

“I HAVE A DREAM”[®] FOUNDATION OF BOULDER COUNTY

2002 Program Evaluation Results - Outcomes and Impacts

Executive Summary

What is IHAD-Boulder’s mission? Since 1990, the “I Have a Dream”[®] Foundation of Boulder County (IHAD-Boulder) has promoted self-sufficiency and educational support for low-income children in Boulder County by providing a long-term program of academic support, mentoring, tutoring, social and cultural enrichment, and the promise of a tuition-assistance scholarship for higher education upon graduating from high school or obtaining a general equivalency diploma (GED). Although IHAD-Boulder retains the original intent of the program’s founder Eugene Lang to provide the tools necessary for low-income students to complete their educational goals, it is unique from IHAD programs in other cities in its commitment to exist as a long-term member of the Boulder County community by adopting multiple classes of Dreamers. Dreamers are provided support by a broad network of caring adults, including volunteer tutors and mentors, AmeriCorps members, as well as IHAD staff and individual Project Coordinators assigned to each class. IHAD-Boulder’s first two classes graduated in 1998 and 2000. In addition to providing college scholarships to these graduates, IHAD-Boulder currently serves more than 250 Dreamers in 6 active classes throughout Boulder County.

Is IHAD- Boulder accomplishing its mission? Yes! IHAD-Boulder has organized its program around accomplishing six distinct but complementary goals¹. These goals directly correlate with the likelihood of each Dreamer to accomplish his or her educational and life objectives. In an effort to continually monitor the program’s effectiveness, in December 2001, IHAD-Boulder surveyed Dreamers, their parents, teachers, tutors and AmeriCorps members (AmeriCorps members assist the Program Coordinator assigned to each class of Dreamers in delivering the program). Based upon completed surveys, IHAD-Boulder is meeting its six program goals. The results of the 2001 surveys have been organized according to these goals. The following pages discuss these results under each goal, providing major findings, as well as samples of individual responses. Together, they provide a qualitative as well as a quantitative sense of the work of IHAD-Boulder:

- #1 Dreamer performance on key academic measures during the past year has been exceptional. Teachers, parents and Dreamers all report that the vast majority of Dreamers improved grades, school attendance, homework completions as well as other academic measures. These perceptions are confirmed by available statistics: For example, graduation rates for the Dreamer classes of 2000 and 1998, were 87% in one case and almost double the expected rate² in the other.**
- #2 An overwhelming number of Dreamers, as well as their parents and IHAD staff expect Dreamers will continue their education past high school.**
- #3 Dreamers are well supported by one or more caring adults, including their Project Coordinators, mentors and AmeriCorps members, in most cases meeting at least once a week.**
- #4 89% of Dreamers surveyed reported that IHAD “makes them feel good about themselves”.**
- #5 86% of Dreamers regularly participate in after-school programming.**
- #6 More than 160 tutors, 35 mentors and 14 AmeriCorps members were engaged during 2001 in the lives of Dreamers. Of those that participated in the survey, over 90% reported the experience to be a positive one for them.**

Overall, 98% of IHAD Dreamers, 94% of their parents and 90% of their tutors report that they are satisfied with the IHAD- Boulder County program.

“IHAD has given my child hope, dreams and belief in herself.” – Parent

“I like everything about IHAD.” – Dreamer

“We are so lucky that she is in this program.” - Parent

“...IHAD is the only college access program that opens up every sector of higher education to [low-income] people.”³

How was the survey conducted? In December of 2001, individual surveys were either mailed or collected at after-school centers, parent meetings or during home visits by AmeriCorps members from the 187 Dreamers in the 5 classes then active, as well as their parents, teachers, tutors, mentors and AmeriCorps members. Parent surveys were available in both Spanish and English. Of those distributed, completed surveys were received from:

- ◆ 133 Dreamers (71% of Dreamer surveys distributed);
 - Of those that responded, the average age was 7-12 years;
 - 51% are female and 49% male; and
 - 85% are Latino; 12% are Caucasian; 2% are African-American; and 1% are Native American.

- ◆ 95 Parents (51% of Parent surveys distributed);

- ◆ 124 Teachers (45% of teacher surveys distributed);

- ◆ 20 Tutors (14% of tutor surveys distributed); and
 - Of those that responded, 85% were female, 15% were male.
 - 85% had been tutoring for six months or less, with the other 15% tutoring for one year or longer.

