

# Strategic Plan

---

2023-2025

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND ..... Page 3

THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS ..... Page 5

STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR FY 2025 ..... Page 5

MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES ..... Page 6

GOAL #1 - SUPPORTING THE DREAM PROJECT'S PROGRAMS

    Scholarships ..... Page 7

    Mentoring ..... Page 8

    Dream Scholar and Alumni Support ..... Page 9

GOAL #2 - SUPPORTING THE DREAM PROJECT'S MISSION

    GOAL #2A - Fundraising ..... Page 12

    GOAL #2B - Communications ..... Page 16

    GOAL #2C - Governance ..... Page 18

    GOAL #2D - Operations, Staffing, and Infrastructure ..... Page 19

PRELIMINARY FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS ..... Page 20

STAFF, BOARD OF DIRECTORS, AND STRATEGIC PLANNING TEAM ..... Page 21

CONTACT INFORMATION ..... Page 22



# INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

## The Continuing Challenges Facing Dreamers

Young people with uncertain immigration status face immense obstacles in pursuing the ambitions that fire most young minds, including the central dream of higher education. These young people, the Dreamers, are the focus of the Dream Project's mission. They face legal ambiguities, restrictions, and limitations that can be overwhelming; they may not be well-versed in how to navigate the higher education system, and they often assume that they have no legal avenues to college and that higher education falls well outside their financial means.

Dreamers face unique challenges in navigating the higher education labyrinth. The majority are the first person in their families to consider college. They lack some of the resources – such as social and alumni networks, parental counseling, and access to information – from which other students may benefit. Many must balance jobs with schoolwork or are the primary caregiver for younger siblings. Many have entered high schools from which they will graduate midstream, and so must struggle with linguistic, cultural, and social barriers, while yet others have had the continuity of their education disrupted.

One critical barrier is the relative lack of understanding about how one gains access to the American higher education system through the application procedures and the financing methods. Many school professionals, including teachers, counselors, and other personnel, are not always aware of their state's policies concerning admission, tuition, and financial aid eligibility for undocumented students and therefore are ill-prepared to offer cogent advice or to direct students to the proper resources. Adding to this is the fear and uncertainty that undocumented students face, and the resulting tendency to maintain a low profile, becoming reticent about asking for support. Because of this, professionals who do have the knowledge and commitment to help these students often cannot identify who they are. The mentoring of these students by well-informed educators then becomes a critical component of helping them achieve their dreams.





## The Dream Project's History

The Dream Project was established in 2010 when a small group of parents, students, educators, and community members met at the home of Dream Project founder Dr. Emma Violand-Sanchez to discuss their concerns about college costs for undocumented immigrant students in Virginia. “Well, I can cook,” one parent said, and the first fundraiser for the Dream Project was organized, raising money to support scholarships for four outstanding undocumented students. The Dream Project’s Mentoring Program began with these four students meeting in a Georgetown University dorm room with a volunteer mentor who helped them complete college and scholarship applications. This was, and continues to be, one of the only programs offering scholarship and mentoring assistance available to undocumented students in Virginia.

By FY 2022 the Dream Project was providing 100 high-achieving immigrant students with annual scholarships in the amount of \$3,000, renewable for five years. The Dream Project’s Mentoring Program also has flourished, serving as many as 40 students each year through the help of up to 25 volunteer mentors. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Mentoring Program successfully transitioned to an all-virtual format. Going forward, the Dream Project will consider how to best adopt a hybrid format to assist students who may have difficulty attending in-person sessions.

In 2018, the organization hired its first full-time Executive Director, and in 2021 hired a full-time Development Director and a full-time Director of Communications and Student Recruitment. The Dream Project has been recognized by the Catalogue for Philanthropy as “one of the best nonprofits in the greater Washington DC metropolitan area.”

Now into its second decade, the Dream Project has a proven record of helping our scholars to overcome the challenges they face and to succeed in college. As of June 2022, over 100 Dream Scholars have graduated from college. Over the next three-year period, we are committed to strengthening our operations and programs and deepening our engagement with the community we serve.



## **STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS**

This strategic planning process was funded by a capacity-building grant from a Dream Project donor. The planning session was facilitated by Kevin Coray, a strategic planning consultant and trusted advisor with thirty-five years of experience. Through individual and facilitated group work, Kevin helps institutions navigate change and create effective and sustained impact through the change management model of Appreciative Inquiry.

