MINDFUL GIVING
Thoughtfully increasing college completion.
2013-2014 PHILANTHROPY REPORT

GREAT LAKES
HIGHER EDUCATION HAS THE POWER TO CHANGE LIVES FOR THE BETTER.

Yet it continues to remain out of reach for far too many students. To change that, we’ve committed nearly $100 million since 2006.
MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Great Lakes is focused on helping students from low-income households, students of color, and students who are the first in their families to attend college. Traditionally, they have the most to gain from college yet have the least support in getting there.

The charitable mission of Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation & Affiliates is manifested through our Community Investments program. This program is the primary way we work to help increase higher education completion rates, which are critical for both economic prosperity and social well-being.

We value equally: certifications, apprenticeships, and degrees
The notion that “college” is defined as a baccalaureate degree is outdated and limiting. There are any number of paths to higher education, and we support them all. From earning a program certificate, to working as an apprentice, to obtaining a two- or four-year degree. All are steps in the right direction.

$21 million committed to leveling the playing field this year alone
During the 2013-2014 academic year we increased our community investments significantly, funding more programs and reaching more students than ever. But even as we approach $100 million in total commitments since 2006, our goal remains singular and unchanged. One by one, we strive to see more students complete a postsecondary education so they can transform their lives, their families, and our communities.

Three-point approach: services, research, grants
To achieve this goal, our experience shows us that the best approach is one that integrates efforts on three fronts. In this report we show how our college advising services are offered directly to students and those who help them; how the research we fund is designed to learn what really works; and how the grants we make help partners run like-minded programs for students.

With everything we do, we are always mindful that moving students toward greater opportunity in life benefits us all. This is our purpose, our passion, and our promise.

Sincerely,

RICHARD D. GEORGE
President & Chief Executive Officer
Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation & Affiliates
Helping students achieve their full potential is a big deal—for them and for the future of our communities. With so much at stake, we have to get it right.

Knowledge and action are both imperative. Understanding what holds students back and taking bold but deliberate steps to address those barriers are equally critical. We think we’ve found a good balance. Look at our services, research, and grants, and a pattern emerges. That’s by design. We take a consistent and thorough approach in all we do, refined through years of experimentation. And above all: we strive to be transparent in how we work.

We identify problems by paying attention

Our work brings us in contact with smart, caring professionals and inspiring, articulate students. When we ask them about their experiences—and then listen to what they say—new opportunities and challenges are brought to light. Talking shop with others serving students, making grants, or conducting research is another source of insight.

We look for points on the path to college completion where students too often get off track. We know we can’t solve every problem, so we look for the ones where we feel we can make a difference, working in tandem with current or potential partners.

We work with partners to take action

To every partnership, we bring a set of guiding principles and a firm focus on the problems we want to tackle. In selecting partners, we seek a diverse array of solutions—diverse in the student populations to be served, strategies to be employed, and outcomes to be achieved.

Through it all, we place a priority on direct and personal engagement with students. We see time and again that the best results are achieved when someone students trust helps them make good use of information and resources in their own, unique lives.

We form partnerships to find solutions

We seek out others who share our goals, values, and commitment to evaluation and improvement. Our most fruitful partnerships come from working with three distinct groups:

- Nonprofit community-based organizations and institutions of higher education with compelling ideas and plans for using our grant funds.
- Counselors and educators at high schools in low-income communities who welcome our added support.
- Leading scholars studying strategies to increase equity and achievement in higher education.

We evaluate findings to get better

There’s a lot to be learned from the data our partners share on site visits, in reports, and in conversation. The variety of actions taken, student populations served, and findings reported yield a rich repository of knowledge. We apply the lessons as we continually evolve and expand our philanthropic efforts to help students meet each challenge along the way.

Where we work:

Our philanthropy is focused in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Ohio, and Iowa.

To receive announcements of new grant opportunities, subscribe to our Great Lakes Philanthropy Newsletter at community.mygreatlakes.org.
2013-2014 ACADEMIC YEAR COMMITMENTS

$21 MILLION

32% COLLEGE SUCCESS GRANTS
31% RESEARCH
20% COLLEGE READY GRANTS
13% CAREER READY GRANTS
3% COLLEGE ACCESS ADVISING SERVICES
1% PROGRAM SUPPORT
Look closely and you’ll see that college success is the result of a continuous and connected series of successes at several critical junctures. Fall short at any point in this progression, and the promise and potential of college completion can be lost. So our approach to graduating more students is to fund services, research, and grants designed to help overcome challenges at each stage along the way. We’ve organized this report to reflect that progression.

