

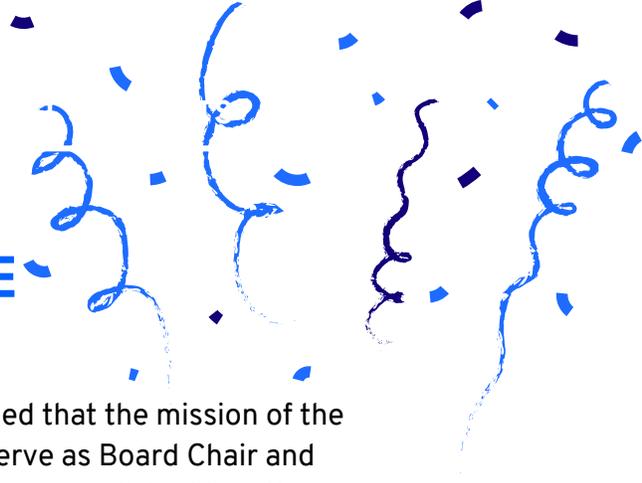


# 2025

# ANNUAL

# REPORT

*Celebrating 15 years!*



## **ANNUAL LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND BOARD CHAIR**

This has been a year of change and challenge, and it has reaffirmed that the mission of the Dream Project is more important than ever. We are honored to serve as Board Chair and Executive Director, and we are proud of what our community has accomplished together. Fifteen years ago, a community of students, parents, and local leaders—including Dr. Emma Violand-Sánchez—came together with a bold vision: to ensure immigrant students could pursue higher education regardless of their immigration status. They began by awarding four scholarships of \$1,000 each. Today, the Dream Project awards more than 100 scholarships annually, each valued at \$4,000. This remarkable growth is a testament to the vision and dedication of our founders, board members, staff, mentors, families, and donors who make this work possible.

Over the past year, we have focused on strengthening our programs, building infrastructure, and transitioning day-to-day operations from the board to staff. Already, we are seeing the positive results of these efforts. Our Annual Scholarship Award Ceremony was the most attended in our history, with over 300 participants celebrating our scholars. And in collaboration with Stanford University, we are launching Bridge to Dreams—a virtual summer mentorship program beginning in July 2025 that pairs college-ready high school seniors with Stanford graduate student mentors. This initiative will foster opportunities for higher education, improve college acceptance rates for immigrant students, and expand representation in academia. We have also worked to meet the evolving needs of our community. Through monthly legal information sessions, we have created space for students and families to better understand their rights, navigate the impact of recent Executive Orders, and access mental health resources, including our monthly Solidarity Circles. These conversations are part of our unwavering commitment to support our community during these challenging times.

Looking ahead, our FY2026–2028 strategic plan charts a bold course. We aim to increase scholarship amounts each year, with the long-term goal of awarding a scholarship that covers a full year at a community college. For the second year in a row, our revenue exceeded \$1 million, which allowed us to raise scholarship awards by \$500. Building on this momentum, our new plan sets a target of 15% annual revenue growth to keep pace with our vision. We are inspired by the generosity of our donors, grantors, businesses, and faith-based partners as we work toward this goal. As we look to the year ahead, we are excited for the opportunities and challenges before us. Together, with your continued support, we will strengthen our services and expand the impact of our scholarships. Thank you for walking alongside us in this mission.

**WITH GRATITUDE,**  
**TIM LAWLER, BOARD CHAIR &**  
**KAREN VALLEJOS CORRALES,**  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**



# WHO WE ARE

**Mission:** We empower students whose immigration status creates barriers to higher education by working with them to succeed in college through scholarships, mentoring, family engagement, and advocacy.