The Dream Project's Board of Directors authorized the creation of a Strategic Planning Task Force, consisting of five Board members and the Executive Director. The Task Force planned and designed the strategic planning Board retreat and analyzed data, allowing the Board to make informed data-based decisions. Constituent groups engaged in the development of this strategic plan included parents, mentors, mentees, donors, scholarship recipients (Dream Scholars), and alumni. The Board and staff will review progress quarterly and update the annual operation plan as needed.

## **STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR FY2025**

This plan reflects the Dream Project's intended strategic direction over the next three years as well as the Board's and staff's heartfelt commitment to our mission and our students. Between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2025, we will continue to deepen support and empowerment of students whose immigration status creates barriers to their pursuit of higher education. We will serve students starting in high school, through their college years, and into careers. Student empowerment will grow through mentoring, scholarships, and a supportive Dream Project community network which includes peers, alumni, mentors, families, donors, community leaders, educational institutions, and partnering organizations. The Dream Project will continue to be a professionally run organization which still maintains its roots as a community organization; it is this combination that provides so much of the passion and commitment of our leadership, staff, and supporters.

During the period of this Strategic Plan, the Dream Project will continue to support 100 Scholars and increase the dollar amount of each annually renewable scholarship. In addition, we will pilot a vocational training (Career Technical Education/CTE) scholarship program to support students who wish to pursue a certificate at an accredited public institution. We will also strengthen and grow our Mentoring Program through a more intentional and focused recruiting process and through developing innovative approaches to program delivery, using technology and other creative methods of engagement. Finally, we will support our Dream Scholars and alumni by improving our annual Dream Summit, broadening internal scholar support systems, and expanding strategic partnerships (such as our existing partnership with Beyond 12 and the Center for Psychological Services).

As a result of growing our professional staff, we will also be able to more clearly define the roles of staff and Board, with staff assuming operational responsibility while the Board focuses on strategic direction and adherence to our mission. We will maintain, however, the close working relationship between Board members and staff that characterizes the Dream Project's ethos. The Dream Project remains committed to ensuring the privacy and security of all Dream Project participant information.

# MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

## MISSION

The Dream Project empowers students whose immigration status creates barriers to education by working with them to access and succeed in college through scholarships, mentoring, and scholar, alumni, and family support.

## VISION

Our vision is a supportive and inclusive community where Dreamers and their families are empowered through education to pursue their dreams and achieve their full potential.

## VALUES

**EQUITY:** The Dream Project strives to ensure that all students have fair and equal opportunities to achieve their academic goals, regardless of their immigration status.

**EXCELLENCE:** The Dream Project believes that a rigorous and enriching education builds students' capacity to overcome the formidable challenges they face as a result of their immigration status and fosters their intellectual, professional, and personal growth.

**COLLABORATION:** The Dream Project cultivates a community of Dream Scholars, alumni, families, mentors, volunteers, donors, board members, educational institutions, partnering organizations, community leaders, and elected officials, and believes that through intentional collaboration and solidarity we can more effectively serve and support our students.

**HOLISTIC SUPPORT:** The Dream Project believes that providing financial, social, and emotional support is foundational to ensure that students thrive in a holistic way.



# STRATEGIC PLAN AND GOALS

## Goal #1 - DREAM PROJECT PROGRAMS

### Objectives

By the end of FY 2025, the Dream Project will significantly increase and enhance its support for students through scholarships, mentoring, and scholar and alumni services, as well as through collaborative partnerships. Consistent with our ethos of building community, Dream Project mentees, Scholars, alumni, and parents will actively participate in advancing the organization's mission, vision and values.

### A. Scholarships

Over the next three years, the Dream Project will continue to support 100 Scholars and will increase the amount of each annual scholarship. We will pilot a scholarship program for vocational training through Career and Technical Education (CTE) certificate programs at public institutions.

#### 1. Increase scholarship amounts --

Responding to the needs of our students who cannot legally work and who face rising tuition costs, the Dream Project will increase the annual scholarship amount to at least \$4,000 by FY 2025, by implementing annual increases as follows: \$3250 in FY 2023; \$3500 in FY 2024; and \$4,000 in FY 2025.

