



THE GATE

COLLEGE POSSIBLE MILWAUKEE | FALL 2018



2018 ANNUAL REPORT [See page 4](#)

COACHING WORKS!

Discover the impact of a College Possible coach [see page 2](#)

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From the Desk of
CEO and Founder

Jim McCorkell



I am always thankful for the generosity of our donors, the commitment of our leadership team and coaches, and the sheer perseverance of the students we serve. But as I reflect upon 2018, I feel more than thankful — I feel inspired.

- Four years ago, with the U.S. Department of the Treasury, we began studying the impact our financial advising has on our students. With the release of those findings in September, we can now say with conviction that our curriculum leads to our students making better financial decisions.
- Three years ago we initiated a study with Hope Lab of Wisconsin to assess our impact on college application and enrollment. This spring, the findings showed that our students are 30 percent more likely than their peers to apply to and enroll in college.
- Early in 2016, we launched Catalyze, the partnership program that brings our model to colleges and universities. Today, we have already partnered with seven universities to serve almost 2,000 students from low-income backgrounds.
- In September, College Possible was awarded the first-ever Evergreen National Education Award in recognition of our best-in-class college programming and outcomes.

These accomplishments give me energy to continue our work to close the degree divide, and inspire our staff, coaches and students to go above and beyond in service to our vision of a day when students from low-income backgrounds graduate from college at a rate equal to that of their upper-income peers.

If we, as a nation, were able to accomplish that, the 2.4 million students from low-income backgrounds currently on America's campuses would fill our country's workforce needs and support a competitive economy. And, perhaps most importantly, it would take our country one more step in the direction of America's fundamental promise that if you work hard and play by the rules, you'll get a fair shot to go as far in life as your talents and effort can take you.



WE ENVISION A DAY WHEN
**THE FUTURE OF
AMERICA'S
CHILDREN**
IS DETERMINED SOLELY BY
**THEIR TALENT,
MOTIVATION + EFFORT.**

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On the Cover: Riverside University High School Coaches Charles and Adam during an after-school session.

MISSION

College Possible is a national nonprofit organization making college admission and success possible for students from low-income backgrounds, the majority of whom are students of color, through an intensive curriculum of coaching and support.

Our services include:

- + Extensive ACT test preparation
- + College search and application guidance
- + Enrollment and high school-to-college transition coaching
- + Financial literacy and financial aid consulting
- + Connection to campus resources and opportunities
- + Study skills and self-advocacy coaching


LET'S CONNECT

414-220-9450


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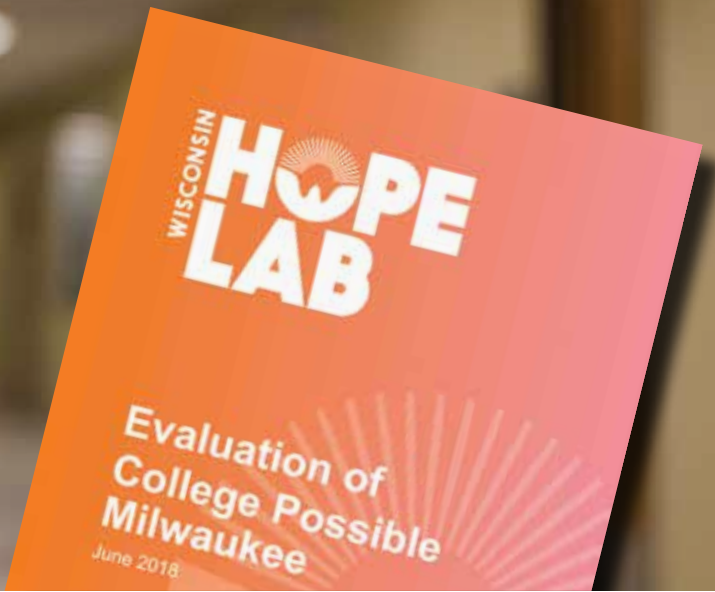
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Moving the Dial

by Lisa Guyott



A three-year study commissioned by College Possible Milwaukee and implemented by Wisconsin HOPE Lab has shown that high school students we serve are 30 percent more likely to enroll in college the year after high school graduation than their peers, and were more likely to enroll in four-year and selective institutions.

