



2020 Annual Report



GOING

THE

DISTANCE

2020 THANK YOU

A Student Speaks

“I moved from Bangladesh to the United States with my parents and sister, Makruma (also now a graduate of Sisters Circle). At the time, I was placed one grade level back because I knew very little English. Everything was new and different.



Masuma Islam, Sisters Circle, Maryland

As a young woman, growing up I often struggled to find myself. I struggled to fit in with other students because of my social class status and at times felt unseen and didn't know my place in the society as a woman of color. But with Sisters Circle by my side I was given the opportunity to meet other incredible women at various events such as career panels where women in diverse professions talked about their work. I met so many mentors within our network who are making positive differences in people's lives.

Today, I'm a more confident independent woman because I know I matter and my place in society matters. It was my experience with Sisters Circle from early adolescence to young woman-hood that truly inspired me to pick my major in college and my career in Diversity education at Johns Hopkins University.

Sisters Circle has been there for every milestone of my life and my success today has a direct connection with this loving community. With mentors by my side—those who truly believed in me and directed me to resources along the way—I was able to get to places I never thought existed for someone like me.”

— Masuma Islam

Sisters Circle received grants from the IECA Foundation in 2019 and 2020. They provide long-term mentoring to foster meaningful and sustainable change in the lives of girls and young women in Baltimore. As early as middle school, Sisters Circle motivates students to create a vision for their own future by providing career exploration workshops, exposure to professional role models and internship opportunities. They work with students to make intentional decisions about their future, define success for themselves, and choose their own path.

2020 GOING THE DISTANCE

Dear Friends of the IECA Foundation,



On behalf of the IECA Foundation Board of Trustees, I extend well wishes to our friends, colleagues, and supporters. We have never experienced a year like 2020 in our lifetimes, let alone in the 25 years since the Foundation's inception. Many of us have experienced illness, loss, and hardship since the beginning of the pandemic. We offer our sincere hope for a brighter 2021 and future for you all.

The year 2020 brought some unique challenges, from social distancing, to mask mandates, to being "Zoomed out." Because of the new restrictions, we had to quickly learn how to transition our annual in-person fundraising event to the virtual environment. Instead of getting down on a hotel dance floor, we had to break out the dance moves in our living rooms. While we sorely missed being with our friends in person, we still managed to have a great time, and thanks to you, we were able to raise significant funds to help educational programs for underserved youth across the country.

As you can imagine, the small organizations we support were greatly impacted by the virus and the necessary restrictions that were put in place. Our Board decided that during this extraordinary time, we had to give in an extraordinary way. This called for a complete pivot in our grantmaking process. Instead of one main grant cycle, we added a second, immediate cycle during the lockdown specifically for programs that we had previously supported.

As you know, we follow our grant recipients and their progress over the years. We develop relationships with the people who dedicate their lives to serving students, their families, and communities. When the pandemic hit, we had to ensure these struggling organizations would remain open and not be abandoned in the wake of COVID-19. This is where our loyal donors and friends stepped in and gave with generosity that was incredible — yet so true to form.

This year, because of your tremendous support, the nine programs that we supported through this additional grant cycle were able to get through hardship and persevere. We were also able to give 15 regular grants and five microgrants to educational and therapeutic programs across 15 states. In this very challenging year, we are truly amazed at what we were able to accomplish for students in need, all because of you. If there is one thing we can count on, it is your loyalty and belief in the power of education. Thank you.

With gratitude,
Krissy Naspo
2021 Board Chair, IECA Foundation



Settlement Music School,
Pennsylvania



Kids On Point, South Carolina



Tailored Rides, Texas

Mission Statement

The IECA Foundation was founded in 1996 to support the mission and expand the role of the Independent Educational Consultants Association (IECA).

The mission of the IECA Foundation is to identify and support programs that have significant impact on students and their educational environments. Priority is given to programs that assist students as they make educational choices.



2020 MAIN GRANT CYCLE

Educational programs supported by IECA Foundation grantmaking create opportunities and provide hope to deserving and under-served students. This year, we granted almost \$100,000 to 29 programs spanning 15 states, thanks to the incredible support from our donors. These outstanding organizations strive to improve the lives and educational trajectories of students all across the country.