#### 2. Increase the number of scholarship applicants --

Through active collaboration with the Communications, Outreach and Advocacy Committee and the Parents committee, we will expand outreach to school systems, faith-based organizations, and community organizations, in order to increase the number of new (i.e., non-renewal) applicants to 100 by FY 2025, by achieving annual increases in new applicants as follows: 50 by FY 2023; 75 by FY 2024; and 100 by FY 2025.

#### 3. Pilot a CTE scholarship program --

Some of our students might be better served by vocational training, especially given that a growing number of young immigrants are not eligible for DACA and are thus blocked from many career paths. In addition to our flagship scholarship program, the Dream Project will launch a pilot program to provide scholarships for students pursuing CTE certificate programs offered by public institutions such as Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC). Programs at for-profit institutions will not be considered.

In order to establish this pilot program: a. By the end of FY 2023, the Dream Project will establish a working group to research CTE options and costs at community colleges, determine certification requirements, and establish a program implementation plan; b. By the beginning of FY 2024, the Dream Project will launch the pilot program by awarding three CTE scholarships that will be renewable one time; c. Contingent on the success of the pilot program and the availability of funds, the Dream Project will increase the number of CTE scholarships in succeeding years.

## B. Mentoring

The Mentoring Program will focus on four main goals: Expand outreach efforts to recruit more mentees; launch a pilot Mentoring Program for CTE students; supplement the virtual Mentoring Program with monthly in-person sessions; and strengthen and expand partnerships.

### 1. Expand outreach efforts --

The Dream Project will develop and implement a strategy to increase the number of mentees in our mentoring program. By the beginning of FY 2023, an initial strategy and timeline will be in place to identify and make contact with high school principals and administrators; counselors; teachers; and community and faith-based organizations to assist in promoting the Mentoring Program to college-ready high school seniors and juniors. The target geographic areas and number of mentees will be:

- a. FY 2023: 30-35 mentees, focusing recruitment on Arlington County and Alexandria City
- b. FY 2024: 35-40 mentees, expanding recruitment to Fairfax County and Falls Church City
- c. FY 2025: 40-45 mentees, expanding recruitment to Prince William County and Manassas City

### 2. Pilot a program for CTE students --

For a growing number of undocumented students, vocational training offers a greater potential benefit than a two- or four-year college degree. In addition to our well-established and well-respected Mentoring Program for college-bound students, the Dream Project will pilot a curriculum within the existing program to accommodate the unique and specific needs of those students who may benefit more from a CTE certificate. In order to establish this CTE pilot program:

- a. By the beginning of FY 2024 the Dream Project will develop guidelines, including a curriculum outline, to prepare students to enroll in certificate-granting CTE programs, including the G3 initiative, at public institutions such as Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC). Curriculum development will include research on CTE options and costs at community colleges, the enrollment process, scholarship options, and certification requirements for non-citizens, including those eligible for in-state tuition.
- b. By the beginning of FY 2024 the Dream Project will launch the pilot CTE Mentoring Program to serve a minimum of three students.
- c. At the end of FY 2024 the Dream Project will conduct an evaluation of the CTE pilot program, and contingent upon its success, will make necessary adjustments and continue the program in subsequent years. Regardless of the success and potential continuance of this pilot program, the Dream Project's primary mission will be to provide mentoring to students who plan to attend two- and four-year colleges.

### 3. Supplement the virtual Mentoring Program with monthly in-person sessions --

By the beginning of FY 2023, the Dream Project will experiment with a new structure for delivering the weekly mentoring sessions, continuing with weekly virtual sessions with the added option of participating in person once a month.

## B. Mentoring (cont.)

The process will involve several steps:

- a. Develop guidelines to ensure effectiveness, accountability, and supervision (of both mentees and mentors), as well as mentee investment in, and engagement with, the Dream Project community.
- b. Identify additional support to serve the virtual mentee/mentor pairs who are not able to attend in-person while simultaneously managing the monthly in-person sessions for those who are able to attend in-person.
- c. By the end of FY 2023, conduct an evaluation of the experimental virtual supplemented by in-person sessions to determine any necessary adjustments for improvement.
- d. By the end of FY 2024, explore available alternative venues for in-person sessions in order to make them more accessible to more mentees.
- e. Annually evaluate and update the mentoring curricula and technology platform to meet the evolving needs of the mentees and mentors.

### 4. Strengthen and expand partnerships --

Beginning in FY 2023, the Dream Project will expand and deepen partnerships with other mentoring programs, such as Casa Chirilagua, Alexandria Lodgings, and George Washington University's New Horizons mentoring program to mutually enhance the services provided to Virginia high school students.