- ◆ 11 AmeriCorps members (73% of AmeriCorps surveys distributed)

GOAL #1:

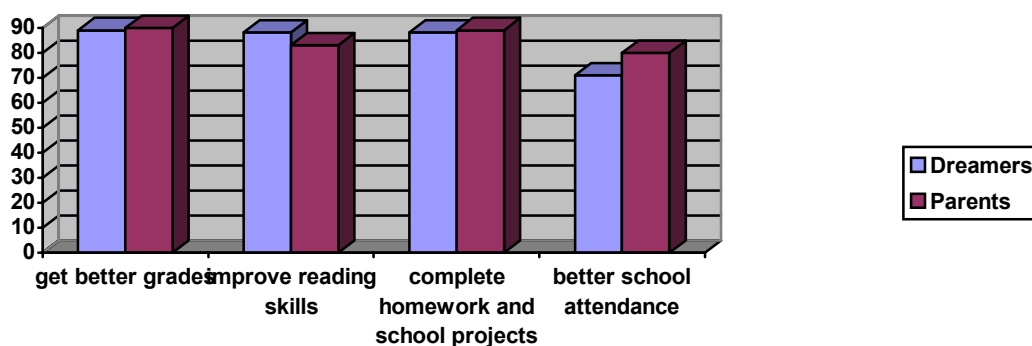
**DREAMERS WILL BECOME ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN LEARNING
(IMPROVE GRADES, LITERACY SKILLS AND COMPLETE HOMEWORK);
WILL GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL AT HIGHER RATES THAN THEIR PEERS; AND
WILL ULTIMATELY GO ON TO POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION.**

Key Survey Results:

- ◆ 98% of Dreamers are currently in school.
- ◆ Average cumulative GPA for Dreamers was 2.8.
- ◆ Teachers reported that **71% of Dreamers have improved their academic progress** in school.
- ◆ Teachers reported that **64% of Dreamers have improved their grades** since the beginning of the year.

IHAD Dreamers are actively engaged in learning.

The following percentages of Dreamers and their parents reported that IHAD helped Dreamers to:



IHAD dramatically increased graduation rates of Dreamers as compared to their peers.

- ◆ 67% of the first class of IHAD Boulder County Dreamers (Boulder Class of 1998) graduated from high school when only 35% were expected to graduate (according to statistics from the local high school where Dreamers attended)².
- ◆ 87% of the second class of IHAD Boulder County Dreamers (Lafayette Class of 2000) graduated on time, in a school district with peer group graduation rates of less than 60%⁴.

IHAD Dreamers had exceptionally high rates of post-secondary attendance as compared to national averages.

- ◆ 80% of the Boulder Class of 1998 Dreamer graduates enrolled in college or vocational school, a rate almost double that of low-income high school graduates nationwide⁵.
- ◆ 90% of the Lafayette Class of 2000 Dreamer graduates are currently attending college or vocational school.

Sample Survey Responses

"I have noticed that my daughter is even more excited to go to school each day and tell me about everything she has done." – Parent

"My child wants to go to school so that he can go to IHAD after school." – Parent

"My daughter is much more attentive in class." – Parent

"My child has improved his skills with homework and solving math problems." – Parent

"His reading and comprehension have improved, he's moved up a reading level." – Parent

"She understands words and her spelling is improving." – Parent

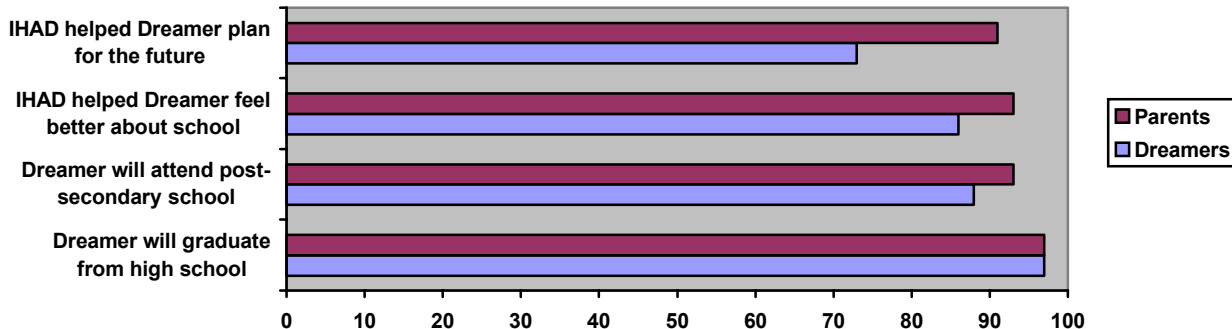
"She finishes her homework on time now!" – Parent

GOAL #2:

PARENTS AND IHAD STAFF WILL HAVE HIGH EXPECTATIONS OF DREAMERS AND WILL ENCOURAGE THEM TO HAVE HIGH EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS AND A POSITIVE VIEW OF THEIR FUTURE

Key Survey Results:

The following percentages of Dreamers and their parents responding to the survey, reported that they believed...