Abramson Scholarship Foundation (Washington, D.C.) \$4,000

The Abramson Scholarship Foundation ensures that motivated, low-income D.C. public high school graduates have the opportunity to get to and through college. They provide students with financial and mentoring resources that help them rise above the obstacles posed by poverty that could otherwise hamper their chances of life successes.

CITYarts (New York) \$5,000

CITYarts engages young people and professional artists in the creation of public art. Through this creative process, CITYarts empowers youth and connects them locally and around the world to become active participants in transforming communities.

Communities in Schools of Augusta (Georgia) \$5,000

The mission of Communities in Schools of Augusta, Richmond County (CISARC), is to surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life. Working alongside school staff, CISARC site coordinators identify at-risk students, assess their needs, and provide integrated support utilizing community partnerships.

Future 5 (Connecticut) \$5,000

Founded in 2009, Future 5 is a 501(c)3 nonprofit that helps motivated, low-income high school students in Stamford, Connecticut, to reach their full potential. Future 5 focuses on linking under-resourced high school and college students to their future by supporting them with connections to college, careers, the community, and character.



MANA de San Diego (California) \$5,000

MANA de San Diego is the largest and local chapter of a national organization focused on Latina empowerment through education, leadership development, community service, and advocacy. Short for “Hermana,” the Spanish word for sister, MANA is a dynamic sisterhood of Latinas bound together by common history, culture, language, and goals.



Mercy Center's Sisters Academy (New Jersey) \$5,000

Mercy Center, founded by the Sisters of Mercy, provides programs and services that empower, enrich and educate people facing socio-

economic challenges to realize their full potential, with a special emphasis on women and children.

Mile High 360 (Colorado) \$5,000

Mile High 360's mission is to ensure socio-economic status does not determine a child's future. Their goal is to end generational poverty by creating pathways to independence and choice through education. Mile High 360 is an intensive youth-development program, providing under-resourced students of color with year-round programming for 13 consecutive years.



MUSYCA (California) \$5,000

MUSYCA Children's Choir provides performing arts education for children and youth ages 4-18. Their students' artistic output reaches millions of people around the United States and the world, bringing joy through its performances, recordings, film, and TV appearances, collaborations, outreach and touring.

NativityMiguel Middle School of Buffalo (New York) \$5,000

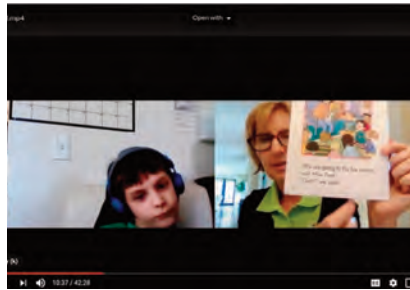
NativityMiguel is a faith-based middle school that transforms the lives of under-served students in a secure, nurturing environment on two single-gender campuses. They deliver a uniquely effective education that includes an extended school day and school year, dedicated and caring teachers, personal mentoring, and continuing support through high school graduation.

2020 MAIN GRANT CYCLE



New Futures ▲ (Washington, D.C.) \$5,000

The mission of New Futures is to create educational opportunities for rewarding careers. As the only regional organization supporting young people through shorter-term postsecondary credentials like community college degrees, they support young people of color in the Washington, D.C. region as they pursue family-sustaining, in-demand careers.



Reading Power ▲ (Illinois) \$5,000

Reading Power provides one-to-one literacy intervention for children in pre-K through second grade attending under-served schools in Lake County that do not have resources to meet required reading intervention mandates. Reading Power is a nonprofit literacy organization led by educational professionals and delivered by more than 225 trained volunteers.



The Leaders Readers Network ▲ (Texas) \$5,000

The Leaders Readers Network (formerly Give More HUGS) is dedicated to equalizing access to quality education. Their network of teachers and students represent a diverse and dedicated group of leaders who are working together to ensure children in their communities have access to brand new books, school supplies, and leadership development.



