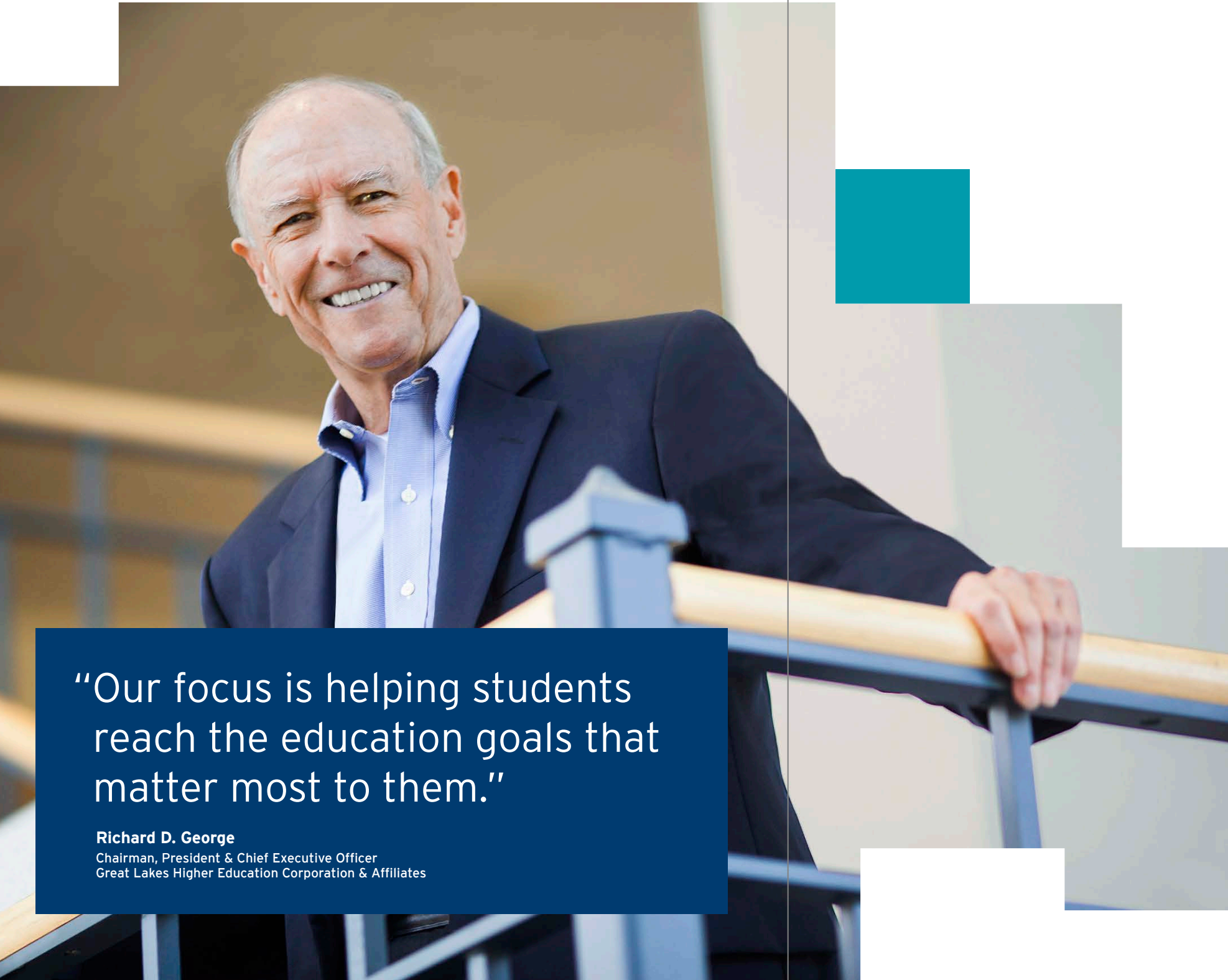




# Building On What Works

2017 EDUCATION PHILANTHROPY REPORT





“Our focus is helping students reach the education goals that matter most to them.”

