

FACTS: COLLEGE ACCESS AND SUCCESS IN ILLINOIS

Percent of U.S. jobs that will require postsecondary education in 2018¹

63%

Percent of Illinois adults who had a college degree in 2008²

36%

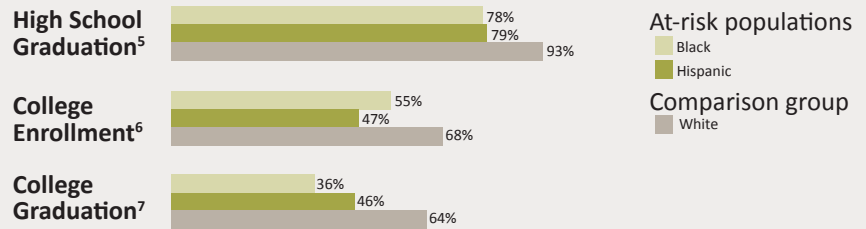
Percent of Illinois adults who had completed some college course work without earning a degree in 2008³

23%



SOCIAL ISSUE INDICATORS

The chart below shows short- and long-term indicators to assess progress in closing the college achievement gap in the state of Illinois. **High school graduation** refers to 9th graders who graduate high school in 4 years. **College enrollment** refers to public high school graduates entering 2- and 4-year colleges. **College graduation** refers to adults ages 25 to 64 who have college degrees. The following data is reported by the Illinois State Education Department, but independent sources⁴ report lower graduation rates. A new federal regulation to be implemented in the 2010-2011 school year, will standardize the graduation rate formula.



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ILLINOIS

CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND REFORM

Arne Duncan, former Chicago Public Schools CEO, was appointed U.S. Secretary of Education by President Obama and confirmed by the U.S. Senate on January 20, 2009. As CEO, Arne Duncan was credited with steadily improving math scores during his tenure and converted a number of neighborhood schools into charter schools.

In March 2010, the Illinois State Senate approved legislation allowing students at Chicago Public Schools to attend private schools using a voucher. However, the legislation was rejected by the Illinois State House, and is now an issue in the run-up to the Chicago mayoral election.

ILLINOIS STATE INITIATIVES

- **Common Core Standards Initiative** - In June 2010, Illinois joined 42 states and territories in adopting the common standards that specify math and English public curricula at each grade level. The Common Core standards were developed by a consortium of states and are designed to reflect the knowledge and skills that young people need to succeed in college and careers. The standards have been promoted by the Obama administration, and their adoption has been linked to the \$4.3 billion Race to the Top initiative.
- **Race to the Top (R2T)** - Illinois was a finalist in the first two rounds of R2T, but did not receive funding in either round. Illinois reportedly missed out in the first round due to the lack of support from school districts and teachers' unions, comparative to other states. Despite implementing the recommended changes and gaining greater support from these two groups, Illinois still did not receive funding. Unsure of the reason, Chicago Mayor Richard Daley has come out strongly against the perceived snubbing.^{8,9}
- **Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)** - Illinois is a governing member of PARCC, a 26-state consortium that received a four year \$170 million grant from R2T to develop new math and English assessments and performance standards based on college and career readiness.
- **Shifting Gears** - Since 2007, Illinois has been one of five Midwestern states participating in the Joyce Foundation's Shifting Gears initiative. The initiative has provided \$16 million in combined grants and matching state funds to develop postsecondary education programs for low-skilled workers. The programs incorporate academic, occupational, and English as a second language (ESL) training to enable workers to move up the career ladder.

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF COLLEGE ACCESS AND SUCCESS IN ILLINOIS

According to separate Alliance for Excellent Education studies,

- Dropouts from the class of 2008 will cost Illinois almost \$11 billion in lost wages over their lifetime.¹⁰
- If all Illinois high school students graduated prepared for college, the state would save over \$210.2 million annually in community college remediation costs and lost earnings.¹¹

THE SOCIAL IMPACT RESEARCH PROCESS

SELECTING HIGH-PERFORMING COLLEGE ACCESS AND SUCCESS ORGANIZATIONS IN CHICAGO

Social Impact Research (SIR) aggregates, analyzes, and disseminates information to help social impact investors identify and support high-performing organizations working to solve particular social issues. To this end, SIR compiles three types of reports, designed to be read together. The social issue report provides investors with a broad overview of the social issue. The state report provides context about how the issue is being addressed in a particular state. The organization reports highlight high-performing nonprofits in metropolitan areas working on the issue.