- a. By the beginning of FY 2023 the Dream Project will have an updated list of existing partnerships to meet students' needs within our mentoring program and underclassmen interested in our programs.

## C. Support for Dream Scholars and Alumni

The objective of Scholar and alumni support is to help students succeed in college and utilize their education to start a career. Dream Project Scholars are overwhelmingly first-generation students who need guidance navigating the higher education system and adjusting to college life. Their immigration status, which makes it difficult to work both during and after college, creates greater headwinds than native-born first-generation students face. The Dream Project will focus on four overlapping areas of Scholar and alumni support: academic, social, and emotional support; Scholar and alumni engagement; emergency services; and career development.

### 1. Academic, social and emotional support --

Since 2020 the Dream Project has partnered with the non-profit organization Beyond 12 to provide regular academic, social and emotional support to about half of Dream Project students. The Beyond 12 coach checks in with each student every two weeks to both deliver a curriculum of skills necessary for college survival and to help the student with specific obstacles. Sometimes, the Beyond 12 coach uncovers issues that indicate the need for further support services.

## C. Support for Dream Scholars and Alumni (cont.)

We will continue our relationship with Beyond 12, making the program mandatory for first-year students and those on academic probation, and optional for second-year students or for students who transfer from a two-year to a four-year school. A third year of coaching will be available only in rare circumstances. We will evaluate the program annually and make adjustments as necessary.

### 2. Scholar and Alumni engagement --

The Dream Project will continue to provide holistic support for our Scholars and alumni, as well as to create a sense of community among our constituency.

a. Summer Summit: The FY 2023 Summer Summit will offer virtual content-specific sessions as in recent years. These sessions will consist of multiple simultaneous streams for first-year and second-year Scholars, upper-level Scholars, alumni, and parents. For upper-level Scholars, the content of the sessions will vary from what was offered to first- and second-year students to make the Summit more engaging for repeat participants and those approaching graduation. Tailored sessions for upper-level Scholars and alumni will include such topics as job preparedness and interview skills. The Summit will include a kickoff or culminating in-person interactive sessions on a universal theme, such as developing leadership skills, followed by a social event for Scholars and alumni. Evaluation results from FY 2023 will inform how we plan for the mix of virtual and in-person sessions, as well as content, in subsequent years.

b. Student Gatherings: For FY 2023, we will offer two social gatherings – one virtual and one in-person. In addition, we may offer ad hoc student gatherings on specific topics, such as financial literacy or specific career fields. Evaluation results from FY 2023 will inform how we plan for subsequent years.

### 3. Emergency support services --

In recognition of the fact that Dream Project students frequently encounter unexpected emergencies that interfere with their ability to perform well in school, we will continue to offer the following services to our Scholars:

a. Herman Loan Fund: Consistent with our agreement with the Molly and Joseph Herman Foundation, we will consider and approve loans to Dream Project Scholars of up to \$2,000 for emergency purposes. By the beginning of FY 2023 following a sub-committee evaluation, policy and procedural changes will be proposed to 1) track more closely borrowers' enrollment status, 2) follow up more immediately when borrowers graduate or leave school, 3) impose limitations on the total amount each Scholar is able to borrow, and 4) collect repayment from delinquent borrowers consistent with the Dream Project's ethos.

b. Emergency Relief Fund: The Emergency Relief fund will no longer be tied to covid-related emergencies and will meet the emergency needs related to housing, food, and medical needs of Dream Project Scholars.

## C. Support for Dream Scholars and Alumni (cont.)

c. Computer Fund: The computer fund provides funds to refurbish donated computers that will meet Scholar needs and also, if necessary, to purchase new computers for Scholar use.

d. Case Manager: The Case Manager advocates for Scholars to help them access public, private, and Dream Project resources that address academic, non-academic, and emergency needs.

e. Mental Health Services: The Dream Project will continue to provide mental health facility costs for short-term treatment of scholars through the George Mason University Center for Psychological Services (GMU-CPS).