**Richard D. George**

Chairman, President & Chief Executive Officer  
Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation & Affiliates

## Message from the Chairman

Not many organizations get to celebrate their 50th anniversary, so reaching that milestone made 2017 a special year at Great Lakes. We've accomplished a lot since we were founded in 1967. One of the most important lessons five decades of experience has taught us is that there is no single path to success that's right for every student. For some, the right path is a four-year university degree. For others, a shorter-term credential that connects directly to a good job is the right option. And the path need not lead directly from high school to college. Military service, apprenticeships and post-high school work experience can be valuable parts of an individual's educational path.

That truth is more apparent now than ever before, in part because today's student body looks different from the one that populated our nation's campuses back in 1967.

The 2017 cohort is older, more diverse economically and culturally, and brings a lot of valuable life experience to the table. They also face some different obstacles.

In this report, you'll learn how we're building on 50 years of experience and a strong body of evidence from experts in the field to help knock down barriers to completion, with particular focus on those that disproportionately affect students of color, students from low-income households and first-generation students—regardless of which path they have chosen.

Our priority at Great Lakes is to foster institutional changes that help students on all paths succeed. We aim to help them achieve the higher education goals that are most relevant to their own career and life aspirations.



We believe that as a society, we do better collectively when everyone has the opportunity to realize their potential, and that the most reliable way to do that is through education.

Our guiding belief is that postsecondary degrees, credentials, apprenticeships and certificates are the surest path to economic success.

We work to ensure that more students are able to access and complete the type of education most relevant to their goals, whether they are recent high school graduates or returning students with valuable workforce or military service experience. We believe we can have the greatest impact by targeting our resources toward the groups that have the most to gain from postsecondary education but have historically faced the greatest obstacles to success: students of color, students from low-income households and students who are the first in their families to attend college.

**Goal 1: Helping Students Complete Programs and Earn Valued Credentials That Lead to Good Careers**

The focus of our work is supporting the identification and implementation of evidence-based strategies for helping students overcome the academic, financial and social obstacles that can derail an education.

**Goal 2: Learning and Promoting Best Practices**

We recognize that there is a place for innovation and identifying new interventions. Our focus, however, is on helping implement and bring to scale approaches that have already been shown to work. We aim to help catalyze changes

on the institutional and system levels that improve the entire postsecondary landscape. So when an idea proves to be effective, we work to spread the word and to help colleges learn what it takes to put these best practices in place.

**Goal 3: Foster Collaboration among Partners With Similar Missions**

We consistently partner with colleges, researchers and other funders to identify problems, conceive and evaluate potential remedies, and ultimately bring the most effective solutions to scale. We fund independent evaluations of promising strategies, and provide startup resources to help partners get proven programs off the ground. We also frequently join forces with other funders to amplify the impact of the projects we fund.

**Our Three-Pronged Funding Approach**

Our funding strategy ensures that we are helping advance great ideas at every stage of development, from promising but untested measures to proven practices we can help bring to scale. The vast majority of our grants fall into one of these three categories:

**EXPLORATION GRANTS** are limited-term grants to learn more about ideas and approaches that look promising based on our own experiences or the research of others.

**VALIDATION GRANTS** support independent evaluations designed to demonstrate whether a program is as effective as preliminary data suggests, and to help better understand what conditions it works best under, and for whom.

**SCALING GRANTS** enable successful programs to significantly increase the number of students they serve. These are the grants that pave the way to lasting change by providing our partners with resources to institutionalize proven practices, and by giving them time to build those practices into sustainable programs.





# \$73 million

We committed more funds in 2017 than any other year in Great Lakes' history.



## THE LONG GAME: Leveraging Lessons Learned

Our three-pronged approach to grantmaking is targeted and purposeful. While we recognize the value of innovation, we primarily seek to identify, validate and bring to scale evidence-based solutions that lead to lasting improvement.

We rely on respected researchers and practitioners to develop better ways to help more students succeed. Our role as a funder is to build on their work.

How do we do that? The building can happen in a few ways. Once we learn of an effective approach, whether through one of our own projects or through the work of others, we may invest resources in a rigorous evaluation to learn how, why and under what conditions it works. We may provide the resources to expand a proven program to more sites in order to learn what it takes to build the institutional will and capacity needed for meaningful change. Or perhaps in the course of evaluating a program, we discover other related challenges that need to be addressed. That may spark an idea for a complementary intervention that works in tandem.