“We see the impact of our work in individual student outcomes,” said Edie Turnbull, executive director of College Possible Milwaukee. “Having this validated by a third

party only gives us greater confidence that the College Possible model is effective in closing the degree divide between students from low-income backgrounds and their higher income classmates.”

In addition to students served by College Possible, the evaluation also includes all students who entered the 11th grade in 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 at any of the eight Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) where College Possible operated. Subsets of those students were employed for comparison purposes to estimate program impacts.

The Hope Lab’s evaluation of College Possible Milwaukee examined the impact of College Possible for two cohorts of students attending

Compared to the matched comparison group,
COLLEGE POSSIBLE STUDENTS:

COMPLETED
1.4x
more scholarship applications

ARE
30%
more likely to enroll in college immediately after high school

ARE
30%
more likely to attend a 4-year college or university

↑ PROGRAM PARTICIPATION = ↑ COLLEGE ENROLLMENT + ↑ PERSISTENCE RATE

The greater the participation in the College Possible program, the higher the college enrollment and persistence rates.

MPS high schools by comparing program participants to other students who have similar measurable characteristics like GPAs and household incomes. The evaluation examined the impact College Possible Milwaukee had on students' odds of enrolling in college and where they enroll, year-to-year persistence in higher education, along with additional information on students' college admissions activities and academic preparation in high school.

The study also pointed out that, compared to their peers, College Possible students submitted more admissions and scholarship applications and had higher rates of FAFSA completion. The program also improved ACT Writing and English scores and increased enrollment in science, math and AP or IB courses during twelfth grade.

Importantly, students who participated in College Possible at higher rates benefited more than students who participated less. Students with high levels of program participation (i.e. who attended at least 50% of available program sessions) had higher rates of immediate college enrollment and enrollment in four-year colleges. They met program targets for numbers of college admissions applications and scholarship applications at much higher rates than those with lower levels of participation.

These pre-college activities are critical measures of persistence, as finances are one of the primary barriers to college graduation for College Possible students. "The cost of earning a college degree has increased 60 percent over the last decade," Turnbull noted.

"Helping our students identify and pursue scholarships and grants is key to helping them persist through college, and key to helping them contribute to the future of Milwaukee."

Edie Turnbull, Executive Director, College Possible Milwaukee

Change a Life

We are grateful for your continued financial support and investment in our student's futures and their ability to succeed.

Together we can help educate the next generation of leaders. **Thank you for believing in their bright futures!**



“College Possible has helped me in ways I never knew I would need.”

Peter

Information Science & Technology
Major, UW-Milwaukee, Class of 2018
Hamilton High School, Class of 2013

**Current AmeriCorps Coach
with College Possible**

Prefer to give online?

**Visit [CollegePossible.org/
ChangingLives](https://CollegePossible.org/ChangingLives)**



2018 ANNUAL REPORT

Your generosity supported College Possible Milwaukee, serving **3,947 students** on their path to college graduation



781 HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS SERVED

.....

1,379 COLLEGE STUDENTS SERVED

.....



1,787 STUDENTS SERVED THROUGH COLLEGE PREP TALKS

.....

15 PARTNER HIGH SCHOOLS

.....

26 CONNECTS COLLEGE PARTNERS IN WISCONSIN

.....



161 DEGREES EARNED SINCE 2008

Visit CollegePossibleThrives.org to learn more.