**Seeing students all the way through**

Inside are stories of efforts being made to see students all the way through. It begins with helping them believe that college is a real possibility in their lives, whatever their circumstances. And it culminates in bridging the sometimes daunting gap between postsecondary studies and a new career.

**Improving outcomes: at the heart of everything we do**

Our organization exists to help more students go to college and find success in life. Many rely on student loans to make it happen, and millions count on the customer service we provide to understand their options, solve problems, and stay on track.

Our 1,800 employees advance our mission through their daily efforts, which make possible the community investments detailed in this report. Further, they amplify the impact we make as an organization by getting involved locally in education causes that complement our mission.

As you’ll see, helping students from a wide variety of circumstances build brighter, more secure futures demands engagement in a wide variety of ways.
According to a U.S. Department of Education survey, public school students receive an average of just 38 minutes of college admissions advice from their guidance counselors—a tiny percentage of the time needed to navigate a process that is challenging for even the most highly educated families.

“The Crucial Role of College Counselors.” The Atlantic, Beth Zasloff and Joshua Steckel, April 2014
For the members of our College Access Advising team, it’s often about building trust. From being an expert source of information available to help students and families prepare for and navigate the path to college to sharing changes to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) with high school counselors, building trust is critical to the team’s success.

For many of the students we work with, college is not a priority or something that they give much thought to. For others, they think about college, but are put off by the unknown. And then there are those who already know the value of higher education, but don’t think it’s an option for them. This last group of students asks a lot of questions, including: “Where do I get the money to pay for college?”, “Are my grades good enough to go?,” or “My parents didn’t go and are doing fine, why should I go?”

Often what students lack is the insight needed to make an informed decision about higher education and someone with the time and expertise to help them. School counselors are spread thin for time. In the United States, the student-to-school-counselor ratio is 471-to-1 while the American School Counselor Association recommends a maximum ratio of 250-to-1.*

That’s where our College Access Advising team makes an impact. By developing partnerships with schools and counselors, they are able to provide life-changing knowledge and support during critical steps that let students know they can, and should, go to college.

Students and families have been personally contacted by our College Access Advisors during 2013-2014.

24,000+
Making an impact
Everyone should have a path to college. No matter what their academic background or financial situation, college is always an option.

That's the message our 18-member College Access Advising team shares with students and families across Wisconsin and South Dakota, through a mix of free workshops and one-on-one college access advising assistance.

We hold thousands of college planning workshops that cover the topics we’ve learned are the most beneficial to the students we serve: the FAFSA®, financial aid, applications and admissions, general college preparation, and college exploration. The goal is to show students why college matters, what they need to do at each step along the way, and what they should consider when choosing a college and major to help ensure a good fit.

We also work closely with students and families to file the FAFSA to make sure they have the money to go to college (learn more about this on page 14).

Helping busy counselors
We call our free program Next Stop College and it was developed to support the work counselors do with ninth through twelfth grade students and their families every day. Through the program, print materials, workshops, and one-on-one advising sessions are made available to students and families. We also offer the counselors we work with training that fits their busy schedules. Through webinars and in-person sessions, we share key information and tips on college planning, admissions, and financial aid at critical times throughout the school year.

84% of students attending our workshops demonstrate increased knowledge of critical college access information.
Simply put, students who arrive on campus ready to pass college-level classes are the ones most likely to finish their programs. Remedial courses can help transition underprepared students into college-level classes, but they come with challenges and risks. Financial aid often doesn’t cover their costs, adding financial strain. Students taking them may feel stigmatized. For these and other reasons, students taking remedial math and English are at much higher risk of leaving before earning their degree or certificate—and the brighter, more secure future it promises.

How can we best help the students with the most to gain prepare to succeed in college-level classes from day one? Each of the 34 programs funded by our 2013-2014 College Ready grants has its own compelling answer, and some lessons to share.

Here are three powerful examples:

Science: it’s a beautiful thing
Young women from several Milwaukee high schools are discovering the appeal of science and math majors—through the study of beauty. Students in Alverno College’s Girls Advanced Academy in Science and Mathematics gain practical experience applying statistics, cell biology, physiology, and chemistry. One example: teams create, test, and present skin lotions to parents and teachers. They increase their math and science aptitudes, and develop analysis, problem-solving, and collaboration skills, as well.

Boosting skills, scores, and confidence
Preparing underperforming 10th graders to thrive in college is the goal of Below the Midpoint at Saint Paul College. Students come on campus for 32 weeks of intensive work in math and reading. Their families join in for evening workshops on college applications and financing. Students see big gains on placement tests—like Ariana Rivera, who increased her math score by 50 percent. Parents like Ariana’s mom DeAnn see broader gains: “I want to say as a parent what an impact this program has made in my daughter’s life. Not only has it improved her math and reading, she has gained confidence.”