## OUR 2024-25 STAFF

**Karen Vallejos Corrales, J.D.**, Executive Director  
**Michele Connelly**, Director of Development  
**Cecilia Morales**, Director of Operations  
**Iman Mekonen**, Comms. & Advocacy Coordinator  
**Katherine Fernandez**, Program Assistant  
**Belinda Passafaro**, Case Manager  
& Senior Consultant  
**Roshell Andrade**, Mentoring Coordinator  
**Paola Montano**, Bookkeeper  
**Hareth Andrade**, Comms. & Events Coordinator  
**Monica Castillo**, Development Assistant

## OUR 2024-25 BOARD

Tim Lawler, *Board Chair*  
Julie Zalkind, *Board Vice Chair*  
Robert Remes, *Treasurer*  
Nancy McEldowney, *At- Large*  
Meg Tucillo, *At-Large*  
Dayana Hudson, *Secretary*  
  
Ninfa Amador-Hernandez, Monica Burgos,  
Dawn Cutler-Tran, Ann Kennedy, Ron Pillay  
Kulathuran, Jeff Miles, Melanie Nezer, Marie  
Price, Giancarla Rojas, David Rothwell,  
Julius D. Spain, Bryan Viera

## OUR 2024-25 ADVISORY BOARD

**Carlos Alberto OtaI**, *Advisory Board Chair*  
John Andelin, Honorable Ricardy Anderson, Gaston Araoz, Dr. Katherine Barko-Alva, Dr. Nathan Carter, Honorable Cristina Diaz-Torres, Dr. Francisco Durán, Senator Adam Ebbin, Senator Barbara Favola, Denise Ferguson, Anita E. Friedman, Magaly Galdo-Hirst, Ginger Geoffrey, Ingrid Guerra-Lopez, Rebecca Herman, Dr. Bethany Letiecq, Rita Lewis, Delegate Alfonso Lopez, Cressida McKean, Tara Palacios, Honorable Dalia Palchik, John Porter, Jane Powell, Andy Shallal, Dr. Matthew Shank, Justine Springberg, Honorable Walter Tejada, Kathy Tenhula, Dr. Emma Violand Sanchez

# CELEBRATING 15 YEARS OF THE DREAM PROJECT!



# 156

## ALUMNI

In total alumni who have graduated through the Dream Project scholarship program.

## CAREERS ALUMNI PRACTICE

- Engineering
- Technology
- Education
- Consulting
- Research
- Law

# OUR IMPACT



## STUDENT QUOTE

“Your support goes beyond relieving financial burden but rather allows for fun memories with friends at UVA. Not to mention that you are helping a low-income first-generation Latina achieve a higher education which is what I like to call my American Dream!”

# 2.1M

## IN SCHOLARSHIPS

2.1M in scholarships have been awarded to immigrant students in Virginia since the founding of the Dream Project in 2011.



# THE 2024-2025 SCHOLARSHIP CYCLE

**192**

## APPLICANTS

Total applicants from the 2024-2025 cycle for the four-year scholarship

**34**

## UNIVERSITIES

The total number of universities attended by scholars.