IMPACT & RESULTS



17%

average ACT score increase



94%

earned admission to college



4x

more likely to graduate from college than their low-income peers



\$4M

total scholarship dollars earned



79%

enrolled in college following high school graduation



30%

more likely to enroll in college immediately after high school

MILWAUKEE FINANCIAL HEALTH

For the year ended June 30, 2018

UNRESTRICTED REVENUE & SUPPORT

\$2,670,505

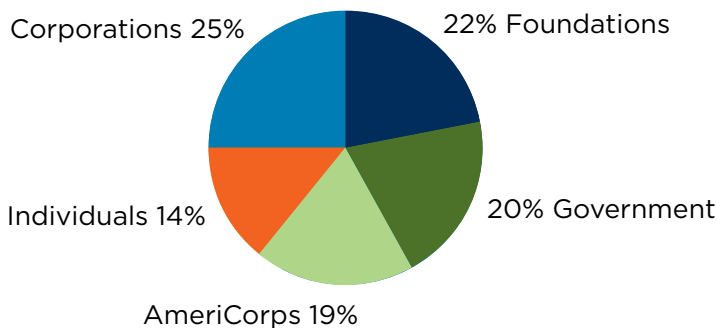
vs. FY 17 — \$2,365,057

TOTAL EXPENSES

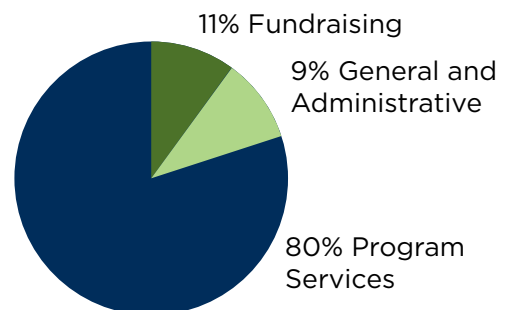
\$2,365,057

vs. FY 17 — \$2,325,938

REVENUE



FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES



DONORS

Thanks to contributions from a broad base of supporters, we help make college possible for greater numbers of students from low-income backgrounds. Gifts are from July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018.

MILWAUKEE MULTI-YEAR LEADERSHIP GIFTS

Ascendium Education Group
\$1,097,000 over two years

State of Wisconsin
\$1,000,000 over two years

Stimac Family Foundation
\$60,000 over two years

Siebert Lutheran Foundation
\$60,000 over two years

Gene and Ruth Posner Foundation
\$45,000 over three years

Real Estate Alliance for Charity
\$37,500 over three years

M&I Foundation
\$30,000 over three years

CORPORATIONS, FOUNDATIONS, INDIVIDUAL, HONOR & MEMORIAL GIFTS

\$500,000 and above
State of Wisconsin

\$250,000-\$499,999
Ascendium Education Group
Burke Foundation
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\$50,000-\$99,999
Ray and Kay Eckstein Charitable Trust
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 Trader Joe's-Brookfield
 Transfer Pizzeria Cafe
 University of Houston
 University of Minnesota-
 Twin Cities
 University of Utah
 University of
 Wisconsin- Milwaukee
 Waukesha County Technical
 College
 Waxwing

COLLEGE POSSIBLE CONNECTS BRIDGE PARTNERS

Alverno College
 Lakeland University
 Lawrence University
 Mount Mary University
 Northland College
 Silver Lake College
 University of
 Wisconsin-Platteville

*National or Local Board
 Member
 +Staff Member
 -Current or Former
 AmeriCorps Member
^oCurrent Student or
 Program Alumni
 •Pledged Commitment
 #AmeriCorps Alumni
 Council Member

STATE SUPPORT

In 2018, College Possible received \$1 million from the state of Wisconsin to be disbursed evenly over two years. The majority of funding will support traditional programming in Milwaukee. Some of these funds are also being used to pilot programming aimed at helping students in smaller towns and rural communities. We are excited to announce that this year we are piloting programing in Stevens Point, Wisconsin.



DONOR PROFILE

Croen Foundation

by Liz Smith

Fred and Amy Croen do their research before making a grant. The couple developed the Croen Foundation in 2014 following the sale of Amy's investment management company and along with their two children, they disperse funds to a variety of area non-profits.

"We started asking around and talking to leaders in the philanthropic arena to see what kind of organizations they were supporting. College Possible came up more than once so we set up a meeting to learn more," Fred said.

After reviewing metrics and outcomes, the Croen Foundation became an ardent supporter of College Possible's mission to help students get to and through college.

"College in this day and age is important," Amy said. "The opportunity to go to college isn't ubiquitous so we wanted to do what we could to encourage that and help if we could."

Investments from family foundations like the Croen's are a critical part of College Possible's

overall funding stream, accounting for nearly one quarter of our total revenue.

The Croens, who met in college at Princeton University, have always valued education. They sent both of their children to college and understand how difficult it could be to navigate that process alone.

"If you don't have someone leading the way for you through the school system, how do you figure it out on your own? It's nearly impossible," said Amy.

