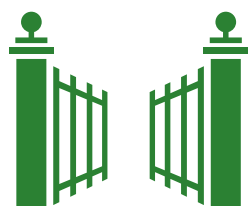




# 20

## YEARS OF RIPPLES

2019–2020 Annual Report



**COLLEGE  
POSSIBLE™**



**AmeriCorps**

College Possible is proudly  
supported by AmeriCorps

“Each time a person stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, they send forth a tiny **RIPPLE OF HOPE**, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.”

— Robert F. Kennedy

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Dear College Possible community,

Twenty years ago, College Possible began with just 35 students at two high schools. Today, we reach nearly 23,000 students across seven locations and partner colleges have embedded our programming on their campuses across the country. Our budget has grown from just a few thousand dollars to more than \$25 million. We have generated some of the best program results in the country for our students, and we are now widely considered among the largest and best college access and success organizations in the nation.

Thanks to the inspiring work of our students, coaches and staff, we have seen thousands of students reach their ultimate goal of a college degree. A 2019 survey of student alumni found College Possible graduates to be thriving. Today we see the ripples our graduates have made, they are employed, earning middle-class or higher incomes, and are committed and engaged citizens.

However, challenges remain. The 2019-2020 school year turned out very differently than any of us could have imagined. Students, already navigating a complex higher education system, faced even more unexpected challenges. Changing learning environments, lost income and housing and limited access to technology due to COVID-19 made the end of the school year a difficult time for many students, but College Possible was there to support them through it all.

Innovative programming, adapted from our tech-connected Navigate and CollegePoint programs,

allowed us to quickly pivot to serve students in a virtual setting. From helping students select the school that is right for them — academically, financially and socially — to providing support in an increasingly digital learning environment, our coaches were prepared to help students meet changes head-on. Our teams also found new ways to celebrate students’ achievements, through websites like Champions for College Completion in Philadelphia and Soar! 2020 in Minnesota.

We approach the coming year with a clear sense of purpose. The racial injustices, social unrest and economic uncertainty of the past year have had a profound effect on our communities, students and staff. It has laid bare the challenges that remain, but also opened up the opportunity for honest conversations and real change. Our work is more important than ever, as we strive to open doors so that more students can find educational and economic success.

The transformative effect of a college degree cannot be denied. Each time a College Possible student earns their degree, they create ripples of hope. Ripples that can raise families up from poverty and create stronger communities across the country. For the last 20 years, College Possible has worked toward a day when a student’s future is determined solely by their talent, motivation and effort, not their family income.

Thanks to your financial support and advocacy as we continue this work for the next 20 years.



*C.R.*

Craig Robinson  
President, College Possible

*J.R. McCorkell*

Jim McCorkell  
Founder and Senior Advisor





“There are countless talented, motivated students out there who are not aware of their college options, not encouraged to pursue them, not supported in their pursuit. College Possible has been changing that, opening doors and supporting talented students in their academic pursuits and college search process.”

Bart and Kim Reed, Founding Donors

## Celebrating 20 Years of Impact

For 20 years, College Possible has supported thousands of students in their journeys to and through college. Multiple evaluations, including a Harvard University randomized control trial, demonstrate that College Possible students are more likely to go to college and three times more likely to earn a college degree than their peers from low-income backgrounds.

What began as an idea from founder Jim McCorkell, himself a first-generation college student, has grown to a nationally recognized organization with offices in seven states and students in more than 700 high schools and colleges across the country.

Last year, a first-ever survey of College Possible alumni, five and 10 years out of college, showed the impact and change our program has had on their lives. Five-year graduates reported a median individual income of \$40-59,999 and over a third of 10-year

graduates have family incomes of \$100,000 or more. Graduates have a 98% employment rate and report high rates of civic and philanthropic engagement. They also attribute a large portion of their success to the assistance provided by College Possible and their near-peer coaches.

### These results reaffirm our mission.

As we move forward into our next 20 years, we are committed to closing the degree divide and helping students reach their potential. As a data-driven organization, results will guide the ways we help students pursue their college degrees and achieve lives of choice and opportunity.

We are indebted to our donors who share our vision that students should go as far as their talent and motivation takes them. Many of our original donors still support us today.

## Our Mission

Making college admission and success possible for students from low-income backgrounds through an intensive curriculum of coaching and support.

## Our Vision

We envision a day when a student's future is determined solely by their talent, motivation and effort.

## Our Commitment

We are committed to providing the tools, strategies and support that students from low-income backgrounds need to navigate and overcome systemic barriers to college graduation.



**22,909**  
Students Served  
in 2019-2020



## NATIONAL LEADERSHIP

**Jim McCorkell**  
Founder and CEO

**Craig Robinson**  
President

## NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## Program Impact

**22,909** students served

**700+** partner high schools  
and colleges

*80 high school partners and students at 658 Colleges*

**97.6%** college admission rate

**80%** first to second year  
college persistence rate

“I can’t tell you enough about  
the “ripples” my College Possible  
experience had on my life. I am now the  
associate principal at the middle school  
in Roseville. I can truly say that I owe  
countless thanks to College Possible...”