**\$400K**

## IN SCHOLARSHIPS

In awarded scholarships for scholars on a four-year degree track

**\$40K**

## IN CTE SCHOLARSHIPS

In awarded scholarships for the Career & Technical Scholarship program

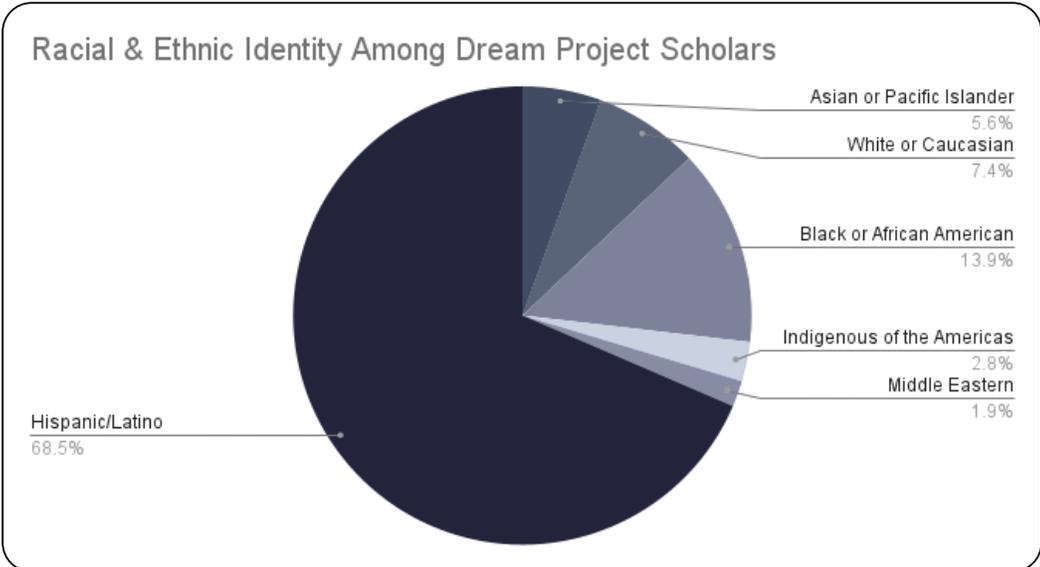
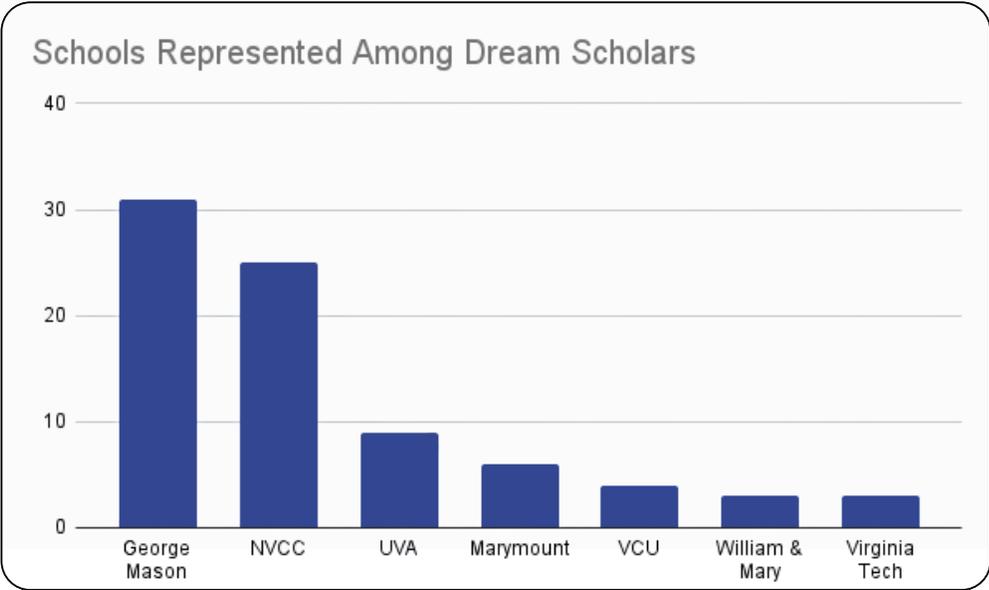
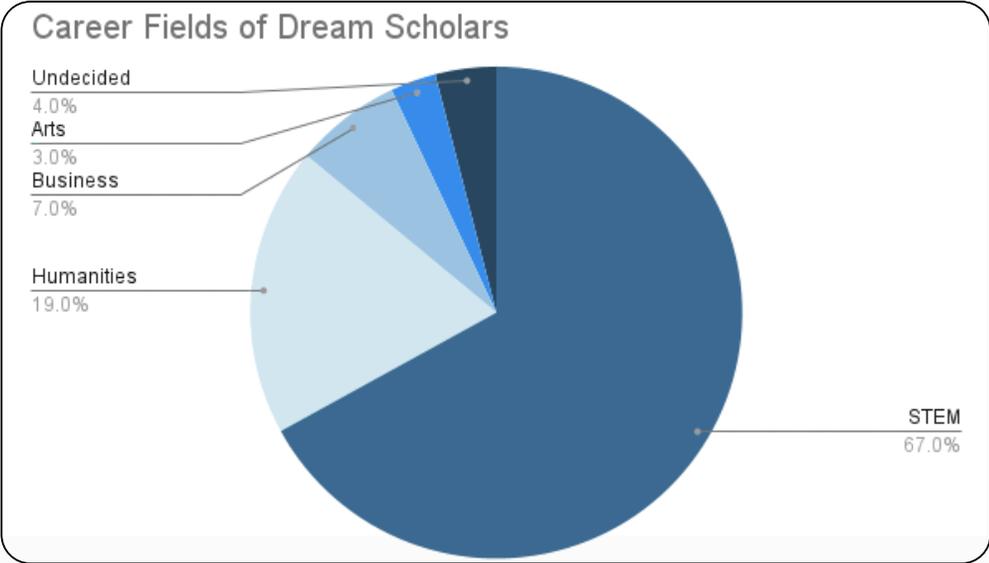
# THE SCHOLARS WE SERVE