Students teaching students
The best way to learn is to teach. That’s the idea with Prepare2Nspire at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. Eighth and 11th grade students improve their math scores through “cascading tutoring.” University undergrads mentor and tutor 11th graders, who then prepare lessons for eighth graders each Saturday. Guest speakers, math-focused field trips, and social events round out the experience. The program is making a big impact on both students and parents, and is inspiring some 11th graders to consider teaching careers.
60% of community college students need remedial courses

Only 25% of these students complete their degree or certificate

2. Community College Research Center, Developmental Education in Community Colleges
The cost of obtaining a college degree has increased by 1,120% over the past 35 years.

Bloomberg, Labor Department, August 2012
One of the biggest and most overwhelming obstacles for students pursuing higher education—and the many benefits that come with it—is finding the money to pay for their education. Federal aid is available to help all students, but sometimes even that isn’t enough. This can be especially true for students from low-income backgrounds whose families are working hard just to make ends meet.

Many of these students aren’t aware of or don’t take the necessary steps to access the aid available to them, because they are often the first in their families to go to college. For some students, even after receiving financial aid, they don’t have access to the money needed to cover life’s unexpected expenses. And with the cost of higher education on the rise and more students competing for scholarships and grant dollars, finding the money can be challenging.

While we know there is no simple solution, short of covering the costs of higher education for anyone wishing to pursue it, Great Lakes has taken strides to help address this problem. Through a number of innovative approaches, we’ve already helped thousands of college hopefuls find the money they need to make their education a reality.
A scholarship promise

Does the promise of a scholarship—early in a student’s high school career—increase the odds that the student will go on to higher education? We’ve committed $10 million in scholarship money to find out through The Degree Project.® Launched in collaboration with Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS), The Degree Project aims to motivate more Milwaukee high school students to do well in school, and continue their education in college.

This groundbreaking initiative was introduced in 2011, when Great Lakes and MPS surprised 2,600 randomly selected freshmen with the chance to earn a scholarship of up to $12,000 to help pay for college. To get the scholarship, students must graduate on time, with a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.5, and an attendance record of 90 percent or higher.

An important goal of The Degree Project, as with all of our philanthropy, is to learn what works. For this reason, The Degree Project includes an ongoing evaluation of the program by a team of Tulane University and University of Wisconsin-Madison researchers, independently funded by the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences.

During June 2014, students in The Degree Project finish up their junior year of high school and we get closer to answering this question and helping inform future college access efforts, in Milwaukee and beyond.

Failing to file the FAFSA® meant 1.3 million students missed out on a full Pell Grant of $5,645 for the 2013-2014 academic year. That’s over $7.3 billion in unclaimed free money.

CNNMoney, March 2014

The FAFSA® is the key

Without financial aid, many students simply can’t afford college, no matter how well prepared they are academically. The key is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA provides access to all federal aid, including grants and federal loans. Many states and institutions also rely on the FAFSA to allocate financial aid. However, many students fail to file the FAFSA, often because they mistakenly believe they are not eligible. This results in students missing out on the money to help make their college dreams a reality.

To address this issue in South Dakota and Wisconsin, our College Access Advising team tells students “u hafta FAFSA.” Our goal is to raise awareness of the importance of the FAFSA and help students complete and submit it.

During 2013-2014, our team has provided FAFSA workshops and one-on-one advising for thousands of students and families. During this period, over 2,000 of the students we’ve helped have hit “submit” on their FAFSA with a member of our team by their side.
Money for life's unexpected expenses

No one can predict when life will throw them a curve ball. Imagine having to choose between paying next semester’s tuition and fixing your car so you can get to and from work and class each day. For many college students, all it takes is one unexpected bill to create a financial hardship that may lead them to drop out of college.

To help the students of Wisconsin’s technical colleges, we’ve funded a three-year, $1.9 million Emergency Grant Program. Now in its second year, our funds are used to bring the Scholarship America® Dreamkeepers® emergency grant model to each college and help the neediest of students cover unexpected costs.

When an emergency arises, students apply for small grants. The immediate goal is to remove the obstacle and the stress that comes with it. More importantly, we want to help more students stay in college and get their degree or diploma—without getting waylaid by an expense just beyond their means. So far it’s paying off. To date, grant recipients are four percentage points more likely to stay enrolled in their programs compared to similar students—and a full 10 percentage points more likely to persist than the national average for two-year public college students.

$368

AVerAGE Grant AWARDED THROUGH THE EMERGENCY GRANT PROGRAM TO HELP STUDENTS STAY IN SCHOOL.

Filling a financial gap

The Wisconsin Covenant promises eligible students financial aid based on their family’s need. Even so, many students and families see a gap between the aid they receive and their college costs. We’re making grants to help students and families fill that gap.