**Becky Fisher Suttan**  
First group of Corps members 2001–2003

## Highlights

- Craig Robinson is named the first president of College Possible in July 2019.
- Bloomberg Philanthropies announces a new three-year commitment with College Possible's CollegePoint program.
- College Possible Washington was announced as our seventh location after a merger with College Access Now is completed in August 2019.
- Founder and CEO Jim McCorkell was awarded the Executive Leadership Award of Excellence by NCAN in September 2019.

## Catalyze

- New college partnerships announced with:
  - Austin Peay University
  - California State University – Stanislaus
  - Morgan State
  - Vaughn College
- One of seven organizations in 2019 to receive an investment from The Studio @ Blue Meridian to accelerate our readiness to significantly scale the reach, impact and influence of our work.

## CollegePoint

- Substantive monthly engagement increased 12% with students from the class of 2020.
- With the support of Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Summer Support team at College Possible provided additional advising to the CollegePoint class of 2020 through the summer to address enrollment challenges in response to COVID-19.

## Financial Health

For the year ended June 30, 2020

## Unrestricted Revenue &amp; Support

**\$25,402,165**

vs. FY '19 — \$22,494,161

## Expenses

**\$25,139,162**

vs. FY '19 — \$22,152,601

## Assets

Current Assets	\$9,225,037
Property & Equipment	\$1,217,816
Other Assets	\$12,879,839

**Total** **\$23,322,692**

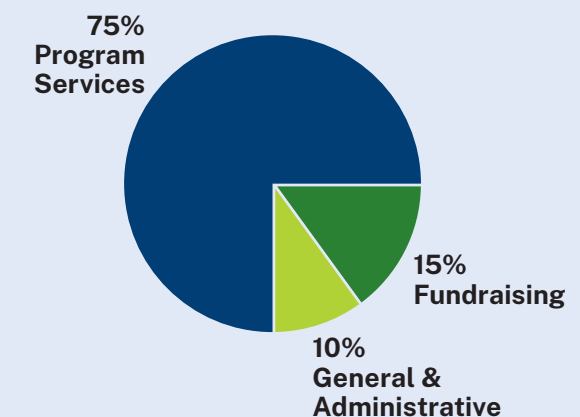
## Liabilities &amp; Net Assets

Current Liabilities*	\$5,552,374
Long-Term Liabilities*	\$4,282,891
Net Assets	\$13,487,427

**Total** **\$23,322,692**

*\*Roughly \$8 million in liabilities is deferred revenue from conditional grants we expect to recognize within the next two fiscal years.*

## Functional Expenses





## Ripples From the First Class of Graduates

As the first in her family to go to college, Lily Moua-Yang’s parents had reservations about her choice in school. Their daughter had chosen a private liberal arts college and she would be required to live on campus, since the school was in another town. But Lily’s heart was set on attending St. Olaf College after hearing about the study abroad opportunities from her College Possible coach, Chuayi.

With Chuayi’s help, Lily applied for 12 scholarships, determined to cover the cost of her dream school. Her hard work paid off and she won eight including the Children’s Defense Fund Beat the Odds Scholarship, the Optimist’s Scholarship and the Coca-Cola Scholarship. Chuayi also helped Lily talk to her parents about the opportunities that living on campus would provide.

“Having Chuayi there, being able to communicate with my parents about what it means to be a college student on campus and how it would help me grow as an individual... was definitely a huge factor in my parents accepting me going to college in Northfield.”

After graduating from St. Olaf in 2006, Lily started working in human resources and developing her skills as a professional at Target’s Corporate Headquarters. She also attended the Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota to earn her master’s degree in public policy. After interning at the Minnesota Department of Health and Human Services during her master’s program, Lily discovered that she enjoyed government policy work. She is now a management analyst for the United State

Department of Agriculture, working on domestic and international projects to assess and improve U.S. agricultural programs.

Along with her role at the Department of Agriculture, Lily and her husband run a real estate firm with the specific goal of helping first-time homebuyers through the process of buying a house. She sees many parallels between this work and the guidance she received from College Possible.

“We help a lot of first-time home buyers with understanding the challenges and the process of home ownership and building wealth through equity and investing in homes,” she explained. “Like how going to college was an obstacle and College Possible was that infrastructure there to assist people like myself, a first-generation student.”

Aside from her real estate work, Lily sees several ripples created by College Possible in her life today. One of the most significant ripples was her relationship with her mentor, David Laird, College Possible’s first Board Chair, who passed away in September 2020.

“I’m super grateful to be a part of College Possible because, if I hadn’t, I would never have had him as a mentor in my life,” she said. “I would say that the role that he played really allowed me to continue to focus on service and giving back.”