Large-scale change requires the collective efforts of many organizations and leaders. So if an approach is scalable, we share results and insights widely and collaborate with researchers, fellow funders and other stakeholders to create an environment where the best ideas can take root, grow and, ideally, become the norm.

Read on for some examples of our efforts to build on what works in 2017.





## BUILDING ON EMERGENCY AID

We're addressing student financial obstacles stemming from both unexpected emergencies and home-stretch shortfalls.

### A Root Canal or Blown Head Gasket Shouldn't Halt an Education

It's long been clear that a large number of financially vulnerable students have to put their studies on hold—sometimes permanently—when hit with an unexpected expense like an auto repair or medical bill. We awarded our first emergency grant programs in 2012 to the 16 colleges in the Wisconsin Technical College System. The success of that program led us to expand it to 31 two-year colleges in the Midwest in 2016.

Based on our experience with two-year colleges, in 2017 we expanded the **Dash Emergency Grant** program to four-year institutions, investing **\$7.2 million** in grants to 32 four-year colleges in six states. In addition to helping more students stay enrolled, we are interested in learning the subtle differences between two- and four-year institutions in how the program is operated, what types of crises students experience and how the grants impact completion rates.

### Spotlighting the “Human Element”

As colleges set up their emergency grant programs, a pattern emerged: Our previous grants addressed policies and procedures at the institutional level, but not training on best practices for the people who have to approve or deny a request for emergency aid. Consequently, administrators struggled with calibration on decision-making and with aligning program and institutional goals.

So in 2017 we awarded a **\$128,000** grant to **Equal Measure**—a research organization that helps philanthropies, nonprofits and

government agencies increase their impact—to explore the grant decision-making process. Through focus groups and interviews with current Dash Emergency Grant recipients, Equal Measure is learning how administrators decide whether to award emergency grants. They will use that knowledge to develop a set of training materials for those on the front lines of emergency grant programs, including a handbook, checklists and self-assessment guides.

### Helping Students Cover the “Last Mile”

Many students nearing completion of their academic program are prevented from finishing due to a relatively small unpaid balance they owe to their school for tuition, lab fees, parking fines or any number of other campus charges. The outstanding bill is often as little as a few hundred dollars.

While emergency grants are designed to help with unforeseen expenses paid to third parties, completion grants are for sums owed to the institution itself. Another key difference is that completion grants are initiated by the school rather than by the student, as is the case with emergency grants.

In 2017 we began to learn more about this problem by partnering with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to fund a **\$4 million** grant to the **University Innovation Alliance (UIA)**—a coalition of 11 major public research universities—to evaluate the implementation of completion grant programs at each member school. Completion grants provide “last mile” aid to students within a semester or two of graduating to cover outstanding campus balances.

The programs are modeled on the Panther Retention Grant program that has proven to be highly effective at UIA member Georgia State University.

Through this project, we hope to share with the field an understanding of what it takes to implement and sustain a successful completion grant program best suited to the needs of a college's students, and gauge the return on investment in terms of higher completion rates.

“Students often stop-out because they lack the resources to cover car repairs, a medical bill or childcare expenses.... This is a program that will meet immediate needs that are not currently addressed through traditional programming.”

### Wendy Hayes

Chief of Staff, Office of the President,  
Central State University Wilberforce, OH

## Great Lakes Employees Help Build Brighter Futures in Their Communities

Great Lakes' employee giving program provides a variety of opportunities for employees to contribute their time and talents to the community. But as our 50th anniversary approached, there was a desire to recognize it by offering new ways to give back. One of them was the creation of **Brighter Futures Grants**.

An extension of Great Lakes' philanthropy program, Brighter Futures Grants offered employees across the company the opportunity to actively experience the grantmaking process. Employees at each center voted on the community issues they wanted to address, and then formed committees to choose recipients from among local nonprofits working on the issues they identified.

Each Great Lakes center awarded **\$50,000** to a nonprofit in their community; a total of **\$525,000** in one-year Brighter Futures Grants were made to 14 organizations addressing hunger, homelessness, services for people with disabilities, domestic violence and youth development.