Sample Survey Responses:

"I now have a chance to go to college!" – Dreamer

"IHAD gives my son a picture of the future (we hadn't expected him to go to college)!" – Parent

"IHAD gives my son more incentive to be a better person and reach his goals in life." – Parent

"My daughter now believes she will go to college. IHAD has also helped her improve her grades and to have more self-confidence." – Parent

"My child knows that she has a future." – Parent

"I have high expectations for my class of Dreamers. I can see that their parents also have higher expectations not only for their Dreamers but also for her siblings and other family members." – Program Coordinator

"[My daughter's Project Coordinator] worked very hard to help [her]. They planted the seeds for some goals for her future, and without the continued support of IHAD, [she] would have been one of those kids who fell through the cracks. She fought them tooth and nail, but they persevered. I really want to thank all of you and all the people who helped make IHAD possible." - Parent of a Dreamer that is now studying Criminal Justice at college.

GOAL #3:

EACH DREAMER WILL DEVELOP AN ONGOING SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH AT LEAST ONE CARING ADULT

Key Survey Results:

- ◆ In the 2001-2002 academic year, **160 tutors and 35 mentors** were paired with Dreamers.
- ◆ **89%** of Dreamers and **82%** of their parents reported that they had **contact with the Project Coordinator at least once a week.**
- ◆ **94%** of Dreamers and **93%** of their parents reported that the **AmeriCorps members were supportive.**
- ◆ **89%** of Dreamers and **96%** of their parents reported that their **Project Coordinator has been supportive.**

IHAD tutors, mentors and Project Coordinators establish consistent and positive relationships with Dreamers.



Sample Survey Responses:

"My Project Coordinator says I can do whatever I set my mind to." – Dreamer

"My Project Coordinator talks with me a lot." – Dreamer

"The AmeriCorps volunteers never let us down and they understand me." – Dreamer

"I like IHAD because they're always willing to help me whenever I need it or just to have someone to talk to." – Dreamer

"The Project Coordinator is like a second mom to the children. She truly cares for my son. She is so supportive of our family." – Parent

"I think that it is great that the AmeriCorps volunteers are involved in the progress of our children. They are very good role models for the girls that want to have a career." – Parent

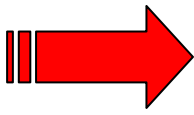
GOAL # 4:

DREAMERS WILL REPORT HAVING HIGH SELF-ESTEEM AND WILL DEVELOP SOCIAL SKILLS (EMPATHY, SENSITIVITY, AND FRIENDSHIPS) AND LIFE RESISTANCE SKILLS (RESIST NEGATIVE PEER PRESSURE AND DANGEROUS SITUATIONS)

Key Survey Results:

Dreamers responding to the survey reported that IHAD:

- ❖ helps them to **feel good about themselves (89%)**;
- ❖ helped them **get along better with their family (88%)**; and
- ❖ **gives them something constructive to do (87%)**.



Parents of Dreamers responding to the survey reported that IHAD:

- ❖ helped their child **get along better with their family (88%)**;
- ❖ has helped their child **make new friends (89%)**; and
- ❖ has helped them **stay out of trouble (93%)**.

- ◆ According to statistics from Boulder Housing Partners, the local city housing authority, over the past six years, **crime and vandalism reports have been reduced by 50%** in the neighborhoods where IHAD is providing services (along with Boulder County Housing Authority and Boulder Parks & Recreation) to Dreamers and their families.⁶

Although difficult to measure, Dreamers and their parents overwhelmingly indicated that IHAD had a positive impact upon important measures of personal self-esteem and social interactions.



Sample Survey Responses:

“My child has learned better social skills and now has a more positive attitude at school and at home.” - Parent

“My child knows that he can do whatever he puts his mind to.” - Parent

“My child has had fewer anger outbursts and is trying to share more with his younger brother.” – Parent

GOAL #5 :
TO PROVIDE A SAFE PLACE AND STRUCTURED ACTIVITIES FOR
DREAMERS DURING NON-SCHOOL HOURS

“By offering children rewarding, challenging, and age-appropriate activities in safe, structured and positive environments, after-school programs help to reduce and prevent juvenile delinquency and insulate children from violent victimization. --- After-school programs can help school districts save money over the long term because of decreased student retention and special education placements.” – U.S. Dept. of Education⁷

Key Survey Results:

- ◆ 86% of the **Dreamers regularly participate** (at least once a week or more) in the after-school program.
- ◆ Reasons most commonly cited by Dreamers for not participating in after-school programming were:
 - Religious education
 - Athletics
 - Babysitting obligations
 - Location/transportation
- ◆ **93%** of parents want their child to attend IHAD activities because they **want their child to go to college.**
- ◆ Dreamers reported that they attend IHAD activities because they:
 - want to **graduate from high school (81%)**
 - want to **go to college (71%)**
 - want to **improve their study skills (71%)**
 - like the tutors, mentors and program staff (71%)

IHAD provides year-round educational and recreational activities to its Dreamers. These programs are available at least 15 hours each week during the school year and 30 hours each week of the summer.

