

The REAM Foundation

Selected Impact Highlights 2018-19

The REAM Foundation helped enable *Posse Chicago* to serve 121 new scholars in 2019, **inspiring excellence in first generation college student.**



Posse Chicago students collectively were awarded close to \$24 million in full-tuition leadership scholarships from twelve colleges and universities. Among these outstanding young individuals is Ali, who is part Iraqi and part Black, and valedictorian at Simeon Career Academy. His school lacked STEM extracurricular activities, so he started an aquaponics club where students can share their passion for nature, research and experiments. Ali is also a powerlifter and football player, and without a home computer or laptop, he does all of his homework on his phone.

Young people learned to manage strong emotions through the work of *Friends of the Children* with an investment from The REAM Foundation.



When Cecilia entered the “Friends” program, she struggled with outbursts of anger. She lashed out at her classmates and teachers and often threw things at people and had tantrums. Over the course of the last year, her “Friend” helped her learn how to identify the emotions she was feeling and find positive and productive coping skills to use when she is overcome with anger or sadness. By the end of first grade, Cecilia got to the point that instead of an outburst, she asked her Friend or teacher to “step out and talk” with her so that she could express how she was feeling. Cecilia’s teachers have noticed this development and said that this skill has helped Cecilia get along better with her peers.

The REAM Foundation supports *Chicago Shakespeare Theater’s “Team Shakespeare,”* which brings Shakespeare to life for students.



Following Team Shakespeare’s professional development course, a teacher at Bulls College Prep in Chicago reported, ***“I used to be afraid to let students get up out of their seats; now I find myself counting down the moments until we get up and perform.”*** After seeing a performance at Chicago Shakespeare Theater for the first time, one grateful student emailed, ***“I am writing simply to express how much I absolutely loved this play. I was completely astounded by how phenomenal every single actor was, and how they brought not only the story, but each individual character, to life. All the actors were so invested in their characters and the story, and it was such an amazing experience to be able to see so much dedication and skill poured into this play. I also enjoyed the Q&A portion after the show, where the actors would answer questions about the play.”***

With support from **The REAM Foundation**, *Communities in Schools of Chicago* has piloted a new “STEMpathy” program to **help equip young people with needed job and life skills**:



Through the STEMpathy program, students are taught how to break down problems, work through frustration to find a solution, and communicate and work with others to get a result. **Janilya** made significant strides throughout the program. She was hesitant at first and would often express not wanting to participate. Staff validated Janilya’s feelings and encouraged her to keep trying. The more Janilya pushed past challenges and found solutions, the more motivated and interested she became. Janilya changed from not wanting to be in the program to leading her group through the last and most complicated challenge of the program at the end.

The REAM Foundation invests in *Spark Chicago*, which **empowers middle schoolers to succeed in school and beyond**. After spending time in semester-long mentorships, Spark students have shared:



“I learn about networking and how people help other people. I learn that people help other people find great opportunities.”

– Robert

“My life is different now because of Spark ... Before, math wasn’t my favorite subject. But now I see that you can have cool jobs when you are good at math. It makes me try harder – I can see why school and even the classes that I don’t like are important.”

– Kalin

Funding from **The REAM Foundation** made it possible for *Noble Network of Charter Schools* to take 35 juniors from DRW College Prep on college tours, which **helps high school students find great college options and overcome odds stacked against them**.



One student had her mind set on attending a Historically Black College or University (HBCU). She fell in love with the media coverage around these schools and wanted to be at an institution that is culturally relevant to her identity. After visiting the colleges, she was able to compare the environments at several HBCUs and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She learned that she liked the big school environment and felt the major and course options at U of I were more suitable for her career trajectories. If she did not attend these college tours, she would not have come to this conclusion on her own.