Career Fields of Dream Scholars. Results are taken from the 2024 Scholar Survey with a 100% response rate.



2025 Scholar

The Top Seven Schools Represented Among Dream Scholars. Results are taken from the 2024 Scholar Survey with a 100% response rate.



# MENTORING PROGRAM

Our year-long College Track program supports high school seniors as they navigate the college application process.

Students receive guidance in researching schools, writing personal statements, and understanding financial aid. Mentors—many of whom are professionals, college students, or alumni—serve as role models, helping students build confidence and develop realistic, achievable college plans.

## MENTORS MAKE THE BIGGEST DIFFERENCE

“Meeting weekly with my mentor, it helps me keep track of tasks and get work done; and my mentor is someone I know I can turn to for guidance.”

## SCHOOL DISTRICTS WHERE MOST DP MENTEES APPLY FROM

- Fairfax County Public Schools
- Alexandria City Schools
- Arlington County Public Schools

## AVERAGE GPA OF DP MENTEES

# 3.4



# CTE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

## COLLEGES SCHOLARS ARE ATTENDING:

- Laurel Ridge Community College
- Southside Virginia Community College,
- Northern VA Community College,
- Brightpoint Community College, + Midlothian, VA Campus

## NEW TECHNICAL CAREERS

CTE careers that scholars are pursuing include: HVAC, Business Management with Accounting, RN, Electricity, and Radiologic Technology

The Dream Project CTE Scholarship is an annual, renewable award created to support immigrant students whose career goals focus on the applied skills needed for a specific trade or profession. Recipients are selected by the Dream Project Selection Committee based on their demonstrated commitment to their chosen field, work ethic, community involvement, and resilience.

The scholarship was piloted last year, and 2025 marks its first official year as a permanent part of Dream Project's programming. This expansion reflects our commitment to supporting diverse career pathways and ensuring immigrant students have access to the training and education needed to thrive in technical professions.



## THE IMPACT

The CTE Scholarship is making technical education more affordable for students who might not otherwise have the financial means to pursue these studies. Given the specific nature of CTE career pathways, some students qualify for VASA while others do not, which creates an additional financial barrier.

The CTE Scholarship helps close this gap by providing essential funding and connecting recipients with professional development opportunities through Dream Project's other programs, ensuring they can move forward in their technical career goals.

# PARENTS

Since its inception, the Dream Project has thrived thanks to the unwavering commitment and involvement of parents. What began as a small group of dedicated founding parents determined to help their children pursue higher education despite numerous challenges has grown into a vibrant and enduring community support network.

This year, the Dream Project took intentional steps to institutionalize family engagement by incorporating it into our core programmatic goals—ensuring that parent participation remains a cornerstone of support for our mentees and scholars.

Furthermore, the Parents’ Committee—composed of both founding and newer families—has long played a vital role in the organization. The committee has spearheaded fundraising initiatives, fostered networks of mutual support, and led outreach efforts to immigrant communities, schools, churches, elected officials, and advocacy organizations.



23'



15'

## TODAY



25'

This year, an agreement was made to formally incorporate the Parents’ Committee into the organization’s bylaws as an ad hoc committee, ensuring that parents continue to play a key role in strengthening the Dream Project’s growth, sustainability, and community impact.

25'



25'

# RISING TO THE CHALLENGE



In response to unexpected challenges this year we have adapted swiftly and strategically. Over the past year, we expanded our support services to ensure students have the tools they need to persist, regardless of the policy or political climate.