The River Food Pantry used their Brighter Futures Grant to buy a new van for their MUNCH mobile lunch program, enabling them to provide healthy meals to more kids on Madison's Northside.

## CONNECTING DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION AND GUIDED PATHWAYS

There is already a wealth of evidence pointing toward best practices in both developmental education and guided pathways. But little work has been done to connect them. Until now.

Countless hours and millions of dollars have been spent on improving developmental education and guided pathways; but in spite of those and other efforts, the system still lacks equity for students of color, low-income students and students returning to school after an interruption in their studies. So we joined with two other funders to try something audacious.

### Moving the Needle on Equity

Strong Start to Finish (SSTF) is a campaign launched in 2017 with **\$13 million** in pooled funds from Great Lakes, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and The Kresge Foundation.

The goal is to help more students get through introductory math and English courses and into an academic program in the first year of college—a proven indicator of success—building on 20 years of research on developmental education and guided pathways. Education Commission of the States is coordinating the campaign.

Students of color, low-income students and returning students are disproportionately placed in developmental education courses, which can cost as much as regular courses but don't count toward graduation requirements. As a result, students who start out in developmental

education classes take longer to graduate, are more likely to get discouraged and drop out, and rack up more loan debt than their peers. Meanwhile, many students placed in gateway math and English courses often struggle without access to needed supports.

The idea behind guided pathways is to get students on a successful route to completion early. Research shows that students are more likely to earn a credential in a timely fashion if they develop an academic plan early on, have a clear roadmap of the classes they need to take, and receive guidance and support to help them stay on course. The challenge is to link evidence-based best practices in both of these areas and accelerate adoption of those methods.

### Making New Connections

Strong Start to Finish is making a difference by forging connections between developmental education and guided pathways. Three-year grants of **\$2.1 million** each were awarded to four systems with track records of success with evidence-based practices: the Ohio Department of Higher Education, State University of New York (SUNY), the University System of Georgia and City University of New York (CUNY). The grant funds are enabling these systems to accelerate their progress—at scale—in implementing and refining proven reforms, and in helping other institutions learn from their experiences.

“This represents a transition from a system that served *some* students well to a system that serves *all* students well.”

### Dr. Uri Treisman

Founder and Director of the Charles A. Dana Center at The University of Texas at Austin and Chair of the SSTF Expert Advisory Board

## Networking for Student Success Across Wisconsin Technical Colleges

Community colleges employ a wide range of strategies aimed at improving completion rates. But much of the time, these efforts are isolated, taking little advantage of the experiences and insights of other colleges pursuing the same goals.

A growing national network of state **Student Success Centers** is organizing each state's two-year colleges around evidence-based strategies to improve student persistence and completion rates. Entering 2017, 13 states had established Student Success Centers, with funding from The Kresge Foundation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. **Jobs for the Future (JFF)**—a national nonprofit that builds educational and economic opportunity for underserved populations—manages the Student Success Center Network, providing technical assistance and encouraging collaboration among centers.

With a **\$1.35 million** grant from Great Lakes, JFF helped the **Wisconsin Technical College System** launch the nation's 14th Student Success Center. As part of the network, Wisconsin colleges are collaborating with and learning from peers in the other states that have centers up and running.



Key members of the Student Success Center during a recent meeting at the WTCS office in Madison.





## BUILDING BETTER ACADEMIC PROBATION PRACTICES

### What can colleges do differently to better support students facing the loss of financial aid?

Students placed on probation because they are not meeting satisfactory academic progress (SAP) standards—defined by the U.S. Department of Education as a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 and completion of at least 67% of credits attempted—are at risk of losing their financial aid. SAP probation disproportionately affects underserved students, and for many, cutting off aid is tantamount to ending an academic career.

Beyond the financial implications, being placed on probation can be traumatic for students, often starting a downward spiral of shame, discouragement and withdrawal. While students are ultimately responsible for getting themselves back on track, colleges sometimes have policies that inadvertently aggravate the problem rather than helping students avoid or recover from financial aid probation.