### 4. Career development --

Dream Project students face significant barriers to finding jobs and internships because their immigration status may not permit traditional paid employment. In addition, because they are predominantly first-generation immigrant students, they do not have extensive connections to form networks. Nonetheless, many students and employers have found ways to create opportunities, usually as a result of personal networking. The Dream Project will pilot two volunteer-run career development programs during FY 2023.

a. The first career pilot program, led by a current Dream Project alumnus, will consist of a cadre of senior Dream Project Alumni who will identify DREAMer-friendly jobs and internships and offer advice to Scholars in their fields. The goal for the number of students-career mentor pairs is: FY 2023: 5; FY 2024: 10; and FY 2025: 15

b. A second career pilot program will pair junior and senior Dream Scholars with seasoned mentors in their fields, who will be identified and recruited from among the Dream Project's well-established network of supporters and Advisory Board members. The mentors will serve as informal career advisors and as starting points for networking. The goal for the number of student-career mentor pairs is 10 by FY 2023; 20 by FY 2024; and 35 by FY 2025.

Each of these pilot programs will be evaluated at the end of FY 2023, and if successful, will expand in subsequent years. If additional resources become available, the Dream Project will create a database of supporters with contacts in specific fields.



# STRATEGIC PLAN AND GOALS

## Goal #2A - FUNDRAISING

### Objectives

During the course of the strategic planning period, the Dream Project will increase its annual fundraising capability so that by FY 2025, we will raise \$785,000 from a sustainable and diversified pool of donors, including individuals, foundations, corporations, and faith-based communities. We also will build a strong organizational infrastructure to support fundraising operations, a process that began with the hiring of our first full-time Director of Development in February 2022. Achieving this fundraising goal will allow us to provide more substantial annual scholarships (\$4,000 per Scholar by FY 2025), as well as sustainable funding for all programs and operations. This goal will be accomplished by diversifying funding streams such that by FY 2025, approximately 35 percent of our funds will come from major individual donations (\$10,000 or greater), 30 percent from general individual donations, 25 percent from foundation grants, 5 percent from corporations and businesses, and 5 percent from faith-based institutions.

### A. Diversify Funding Streams

The Dream Project will diversify and increase total fundraising to \$775,000 by the end of FY 2025 by focusing on four funding streams: individual giving, foundation grants, corporate/small business donations, and faith community donations, as well as an annual gift from the Parents Committee. (For intermediate fiscal years, please refer to the graph on page 20.)

#### 1. By FY 2025, in order to increase total individual donations to \$503,000, The Dream Project will:

- a. Increase general donations (individual gifts in amounts smaller than \$10,000) to \$232,000 by expanding the number of general donors by 20 percent, from 165 current donors to 200 donors by the end of FY 2025, and increasing the dollar amounts of donations.
- b. Increase major individual donations (\$10,000 or more) to \$271,000. In FY 2022, the Dream Project enjoyed the support of 15 major individual donors (“Investors”). We anticipate losing up to three Investors per year, so the increase will be achieved by replacing Investors lost plus adding one new investor per year. By the end of FY 2025, we will have the support of 18 Investors.

#### 2. By FY 2025, increase foundation grants to \$194,000. The Dream Project will:

- a. Continue to research, cultivate new, and steward current foundation partners. In FY 2022 we submitted six grant proposals. In each year of this strategic plan, we will increase the number of grant proposals we submit by at least four.
  - i. In FY 2023 we will submit no fewer than ten proposals
  - ii. In FY 2024 we will submit no fewer than fourteen proposals
  - iii. In FY 2025 we will submit no fewer than eighteen proposals.

## A. Diversify Funding Streams (cont.)

**3. By FY 2025, increase corporate and local business donations to approximately \$39,000. The Dream Project will:**

a. Develop a list of potential corporate and local business donors; a corporate/business strategy for outreach; and, appropriate corporate/business marketing materials, in order to cultivate new and steward current corporate and local business donors.

b. By FY 2025, we will enjoy the support of two corporations and six Corporate Angels (see Named Scholarship outreach mechanism below).

c. We will begin to cultivate corporate and business sponsors, such as construction industry companies or hospitals, to potentially finance the scholarships for the Career and Technical Education (CTE) pilot program.

**4. By 2025, increase gifts from faith-based institutions to \$39,000. The Dream Project will:**

a. Strengthen and expand relationships with current faith-based community partners:

i. Schedule congregational “meet & greets” with no fewer than nine existing and new partners per year (an average of one per month during the school year).

ii. Develop new partnerships with no fewer than three faith-based partners per year for a total of no fewer than nine new partners by FY 2025.

iii. Cultivate a minimum of two new Faithful Friends per year for a total of six Faithful Friends by the end of FY 2025 (see Named Scholarship outreach mechanism below).

