



# THE VISION

www.winningfutures.org

School-based Mentoring Since 1994

Annual Newsletter



Future Designer  
**Colleen**  
Winning Futures Alumni



Future Sales Manager  
**Christian**  
Winning Futures Alumni

## Forging a New Path in Workforce Development

Letter from the CEO-Kristina Marshall

The workforce – and employer needs – are changing rapidly. That’s why Winning Futures is developing a new 10-year target for the organization to evolve from a one-year, in-school mentoring program to a two-to-three year workforce preparation mentoring experience that helps a student emerge truly ready to contribute with the social skills and practical skills needed for success.

The word “vocation” means “calling” – what we are meant to do to contribute to the world. Many of you know that leading Winning Futures was my calling. How do our students find theirs? We think they need more experiential workplace visits, internships and job shadows in addition to

the proven skills they are developing in our existing facilitated mentoring programs.

**We will evolve from a one-year, in-school mentoring program to a two-to-three year workforce preparation mentoring experience.**

In today’s fast-paced workplace with constantly changing technology and the need to juggle many projects simultaneously, students need more and more support to figure out what that right career is and how to get there. College graduation rates are still low partly because some kids who would

be better suited for skilled trades, computer programming or other more hands-on vocations are pursuing paths that may not make sense for them.

In other cases, there are workers who want to begin increasing their earning potential immediately but eventually earn a four-year degree via night school or online learning. There will also be students who go directly to college. We welcome and support each of these outcomes.

### How We’ll Do It

Winning Futures is looking at the research, the trends happening in academia, the workforce, and talking to corporate leaders, entrepreneurs and others who

Continued on next page

care. Their feedback, along with the feedback from our sponsors, mentors, staff and educators, will shape the specifics of our new long-range strategic plan.

It's about having kids really assess who they are and what they want. It's about going much deeper than we traditionally have.

Here are some of the practical things we think students need to learn: how to keep a job, how to interact with HR professionals, problem-solving skills, professionalism, how to deal with a difficult boss, communication skills, what to do when personal issues affect your job. The list goes on.

We also want to be the bridge that not only helps high-school aged youth, but is there to build a strong foundation so when their career goals or industry factors drive a career change they are better equipped to handle it. How many of us know someone who has been

devastated by a job loss or downsizing event through no fault of their own?

We know this new role for Winning Futures will require resources. We'll have to, at the appropriate time, add an individual to the team who works on company outreach, job shadow logistics and the like, along with career coaches for our students.

#### The Timeline

We plan to continue to gather information for the next 12 months and then form a roll-out plan with our high schools. This push will be a big focus area for our fundraising and we need all of our community supporters, including you, to help with spreading the word.

Educating employers will happen one company at a time. Those who find success in approaching workforce development in a new way, in partnership with us, will be evidence to the next wave that the investment in

time and resources is well worth it.