SIR focused on the issue of college access and success because it represents a high-impact area of investment. Supporting high-performing college access programs in Chicago will create educational opportunities for many at-risk students, resulting in a number of positive outcomes for their families, government, and society as a whole. As discussed in the social issue report, these benefits include increased employment and productivity, breaking the cycle of poverty, and lower crime rates and related costs.

Through desk research SIR identified approximately 100 nonprofit organizations in Chicago working to improve college access and success through direct service, almost all of which focus on at-risk students. Through further analysis this list was narrowed to approximately 30 programs that incorporate the core components of the SIR high-impact approach – academic preparation and enrichment, college aspiration and knowledge, and financial aid and planning. These 30 organizations were invited to participate in SIR’s research. SIR then conducted interviews with participating organizations and administered a comprehensive survey in order to gain insight into the organizations’ program performance, social impact activities, and overall health.

Each organization was analyzed using 35 discrete indicators within the following three categories:

- **Program Performance:** tutoring and study skills, coursework and test preparation, academic advising, building college aspirations, help with the college application process, financial aid awareness and planning, help with adapting to the college environment, and timing of intervention
- **Social and Economic Outcomes:** systemic change activities, community partnerships, strategies to replicate and/or scale and efforts to improve program quality
- **Organizational Health:** financial health and sustainability, board involvement, performance of the management team, and internal data collection process

During the analysis each organization was benchmarked by four analysts using SIR’s five point scale for each indicator. Based on this analysis, SIR selected 2 recommended organizations in Chicago, listed below. Social impact investors interested in supporting these high-performing nonprofits should refer to the organization reports to select an organization in which to invest.

The list of recommended organizations below is not comprehensive and there may be other high-performing college access and success organizations in Chicago that did not submit data and therefore could not be analyzed.

RECOMMENDED ORGANIZATIONS: EXAMPLES OF HIGH PERFORMERS

ORGANIZATION	LOCATION(S) SERVED	# SERVED IN 2009
“I Have a Dream” North Chicago	North Chicago	30
Umoja Student Development Corporation	Washington Park, North Lawndale	1,200

ENDNOTES

1. Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, “Help Wanted: Projections of Jobs and Education Requirements through 2018,” (June 2010), <http://www9.georgetown.edu/grad/gppi/hpi/cew/pdfs/FullReport.pdf>.
2. Lumina Foundation for Education, “A Stronger Nation through Higher Education,” (September 2010):35, http://www.luminafoundation.org/publications/A_stronger_nation.pdf
3. Ibid.
4. Alliance for Excellent Education, “Understanding High School Graduation Rates in Illinois,” (2009), http://www.all4ed.org/files/Illinois_cs.pdf.
5. Illinois State Board of Education, “2010 Illinois State Report Card,” (2010), http://webprod.isbe.net/ereportcard/publicsite/getReport.aspx?year=2010&code=2010StateReport_E.pdf.
6. Chicago Public Schools, “2009 College Enrollment Information, Sheet 2: NSC College Enrollment Data 2004-2009,” (2009), http://research.cps.k12.il.us/export/sites/default/accountweb/Reports/AllSchools/College_Enrollment_Data.xls.
7. Alliance for Excellent Education, “Illinois: The Case to Adopt Common College- and Career-Ready Standards and Assessments,” (2010), http://www.all4ed.org/files/Illinois_cs.pdf.
8. Snider, Justin, “Race to the Top: The Biggest Losers,” (2010), http://hechingered.org/content/race-to-the-top-the-biggest-losers_2398.
9. Byrne, John and Tara Malone, “Daley Blasts Education Plan Pushed by Obama, Duncan,” *Chicago Tribune*, September 15, 2010, http://newsblogs.chicagotribune.com/clout_st/2010/09/daley-blasts-education-plan-pushed-by-obama-duncan.html.
10. Alliance for Excellent Education, “Understanding High School Graduation Rates in Illinois,” (2009), http://www.all4ed.org/files/Illinois_cs.pdf.
11. Alliance for Excellent Education, “Illinois: The Case to Adopt Common College- and Career-Ready Standards and Assessments,” (2010), http://www.all4ed.org/files/Illinois_cs.pdf.