Eighth grade students who signed the Wisconsin Covenant Pledge between 2007 and 2011 promised to earn a high school diploma while maintaining at least a B average. Those who fulfill the pledge upon graduation are recognized as Wisconsin Covenant Scholars and are promised a spot at a college in Wisconsin.

To help pay the way, the State of Wisconsin gives Scholars graduating high school between 2011 and 2016 a Wisconsin Covenant Scholars Grant of $250 to $1,500. The annual grant depends on family income, and is available for four years of college over a five-year period.

Even with the grant from the State of Wisconsin, many bright, hardworking Wisconsin Covenant Scholars from low-income households will need additional financial aid to be able to attend college.

To help these students fill the financial gap between the cost of a higher education and the amount of federal and state financial aid they receive, Great Lakes provides an additional grant of up to $1,500 each year.

Our grant works together with the state’s Wisconsin Covenant Scholars Grant to provide Scholars up to $2,500 per year, up to a total of $10,000.
COMMITTING TO COLLEGE.

When it comes to getting students to college, admission is only the first step. According to Harvard researchers, up to 40 percent of high school seniors who have been accepted to college fail to attend in the fall. During the summer before college, at a time when they need it most, students often lose the support network that was helping them prepare for college, and as a result struggle to overcome the inevitable obstacles that interfere with the realization of their college plans. This so-called “summer melt” occurs disproportionately among students from low-income households, students of color, and those planning to attend a two-year college.

To help reverse this troubling trend, Great Lakes opened its Commit to College grant in February 2014. As a result, four Wisconsin nonprofits were awarded a total of $115,000 to implement summer programming—such as coaching, workshops, and peer mentoring—to keep nearly 400 Wisconsin students from traditionally underserved backgrounds on the path to college.

In addition to funding, grant recipients benefit from the services of Great Lakes’ College Access Advising team. Working in partnership with each grantee, our team offers onsite staff and program support to provide students with workshops and one-on-one advising to help them arrive at college prepared to succeed.

Overcoming the unknown
“For many students it’s overcoming the fear of the unknown,” says Jerilyn Dinsmoor, Executive Director of La Crosse Promise, one of our Commit to College funded programs. “From not knowing what to expect once they arrive on campus to figuring out how to pay for their education—not knowing can be scary, especially for students with parents who have no college experience to pull from. We work to help them overcome that fear.”

One way that La Crosse Promise achieves this is by using student leaders as peer mentors who work with registered freshman at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse over the course of the summer leading up to the new school year. Mentors are assigned to each student, providing a level of comfort similar to what they experience with friends. This helps new students connect with the people and resources they need to be successful in the fall.
Up to two out of every five high school seniors accepted to college fail to attend in the fall.

“I thought college was going to be, ‘You’re on your own. Good luck.’ We have established a little community among us. I like that people know me and that I know them. It’s nice to know that you can go and ask for help. When I go back to see my mom, I miss being over here. It’s a home for me.”

- JO MARTINEZ, FRESHMAN AT CARDINAL STRITCH UNIVERSITY FIRST IN HER FAMILY TO ATTEND COLLEGE
Creating a Culture of Completion for Underserved Students.

Students who feel they belong on campus complete their programs at higher rates than those who don't. This is especially crucial for students who are the first in their families to attend college, students of color, and those from low-income backgrounds. Through our 2013-2014 College Success grants, we’re funding 29 programs to create and sustain supportive communities to help more than 4,000 such students finish their programs of study.

Here are a few examples:

Contagious excitement for learning

Be First at Iowa Western Community College helps 150 first-generation students navigate their first year through weekly advising, supplemental instruction, and tutoring. Advisors take a personal interest in students, and students rely on their encouragement and help in leveraging campus resources to meet financial and academic challenges.
Ninety-five percent of Be First participants rate their advisor as very helpful. Students also connect and come to rely on each other for academic and social support.

The strides made by Be First students can be dramatic. “When one of my pre-nursing students received her first A, she couldn't stop smiling,” a member of the science faculty told program staff. “She seemed more comfortable answering questions and her excitement was contagious to her classmates.”

Additional proof of success: 88 percent of participants remained enrolled the next semester, and two-thirds achieved a GPA of 2.0 or higher.

A program that feels like family
A focus on male students of color distinguishes the Brother-to-Brother program at Fox Valley Technical College, which is producing encouraging results. Eighty-three percent of students in the program remained enrolled the following semester or graduated, and 83 percent successfully completed three-quarters or more of their academic credits.

The program has come to feel like family for many students, boosting their confidence and lending support through study groups, progress meetings, and intrusive advising. Students have been enthusiastic in their participation; they’ve even begun advocating to create a similar program for female students of color at their school.