#### Taking the Sting Out of SAP

To address this issue, Great Lakes committed \$1 million to support policy research organization MDRC's **The Finish Line: Graduation by Design** project. MDRC is exploring policies and practices that prevent students from completing the credits they start. We hope to learn how colleges can reduce the number of students they place on financial aid probation and increase the number released from probation and restored to good academic standing.

MDRC is working with faculty and administrators at three colleges in the Minnesota State system to build their capacity to diagnose and evaluate SAP issues. The colleges will identify institutional practices that create barriers; work with MDRC to develop interventions to reduce or eliminate those barriers; and ultimately use those insights to develop guidance that can be shared with colleges across the country.

#### Toward a Better Letter

Federal law requires colleges to notify students who are falling short of SAP standards that their financial aid is in jeopardy. In addition to the warning, the probation letter generally includes information about available resources, like tutoring and workshops, that can help the student get back on track. But too often, students who receive such letters become discouraged instead of seeking help. Research has shown that the tone of the letters themselves, which tend to emphasize compliance with federal requirements rather than focusing on the student's needs, may be part of the problem—especially for underserved students who may harbor lingering doubts about being “college material.” Another of our 2017 grants builds on the goals of The Finish Line project by addressing this specific aspect of SAP.

Pilot studies by **College Transition Collaborative (CTC)**—a research consortium based at Stanford University—suggest that changing the tone of probation letters to emphasize the help that's available can lead more students to seek out support, stay enrolled and return to good standing. Our \$66,000 grant to CTC is supporting development of a toolkit for college administrators to revise probation notification letters in a way that better encourages students to take advantage of helpful resources.

“While the threat of Pell loss could serve as a motivation to improve student effort and academic progress, this is more likely to occur if aid recipients who fail to meet academic standards early in college are embedded in strong academic support and communication systems.”

#### Lauren Schudde and Judith Scott-Clayton

Community College Research Center,  
Teachers College, Columbia University,  
“Pell Grants as Performance-Based Aid?” 2014

Read about all of our current grants at:  
[community.mygreatlakes.org](http://community.mygreatlakes.org)

## Boosting Success at Minority Serving Institutions

**Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs)**—designated as such by the federal government because they enroll a large number of minority students—play a critical role in higher education in the United States, collectively serving up to 20% of all U.S. students. Great Lakes is partnering with the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Federal Student Aid (FSA) to support the efforts of MSIs in improving persistence, retention, completion and student loan repayment among their students.

Through our MSI project, we're providing 35 Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) and four Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) with a suite of proven student success programs. Offerings include a paid internship program, an emergency grant program, financial literacy training and more—all offered free of charge. Some of the programs and tools available to the colleges were developed by Great Lakes, while others are from leading experts in the field, including Achieving the Dream, Carnegie Math Pathways and the Center for Community College Student Engagement.



We gathered in Chicago last April with TCU representatives to kick off our Minority Serving Institutions initiative.





## A Peek into 2018

With our 50th anniversary celebration behind us, we can't help but be excited about what's in store for Great Lakes at the beginning of our second half-century. We are launching a number of new grant initiatives in 2018, expanding on what we have learned from leading experts and through our own previous projects. As always, the emphasis is on catalyzing lasting change that will help transform the higher education system into one that is more inclusive, more equitable and more effective for the students facing the greatest barriers.

### Expanding Higher Education in Prison

In 2018 we will be working with the RAND Corporation and the Minnesota Department of Corrections to expand access to high-quality career and technical education for incarcerated students in that state, enhancing their opportunities for gainful employment upon release. This project builds on our 2016 grant to RAND to produce a landscape scan of major trends in higher education for incarcerated adults.

### Increasing FAFSA Completion

We're joining forces with The Kresge Foundation and the National College Access Network (NCAN) on a project aimed at increasing FAFSA completion rates for whole cities, rather than for individual high schools. This grant builds on previous work by Kresge and NCAN.

### Improving Transfer Outcomes

The Aspen Institute will use a planning grant from Great Lakes to set the stage for a three-year initiative aimed at increasing bachelor's degree attainment among transfer students. Only 14% of students who enter community college with the intention of eventually graduating from a four-year institution succeed in doing so within six years. While most efforts to improve transfer outcomes have focused on either institutional strategy or state policy, this project is designed to promote an approach that operates on both of those levels in concert.