### Lily Moua-Yang

College (Admission) Possible Alumna, 2000—2002

Bachelor’s Degree, St. Olaf College

Master’s Degree, Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota

Management Analyst, United States Department of Agriculture

Licensed Realtor

## National Donors and Partners THANK YOU!

### NATIONAL MULTI-YEAR LEADERSHIP GIFTS

**Ballmer Group**  
\$20 million over 10 years

**Blue Meridian Partners**  
\$7 million over 2 years

**United States Department of Education**  
\$3 million over 5 years

**Michael & Susan Dell Foundation**  
\$1.2 million over 3 years

**AT&T**  
\$1 million over 2 years

**The Travelers Companies, Inc.**  
\$900,000 over 3 years

### CORPORATIONS AND FOUNDATIONS

**\$500,000 and above**

AT&T  
Ballmer Group  
Blue Meridian Partners

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Northwest Area Foundation  
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**Up to \$1,000**  
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AmazonSmile Foundation  
Education Credit Management Corporation  
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**\$10,000-\$25,000**

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Sara and Tom Gavin

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Michael Hood and Luisa Palacios  
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### GIFTS IN TRIBUTE

In Honor of Bob Massa  
In Honor of uConnect's Partner Institutions  
In Memory of Adell Bell  
In Memory of Dr. David N. Chase

### MATCHING GIFT COMPANIES

Aetna  
Arthur J Gallagher Foundation  
Delta Dental of Minnesota  
Ecolab Foundation  
Securian Financial  
The Travelers Companies, Inc.

### SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS

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California State University, Stanislaus  
Coe College  
Luther College  
Morgan State University  
St. Cloud State University  
University of Cincinnati  
Vaughn College of Aeronautics and Technology

**KEY:** \*National or Local Board Member    °Current Student or Program Alumni



## CHICAGO LEADERSHIP

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Executive Director

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## Highlights

- Connected students to over \$150K in Emergency aid to help them and their families during COVID-19.
- 84% of College Possible Chicago students enrolled in college last year.
- Chicago seniors earned over \$500K in private scholarships.
- One of seven nonprofits featured at Invest For Kids Conference 2019.
- Participated in EY Connect Day where students worked with professionals from EY to enhance their resumes and practice interviewing.
- Launched the College Possible Chicago AmeriCorps Alumni Group.

## Program Impact

**1,348** students served

**96.4%** college admission rate

**85.7%** first to second year college persistence rate

## A Career Path Inspired by Students

Anwen Parrot had always been resistant to the idea of becoming a lawyer. Despite a lifetime of prodding by friends and family who cited her love of reading, writing and knack of philosophical arguments as proof that she would be a natural, it never sounded like an appealing profession.

That was until she became a College Possible coach and realized that, as a lawyer, she could work to create positive change for individuals she had grown to care deeply for: her students and their families.

When Anwen graduated from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, she applied through AmeriCorps to serve with College Possible. Her role with the organization was to support and mentor 40 high school juniors as they prepared for college. Being a recent graduate herself, Anwen was close in age to her students and thus able to relate, often spending break time in session gossiping about pop culture, sharing music they loved and talking through the struggles that high school students often face — relationship or family problems. “I’m not so far removed from where they are that I forgot what it’s like ... what you feel in high school is very real for you then.”

Many of Anwen’s students were the first in their family to go to college, and their bi-weekly sessions with College Possible provided a space where they could share in their similar struggles, frustrations and triumphs. Anwen recalled one instance when her student, Mau, was brought to tears after losing a scholarship that she had spent so much time working on.

Another student, Jamiya, immediately stepped in to cheer her up and provide a pep talk to motivate Mau to keep applying for other scholarships. Mau and Jamiya were not particularly close before they joined College Possible, but now were connected by their common goal: going to college. Anwen recognized how instrumental these after-school sessions were in fostering a supportive community for her students.



**Coach Anwen Parrot and students from Lake View High School**

While Anwen came from a different background than most of her students, through her role with College Possible she was confronted with the difficulties many of them faced as minority, low-income students.

“[Serving with College Possible] forced me to reflect on my own high school experience and see things that I didn’t realize were happening at the time, because they didn’t directly affect me.”

Despite all of their efforts, in and out of the classroom, Anwen knew that her students struggled against circumstances they had no control over, like housing instability and concerns regarding personal



safety. There was little she could do beyond listening and showing she cared. “My students and I could work around the clock, but these barriers outside of school were very real and hard to overcome.”

Anwen determined becoming a lawyer was the best way for her to make a broader impact on the community of students she had come to know and care about. With her new goal in mind, Anwen applied to serve a second year with College Possible. She would continue supporting her students in their senior year while simultaneously preparing for law school. As the new school year began, Anwen and her students went through the college application process together: preparing for and taking standardized tests, the LSAT and SAT, respectively, filling out financial aid forms and applying to schools. She remarked, “From the time I woke to the time

I went to bed, I was either working with my students or studying.” After one of Anwen’s students learned that the LSAT was a six-hour test, she left her a bag of candy and a note of appreciation and encouragement in her backpack, just like Anwen had done for each of her students before they took the SAT.

Anwen’s time at College Possible played a pivotal role in determining the next steps in her career. Now attending law school at the University of Minnesota, Anwen remains inspired by her former students’ hard work and endless positivity in the face of adversity. She will use this, and her experiences with College Possible, as motivation as she works toward earning her law degree and making a difference in a field about which she cares deeply—and personally.