North Bay Children's Center ▲ (California) \$5,000

For more than 30 years, North Bay Children's Center (NBCC) has been a safety net for thousands of low-income families of diverse backgrounds struggling to provide the best start for their children. NBCC ensures optimal child development through culturally rich programs that prepare children from diverse backgrounds to succeed socially, emotionally and academically with an effective mix of early learning experiences that focus on school readiness, foster self-sufficiency, and promote health and wellness.



Soundscapes ▲ (Virginia) \$5,000

Soundscapes is a nonprofit, educational intervention program that helps prepare under-served students to succeed in school and beyond through intensive after-school music education. Soundscapes uses music as a tool to instill critical life skills in elementary through high school students.



Trinity Academy of Hartford ▲ (Connecticut) \$5,000

In the fall of 2014, Trinity Academy of Hartford opened its doors as a small independent tuition-free elementary school for low income students in Greater Hartford. Their mission is to educate students in a nurturing and inclusive environment with a focus on intensive academics, the arts, literacy and critical thinking, and to help students to develop the strong core skills needed to grow socially, emotionally and culturally.

Total: \$74,000

2020 MICRO GRANTS

The IECA Foundation supports the purpose of every consultant's work — to help children and young adults find the best possible choices for their education. For almost twenty-five years, the Foundation, the philanthropic arm of IECA, has been funding worthy programs that help children

and young adults find great educational opportunities.

Each year, the Foundation seeks to highlight the work that IECA members and consultants do by awarding \$1,000 micro-grants to five organizations that align with our mission — organizations where

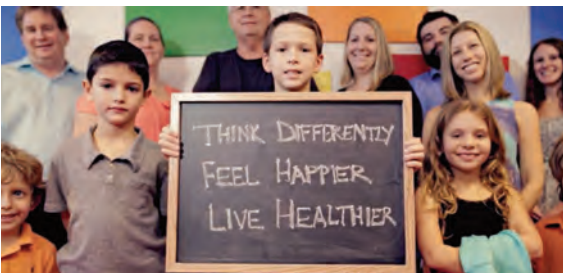
consultants have had an ongoing relationship serving young people as they move forward in their education.

The following organizations are near and dear to the hearts of the IECA members who support them through volunteer work:



Caterpillar Ministries ▲ (North Carolina)

Caterpillar Ministries strives to support the well-being of families in the Huntington Green mobile home community of Huntersville, North Carolina, most of whom live below the federal poverty line. Programs include fun for preschoolers, small groups for teens, and ESL classes and job training for adults.



College Consultants Care ▲

College Consultants Care provides free college application assistance from experienced Independent Educational Consultants to students diagnosed with cancer or have a parent diagnosed with cancer.

Faulk Center for Counseling (Florida)

The mission of the Faulk Center for Counseling is to promote emotional well-being through a variety of free and low-cost programs for counseling, therapy, and support. They provide a warm, accepting and confidential environment where people who are dealing with life's problems are helped to make changes or to cope more effectively with things that they cannot change.



iWRITE Literacy Organization ▲ (Texas)

iWRITE believes that creativity and imagination are natural gifts of childhood, which is why it encourages children to create daily and enter the annual short story contest, I Write Short Stories by Kids for Kids. Both reading and writing build a foundation for children to become leaders among their peers.



Settlement Music School ▲ (Pennsylvania)

Settlement Music School was established as a means by which students from poorer and under-represented communities could receive free or reduced rate music lessons and have instruments to play.

2020 COVID-19 GRANTS

This year, the IECA Foundation granted \$20,000 to nine organizations with immediate funding needs due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The generosity of our loyal donors has provided basic needs to programs that serve the educational and therapeutic needs of children across the country.

College Bound Opportunities

College Bound Opportunities' mission is to mentor, empower, and inspire low-income, first-generation scholars to overcome barriers, graduate college, and achieve success in life. Through their multi-faceted programming encompassing academic, social, emotional and financial supports, they help their scholars build the tools, resources, skills and knowledge necessary to successfully navigate a college career.