Achieving success in college—and parenthood
Students who balance college classes and raising children face their own set of challenges. Life Impact at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee provides one-on-one and community support to help these students overcome academic, professional, personal, and financial barriers. Enrolled parents get access to life coaching, emergency funds, tutoring, networking, and family-friendly social events. Eighty-four percent of participants graduate or stay on track for it, and 100 percent of their graduates report employment or enrollment in advanced degree programs within six to nine months of graduation.
Low-income students are the least likely to complete a postsecondary program.

### Wisconsin HOPE Lab

College enrollment is growing, but students from low-income households, students of color, and those who would be the first in their families to attend college are still being left behind. Our purpose with the Wisconsin HOPE Lab is finding the best ways to level the playing field for such students, and Harvesting Opportunities for Postsecondary Education (HOPE) for the common good.

We’re providing $2.5 million over five years to develop the new research lab—the first of its kind—at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Its mission is to find new and effective ways to minimize barriers to college completion, so more students reach their full potential.

**The lab will carry out its charge in several ways:**

- Hosting workshops with counselors and students to identify problems and opportunities.
- Visiting schools and community-based organizations providing college access and success services.
- Conducting research to clarify challenges to be addressed.
- Testing potential approaches and evaluating them experimentally.
- Sharing news on discoveries, ongoing developments, and evaluation results with the broader higher education community.

The Wisconsin HOPE Lab intends to make its findings useful for practical application in college access and success services. Lab staff will observe services in real-world settings and actively engage with leaders in the field, so their research agendas are aligned with the most pressing challenges to college completion.
Apprenticeships offer on-the-job training and a powerful opportunity to learn skills to land a good-paying job. Apprenticeships can also require up to 10,000 work hours and take up to 5 years—with no financial aid available.
WORK EXPERIENCE, TRAINING, AND FUNDING HELPS STUDENTS LAND JOBS.

All too often we hear stories of those eager to work turned away from jobs and being told “if only you had previous job experience” or “you lack the training we require.” The reality is that this can be true whether a student is pursuing a traditional four-year degree, a two-year degree, or a program certificate. And the irony is that employers with jobs in fields like science, math, construction, and advanced manufacturing can’t find workers with the training to fill them. To address this void and give students the chance to expand their job opportunities, Great Lakes offers specialized scholarships and grants to increase the odds of launching a successful career.

Ensuring apprenticeship completion

For students in the construction trades, the final step to a good-paying, high-demand job is an apprenticeship. But something as simple as a pair of boots often stands in the way of program completion.

Working as an apprentice means having to pay for classes without the benefit of financial aid. It can also mean requiring a student to buy expensive tools and clothing with money from their own pocket—sometimes while making a wage barely above the poverty line. A student in this situation may have to decide between paying the electric bill or buying the tools and clothing that keep him/her on the path to a career in the construction trades.

We understand that student apprentices are making sacrifices in order to invest in their futures—working at lower wages today to earn the skills and experience they need for a better job tomorrow. To help more of these students persevere toward that goal, we’ve created the Jim Elliott Apprentice Scholarship for the Construction Trades. This scholarship honors Milwaukee’s own Jim Elliott, who has dedicated a lifetime to the construction trades in Wisconsin.

Through this 10-year, $200,000 commitment, 20 scholarships will be awarded each year to help student apprentices at Milwaukee Area Technical College pay their expenses. In January 2014, 20 hard-working students received $1,000 each to buy tools, equipment, and clothing for their trade.
Encouraging majors in science, technology, engineering, and math

Sixty percent of U.S. employers are having difficulties finding qualified workers to fill vacancies at their companies in the science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields. This is why STEM education is a national priority, and for the third consecutive year, Great Lakes is inviting students majoring in STEM disciplines to apply for $2,500 scholarships through the Great Lakes National Scholarship Program. In June 2014, 750 new and continuing students will receive awards totaling $1.9 million. These awards help students pay for increasingly prominent majors and help address a critical need in our workforce.

Paid internships provide real-world experience

We created the Career Ready Internship grant so that fewer students have to make the difficult choice between taking an unpaid internship that will improve their job prospects after college, and keeping a low-paying job that won’t.

For many college juniors and seniors, juggling going to class, studying, holding down a job, and taking an unpaid internship is simply not possible. Regrettably, most cannot find a way to take an unpaid internship when faced with challenges such as adding extra hours to their already busy schedules or taking time off their regular jobs only to end up wondering which bill goes unpaid. So those students miss out on invaluable, real-world experience working in their field of study—experience that can make them more competitive in the job market after graduation. In fact, according to the National Association of Colleges and Employers, 67 percent of students who took part in paid internships at for-profit organizations were offered full-time jobs.