# Chicago Donors and Partners

## THANK YOU!

### MULTI-YEAR LEADERSHIP GIFTS

Caerus Foundation  
\$176,000 over 4 years

CME Group Foundation  
\$50,000 over 2 years

Crown Family Philanthropies  
\$100,000 over 2 years

Polk Bros. Foundation  
\$80,000 over 2 years

The Siragusa Family Foundation  
\$30,000 over 3 years

### CORPORATIONS AND FOUNDATIONS

\$250,000-\$499,999  
Serve Illinois

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**Kellie J. Sigh**  
Executive Director

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## Highlights

- Kellie J. Sigh named executive director.
- College Possible Milwaukee students received over 140 scholarships.
- Twin sisters, Arielle and Arianna Williams, were accepted to 38 colleges and received over \$1 million in scholarships.

## Program Impact

**2,432** students served

**100%** college admission rate

**76.6%** first to second year college persistence rate

**“Everything being virtual was challenging. I was stressed out and wasn’t receiving the help I expected from my career adviser at school.”**

As the coronavirus pandemic exacerbates existing barriers to a college degree for College Possible students, it also highlights Milwaukee students’ need for a support system as they pursue a bachelor’s degree.

When COVID-19 began to spread in March 2020, College Possible Milwaukee student, Esmeralda Garcia was finishing her last semester of college and preparing to graduate in May. Within one week, Esmeralda’s entire life changed: she lost her housing, her job and moved back home to share a room with her little brother. Yet, Esmeralda persisted in trying to figure out her post-graduation plans.

Stressed after not receiving much help from her academic adviser, Esmeralda was worried about finding a job after college. That is when she called her College Possible coach. “I was venting to my coach about what I was going through and how I was feeling because I knew my coach was someone I could trust, someone that would support me when I needed it most.”

Her coach was Acacia Balsewicz, a recent college graduate and AmeriCorps member serving with College Possible Milwaukee. Not only was Acacia able to provide the guidance Esmeralda needed, she was also able to relate to how Esmeralda was feeling, since Acacia was once a College Possible student herself. “The support I received throughout my experience as a College Possible student made me want to provide that same support and opportunity to students who are in similar positions.”

As a College Possible graduate and the first in her family to receive a college degree, Acacia knows the impact these relationships can have on first-generation students and students from low-income households like Esmeralda. So when Esmeralda called her coach, stressed about her post-college plans, Acacia was prepared to listen and help Esmeralda find a solution. “I shared my coaching experience with her, and how valuable it’s been

for me in my personal and professional growth,” Acacia recalled.

This is when Acacia suggested applying to serve as a coach with College Possible. “I got my hopes up,” said Esmeralda. “I knew how much my coaches impacted me and it was something I always wanted to do. If I have the opportunity to help someone, I want to take it, embrace it and have fun with it.”

With her College Possible coach, Acacia, by her side, Esmeralda persevered through her final semester of school during the COVID-19 outbreak, graduated on time, and now serves with College Possible Milwaukee as a high school coach.

**“College Possible felt like a family. My coach pushed me to follow my dreams and made it feel like we were all in it together.”**

Her determination to help Milwaukee students graduate from college and navigate through the systemic barriers and inequalities that she, her coach Acacia, and many others before them have encountered, not only positions her to succeed as a coach with College Possible but also as a future leader bringing change in our community.



**Esmeralda Garcia**

College Possible Alumna

College Possible AmeriCorps  
Coach, 2020–2021



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\$1 million over 2 years

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## Highlights

- Hosted our second Circle of Impact concert event in October 2019 and raised more than \$150,000 for College Possible students.
- Transitioned to serve all students virtually for the remainder of the school year in March 2020.
- Recognized College Possible's high school students with our Launch! website in May 2020.
- Celebrated 544 new college graduates with our Soar! website in June 2020.

## Program Impact

**5,552** students served

**99.1%** college admission rate

**79.3%** first to second year college persistence rate

#### MINNESOTA

## The Spirit of Service: A Reflection from College Possible Alumna Khullani Abdullahi

Prior to joining College Possible as a high school junior, Khullani Mahdi Abdullahi had never heard of her future alma matter. Although, only 45 minutes down the road from her home in St. Paul, Carleton College hadn't been on her radar until she met Jim McCorkell, an alum of the institution and founder of a brand-new college access program. Thanks to a visit to Carleton with her College Possible coach Michelle, Khullani was able to meet with the admission director personally and apply early decision after the official deadline, which helped her secure a spot at the competitive institution.

After graduating from Carleton in 2007, Khullani attend the University of Minnesota Law School and has since gone on to leverage her law degree in business. She has built a series of consulting firms that advise companies around the country on digital strategy. She traces her ability to pivot her career, build successful businesses and thrive during the pandemic back to her experience attending college and law school.

"I'm able to hop on calls and pitch clients with a level of authority, even though I'm selling a service that is outside my educational expertise," she explained. "It is the fact that you have a degree from Carleton and the fact that you have a degree from the University of Minnesota Law School that in and of itself makes it possible."

