able to succeed in school and in life. A network of over 75 education organizations has come together to tackle this problem.

Across the country, innovations are making a learner-out approach to education a reality. For example, districts like Arlington, Massachusetts are providing individualized education and saving money by taking a learner-out approach for every student and bringing special education costs under control by serving more students in their home community. Nonprofit organizations are also helping school districts reimagine the way learning happens. The **New Teacher Center** (pg. 79) is on track to provide professional development for one-third of all new educators, teaching them how to unleash the potential of every student. Through collaborations with organizations such as the University of Kansas’s Center for Research on Learning, New Teacher Center is scaling practices that can change the trajectory for students through individualized instruction. **New Classrooms** (pg. 78) helps schools redesign the classroom using digital learning, peer collaborations, and other instructional methods that leverage the collective talents of teachers to enable personalized learning. And Big Picture Learning is developing and sustaining innovative, personalized learning environments, replicating new models for learning, and training educators to serve as leaders in their schools and communities.

Parents also play an essential role in driving a learner-out approach to learning. In 2014, 15 nonprofit partners came together to launch Understood.org, a comprehensive free resource for parents of the 1 in 5 students with learning and attention issues. Understood empowers parents with information and resources, including an online community as well as daily chats and webinars with experts and tools that let parents and educators experience learning and attention issues. Understood is now reaching over 1 million parents. With partnership between educators, students, nonprofits and parents, we can scale proven practices and recognize the potential of all learners.



PHOTO BY
GENESYS WORKS

Genesys Works helps 90% of their low-income students enroll in college, compared to 30% of their peers.

BIG CHALLENGE: “MARKET-ABLE” AMERICA

FOR DECADES — and as recently as 1990 — America led the world in the percentage of citizens with higher education degrees. Today, not only are we falling in the international ranks but employers are struggling to find workers with the skills they need. Tremendous national progress on high school completion will be hollow unless all those graduates can connect to career pathway programs that lead to marketable experiences and credentials. Innovation could transform higher education and put more Americans on a path to a marketable credential. To reclaim our place in the international ranks and prepare the workers we need, **we challenge the next President to support more ladders to help students attain a marketable postsecondary credential — and ensure that they are developing the skills they need to succeed in the economy.**

HARNESS COMMUNITY PARTNERS TO RAISE COLLEGE COMPLETION

Despite rising high school graduation rates and college enrollment rates, too many students fail to complete their college degrees. A postsecondary degree or credential is critical in today's economy, but the path to and through college, even for academically qualified students, is fraught with obstacles. Many students need supports ranging from transportation and technology to mentoring and mental health services in order to succeed in postsecondary education. Presently, the systems intended to provide these supports are underfunded and poorly designed to coordinate with higher education institutions. The federal government should encourage the integration of public and private-sector systems of support to increase college completion and recognize and reward colleges that are successful at providing strong supports for students.

REFORM FEDERAL COLLEGE ACCESS AND SUCCESS FUNDING TO IMPROVE COMPETITION

Several federal funding streams currently provide grants to education institutions and states to increase access to and success in college for low-income, underrepresented, and underprepared students. Recent years have seen the development of innovative new models, many achieving better results than existing federal grantees. Despite their success, these innovative programs find it nearly impossible to access education department funding under existing rules that favor legacy grantees, leaving them operating at a sub-optimal scale. Existing federal college access programs should be updated to open funding on a competitive basis to any organization, without preference to those that have received federal funding in the past. This funding should be tiered, with the largest grants going to programs with the best outcomes of increasing higher education access

and success of disadvantaged and underrepresented students, while also making funding available to develop and test new innovative approaches.

BRING FOCUS ON OUTCOMES TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Federal higher education programs have long been focused on access, rather than on whether students are achieving the outcomes they need to obtain and retain employment. Higher education needs to be refocused on prioritizing both access and outcomes. This can be accomplished in several ways. Accrediting agencies should drive quality and outcomes and new accrediting agencies could foster disruptive innovation in the higher education sector by focusing on outcomes over inputs. In addition, federal student aid should be unlocked for students seeking the education and training at outcome-focused programs, including in certificate and other opportunities that lead directly to employment. Finally, a portion of federal student aid should prioritize outcomes through pay for performance incentives designed to boost funding for colleges and universities, and programs operated outside of the traditional higher education system, that deliver on outcomes, such as a certain percentage of students achieving a credential or securing employment.

LAUNCH A GRAND CHALLENGE FOR POWER SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Power skills — defined as leadership, grit, critical thinking, problem solving, communication, teamwork, etc. — are highly valuable by employers. However, they are also the skills that are least valued, tested, and intentionally taught by our education system. The Federal government should use a portion of existing workforce funding to build on progress already made in the field to define and measure these skills and accelerate change through a grand challenge. The grand challenge would look outside government to find

solutions, linking the skills most valued by employers to training opportunities, and sparking a market for job seekers and employees to grow their power skills competencies.

LINK COLLEGE TO REAL WORLD WORK EXPERIENCES

Higher education should be an opportunity for students to gain both academic and career knowledge and experience. Increasing relevant, meaningful opportunities for students to explore careers in their fields of interest will lead to improved completion rates and increased employment after graduation. One way to accomplish this is through service year programs that advance goals of higher education policy by providing opportunities for students to link learning to experience; enable students to gain college-level learning through their service; and provide human capital to help other students access and persist in higher education. Higher education policy can accelerate the growth of service year programs, extra-mural internships, service-learning, and pre-apprenticeships through modernization of federal Work Study and Perkins programs as well as loan deferrals and forgiveness. The costs of portfolio assessment for college credit should also be made an eligible expense under Title IV student aid, the GI Bill, and Segal Education Awards.

CREATE A VETERANS CIVILIAN SERVICE OPTION

Over the next five years, more than one million military service members will return to civilian life. Regrettably, among all returning veterans, as many as four in ten report difficulty transitioning to civilian life. Those who are able to serve their communities upon returning to civilian life, however, are far more likely than other veterans to say that their transitions are going well. Military service members have a strong sense of mission, and nine out of ten veterans agree that continuing to serve their communities is important to them. Yet only 20 percent have the opportunity to volunteer after their

discharge. A Civilian Service Option would provide returning veterans with much-needed transition time, pathways to education, training for jobs, and the dignity and pride of continuing their service here at home. Local organizations, their communities, and the nation as a whole would benefit from the time and talents of dedicated men and women who have served their nation in uniform. Most importantly, these veterans would have a new option for reintegration into civilian life, one that would resonate with their commitment to service. This mission could be supported as an eligible benefit under the GI Bill, through the Department of Defense transition programs, or through Department of Labor veterans assistance.

RECOGNIZE MICROCREDENTIALS FOR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HIRING

As the nation's largest employer, the federal government has an opportunity to take a leading role in recognizing emerging credentials and skills as part of the hiring process. The Office of Personnel Management should develop a protocol for recognizing microcredentials (which recognize individual skills or practice) and credentials offered outside of traditional education institutions that takes into account their relevance, rigor, and reliability. In addition, the Department of Labor should recognize such credentials as evidence of learning through internships, service year programs, and other experiences under Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) rules relating to private sector internships and determining whether a program is exempt from FLSA coverage.

BIG CHALLENGE: FIRST JOBS

REGARDLESS OF BACKGROUND, getting a first full-time job starts a young person on a path to becoming economically successful. A first-time employee learns workplace behaviors and skills, experiences a specific field, makes connections, and develops the pride that goes with a paycheck. Unfortunately, time spent unemployed as a young adult leaves a “wage scar” that lasts well into middle age. Even as the economy recovers, unemployment among young adults remains disproportionately high. The difficulty most young adults have launching themselves into stable jobs and career paths has led to nearly 60 percent of adult children receiving financial support from parents, with significant numbers of parents taking on debt or deferring retirement. We can make sure that every young adult has access to that important first job by calling on private employers to hire opportunity youth, growing apprenticeships and on-the-job training, including service year positions, and investing in social enterprises that offer first jobs which often serve as a bridge to traditional employment. **We challenge the next President to mobilize America to open first job opportunities for every young adult to step onto a pathway to a career.**

REWARD PRIVATE SECTOR EMPLOYERS FOR HIRING UNEMPLOYED YOUTH

The role of employer demand is critical in determining access to stable career pathways into the middle class for unemployed young people. With just 46 percent of young adults employed annually from 2008-2012, the worst job prospects for youth on record, economists worry the high unemployment of youth will cause long-term damage to the economy. In 2009, an additional category was created within the Work Opportunity Tax Credit to provide employers with an incentive to hire young adults who were neither in school nor in the workforce. However, employers lacked sufficient time to use the tax credit and the effectiveness of the credit was severely limited. The federal government should support tax policies that promote meaningful work experience for this population, including through employment pathways tax credits as well as through incentives for apprenticeship.

SUPPORT PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT IN HUMAN CAPITAL

More employers are developing and offering training platforms to equip their employees with knowledge and skills that will benefit the employees in their current jobs and throughout their careers. The federal government should support these investments in human capital development through tax credits when first-time hires earn an industry-recognized credential.

INVEST IN BRIDGE-BUILDING JOBS THROUGH SERVICE YEAR PROGRAMS

Hundreds of thousands of Americans who want to perform a service year are turned away due to limited openings. Hundreds of thousands more do not even know it is an option. Service year programs are a proven



PHOTO BY
THE MISSION CONTINUES

Empowering veterans to integrate into civilian life
and strengthen communities through service.

strategy to help young adults make the critical transition from school to career. Serve America Act programs, public agency corps, and incentives to stimulate private sector-funded programs (such as allocating AmeriCorps education awards or student loan forgiveness for certified service year programs) can increase service year opportunities while providing needed help to communities. In addition, service year programs, particularly AmeriCorps, have for decades served as the workforce development system for the nonprofit sector and should be recognized by law as a form of on-the-job training. In addition, certified service year programs that do not receive federal funding should be treated the same as AmeriCorps programs under federal wage and hour and unemployment laws.

CREATE A MODERN-DAY CCC FOR TODAY'S YOUTH

Millions of “Opportunity Youth” without college degrees are disconnected from education and work. Youth corps are comprehensive youth development programs that provide their participants with job training, academic programming, leadership skills, and additional support through a strategy of service that improves communities and the environment. They are a direct descendant of the Depression-era Civilian Conservation Corps, which mobilized three million young men who dramatically improved the nation’s public lands while receiving food, shelter, education, and \$30-a-month stipend. Today, more than 100 youth corps programs nationwide provide opportunities for youth and young adults to advance themselves through team-based service, often supplemented with job training and education. But they offer too few positions relative to the need. Youth corps should be expanded through corps procurement preferences for work on federal lands, urban public works and infrastructure, and other federally funded projects, which could help to reduce the backlog of maintenance and other projects while saving taxpayer dollars.

BIG CHALLENGE: SECOND CHANCES

MILLIONS OF AMERICANS hit rock bottom with no path back to self-sufficiency. They may be formerly incarcerated, experiencing homelessness, struggling to beat substance abuse or address mental illness — or all of the above. For some, doors to education and employment are slammed shut. For others, the help that’s there is too hard to find. These challenges have a ripple effect impacting families and in some cases, whole communities. We can use innovative technology, human capital, community collaborations, and systems reform to give a fresh start and hand up to all people looking to change their lives. **We challenge the next President to build on-ramps to opportunity for all Americans, giving citizens who have turned their lives around or paid their dues a second chance at a better future.**

LEVERAGE SOCIAL ENTERPRISES TO EXPAND JOBS COST-EFFECTIVELY FOR THE LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED

Social enterprises are businesses with the primary purpose of social benefit to their communities or nonprofits that engage in earned income strategies to support their social missions. Many social enterprises focus on providing jobs, and second chances, to individuals in local communities. To support social enterprise growth, the federal government should offer: tax benefits for firms or individuals investing in for-profit social enterprises or ‘for benefit’ companies and for companies that hire those prepared for the workforce by social enterprises; procurement preferences for social enterprises; and access to small business programs to nonprofits that operate businesses.

TAKE YOUTHBUILD TO SCALE

In YouthBuild programs, low-income young people ages 16 to 24 work full-time for 6 to 24 months toward their GEDs or high school diplomas while learning job skills by building affordable housing for homeless and low-income people in their communities. YouthBuild programs emphasize leadership development, community service,

and the creation of a positive mini-community of adults and youth committed to each other’s success. When students exit a Youthbuild program, they are placed in college, a job, or both, setting them on a path to continued education, employment, and success. But demand for YouthBuild slots has outpaced supply, and the program should be scaled to meet demand.

PUT CORRECTION BACK IN THE CORRECTIONS SYSTEM

Our criminal justice system focuses more on punishment than ‘correction’ or rehabilitation, with consequences for not only those behind bars but for their families and communities. To shift this focus, key reforms should be implemented. There is ample evidence that mandatory minimums do not reduce crime, have resulted in significant racial disparities in our jails and prisons, and have undermined our criminal justice system by arbitrarily and severely punishing individuals. In addition, juveniles are repeatedly adjudicated, and even incarcerated, for behavior that is considered a crime only because of their age, such as truancy, running away, or violating a curfew. The potential trauma of the early imposition of a criminal record can lead to further involvement with the justice system, and these punitive practices ignore the underlying causes of the behavior, which if properly addressed could set many youth on a more successful life path. Finally,

restorative justice models that involve cooperation and collaboration between the offender and the victim should be incentivized to support restitution, meaningful accountability, and rehabilitation.

BAN THE BOX

Currently, if an individual has ever been adjudicated for a crime, even if they were convicted, they may be required to disclose that event on employment applications. There is no consideration of the type of crime or when the adjudication or conviction occurred. The inclusion of this arbitrary question creates a barrier to employment and a critical pathway to self-reliance and financial security. There should be a federal directive to ‘Ban the Box’ on federal employment applications and a national challenge to all employers to drop this harmful practice.

KEEP YOUTH OUT OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Often a combination of complicated factors leads to a young person’s first interaction with the criminal justice system including exposure to violence, educational deficiencies, mental health needs, high poverty, or lack of housing stability. One effective way to keep kids out of the criminal justice system is to align all of these systems for greater impact. In existing federal justice grants, priority should be given to applicants that propose a community partnership approach to reduce behavioral issues that increase a young person’s risk of interaction with the criminal justice system. Federal grants should encourage and incentivize the establishment of community partnerships to collaborate, using data to identify the needs of children and youth in the community, mapping existing community resources to identify gaps, and developing a targeted plan with evidence-based approaches to reduce involvement in the criminal justice system.