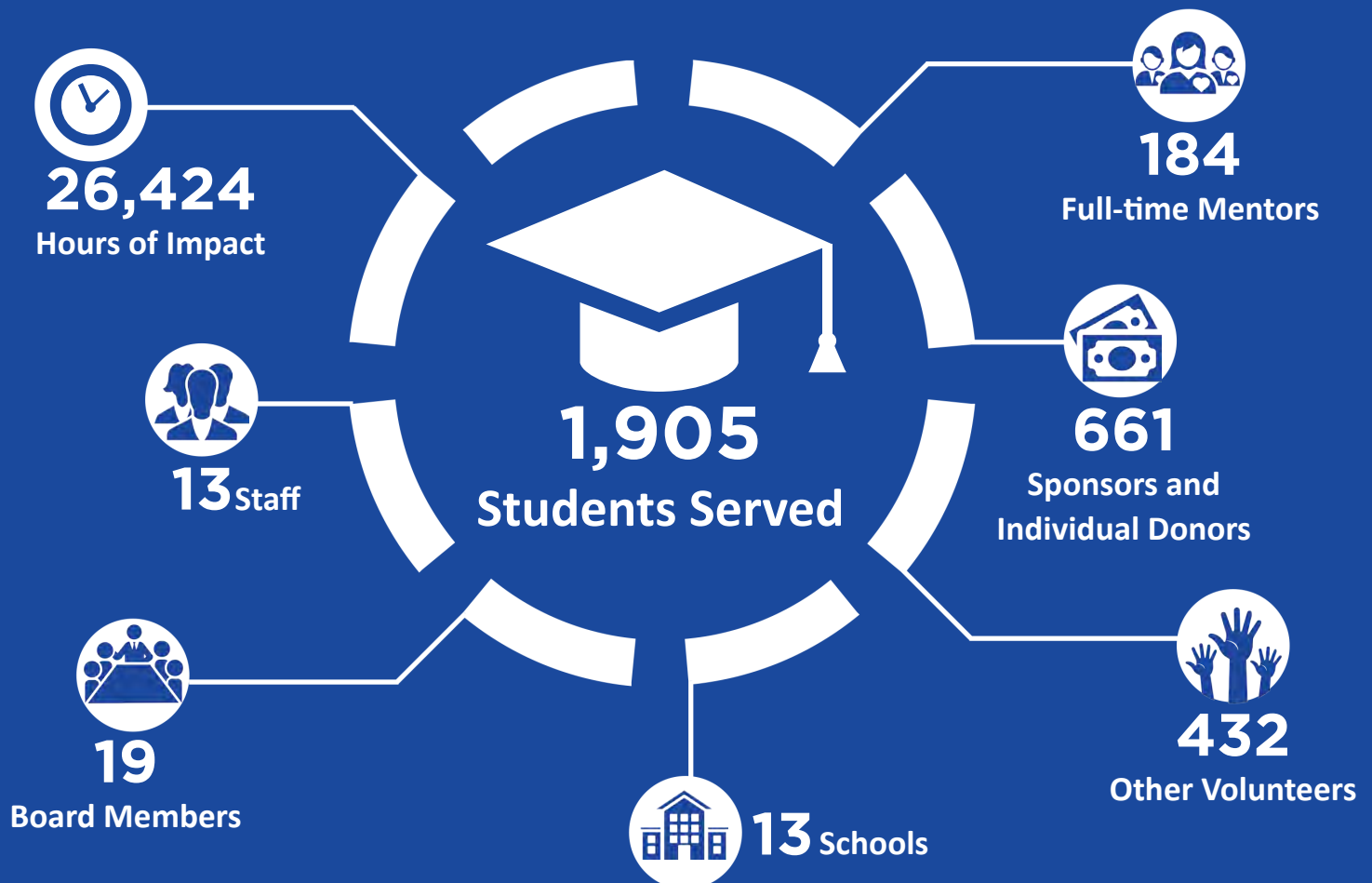
We are looking to build relationships with all industries, from automotive to tech to health care to hospitality. We also want to partner with organizations such as foundations, existing workforce groups, and other nonprofit partners. If you have suggestions for a potential partner or financial supporter, please send that lead to me.

We are excited to share this high-level summary of our big plans and welcome input and support as we forge ahead. It's going to be an exciting few years! Thank you to everyone in advance for helping us run with this reinvigorated mission!



Kristina Marshall  
President and CEO

*“Winning Futures taught me that there will be struggles, but it is possible to overcome those struggles by working hard.”*  
Rachel, Pontiac Academy for Excellence







## The Future is Clear for Richard Russell

**R**ichard Russell, (second from left) a junior at Warren Mott High School, has his eyes on the prize. As a recipient of a 2017 Winning Futures Scholarship, Richard is building the foundation he will need to accomplish his five-year goal. By 2022, Richard plans to be a graduate of Wayne State University with his bachelor degree in Education. In the meantime, he is focusing on accomplishing his short-term goals, and doing a great job at it.

As a part of the Winning Futures program, students are asked to set an eight-week goal of improving their grade in one of their core classes.

Richard set an ambitious goal to turn his C- grade in math to an A. Following his planned action steps of completing all homework assignments on time and asking questions in class and after school, he accomplished his goal three weeks early!

Learning to set SMART goals has given Richard more confidence about his future. *"Because of Winning Futures I'm turning a very scary future into a very possible set of achievable goals. Now I can visualize my future, not just wonder about it,"* he says.

