



SUMMER
SEARCH

Begin.
Believe.
Become.

A national youth development organization, **SUMMER SEARCH** helps students from low-income backgrounds strengthen the skills they need to become college-educated leaders who give back to their families and communities.

THE ISSUE

First-generation college students from low-income communities face systemic barriers to earning a college degree.

Just 21% earn a Bachelor's degree, compared to 57% of their higher-income peers.¹

A college degree increases lifetime earnings by about \$1M (vs. a high school degree) and given that parents pass on their educational advantage to their children, a ripple effect is created by supporting students from low-income communities to earn a college degree.

The social and economic health of our country depends on having college-educated leaders from all backgrounds.

WHO WE SERVE

We serve students who dream of a college education and who could most benefit from experiential opportunities and mentoring to reach that dream.

Our students live in households with a median family income of \$24K, and while they often encounter the effects of systemic inequity, these students maintain their potential and drive. With added supports, they can successfully earn a college degree and change the face of leadership in our communities.

96%

qualify for free or reduced lunch

91%

are first-generation college students

96%

are students of color

42%

are male students

MEET LUIZ

“In a society that can set so many boundaries on what is possible for a young person of color, Summer Search empowers young people by allowing us to push past our limits so we can learn just how much we can achieve. I always knew that I could achieve, but I needed Summer Search to help me see the opportunities I didn’t even know were there.”

VALIDUS PREPARATORY ACADEMY, CLASS OF 2017
ST. LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY, CLASS OF 2021



HOW WE WORK

We partner with high schools, community-based organizations and families to enroll sophomores in Summer Search’s long-term program, which runs through college graduation and beyond (7-9 years).

OUR APPROACH

Our program offers a unique combination of high-touch mentoring and summer developmental opportunities that together strengthen the beliefs and skills students need to succeed. Our model is grounded in current research on adolescence and educational attainment and capitalizes on the unique opportunities present during this developmental period.

LONG-TERM MENTORING

We partner each student with a staff mentor who builds an authentic and long-lasting relationship in order to provide individualized support for many facets of a student’s life, including navigating the complex college process, discussing their identity, and everything in between at school, at home and in the community.



DEVELOPMENTAL OPPORTUNITIES

We provide students with challenging experiential (wilderness, community service, academic programs, internships) opportunities during the summers that broaden their views of the world and ultimately reveal what they’re capable of. These experiences provide opportunities for students to partner with their mentors to reflect on and learn from their triumphs and setbacks, which serves to strengthen the skills and mindsets needed for the journeys to and through college.

OUR IMPACT

85%

of most recent graduating senior class matriculated to college

85%

of our college students re-enrolled this past year

69%

of most recent classes of college students earned a 4-year college degree within six years compared with 21% of their peers¹

¹ Pell Institute, *Indicators of Higher Education Equity in the US 2016 Historical Trend Report*

OUR REACH

We have supported

6,616

young people

We currently serve

3,584

students

We are in

5

regions



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