CREATE TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS THAT MAKE IT EASIER FOR PEOPLE TO GET HELP

In most areas of our lives, we are able to use technology tools to research and compare products and services, find solutions to problems, get advice, or identify providers based on geography or other preferences — but rarely when it comes to government programs. Americans struggling to find a way out of poverty may be eligible for a range of publicly funded assistance but face a maze when they try to access help. At the same time, agencies — at every level of government — manage overlapping information systems and make duplicative eligibility determinations and provide case management for the same clients. Technology investments are needed to improve access, streamline eligibility determinations, integrate services, improve data sharing and analytics (with appropriate privacy protections), and reduce bureaucracy across government programs. Although increased resources are necessary to update systems, this investment should pay off through increased efficiency and improved outcomes.

HIGH-IMPACT ORGANIZATIONS

MOVING AMERICA FORWARD

AMERICA FORWARD COALITION

NATIONAL IMPACT



14.1K

COMMUNITIES
IMPACTED



\$2.47B

CUMULATIVE
ANNUAL BUDGET



\$8.15M

LEVERAGED
IN GOVERNMENT FUNDING
TO SUPPORT RESULTS



7.8M

LIVES
TOUCHED

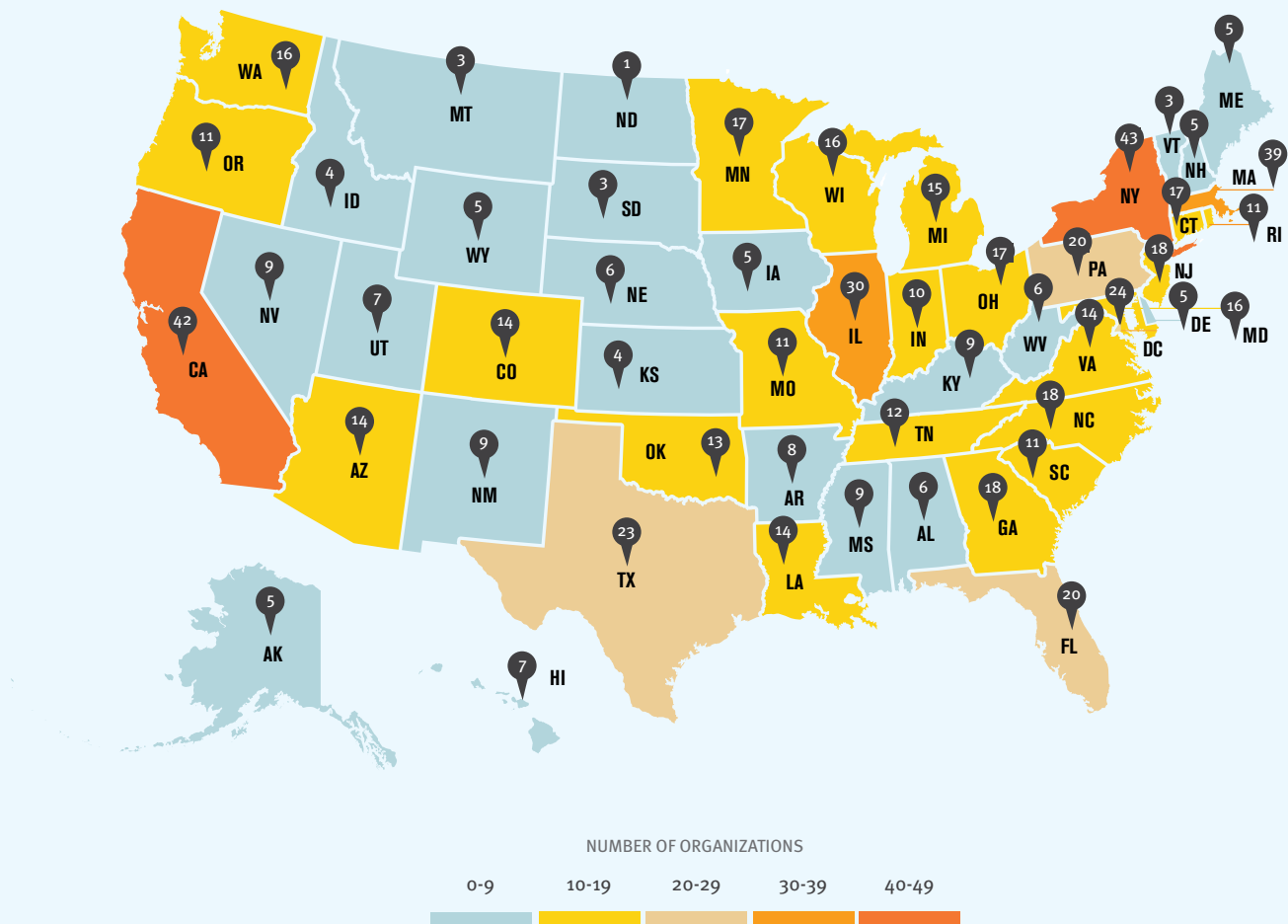
AMERICA FORWARD COALITION

APPENDIX

71	ACELERO LEARNING/SHINE EARLY LEARNING	93	ENTERPRISE COMMUNITY PARTNERS	80	READING PARTNERS
87	ALTERNATIVE STAFFING ALLIANCE	76	EYE TO EYE	88	REDF
74	AMERICA'S PROMISE ALLIANCE	94	FAMILY INDEPENDENCE INITIATIVE (FII)	92	ROCA
74	ANET	92	FIRST PLACE FOR YOUTH	95	ROOT CAUSE
71	APPLETREE INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATION INNOVATION	76	GENERATION CITIZEN	73	SAVE THE CHILDREN
71	AVANCE, INC.	87	GENESYS WORKS	73	SAVE THE CHILDREN ACTION NETWORK (SCAN)
82	BARD EARLY COLLEGES	77	GLOBAL CITIZEN YEAR	80	SAY YES TO EDUCATION
74	BELL	95	GREENLIGHT FUND	89	SERVICENATION
82	BEYOND 12	85	iMENTOR	85	SINGLE STOP
83	BLUE ENGINE	72	INSTITUTE FOR CHILD SUCCESS	89	SOCIAL ENTERPRISE ALLIANCE (SEA)
83	BOTTOM LINE	95	INVEST IN OUTCOMES	96	SOCIAL FINANCE US
75	BUILD	72	JUMPSTART FOR YOUNG CHILDREN, INC.	85	SUMMER SEARCH
72	CHILD MIND INSTITUTE	77	KIPP SCHOOLS	80	TEACH FOR AMERICA
75	CITIZEN SCHOOLS	94	LIFT	81	THE CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY
75	CITY YEAR, INC.	77	MATCH EDUCATION	89	THE CORPS NETWORK
83	COLLEGE ADVISING CORPS	78	NATIONAL CENTER FOR LEARNING DISABILITIES (NCLD)	90	THE MISSION CONTINUES
84	COLLEGE FORWARD	78	NEW CLASSROOMS INNOVATION PARTNERS	96	THIRD SECTOR CAPITAL PARTNERS
84	COLLEGE POSSIBLE	78	NEW LEADERS	81	TURNAROUND FOR CHILDREN
84	COLLEGE SUMMIT	87	NEW SECTOR ALLIANCE	90	TWIN CITIES RISE!
93	COMPASS WORKING CAPITAL	79	NEW TEACHER CENTER	86	uASPIRE
95	CONNECTICUT CENTER FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION, INC.	88	OPPORTUNITY NATION	73	WATERFORD INSTITUTE
93	CSH (CORPORATION FOR SUPPORTIVE HOUSING)	79	PEACE FIRST	90	YEAR UP
76	EDUCATORS 4 EXCELLENCE	79	PEER HEALTH EXCHANGE	91	YOUTHBUILD USA
		88	PUBLIC ALLIES	92	YOUTH VILLAGES, INC.
				82	10,000 DEGREES

AMERICA FORWARD COALITION

NATIONAL IMPACT



FOCUS AREAS

EARLY LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT	pages 71 - 73	JUVENILE JUSTICE & CHILD WELFARE	page 92
EDUCATION & YOUTH DEVELOPMENT	pages 74 - 81	POVERTY ALLEVIATION & HOUSING	pages 93 - 94
COLLEGE ACCESS & SUCCESS	pages 82 - 86	SOCIAL INNOVATION FINANCING & IMPACT PHILANTHROPY	pages 95 - 96
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & SERVICE	pages 87 - 91		

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ALASKA

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ARIZONA

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Year Up
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Match Education
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Opportunity Nation
Peace First
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Roca
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The Children's Aid Society
The Corps Network
The Mission Continues
Third Sector Capital Partners, Inc.
Turnaround for Children
Year Up
YouthBuild USA

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Teach For America

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The Mission Continues
Third Sector Capital Partners, Inc.
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LIFT
New Leaders
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Single Stop
Social Finance US

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The Mission Continues
Year Up
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TENNESSEE

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The Corps Network
The Mission Continues
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Reading Partners
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Social Enterprise Alliance
Teach For America
The Corps Network
The Mission Continues
Third Sector Capital Partners, Inc.
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College Summit
Enterprise Community Partners
Save the Children
The Corps Network
YouthBuild USA

WISCONSIN

Acelero Learning/Shine
Early Learning
Alternative Staffing Alliance
America's Promise Alliance
City Year, Inc.
College Possible
Enterprise Community Partners
Eye to Eye
New Leaders
New Teacher Center
Public Allies
Save the Children
Social Enterprise Alliance
Teach For America
The Children's Aid Society
The Corps Network
YouthBuild USA

WYOMING

College Advising Corps
Enterprise Community Partners
Eye to Eye
Save the Children
The Corps Network

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

America's Promise Alliance
ANet
AppleTree Institute for Education Innovation
City Year, Inc.
College Summit
Enterprise Community Partners
Eye to Eye
Jumpstart for Young Children, Inc.
KIPP Schools
LIFT
New Classrooms Innovation Partners
New Leaders
Peer Health Exchange
Public Allies
Reading Partners
Save the Children
ServiceNation
Social Finance US
Teach For America
The Corps Network
The Mission Continues
Turnaround for Children
BUILD

NATIONAL

CSH
Opportunity Nation
Social Finance US



ACELERO LEARNING/ SHINE EARLY LEARNING

FOUNDED 2001

HEADQUARTERS BOSTON, MA

LOCATIONS AR; CA; CT; FL; IN; KY; MD; MI; NJ; NV; NY; OH; OK; PA; TX; WI

Transforming early learning for the best start

Founded in 2002, Acelero Learning is a for-profit company committed to bringing a relentless focus on positive child and family outcomes in order to close the achievement gap and build a better future for children, families, and communities served by the Head Start program. In 2009, after seven years of building and growing its own high-performing Head Start program that developed powerful new approaches to data, curriculum, and family services, Acelero began disseminating its proven methodology. Acelero's subsidiary, Shine Early Learning, focuses on providing training and technical assistance to other Head Start programs in a continued effort to leverage Acelero Learning's innovations to impact the early childhood community at large.

IMPACT

- Children served for two years through the Acelero Learning Head Start program show outcomes that are nearly triple those of the best national Head Start sample, scoring 16.15 points versus the national average of 6.4 points on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test.
- Acelero Learning has over 1,000 employees who serve more than 5,000 low-income children and their families in four states.
- Shine Early Learning has intensive Shine Assist partnerships with over 31 Head Start programs that serve more than 36,000 children across the country.

APPLETREE INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATION INNOVATION

FOUNDED 1996

HEADQUARTERS WASHINGTON, DC

LOCATIONS DC

Erasing the achievement gap before kindergarten

AppleTree is a nonprofit committed to erasing the achievement gap by providing young children with the social, emotional, and cognitive foundations they need to thrive in school. After winning an Investing in Innovation (i3) grant in 2010 from the US Department of Education, AppleTree created an evidence-based, comprehensive instructional model for three- and four-year-old children called Every Child Ready. Developed through an innovative research-to-practice approach, the instructional model is constantly tested and improved in real-world classrooms. During the 2014-2015 school year, Every Child Ready educated more than 1,600 children. Of those, more than half attend a partner school or early learning center where AppleTree is deeply involved in helping implement Every Child Ready by providing professional development, mentoring/coaching of teachers and school leadership, and various assessment tools measuring school quality and children's progress.

IMPACT

- Every Child Ready (ECR) students across all ability levels made greater gains in early math skills (as measured by the Test of Early Mathematics Ability) than students receiving different comprehensive, math-focused curricula.
- AppleTree students made greater gains in receptive vocabulary than students receiving other commonly used curricula, especially those starting below the normal range.
- The effects of Every Child Ready appear to increase with more exposure, as students with years of ECR finished pre-K performing above the 50th percentile in receptive vocabulary, expressive vocabulary, print knowledge, phonological awareness, and early math skills.

AVANCE, INC.

FOUNDED 1973

HEADQUARTERS SAN ANTONIO, TX

LOCATIONS CA; NM; TX

Unlocking America's potential by strengthening families in at-risk communities through effective parent education and support programs

AVANCE is a national nonprofit providing innovative services to families in marginalized communities. Focusing on pregnant women and those with children under four, AVANCE benefits from a two-generation approach that empowers parents to become advocates for their children while imparting invaluable knowledge and skills to early learners. Through its Parent-Child Education Program (PCEP), AVANCE helps families break the cycle of poverty, while creating an enriching home environment for their children. By building parents' networks and access to education and employment, while enriching their knowledge of childhood development, the PCEP facilitates parents' personal and professional success as well as their child's long-term academic and personal success.

IMPACT

- 93% of AVANCE alumni enter kindergarten "school-ready."
- Participation in AVANCE's PCEP led to a 216% increase in mothers with higher education degrees and a 127% increase in mothers with steady employment.
- 94% of AVANCE alumni graduate high school and 43% enroll in a post-secondary institution, compared with 64% and 33% of Texans, respectively.