**5. Increase the Parents Committee donation to \$10,000 per year** (Dream Project parents raise money through participation in the annual Holiday Celebration as well as through smaller parent-led events and activities throughout the year.)

a) Incorporate parent initiatives into Fundraising Committee planning and increase collaboration between the Fundraising Committee and the Parents Committee. Starting in FY 2023 the Fundraising Committee will include at least one representative from the Parents Committee.



## B. Increase Named Scholarship Giving Across All Four Funding Streams

In addition to regular and ongoing networking and stewardship activities, the Dream Project will further expand outreach that helps generate interest and giving across all four donor streams as well as through the Parents Committee:

**1. The Named Scholarship (NS) Program allows donors across funding streams to sponsor student scholarships for \$2,500 per year per student** (for a total four-year commitment of \$10,000). The Dream Project will increase net Named Scholarships by an additional six each year so that by FY 2025 we will have a total of 125 Named Scholarships. In addition to existing individual and foundation Named Scholarships, we will create two new Named Scholarship categories:

**a. Corporate Named Scholarships:** We will develop and launch a “Corporate Angels” program through which corporations and small businesses may choose to sponsor Named Scholarships. We will cultivate a minimum of two new Corporate Angels per year (included in the overall NS goals above) for a total of six Corporate Angels by the end of FY 2025.

**b. Faith-based Community Named Scholarships:** We will develop and launch a “Faithful Friends” program through which faith-based institutions may sponsor Named Scholarships. We will cultivate a minimum of two new Faithful Friends per year (included in the overall NS goals above) for a total of six Faithful Friends by the end of FY 2025.

## C. Schedule Events and Meetings

The Dream Project will continue to host at least one large fundraising event each year, and when public health conditions allow, will host small house party events as well. We also will maintain a regular schedule of mailings and e-blasts to our supporters and potential supporters.

**1. Annual Holiday Celebration:** Through the promotion of The Dream Project’s main fundraising event, we will encourage donors across all funding streams to make end-of-year donations. In addition, the Parents Committee will use this opportunity to raise funds for their annual donation to the Dream Project. If the public health situation allows, we will hold the event in person each year. If it is not safe to gather in person during the holiday season, we will develop another solution to encourage end-of-year giving.

**2. House Parties:** If the public health situation allows, the Dream Project will encourage Board members, Advisory Board members, Investors, and other supporters to host private house parties, for which Dream Project staff will provide assistance and facilitation as needed.

**3. Mailings:** The Dream Project will send out at least three major mailings each year to donors across all funding streams, including the back-to-school mailing, an end-of-the-calendar-year mailing, and an end-of-the-school-year mailing. In addition, donors giving over \$500 will receive a physical copy of The Dream Project’s Annual Report.

## D. Expand Social Media Outreach

The Fundraising Committee, in collaboration with the Communications, Outreach, and Advocacy Committee, will increase our social media engagement and encourage followers to establish peer-to-peer social media fundraisers (in honor of birthdays, events, anniversaries, etc.).

## E. Improve Promotional Materials

The Dream Project will update and create a variety of promotional materials and toolkits that are appropriate for each of our four funding streams at the beginning of FY 2023, and revise these materials annually, or as needed. By the end of FY 2023, the Dream Project will create an online library for easy retrieval of appropriate fundraising materials.

## F. Recruit Student Ambassadors

The Dream Project will recruit, on an ongoing basis, Scholars and Alumni to speak at Dream Project events or to prospective donors to share their stories, challenges, and achievements.

## G. Strengthen Database Management and Bookkeeping

The Dream Project will research and, if fiscally feasible, purchase software systems to synchronize Quickbooks and Salesforce, and will invest in additional software and computer training for staff, as needed.



---

# STRATEGIC PLAN AND GOALS

## Goal #2B-Communications, Advocacy, and Outreach Objectives

The Dream Project will ensure effective communication to key audiences, advocate alongside our partners for the needs of our students, and expand outreach to potential stakeholders and allies. Through these activities, the Dream Project will continue to build a recognizable and well-respected brand within the community, and maximize awareness of our mentoring and scholarship programs.