## Legal Information Session and Guardianship Planning

Routinely hosting sessions on executive, court and legislative changes that provide timely relevant updates with spaces for members to ask questions and voice concerns. Guardianship planning: Training staff to support students and families in preparing alternative guardianship and power of attorney documents.

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## Emergency Aid

Amending our relief program to cover emergency legal aid costs and broaden financial support.

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## Data Protection Enhancements

Investing in technology and updating policies to strengthen the security of sensitive data.

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## Mental Health Support

Expanding existing mental health support program by increasing the allocated hours for the case manager and and strengthening referrals to help students build resilience and access critical resources.

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# HOLISTIC SUPPORT

## Solidarity Circles and Sharing Our Stories (SOS) Program

Launched in February 2025, the Solidarity Circles have become a sacred space for Dream Project scholars to come together, reflect, and feel supported in community.

Over six sessions, the Circles have welcomed an average of 12 participants each time. Every participant received The 5-Minute Gratitude Journal, a tool that continues to help cultivate greater joy and appreciation in their daily lives. Our very own Dream Project alumna, Girasol, an elementary school art teacher, co-facilitated several of these sessions and led meaningful artistic experiences that inspired cultural identity and celebration, deepened relationships and cultivated greater gratitude and joy within the Dream Project community.

SOS: Began prior to the current political climate, the program involves a creative workshop series that fosters resilience and healing through storytelling, art, and reflection.



SOLIDARITY CIRCLES  
HAVE BECOME A  
SACRED SPACE FOR  
DREAM PROJECT  
SCHOLARS

6

SESSIONS FROM FEB-SEPT

12

AVERAGE PARTICIPANTS  
EACH SESSION

# HOLISTIC SUPPORT

Over the past year, the Dream Project has deepened its commitment to holistic support ensuring scholars have access not only to academic and financial resources, but also to spaces and services that nurture their mental, emotional, and personal well-being.

## MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

The Dream Project covers the cost of the initial 8 counseling sessions for each scholar to help ensure access and equity, while also continuing to subsidize additional sessions at a very minimal cost. These confidential resources support scholars in crisis, in navigating major life transitions, and seeks to help them balance the demands of work, academics, and family responsibilities, within a trauma-informed lens, while helping them maintain overall wellness.

8

FREE SESSIONS PER SCHOLAR

DP SCHOLARS BENEFITTED FROM MENTAL HEALTH AND COUNSELING SERVICES THROUGH OUR LONG-STANDING PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CENTER FOR COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH AT GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY.

## College Coaching in Partnership with Beyond 12

### 27 students who participated in Beyond 12 (2024–2025):

College is a significant adjustment. During the 2024–2025 academic year, first-year college scholars worked closely with a Beyond 12 coach to navigate the challenges and uncertainties of their transition to college life. Students received coaching on common first-year issues such as registering for classes, overcoming technology challenges, and balancing financial and social pressures. Many also worked with their coach to improve balance between work, family, and school responsibilities.

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## Refurbished Laptop Program

### 10 students who received a refurbished laptop:

A reliable computer is essential for success in college. If you are a Dream Project Scholar and your computer is not functioning properly, check with your school's technology office to diagnose the issue and obtain a repair estimate. The Dream Project will collaborate with you to find a solution—either by funding necessary repairs or by providing a refurbished laptop.

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## Scholars Check-In Program

### 10 student in the check-in program:

The Dream Project is committed to ensuring that every scholar maintains eligibility for scholarship renewal. During the 2024–2025 academic year, the Scholar Check-In Program supported 10 scholars who needed additional assistance to meet academic eligibility requirements for the upcoming scholarship cycle. Through regular check-ins, our case manager works closely with each student to provide personalized guidance on academic progress, time management, and overall wellness—helping them stay on track and thrive academically.