CHILD MIND INSTITUTE

FOUNDED

2010

HEADQUARTERS

NEW YORK, NY

LOCATIONS

NY

Transforming children's lives and helping them reach their full potential

The Child Mind Institute (CMI) is a nonprofit organization transforming the way psychiatric and learning disorders are treated in children and teens. CMI's integrated approach combines patient care with visionary research to inform its practices, comprehensive resources to educate and empower parents, and impassioned advocacy to destigmatize psychiatric illness. With the aim of never denying care on account of inability to pay, CMI offers children and their families personalized treatment based on cutting-edge research. This model allows CMI to explore the frontiers of healthy brain development while translating its findings into effective interventions for children.

IMPACT

- CMI clinicians have treated more than 4,000 young people with psychiatric and learning disorders.
- CMI has provided training, intervention services, and resources to parents, teachers, and administrators from more than 150 New York City schools, and two million people have accessed educational resources through CMI's website.
- CMI has provided more than \$1.5 million in financial aid for treatment services.

JUMPSTART FOR YOUNG CHILDREN, INC.

FOUNDED

1993

HEADQUARTERS

BOSTON, MA

LOCATIONS

AZ; CA; CT; DC; GA; IL; MA;
MO; MS; NJ; NY; PA; RI;
TX; WA

Working toward the day every child in America enters kindergarten prepared to succeed

Jumpstart is a national early education organization delivering a research-based and cost-effective program by training college students and community volunteers to work with preschool-age children in low-income neighborhoods. Through a proven curriculum, these children will develop the language and literacy skills they need to be ready for kindergarten, setting them on a path for lifelong success. Since 1993, Jumpstart has served 76,000 preschool-age children and engaged 36,000 college students and community volunteers to provide early childhood education programming in low-income neighborhoods nationwide. Jumpstart is also a proud member of the AmeriCorps national service network.

IMPACT

- 92% of Jumpstart participants made gains in language and literacy skills during the 2013-2014 program year.
- Internal evaluations and external studies have consistently found that Jumpstart children show learning gains significantly greater than comparison children.
- In February 2014, Jumpstart was profiled as an exemplar program by the Center for High Impact Philanthropy (CHIP) at the University of Pennsylvania.

INSTITUTE FOR CHILD SUCCESS

FOUNDED

2010

HEADQUARTERS

GREENVILLE, SC

LOCATIONS

NC; NY; SC

Fostering the success of all children

The Institute for Child Success (ICS) is a nonpartisan research and policy institute working with policymakers, service providers, government agencies, funders, and business leaders to advance a culture that supports and sustains the success of all children. Resting on its three core pillars — research, policy, and integration — ICS identifies research-based approaches to meet the challenges of early childhood development, healthcare, and education and supports its partners in implementing these best practices. ICS focuses on the broader systems that foster the education and health of children, bringing about change that is exponential. Through its work to integrate and align the efforts of service providers and advocates in the early childhood field, ICS brings together diverse perspectives and maximizes the effect in the lives of young people.

IMPACT

- ICS is working to expand evidence-based home visiting through research on innovative practices, legislative advocacy, and technical assistance to jurisdictions exploring alternative financing models.
- ICS has published a series of papers and is hosting a series of events to help policymakers support the development of strong executive function in young children.
- ICS works continually to develop Pay for Success mechanisms to support the scaling of effective early childhood interventions.

SAVE THE CHILDREN

FOUNDED 1932

HEADQUARTERS FAIRFIELD, CT

LOCATIONS AL; AR; AZ; CA; CO;
CT; DC; HI; IL; KS; KY;
LA; MA; MD; MO; MS; NE; NM; NV; NY;
OK; OR; SC; TN; TX; WA; WI; WV; WY

Helping all children succeed

Founded more than 80 years ago, Save the Children invests in childhood — everyday and in times of crisis. In the U.S. and around the world, Save the Children is dedicated to ensuring every child has the best chance for success. Its pioneering programs give children a healthy start, the opportunity to learn, and protection from harm. Its advocacy efforts provide a voice for children who cannot speak for themselves, and Save the Children inspires and achieves lasting impact for millions of the world's most vulnerable girls and boys. By transforming children's lives now, Save the Children is helping change the course of their futures. Last year, its U.S. programs served more than 300,000 children in need. Save the Children delivers rigorous, research-based early learning, health and nutrition, and supplemental school-age literacy programs; addresses the needs of U.S. children in disaster readiness, relief, and recovery; and advocates with authorities at the local, state, and federal levels to create large-scale, lasting change for kids.

IMPACT

- 84% of the 3-year-olds in the early childhood development program *Early Steps to School Success* score at or above the national average on literacy and language tests.
- Children gain the equivalent of 4.2 additional months of school from Save the Children's literacy programs, with twice the number reading at grade level by the end of the year.
- Since Hurricane Katrina, Save the Children has helped more than 1 million children affected by disasters.

SAVE THE CHILDREN ACTION NETWORK

FOUNDED 2014

HEADQUARTERS WASHINGTON, DC

LOCATIONS IA; IL; NH; SC; WA

Mobilizing all Americans to invest in early childhood now

Founded by Save the Children in 2014, Save the Children Action Network (SCAN) is a new organization dedicated to mobilizing Americans around a commitment that cannot wait — investing in early childhood now. SCAN works to ensure that the issues critical to children's lives and futures are given top priority by our elected leaders and to hold those leaders accountable. SCAN will make certain that promises made are promises kept. SCAN focuses on two objectives critical to early childhood success: securing early education by ensuring access to high-quality early learning experiences for every child in the United States and helping kids survive by ending preventable, early childhood deaths around the world.

IMPACT

- In 2014, SCAN invested more than \$1.2 million in 10 federal, state, and local elections across five states.
- In California, Illinois, Iowa, and South Carolina, SCAN worked closely with partners on the ground to identify and support candidates who have stood up for investments in early education and maternal, newborn, and child survival.
- In Washington state, SCAN supported Seattle's Proposition 1B, a successful ballot initiative that will expand preschool for the city's four-year-olds.

WATERFORD INSTITUTE

FOUNDED 1976

HEADQUARTERS SANDY, UT

LOCATIONS NATIONAL

Inspiring a great start for every child

Waterford is a U.S. leader in preschool through second-grade software for reading, math, and science programs. Waterford's software illustrates four key principles in its approach to learning: scalability, individualized and equitable instruction, student engagement, and low cost. Waterford offers a personalized experience that can be successfully implemented for any child in any setting. A deep library of activities and the most advanced sequencers in the industry provide children with an experience that is personalized to their skill, learning style, and content mastery. As a nonprofit, Waterford invests significant time and resources into creating quality curricula and is able to offer individualized, research-based instruction at a cost that is much less than traditional reforms.

IMPACT

- Preschoolers using Waterford demonstrated two to three times higher academic growth rates than a control group.
- English Language Learners (ELL) using Waterford in kindergarten made greater literacy gains than both the ELL and native English-speaking control groups across 15 Title I schools.
- After using Waterford, low-performing first graders significantly outperformed the low-performing comparison group, with post-test scores equal to the moderate-performing groups.

AMERICA'S PROMISE ALLIANCE

FOUNDED

1997

HEADQUARTERS

WASHINGTON, DC

LOCATIONS

AK; AL; AZ; CA; CO; CT;
DC; DE; FL; GA; IA; ID;
IL; KS; KY; LA; MA; MD; ME; MI; MN; MO;
MS; NC; NE; NJ; NM; NV; NY; OH; OK; OR;
PA; RI; SC; TN; TX; UT; VA; WA; WI; WV

Making the promise of America real for every child

America's Promise Alliance (APA) leads the largest alliance dedicated to bringing young people to the top of the national agenda. Building on the legacy of its founder, General Colin Powell, it is a catalyst and connector for nearly 400 national organizations and more than 100 communities that are providing all children, especially the most vulnerable, with the fundamental resources they need to succeed at home, in school, and in the community. America's Promise brings attention to the issues that shape young people's lives, calls all individuals and institutions to be accountable for young people's well-being, and aligns diverse players in pursuit of urgent, ambitious goals none can reach alone. APA leads GradNation, a ten-year campaign to raise the national on-time high school graduation rate to 90% by 2020 — with no school graduating fewer than 80% of its students on time — leading to a dramatic increase in postsecondary enrollment and graduation.

IMPACT

- Through GradNation, the nation is on track to reach the 90% on-time high school graduation goal by 2020. For the first time ever, in 2012, the U.S. graduation rate exceeded 80%.
- Because of the work of APA, more is known today about the underlying causes and complexities of young people leaving school before completion, which has led to better wraparound supports for students in and out of school and better data to connect the interventions and supports to the individual needs of learners.

ANET

FOUNDED

2005

HEADQUARTERS

BOSTON, MA

LOCATIONS

CO; DC; IL; LA; MA; MI; NJ;
NY; OH; TN

Helping schools boost student learning with great teaching

ANet is a nonprofit founded on the premise that every child in America deserves an excellent education and the opportunities it provides. ANet pursues its vision for educational equality by helping schools boost student learning with great teaching grounded in standards and informed by data and the successful practices of educators nationwide. ANet's coaching, resources, and professional development help schools build a culture of continuous improvement. ANet works alongside schools to translate best practices into customized solutions that account for the unique strengths and needs of every school. ANet offers an integrated set of tools and services designed to help educators identify specific student needs and effectively meet students where they are along the academic spectrum. Through ANet partnership, schools are able to implement a high-quality cycle of teaching and learning.

IMPACT

- Since 2005, ANet has grown to partner with 525 schools in 30 different systems nationwide, serving approximately 170,000 students in grades 2-8 and 7,000 educators.
- ANet's founding corps of seven low-income Boston schools has virtually closed the achievement gap with non-low-income schools in Massachusetts.
- ANet schools achieving their 3-year practice goals attained increases in student proficiency of 12% in math and 6% in English Language Arts.
- 80% of ANet school partners report that ANet has been helpful to their teachers' development, and 90% of ANet partner schools are satisfied with their ANet experience overall.

BELL

FOUNDED

1992

HEADQUARTERS

BOSTON, MA

LOCATIONS

CA; MA; MD; NC; NJ; NY; OH

Helping all children excel through summer and after school learning experiences

BELL (Building Educated Leaders for Life) transforms the academic achievements, self-confidence, and life trajectories of children living in under-resourced urban communities. Believing in the tremendous potential of all children to excel, BELL recognizes them as scholars and pursues its mission by expanding learning time in the summer and after school. The BELL Summer and BELL After School programs feature small-group academic instruction in literacy and math, mentorship, and community service, as well as a wide variety of enrichment courses such as science, entrepreneurship, health, and leadership development. BELL rigorously monitors program quality and evaluates academic and social gains using standardized tests, skill-based quizzes, and operating metrics.

IMPACT

- Scholars in BELL After School outpace their peers in acquiring new literacy and math skills, narrowing the achievement gap and gaining the skills they need to succeed in school.
- According to standardized diagnostic tests, in 2014 underperforming BELL Summer scholars gained an average of 2.4 months' grade-equivalent skills in reading and 1.8 months' grade-equivalent skills in math rather than losing skills as a result of "summer learning loss."
- A random-assignment study conducted by the Urban Institute found that BELL Summer increases the academic achievement of under-performing students.

BUILD

FOUNDED 1999

HEADQUARTERS REDWOOD CITY, CA

LOCATIONS CA; DC; MA

Using entrepreneurship to empower low-income youth to graduate high school and succeed in college

BUILD's mission is to use entrepreneurship to excite disengaged, low-income students and propel them through high school to college success. BUILD believes that the power of student ideas in action drives youth to reach their fullest potential in school and beyond. BUILD's four-year high school program offers a unique blend of entrepreneurship, rigorous academics, and mentoring support that attracts and motivates many students who are otherwise at high risk of dropping out of high school.

IMPACT

- Since 2012, 97% of BUILD students graduate from high school, and 98% of them are accepted to college.
- BUILD has incubated more than 750 businesses through its student incubator program, which helps students start and run their own businesses.

CITIZEN SCHOOLS

FOUNDED 1995

HEADQUARTERS BOSTON, MA

LOCATIONS CA; IL; MA; NC; NJ; NY; TX

Educating children, strengthening communities

Citizen Schools is setting a new standard for out-of-school and expanded learning time (ELT) with a cost-effective learning model that helps close achievement gaps by working with students to develop lifelong skills for success. Citizen Schools partners with middle schools to expand the learning day for children in under-resourced communities nationwide. Through a "second shift" of educators, Citizen Schools provides academic support to students, connects them with "citizen teachers" and community leaders through hands-on apprenticeships, prepares them for college, and encourages them to be active in their communities. By drawing thousands of citizens into schools each year, Citizen Schools is promoting student achievement, transforming schools, and reimagining education in America.

IMPACT

- Citizen Schools adds 400 additional hours of learning time each year for middle school students.
- Students participating in Citizen Schools programs are 2.4 times more interested in pursuing STEM careers than their peers and twice as interested in learning about college and careers during school.
- Interim findings from a recent evaluation of Citizen Schools' ELT initiative reveal positive and promising student learning gains on state assessments in English Language Arts (ELA) and math. Schools implementing the ELT curriculum for longer periods of time yield even higher results, equivalent to seven additional months of learning in ELA.
- The high school graduation rate of Citizen Schools alumni was 20% higher than that of matched peers.

CITY YEAR, INC.

FOUNDED 1988

HEADQUARTERS BOSTON, MA

LOCATIONS AR; CA; CO; DC; FL; IL; LA; MA; MI; NH; NY; OH; OK; PA; RI; SC; TX; WA; WI

Uniting diverse teams of young people for a year of full-time service in public schools in high-poverty communities

City Year is an education-focused nonprofit dedicated to helping students and schools succeed. City Year partners with public schools to strategically deploy AmeriCorps members who are trained to provide full-time, targeted student, classroom, and school-wide support. In 26 communities across the United States and through two international affiliates, teams of AmeriCorps leaders support students by focusing on attendance, behavior, and course performance through tutoring, mentoring, and afterschool programs that keep kids in school and on track to graduate from high school ready for college and career success.

