



The mission of the “I Have a Dream” Foundation of Idaho (IHDF-ID) is to provide academic and social/emotional support to low-income youth, from early elementary school through middle and high-school and post-secondary education, with guaranteed tuition support. Our work is founded on the belief that given equitable access to resources, all children can realize their innate potential and achieve their dreams.

Our programs have significantly advanced the academic progress of our 45 “Dream Scholars” (the youth we serve) over the past seven years, from the 3rd grade to the 10th grade, and we continue to support our youth with expanded programming in the areas of life skills learning, social/emotional support and college preparation.

We have expanded our programming in response to the changing needs of our Dream Scholars as they progress in their high school years, and have launched a campaign to significantly increase the number of youth we serve by adopting our next group of Dream Scholars by the fall of 2021. We are committed to expanding our reach as we grow, to serve more youth in our valley.

Despite the perceived affluence of the Wood River Valley, more than 20% of households in Blaine County are living below the poverty line, and more than 33% of children enrolled in the Blaine County school district are from low-income households. The ISAT literacy scores of economically disadvantaged students in Blaine County are 44% lower than their peers, and only 25% of those students score at grade level in math. These statistics point to a strong correlation between household poverty and low academic performance. IHDF-ID has successfully provided 45 of our community’s low-income youth (many of whom face low expectations in school, poor academic preparation and instability at home), with a strong and supportive environment throughout their academic performance; this support has allowed them to stay on track with their economically more advantaged peers toward high school graduation and a successful transition to college or career.

The success of our program over the past seven years has been based on the core components we have established to support our youth. We provide our students with academic tutoring, mentorship, life skills and leadership development programs and social/emotional programming. Our services are provided by a combination of staff, contractors and community volunteers. Our programs also provide community enrichment opportunities and require our youth to performing ten hours of community service each, annually; we also work with our Dream Scholar families to encourage their involvement in their child’s academic life and our programming.

This year we expanded our tutoring and mentorship programs in the area of life skills development and college preparatory support. Life skills programs include financial literacy, career exploration, healthy choices workshops, life planning and management



skills, public speaking and leadership development. College preparatory support includes PSAT/SAT workshops, counseling to explore post-secondary educational opportunities, course planning and support through the college application process. We have engaged outside consultants to deliver these expanded program offerings and hope to make this a consistent and increased part of our programming. Our Dream Scholars also have opportunities to visit local and regional colleges and attend college immersion experiences. Additionally each year, some of our youth attend a “Dream Up” college and career exploration conference, hosted by our national affiliate, that allows them to interact and work with other Dream Scholars nationally, and to learn about post-secondary and career opportunities in a larger context.

What makes IHDF-ID’s program unique and successful is the active, long-term, year-round support we provide to our Dream Scholars. We believe our results are maximized over time by providing both breadth and depth of services that a “lighter-touch” or short-term program cannot achieve. The impact of this approach is demonstrated in the success of “I Have a Dream” Foundation programs nationally, reflected in graduation rates, often at 90%, compared to the 70% graduation rates of their low-income peers.

We track our Dream Scholars’ monthly performance in the categories of grades, homework completion, school attendance, test scores, and program engagement. This allows us to evaluate whether our program is providing each of our students with the academic, life skills, and social-emotional support that he or she needs. Half of our Dream Scholars have GPA’s over a 3.0, five are above a 3.5 and two of our students boast 4.0 GPA’s. Consistent with our commitment to support our Dream Scholars’ social and emotional health, we conduct meetings and surveys with our students to assess their well-being, and we offer regular programming that includes workshops, counseling and mentorship, to support the development and maintenance of healthy choices and stress management.

IHDF-ID is a 501(c)3, nonprofit organization affiliated with the national “I Have a Dream” Foundation, founded in 1981 by businessman and philanthropist, Eugene Lang. The affiliate programs around the country have served 18,000 low-income youth, since inception. We have a diverse, active and dedicated, 13-member, board of directors, each of whom makes annual, financial contributions to support the organization, totaling over \$600,000 to date. Our board is made up of professionals, educators, retired executives, entrepreneurs and community volunteers.

We have two, full-time staff members, Executive Director, Laura Rose-Lewis, responsible for the oversight, management, operations and development of IHDF-ID, and Program Director, Pamela Donoso, who provides daily mentorship tutoring and monitoring of our Dream Scholars, and manages the day-to-day programs administered to the youth. We partner with Wood River High School, where our Dream Scholars are 10th graders, and where we have donated office and works-space.



We collaborate extensively with local nonprofits to provide enrichment activities and experiential learning for our Dream Scholars. Our Dream Scholars, in turn, perform community service for a range of local nonprofit organizations (including Hunger Coalition, Senior connection, the Souper Supper program (Catholic Church in Hailey), and others. Our youth are each required to perform at least 10 hours of community service a year; last year they performed over 400 hours of community service and we hope to exceed that this year.

This summer, we are partnering with the Wood River High School (WRHS) to deliver summer programming that will allow many WRHS youth to recover credits they lost during the year due either to incomplete assignments or poor performance. Last year, we delivered a similar program for some of our Dream Scholars (those who needed to recover credits), and because of our success (13/14 youth passed their credit recovery course in a month's time), the high school engaged us to help design this program to serve many youth outside of our program. In June, in partnership with WRHS, we will deliver a credit recovery program to over 60 Wood River High School youth that have struggled with the online format of school during the COVID crisis, or lost credits otherwise in the course of the year, and we hope to see the same success rate this year with a much larger number of high schoolers.

We are committed to the academic success, life skills learning and social/ emotional well-being of our youth in the Valley. We believe the Dream Scholars' development in these areas will not only support them to achieve their potential and reach their dreams, but will teach them to become contributing members of our local community and of the world.

Respectfully,

Laura Rose-Lewis
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