

# Early-Stage Finalists

## 10,000 Degrees

781 Lincoln Ave., Suite 140 • San Rafael, CA 94901  
415-459-4240 • [www.10000degrees.org](http://www.10000degrees.org)



10,000 Degrees (10KD) is the premier “college access and success” program in California, located in the San Francisco Bay Area and operating with a \$5 million budget. 10KD students attend public schools, live below the poverty line, and are often the first in their families to pursue a college degree. Despite these factors, 84% of 10KD students have not only gained acceptance to college but have graduated.

10KD is transforming low-income and minority students from a potential burden on society to a substantial economic stimulus. With college graduates earning an average of \$1 million more over their lifetimes than those without a degree, 10KD is strengthening California’s social fabric and impacting its long-term economic prosperity. Based on these figures, when 10KD achieves its immediate growth goals, every cohort of 10,000 students has the potential to annually contribute one billion dollars in lifetime earnings to the California economy. 10KD’s expansion is imminently achievable. The cost to go from 2,500 students to 10,000 students and prepare for 10KD’s further expansion is \$5 million over three years, and represents a tremendous return on investment.

Over a three-year period, the investment is designed to put at least 10,000 underprivileged students on the path to a college education in the North San Francisco Bay region (approximately 25% of the target population). This will be achieved by expansion of programs and services to 7,500 more students in Marin County’s adjoining communities where demand has been expressed—Sonoma, Solano and West Contra Costa Counties. Funds will be employed to (1) Strengthen 10KD’s infrastructure to create a more robust operating platform; (2) Support research and development that will build financial sustainability and prepare 10KD to bring its solution to other regions both inside and outside California; (3) Provide seed capital for expansion into new communities, and (4) Secure additional capital to accelerate earned income marketing, advance technology innovations and take advantage of opportunities for accelerated growth. Key programs and services have already been extended to students in two more counties, enabling 10KD to reach a benchmark of 4,000 students in 2012-2013. With a multi-year fundraising campaign in the planning stage, one donor has already committed \$1 million, and strategic partnerships (worth over \$3 million) have been procured.

10KD’s model is proven, cost-efficient, and easily adoptable. The key strategy has been, and will continue to be, listening to stakeholders about where gaps in the student pipeline exist, sharing relevant data with them, and collaboratively developing plans to put as many students as resources allow on the path to a college education. This strategy will serve 10KD as the organization develops client partnerships for new earned revenue streams, leverages strategic partnerships with mission-aligned organizations and funders, and develops technology solutions that will be licensed to others in the field.

10KD’s solution is not just about academic, emotional and financial supports to help underprivileged students overcome the odds. 10KD’s programming develops life skills, critical thinking, the ability to work effectively in teams, and an appreciation for the value of public service. When 10KD’s students accept their diploma, they enter the workforce knowing that anything is possible. Many are community leaders involved in public service or non-profit work. Hundreds of alumni come back to volunteer or work at 10,000 Degrees.