### A. Increase Communication

By the beginning of FY 2023, the Dream Project will develop and implement a Communications Plan, including a Social Media Plan, to help meet the broader goals of the three-year Strategic Plan. The Communications Plan will have several key goals:

- 1. Build a strong social media presence** using strategies outlined in the Social Media Plan, with a goal of creating or sharing two to four posts per month and increasing the number of followers by 10 percent each year across all social media platforms.
- 2. Improve and maintain The Dream Project website** to better support communications and fundraising strategies and to more effectively reach target audiences, including parents, supporters, students, educators, and the general public (the website will be professionally redesigned by the end of FY 2022-2023).
- 3. Develop and regularly update promotional material** including brochures; videos; Named Scholarship and Corporate Angels packages; a press kit; program descriptions and outcomes; exhibit display materials; and other materials.
- 4. Broaden engagement and increase access to information** by translating the most important Dream Project collateral into multiple languages, beginning with Spanish.
- 5. Develop and share stories** through traditional and social media streams, within community groups, and at educational and public events by collecting and utilizing at least ten written student stories each year and generating at least five stories highlighting Dream Project programs, initiatives and successes each year.

## B. Participate in Advocacy Initiatives

The Dream Project will contribute to raising awareness of our students' aspirations, their proven ability to overcome challenges, and the contributions they make to our communities. We will accomplish this by elevating student narratives and by working collaboratively to bring about public policies that reduce the challenges our students face and create more opportunities for them to succeed. The Dream Project will:

- 1. Each year, recruit and prepare at least ten students who have varied backgrounds and immigration experiences to participate in advocacy events.**
- 2. Build understanding with community leaders, business owners, advisory board members, and elected officials** of the challenges faced by Dream Project scholars due to their immigration status and decreasing eligibility for DACA.
- 3. Partner with other immigrant advocacy groups** to promote legislative and policy changes that benefit the Dream Project community and to oppose harmful policies.

## C. Expand Outreach

The Dream Project will participate in events, functions, and coalitions that build awareness of our work and our community and expand resources available to our students. These activities will be closely coordinated with the Mentoring, Fundraising, and Scholar and Alumni Support committees, and will be focused on the following goals:

- 1. Cultivate and maintain partnerships** with local counties and municipalities, school districts, and community-based organizations, with a goal of developing two new formal agreements each year.
- 2. Participate in at least two community events each year**, such as college nights, county fairs, farmers markets, folkloric festivals, etc.
- 3. Cultivate and maintain partnerships with private and public universities in Virginia** by establishing at least one net new working relationship with a college or university each year.
- 4. Cultivate and maintain engagement with Dream Project alumni.**
  - a. By FY 2023 engage with 30% of Dream Project Alumni
  - b. By FY 2024 engage with 40% of Dream Project Alumni
  - c. By FY 2025 engage with 50% of Dream Project Alumni

## D.Support the Parents Committee

The Dream Project was established by a group of parents, and we will continue to work closely with the parents and families of our students in support of their success by focusing on the following actions:

- 1. Conduct at least ten workshops throughout the year** (including the Parent Summit sessions) with topics such as supporting their children's successful college experience, financial planning, computer literacy, mental health, immigration law, and policy issues.
- 2. Collaborate with the Parents Committee to promote the Mentoring and Scholarship programs.**
- 3. Collaborate with the Parents Committee to identify student needs.**
- 4. Support the Parents Committee's fundraising efforts.**

# STRATEGIC PLAN AND GOALS

## Goal # 2C - Governance

Over the course of the strategic plan period, the Dream Project's Governance Committee will continue to respond to the requests of both the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors, as well as generate its own proposals to foster efficient and effective governance:

- 1. Based on the results of the Board self-evaluation process to be completed by the end of FY 2022, determine whether and/or how to improve the process in subsequent years.**
- 2. Continue to refine and improve the Roles and Responsibilities document** on the basis of revisions proposed at least once each year by the Executive Director.
- 3. Develop and adopt a process for policy development**, specifying a policy format, and developing and implementing a clear delineation between policies (the responsibility of the Board of Directors) and procedures (the province of staff) by the end of FY 2023 and then refining the process as necessary during FY 2024 and FY 2025.
- 4. Propose a process for the approval of new Dream Project initiatives** by the end of FY 2023, and refine the process as necessary during FY 2024 and FY 2025.