# Thank you!

As always, we wish to express our sincere thanks to our many partners. You inspire us to aim high and to remain optimistic about our mission to help more students attain their goals and improve their lives.





# 2017 Grant Partners

360 Communities, MN	\$50,000
Aaniih Nakoda College, MT	\$139,000
Achieving the Dream, MD	\$9,533,175
Alverno College, WI	\$210,000
Ashland University, OH	\$2,789
The Aspen Institute, DC	\$368,000
Association of American Colleges and Universities, DC	\$43,044
ASU + GSV Summit, IL	\$75,000
Badger Air Community Council, WI	\$10,000
Bay Mills Community College, MI	\$265,000
Black Hawk Middle School, WI	\$28,872
Blackfeet Community College, MT	\$185,000
Blackhawk Technical College, WI	\$1,323
Boscobel Elementary School, WI	\$4,587
Bottom Line, MA	\$50,000
Boys & Girls Club of Aberdeen Area, SD	\$50,000
Boys & Girls Club of Dane County, WI	\$13,250
Building Brave, WI	\$250,000
Cankdeska Cikana Community College, ND	\$39,000
CAP Services, Inc., WI	\$25,000
Cardinal Stritch University, WI	\$67,200
Carleton College, MN	\$168,000
Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, CA	\$250,000
Central State University, OH	\$378,000
Charles Warren Fairbanks School 105, IN	\$3,029
Chief Dull Knife College, MT	\$139,000
Chippewa Valley Technical College, WI	\$1,000
Civic Nation, DC	\$250,000
Cleveland State University, OH	\$262,500
College Goal Wisconsin, WI	\$15,000
College of the Muscogee Nation, OK	\$139,000
College of Menominee Nation, WI	\$185,000
Community Partners, CA	\$50,000
Diné College, AZ	\$378,000
Eau Claire Community Foundation, WI	\$25,000
Edgewood College, WI	\$131,250
Education Commission of the States, CO	\$4,500,000
Equal Measure, PA	\$128,000
Feed My People, Inc., WI	\$25,000
Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College, MN	\$265,000
Fort Peck Community College, MT	\$52,000
Fox Valley Technical College, WI	\$1,000
Gateway Technical College, WI	\$1,000

Gompers Elementary School, WI	\$28,872
Grand View University, IA	\$210,000
Grantmakers For Education, OR	\$38,400
Great Lakes College Access Advising Program, WI	\$36,046
Harris-Stowe State University, MO	\$78,000
Heidelberg University, OH	\$115,500
Herzing University, WI	\$1,000
Higher Ed Insight, DC	\$191,667
Hope's Door New Beginning Center, TX	\$50,000
Horizon House, Inc., IN	\$25,000
Iłisaġvik College, AK	\$100,000
Institute of American Indian Arts, NM	\$185,000
It's My Community Initiative, OK	\$25,000
Jain Family Institute, NY	\$162,000
Jefferson Elementary School, WI	\$7,820
Jobs for the Future, MA	\$1,350,000
John Barry Elementary School, CT	\$5,069
Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College, MI	\$139,000
Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College, WI	\$185,000
Lakeland Community College, OH	\$2,500
Lakeshore Elementary School, WI	\$6,610
Lakeshore Technical College, WI	\$1,000
Leech Lake Tribal College, MN	\$185,000
Lincoln University, MO	\$378,000
Little Big Horn College, MT	\$139,000
Little Priest Tribal College, NE	\$139,000
Lourdes University, OH	\$210,000
Madison College, WI	\$6,501,000
Madison Metropolitan School District, WI	\$92,000
Madison Region Economic Partnership, WI	\$61,104
MDRC, NY	\$963,507
Mercy College of Health Sciences, IA	\$84,000
Mercy College of Ohio, OH	\$210,000
Metropolitan State University, MN	\$420,000
Midstate Independent Living Consultants, Inc., WI	\$25,000
Mid-State Technical College, WI	\$1,000
Milwaukee Area Technical College, WI	\$1,000
Milwaukee Public Schools, WI	\$92,500
Minnesota State University, Mankato, MN	\$420,000
Montana Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, MT	\$3,000,000
Moraine Park Technical College, WI	\$1,000
Moreland Art & Health Sciences Magnet School, MN	\$5,129