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# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Total Individual Gifts	\$489,192.00
Foundations/Grants	\$497,065.00
Faith Organizations	\$17,225.00
Other Income & Refunds	\$34,471.00
In-Kind Donations	\$41,885.00
Interest Income	\$52,706.00
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$1,132,544.00</b>

## EXPENSES

<b>DIRECT STUDENT SUPPORT</b>	
Dream Scholarships	\$610,193.00
Mentoring Program	\$85,571.00
Scholar and Alumni Activities	\$186,046.00
Parent Support	\$26,951.00
<b>TOTAL GENERAL PROGRAMS SUPPORT</b>	<b>\$908,761.00</b>

<b>SUPPORTING SERVICES</b>	
Communications and Advocacy	\$43,991.00
Development Infrastructure	\$107,953.00
General & Administrative	\$51,165.00
<b>TOTAL SUPPORTING SERVICES</b>	<b>\$203,109.00</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>\$1,111,870.00</b>

# NAMED SCHOLARSHIPS

Abdur and Robina Rashid Scholarship  
 Abraham and Celia J. Ringell Memorial Scholarship (2)  
 Albert Zalkind Memorial Scholarship (2)  
 Ann Bacher and James Sampson Scholarship  
 Ann Caldwell Kennedy Scholarship  
 Ann Palmer Scholarship  
 Anna WinklerPrins Scholarship (2)  
 Carole H. Lopez Memorial Scholarship  
 Chapin Family Scholarship  
 David Carliner Memorial Scholarship (3)  
 Denise Ferguson Friendship Scholarship  
 Dr. Luis Adolfo Siles Salinas Memorial Scholarship  
 Dream Project Parents Committee Scholarship  
 Elizabeth Kerr Martin Memorial Scholarship (4)  
 Fairlington Presbyterian Church Dream Scholarship  
 Founder's Scholarship  
 Frechette Family Foundation Scholarship (10)  
 General (Ret.) Colin L. Powell Memorial Scholarship (5)  
 Glen James Ferguson Scholarship (3)  
 Goree Family Foundation  
 J. Robert Vastine, Jr. Scholarship  
 James G. Lewis Scholarship  
 Jean Crandall Memorial Scholarship  
 Jim Weber Memorial Scholarship  
 John D. Evans Foundation Scholarship  
 Joyce Porter Scholarship  
 The Hon. Julius D. and Adriana Spain Scholarship  
 KBR Foundation Scholarship (5)  
 Ling Family Scholarship  
 Margarita A. Salvary Dreamer Scholarship  
 Marianna and Julius Herman Scholarship  
 Marie Dowd Memorial Scholarship  
 Mary Chilton Ferguson Scholarship (3)  
 Mary Kach Chapin Memorial Scholarship  
 Mary Kay Kach '85 Scholarship  
 Mason Hirst Foundation Scholarship  
 Melva B Galdo Scholarship

Milton Luis Gomez Memorial Scholarship  
 Molly Herman Scholarship  
 Nancy Firestone Scholarship  
 Natalie P Moody Scholarship  
 Patricia Schamber Memorial Scholarship  
 Perpetual Journey Scholarship (2)  
 Philip Zalkind Scholarship  
 Promise for the Future Scholarship  
 Ralph and Roslyn Limmer Memorial Scholarship (3)  
 Realizing Aspirations Scholarship  
 Rich Rosenberg Memorial Scholarship  
 Rita Andelin Memorial Scholarship (4)  
 Roselyn Abitol Memorial Scholarship  
 Ruth Zalkind Memorial Scholarship  
 Schmitz Family Scholarship (2)  
 Sharon H Youcha, MD Scholarship  
 Shawn N. Smith Memorial Scholarship  
 Skip Goree Memorial Scholarship  
 St Mary's Episcopal Church Scholarship (2)  
 Stewart Stevenson Lupton Scholarship  
 Ted Price Scholarship  
 Teddy McBay Scholarship  
 Temple Rodef Shalom Trailblazers Scholarship  
 The Cabalu Family Scholarship  
 The Charlene A Green Scholarship  
 The Dario and Wendy Marquez Dream Scholarship  
 The Jared Scott Vann Memorial Scholarship  
 The Pay It Forward America Foundation Scholarship  
 Thomas Hall Memorial Scholarship  
 Tuccillo Family Scholarship

