



DEGREES
OF CHANGE

2018-2019

ANNUAL REPORT

TO COLLEGE AND BACK. TOGETHER.

Growth and Gratitude

During the 2018-19 program year we made incredible strides in serving students and building out our program offerings.

Together we maintained our impressive 82% graduation rate, celebrated 72 new college graduates, and added one new college partner. We also selected, trained and sent 311 new scholars to college. We also supported 477 scholars on campus in 2018-19, including 341 Act Six and 136 Ready to Rise scholars.

We also kicked off two important new initiatives. Seed Internships connects diverse college students with local businesses through paid summer internships, preparing local students from the community to become professionals leading the community.

Seed showed great promise as we wrapped up our first year in Tacoma. We received 140 applicants for 15 internship positions at 10 local companies, with all our interns successfully completing their 10-week summer internship, and earning over \$75,000 collectively. Six interns continued with their employer into the school year, with two securing full-time positions.

In addition, we launched Tacoma Completes, which works with local colleges, college success non-profits and adjacent

sectors like housing, transportation and mental health, to improve college persistence and completion outcomes for the entire Tacoma community.

Together, we maintained our
impressive 82% graduation rate.

Both Seed and Tacoma Completes are programs that we have launched here in Tacoma with the hopes of expanding them to additional communities as we refine their design and implementation.

We are grateful for your support in building out our portfolio of programs that work together to support communities to build diverse, college-educated, local leadership reflective of their community as a whole.

We could not do this work without you.

TIM & MICHELLE
CEO & Board Chair

Michelle's Story



Growing up in Lakewood, Michelle never considered herself a leader, and did not know what her future might hold.

And she remembers not seeing many successful professional Black people, let alone Black women, throughout her childhood. In the Bess Family, school was a top priority and as the oldest of five children Michelle knew getting into college would not be enough. She'd need

a scholarship to ensure there was not additional financial pressure on her family when she went away to school.

Through Act Six, Michelle was able—not only to complete her bachelor's degree in biology—but, just as importantly, to develop and grow as a leader. At Whitworth Michelle was part of the newly created cheerleading team and took over the role of Cultural Events Coordinator, both of which allowed her to hone her ambitious servant leader style.

"Degrees of Change and Act Six were life-changing for me," Michelle shares. "Both my sister and I are Act Six alumni, so Degrees of Change programming changed the trajectory of our family and the communities we love."

Through an urban studies program during college, Michelle spent a month in Chicago and fell in love with the city, where she finally met the successful Black women business leaders, politicians, doctors and teachers she was looking for as a young

girl. Immediately after graduating from Whitworth, Michelle moved to Chicago and has put down roots as she worked for several years in college access and persistence with a number of national non-profits.

Today she works as the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Director for Sprout Social, a Chicago-based software company and was recognized in 2018 as an Adweek Rising Brand Star. Recently, Michelle completed an Executive Certificate in Diversity and

Degrees of Change programming changed the trajectory of our family and the communities we love.

Inclusion Management at Georgetown University. She is the co-founder and co-owner of The Brave Space, that helps diversity, equity and inclusion practitioners to create spaces that allow individuals to embrace discomfort and speak their truth.

This year, Michelle became the Board Chair for Degrees of Change, and the first-ever program alum to serve in this capacity. Michelle, whether in Chicago or the Tacoma area, working for Sprout Social or serving as Board Chair, has committed her life to supporting diverse groups of leaders to solve the greatest challenges that face our communities today.

An incredibly thoughtful, inclusive and gracious professional, we are proud to count Michelle as an Act Six alum and an exceptional leader of our Board.



72
new
alumni
graduated



311
new scholars
selected
and trained



492
scholars
supported
on campus



82%
six-year
graduation
rate



22
partner
colleges

Financial Summary

2018-2019

\$1,767,000 Foundation Grants

\$291,000 Earned Income

\$165,000 Individual Contributions

\$64,000 Other Income

Revenue

\$2,287,000

\$684,000 Ready to Rise National

\$582,000 Local Tacoma Programs

\$388,000 Software Development

\$356,000 Act Six National

\$143,000 Fundraising

\$104,000 Management

Expenses

\$2,257,000

Assets

\$394,000 Current Assets

\$102,000 Other Assets

Liabilities and Net Assets

\$115,000 Current Liabilities

\$178,000 Unrestricted Net Assets

\$203,000 Temp Restricted Net Assets

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Chicago, IL – Pursue Scholars

Indianapolis, IN – Shepherd Community Center

Minneapolis - St. Paul, MN – Urban Ventures

Portland-Salem, OR – The Contingent

Spokane, WA – YMCA of the Inland Northwest

Tacoma-Seattle, WA – Degrees of Change

Yakima Valley, WA – Yakima Valley Community Foundation

PARTNER COLLEGES

Augsburg University

Bethany Lutheran College

Bethel University

Central Washington University

Clark College

Concordia College Moorhead

George Fox University

Gonzaga University

Heritage University

Northwest University

University of Northwestern–St. Paul

North Central University

Oakland City University

Pacific Lutheran University

Saint Martin's University

Tacoma Community College

Taylor University

Warner Pacific University

University of Washington Tacoma

Washington State University Vancouver

Western Washington University

Yakima Valley College



Together we grow impact!

Thank you to 506 individuals, foundations and organizations who made financial contributions to support our work in 2018-19

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