IMPACT

- In the 2013-2014 school year, students working with City Year demonstrated an average growth rate of 1.4 times what was expected in English and math on the MAP, an assessment used across the country. In one year or less, City Year helped its partner schools cut the number of at-risk students in English and math by 50%.
- Partner schools saw a 72% increase in the number of students classified as having strong Social Emotional Learning skills, such as self-awareness and goal-setting, on the DESSA assessment.
- Students received approximately 22,500 additional hours of instruction as a result of City Year's attendance programs.

EDUCATORS 4 EXCELLENCE

FOUNDED 1993

HEADQUARTERS NEW YORK, NY

LOCATIONS CA; CT; IL; MN; NY

Working to ensure that the voices of classroom teachers are included in the creation of policies that shape their classrooms and careers

Educators 4 Excellence (E4E) is a national movement of like-minded teachers strengthening their power and role in crafting and implementing school policy. From a small group of New York teachers frustrated by the top-down approach to the policy-making that shaped their classrooms and careers, E4E has grown into a nationwide force of teachers leading the charge to change America's education system. E4E teachers come together to learn about policies affecting their students, their classrooms, and themselves. E4E provides teachers with the latest news and research about current education policies and practices. E4E teachers share their vision with decision makers through a series of policy and networking. They take action to ensure that their voices are heard by advocating for teacher leadership and collaboration at their schools, pushing for policies at the district and state level that include E4E teacher-created recommendations, and getting involved with their unions to ensure their opinions are represented.

IMPACT

- In 2013, E4E teachers' recommendations helped shape New York State's evaluation system for New York City schools.
- Since 2011, E4E has published nearly two dozen formal policy papers on issues ranging from teacher evaluation and teacher diversity to tenure and principal evaluation.
- Every month, E4E hosts events around the country for teachers, such as conversations with superintendents and discussions about Common Core and other curricular standards.

EYE TO EYE

FOUNDED 1998

HEADQUARTERS NEW YORK, NY

LOCATIONS AZ; CA; CO; CT; DC; FL; GA; IL; IN; MA; MN; NC; NH; NJ; NV; NY; OR; PA; RI; VA; WA; WI; WY

Creating a world in which people with LD / ADHD are fully accepted, valued, and respected — not just by society, but also by themselves

Eye to Eye is a national, nonprofit mentoring program changing the lives of thousands of children and young adults across the United States. Using a research-based arts mentoring model in which committed college students with learning disabilities (LD) and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) mentor children who face the same challenges, Eye to Eye helps students with LD/ADHD improve self-advocacy and meta-cognitive abilities, skills proven to be essential to the life and success of LD/ADHA adults. Eye to Eye's grassroots approach to mentoring leverages partnerships with parents, communities, schools, and universities to create a network of advocates surrounding each child.

IMPACT

- 87% of Eye to Eye mentees reported that their mentor helped them think positively about the future, with 85% reporting increased self-esteem as a result.
- 87% of mentees felt more academically empowered after the program, and 73% believed that their mentor helped them to become self-advocates.
- 89% of mentors in the program felt that their participation had made them better advocates for themselves as well.

GENERATION CITIZEN

FOUNDED 2008

HEADQUARTERS NEW YORK, NY

LOCATIONS CA; MA; NY; RI

Ensuring that all students in the United States receive a "drivers' education" for democracy, in the form of action civics

Generation Citizen (GC) works to ensure that all students in the United States receive an effective action civics education, providing them with the knowledge and skills necessary to collectively rebuild our democracy. GC directly engages schools in action civics while building demand for the concept across the country. To implement its core action civics program, GC pairs college volunteers, called Democracy Coaches, with middle and high school teachers to lead a student-centered action civics course in which students take real action on an issue impacting their lives. GC's recent advocacy efforts have included a convening of funders, practitioners, and policymakers co-hosted by The Ford Foundation called "Educating for Democracy," and a successful initiative, the Teens on Board campaign, to lower the age at which young people can sit on New York City community boards from 18 to 16.

IMPACT

- In the 2014-15 school year, GC reached 7,600 middle and high school students in four program sites with its action civics curriculum.
- In 2014, teachers reported that, as a result of GC, 67% of their students experienced an increase in their sense of civic responsibility and 69% experienced an increase in their belief in the ability to effect political change.
- 87% of a recently surveyed cohort of Democracy Coaches reported that GC altered their approach to community service and civic responsibility, and 100% were planning to pursue careers in the public sector.

GLOBAL CITIZEN YEAR

FOUNDED 2009

HEADQUARTERS OAKLAND, CA

LOCATIONS NATIONAL

Building a pipeline of future leaders through a transformative global bridge year after high school

Global Citizen Year sees the path to college as an extraordinary — and largely untapped — opportunity to unleash the potential of a new generation of global leaders. To harness this opportunity, it recruits and trains a diverse corps of high-potential graduating seniors from across the United States and supports them through a bridge year of service, learning, and leadership training in Africa, Latin America, and Asia. Through world-class training and individual apprenticeships, these Fellows develop skills and perspectives that prepare them for success in college, careers, and a global economy. By nurturing a dynamic network of alumni over time, Global Citizen Year will build a pipeline of new American leaders who drive solutions to 21st century challenges.

IMPACT

- 99% of Global Citizen Year Fellows are enrolled in college and on track to graduate on time.
- 97% believe the global skills they developed during their Global Citizen Year have helped them succeed academically, professionally, and/or personally.
- 96% return from their year fluent in a critical language, and 99% state that Global Citizen Year changed how they see their role in the world.
- 88% have clear goals for what they want to get out of college, compared to 31% pre-program, while 84% view themselves as leaders for social change, compared to 41% pre-program.

KIPP SCHOOLS

FOUNDED 1994

HEADQUARTERS SAN FRANCISCO, CA

LOCATIONS AR; CA; CO; DC; FL; GA; IL; IN; LA; MA; MD; MN; MO; NC; NJ; NY; OH; OK; PA; TN; TX

Proving low-income students can achieve academic success

KIPP, the Knowledge Is Power Program, is a national network of free, open-enrollment, college-preparatory public schools that prepare students in underserved communities for success in college and in life. KIPP builds a partnership among parents, students, and teachers that puts learning first. More than 88% of KIPP's students are from low-income families and eligible for the free or reduced-price meals program, and 95% are African American or Latino. By providing outstanding educators, more time in school learning, and a strong culture of achievement, KIPP is helping all students climb the mountain to and through college.

IMPACT

- As of the 2014-2015 school year, KIPP has a total of 162 schools serving more than 59,000 students, with plans to continue growing annually.
- As of spring 2014, 45% of KIPP alumni who completed eighth grade at a KIPP school ten or more years ago have graduated from a four-year college (compared to the 9% national average for low-income students), with an additional 6% having earned two-year degrees and 12% still persisting toward their college degree.

MATCH EDUCATION

FOUNDED 2000

HEADQUARTERS JAMAICA PLAIN, MA

LOCATIONS MA

Getting results in schools, transforming teacher training, and rethinking what college can be

Match Education encompasses four organizations all working to transform education in America. Match Charter Public School is an innovative, high-performing, free charter school on four campuses in Boston spanning pre-K through grade 12. The Sposato Graduate School of Education offers future teachers a distinct approach to obtain a Master's in Effective Teaching, including a first-year, fulltime residency at a high-performing, high-poverty school. Match Beyond — a new hybrid college and jobs program — empowers students to earn their associate's or bachelor's degree by providing individual coaching, study support, and job placement services. Match Export is disrupting the status quo in education by widely disseminating the immense body of knowledge Match has gained through its direct service operations. Through these four organizations, Match Education is inventing solutions to important practical problems in education while generating measurable outcomes for students and teachers.

IMPACT

- By tenth grade, nearly 100% of Match students have achieved proficiency in both math and literacy, and 83% of Match tenth graders scored in the advanced category in math on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System exam.
- 100% of Sposato trainees have received a teaching offer.
- Match Export has supported the creation of tutoring programs in major cities and more than 67,000 students have enrolled in its two massive online open courses.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR LEARNING DISABILITIES (NCLD)

FOUNDED	1977
HEADQUARTERS	NEW YORK, NY
LOCATIONS	NY

Improving the lives of people with learning difficulties and disabilities

The National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD) improves the lives of all people with learning difficulties and disabilities (LD) by empowering parents, enabling young adults, transforming schools, and creating policy and advocacy impact. NCLD envisions a society in which every individual possesses the academic, social, and emotional skills needed to succeed in school, at work, and in life. NCLD engages and mobilizes a national advocacy network of more than 80,000 parents and educators to ensure that federal policies reflect evidence-based research and practice and support equal opportunities for children and adults with LD.

IMPACT

- In 2013, NCLD shared valuable information with 1.9 million visitors to its website and an additional 257,000 monthly in-person visitors.
- Over the course of the year, NCLD mobilized 34,000 activists for legislative action.
- In 2013, NCLD informed 23,000 pediatricians on the signs of LD.

NEW CLASSROOMS INNOVATION PARTNERS

FOUNDED	2009
HEADQUARTERS	NEW YORK, NY
LOCATIONS	DC; GA; IL; NC; NJ; NY

Personalizing learning for every student, every day

New Classrooms is a national nonprofit organization that partners with individual schools, school districts, and charter management organizations to reimagine classroom learning. New Classrooms Innovation Partners designs and implements innovative instructional models that leverage classroom design, teacher talent, and technology to enable personalized learning for every student, every day. New Classrooms' flagship instructional model, Teach to One: Math, integrates teacher-led, collaborative, and independent instruction in ways that enable students to not just learn skills but also apply them in real-world contexts. New Classrooms' first-of-its-kind technology draws from tens of thousands of high-quality lessons to create a dynamic curriculum tailored to students' unique needs. New Classrooms currently partners with 16 schools to provide a comprehensive mathematics program for nearly 6,500 students in five states and the District of Columbia. Every day, every student receives a unique and customized schedule based on his or her performance from the previous day.

IMPACT

- In 2014, the more than 6,000 students participating in Teach to One made math gains at 1.5 times the national average — equivalent to an additional half year of learning.
- Students who began the year below grade level in math experienced gains that were 1.8 times the national average for all students (not just low-performing ones).
- English Language Learners gained an average of 1.7 years of knowledge using Teach to One, 70% faster than the national average for all students.

NEW LEADERS

FOUNDED	2000
HEADQUARTERS	NEW YORK, NY
LOCATIONS	AR; AZ; CA; CT; DC; FL; GA; HI; IA; IL; KY; LA; MD; MI; NC; NJ; NY; OH; PA; RI; TN; TX; VA; WI

Recruiting, developing, and supporting outstanding leaders for high-need public schools

New Leaders is a national nonprofit that develops transformational school leaders and designs effective leadership policies and practices for school systems across the country. The New Leaders community — including aspiring and sitting principals, teacher leaders, and principal supervisors — is a driving force for change in some of the country's largest, highest-need school systems. Drawing on its 15 years of experience, New Leaders has developed an extensive knowledge base about highly effective school leadership and regularly provides system leaders with the resources they need — research findings, policy recommendations, and state and district implementation support — to foster great leadership in classrooms, schools, and school systems.

IMPACT

- New Leaders has trained 1,600 school leaders in 15 of America's highest need communities. Together, these dedicated individuals are leading more than 14,000 teachers toward instructional excellence, making a difference for 350,000 students during the 2014-2015 year alone.
- An independent, seven-year study by the RAND Corporation found that students attending New Leader schools outperform their peers by statistically significant margins specifically because they have a New Leader principal in place.
- Through its work advising school systems, New Leaders has impacted 13,000 leaders and 7 million students across the country, truly scaling best practices to impact many more students in need of great leadership.

NEW TEACHER CENTER

FOUNDED 1998

HEADQUARTERS SANTA CRUZ, CA

LOCATIONS CA; FL; HI; IL; MA; NC; NY; TX; WI

Accelerating the effectiveness of teachers and school leaders

New Teacher Center (NTC) focuses on improving student learning by accelerating the effectiveness of new teachers and school leaders. NTC partners with states, school districts, and policymakers to design and implement programs that create sustainable, high-quality mentoring and professional development. NTC programs build leadership capacity, work to enhance teaching conditions, improve retention, and transform schools into vibrant learning communities where all students succeed. NTC was founded by educators in 1998 at the University of California at Santa Cruz, but in July 2009, NTC began operating as an independent nonprofit. Since 2010, NTC programs have reached 34,000 new teachers and over 2 million students across the country.

IMPACT

- 94% of teachers who received professional development from NTC agreed that they use what they learned in their ongoing practice.
- 99% of teachers with two years of induction support from NTC say it caused them to become more thoughtful, strategic, and effective educators.
- A federal randomized controlled trial showed that the students of beginning teachers who participated in two years of sustained, comprehensive induction like that provided by NTC achieved learning gains equivalent to moving from the 50th to 58th percentile in math and from the 50th to the 54th percentile in reading.

PEACE FIRST

FOUNDED 1992

HEADQUARTERS BOSTON, MA

LOCATIONS MA

Creating peaceful environments for students through whole school change

Peace First uses a whole school approach to change the way students, teachers, and principals think about building an effective and safe school environment. Peace First teaches children the skills of conflict resolution and civic engagement and provides educators with the critical skills and knowledge to integrate social-emotional learning into the school's curriculum and culture. Combined, these efforts strengthen schools' social and academic environments, creating stronger schools and more successful students. Classroom educators teach kids about friendship, communication, and conflict resolution through experiential activities and community service learning projects in pre-K through 8th grade classrooms on a weekly basis.

IMPACT

- 90% of teachers observe positive changes in students' conflict resolution skills, and 81% of students report that they can walk away from a fight without feeling like a coward.
- Over 80% of teachers using the Peace First curriculum integrate Peace First concepts, vocabulary, and rituals into their regular work with students.
- The overwhelming majority of visitors to the Digital Activity Center are pleased with the content and structure of the curriculum. Users of the site feel equipped to implement the curriculum with little to no training or assistance from Peace First.

PEER HEALTH EXCHANGE

FOUNDED 2003

HEADQUARTERS SAN FRANCISCO, CA

LOCATIONS CA; DC; IL; MA; NY

Giving teenagers the knowledge and skills they need to make healthy decisions

Peer Health Exchange (PHE) gives teenagers the knowledge and skills they need to make healthy decisions by training college students to teach a comprehensive health curriculum in low-income high schools that lack health education. PHE recruits, selects, and trains college student volunteers to teach a 13-workshop, skills-based health curriculum. As slightly older peers, PHE's volunteers are well positioned to lead honest conversations about teenagers' choices and health. In PHE's program, teenagers learn essential health information and develop critical skills including decision-making, communication, advocacy, and access to health resources in their schools and communities. By applying the skills they learn in PHE workshops outside of the classroom, PHE teenagers can make informed choices that contribute to better health and life opportunities.