Evanston Scholars ▲

Evanston Scholars improves college access and success for ambitious first-generation and low-income Evanston students. The Foundation grant helped the organization deliver a comprehensive College Affordability curriculum that spans the entire Evanston Scholars program.

Leaders Readers Network

The Leaders Readers Network (LRN) was established in 2012 to support students and teachers in disadvantaged communities achieve their educational goals. LRN has three main programs: BookShare, BackPacks and Ambassadors. They provide books, backpacks, and mentorships. Their unique leadership model trains students and teachers to cultivate their leadership while impacting students in underserved communities.



Kids On Point ▲

Kids On Point introduces young people to the world of opportunity outside of their under-resourced neighborhoods through year-round academic, athletic, and enrichment programming. Kids On Point promotes civic engagement by organizing monthly volunteer and service learning projects in collaboration with other charitable organizations in Charleston.



MOSTe ▲

MOSTe (Motivating Our Students Through Experience) is a nonprofit dedicated to ensuring that girls from underserved areas in Los Angeles County have the support they need to graduate from college. Students enter their programs in the seventh grade and are provided the resources, guidance, and access needed to help them achieve their educational goals.

Pass with Flying Colors

Pass with Flying Colors aims to prepare students in Chicago's public high schools for college. The Foundation grant helped the program reach 70 first-generation students from 9th to 11th grade, providing campus visits, career/major explorations, and college knowledge activities.

Riding Unlimited

Riding Unlimited's mission for the past 30 years has been to Turn Disabilities Into Possibilities. They help individuals with physical, educational, intellectual and emotional disabilities through the power of the horse. Therapeutic horsemanship improves strength, balance, coordination, memory utilization, muscle tone, motor skills, social interaction and self-esteem.



Sisters Circle ▲

Sisters Circle, a long-term mentoring program for middle and high school girls, has led the effort to cultivate longer and more meaningful connections with youth, and, through these trusted relationships, introduce at-risk girls in Baltimore to a broader network of support that promotes life-long success.



Tailored Rides ▲

Tailored Rides is a small therapeutic riding center in rural Northeast Texas. Lamar County, Texas is an economically disadvantaged county with a reported 18.8 percent of the residents living in poverty and 12.9 percent reporting a disability. Tailored Rides serves children and adults with special needs, providing an innovative learning environment, for students with disabilities or other disadvantages.

2020 KATZ AWARD

The Irvin W. Katz Award is presented each year by the IECA Foundation. It was created to honor consultants for their volunteer work with organizations providing educational opportunities to children. Irv Katz was a beloved IECA consultant who worked passionately for the good of children.

In 2020, the IECA Foundation presented the Katz Award to IECA Professional Member Jo Leonard for her work with the R.J. Leonard Foundation, an organization she founded in memory of her father, who passed away in 2006.

“Robert James Leonard, my dad, was a successful teacher and entrepreneur who had passion for

knowledge and education, as well as the tenacity necessary to build a successful business from very little. His passion, the decisions that he made, and the opportunities that he grabbed, inspired me throughout my life and still do today.

In August 2008, motivated by both his passions and the support that he offered to me throughout his life, I launched the R. J. Leonard Foundation in memory of him.

The organization offers education and life planning, mentorship and extensive financial support to youth aging out of the foster care system, so that they are playing on the same field as their more fortunate peers, and are able to become self-sufficient and independent, free from



Katz Award Honoree Jo Leonard

poverty for the rest of their lives. I am proud of the work we have done to educate, mentor and inspire this highly at risk population, for whom the probability of success after aging out is exceptionally low.

Since our launch 11 years ago, we have worked with 21 Fellows, and we have watched some amazing success stories as they have launched into self-sufficiency.”

2020 IMPACT

\$100K in Grants Awarded

Over 5,000 Children Helped

29 Programs Across 15 States



North Bay Children's Center, California



Caterpillar Ministries, North Carolina



Sisters Academy of NJ, New Jersey



Evanston Scholars, Illinois

2020 RECIPIENTS SPEAK

Abramson Scholarship Foundation

“We are so grateful for the IECA Foundation’s continued support of our mentoring program. Our Scholars need us more than ever, and it is really heartwarming that they can continue to rely on your generous support.”