College Possible coaches work with students during every step of the college journey; from ACT preparation and essays, to the application process and financial aid, all the way through graduation, AmeriCorps Members support students throughout their college experience.

"We think College Possible is the leader in Milwaukee in terms of helping support families and students who need to get to, and through, college," said Fred.

Engineering His Future

by Liz Smith

When I asked Josh Sharkey about his next move he said “I’m keeping my eyes wide open, looking ahead.” The computer engineering student is a senior at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and has been building an impressive resume of internship experiences to get him closer to his ultimate goal – becoming an engineer.

Josh knew he wanted to study computer engineering even before entering college, thanks to an HTML class at Riverside University High School. “I spent all of my time on computers and felt like I still didn’t know how they worked,” Josh said. This curiosity cemented his college path and he entered UWM a pre-declared computer engineering major.

At Riverside, he worked with College Possible coaches who helped him with both navigating the college application process and making him a competitive applicant. “College Possible boosted my ACT score by six points and helped me get into school,” he said.

After his first year at UWM Josh had a 3.8 GPA and was thinking college would be easy, but sophomore year was challenging. He lived off campus, worked more hours at a second job and had a demanding class load. He failed some classes and was placed on academic probation. After that year he decided to stop out of school and got a job working at a restaurant and another as an apprentice in the trades.

“I got a taste of what life would be like if I didn’t go back to school,” said Josh. “It felt like a lot of my options were limited without a college degree.”

After a few months his boss asked what Josh’s plan was for returning to college and encouraged him to reach out to his advisor from UWM. Josh listened and started taking the steps necessary to re-enroll as a computer engineering student.

“When I came back I was on academic probation, had to obtain repeat permissions and I was ineligible for financial aid,” he said.

He worked with his advisor on creating a plan and was told he could receive financial aid under the condition that he never failed another course. He had to retake 4 courses

and follow a strict plan that would allow him to complete the classes the necessary for his major.

Despite the pressure, Josh rose to the occasion.

Now, Josh is thriving as a senior in the computer engineering program. He found a social network of engineering students to study with and joined WiscAMP, a mentoring program for underrepresented students pursuing STEM fields.

[This year, Josh will be a mentor to four UWM students in the engineering department as part of WiscAMP.](#)

“I look forward to that,” he said. “There are a lot of times where you find yourself giving advice because you’ve dealt with something and have good advice to give. I always find myself giving those cheat codes or hacks about professors or how to study or making it through.”

Aside from his leadership experience, Josh is gaining valuable work experience as an engineer. He’s explored data science, web development, cyber security and app production in a variety of professional settings to get a better idea of where he can see himself after graduation.

One of the most impactful experiences was a study abroad opportunity in Taiwan. Josh, along with three other UWM students, spent

three weeks in Taiwan as part of an exchange program with Chung Yuan Christian University.

The experience included industry visits to a nuclear plant, an incineration plant, an innovation center and a production facility. As part of the program, Josh worked with a research professor and a group of international students on making improvements to a water-resistant drone design.

“I had never done anything like that,” he said. “It was nice because they kind of just threw you in it and didn’t expect much, but the sky was the limit if you had the experience or desire to make something happen.”

He also started learning Mandarin, something he hopes to continue, and went surfing for the first time.

Stateside, Josh has participated in professional opportunities that have connected him with organizations like the Medical College of Wisconsin and Manpower Group. He also worked as an innovation consultant for the Greater Milwaukee Committee.

Currently, Josh is working as software engineer for Northwestern Mutual and finishing up his last few classes at UWM. He should have no trouble finding a job when he graduates next spring.

[“I want to end up somewhere doing something impactful,” he says.](#)

UPDATE: In November, Josh was one of thirteen engineering students selected to be part of the FoxConn Co-Op program through UWM. He will spend five months in Taiwan working on applied research projects and learning hands-on.



PARTNER PROFILE

Improving Financial Support to Create More College Grads

Lakeland University, Plymouth, WI

Lakeland University and College Possible are proud to announce a new partnership that will pave the way for more Milwaukee students to enroll at Lakeland this fall, leading to an increase in college graduates in the region.