We don’t believe that internships should be a luxury available only to those who can afford to work without pay. As a result, 19 colleges and universities in Wisconsin were awarded more than $2.5 million in Career Ready Internship grants in September 2013. Funds are being used to support nearly 1,300 paid internship opportunities for college juniors and seniors.

Skilled training fills employer needs

Consistent with national trends, Wisconsin employer report having trouble finding workers with the skills needed to fill open positions in advanced manufacturing. The irony is that there are people eager to take on these family-sustaining jobs. As college costs—and student debt levels—continue to rise, a better linkage between postsecondary education and the workforce has become even more imperative.

We created the Wisconsin Workforce Partnership Grant in an effort to fast-track the development and implementation of programs that produce graduates ready to meet specific employer needs. Under a three-year, $3.8 million pilot program, Wisconsin Technical College System campuses are forging partnerships with local manufacturers to design tailored training programs.

Our goal is to provide students with training that results in the completion of a meaningful degree, diploma, or certificate program—and placement in good-paying occupations at businesses engaged in advanced manufacturing.
“We’re trying to diversify the trades by bringing in more low-income apprentices so we can help them move into the middle class—that’s a challenge because of the costs associated with an apprenticeship. The Jim Elliott Scholarship helps make a better life a reality.”

— MARY WATRUD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CONSTRUCTION TRAINING, INC.
EMPLOYEE GIVING

The impact we strive to make as a nonprofit is amplified by the personal involvement of many of our 1,800 employees in a variety of education causes in our communities. Employees join together to coordinate their giving and service through our Great Lakes Gives program.

Employees have adopted schools near each of our eight offices. Each one has a high percentage of students from low-income backgrounds, and each identifies specific needs throughout the school year. Our employees respond by donating whatever is needed—school supplies, snacks to remove hunger as a barrier to learning, books for summer reading programs, winter clothing to keep students warm, Box Tops for Education® that schools can convert into needed cash, and more.

Employees also give generously in our annual United Way campaign. The impact is multiplied by a corporate match dedicated 100 percent to education causes that complement our mission.

Thousands of dollars are raised by employees participating in education-focused events in our communities, as well.

Whether volunteering at an adopted school, participating in a silent auction for United Way, or riding bikes with friends and family to raise money for the Boys & Girls Club, our employees live our mission of advancing education to change lives for the better.
A future of growth
Taking on bigger challenges, delivering even bigger results.

As we look toward 2014-2015—and beyond—our focus remains singular: We want to know what works. We want to know what doesn’t. And we want to know what could be working, but isn’t. Equipped with this knowledge we will take bold action, addressing big issues with big solutions. We will translate promising research into effective programming and scale-up proven and successful ideas with the goal of reaching even more students with even greater efficiency.

Simply put, we want to be a recognized catalyst in effecting lasting changes to the educational landscape, and we are ready to make the commitments needed to so. We will be expecting the same of our partners, as well. While we will continue “testing the waters” with new ideas, look for us to dive deeper than ever into initiatives that provide the most significant, long-term payback.

Key among our funding priorities will be internships, apprenticeships, mitigation of “summer melt” among incoming college freshmen, success in college remedial coursework, increased FAFSA® completion, and more.

Additionally, we will be surveying our grantees to learn what’s working and what can be improved at Great Lakes. We look forward to receiving honest feedback and sharing it in early 2015.

Our continued promise is a tireless belief in building better futures, through thoughtful programming and thorough analysis.

“Every year we strive to help even more students realize the dream of higher education—because it remains the surest path to economic prosperity.”

Amy Kerwin
Vice President - Community Investments
Great Lakes Higher Education Guaranty Corporation

Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation & Affiliates

We work with schools, lenders, and community organizations to change lives for the better through higher education. Great Lakes supports these partners with philanthropic, educational, and operational resources that help students and families pay for college and build brighter futures. One of the nation’s largest integrated providers of student loan services, Great Lakes serves the U.S. Department of Education, colleges across the nation, and student loan borrowers, servicing more than 8.6 million borrower accounts. Great Lakes is a nonprofit corporation headquartered in Madison, Wisconsin, with offices in Rocky Hill, Connecticut; Eagan, Minnesota; Aberdeen, South Dakota; Plano, Texas; and Boscobel, Eau Claire, and Stevens Point, Wisconsin.
**BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF DANE COUNTY**
Providing rigorous weekly tutoring and coursework to increase GPAs and prepare 190 middle school and 625 high school students for success in college.

**$609,300**

**CHIPPEWA VALLEY TECHNICAL COLLEGE**
Providing 24 Eau Claire 11th graders with a dual credit math course that allows students to test into college-level math when complete.