## A Profound Impact

**W**inning Futures is all about realizing life goals and planning a clear path to achieve them. Having moved to the Detroit area in 2016, I was looking for a way to positively impact my new community. After finding the organization online, I did not know what to expect. The impact on my life is more profound than I could have ever imagined.

When I joined Winning Futures as a mentor at Madison High School, I had just acquired a business. Negative thoughts and the fear of failure were becoming toxic in my life. That all changed when I heard the facilitator trumpet Winning Futures' famous phrase, "attitude is everything!" This simple, yet insightful message began to change my perception each time I heard it.

With each fun and relevant activity, Winning Futures helps students determine the right path to achieve their dreams by teaching the importance of identifying their values and setting SMART goals. I couldn't



help but apply these methods to my life. I found myself thinking, where do I see myself in five years? What steps do I need to take and what obstacles might I need to overcome? I was benefiting from the lessons we were teaching the students.

By Raj Pithadia  
Liberty Cast Products

IMPACT

85%

of students said their confidence in themselves increased.

91%

of students said their understanding of what it will take to achieve the career they want to have increased.

88%

of mentors said that typically when going to work after a mentoring session, their attitude was improved.

92%

of mentors have developed new skills that helped them improve professionally.

## About Our Outcomes

# 85%

of students said they have improved their study and academic skills.

# 78%

Teachers observed

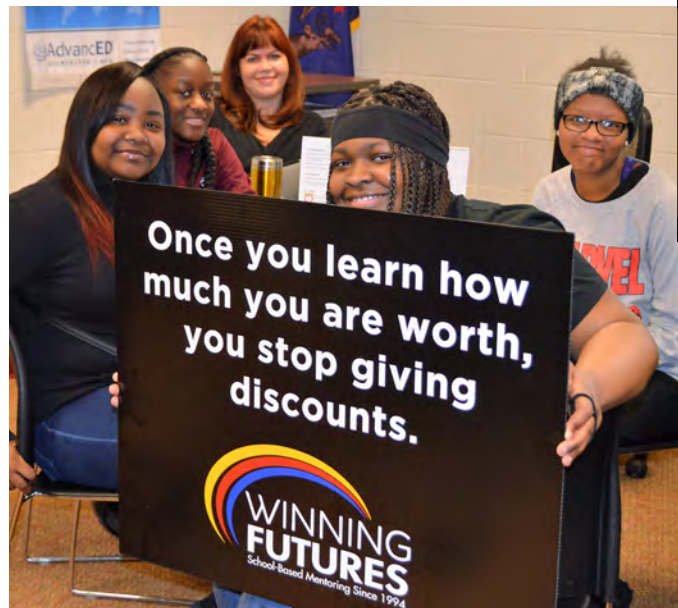
of students with a more positive attitude toward school.

# 81%

Teachers observed

of students are more likely to further their education in college or trade school.

Winning Futures is an evidence-based program with over 20 years of student data. Students who completed our program by participating in at least 70% of the sessions this year were included in the results. During the 2016-17 school year, we found statistically significant increases ( $p < 0.05$ ) in students' **work-readiness skills, self-efficacy, and confidence in their future**. We are also beginning to study long-term impact by tracking alumni through post-secondary enrollment and completion. Keep an eye out for more of this year's findings throughout the newsletter!



## A Teacher's Perspective

Since this was my first experience with Winning Futures, I had very little knowledge of the program. Having seen photos of the fun activities, I assumed it was a hands-on time for students to explore science topics. I was surprised to learn that the students were paired with professional mentors with a focus on workforce preparation and developing professionalism in teens.

I have three classes that have been privileged to participate in the program every Tuesday, and I have seen my students from these classes develop a better grasp of their role as a student. Having the mentors from various professional fields share with them what it takes to be successful in the workforce has pushed my students to take their academics more seriously. I love that the mentors care and ask the kids about their grades and what they did over the past week to improve.

One major improvement I have seen from my students' participation in the program is reflected in their grades during the third quarter. During this time, each student had to set a goal to increase

their grade in one course. Students came to me before and after school to see what they could do to increase their grade. I saw several mini-groups form to quiz each other, setting up their own study sessions prior to a weekly quiz. I also witnessed groups discussing our

class novel outside of the classroom in preparation for the group discussion and quiz. These three classes really improved and became better

students. In fact, 89% of my students succeeded in increasing their grades!