— *Danielle Verbeist*



CITYArts

“On behalf of CITYArts Board of Directors, I would like to thank you for your contribution of \$5,000. With all that is going on in the world, it is needed now more than ever. Because of the generous support from people like you, CITYArts can continue to fulfill its mission to engage youth in collaboration with professional artists to create public art.

This mission is especially critical now given present circumstances. In response to today’s challenges, CITYArts remains connected with our youth as we ignite their imagination to work with their families and our artists remotely on our inspiring new CITYArts program: Paint My Neighborhood/ School From MyHeART At Home. As CITYArts continues to engage our youth in positive creation, and to empower, educate, and connect them to realize their potential and transform communities, we strongly believe that the heartache of the moment will lead to Change from Within! This program will give our youth something to look forward to when they are able to come back to school. We need you to help us continue to make this significant impact on the lives of our children and communities.”

— *Tsipi Ben-Haim*



NativityMiguel Middle School

“Thank you so much for this very good news. We re-opened our school to students last week for the first time since March. The program being supported by this grant is therefore more important than ever, as we and our students continue to navigate through this unusual time.”

— *Nancy Langer*



Reading Power, Inc.

“Reading Power is so grateful for the continued support of the IECA Foundation. Your grant of \$5,000 will help us to meet the serious challenges to student success created by the COVID-19 crisis. We have worked hard to adapt our tutoring model to a virtual format so we can continue to work with students as they learn from home and your funds will help support this effort.”

— *Lucy Mooney*



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MANA de San Deigo, California

2020

CIRCLE 96 SOCIETY



We want our most dedicated supporters to know how much they mean to us. Therefore, in 2018, we created a new loyalty group: The Circle 96 Society.

Why Circle 96 Society?

The work of the IECA Foundation is cyclical, with grantmaking happening annually. We believe the

image of a circle aligns perfectly with this process, as well as the idea of a dedicated circle of donors. The 96 is in reference to the founding year of the IECA Foundation.

Members of The Circle 96 Society will be the first to hear about upcoming IECA Foundation events and opportunities, as well

as receive invitations for Circle 96 gatherings at future conferences. We are excited to welcome new members to The Circle 96 Society and look forward to seeing this group of supporters grow! We extend special gratitude to our members, listed below, for their steadfast support of the IECA Foundation.

Richard and Robin Abedon
The Angelo Family Charitable
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David Tuttle

Lucia Tyler

Stanford and Carol Vincent



MUSYCA Children's Choir, California

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The Angelo Family
Charitable Foundation

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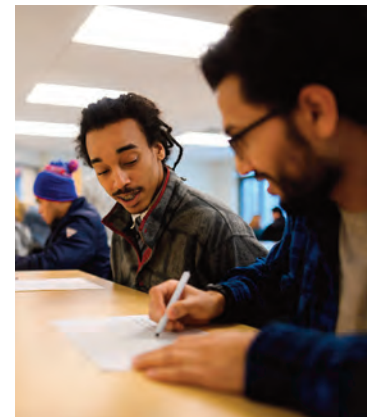
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Stanford and Carol Vincent



Sisters Academy, New Jersey



Mile High 360, Colorado



New Futures, Washington, D.C.

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David Tuttle



Soundscapes, Virginia

2020 DISCO FEVER PARTY

In November, the IECA Foundation hosted its first ever virtual event: Disco Fever, a Murder Mystery Party, as part of the IECA Fall Conference. This amazing event was created and hosted by

Whitney Longworth from Summit Educational Group. Guests dressed in their funkiest attire, boogied the night away through Zoom, and had a groovy time in our virtual photo booth.

Thank you to our generous sponsors for making this event possible! Proceeds will help us continue our grant-making efforts for years to come.



2020

THANKS, DISCO FEVER SPONSORS



2020

GOING THE DISTANCE

Thank You for an Incredible Year

Here's how you can continue to support the IECA Foundation

Visit our website to donate online at:
www.iecafoundation.org/donate

Send a check to support our grant-making efforts to:
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Sisters Circle, Maryland