IMPACT

- 73% of PHE teens reported that they've already used something they learned from PHE workshops to make a healthy decision, and 91% reported that they plan on using something they learned to make a healthy decision in the future.
- The number of students who knew where to access contraceptives if needed increased from 41 to 72%.

READING PARTNERS

FOUNDED

2001

HEADQUARTERS

OAKLAND, CA

LOCATIONS

CA; CO; DC; MD; NY; OK;
SC; TX; WA

Unlocking student potential by raising reading achievement

Reading Partners targets the highest-need students, identified as those six to 30 months behind grade level in reading. Reading Partners operates in 101 reading centers in schools in low-income communities across the country. Trained, supervised volunteers provide one-on-one literacy tutoring twice weekly during and after the school day. Using a research-based curriculum designed to achieve results, Reading Partners engages each school and community in a program intended to inspire change by spreading the joy and power of reading.

IMPACT

- Over the course of a year, students in Reading Partners' program improved their reading comprehension, sight word efficiency, and fluency by the equivalent of an additional one and a half to two months of learning.
- 89% of students accelerated their progress in reading, with most more than doubling their rate of learning.
- Reading Partners' program costs schools less than half of other supplemental reading programs.

SAY YES TO EDUCATION

FOUNDED

1987

HEADQUARTERS

NEW YORK, NY

LOCATIONS

CT; NY; PA

Galvanizing communities to ensure that every public school student graduates high school and can access, afford, and complete a postsecondary education

Say Yes to Education supports nearly 65,000 students in pre-K through grade 12 in an effort to dramatically increase high school and college graduation rates. Say Yes partners with entire communities — including local governments, school districts, businesses, community and faith-based organizations, unions, and others — to address four predictable barriers that often prevent low-income students from reaching their potential: academic readiness, social and emotional capacity, health and well-being, and financial resources. By providing the promise of a postsecondary tuition scholarship along with sustainable, evidence-based solutions implemented at scale, Say Yes and its partners leverage the power of communities to help bridge the achievement gap among young people from backgrounds historically underrepresented on the nation's higher education campuses.

IMPACT

- Within the first 20 years, Say Yes consistently doubled both high school and postsecondary graduation rates across all partner locations. In more recent citywide efforts, Say Yes is yielding promising results, including unprecedented cross-government and cross-sector collaboration and scaled use of a powerful new data system.
- In Syracuse, NY, Say Yes' management of wrap-around services at scale has led to a 40% decrease in the placement of young people in the foster care system.
- In Buffalo, NY, Say Yes' delivery of scholarship and program supports at scale has led to a 9% increase in college matriculation rates.

TEACH FOR AMERICA

FOUNDED

1990

HEADQUARTERS

NEW YORK, NY

LOCATIONS

AL; AR; AZ; CA; CO; CT; DC;
DE; FL; GA; HI; IL; IN; KS; KY;
LA; MA; MD; MI; MN; MO; MS; NC; NJ; NM; NV;
NY; OH; OK; PA; RI; SC; SD; TN; TX; VA; WI

Enlisting promising future leaders in the movement to end educational inequity

Teach For America (TFA) works in partnership with communities to expand educational opportunity for children facing the challenges of poverty. TFA recruits and develops a diverse corps of outstanding college graduates and professionals to make an initial two-year commitment to teach in high-need schools and become lifelong leaders in the movement to end educational inequity.

IMPACT

- A recently released study from Mathematica Policy Research found that corps members teaching in elementary grades, who averaged less than two years of experience, were as effective as other teachers in the same schools, who typically had nearly 14 years of experience. Among teachers in pre-K through second grade classrooms, the Mathematica study found that Teach For America corps members increased students' reading scores by an amount equal to 1.3 additional months of instruction.
- A growing body of rigorous independent research continues to reveal that Teach For America corps members promote student achievement in measures equal to and sometimes greater than non-Teach For America teachers in the same schools, whether the comparison groups are traditionally certified, alternatively certified, veteran educators, or new to the classroom.

THE CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY

FOUNDED 1853

HEADQUARTERS NEW YORK, NY

LOCATIONS GA; NY; OK; WI

Helping children succeed and thrive

The Children's Aid Society (CAS) is a multiservice organization that helps children in poverty to succeed and thrive. CAS provides comprehensive supports and programs from cradle through college in targeted high-needs New York City neighborhoods, touching the lives of 70,000 children and families in more than 40 locations. All aspects of a child's development, beginning in early childhood and continuing through young adulthood, are addressed through four key areas: learning and cognitive development, social and emotional skills development, access to quality healthcare, and support to ensure a stable and happy family life. In addition to direct service, the National Center for Community Schools and the CAS-Carrera Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program, which has been replicated in 13 states, provide technical assistance to communities nationally.

IMPACT

- 68% of children assessed at CAS's comprehensive summer camps maintained or improved their reading comprehension, thereby combating summer learning loss.
- The Children's Aid Carrera Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention program has been shown to reduce teen pregnancy and birth rates by 50%.
- By the end of the 2013-2014 school year, only 23% of students in CAS early childhood programs presented language and literacy skills in the below normal to lower range of normal development, compared to 70% at the start of the year.
- A study of two CAS community schools demonstrated CAS's positive return on investment — an investment of \$1 delivers \$10.30 in social value for the elementary school and \$14.80 for the middle school.

TURNAROUND FOR CHILDREN

FOUNDED 2002

HEADQUARTERS NEW YORK, NY

LOCATIONS DC; NJ; NY

Understanding the science behind the impact of stress on child development and putting this knowledge to work in struggling public school

Turnaround for Children is dedicated to proving that schools can successfully address the recurring, predictable obstacles to teaching and learning that stem from poverty and set the stage for significant academic improvement and student growth. Turnaround partners with schools serving high-poverty communities to implement an intervention grounded in science that aims to drive improvement in school culture, teacher effectiveness, and student academic achievement. In each partner school, Turnaround creates a student support system that provides expedited access to quality mental health services for the highest-need students, trains teachers in strategies to build safe, supportive, and productive classrooms, and works with school leaders to execute a school improvement plan that leverages data, puts positive disciplinary practices in place, and fosters a culture of high expectations.

IMPACT

- 90% of Turnaround students with intense needs were connected to appropriate services in an average of 20.8 days, compared to 20% of students in other high-poverty schools.
- In the last two years, suspensions and serious behavioral incidents at Turnaround partner schools have been reduced by more than 50%.
- Independent observers using third-party validated measures of classroom climate, productivity, and engagement report a 40% increase in the number of teachers rated as being highly effective in Turnaround partner schools.



10,000 DEGREES

FOUNDED	1981
HEADQUARTERS	SAN RAFAEL, CA
LOCATIONS	CA

Creating college graduates who change the world

10,000 Degrees is a nonprofit dedicated to helping low-income youth attend college and graduate ready to give back to their communities and the world. Believing that education forms the basis for a just and equitable society, 10,000 Degrees works collaboratively with students, families, schools, and communities to support each student in reaching his or her potential. Beginning in third grade and continuing through middle school, 10,000 Degrees' College4Kids program brings disadvantaged students to tour college campuses, while its flagship 10,000 Degrees Institute for high school students provides the tools necessary for low-income students to gain admission to and graduate from college.

IMPACT

- 84% of 10,000 Degrees students graduate with a four-year degree, compared to 54% nationally and 31% for low-income youth.
- 10,000 Degrees has awarded more than 30,000 scholarships totaling over \$56 million.
- In 2014, 10,000 Degrees served 3,300 students and awarded \$2.6 million in financial aid.

BARD EARLY COLLEGES

FOUNDED	2001
HEADQUARTERS	NEW YORK, NY
LOCATIONS	LA, MD, NJ, NY, OH

Enabling students from all backgrounds to succeed in college

The Bard Early Colleges are founded on the belief that many high-school-age students are eager and ready for the rigors of a college education and that an early college education motivates students and helps them access, afford, and complete postsecondary education. Bard College has been a pioneer in early college education since 1979 and has operated early colleges in partnership with public school systems since 2001. These Bard Early Colleges provide an opportunity for adolescents to pursue a college course of study in the liberal arts and sciences and graduate with up to 60 college credits and an Associate in Arts (A.A.) degree from Bard College alongside a high school diploma, at no cost to the student. In addition to four-year, degree-granting early college high schools, Bard runs early college centers where high school students can earn one year of college credit. Core features of the Bard Early Colleges include seminar classes taught by college professors committed to teaching younger students, robust student supports — including college transfer assistance — and a college education modeled on the first two years of Bard College's curriculum.

IMPACT

- 92% of Bard High School Early College (BHSEC) students (Class of 2014) earned an A.A. degree concurrently with their high school diplomas.
- Approximately 97% of BHSEC graduates (Class of 2014) enrolled in a four-year institution of higher education, many as college juniors.
- Over 90% of BHSEC graduates who enroll in colleges and universities earn a bachelor's degree, compared to the national rate of 59%.

BEYOND 12

FOUNDED	2009
HEADQUARTERS	SAN FRANCISCO, CA
LOCATIONS	CA; GA; MA; NY

Ensuring all students have the opportunity to succeed in college and beyond

Beyond 12 strives to increase the number of traditionally underserved and underrepresented students who earn a college degree. Beyond 12 works at the intersection of K-12 and higher education to address the college completion challenge at its roots. By integrating a personalized student coaching service with its longitudinal student tracking platform, Beyond 12 is providing the critical data and service bridge between lower and higher education to eliminate the artificial barriers created between them and ensure that all students are equipped to succeed. Through the creation of a feedback loop between high schools and colleges, Beyond 12 formalizes the sharing of data so that high schools can learn from their alumni and better prepare their students for the academic, financial, and social challenges they will face in their postsecondary studies.

IMPACT

- Beyond 12 is tracking the postsecondary progress of over 50,000 college students and coaching close to 2,000 students.
- 82% of students coached by Beyond 12 who graduated from high school in 2011 persisted to their third year of college compared to a 59% national third year persistence rate for similarly underserved students.
- Beyond 12 has been acclaimed nationally for its innovative approach as a Robin Hood College Success Prize finalist, as a Google Bay Area Impact Challenge winner, and as one of Fast Company's top 10 most innovative companies in education.

BLUE ENGINE

FOUNDED	2009
HEADQUARTERS	NEW YORK, NY
LOCATIONS	NY

Partnering with public high schools in low-income communities to increase academic rigor and prepare students for postsecondary success

Blue Engine believes that academic rigor in high school constitutes the single strongest predictor of college success and helps students at six New York City public high schools prepare for a successful postsecondary educational experience. Blue Engine places three or four motivated, recent college graduates, known as Blue Engine Teaching Assistants (BETAs), in each classroom it serves to facilitate a more personalized approach to learning. BETAs supplement the work of the lead teacher by meeting with the same group of students for a portion of each class, enabling them to tailor their lessons to the needs of their individual students. Recognizing that college-eligible students are often ill-prepared and ill-equipped to succeed upon arrival on campus, Blue Engine works to ensure that those qualified to attend college will also be ready to succeed.

IMPACT

- In Blue Engine schools, 73% more students scored at a college-ready level on New York State Regents exams compared to schools without Blue Engine's program.
- 32% fewer students failed the state Regents exams as a result of Blue Engine's program.

BOTTOM LINE

FOUNDED	1997
HEADQUARTERS	BOSTON, MA
LOCATIONS	IL; MA; NY

Helping low income, first generation students get in to college, graduate from college, and go far in life

With its integrated, data-driven approach, Bottom Line not only helps low-income, first-generation-to-college students gain admission to college, they also continue to work with their students upon arrival on campus to ensure they have the tools and support needed to graduate. Through its Access Program, high school students are paired with a mentor who guides them through each aspect of the college admissions process, from drawing up a list of schools and drafting a personal statement, to finding scholarships and choosing the right school for them. The Success Program then helps students transition to life on campus and supports them for up to six years as they navigate diverse obstacles such as selecting courses, securing internships, maintaining financial aid, overcoming personal challenges, and building a professional "brand" as they prepare to graduate and enter the workforce.

IMPACT

- Over 98% of Bottom Line high school students are accepted to college.
- 78% of Bottom Line students graduate with a bachelor's degree from college.
- Bottom Line students are up to 43% more likely to graduate from college in six years or less compared to their peers.
- Bottom Line supports more than 3,900 students annually.

COLLEGE ADVISING CORPS

FOUNDED	2005
HEADQUARTERS	CHAPEL HILL, NC
LOCATIONS	AK; AZ; CA; GA; IL; MA; MI; MO; NC; NY; PA; RI; TX; VA; WY

Increasing opportunity for America's students

College Advising Corps is a national nonprofit increasing the number of first-generation-to-college, low-income, and/or underrepresented students applying to, enrolling in, and graduating from college. Believing that a college education constitutes the greatest determinant of upward social mobility and lifetime earning potential, College Advising Corps places recent graduates from its partner colleges in underserved high schools to act as fulltime college advisers. In addition to guiding students through the admissions and financial aid processes, these advisers work with teachers and administrators to instill a college-going culture in the school. By supplementing the work of existing counseling staff, Corps advisers reach more students while embedding themselves in the school community, opening the eyes of students and their parents to the possibility of a postsecondary degree. College Advising Corps students also persist in their postsecondary studies at rates mirroring the national average despite its serving schools with large numbers of low-income and first-generation-college students.

IMPACT

- Students who meet with the College Advising Corps adviser in their school are 30% more likely to apply to college and 18% more likely to apply to three or more schools compared to the other seniors in their schools.
- College Advising Corps students are 23% more likely to be accepted to a college or university and 27% more likely to submit a FAFSA and apply for financial aid.