**$35,213**

**EDGEOOWD COLLEGE**
Providing 15 middle school students with academic skill-building and tutoring. College mentors guide students through activities on campus throughout the academic year.

**$29,984**

**FORWARD SERVICE CORPORATION**
Preparing high school students academically for college, improving their GPAs, and reducing the likelihood that they will need remedial college courses.

**$137,756**

**NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE**
Providing 20 adult students with instruction four nights per week to prepare them for the challenges of college-level work.

**$26,500**

**REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA**
Increasing the knowledge of 180 high school students through a 10-week ACT review on the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities campus.

**$21,721**

**SAINT PAUL COLLEGE**
Increasing the academic preparedness of 50 underperforming 10th graders through 32 weeks of skills-enhancing work in math and reading.

**$125,000**

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**ALVERNO COLLEGE**
Helping 38 high school juniors pursue science and math majors using the study of beauty.

**$72,608**

**BELoit COLLEGE**
Using an online curriculum, weekly lab and tutor time, and monthly workshops to improve the ACT scores of 40 11th and 12th graders.

**$34,092**

**COMMUNITY ACTION CENTER OF NORTHFIELD**
Supporting 455 6th–12th graders. Students improve GPAs through individual academic counseling and tutoring throughout the academic year.

**$126,345**

**EDGEOOWD COLLEGE**
Providing 12 8th–10th graders with one-on-one tutoring once per week. Tutors incorporate college readiness tips that they learn through a paired course at Edgewood College.

**$9,110**

**MID-STATE TECHNICAL COLLEGE**
Offering on-campus college writing and math classes, study time, and a case manager to prepare 80 high school juniors and seniors for the rigors of college.

**$111,076**

**PATHWAYS TO COLLEGE**
Offering after-school tutoring, Saturday skill-building workshops, leadership training, and an intensive summer program to 180 Milwaukee middle school students.

**$171,800**

**REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA**
Increasing the knowledge of 180 high school students through a 10-week ACT review on the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities campus.

**$21,721**

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**COLLEGE READY GRANTS**
$4.2 Million

**COLLEGE POSSIBLE TWIN CITIES**
Providing services to increase the ACT scores of 800 high school juniors at 19 partner high schools.

**$300,000**

**CONNECTIONS CENTER**
Supporting 570 9th–10th graders with one-on-one tutoring, academic counseling and individual study time throughout the academic year.

**$90,000**

**EDGEOOWD COLLEGE**
Providing 15 middle school students with academic skill-building and tutoring. College mentors guide students through activities on campus throughout the academic year.

**$29,984**

**FORWARD SERVICE CORPORATION**
Preparing high school students academically for college, improving their GPAs, and reducing the likelihood that they will need remedial college courses.

**$137,756**

**NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE**
Providing 20 adult students with instruction four nights per week to prepare them for the challenges of college-level work.

**$26,500**

**REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA**
Increasing the knowledge of 180 high school students through a 10-week ACT review on the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities campus.

**$21,721**

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**UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - EAU CLAIRE**
Providing weekly academic tutoring and college access information to raise the GPAs of 180 6th–12th graders.

**$294,341**

**UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - MADISON**
Offering workshops and tutoring to increase reading and writing scores for 30 adult learners.

**$66,099**

**UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - MILWAUKEE**
Providing tutoring, parent/student workshops, academic advising, and college visits.

**$198,103**

**UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - SUPERIOR**
Partnering with a local school district to provide supplemental academic instruction to increase the cumulative GPA of 100 6th–12th grade students.

**$134,085**

**UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - WHITewater**
Serving 100 high school students through tutoring, programming, academic advising, and a sequential curriculum during the school year and summer.

**$216,901**

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**COllEgE REaDy GRaNTS**
$4.2 Million
With time, attention, tutoring, and challenging work, students gain expanded options for college, and increased opportunities for lifelong success.
ALVERNO COLLEGE
Providing research-documented strategies, including proactive advising, to 250 students who are the first in their family to attend college.
$169,149

CARDINAL STRITCH UNIVERSITY
Building a living/learning community, developing relationships, and engaging in programs that enhance the educational experience for 30 first-year students.
$60,000

CENTURY COLLEGE
Providing an entry-level reading class, within an intentional learning community, to 135 students.
$275,478

FOX VALLEY TECHNICAL COLLEGE
Providing intrusive advising and learning community opportunities to 40 male students of color.
$105,974

IOWA WESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Helping 150 students navigate their first year of studies through weekly advising meetings, supplemental instruction, and tutoring.
$214,190