Thanks to financial support from Lakeland's new Cooperative Education program and the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, 21 College Possible students attending Lakeland this fall will have the opportunity to blend paid work experiences for credit with traditional coursework. This income, combined with scholarships, provides students the opportunity to earn as much as \$100,000 during their four years of college, giving them the potential to reduce student loan debt and providing them with 12-18 months of professional work

experience.

This program was driven by the knowledge that one of the primary obstacles facing college students from low-income backgrounds is financing their education.

"As access to higher education has continued to grow, equity among who can earn a degree and how to pay for it has not," said Lakeland President David Black. "The cost of tuition at many schools has continued to increase, pricing out those students that come from low-income communities who have the academic skills and drive needed to earn a degree."

The Bradley Foundation is funding scholarships that allow these College Possible students to live and learn on Lakeland's campus while working in the Sheboygan area in the summer. The Bradley Foundation will help pay a portion of their freshman year Lakeland tuition bill. Students will fund the remainder of their education through scholarships, the wages they earn working and other financial aid.

These are not the first College Possible students to attend Lakeland, but many previous students, despite receiving financial aid, could not stay enrolled due to their lack of funds. Lakeland's Cooperative Education model and the Bradley Foundation support addresses the funding gap.

Since 2008, College Possible has worked to address the issue of higher education access in



the city of Milwaukee, helping thousands of students gain admission into colleges and universities and support them as they complete their degrees.

Kelly Schaer, College Possible Milwaukee's program director, recalled a conversation earlier this year with Lakeland about the financial gap facing the students they serve.

"Lakeland has responded with action and has found a way to have more College Possible students enroll at Lakeland," Schaer said.

"Lakeland's enrollment will increase because they are demonstrating to our students that they are wanted and supported on campus. It is so important for our students to know that they have champions on campus waiting for them to be part of campus and lead to a diverse and welcoming student body.

"Because of this partnership between College Possible and Lakeland, I'm confident that our enrolling students will be college graduates in four years. They will have successfully built the skills, knowledge and experiences they need to enter the workforce and create a wonderful future for themselves."

Black said Lakeland's Cooperative Education program will help more students realize their goals of earning a college degree. And, he said, Lakeland is eager to form more partnerships like the one with College Possible.

"We admire the work that College Possible has been doing to help Milwaukee young people realize their dream of earning a college degree, and we are proud to partner with them in this new endeavor," Black said.

"None of this would be possible without the generous support of the Bradley Foundation, and we are so thankful they share our vision of the power of cooperative education."



LAKELAND UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1862, Lakeland is a four-year, private university that integrates the liberal arts and experiential learning. Lakeland's main campus is located in Sheboygan County, and the institution has strong ties to the United Church of Christ. Lakeland serves more than 3,000 students, from traditional undergraduates at its main campus to undergraduate and graduate students taking evening and online courses through one of Lakeland's seven centers located throughout Wisconsin. Lakeland also has a two-year campus in Tokyo, Japan.

[Learn more at Lakeland.edu](https://www.lakeland.edu)

LAKELAND STATS:

2,600

Evening, weekend and online students

850

Traditional undergraduates

24

Countries represented on campus

95.4%

of graduates are employed within six months of graduation

NATIONAL NEWS

College Possible Receives the Inaugural Evergreen Prize

On October 16, at an event featuring education and philanthropic leaders from around the country, the Evergreen Prize judge committee announced that College Possible received the first-ever Evergreen National Education Prize.

More than 70 well-respected organizations from across the country submitted applications this summer for the inaugural prize, all of whom are seeking to elevate our nation's youth from low-income backgrounds to postsecondary and workforce success.

"High-quality programs from College Possible and our other finalists have the potential to accelerate educational and economic opportunity for all youth," said Ben Castleman, managing director of the Evergreen Prize and

associate professor of education and public policy at the University of Virginia. "With the first Evergreen National Education Prize, we hope to catalyze other organizations and innovators to look to these models as evidence-based solutions to improve college and workforce outcomes for youth in their communities."

As the recipient of the Evergreen Prize, College Possible will receive \$125,000 to expand the impact of its Catalyze program, accelerate its growth and leverage predictive analytics in its peer mentoring and curriculum development.