COLLEGE FORWARD

FOUNDED

2003

HEADQUARTERS

AUSTIN, TX

LOCATIONS

TX

Helping disadvantaged youth enroll in college and succeed in earning a baccalaureate degree

College Forward believes that access to higher education is the right of every young person, regardless of socioeconomic status. College Forward provides intensive, individualized college access and college completion services to low-income and first-generation students. In collaboration with school districts and other community organizations, College Forward orients high school students and their families to the college experience, preparing them for entrance examinations, applications, and the financial aid process. Once enrolled, “collegians” are supported through a unique Completion Program to ensure their attainment of a bachelor’s degree. Texas ranks among the lowest in the country for persistence and graduation rates among college students; however, 83% of College Forward students who enroll in college persist in their studies.

IMPACT

- 99% of College Forward students graduate from high school and are accepted to college each year.
- More than 90% of College Forward students enroll in college within 12 months of high school graduation, and 77% attend four-year colleges and universities.
- College Forward’s program costs just a fraction of similar “high-dosage” programs. For instance, CollegeForward’s two-year high school program costs less than one-fifth as much as the federally-funded Upward Bound program.

COLLEGE POSSIBLE

FOUNDED

2000

HEADQUARTERS

ST. PAUL, MN

LOCATIONS

IL; MN; NE; OR; PA; WI

Making college admission and success possible for low-income students

College Possible helps low-income students achieve admission to and success in college through an intensive curriculum of coaching and support. Recent college graduates serve as full-time AmeriCorps coaches to students and provide critical services at no cost to families, including academic support through ACT/SAT test preparation, college application assistance, financial aid consulting, guidance in the college transition, and support toward college degree completion.

IMPACT

- College Possible more than doubles the chances that a low-income student will enroll in a four-year institution, and 98% of College Possible students are accepted to college.
- College Possible students are 10 times more likely to graduate from college than their low-income peers.
- College Possible students increase their ACT scores by 20%.

COLLEGE SUMMIT

FOUNDED

1993

HEADQUARTERS

WASHINGTON, DC

LOCATIONS

CA; CT; DC; FL; MO; NY; SC; WV

Transforming the lives of low-income youth by connecting them to college and careers

College Summit, a national leader in college access and persistence for low-income high school students, has been transforming young lives nationwide since 1996. In high schools throughout the United States, College Summit creates a corps of students, Peer Leaders, who lead their classmates to and through college. To date, College Summit has placed almost 200,000 low-income youth from more than 500 schools on the path to college and career.

IMPACT

- Partner high schools achieve between 12 and 18% increases in college enrollment rates for participants.
- Of College Summit students who enroll in college, 79% persist in their studies, on par with the national persistence rate across income levels.

iMENTOR

FOUNDED	1999
HEADQUARTERS	NEW YORK, NY
LOCATIONS	IL; NY

Improving the lives of low-income high school students through evidence-based, technology-enabled mentoring

iMentor's innovative mentoring model uses mentoring relationships to ensure that more students graduate high school college-ready and succeed in college. iMentor partners with public schools to match every student one-on-one with a mentor during his or her high school career. Mentor-mentee pairs interact weekly through email and meet in person once a month for three to four years. The use of technology allows more professionals to become mentors, and a combination of an evidence-based curriculum and targeted staff support allows mentors to be effective in their roles. With its whole-school partnerships, iMentor serves as a holistic student support resource for schools, augmenting under-resourced guidance and college counselors. iMentor mentees become more invested in their future and develop communication, critical thinking, leadership, and social skills necessary for college success. Nationally, iMentor partners with more than 14 organizations in 12 states to provide them with necessary resources to run a high-quality mentoring program using the iMentor model.

IMPACT

- In 2014, 82% of iMentor high school seniors completed college applications.
- 58% of iMentor's 2014 high school graduates enrolled in college, compared with only 51% of low-income students nationwide.
- In 2013, 75% of iMentor students who enrolled in college within one year of graduating high school persisted into their second year, compared to the national average of 66% for first-generation college students.

SINGLE STOP

FOUNDED	2007
HEADQUARTERS	NEW YORK, NY
LOCATIONS	CA; FL; LA; MA; MS; NJ; NY; PA

Providing coordinated access to the safety net and connecting people to the resources they need to attain higher education, obtain good jobs, and achieve financial self-sufficiency

Single Stop USA is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to helping financially vulnerable families and students gain economic mobility by connecting them to existing benefits and services intended for them. These basic resources, such as food, health insurance, childcare, and tax refunds, increase the likelihood that families are healthy and stable, with parents who work and children who attend school. By working in partnership with community colleges, commercial centers, and place-based need organizations, Single Stop is focused on scalable service delivery channels with an eye towards increasing the volume, impact, and sustainability of its work.

IMPACT

- In 2013 alone, Single Stop and its partners served more than 151,000 families and individuals in New York City, connecting them to more than \$488,000,000 in benefits, tax refunds, and supportive services.
- Since 2007, Single Stop and its partners have served nearly 1 million families and individuals, connecting them to over \$2.8 billion in benefits, tax refunds, and supportive services.
- For every dollar invested by Single Stop, there is a \$20 return on investment to society.

SUMMER SEARCH

FOUNDED	1990
HEADQUARTERS	SAN FRANCISCO, CA
LOCATIONS	CA; MA; NY; PA; WA

Helping young people soar

Summer Search transforms the lives of young people from traditionally underserved communities by equipping them with the individualized experiences and support they need to graduate from college and reach their full potential. Summer Search works with partner high schools to identify resilient, altruistic, and determined sophomores and provides them with a combination of professional insight mentoring and scholarships to challenging summer experiences such as wilderness expeditions, academic enrichment programs on college campuses, and service projects in the United States or abroad. Summer Search's college counselors guide students through the application, financial aid, and college-selection processes during their senior year of high school, and even after students arrive on campus, Summer Search continues to offer mentoring, ongoing financial aid counseling, and career exploration services. Through this innovative, long-term, and comprehensive approach, Summer Search gives teenagers the confidence and life skills they need to succeed in college and beyond.

IMPACT

- 99% of Summer Search seniors graduate high school, with 93% going on to college and 79% of those enrolled on track to graduate.
- 92% of Summer Search participants are first-generation college students.
- Summer Search has served more than 5,200 young people since its founding and currently serve about 3,200 students annually at 148 high schools in seven regions.

uASPIRE

FOUNDED

1985

HEADQUARTERS

BOSTON, MA

LOCATIONS

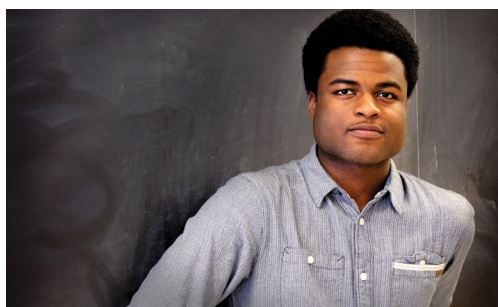
CA; FL; MA

Ensuring that all young people have the financial information and resources necessary to find an affordable path to and through a postsecondary education

uAspire is a national leader in providing college affordability services to young people and families, alleviating financial barriers to college success. uAspire delivers programming directly to young people and families in high schools and also virtually, using text messaging and other technologies. In addition, uAspire provides best-in-class instruction, resources, and ongoing support on issues of college affordability to frontline college access and success providers in partner school districts and charter management organizations, community organizations, and higher education institutions across the country. Through policy and systems-change efforts, uAspire works to ensure that people and institutions of influence at local, state, federal, and higher education levels have the information, data, and perspective they need to enact positive, lasting change.

IMPACT

- In 2015, uAspire will reach more than 100,000 students through its direct service (in-person and virtual) and practitioner training programs.
- uAspire helped the high school class of 2014 secure over \$150 million in financial aid — a return on investment of \$61 in financial aid for every \$1 invested in its advising programs.
- 65% of uAspire's advisees enroll at a postsecondary institution during the fall immediately after high school graduation, compared to a national average of just 53% for low-income students, and 89% of advisees reenroll for a second year compared to 69% across all income levels.



ALTERNATIVE STAFFING ALLIANCE

FOUNDED	2007
HEADQUARTERS	BROOKLINE, MA
LOCATIONS	AZ; CA; CO; FL; GA; IL; IN; LA; MA; MD; ME; MI; MN; NC; OH; OK; OR; TX; UT; VA; WA; WI

Helping people with obstacles to employment enter and advance in the workforce

Alternative Staffing Alliance is a national network of community-based alternative staffing organizations (ASOs) that combine an enterprise approach with supportive services to employ job seekers with obstacles to employment. Using temporary and temp-to-hire placements, ASOs supply employers with reliable, well-matched workers and empower individuals to succeed in the workplace and become more financially stable.

IMPACT

- In 2013, Alliance members placed 20,000 job seekers in competitive employment.
- ASO workers earn an average wage of \$10.18 per hour.
- 58% of ASOs name criminal history, TANF dependency, and risk of homelessness as top characteristics of job seekers served.

GENESYS WORKS

FOUNDED	2002
HEADQUARTERS	HOUSTON, TX
LOCATIONS	CA; IL; MN; TX

Changing the life trajectory of low-income high school students by engaging them in meaningful year-long, senior-year internships

Genesys Works enables economically disadvantaged high school students to enter the economic mainstream by providing them with the knowledge and work experience required to succeed as professionals. The organization trains high school students to perform services such as information technology, accounting, or engineering drafting and pairs them with work experience in major corporations. This partnership gives students skilled employment opportunities, while providing companies with a high-quality and cost-effective workforce.

IMPACT

- 82% of Genesys Works' students successfully finish an intensive 8-week training over the summer and are placed in year-long corporate internships. Of those students, 90% complete their internships and enroll in two- or four-year colleges, compared to 20 to 35% of their peers.
- Over 80% of all Genesys Works alumni are actively enrolled in college or have completed their degrees.
- 94% of Genesys Works' corporate partners stay engaged in the program year after year.
- The organization has grown at a compounded annual growth rate of 44% over the last ten years.

NEW SECTOR ALLIANCE

FOUNDED	2001
HEADQUARTERS	BOSTON, MA
LOCATIONS	CA; IL; MA; MN

Strengthening the social sector by enriching its talent pipeline

New Sector Alliance is a leadership development organization that builds the skills, commitment, and experiences emerging leaders need to achieve and grow their impact in education, health services, workforce development, poverty alleviation, and beyond. Through summer- and year-long fellowships, emerging leaders provide meaningful support to nonprofit organizations, helping them build capacity to serve communities today; meanwhile, Fellows engage in intensive professional development activities that strengthen their career success and long-term opportunities, while building their professional networks. New Sector leverages tools and talent from a network of academic institutions, corporations, and nonprofits, who together offer thousands of hours of in-kind support to Fellows by serving as Supervisors, Mentors, and Trainers.

IMPACT

- 96% of New Sector alumni say the training they received at New Sector is transferable to their current work.
- More than 83% of alumni work or volunteer in the social sector.
- 100% of Fellows make a meaningful, positive impact at their placement sites.

OPPORTUNITY NATION

FOUNDED	2011
HEADQUARTERS	BOSTON, MA
LOCATIONS	NATIONAL

Advancing a shared plan to restore opportunity

Opportunity Nation is a bipartisan, cross-sector national campaign made up of more than 300 nonprofits, businesses, educational institutions, faith-based organizations, community organizations, and individuals all working together to expand economic mobility and close the opportunity gap in America. Collectively, Opportunity Nation partners support, engage, and reach more than 100 million Americans in every corner of the country. Additionally, Opportunity Nation worked with its diverse, cross-sector coalition — including employers, educational institutions, nonprofits and philanthropies, policymakers and young Americans — to release a shared call to action to tackle the U.S. youth employment crisis. We Got This focuses on how our country hires, trains, mentors, graduates, and revives young adults.

IMPACT

- Opportunity Nation created a first-of-its-kind tool, the *Opportunity Index*, which has sparked research, national awareness, and grassroots activism.
- In 2014, Opportunity Nation advocated for the passage of the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act*, the bipartisan and bicameral reauthorization of the *Workforce Investment Act*.
- Opportunity Nation has hosted three national summits focused on driving the national dialogue on economic mobility and income inequality by directing attention to cross-sector solutions grounded in data. At the 2015 National Opportunity Summit, Opportunity Nation released an updated version of its cross-sector and bipartisan call to action, *We Got This*.

PUBLIC ALLIES

FOUNDED	1992
HEADQUARTERS	MILWAUKEE, WI
LOCATIONS	AZ; CA; CT; DC; DE; FL; IA; IL; IN; MD; MI; MN; NC; NM; NY; OH; PA; TX; WI

Preparing a new generation of diverse, young leaders to work for community and social change through careers in nonprofit and public service

Public Allies aims to change both the face and the practice of leadership by cultivating talented, diverse, “home-grown” leaders from underrepresented backgrounds. Cognizant of the connection between leadership development and community development, the majority of the program’s participants — or “Allies” — are from the communities, and often the very neighborhoods, in which they serve. A national movement operated in collaboration with hundreds of nonprofit organizations in 23 communities nationwide, Public Allies has launched nearly 6,000 careers in public service. Its signature AmeriCorps program combines a 10-month nonprofit apprenticeship with a community-centered approach to leadership development that emphasizes the practice of five core values that invigorate public life: collaboration, diversity and inclusion, asset-based change, continuous learning, and integrity and accountability.

IMPACT

- 87% of alumni continue to work in the public service sector and their levels of volunteer, civic, and political activity are more than double that of their age cohort.
- 90% of participants who were disconnected from work and school when they entered Public Allies are either employed or in college within a year of completing the program.
- More than 95% of nonprofits report that Public Allies participants have met or exceeded their service goals.

REDF

FOUNDED	1997
HEADQUARTERS	SAN FRANCISCO, CA
LOCATIONS	CA; OR

Creating jobs and employment opportunities for people facing the greatest barriers to work

REDF, a California-based nonprofit, has led the pioneering effort to create jobs and employment opportunities for people facing the greatest barriers to work, such as young people who have dropped out of school, people who have been in prison or homeless, and those who live with mental health disabilities. Believing the opportunity to work should be available to everyone, REDF invests in and builds the capacity of a carefully selected portfolio of social enterprises, mission-driven businesses focused on hiring and assisting people who face barriers to work. As a result, REDF has helped thousands of people in California get jobs. Now REDF is taking best practices learned from nearly two decades of experience to grow its impact nationally and put hundreds of thousands of people to work.