Mount Mary University, WI	\$84,000
National Student Clearinghouse, VA	\$300,000
Navajo Technical University, NM	\$378,000
Nebraska Indian Community College, NE	\$139,000
Nicolet Area Technical College, WI	\$1,000
Northcentral Technical College, WI	\$1,000
Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, WI	\$1,000
Northwest Indian College, WA	\$265,000
Notre Dame College of Ohio, OH	\$113,400
Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College, ND	\$139,000
Oglala Lakota College, SD	\$378,000
Ohio Department of Job & Family Services, OH	\$200,000
Ohio State University, OH	\$210,000
Ohio Wesleyan University, OH	\$131,250
O.M. Tiffany Elementary School, SD	\$20,128
Operation Fresh Start, WI	\$50,000
Rainwater Elementary School, TX	\$4,795
RAND Corporation, CA	\$10,964
Red Lake Nation College, MN	\$139,000
Research Foundation of the City University of New York, NY	\$477,584
The River Food Pantry, WI	\$50,000
Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College, MI	\$39,000
Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, IN	\$1,000
Salish Kootenai College, MT	\$265,000
Scholarship America, MN	\$823,000
Sisseton Wahpeton College, SD	\$139,000
Sitting Bull College, ND	\$139,000
Southwest Wisconsin Technical College, WI	\$1,000
Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute, NM	\$185,000
Southwestern Wisconsin Community Action Program, Inc., WI	\$50,000
St. Catherine University, MN	\$140,069
St. Cloud State University, MN	\$420,000
Stanford University, CA	\$66,111
Stevens Point Area Public School District, WI	\$15,000
Stone Child College, MT	\$185,000
Strada Education Network, IN	\$20,000,000
Tohono O'odham Community College, AZ	\$139,000
Tools of the Trade, WI	\$180,000
Trustees of the Hamline University of Minnesota, MN	\$141,750
Turtle Mountain Community College, ND	\$185,000
U. S. Dream Academy-Indianapolis, IN	\$25,000
Union Institute & University, OH	\$86,100
United Tribes Technical College, ND	\$185,000



United Way of Dane County, WI	\$12,000
University Innovation Alliance, AZ	\$1,999,998
The University of Akron, OH	\$630,000
University of Arkansas-Fort Smith, AR	\$157,500
University of Central Arkansas, AR	\$210,000
University of Mary, ND	\$210,000
University of Northwestern-St Paul, MN	\$63,000
University of Tampa, FL	\$1,000
University of Texas at Austin, TX	\$504,521
University of Toledo, OH	\$420,000
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, WI	\$105,000
University of Wisconsin-Madison, WI	\$5,000
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, WI	\$630,000
University of Wisconsin-Platteville, WI	\$420,000
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, WI	\$315,000
Upper Iowa University, IA	\$88,988
Vera Court Neighborhood Center, WI	\$20,000
Waukesha County Technical College, WI	\$1,000
WestEd, CA	\$4,959,450
Western Technical College, WI	\$1,000
White Earth Tribal and Community College, MN	\$139,000
Wilberforce University, OH	\$265,000
Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College, WI	\$1,000
Wisconsin School Counselor Association, WI	\$44,000
Women's League Child Development Center, CT	\$50,000
Xavier University, OH	\$84,000
Other Commitments	\$675,098

**TOTAL AWARDED \$73 Million**





## Unleashing the power of education for 50 years.

Established in 1967, Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation & Affiliates is a nonprofit group focused on helping students nationwide prepare for and succeed in postsecondary education and student loan repayment.

As a leading student loan guarantor and servicer, we provided assistance and repayment planning to more than 8 million borrowers in 2017. We also provide assistance to colleges and lenders across the nation.

The group's earnings are used to promote higher education access and completion for students of color, low-income students and first-generation students. Since 2006, Great Lakes has committed nearly \$260 million in grant funding.

[community.mygreatlakes.org](https://community.mygreatlakes.org)