MADISON COLLEGE
Establishing a learning community for 50 first- and second-year students, supporting the development of positive character traits and leadership abilities.
$68,797

MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY
Assisting 38 scholars of color with their transition to, and through, college.
$106,940

MOUNT MARY UNIVERSITY
Providing services to increase financial literacy, sense of belonging, career development, and empowerment, for 60 students.
$209,550

NORTHSTAR EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
Providing interactive student loan and financial literacy resources free of charge to Iowa colleges and students.
$150,000

ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY
Offering 150 first-year students common core courses, workshops, tutoring, mentoring, and encouragement for campus involvement.
$299,999

ST. OLAF COLLEGE
Advising 170 students throughout their college experience at regular group workshops and intrusive advising sessions.
$90,266

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA FOUNDATION
Funding scholarships for University of Minnesota students, in honor of a Great Lakes board member.
$100,000

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - MILWAUKEE
Providing individual and campus support to help 40 student-parents overcome academic and personal barriers.
$139,865

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - MARATHON COUNTY
Building connections with 165 first-generation college students by providing academic assistance and advising.
$143,683

UNITED COMMUNITY CENTER
Helping 100 students connect their college work to future careers while building essential professional skills.
$195,208

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - MILWAUKEE
Providing an entry-level reading class, within an intentional learning community, to 135 students.
$275,478

ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY
Offering 150 first-year students common core courses, workshops, tutoring, mentoring, and encouragement for campus involvement.
$299,999

COLLEGE SUCCESS GRANTS
$6.8 Million
Each program has been thoughtfully designed to address the challenges known to keep students from graduating.
# CAREER READY GRANTS

## $2.7 Million

### COLLEGE ACCESS ADVISING

$611,000

We field a team of advisors to help students and families in low-income communities plan, prepare, and pay for college—moving them toward greater opportunity in life.

### PROGRAM SUPPORT

$194,000

### RESEARCH GRANTS

$6.5 Million

We invest in research initiatives to assess how a range of different strategies impact college access and success. Our funding has launched the Wisconsin HOPE Lab, and is helping to determine how financial aid affects outcomes for students in STEM fields.

### SUPPORT FOR 12 LIKE-MINDED ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDING...

- Minnesota Council on Foundations
- Council for Opportunity in Education
- Grantmakers for Education
- Donors Forum of Wisconsin
- National College Access Network
- National Scholarship Providers Association

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### JIM ELLIOTT APPRENTICE SCHOLARSHIP FOR THE CONSTRUCTION TRADES

MILWAUKEE AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE ........................................................... $200,000

### INTERNSHIP GRANTS

- ALVERNO COLLEGE, MILWAUKEE ......................................................................... $150,000
- BELOIT COLLEGE, BELOIT ........................................................................ $80,870
- CARDINAL STRITCH UNIVERSITY, MILWAUKEE ........................................ $149,600
- CARROLL UNIVERSITY, WAUKESHA ........................................................... $94,500
- CARThAGE COLLEGE, KENOSHA ............................................................... $144,897
- LAKELAND COLLEGE, PLYMOUTH ............................................................. $150,000
- LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY, APPLETon ......................................................... $125,000
- MILWAUKEE SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING .................................................. $150,000
- MOUNT MARY UNIVERSITY, MILWAUKEE ................................................ $150,000
- RIPON COLLEGE, RIPON ............................................................................. $135,125
- SILVER LAKE COLLEGE, MANITOWOC .................................................. $150,000
- ST. NORBERT COLLEGE, De PERE ............................................................ $150,000
- UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-GREEN BAY ............................................. $150,000
- UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE ............................................. $150,000
- UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-OshKosh .................................................. $150,000
- UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-RIVER FALLS ......................................... $28,200
- UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-STEVENs POINT ........................................ $150,000
- UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-SUPERIor .................................................... $150,000
- VITERBO UNIVERSITY, LA CROSSE ......................................................... $135,020
WE’VE COMMITTED OVER $21 MILLION FOR THE 2013-2014 ACADEMIC YEAR

ALL WITH ONE GOAL IN MIND:
To see more students complete college—and go on to transform their lives, their families, and our communities.
GUIDING PRINCIPLES
OF OUR PHILANTHROPY:

LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD so that all students—especially those from underserved backgrounds—are prepared for success in higher education.

ELIMINATE TWO KEY BARRIERS TO COLLEGE SUCCESS: lack of academic preparedness at the pre-college level and threats to college completion for students enrolled in higher education.

TRACK MEANINGFUL RESULTS for students served. This makes it possible to learn about what works and what doesn’t, so we can all continually refine our efforts.

VALUE ALL FORMS OF EDUCATION beyond high school equally, whether the academic program leads to a two- or four-year degree or other credential.