IMPACT

- A 2015 *Mathematica Jobs Study* found that on average, monthly income increased by 268% in the year after a worker began the social enterprise job, and income from government benefits decreased by 65%.
- One year after seeking employment in a social enterprise, those employed had a 19% higher employment rate than those who were not hired and only received job readiness and search services.
- 67% of those employed at a social enterprise were still working six months later, and housing stability tripled, with employees living in a home or apartment throughout the year.
- Every dollar a social enterprise spends has a \$2.23 return on investment to society.

SERVICENATION

FOUNDED	2008
HEADQUARTERS	WASHINGTON, DC
LOCATIONS	NATIONAL

Building a grassroots movement to make a year of national service a way of life

ServiceNation's vision is a future where young Americans across the country turn to each other and ask, "Where will your service year be?" This idea will transform our nation by tackling pressing problems in communities, uniting Americans in common purpose, and building the next generation of civic leaders. ServiceNation has built a movement — now over 140,000 members and a coalition of over 550 organizations — to change culture and influence politics so that a service year becomes a common opportunity and expectation in America.

IMPACT

- The recently launched *Serve a Year Campaign* will bring together some of the biggest cultural influencers in our country, from celebrities to television shows to viral video creators, to inspire millions of young people to serve a year in their communities through programs like AmeriCorps. The launch included a national announcement of the campaign on Jimmy Kimmel Live! — now seen by over 2.5 million people on ABC and online. In total, pictures and videos shared about and from the event had over 32 million impressions that week.
- The ServiceNation Coalition — a cohort of local organizations working to expand opportunities for all Americans to serve — includes over 550 organizations in all 50 states. These organizations helped engage and educate elected officials over 250 times in 2014.
- In the states where ServiceNation has full-time staff, 93% of the Members of Congress with whom ServiceNation has engaged have substantively increased their support for and/or interest in national service.

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE ALLIANCE

FOUNDED	1998
HEADQUARTERS	NASHVILLE, TN
LOCATIONS	CA; CO; FL; GA; IL; MD; MI; MN; NY; OH; TX; WI

Championing social enterprise in the United States

Since its inception as The National Gathering for Social Entrepreneurs in 1998, the Social Enterprise Alliance (SEA) has been a champion and key catalyst for the development of the social enterprise sector in the United States. Its vision is for social enterprise to reach its potential as a force for effective, efficient, and sustainable social impact. SEA empowers social enterprises with the tools and resources they need to succeed and works to foster an ecosystem in which social enterprise grows and thrives. Social enterprises are organizations that use commercial approaches to address important societal needs that are insufficiently met by traditional private, public, and social sector efforts. Social enterprises are often structured as nonprofits but increasingly use for-profit and emerging hybrid organizational forms as well. SEA is the voice for social enterprise in the United States, with over 1,000 members and 17 chapters in 16 states.

IMPACT

- SEA's national conference is now in its 15th year and continues to serve as the primary convening of social enterprises and other ecosystem partners in the field each year.
- SEA's chapter system fosters community, collaboration, and local ecosystem development in 17 regional metropolitan areas across the United States.
- SEA's newsletter and social networks spread social enterprise news and information to over 22,000 subscribers, fans, and followers.

THE CORPS NETWORK

FOUNDED	1985
HEADQUARTERS	WASHINGTON, DC
LOCATIONS	NATIONAL

Strengthening America through service and conservation

The Corps Network is the national membership organization of America's Service and Conservation Corps. Corps are comprehensive youth development programs that provide participants with job training, academic programming, leadership skills, and additional support services tied to a strategy of service projects that improve communities and the environment. The Corps Network advocates for and promotes Corps, which are widely recognized as a successful strategy for addressing critical youth development, community, and environmental needs. Corps enroll 20,000 youth and veterans annually from age 16-25 in all 50 states and DC and organize an additional 290,000 volunteers who provide an estimated value of \$14 million to their communities through service.

IMPACT

- 100% of those served reported learning academic and professional skills while 93% reported positive attitudinal and behavioral changes across time.
- Court-involved youth served by a Corps demonstrate only a 10% recidivism rate, with an 80% placement rate in a job and/or post-secondary education or training.
- 75% of post-secondary Success Strategy students persisted in their studies through the difficult first year of college or post-secondary training.

THE MISSION CONTINUES

FOUNDED 2007

HEADQUARTERS ST. LOUIS, MO

LOCATIONS AZ; CA; CO; DC; FL; GA; IL; IN; MA; MD; MI; MN; MO; NC; NJ; NY; OH; PA; TN; TX; VA; WA

Empowering veterans to keep serving and succeeding

The Mission Continues harnesses the innate spirit of service embodied by veterans in order to strengthen their communities and help them navigate the challenges of reintegration to civilian life. The Mission Continues' two signature programs, The Mission Continues' Fellowship and The Mission Continues' Service Platoons, partner veterans with nonprofits and community organizations to tackle some of the most pressing challenges facing their communities. Through its unique model, The Mission Continues provides reciprocal benefits to both the veterans and their communities. Veterans develop new skills and networks that will help them successfully reintegrate to civilian life while their communities grow stronger as a result.

IMPACT

- After the Fellowship program, 93% of participants were employed full-time, enrolled in school full-time, or disabled/retired and engaged in a continuing role of service.
- 27% of participants screened positive for depression at the beginning of the Fellowship program, while only 13% did so after completing the program.
- 73% of Platoon Members agree that being a Platoon Member makes them feel like part of a team.

TWIN CITIES RISE!

FOUNDED 1993

HEADQUARTERS MINNEAPOLIS, MN

LOCATIONS MN

Providing employers with skilled workers by training under- and unemployed adults for skilled jobs that pay a living wage

Twin Cities RISE! (TCR!) is an outcomes-driven organization that strives to break the cycle of generational poverty by providing long-term job training designed for those facing the most barriers to self-sufficiency. The mission of Twin Cities RISE! is to provide employers with skilled workers — primarily men from communities of color in the Twin Cities area — by training under- and unemployed adults for skilled jobs that pay a living wage of at least \$20,000 annually. Through a pay-for-performance contract with the State of Minnesota and private funders, TCR! receives funding only upon realization of long-term, successful outcomes.

IMPACT

- TCR! graduates placed into living wage jobs achieved average incomes of \$26,489 per year in 2014, up from \$4,147 at program start, an increase of over 500%.
- 82% of TCR! graduates remain in their job in the first year, and 71% remain in the second year.
- Ex-offenders who graduate from TCR! have a recidivism rate of just 16% compared to 61% statewide.

YEAR UP

FOUNDED 2000

HEADQUARTERS BOSTON, MA

LOCATIONS CA; CT; DC; FL; MO; NY; SC; WV

Empowering urban talent to reach their potential

Year Up's mission is to close the Opportunity Divide by providing urban young adults with the skills, experience, and support that will empower them to reach their potential through professional careers and higher education. Year Up uses a high support, high expectation model that combines marketable job skills, stipends, internships, and college credits. It offers career training to low-income young adults (ages 18-24) and with over 250 corporate partners, provides them the resources and experiences they need to enter full-time jobs and/or higher education. Its holistic approach combines a focus on students' professional and personal development and employers' demand for talent, placing students on a viable path to economic self-sufficiency.

IMPACT

- Year Up ensures that a minimum of 75% of its students graduate.
- 85% of all Year Up graduates are working or in school full-time within four months of graduation. Those who are working earn an average wage of \$16 per hour (\$32,000 per year for salaried employees).
- Year Up maintains a corporate partner satisfaction rate of at least 90%.

YOUTHBUILD USA

FOUNDED	1990
HEADQUARTERS	SOMERVILLE, MA
LOCATIONS	AK; AL; AZ; CA; CO; CT; DE; FL; GA; HI; IA; ID; IL; IN; KY; LA; MA; MD; ME; MI; MN; MO; MS; MT; NC; NE; NH; NJ; NM; NV; NY; OH; OK; OR; PA; RI; SC; TN; TX; UT; VA; VT; WA; WI; WV

Unleashing the intelligence and positive energy of low-income young people to rebuild their communities and their lives

YouthBuild engages young adults in working toward their high school credentials while learning job skills by building affordable housing and preparing for postsecondary education and career success. In 260 local YouthBuild programs across the country, 140,000 young people have built 30,000 units of affordable housing. Participants spend 10 months in the program, dividing their time between the classroom and the construction site. Many earn AmeriCorps Education Awards in return for their service. YouthBuild programs are managed by local nonprofits and government agencies and primary funding for local programs comes from the US Department of Labor under the federal YouthBuild program, recently reauthorized in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014. YouthBuild USA, Inc. — the international nonprofit organization that orchestrates high quality replication of the YouthBuild program in the United States and internationally — provides technical assistance and training to the global YouthBuild network.

IMPACT

- 77% of enrollees obtained their high school equivalency credentials, high school diplomas, and/or industry-recognized credentials.
- 61% of enrollees went on to postsecondary education or jobs.
- 72% of those placed retained their placement for at least six months.
- Recidivism rates within one year of enrollment for all court-involved YouthBuild students average 9%.



FIRST PLACE FOR YOUTH

FOUNDED 1998

HEADQUARTERS OAKLAND, CA

LOCATIONS CA

Supporting foster kids as they learn to support themselves

First Place for Youth is dedicated to providing youth ages 16 to 24 who are exiting the foster care system with the necessary supportive services that will lead to self-sufficiency and to helping them avoid negative social outcomes such as incarceration and homelessness. Through its innovative mix of permanent housing, employment and academic enrichment services, counseling, and community education, First Place helps youth gain the skills necessary to live confidently on their own. First Place challenges the existing foster care system by building healthy self-reliance, developing strong interpersonal relationships, and fostering a sense of community.

IMPACT

- 80% of participants earn a high school diploma or GED, and 91% of those eligible attend college.
- 86% of participants obtain employment, while 83% retain safe, stable housing.
- 98% maintain custody of their own children, thereby breaking the intergenerational cycle of foster care.

ROCA

FOUNDED 1988

HEADQUARTERS CHELSEA, MA

LOCATIONS MA

Disrupting the cycle of incarceration and poverty by helping young people transform their lives

Roca is a nationally acclaimed organization helping disengaged, disenfranchised young people break out of the cycle of violence, poverty, and perpetual incarceration. Roca's Intervention Model pushes young people to identify, confront, and overcome destructive behaviors and learn the skills needed to reengage and succeed in society, education, and the economy. The model includes three distinct phases and spans four years of intensive outreach, programming, and retention and sustainability efforts. Roca's effective model and dedication to rigorous outcomes contributed to its successful application for the Social Innovation Financing Project in Massachusetts to address recidivism rates among young men that age out of the state juvenile justice system. In partnership with Third Sector Capital Partners as the lead intermediary, Roca was awarded the contract, which aims to create better social and fiscal outcomes for the state, with potential savings (after reimbursement payments for successful outcomes) between \$9.4 and \$23.4 million.

IMPACT

- Roca served 469 very high-risk young men in 2014 and retained 80% of them throughout the year.
- Of those who completed the two-year, intensive component of the model, 92% had no new arrests and 98% had no new technical violations.
- 89% of those who completed the model had jobs, with 89% of them retaining employment for 90 days and 85% retaining employment for 180 days.

YOUTH VILLAGES, INC.

FOUNDED 1986

HEADQUARTERS MEMPHIS, TN

LOCATIONS AL; FL; GA; IN; MA; MS; NC; NH; OK; OR; TN; VA

Helping children and families live successfully

Youth Villages is a leading private provider helping children with serious emotional and behavioral issues and their families. Youth Villages provides an innovative continuum of programs and services designed to help children overcome their challenges and live successfully at home and in the community. In working with more than 115,000 children and their families for nearly 30 years, Youth Villages has recorded success rates of more than 80% — a rate nearly double that of traditional child welfare services — and services are provided at one-fourth to one-third of the traditional cost.

IMPACT

- Two years post-discharge, 82% of youth are living at home or with family, and 90% of parents report satisfaction with Youth Villages' services.
- 81% of youth report no trouble with the law two years after their discharge.
- 85% of youth are in school, have graduated from high school, or are in GED classes two years after discharge, and 87% report adequate school performance, with little to no trouble with teachers or homework.

ENTERPRISE COMMUNITY PARTNERS

FOUNDED 1982

HEADQUARTERS COLUMBIA, MD

LOCATIONS NATIONAL

Creating opportunity for low- and moderate-income people through affordable housing in diverse, thriving communities

Since 1982 Enterprise Community Partners has created affordable housing in communities that link residents to opportunities for success. Enterprise believes that access to safe, healthy, and affordable homes is critical to solving problems facing low-income communities. For housing to truly be a springboard to a better life, it must be located near jobs, quality schools, health services, transit, and other opportunities. Enterprise is a recognized leader in socially driven capital investment, pioneering new financial tools like the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit that bring public and private dollars to neighborhoods that have long suffered from underinvestment and neglect. With investments in all 50 states and experts in ten major cities across the U.S., Enterprise is working with local partners to test and scale new solutions to some of the most pressing housing and economic problems facing low-income communities. Enterprise also has a strong presence in Washington, D.C., and city halls across the country, where it works to translate proven solutions into changes to public policy.

IMPACT

- Since 1982, Enterprise has raised and invested more than \$18 billion to build or preserve nearly 340,000 affordable homes, creating strong communities and more than half a million jobs.
- 22 states and several cities across the country have adopted Enterprise's Green Communities Criteria, a leading framework for energy-efficient and resilient building practices, as the local standard for affordable housing construction and rehabilitation projects.

CSH (CORPORATION FOR SUPPORTIVE HOUSING)

FOUNDED 1991

HEADQUARTERS NEW YORK, NY

LOCATIONS NATIONAL

Advancing solutions that use housing to improve the lives of the most vulnerable people, maximize public resources, and build healthy communities

CSH (Corporation for Supportive Housing) harnesses the full power of supportive housing to improve lives and communities by partnering with local organizations to create and expand affordable and service-supported housing for the highest-need individuals and families in our society. At the forefront of the supportive housing field, CSH finances the creation of affordable rental apartments, provides expertise to providers, and advocates for comprehensive, evidence-based solutions at the local, state, and federal levels, reducing costs to the public while simultaneously improving outcomes for the neediest in our society. CSH engages in rigorous evaluations of its practices and is constantly developing new programs to reveal which interventions make supportive housing work better for more people. This research allows CSH to lead industry best practices in ways that encourage wider use of quality supportive housing through a range of design options and financing structures.