When asked about the quality of the programs provided by IHAD, an overwhelming majority of Dreamers and their parents rated them as “excellent” or “good”. Some of the most popular programs cited by respondents to the survey included:

- **Tutoring/After-school center**
- **Mentoring**
- **Parent Meetings**
- **Meetings with Project Coordinators**
- **Computer Skills**
- **Summer Programs**
- **Field trips**
- **Adopt-a-Family Program**
- **Newsletter**

Sample Survey Responses:

“I really like IHAD because they have a very important goal for our children: they want to help them succeed. The cost to me is slim to none and the positive feedback from my child is super. It’s a controlled environment and activities are very good. My child talks highly of the program and seems enthusiastic to go every day and I am too!” – Parent

“It’s fun, I like the activities.” – Dreamer

“The Project Coordinator is very organized in coordinating activities. He shows a sincere interest in all the kids...and is an excellent role model for the kids.” – Parent

GOAL #6:

PROVIDE A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE FOR VOLUNTEER TUTORS AND AMERICORPS MEMBERS TO INCREASE THEIR EFFECTIVENESS WITH DREAMERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

IHAD Volunteer Tutors and AmeriCorps Members reported that overall they were very enthusiastic about the work they were doing, the rapport they were developing with the Dreamers and families, and the quality of the IHAD program.

KEY TUTOR RESPONSES

- ◆ **90% rated their experience as a tutor as excellent or good.**
- ◆ 95% reported that the AmeriCorps members had been supportive, and 90% reported that the Project Coordinators had been supportive.
- ◆ 94% rated the IHAD **training they received as good** to adequate.
- ◆ **65% plan to continue volunteering** after this school year.
- ◆ 56% want additional training in literacy skills and behavior management with children.

SAMPLE SURVEY RESPONSES:

"The Project Coordinator is truly dedicated to helping children." - Tutor

"The Project Coordinator is bright, enthusiastic, and helpful with advice for each session. Good planner. Makes us feel appreciated." - Tutor

"I have gotten so much out of my experience, I love those kids." - Tutor

"I enjoy spending time with the Dreamers." - Tutor

"I believe in the program." - Tutor

KEY AMERICORPS MEMBER RESPONSES:

- ◆ Most **positive aspects** of year:
 - The relationships with children and their families.
 - "Amazing" fellow AmeriCorps members.
 - Leadership and helpfulness of Program Coordinator and direct supervisors.
- ◆ Most **difficult aspects** of year:
 - Diverse age group of children served.
 - Apathy of older kids.
 - Lack of time for community service programming for kids.
 - Emotionally disturbed children.

SAMPLE SURVEY RESPONSES:

"IHAD is an amazing organization that will make a difference in the lives of many." – AmeriCorps member

"I am continually amazed at the members I work with, their intelligence, diligence and devotion to "I Have a Dream." – AmeriCorps member

"I have learned that everyone has so much to offer one another. We are all working from our own experiences trying to create change." – AmeriCorps member

"I see the impact I make on children." – AmeriCorps member

¹ These goals were developed based upon (a) the Five Promises set forth in the Federal AmeriCorp’s program of America’s Promise – the Alliance for Youth, (b) results of a study done by the Search Institute that identified a correlation between rates of experience of 40 separate “Development Assets” and the likelihood of positive outcomes for 1000 youth in grades 6 through 12 (see www.search-institute.org), and (c) the work of IHAD since its inception.

² The “expected rate” is 35% based upon information from the Colorado Dept. of Education, Graduation and Completer Rates for 1998 and 1999 by Ethnic/Racial Group and Gender for Boulder High School.

³ Beating the Odds: How the Poor Get to College, by Arthur Levine and Jana Nidiffer, Josey-Bass Inc. publishers, 1996 (p. 175).

⁴ According to Boulder Valley School District’s self-reported data, the high school graduation rate for Latino students in the district was approximately 58%. Over 90% of the Lafayette Dreamer Class of 2000 were Latino.

⁵ According to the National Center for Education Statistics, *Condition of Education*, 1999, “only 47% of low-income high school graduates immediately enroll in college or trade schools, compared to 82% of high-income high school students.”

⁶ According to statistics gathered from Boulder Housing Partners from local police reports.

⁷ Excerpt from After-School Programs: Keeping Children Safe and Smart, published by the U.S. Department of Education, June 2000