*"I MOVED FROM UKRAINE TO THE US, STARTING A NEW LIFE IN COMPLETE UNCERTAINTY DUE TO A FULL-SCALE RUSSIAN INVASION. A LOT HAS HAPPENED SINCE THE DAY I LOST EVERYTHING. ONCE I WAS ON THE VERGE OF LOSING HOPE AND GIVING UP. I WANT ANYONE WHO HAS ENCOUNTERED SIMILAR FEELINGS TO CONTINUE TO FIGHT BECAUSE EVEN IN THE DARKNESS YOU CAN TURN TO THE LIGHT."*

# 15 YEARS OF EMPOWERING IMMIGRANT STUDENTS

DREAM-PROJECT.ORG

ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

We are deeply grateful to each donor to the Dream Project.

While this list consists of gifts over \$1,000, we appreciate every single one of our supporters.

## **\$\$25,000+**

John Andelin and Ginger Geoffrey  
Anonymous  
Michael Crosswell  
Denise Ferguson  
Donald Graham and Amanda Bennett  
Frechette Family Foundation  
Greater Washington Community Foundation  
Meyer Foundation  
Robert Remes and Deborah Carliner  
The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation  
The Morrison & Foerster Foundation

## **\$10,000-\$24,999**

Anonymous  
Liz and Randall Brouckman  
Conrad N Hilton Foundation  
KBR Foundation  
Andrea Limmer  
Mason Hirst Foundation  
Katherine and Robert Panfil  
Jane and Michael Powell  
Robert Smith  
The Shrewsbury Foundation  
David and Julie Zalkind  
Helaine Zinaman

## **\$1,000 - \$9,999**

Jeffrey Porter  
Jason and Jennifer Powell  
Linda Powell  
Terry and Beth Prange  
Gregory Price & Aimee Gamble Price  
Joan Price  
Marie Price and Rob Crandall  
Abigail and Stuart Raphael  
Rock Spring United Church of Christ  
Linda Rosenberg  
James Sampson and Ann Bacher  
Edward and Adrienne Schmitz  
Deborah Short and Richard Mott  
Rosalie Smith and Lynn Juhl  
Thomas Saucedo  
Julius and Adriana Spain  
St Mary's Episcopal Church  
Rita Susswein Gottesman Fund  
The John D Evans Foundation  
Carlos Torres  
Marjorie Tuccillo  
Emma Violand-Sanchez  
Matt and Ashley Weber  
Antoinette and Vincent WinklerPrins

## **\$1,000-\$9,999**

Addison Township Community Church  
Alicia and Luis Alvarez  
Anonymous  
Bernard Arons and Nan Aron  
Laurette Bennhold-Samaan  
G. Brian Busey and Linda Arnsbager  
George Cabalu  
Alicia and Philip Cackley  
Rick Carter  
CGI Federal, Inc.  
Johnson and Sarah Chen  
Susan and Daniel Christman  
Kevin Coray and Kathleen Loehr  
Parisa Dehghani-Tafti  
Jacomina De Regt  
Paul Douthit  
Fairlington Presbyterian Church  
Glenn Ferguson  
David and Diann Frantz  
Morton and Ann Friedman  
Justin and Daniela Gaither  
Lissette Gomez  
Lynnette Goree  
Bob and Marjorie Green  
Nancy Hall  
Margaret Harwood  
Michael Herman  
Jessica Kaplan and Joseph Youcha  
Ann Kennedy and George Spanos  
Leta Kent  
Charles Klink  
Laurie Koehler and Carla Carick  
Elizabeth Koniuszkow and Michael Wexler  
David and Sarah Knox  
Tim Lawler and Bernardo Siles  
Rita Lewis  
Chen Ling  
Alfonso Lopez  
Maniyar Family Foundation  
Steven Mann  
Marilyn Marcossan and Ed Starr  
Sharon "Teddy" McBay  
Nancy McEldowney and Tim Hayes  
Cressida McKean and Russell Borthwick  
Jeffrey Miles  
Joanna Miller  
John Mooney and Susan Barse  
Melanie Nezer and David Baltaxe  
Mary Norris  
NOVA Catholic Community  
Patricia Payne  
Pay It Forward America, Inc.  
Thomas Perrelli  
David Perry

# Thank You!