



DREAM BIG. WORK HARD. WE'LL HELP.™

Annual Report 2017

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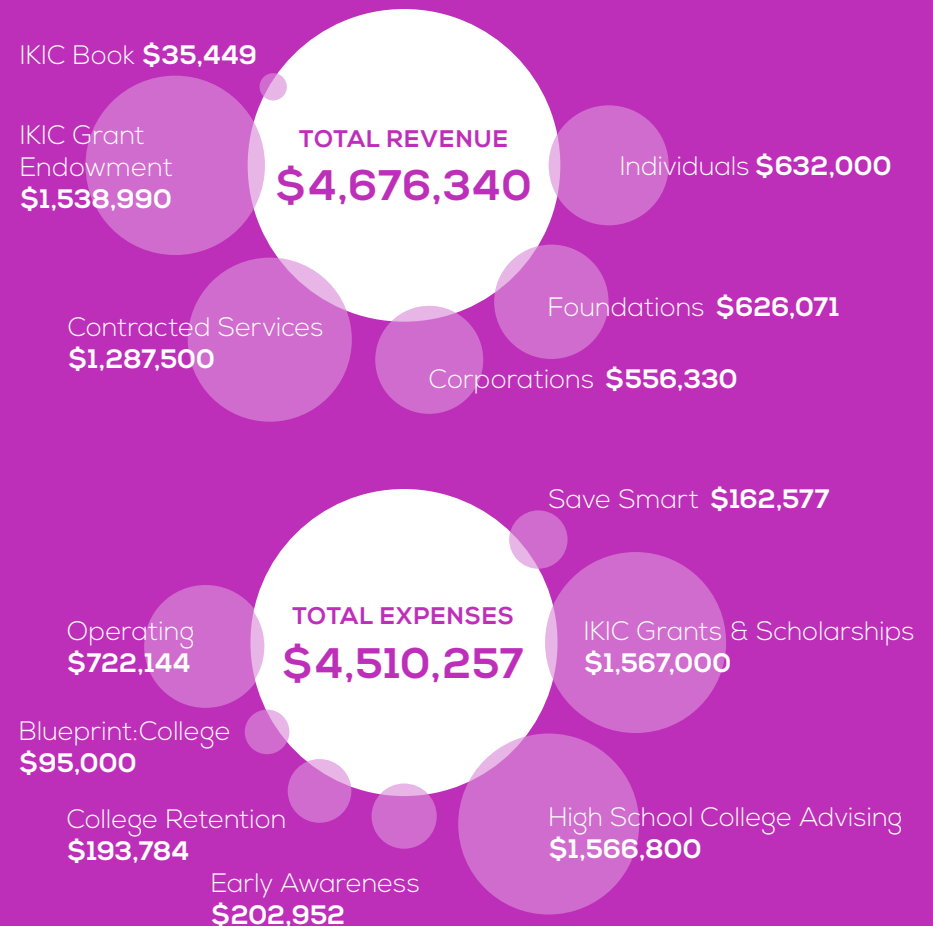
Mission

Inspire, enable
and support
Columbus
City Schools
students in
pursuing and
completing
a college
education.

Financials

Fiscal Year 2017 at a glance*

**Budgeted Expenses*



Celebrating our past, building our future



It is a priority
that has taken
a hold of the
country: as
a nation, a
state and a

community, we must increase the number of students obtaining postsecondary credentials. It is predicted that by 2020, two out of three jobs in Ohio will require additional education beyond high school. At our current attainment rates, we will fall short of this goal. But with organizations like I Know I Can (IKIC), we can change that trajectory.

It is no secret that Columbus is one of the nation's top cities and home to a growing number of Global 500 companies. With this growth comes the responsibility to ensure we are building a workforce that is both large enough and educationally equipped to support the augmented need. As both the IKIC Board President and a Columbus State Community College Board of Trustees member, I have been privileged to play a part in bringing key players from education, non-profit and business sectors together to impact the attainment rate throughout not just our city, but the entire Central Ohio region.

In 2017, IKIC made a substantial impact on addressing the community's need for a more skilled and educated workforce. Through its comprehensive and targeted advising model, I Know I Can saw an increase in the number of students enrolling in college and an impressive 73% of students continuing from their first year of college to their second year. It is results like these and continued successes of our Central Ohio partnerships that keep me optimistic about the future of our community.

We cannot slow down. The work is ongoing and IKIC's leadership is critical. We have made great strides and I strongly believe that, with our efforts to help more students in Central Ohio, we will continue to make significant progress in the drive to fulfilling our community and our students' aspirations.

