

A YEAR IN REVIEW

2020 Program Report



A Letter From Our Executive Director

To our generous supporters,

Thank you for your continued support of Project Legacy. This past year was one to remember for all of us, marked by the uprising of calls for racial justice and a global pandemic that challenged everything we knew. These last 12 months were a whirlwind that left us having to reimagine everything we do, but because of you, we were able to stay steadfast and true to our mission. For this, we are tremendously grateful.

In June of 2020, we were not sure that we would be able to serve the youth in our community as grants and funding reduced in the face of economic uncertainty. But, even in the midst of this, we continued our work and trusted that the universe would provide as it always had.

Because of you, we were able to adapt, grow and continue to support young people in a year where donor support was more critical than ever. As you read our 2020 program update below, we hope you are pleased to see the remarkable growth of our program, and the continued ways Project Legacy makes a difference in the lives of young people in our communities.

Thank you for your continued partnership and friendship to Project Legacy.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Karen Edmonds".

Karen Edmonds
Executive Director

Key Highlights

With the help of individual donors and grant funding, Project Legacy served **over 100 youth** in 2020. Our support of our participants totaled over **\$150,000 in direct support**.

Breakdown of Financial Support

- **\$35,000** in tuition and educational assistance to first generation college students
- **\$56,745** in housing and rental assistance
- **\$16,855** in telecommunications and electronics for distance learning
- **\$18,405** in food, groceries and shelter
- **\$19,880** for maintenance costs including car repairs, auto insurance, license fees, etc
- **\$7,000** for medical, dental and orthodontic care that would have otherwise been uncovered

Support Also Included Countless Other Resources:

- Accommodations and transportation to college visits
- Transportation to and from college
- Textbooks for college
- Nutritious meals and groceries through Operation Nourish
- Clothing for school and winter wear
- Access to healthy, pro-social recreational activities and leadership opportunities



Program Expansion

- In 2020, we expanded our services from Rochester to the Twin Cities, and shortly thereafter began supporting youth in Colorado, North Dakota and Mississippi comprised of both students attending college out-of-state and young people with a connection to our Minnesota participants through Project Red Umbrella.
- We launched **Project Red Umbrella**, a program for young men and women who have been sexually exploited or are choosing to leave the commercial sex industry and are looking for support and healing.
- We launched the **Legacy Scholars** program in partnership with Rochester Community and Technical College and Winona State University-Rochester. The program will serve 25 at-risk young adults of color who require access to education assistance, mental health services, basic needs, addiction and recovery support, and case management. Through this program, Project Legacy will have a presence on-campus at RCTC.
- Finally, we formalized the **Legacy Academy**, our in-house hub for educational support, where we launched **Learning Pods** to provide in-person support for youth faced with the challenges of distance learning amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Here is what we seek: a compassion that can stand in awe at what the poor have to carry rather than to stand in judgement at how they carry it.”

— Father Greg Boyle

Commitment to Diversity

Project Legacy is a program with a commitment to cultural diversity and equity in access and opportunities. Currently, 70% of our staff and 50% of our board positions are held by BIPOC individuals.

Collaborations and Partnerships

Throughout 2020 we continued our collaborations with Olmsted County Health, Housing and Human Services, DFO Community Corrections, Victim Services, Workforce Development, Inc., Doc’s Recovery House, Homeboy Industries, and have expanded to include new partnerships with Revolutionary Scholars in CA, Osuna Consulting in CA, WSU-R and RCTC (Legacy Scholars).

Project Legacy remains a member of the Global Homeboy Industries Network. The mission of the Global Homeboy Network is to work with organizations across the globe to create therapeutic communities that offer job skills training, cost-free programs and services, and social enterprise employment. GHN’s goal is to assist other organizations as they provide marginalized men, women, and youth with tools they need to change their lives and become productive members of their communities. To date, representatives from states and countries around the world are part of our network.

Last summer, Project Legacy also partnered with Plant a Seed, Olmsted County Public Health, City of Rochester Parks and Recreation, and many more to create a community food and learning garden at MLK park.



Last summer, our staff felt strongly that our youth’s mental health needed more attention in this pandemic and formed a partnership with **Minnesota Association for Children’s Mental Health** to organize a Youth MOVE chapter in Rochester, MN under Project Legacy. Youth MOVE MN is a statewide youth-led program committed to sharing stories to improve mental health, education, child welfare, and criminal justice systems. Youth are encouraged and mentored by Project Legacy staff to openly express themselves via poetry, dance, painting, or any art form they see fit.



Funding Support



Sisters of Saint Francis



Thank you to our generous donors, corporate sponsors and foundation supporters.

In 2020, we launched an inspiring storytelling series. Brian Lund, writer and Legacy Academy Tutor, interviewed our young people who told their story, in their own words.

“Project Legacy is a place where I felt connected. I felt comfortable and included. I didn’t feel different, which I have experienced just because I have a different background from other people. I felt like I belonged in that place. For anybody who has that type of experience, or is just looking for friendships, for connections where you can trust each other and support each other, I think this is the perfect place. For me personally, it’s kind of a home away from home.”

Read the full series on our website at www.projectlegacy.org/news.

Community Support

We are grateful to the many faith communities, organizations, businesses and individuals that provided support to Project Legacy in 2020. It is **because of your support** that we were able to expand and provide hope and healing to so many youth and young adults during such unprecedented times.



As we celebrate a year of remarkable growth, we look forward to continued expansion in 2021.
Thank you for supporting the life-changing work of Project Legacy.