Winning Futures is so powerful and impactful that it has been a game changer for those students who have participated. The program has the resources, hands-on activities, and mentors who open the students' eyes to the importance of their education and model what a professional employee and student looks like. The skills they have learned this year are in full practice in my classroom. The academic maturity from those that have had this wonderful opportunity is phenomenal!

By Cherilyn Nagey,  
Harper Woods High School  
English Teacher

**89% of my students  
succeeded in  
increasing their grades!**





## \$29,000 For Continuing Education

This year, 19 students will receive support to make their educational goals a reality! Throughout the year, they have worked on developing a plan to obtain a career that aligns with their skills and interests. We are proud to support them in taking their first step in continuing education through the Winning Futures and RARE Everyday Hero Scholarships.

*“Winning Futures taught me that I can be anything I put my mind to if I set goals and work towards them.”*

Laurane, Student-Cornerstone Health + Technology High School

## 2017 Mentors of the Year



The success of our program relies on the dedication of our volunteers. This year over 180 mentors met with students one hour per week for 22 weeks to help them develop job readiness and strategic planning skills to prepare them for success in school and in the workforce. The

Winning Futures Mentor of the Year Award is presented to one outstanding volunteer from each of our program sites to honor their commitment to mentoring and the difference they make in the lives of those they mentor.

### Our 2017 Winning Futures Mentors of the Year (left to right) are:

**Bill Hamilton**, DTE Energy - Cass Technical High School  
**James Caldwell**, Compassionate Caregiving - Cornerstone Health + Technology High School  
**Gavin Haque**, Red-e Set Grow - Community High School  
**Lee Ellen Kerr**, Dow Automotive - Pontiac Academy for Excellence  
**Todd Ledingham**, General Motors - Harper Woods High School  
**Tori Kozan**, General Motors - Madison High School Mentor  
**Jermel Ray**, General Motors - Warren Mott High School

## IMPACT

89%

of students said their attitude became more positive.

Mentors observed  
88%

of students are more prepared to overcome future obstacles.

98%

of mentors felt they made a difference and rate the program as good or excellent.

91%

of mentors said they were provided support in four major areas: emotional, informational, tangible assistance, and appraisal (a research best practice).

79%

of students who completed the Keys to College program said their continuing education goal changed to better fit their career goals.

84%

of students said they completed at least one step in their continuing education plan.

89%

of students who completed Keys to College said they are more likely to continue their education past high school.

## Promising Practice Award

This year Winning Futures was selected as one of the 2017 Character.org Promising Practice award winners. Founded in 1993, Character.org is a national nonprofit based in Washington, D.C. The mission of the organization is to provide leadership and advocacy for character worldwide. It is dedicated to helping people everywhere become educated, inspired, and empowered to be ethical



and compassionate citizens.

The Promising Practices program highlights what's going well in classrooms across America and the world. The program is simple in scope and recognizes many wonderful ideas from passionate organizations and teachers who are making a real difference in the lives of their students. Each "practice" must be tied to one or more of Character.org's 11 Principles of Effective Character Education.

*"Every moment was a great one [in Winning Futures]. I learned so much, and it helped me to become a better person. It will help me to have a great life in the future."*

Tatiannah, Student-Cass Technical High School



## Winning Futures Keys to College Program Helps Aspiring Dental Student

Amber Abram, a senior at South Lake High School, didn't think Keys to College was going to make much of an impact on her. "I felt like I already knew everything there was to know about applying and going off to college," she said.

Keys to College is a 10-week program and by week eight, it had found its biggest fan, Amber Abram. "My experience in Keys to College was amazing! The program helped me identify additional colleges that offered my major and were a good fit for my career choice. Originally, I had only applied to Ferris State, but thanks to the support of the program, I applied to four additional schools that were also a good fit."

Amber credits Winning Futures for introducing her to the ReBUILDetroit Program offered through the University of Detroit Mercy. ReBUILDetroit offers

intensive training for students interested in pursuing academic, research, or industry careers in biomedical, behavioral, clinical, or social sciences.