IMPACT

- CSH has made close to \$500 million in loans and grants.
- In the past 5 years alone, CSH has helped communities create 70,000 units of supportive housing through federal public policy reform and advocacy efforts. Its loans and project assistance helped create another 83,000 housing units.
- CSH is working in over 30 states across three regions of the country and has presented nearly 850 training at events in the past three years.

COMPASS WORKING CAPITAL

FOUNDED 2005

HEADQUARTERS BOSTON, MA

LOCATIONS MA

Empowering families to build savings and financial capabilities as a pathway out of poverty

Compass Working Capital is a leading provider of financial services for working, low-income families. With the recognition that most poor Americans live one emergency away from a financial crisis, Compass guides families through the process of building savings and assets. Compass' dedicated team of financial coaches provides the tools necessary for low-income families to construct a pathway out of poverty, and through the provision of high-quality financial products and services, Compass' coaches offer resources normally reserved for higher-income individuals. Compass continuously revises its services to reflect the needs of those it serves, but all of its programs include financial education workshops, financial coaching, and savings incentives. By combining these three elements, Compass Working Capital fosters financial literacy and creates the conditions for a successful path out of poverty.

IMPACT

- 86% of graduates from Compass' flagship Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program have transitioned out of subsidized housing compared to 25.5% of graduates from traditional FSS programs operated by housing authorities.
- 28.6% of Compass FSS program graduates have become homeowners compared to 11% of graduates from traditional FSS programs.
- 83% of families enrolled in Compass' FSS built savings while 72% increased their credit score, 65% increased their income, and 52% decreased their debt.

FAMILY INDEPENDENCE INITIATIVE

FOUNDED

2001

HEADQUARTERS

OAKLAND, CA

LOCATIONS

CA; LA; MA; MI; NM

Inspiring America to see the power and potential of low-income families, enabling these families to come together and access the resources they need to thrive, and building momentum to transform the stereotypes, practices, and policies that undermine low-income families' efforts to succeed

Since 2001, Family Independence Initiative (FII) has innovated and tested new approaches to economic and social mobility that demonstrate that low-income families have the initiative and capacity to move themselves out of poverty. Rather than providing top-down direction, FII recognizes the self-determination of low-income families and partners with them to create an environment where they can thrive. Their progress positions them as role models for and organizers of the broader community, creating a ripple of change. Identifying strengths and gaps in systems that support (or undermine) families' progress, FII ultimately aims to stimulate social innovation throughout the country, inspiring products, practices, and policies that will greatly accelerate the pace of social and economic mobility.

IMPACT

- During their engagement with FII, on average, families increased their savings by 120% and their earnings by 24%.
- 30% of FII families start a small business.
- 70% of the children in FII families improve grades or school attendance.
- 75% of families report improvements in their health.

LIFT

FOUNDED

1998

HEADQUARTERS

WASHINGTON, DC

LOCATIONS

CA; DC; IL; MA; NY; PA

Combating poverty and expanding opportunity for all people in the United State

Operating a national network of resource centers, LIFT engages hundreds of volunteers (Advocates) to work one-on-one with low-income community members (Members). Together, they locate resources that enable Members to find employment, secure safe and stable housing, make ends meet through tax credits and public benefits, and obtain quality referrals for services like healthcare and childcare. As Members make progress on the path to opportunity, LIFT Advocates are empowered and transformed as they gain a better understanding of the realities of poverty and the actions necessary to change the systems and policies that stifle social mobility. At a time when more people are suffering and fewer services are available to them, LIFT is committed to working with those most in need not only to achieve stability but also to see their full potential realized.

IMPACT

- Last year, LIFT helped Members obtain \$7 million in wages.
- LIFT worked with Members to secure a value of \$1.4 million in public benefits and health insurance in 2014.
- LIFT Members achieved over 2,500 essential steps towards achieving their goals last year, such as writing a résumé and submitting job applications.



GREENLIGHT FUND

FOUNDED	2003
HEADQUARTERS	BOSTON, MA
LOCATIONS	NATIONAL

Bringing innovative and successful organizations to local communities

The GreenLight Fund identifies innovative, results-oriented nonprofits in cities across the country and supports their successful expansion into the local community. GreenLight selects organizations with great potential to make a significant impact on priority local issues and supports these organizations to be accountable, effective, and sustainable in their early years in order to grow successfully over time. Although great ideas and innovative programs that generate dramatic results are developed across the country, communities often do not hear about them, as social entrepreneurs face daunting barriers to replicating their innovations in new locations. The GreenLight Fund is a community-based, community-focused solution dedicated to identifying unmet local needs, finding and replicating innovations that can meet these needs, and adapting and supporting these programs so they can achieve early impact and long-term sustainability.

IMPACT

- Since 2004, GreenLight has supported the expansion of 14 organizations into its three communities.
- This past year, these organizations reached over 40,000 children, youth, and families, employed 80 staff members, and engaged over 70 board members.
- The organizations supported by GreenLight are growing at an annual rate of 20%-25% in terms of the number of children, youth, and families reached and their budgets.

CONNECTICUT CENTER FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION INC.

FOUNDED	2013
HEADQUARTERS	NEW HAVEN, CT
LOCATIONS	CT

Harnessing innovative brilliance for social good

The Connecticut Center for Social Innovation (CCSI) is a nonprofit focused on the development and financing of outcomes-based models for social service distribution. CCSI collaborates with diverse actors from the public and private sectors, to formulate novel social service innovations that promise to restore the American dream. CCSI goes beyond merely identifying new ways to distribute social services; it strives to develop funding models that invite private capital investment in the delivery of these self-sustaining, cutting-edge interventions. In its work to help families across the nation, CCSI targets six areas: poverty reduction, early childhood interventions, workforce initiatives, criminal justice reform, health care, and homelessness.

IMPACT

- CCSI staff organizes both local and statewide informational conferences designed to educate governments, legislators, and nonprofit organizations about new and innovative financing methods, including social impact bonds, pay for performance contracting, and the development of financial impact analyses.
- CCSI is currently assisting the City of New Haven in designing a major, data-based criminal justice reentry program that will provide services to justice-involved citizens from the time of sentencing to three years after release.
- CCSI's affiliate, One Million Americans, publishes the national online newsletter Reentry Central, which is circulated weekly to more than 9,000 criminal justice professionals nationwide and which provides subscribers with the largest non-governmental database on reentry in the United States.

INVEST IN OUTCOMES

FOUNDED	2010
HEADQUARTERS	MINNEAPOLIS, MN
LOCATIONS	MN

Investing in effective solutions to scale impact

Invest in Outcomes was developed to pilot and evaluate the Human Capital Performance Bond (HUCAP), a form of impact investing where payments for services are based on performance and bonds are used as the main form of capital to finance those services. HUCAPs are state AA "annual appropriation" bonds that fund high-performing human services and can be purchased by private investors and financial institutions seeking a market rate of return or by social investors who support organizations that demonstrate positive societal impact. The initial pilot in Minnesota is intended to include three diverse areas of state spending to demonstrate its applicability across the state budget. If successful, it would provide incremental investment for high performing social service providers and also improve the effectiveness and efficiency of social service spending. HUCAPs have the potential to significantly expand nonprofit's access to capital while delivering more impactful social services.

IMPACT

- The HUCAP is currently being piloted in the state of Minnesota in two areas — employment services for people released from prison, and community housing for the disabled. The employment services model is based on an evaluated program, which shows \$2.20 of return to the state for every \$1 spent on services.

ROOT CAUSE

FOUNDED

1985

HEADQUARTERS

WASHINGTON, DC

LOCATIONS

NATIONAL

Working collaboratively with nonprofits, government agencies, and funders to accelerate their performance and realize tangible and sustainable results

Root Cause is a nonprofit consulting and research firm that defines, catalyzes, and supports high performance. Root Cause partners with nonprofit, philanthropic, and government leaders to strengthen their organizations and programs to make the best use of limited resources and maximize progress in health, education, and employment. Root Cause is driven by the belief that high-performing organizations should make decisions based on the best available data and evidence of what works to impact millions of lives. Root Cause pursues its work through three areas: Champion — advocate and market the practice of high performance using data and evidence of what works; Knowledge — build and organize standards, tools, and resources to improve performance; and Service — work in partnership with leaders to develop and implement strategies to assess and improve performance.

IMPACT

- Since 2003, Root Cause has improved the performance of more than 200 nonprofits, foundations, and government agencies working across a wide range of areas including economic empowerment, education and youth development, and health and wellbeing.

SOCIAL FINANCE US

FOUNDED

2011

HEADQUARTERS

BOSTON, MA

LOCATIONS

NATIONAL

Mobilizing capital to drive social progress

Social Finance US creates partnerships between the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to drive resources toward effective social programs on issues ranging from poverty and crime to education, health, and workforce development. As a market-intermediary, Social Finance structures and manages these partnerships in order to unlock capital to build an outcomes-focused social sector. By developing Pay for Success (PFS) projects, also known as Social Impact Bonds (SIBs), Social Finance helps drive government resources toward better, more effective programs, while strengthening the social impact investing space through the introduction of private capital to fund social outcomes.

IMPACT

- Social Finance helped launch the first state-led SIB in the nation, the New York State Reentry and Employment SIB, a \$13.5 million project to reduce recidivism and increase employment by expanding the Center for Employment Opportunities' comprehensive employment services to 2,000 formerly incarcerated individuals in New York City and Rochester.
- Social Finance is developing America's first PFS initiative centered on positive youth development, using PFS to expand the Wyman Center's Teen Outreach Program to empower teens to make healthy choices, develop strong communities, and lead successful lives.
- Social Finance oversees a demonstration project in Fresno, CA, that is evaluating the social and economic value of asthma management for low-income children.

THIRD SECTOR CAPITAL PARTNERS, INC.

FOUNDED

2011

HEADQUARTERS

BOSTON, MA

LOCATIONS

CA; CT; IL; MA; NV; NY; OH; OR; TX; UT; VA; WA

Accelerating America's transition to a performance-driven social sector

Third Sector is a nonprofit advisory firm whose mission is to accelerate America's transition to a performance-driven social sector. In order to realize this mission, Third Sector is leading the development of Pay for Success projects by serving as a trusted advisor to governments, high-performing nonprofits, and funders. Pay for Success measurably improves the lives of people in need by rewriting the book on how governments contract social services and by driving resources toward programs that work.

IMPACT

- Third Sector led the project construction and financing for Massachusetts' \$28 million Juvenile Justice Pay for Success initiative, the largest to date in the nation.
- Third Sector led Cuyahoga County, OH, in the feasibility and project construction for the first county-level PFS project and the first PFS project in the combined areas of homelessness and child welfare.
- In 2014, Third Sector received \$1.9 million from the federal Social Innovation Fund to help strengthen the pipeline of state and local governments and service providers prepared to implement Pay for Success projects.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

MOVING AMERICA FORWARD

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

MOVING AMERICA FORWARD is designed to start a conversation that will shape the next era in innovative, evidence-based policymaking. But the dialogue sparked by this briefing book would not have been possible without the collective brainpower, creativity, and commitment of the talented social entrepreneurs and thought leaders that make up the America Forward network.

Social entrepreneurs engage in results-driven innovation and relentlessly pursue the goal of creating widespread social impact. They are often driven by an “entrepreneurial insight” with the potential to transform an entire field and create lasting positive change. Social entrepreneurs have much to teach us about what it takes to develop sustainable, replicable, effective organizations that deliver programs with consistent impact in tackling some of our nation’s most challenging problems. Throughout the writing of this book, our social entrepreneur community inspired us. They challenged us. And we believe their ideas, ingenuity, and dedication can truly lead the way to unlocking America’s potential.

Many people played a part in the creation of this briefing book and we are immensely grateful for their input as idea-generators, readers, editors, advisors, and contributors. Moving America Forward would not have been possible without the dedicated efforts of the entire America Forward team at New Profit, including Lexi Barrett, Jessica Crawford, Elissa Gathman, Kira Mikityanskaya, and Nicole Truhe — and our America Forward advisors, including Lee Foley, Juleanna Glover, Danica Petroschius, Shirley Sagawa, and Rich Stombres. Special thanks go to our senior policy adviser Shirley Sagawa. With incredible speed and deftness, Shirley synthesized multiple perspectives and complex policy ideas into a cohesive and powerful text. Thanks also go to the America Forward team for their tireless support researching, writing, and editing Moving America Forward.

The belief that there are real, powerful ways to make our world a better place, and the conviction that we can galvanize resources and unite people across sectors to transform that belief into reality, are the cornerstone of this project and the building blocks of the daily work of New Profit. And these beliefs form the foundation of the life work of New Profit’s founder Vanessa Kirsch, whose inspiring vision helped catalyze the social innovation and venture philanthropy sectors, create America Forward, and launch the America Forward Coalition.

We ask readers to accept that any errors, omissions, or misrepresentations contained in Moving America Forward are solely the responsibility of the America Forward team and not that of our thought partners and contributors.



DEBORAH SMOLOVER

Executive Director, America Forward
Managing Partner, New Profit

AMERICA FORWARD AT NEW PROFIT

ABOUT

America Forward is a nonpartisan policy initiative of **New Profit**, a national nonprofit venture philanthropy fund. New Profit's mission is to break down the barriers standing between people and opportunity in America. To do so, New Profit is working to transform the way America educates its children, propels people towards social and financial stability, and creates healthy communities. New Profit works hand-in-hand with visionary entrepreneurs and philanthropists, along with cross-sector and community-based partners to drive large-scale change through three integrated activities: investing unrestricted capital and strategic support to help great leaders scale the impact of high-impact organizations through the New Profit Innovation Fund and Focus Funds; changing public policy to drive better social outcomes and more efficient use of resources through America Forward; and building communities of learning and action around innovative new approaches to change through the *Gathering of Leaders* and other activities.

NEWPROFIT

 America
FORWARD



INNOVATORS LEAD THE WAY TO
UNLOCKING AMERICA'S POTENTIAL

MOVING AMERICA FORWARD



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