Inside and outside her thriving career, Khullani focuses on how she can be of service to others and how she can enable others to be of service.

This experience started for her in college, when she began to seek out mentorship opportunities at Carleton. The drive to be of service has continued into her professional life as she is currently working on a project around child care access and helping mothers remain in the workforce. She has also developed her own "College Possible cohort" over the years through helping "anybody within 2 degrees of separation" from her with the college application process.

"I just want to thank Jim McCorkell and the early team for having a vision and for making it reality," she said of her College Possible experience. "When we talk about enabling others to be of service, we can't even quantify the hundreds of thousands of lives that will be touched through the Admission Possible/College Possible family."



### Khullani Mahdi Abdullahi

College (Admission) Possible Alumna, 2000 – 2002

Bachelor's Degree, Carleton College

Juris Doctor Degree, University of Minnesota Law School

Digital Strategy Consultant



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\*We would like to express our condolences to the loved ones of founding donors who have passed away. Their support continues to make an impact in the lives of students.





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## Highlights

- Eighty-eight College Possible students, a record number, were awarded the Buffett Scholarship in 2020.
- Two College Possible students were named student government president and vice president at the University of Nebraska-Omaha.
- Shaking It Up 2020 provided college students with training and professional networking experience.

## Program Impact

**2,158** students served

**100%** college admission rate

**81.9%** first to second year college persistence rate

OMAHA

## Passion, talent and support helped Da'Dreion Murrell get to the renowned Berklee College of Music in Boston.

Born and raised in North Omaha, he discovered a love for music singing in school and church at Grace Apostolic Church. In middle school, Da'Dreion participated in competition choirs, and in high school, he became a member of select honors choirs.

A national choir trip took Da'Dreion to Nashville, Tennessee where he performed onstage at the Grand Ole Opry. "I've had some really great experiences, but that trip really helped me solidify that this is what I wanted to do for the rest of my life," he said.

At Omaha Northwest High Magnet School, Da'Dreion met A'Lexis Foster, a fellow student in College Possible. A'Lexis graduated in 2014 and began her college career studying nursing at DePaul University in Chicago. Da'Dreion graduated in 2015 and the two married.

College Possible helped Da'Dreion and A'Lexis focus on academics and find financial resources. He said this was critical in his motivation to succeed.



### Da'Dreion, A'Lexis and daughter Lenora

Da'Dreion Murrell is an alumnus of Berklee College of Music with a Bachelor's Degree in Songwriting minoring in Africana Studies.

"There were so many opportunities with College Possible and it allowed me to go after the scholarships that I really wanted and needed. Now being in college, I have no student debt."

Da'Dreion knew he wanted to be a professional musician but he was scared. Da'Dreion didn't know if he was ready for an advanced music degree, so he prepared. "I am most impressed with Da'Dreion because he knew his direction and pathways even

before his senior year. He knew his passion and purpose in life. He is an awesome young man," said Principal Thomas Lee at Omaha Northwest High Magnet School.

For his first year, Da'Dreion went to school at University of Nebraska Omaha to study music, before being accepted to study at Berklee College of Music. "I was a jazz major, because I wanted to learn more about chords and learn more about music theory," he said.

The couple moved to Boston, and A'Lexis transferred to Bay State College to continue her path to a bachelor's degree in nursing.

In 2018, Da'Dreion and A'Lexis became parents to a daughter Lanora, who turned one in September.



OMAHA

“We’re still actively pursuing our careers and passions while still taking care of our daughter and trying to make sure we are taking care of ourselves.” With commitments to family, managing school and campus events can be difficult at times, he said.

“One of my favorite things about College Possible has been the support of my coaches, calling me and setting up time to talk. They have been very helpful, and having that support system every semester is huge.”

For the past two years, Da’Dreion has been the Berklee Gospel Choir student director. Last fall, he headlined his own performance with original music, a 20-piece band, six singers, dancers, complete with

lighting and a stage extension. Da’Dreion organized the show, but it didn’t happen overnight. He worked with school administration for more than a year for permission to use the Berklee Performance Center.

“In creating this performance, I made my own way. It is propelling me to a larger career, and I’m very proud of what it is becoming and the time I’ve spent trying to organize it.”

Ambitious and goal-orientated, Da’Dreion hopes to use the event to entertain, network and collaborate with other musicians. His goal after graduation is to tour and record. “Moving toward that goal, I’ve used Berklee to establish and make my goal as stable as possible,” he said.

Principal Lee said whatever profession Da’Dreion chooses, he will do great work. “Da’Dreion is very talented, very mature and truly knows how to impact his community and our society. He is a difference maker and true change agent,” Lee said. “I am very proud of Da’Dreion and all of our students who have gone on to college and have excelled.”