Amber has a little bit of advice for future Keys to College students, "pay attention to each activity, learn all you can, ask questions, and apply for scholarships!" When asked where she sees herself in five years, Abram stated, "starting my first year of dental school at the University of Detroit Mercy!"

Amber is one of many students who now has a clear vision of what they want to do after high school, thanks to the program. During the program, students complete career assessments, research colleges and careers that fit their interests, and create individual career plans to prepare them for success after high school.



## Winning Futures Gave me a Voice



**W**inning Futures graduate Sarah Kruk won her first hair competition one week before graduating from Mr. Bela's School of Cosmetology. Her team's authenticity and synergy, characteristics she learned in Winning Futures, landed them accolades to add to their resumes. Winning first place in the competition was a huge milestone for a girl who describes herself as once being afraid to take chances.

Sarah participated in Winning Futures as a senior at Butcher Community High

School in 2013. "Before Winning Futures, I felt like what I did, didn't matter. I only ever did what people told me to do and refused to voice my opinion," she recalled. At the start of the program it was difficult for her to open up to her teammates and mentor, but as the year progressed, so did she.

Four years later, Sarah is living her purpose. She currently works for Pure Beauty Salon as a stylist helping women feel beautiful every day. She sets short-term and long-term goals and says she is more driven than ever. "I've never been happier. It's an amazing feeling to know that what I do actually matters, and most importantly, that I have a voice." Sarah thanks her mentor, Donna Rochester, for listening to her and for not being judgmental. The two keep in touch online and Sarah is thankful to know that if she ever needs advice, Donna is there for her. Sarah's long-term goal is to continue to do what she loves and to open her own salon.

## 20 Years of Mentoring and the Sam Cupp Impact Award

**I**n 1997, the owner of Fitzpatrick Manufacturing, Mike Fitzpatrick, was recruited to become a mentor at Warren Mott High School. We did not know back then what an amazing impact Mike would make.

Over the last 20 years, Mike has mentored over 100 students! He has changed the path of his students' lives and empowered them to reach goals they never imagined they could achieve. Mike has gone above the call of duty of a Winning Futures mentor, shutting down his entire operation to host manufacturing tours to high school students and even hiring some of his former mentees to help them on their path to success. Mike has generously been a sponsor since 1999, and even though he has sold the company, the new owners continue to support Winning Futures through Mike's encouragement.

Mike's enthusiasm, unending support of Winning Futures, and sense of commitment to the youth he serves has been invaluable. His long-term commitment to mentoring has made a big



difference in the Winning Futures story and has helped shape the organization.

We are proud to recognize Mike with our first 20 Years of Service Award as well as with the 2017 Sam Cupp Impact Award in honor of our founder, also an amazing businessman who changed countless lives in the community.

IMPACT®

91%

of students said they gained job readiness skills.

98%

of students said they benefitted from the program.

Mentors observed

88%

of students with more skills required to succeed in a career.

97%

of students would recommend the program to other students.



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## Planned Gift:

Remember Winning Futures in your planned giving. Planned gifts to Winning Futures are bequests or gifts made through a will or trust. A gift may be small or large in amount, but all are important to our organization. Stock donations are also accepted.

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### Founders

Sam Cupp, Winning Futures

Gill Cox, RARE Everyday Hero

### Program Creators

Kristina Marshall

Laurie Tarter

### School Partnerships

Cass Technical High School • Community High School

Cornerstone Health + Technology High School

Cornerstone Madsion-Carver Academy • Fitzgerald High School

Harper Woods High School • Mumford High School

Madison High School • Pontiac Academy for Excellence

Pontiac International Technology Academy

South Lake High School • Voyageur College Prep High School

Warren Mott High School • Western International High School

### Companies Investing in Our Youth

#### Presenting Sponsors

Lear Corporation

#### Program Presenting

Dow Automotive Systems • Dresner Foundation • FCA Foundation

• United Way for Southeastern Michigan

#### Diamond

DTE Energy Foundation • Edward T. & Ellen K. Dryer Charitable

Foundation • Federal Mogul • SRG Global

#### Platinum

General Motors Foundation • Great Expressions Dental Centers

• SET Enterprises • Yazaki North America

#### Gold

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