Regards,

Richard Rosen, PhD Board of Directors President

As I reflect on 2017 and look to our 30th anniversary year, I am taken by the fact that IKIC is not only achieving some of the best work in its history, but is increasingly leading among its peers in the field of college access. IKIC is a proven and trusted partner in guiding students through some of the biggest decisions they will ever make. Over the last three decades, we have gone from a scholarship based organization to one that brings total wrap-around services to students that ensure they get ready for, get in and get through a postsecondary education. But what is it exactly that has made us so successful?

It is the magic of the in-between — providing targeted support in the quiet moments that stand between the major milestones. It's the time spent registering and studying for the ACT. It's the trying moments spent completing the college and scholarship applications. It's the extra effort put into making sure students have the resources they need to complete their Free Application for Federal Student Aid. It's following up and following through for students who need it the most.

Our intent focus on doing what is best for students has brought us to a point at which we're producing greater outputs and results than ever before. We are there for the small victories and the big celebrations, because every moment of a student's postsecondary journey is important to ensuring they enroll, persist in and complete their chosen path — the result of which is a real chance at a brighter future.

IKIC is grateful for the support of so many generous community and business leaders who have helped make this important work possible. Thank you for the 30 years of investments you have

made in the futures of our students, and just as importantly, the future of our city. I hope you enjoy reading this year's annual report to learn about some of these students and see the great impact IKIC is having on central Ohio.

Dream Big,



Katina Fullen Executive Director



Elijah Barber Junior at Eastern Michigan University
and graduate of Eastmoor Academy



“ I never knew how it felt to have someone outside my family be so supportive and show so much concern toward my success. ”

What started as a mentor-mentee relationship three years ago has turned into a great friendship for Eastern Michigan University (EMU) student Elijah Barber and EMU alumnus Dale Heydlauff. There would not usually be much reason for a recent high school graduate to cross paths with a Vice President of American Electric Power but, through a mutual relationship with I Know I Can (IKIC), the two were connected in the fall of 2015. Elijah's relationship with IKIC began in high school when his advisor helped him get ready for postsecondary education, by ensuring he completed his college and scholarship applications on time and encouraging him to pursue his goals.

Fast forward to today and Elijah is a third-year student at EMU, successful inside the classroom as well as out, and grateful for the opportunities IKIC has given him over the years. Shored up by both personal and financial support, Elijah was able to find a college that was right for him on a number of levels, not least of which was the chance to continue participating in athletics that has seen him become a varsity and winning member of the Men's Track and Field team.

“IKIC has meant so much to my success. They provide so much support, checking in on me throughout the year and offering help if there's something I'm having trouble with,” Elijah reflected.

Dale and Elijah connected during Elijah's first year at EMU.

“It took a leap of faith for Elijah to accept me in his life,” Dale recalled, “Now, because of his willingness to trust me, we have built a comfortable rapport. Elijah knows he can contact me at any time to help with anything he needs.”

But it was not just Elijah who was taking a leap. Dale did as well when he answered IKIC's call for local professionals to be mentors to recent Columbus City Schools high school graduates. Now the two have a bond that's brought special meaning to both of their lives.

“I never knew how it felt to have someone outside my family be so supportive and show so much concern toward my success,” Elijah shared, “Mr. Dale takes the time out of his day and weekends to text me, check on how school's going, and even visit me when he is in Michigan.”

Elijah is studying Exercise Science at EMU. Upon graduating, he plans to continue his education by studying Occupational Therapy, and hopes to apply this degree to work in Columbus.

Chris Hearn Senior at New York University
and graduate of Fort Hayes Arts & Academic High School



“ I have accomplished things that I never knew I was capable of ... NYU [has] shown me that I have no ceiling. ”

A 2014 recipient of the I Know I Can Founders' Scholarship, Chris Hearn is currently a senior at New York University (NYU), preparing to receive his degree in Music Business Management. In his four years, he has made the most of his college experience.

Grateful for the opportunity he had been given, Chris distinguished himself as a leader on campus, serving as the Vice President of Gentlemen of Quality and the Director of Diversity on the Student Senators Council, as well as holding a position with the Academic Achievement Program. He has also studied abroad and worked with Sony Music. In other words, Chris has made quite the impact at NYU. The influence the school has had on him, however, has been immeasurable.

“I have been on panels and mixers with artists and industry representatives who have given me unbelievable information and opportunity,” Chris told us, “The biggest players from every realm [are] all around and available to me. No other college can say that with more confidence than NYU.”

And while such great opportunities have been given to him right in New York City, he has also used his college opportunity to open the doors of world travel.