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## Highlights

- Emielle Nischik is named executive director following Julie Mancini's retirement in June.
- Selected to participate in Willamette Week's Give!Guide again and raised nearly \$50,000, including winning the education category for the most donors under the age of 36.
- Program Director Margarita Gutierrez Lemus was a finalist for the Skidmore Prize and won the Young Leader Award for Portland Monthly's 15th annual Light a Fire ceremony.
- Featured as one of the four organizations selected by the Portland Business Journal to be their nonprofit partners for 2019.
- Expanded programming to our first school in Washington County, Aloha High School.

## Program Impact

**1,656** students served

**97.4%** college admission rate

**84.4%** first to second year college persistence rate

#### OREGON

## Untapped Potential by Janell Kim

It was back-to-school night around the beginning of my junior year at David Douglas High School, and my mom and I had just finished picking up my fall schedule and meeting some of my new teachers. We rounded the corner where we came upon the college and career readiness designated location in the hallway in front of the gym. Eager to get home and hoping to avoid any more conversations, I stared at the floor as I quickly ushered my mom down the hall. Halfway through the hallway bustling full of people, my mom stopped me and pointed to a table that flickered green and white in the corner of my eyes.

"Why don't you take a quick look at that table?" I lifted my eyes and saw the big green words "College Possible" strewn across a white banner. Even though I did not have any concrete plans or even ideas for college, as a teacher's pet, perfectionist, and achiever, I felt drawn to the table. The coach at the table quickly gave me the appropriate information and encouraged me to sign up, so I did. I did not realize what that one sheet of paper held in store for my future.

I attended College Possible twice a week for that entire year; if I remember correctly, it was every Monday and Wednesday after school. It was there that I entertained the thought of going to a 4-year university as we spent grueling hours preparing for the ACT. During our time together, my first College Possible Coach Maggie quickly recognized the potential that I had by looking at my grades, course schedule, and extracurricular activities and she encouraged me to apply for summer enrichment programs. I had never heard of summer enrichment programs prior to her mentioning them, and we started to look for different opportunities that I was eligible for.

Together, we came across a program called LEDA, or Leadership Enterprise for a Diverse America. This program was for high-achieving, low-income

high school juniors and its aim was to provide access to higher education to students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds. I completed my application with Maggie's guidance and support as she edited my application and wrote one of my letters of recommendation.

During the process and after submitting my application, imposter syndrome kicked in and I doubted that I would ever even hear back. But Maggie never doubted me. After passing round one of applications, an interview, and round two of applications, I finally received the email that said "Congratulations—LEDA Cohort 11 Welcomes You." This acceptance illuminated to me the potential that Maggie knew was in me but that I could not see in myself before.

I was able to attend this free, seven-week intensive program at Princeton University where I received ACT Preparation, extensive leadership training, and college guidance and partook in a College Writing course taught by a Columbia University writing professor. Because of this program that I was led to through College Possible, I was able to apply to ten colleges at absolutely no cost and eventually ended up attending Washington University in St. Louis for free. I graduated from WashU in May 2020 with a degree in Educational Studies with a minor in Psychology.



### Janell Kim

David Douglas High  
School, '16  
Washington University, '20



OREGON

Words cannot describe how thankful I am for having had the privilege and experience of participating in College Possible during my time in high school.

College Possible opened my eyes to my own potential.

College Possible also exposed me to the larger, inequitable, and oppressive systems at work that permeate our society, particularly in higher education access, and disadvantage students from particular

backgrounds, ultimately affecting future employment and predicted income and life outcomes.

My experience in College Possible, coupled with my passion for education, has me now working as a college adviser through another AmeriCorps program called College Advising Corps. The mission of College Advising Corps is similar to that of College Possible: to increase the number of low-income, first-generation, and underrepresented high school students who enter and complete higher education. I am excited to join in this work, and I am forever grateful for the positive impact that College Possible has had on my life.

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THANK YOU!

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Karma Rose and Jacob Zavita

GIFTS IN TRIBUTE

In Honor of Allie Crihfield  
In Honor of Alec and Rose Bromka, Peter and Julia Bromka  
In Honor of Anne Hoot\*  
In Honor of Asher Lerman Freeman  
In Honor of Barbara Wayson  
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In Honor of Devin Francis  
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In Honor of James Chassè Jr  
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In Honor of Lily Abood and Emielle Nischik  
In Honor of Matty Hackl  
In Honor of Megan Harvey  
In Honor of Mikay Parsons  
In Honor of Nick Johnson  
In Honor of Oso Scott  
In Honor of Paige and Hanna's Wedding  
In Honor of Precious Paxson  
In Honor of Reynolds High School Coaches  
In Honor of Sandie Peters  
In Honor of Scott Dawson\*  
In Honor of the Outstanding College Possible Team!!

