

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Founded in 2000 in Minnesota as “Admission Possible,” College Possible™ has spent more than 11 years perfecting and replicating its model for identifying, recruiting, training and motivating recent college graduates to provide a cost-efficient and results-effective program making college admission and success possible for low-income students. Based on its record of success in student results, replication and financial management, College Possible will continue its national expansion with a plan to grow from three metropolitan areas in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Nebraska to serve 20,000 low-income high school and college students annually in 10 urban markets across the country. With the right support and investment, this goal can be achieved as early as 2015 and no later than 2020, with expansion to a fourth market in 2012.



College Possible’s innovative model presents a uniquely scalable, high impact solution not currently available in the marketplace. The organization is ready for nationwide scaling with a(n):

- Proven, cost-effective, award-winning, results-driven model;
- Detailed scaling plan and national organization infrastructure;
- Committed national expansion launch funds;
- Experienced senior leadership team;
- Strong financial management with 11 years of no deficits, nine consecutive unqualified opinion audits and a healthy operating reserve; and
- Support network of key partners and policy initiatives encouraging growth.

Policymakers and industry experts have endorsed the College Possible model as one that should grow. President Obama cited College Possible’s student results during a bipartisan event at The White House highlighting innovative solutions for scaling. The President said of College Possible’s then two-state operation, “...imagine if it was in 10, or 20, or 50.” The National College Access Network and the National Association for College Admission Counseling, the two foremost associations in college access, honored College Possible with their 2009 awards of excellence, followed by the College Board’s 2010 CollegeKeys Award. Following in-depth due diligence processes in 2011, College Possible was selected for New Profit’s national investment portfolio and the Social Impact Exchange’s Contribution Center to encourage further financial investment in the organization’s scaling plan.

Current school and community-based college access solutions either do not offer the intensity necessary for student success or do not have the cost-efficiency to do so at scale. According to national funders focused on the problem, virtually no nationally-growing solutions are addressing both access and success. As the first organization in the country to leverage the AmeriCorps national service model for college success, College Possible is able to provide the intensive intervention required in helping low-income students overcome significant barriers to a college education and is able to do so at a fraction of the cost of similarly intensive solutions: 1/7th the cost of the most similarly intensive federally funded model. At no cost to high schools or students, College Possible brings new resources into schools – recent college graduates serving as AmeriCorps members – providing the fulltime college mentorship low-income students lack, support that continues through students’ entire college experience.

The program is as effective as it is cost-efficient. The intensive two-year, after-school core high school program begins in the junior year. A fulltime coach provides critical services including academic support through ACT/SAT preparation, admissions and financial aid consulting, and transition

guidance, while encouraging early planning with workshops for underclassmen. The college program provides coaching support toward degree completion. Since the inception of the program:

- High school juniors have raised their college entrance ACT exam scores from the bottom 16th percentile to the 35th percentile of test takers, putting college admission within reach.
- Compared to the national low-income student college enrollment rate of 59 percent, 98 percent of College Possible students have earned admission and 94 percent have enrolled.
- 57 percent of students who enroll in college have graduated from a four-year school in six years or less, compared to 14 percent for low-income students nationwide. Only 8 percent of young people from low-income backgrounds who graduate from high school earn a college degree by age 24, as compared to 82 percent from upper income families.
- A social return on investment study of College Possible found a 333 percent ROI to society.

A 2011 Harvard study demonstrated that College Possible more than doubles a low-income student's chances of enrolling in a four-year college compared to like profile peers. Harvard is continuing this work as a two-year randomized controlled trial with results due out in 2013. This "gold standard" of evaluation techniques will provide further insights to be shared among scholars and practitioners.

College Possible has grown nearly 250-fold since its founding from a pilot program of 35 students to annual service to 8,700 young people while maintaining excellent program and financial results. The organization has successfully replicated programming into 29 high schools in 12 cities and 10 school districts across three metro areas, with college program services now reaching students enrolled on nearly 200 college campuses nationwide. It has assisted other leaders in the successful, independent replication of College Possible-based models in four more geographically diverse urban areas where roughly an additional 2,700 low-income students are served annually. Based on these successes, College Possible's Board of Directors launched a 12-month strategic planning process in 2009 with the support of McKinsey & Company management consultants resulting in the organization's plan for further national expansion as a single 501(c)(3) organization, growing at the rate of one to two new markets per year while expanding within current markets.

Phase one of the organization's national growth strategy calls for the development of a \$10 million growth fund to provide essential investment in organizational capacity building ahead of aggressive growth, thus ensuring sound performance management and reliable growth planning. With an anticipated cost for each new market added to the College Possible portfolio of approximately \$2 million over three years, funds from the growth fund may also be used to help seed a new market launch acting as a challenge to local funders. Whether financed locally or with seed national funds, by the end of three years, each new market will be financed entirely through local and AmeriCorps funding and will make college possible for a growing number of low-income students in that market.

In January 2010, College Possible began putting into place its new centralized national office structure and began new site development and fundraising efforts. The national office provides support and oversight to mature and emerging markets and identifies and builds support for new markets while safeguarding the organization's reputation and program fidelity through results-based management. Each College Possible market is led by an Executive Director.

College Possible envisions a day when the future of America's children is determined *solely* by their potential and effort. Working to fulfill this vision through expansion not only provides low-income families with a path out of poverty, but the United States with an educated workforce.