“The most exciting thing I’ve done, hands down, is my study abroad experience in Prague. That was the best thing college could offer me. I traveled, learned, made friends, experienced culture and truly reflected on where I came from for the first time,” Chris explained.

When he is not leading student organizations or traveling the world, Chris holds a part time job at Sony Music. What started as an internship turned into a paid position for him as a College Marketing Rep where he helps design campaigns that appeal to students in the New York City market. This position even gained him the opportunity to work at the Grammys, a dream of his since childhood.

When reflecting on his time at NYU, Chris shared, “NYU has made a positive impact on my future by exposing me to people whom I would have never had access to otherwise. I Know I Can gave that to me.” And to top off what has been an incredible time and experience for Chris, he will leave one final mark on NYU as the 2018 Commencement Student Speaker for the All-University Commencement Exercises at Yankee Stadium.

As far as what is next for Chris, the options seem endless. From New York to Los Angeles, he is exploring every opportunity. “I have accomplished things I never knew I was capable of, and look forward to continuing to do so as time goes on,” Chris shared, “The challenges and the rigor of classes at NYU have shown me that I have no ceiling.”

I Know I Can Celebrates 30 Years

1988

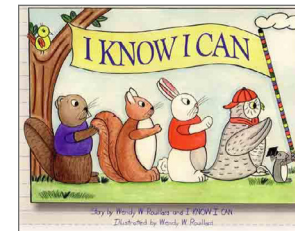
I Know I Can (IKIC) is founded in Columbus, Ohio and awards its first class of IKIC grant recipients.



In its first year, IKIC received the Presidential Award as one of the top 100 private-sector initiatives in the country.

1996

The IKIC endowment, created to provide Columbus students with grants for college reaches **\$10 million**.



IKIC publishes its **self-titled children's book**, one of the first to focus on planning for college. — *IKIC distributes over 4,000 copies each year to Columbus City Schools (CCS) second graders, inspiring them to Dream Big and Work Hard!*

1990

IKIC is named as a **Points of Light** recipient by President George H.W. Bush.

**POINTS
OF LIGHT**



2002

As a leader in the college access field, IKIC pilots one of the **first retention programs** at the Ohio State University.



**THE OHIO STATE
UNIVERSITY**

2010

IKIC, in collaboration with The Ohio State University, pilots

Blueprint:College, a parent engagement workshop series focused on helping families build college going cultures in their homes.

IKIC receives a \$1 million grant to pilot **Save Smart**, a college savings program that matches a family's savings at a \$4 to \$1 rate.

The first class of **Founders' Scholarship** recipients is awarded, providing students with up to \$40,000 to attend their dream colleges. To date, IKIC has awarded 121 Founders' Scholarships totaling nearly \$5 million.

**BLUEPRINT:
COLLEGE**
MIDDLE SCHOOL



2014

IKIC expands staff from 5 to 20 to place a full-time college advisor in each CCS high school.



2013

IKIC celebrates its **25th Anniversary.**

2016

Through its partnership with IKIC, Denison University promises full-tuition scholarships to up to 20 students a year from 2016–2020 through the **Denison Columbus Alliance Scholarship** program. In a trail blazing commitment, Denison will award up to \$15 million in financial aid to CCS students.

DENISON

2008

IKIC unveils new logo and tagline:



DREAM BIG. WORK HARD. WE'LL HELP.™

2009 **AmeriCorps College Guides** join the IKIC team to build capacity within middle and high schools and on college campuses.

2017

IKIC is selected to receive the **Kresge Foundation Award of Excellence** for its impressive success in increasing Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion rates. *IKIC achieved an 11 percentage point increase in the FAFSA completion rate by helping over 1,400 CCS students complete the complex form.*

THE
KRESGE
FOUNDATION

In 2017, I Know I Can saw a **3 percentage point increase** in the number of students who enrolled in college immediately following high school graduation. Nationally, this number decreased by 2.3%.

Here's How:

Over **9,300** 1:1 college advising sessions with seniors averaging 6.2 sessions per student

Over **1,400** 12th grade students completing 2 or more college applications and the FAFSA

Over **\$3 million** in leveraged and awarded financial aid for college

Programs and Services

Blueprint:College

Blueprint:College is an innovative approach to parent engagement in the college planning process. The program consists of college and career planning workshops designed for Columbus City Schools (CCS) 6th–11th grade families. These workshops provide key college readiness and financial education to parents and students to help them build college going cultures in their homes and set them on a college trajectory.

