

FACT SHEET

The Need

Educational attainment is the best antidote to poverty, yet less than 21% of low-income U.S. high school students will successfully complete college. When these young people fall through the cracks, the loss is tragic, both for individuals and for the larger society: a recent article from the [New York Times](#) estimated that *low-income children cost the country \$500 billion* when they become adults.

Summer Search breaks this cycle.

Mission

The Summer Search mission is to find resilient low-income high school students and inspire them to become responsible and altruistic leaders by providing year-round mentoring, life-changing summer experiences, college advising, and a lasting support network.

Who We Are

Summer Search is a leadership development program with a unique commitment to providing ongoing and long-term support for low-income high school students. Founded in San Francisco in 1990, Summer Search now operates seven offices nationwide helping to place more than 700 high school students annually on a path of positive change.

Youth Served

- 69% qualify for free/reduced federal lunch
 - 45% live below the poverty line which is \$20,000 for a household of 4 (*2006 HHS Poverty Guidelines, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*)
 - 92% are minority students
 - 93% are first-generation college students
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What We Do

Summer Search selects disadvantaged high school students who demonstrate **resiliency, altruism** and **performance** (an original model developed by Summer Search called RAP) and helps them realize their full leadership potential.

Summer Search has a four-pronged approach that supports students so they **finish high school** and **go to college**, and then helps them **be successful in the real world**, while encouraging them to **give back** in the process. **We hold our students accountable for themselves, and we, in turn, support them for the long haul.**

Our leadership program services include:

1. Weekly mentoring sessions with highly trained staff mentors, from sophomore year to graduation

2. Two summer experiential education programs, after sophomore and junior years
3. College advisory services throughout high school
4. Alumni support throughout college and beyond

Outstanding Results: Breaking the cycle of poverty

- 90% of Summer Search students stay in Summer Search throughout high school
- 100% graduate high school
- 93% of graduates go to college
- 89% of those enrolled graduate college or stay on track to do so

Giving Back: Becoming positive leaders and role models

- 85% of Summer Search alumni stay actively involved
- 72% are involved in service to the community
- 25% donate their time or money back to Summer Search
- 15% of Summer Search staff and 4% of board members are alumni
- Alumni go on to careers in education, social work and medicine, and 56% report they aspire to careers in public service

Today, Summer Search has nearly 2,000 alumni who are making a positive difference in their families, schools, communities, our nation, and around the world!

Support

Summer Search is funded through individual donations, community and private foundation grants, and in-kind support from program partners. Summer Search has higher than an 80% retention rate among a very loyal donor group, with 25% of funds coming from board members. To make a donation, please visit <http://www.summersearch.org/donate>.

Summer Search History

Linda Mornell, an adolescent therapist in private practice, founded Summer Search in 1990 in the San Francisco Bay Area. The original program offered low-income high school students the opportunities to participate in life changing summer programs that had been so beneficial to her own children. Over time Summer Search evolved to emphasize a direct mentoring relationship between staff members and students, throughout high school and college, enabling participants to improve their life path. Today, Summer Search serves 700 students in seven offices nationwide: Boston, New York City, North San Francisco Bay, San Francisco, Seattle, Silicon Valley and most recently, Philadelphia.

Contact

To learn more please contact a Summer Search office:

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