In Honor of Will Fruhwirth<sup>0</sup>  
In Memory of Cindy Moore  
In Memory of Gail Robinson  
In Memory of Honey and Toby Crihfield  
In Memory of Johanna Mitchell  
In Memory of Madeline Moore  
In Memory of Nick Fish  
In Memory of Pamela Chassè

MATCHING GIFT COMPANIES

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– Centennial High School  
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CORCAP  
David Douglas School District  
– David Douglas High School  
Gaston Union Jr/Sr High School  
George Fox University  
Gresham-Barlow School District  
– Gresham High School  
Irrigon Jr/Sr High School  
Lewis and Clark College  
Linfield College  
McLoughlin High School  
Mt. Hood Community College  
Oregon State University  
Pacific University  
Parkrose School District  
– Parkrose High School  
Portland Community College  
Portland Public Schools  
– Madison High School  
Portland State University  
Rainier Jr/Sr High School  
Reed College  
Reynolds School District  
– Reynolds High School  
Riverside Jr/Sr High School  
St. Helens High School  
Umatilla High School  
University of Oregon  
University of Portland  
Warner Pacific College  
Western Oregon University  
Willamette University



“While we give everything we’ve got for our own kids, it saddens me to realize that this just isn’t the case for so many American high school students. College Possible is doing its part to provide just that...all the little pieces that add up to making College Possible!”

Amy Fitzharris, College Possible Founding Donor

KEY: \*National or Local Board Member <sup>0</sup>Current Student or Program Alumni  
<sup>0</sup> Ambassador Board Member, Investment Committee





For many College Possible coaches, serving as an AmeriCorps member gives them the opportunity to support their communities.

Highlights

- Welcomed Executive Director Dia Williams Adams in May.
- Received our first planned gift of more than \$1 million from the Ralph L. Hose Revocable Trust.
- Forged a new high school partnership with Academy at Palumbo.
- Partnered with Neumann University for “Neumann Day,” a specialized campus visit that gave 140 College Possible students in-depth access to life as a Neumann University student.
- Organized and hosted “Coffee & Conversations,” a gathering of community based organization leaders to discuss various topics within college access and success and how to best support students on their journeys to a four-year degree.
- College Possible Philadelphia celebrated its first class of college graduates (students who joined the Philadelphia program in the 2014-2015 program year and graduated from college in 2020).

Program Impact

1,294 students served

96.4% college admission rate

86.2% first to second year college persistence rate

PHILADELPHIA LEADERSHIP

**Dia Williams Adams**  
Executive Director

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For Ivana Lash it is not only that, but a chance to give back and connect with students on their level. An alumna of the first class of College Possible Philadelphia students, Ivana knows the value a coach can have on high school students.

As the first in her family to complete a bachelor’s degree in four years, Ivana was encouraged and motivated to succeed by her family members, despite them not knowing the process. “College Possible



helped me to do the things that my family could not” she said. “Which definitely helped me not only graduate high school, but to graduate college as well.”

That help culminated in the spring of 2020 when Ivana graduated from the University of Valley Forge with a degree in elementary education.

“It was important for me to go to college, I believe, just have that degree attached to me. Something that nobody can take away from me. Proving to people that this is possible, you can do this, and not letting your circumstances or situations define your future.”

Ivana is now in her first year serving as a high school junior coach at Academy at Palumbo and attends graduate school studying counseling. While she was not sure at first about returning to College Possible as a coach, her training clicked with her desire to help her community and students. “I was like, oh, this really fits into both worlds.”

She also credits College Possible’s training with providing a window into the education and opportunity gaps that exist. “It’s something to live here and not notice it—because it’s your day-to-day life,” Ivana said. “But, to actually see the numbers and the statistics behind where you live and the community that you’re in, it’s very alarming.”

However, knowing those education gaps exist has sparked Ivana’s fire and strengthened her desire to advocate for and help her community succeed, “This is what I need to do right now in this moment and it’s going to determine what I do next.”



Ivana Lash

College Possible Student Alumna

University of Valley Forge ’20

College Possible High School Junior Coach ’20–’21



# Philadelphia Donors and Partners

## THANK YOU!

### MULTI-YEAR LEADERSHIP GIFTS

The Ralph L. Hose Revocable Trust  
\$1,537,313.20 over 3 years

The Bernstein Family  
\$250,000 over 3 years

Christian R. and Mary F. Lindback Foundation  
\$30,000 over 2 years

The Grace S. and W. Linton Nelson Foundation  
\$20,000 over 2 years

### CORPORATIONS AND FOUNDATIONS

\$25,000-\$49,999

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The Foundation for Delaware County  
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Up to \$1,000

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Up to \$250

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Merri Stillman  
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Meg Wherrity  
Kristin Young

### GIFTS IN TRIBUTE

In Honor of Carol Mims-Williams and Family  
In Honor of Jeff\* and Dana Bernstein  
In Honor of Joel Feldman\*  
In Honor of Judith Himes\*  
In Honor of PPRA's 75th Anniversary  
In Honor of Rebecca Sololow

### MATCHING GIFT COMPANIES

NRG

### SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS

#### High School Partners

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Jules E. Mastbaum High School  
Parkway Center City Middle College  
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Cabrini University  
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Lock Haven University  
Millersville University  
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Penn State University  
Shippensburg University  
Temple University  
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#### Community Partners

Philadelphia College Prep Roundtable  
College and Career Readiness, The Office of Postsecondary Readiness, The School District of Philadelphia  
PACAC, The Pennsylvania Association for College Admission Counseling



Coach Zoe Reszytniak with a group of students at George Washington High School in Philadelphia.