# STRATEGIC PLAN AND GOALS

## Goal # 2D - Operations, Staffing, and Infrastructure

By the end of FY 2025, the Dream Project will have the staff and infrastructure capacity to efficiently and effectively execute the growing fundraising, communications, and administrative functions necessary to continue delivering outstanding programs and services, and will take specific steps to enhance all aspects of our operations, including:

- 1. By the end of FY 2023, optimize the workflow among staff, Board members, and volunteers.**
- 2. By the end of FY 2023, consult with partners and constituents about possible solutions for program space and activities.** Space is not needed for administrative tasks but would be helpful for programming and activities, such as scholar and alumni events, Parents Committee meetings and workshops, scholarship application interviews, mentoring, and one-on-one conferences.
- 3. By the end of FY 2023, design and implement a partial remote work policy to meet the needs and desires of BOTH staff and the organization.**
- 4. By the end of FY 2024, provide office equipment (such as laptops and cell phones) for staff members as appropriate.**
- 5. Maintain a work culture in which staff continue to develop their individual talents and abilities to better serve both the organization and their personal growth.**
- 6. Continue to maintain, update and improve The Dream Project's technological and analytical capabilities** (e.g., website, security, and privacy, Salesforce, financial management, scholarship, and mentoring management systems).



# PRELIMINARY FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

The Dream Project will need to continue to increase its resources in order to support the goals of its three-year Strategic Plan. This includes all expenses related to recurring annual costs, such as salaries for outstanding staff to support and advance the organization’s strategic goals, operational costs, training, and program evaluation.

In FY 2020 and FY 2021, the Dream Project received over \$100,000 in largely one-time grants to fund our Covid Emergency Relief Program which quickly distributed over \$97,000 to Dream Project community members in need of assistance. Those Covid-related contributions and disbursements are almost entirely completed, and in FY 2022, the inevitable decrease in Covid-related contributions was more than offset by the continued absence of expenses related to in-person programming and events. The Dream Project reacted

in FY 2022 with nimbleness and effective management such that we actually increased our reserves with a budget surplus. Exceptionally rapid inflation, a dramatic decrease in the stock market, the lingering effects of Covid, and international instability all present an unusual degree of fundraising uncertainty and potential donor hesitation. In response, we are projecting very conservative fundraising goals in FY 2023. Any decrease in revenue will easily be covered by our substantial reserves of \$400,000. In FY 2024 and FY 2025, we project that income will resume its historic upward trajectory.



# DREAM PROJECT STAFF, BOARD OF DIRECTORS, AND TASK FORCE

## Staff

**Karen Vallejos Corrales**

Executive Director

**Michele Connelly**

Director of Development

**Liz Laribee**

Director of Communications and Student Recruitment

**Carlos Puerta**

Program Manager and Systems Developer

**Cecilia Morales**

Business and Program Manager

**Belinda Passafaro**

Case Manager/Senior Consultant

**Patricia Sanguinetti**

Mentoring Coordinator

## Strategic Planning Task Force

Kevin Coray, Ph.D., Consultant

Karen Vallejos Corrales

Jane Powell

Mark Habeeb, Ph.D.

Ann Kennedy, Ph.D.

Robert Remes, Esq.

Julie Zalkind, Ph.D.

## Board of Directors

**Jane Powell**

Chair

**Mark Habeeb, Ph.D.**

Vice Chair

**Robert Remes, Esq.**

Treasurer

**Ann Kennedy, Ph.D.**

Secretary

**Emma Violand-Sanchez, Ed.D.**

Founder and Chair Emeritus

**Monica Burgos Flores**

**Dawn Cutler**

**Cinthia Fernholz**

**Tim Lawler**

**Henry Mejia-Villena**

**Jeff Miles**

**Nataly Montano Vargas**

**Marie Price, Ph.D.**

**David Rothwell, Esq.**

**Robert Smith**

**Julius JD Spain Sr.**

**David Springberg**

**Julie Zalkind, Ph.D.**

Special appreciation to Dream Project parents, mentors, mentees, Scholars, donors, alumni and Advisory Board members who participated in the strategic planning process and provided valuable insight regarding the evolving needs of the Dream Project community.

## CONTACT INFORMATION



Dream Project Inc.  
P.O. Box 7419  
Arlington VA 22207



Facebook:  
[fb.com/DreamProjectVA](https://fb.com/DreamProjectVA)



703-672-1541



Twitter: [DreamProjectVA](https://twitter.com/DreamProjectVA)



[dream-project.org](https://dream-project.org)



Instagram: [DreamProjectVA](https://instagram.com/DreamProjectVA)