College Advising

College Advising Managers with backgrounds in college admissions, financial aid and student life provide full-time, in-school college coaching for CCS students. Through one-on-one interactions, classroom based presentations and workshops, advisors play a key role in coordinating college readiness wrap-around services that include assistance with college selection, college and scholarship applications, college entrance exams, campus tours, and financial aid.

College Retention

College Retention efforts ensure all CCS graduates have a knowledgeable support system during the critical transition from high school to college and throughout their postsecondary journey. IKIC provides near-peer mentors and programming on 17 college campuses throughout the state to assist students in the creation and refinement of academic and career goals,

navigating on-campus resources, and removing financial barriers to persistence through financial literacy and support.

Early Awareness

Early Awareness services focus on enhancing college knowledge and aspirations among 6th–10th grade students. AmeriCorps College Guides use an online college and career planning platform to take students through self-exploration activities as well as ensure that each student has met specific milestones to assist with college preparation and persistence. IKIC also engages students in an educational experience that simulates the financial responsibilities and decisions they will face as adults and how postsecondary success impacts those choices.

FAFSA Workshops

Each year, IKIC College Advising Managers and volunteers assist more than 1,400 students in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Completing this application positions students to receive the most available financial aid for college. IKIC coordinates a workshop in every CCS high school where families can receive extra support to complete their FAFSAs by the priority deadlines set by many colleges and universities.

College Funding

IKIC awards three major sources of financial aid to CCS graduates each year, totaling over \$1.5 million. Students eligible for the Federal Pell Grant and with a 2.25 GPA receive the \$1,200

I Know I Can Grant, which is renewable for four years. These students are often also enrolled in Save Smart, a federally supported college savings program that provides students with a 4:1 match on their savings for college. In 2017, Save Smart leveraged over \$250,000 in financial support for CCS graduates.

Highly competitive students are given the opportunity to apply for the Founders' Scholarship, worth up to \$40,000 over four years. This scholarship is designed to promote the development of college aspirations, academic rigor and community involvement among CCS high school students as well as respond to the growing gap between the cost of college and students' ability to cover that gap.

Read to Succeed Week

Read to Succeed Week is an annual event designed to highlight the importance of reading and developing postsecondary aspirations among elementary aged students. In 2017, more than 100 community volunteers read IKIC's self-titled book to second grade classrooms in 50 CCS elementary schools. Volunteers remind students of the importance of dreaming big and working hard to ensure postsecondary success. At the end of the reading, all CCS students receive their own copy of *I Know I Can* to take home for their personal libraries.

What's Next : Expanding our mission in 2018

As one of the largest and most successful college access and success organizations in the nation, IKIC's mission centers on empowering students and families from underserved populations to obtain a postsecondary degree or credential. While our focus historically has been on those enrolled in Columbus City Schools, the growing imperative for a larger, workforce-ready population has made it evident that the organization's services and support are needed beyond those district boundaries. That is why, in 2018, for the first time in its 30-year history, IKIC is piloting an expansion of services into two new school districts: Whitehall City Schools and South-Western City Schools District (6th largest in the state of Ohio).

The plan to scale up IKIC's services for students in Franklin County is a direct attempt toward achieving the state's "Attainment Goal 2025." Set by the Ohio Department of Education, the goal aims for a 65 percent attainment rate of degrees, certificates or other postsecondary workforce credentials among Ohio's working adults. That rate currently sits at less than 45%. To succeed, Ohio will need to produce about 1.7 million more adults with high-quality postsecondary certificates or degrees over the next seven years.

In partnership with Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services, the intent of this pilot is to provide thousands more students in central Ohio access to IKIC's proven strategies

in college and career advising.

IKIC will begin with placing full-time college advisors and success coaches in Whitehall-Yearling, Franklin Heights and Westland High Schools to bolster the students' completion of critical college and career readiness milestones. The highly qualified and trained advisors will focus on increasing students' exposure to in-demand careers and creating clear pathways toward affordable postsecondary options.

Equipped with its proven and successful strategies for building a college going culture in school buildings, IKIC's presence will have a significant impact on increasing students' college knowledge and achievement of academic and career goals to ensure that more have the skills, networks and abilities necessary to becoming productive, caring and responsible citizens.

The decades have passed but the mission has remained the same. We must continue to work to ensure that no student in Columbus is denied the opportunity of a postsecondary education simply because they did not have access to the resources they needed to make it possible. For thirty years, we've helped nurture the big dreams and hard work of CCS students; now it is time to expand this support and ensure that more students than ever are equipped to build brighter futures for themselves and our community.

Thank You to our 2017 donors and volunteers

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