KEY: \*National or Local Board Member °Current Student or Program Alumni





#### WASHINGTON LEADERSHIP

**Guadalupe Torres**  
Executive Director

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**Mary Trimarco**



In August 2019, College Possible strengthened its footprint and expanded its presence in the Pacific Northwest by uniting with College Access Now (CAN), creating College Possible Washington. This merger brought together two established, mission-aligned organizations focused on supporting the 55% of Washington students who come from low-income backgrounds with data informed, near peer coaching methods. The legacy of grit and passion for students in the hearts of both organizations made it possible to support students facing unprecedented circumstances due to the impacts of COVID-19.

## Highlights

- Served more than 1,000 high school and college students.
- Partnered with Foundry10 to award ten College Possible students \$1,000 scholarships.
- Completed a summer melt prevention program with the Sheng-Yen Lu Foundation that supported 17 high school graduates who recently immigrated to the U.S. to help these graduates stay on course for college enrollment.
- Doubled the size of our college success team to respond to the growing need and truly make a difference for more students.
- Provided two college campuses with four College Possible coaches to increase student persistence and access for the 2019-2020 academic year.
- Completed a three-year, \$45,000 grant with NCAN that provided direct support to students; and supported a graduate intern at College Possible who worked directly on the summer melt prevention program.

#### WASHINGTON

## Yasin Chowdhury dreams of becoming an astrophysicist.

A recent high school graduate from Franklin High School, Yasin has been dreaming of enrolling in the astronomy program at the University of Washington. He was raised in Bangladesh, a country south of India, where he was on the National Cricket Team, studied astronomy and worked hard in school. Last year, Yasin's family moved across the world to the United States for better educational opportunities.

His family is a big source of motivation. He recognizes the importance of being the first person in his family to attend college.

“If I go to college, my brother will feel it is easier; I can guide him.”

Though moving to the United States has been a transition for Yasin, he was able to explore his interests in high school. He was a member of the Art of Resistance Club, a group focused on social and environmental justice and the Robotics Club, which led him to the opportunity to visit the University of Washington, Seattle campus. During a robotics competition, Yasin was immediately captivated by the campus, especially Suzzallo Library.

When Yasin started at Franklin High School, he quickly recognized the multitude of challenges he would face on his path to success. That's where his College Possible coach, John Luke stepped in to help him to apply to colleges and scholarships.

“Everyone helped me a lot as a new student. College Possible is another family to me supporting my dream and trying to make [it] possible.”

With the support of his family and College Possible, there is no doubt that Yasin can achieve his goals. One of his dream has already come true: He is in his freshman year at the University of Washington!



**Yasin Chowdhury**

Franklin High School, '20

Now studying at the University of Washington–Seattle

# Washington Donors and Partners

## THANK YOU!

### MULTI-YEAR LEADERSHIP GIFTS

**Ballmer Group**  
\$450,000 over 3 years

**The Bontje Family Charitable Fund**  
\$300,000 over 3 years

**Satterberg Foundation**  
\$300,000 over 3 years

**Lewis Levin and Emmy Neilson**  
\$270,000 over 3 years

**Sheng-Yen Lu Foundation**  
\$105,000 over 3 years

**BECU**  
\$100,000 over 2 years

**Safeco Insurance Foundation**  
\$100,000 over 2 years

**Silver Family Foundation**  
\$100,000 over 2 years

### CORPORATIONS AND FOUNDATIONS

**\$250,000-\$499,999**  
Serve Washington

**\$100,000-\$249,999**  
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**\$50,000-\$99,999**  
BECU  
The Kaphan Foundation  
Safeco Insurance Foundation  
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National College Access Network  
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In Honor of Guadalupe Torres  
In Honor of Lynsey Bernfeld  
In Honor of Morgan Larsen  
In Honor of Norm and Lisa Bontje  
In Memory of Linda Straley  
In Memory of Sally Fox

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Highline Public Schools  
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Seattle Public Schools

# Two Decades of Growth and Innovation

**22K** **2020**

22,909 students served across seven cities

**2019**

College Access Now unites with College Possible to become College Possible Washington, located in **Seattle, Washington**

**2016**

The program that becomes **Catalyze** is launched

**2015**

College Possible launches in **Chicago, Illinois**

**2014**

College Possible launches in **Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

**CollegePoint** advising launches in partnership with Bloomberg Philanthropies

**2013**

More than 15,000 students reached in four cities

**15K**

**2012**

Admission Possible is renamed College Possible

College Possible launches in **Portland, Oregon**

**2011**

Admission Possible launches in **Omaha, Nebraska**

**2008**

Admission Possible launches in **Milwaukee, Wisconsin**

**2006**

Nearly 1,000 students reached in one city

**1K**

**2000**

Admission Possible founded in St. Paul, Minnesota, 35 students served

**KEY:** \*National or Local Board Member °Current Student or Program Alumni





College Possible is making college admission and success possible for students from low-income backgrounds through an intensive curriculum of coaching and support.

**[CollegePossible.org](https://CollegePossible.org)**