"We at College Possible are thrilled and honored to win this generous prize," said Jim McCorkell, CEO and founder at College Possible. "As this competition has allowed many great organizations to shine on the national stage, we hope that it will help underscore the need to assure that all students

"...we hope that [the Evergreen Prize] will help underscore the need to assure that all students from low-income families deserve a fair shot to go as far in life as their talent and effort can take them."





from low-income families deserve a fair shot to go as far in life as their talent and effort can take them.”

Launched in July, the Evergreen National Education Prize solicited applications from the most innovative, cost-effective, and scalable programs in the nation that help low-income youth achieve college or vocational success.

The Evergreen Prize judge committee, comprised of 11 leaders from across the education and business sectors, reviewed over 70 applications from organizations with programs that increase educational and economic opportunity for underserved youth.

To be considered for the prize, each applicant provided a plan to scale the number of youth they reach and share their program model with other relevant organizations.

“In addition to recognizing and supporting College Possible, the Evergreen Prize has another critical objective,” said Jerry Greenwald, chairman of the Evergreen Prize and co-founder and Partner of Greenbriar Equity. “We hope it will prompt more organizations in this space to continue innovating — and make the needed adjustments in their programs so they have even more of an impact on the lives of our nation’s 18-25 year olds.”

Additional details about the Evergreen Prize and the judge committee can be found at EvergreenPrize.org.

NATIONAL NEWS

College Possible Launches Search for President

College Possible recently announced a search for a president to join the executive leadership ranks. The new position has been created to lead the day-to-day work of running and growing our \$22 million organization.

“Our growth over the last decade, in particular, has allowed us to actively reach nearly 25,000 students from low-income backgrounds each year,” said Jim McCorkell, CEO and founder. “A president will lead the charge to close the degree divide and ensure that the future of America’s children is determined solely by their talent, motivation and effort, not their income.”

Since its founding, College Possible has grown to become one of the largest college access and success organizations in the U.S. by building and replicating a model for recruiting, training and motivating recent college graduates to provide a cost-efficient and results-driven program that helps capable, low-income students get into college and persist through graduation.

“As College Possible continues to expand its reach and serve more students,” notes Stephen Smith, National board chair and CEO of Intellispark, “our executive leadership must expand to take on the challenges and opportunities that will come our way. The entire board is excited by the potential of bringing in additional perspective and skills to lead us forward.”

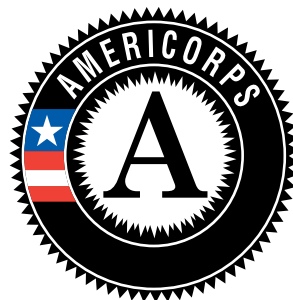
You can learn more about the search at CollegePossible.org/PresidentSearch

CHANGE YOUR WORLD.

Do you know someone with the passion and commitment to serve students from low-income backgrounds on their path to and through college?

College Possible is recruiting college graduates to serve as AmeriCorps members in positions across the country in a variety of roles. AmeriCorps members develop new skills, build a broad network of contacts and leave their term of service knowing they not only changed the lives of the students they served, but contributed to creating a world where together, we thrive.

CollegePossible.org/Apply







1515 North Rivercenter Drive, Suite 105
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53212

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PERMIT NO.

MEET AN AMERICORPS MEMBER



Taylor Price
High School Coach

Hometown: Beloit, WI

College attended:
UW-Stevens Point

Major: Communication
and Sociology

What made you want to serve with College Possible?

It started when I gave a tour to a group of College Possible students while I was a student ambassador at Stevens Point. They were a great group and two weeks later I got a thank you card in the mail. That was my initial understanding of the organization and that was enough. I understood pre-college programming because I benefitted

from it growing up and I had been working with high schoolers every summer. I'm not doing a job, I'm serving. And that's something I'll never get in another job.

Why did you decide to return for a second year of service?

Growth. To see students grow over the course of 10 months was profound. There was no doubt in my mind I had to stay for a second year. I wanted to see it through.

What have you gained?

The network College Possible has is insane, I don't know how else to describe it. It's cool to see the change agents who are part of the organization, who put their best foot forward and do what they can do. Their legacy lasts. Also, I've never had such a supportive supervisor in my entire life.

Apply to serve at
CollegePossible.org/Serve

College Possible is supported by
AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps VISTA
and partners such as Ballmer Group.



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