



# IMPACT REPORT

2020 - 2021



**YOUR DREAM. OUR PROMISE.**





**A CATALYST  
FOR  
COMMUNITY  
VITALITY  
THROUGH  
EDUCATIONAL  
OPPORTUNITY**



A MESSAGE FROM

# AARON CZAPPA

Executive Director La Crosse Promise

Earlier this year, I became the new Executive Director of La Crosse Promise. It is an honor to work with a great organization that has such a meaningful purpose. Our mission statement reads “La Crosse Promise is a catalyst for community vitality through educational opportunity.” As a nonprofit working to economically transform the city of La Crosse, Wisconsin, and improve the quality of life through a commitment to strong education, our work touches upon several different areas.

Some consider La Crosse Promise to be a private nonprofit that provides educational scholarships. Some look at us as a neighborhood revitalization program. Others measure our impact through economic development. And of course, many people talk about how many high school students we serve through our Future Centers by offering personalized college and career readiness services. The exciting news is that we do all of this!

We believe education programs make our community collectively stronger and promote greater equality. An education-minded community is more likely to experience decreased crime, improved health, greater social and civic engagement, and greater financial success. We promote education and career success by investing in the most important parts of a city: its people.

As you look through our impact report, I hope that you will be moved to become more involved with La Crosse Promise. Telling others about our programs and services, supporting our initiatives, volunteering, and donating is what allows us to meet our mission throughout La Crosse.

I look forward to hearing from all of our community supporters and business partners regarding how you can help us take the neighborhood scholarship program and high school Future Centers to the next level.

Sincerely,

## OUR MISSION

La Crosse Promise is a catalyst for community vitality through educational opportunity. We are a nonprofit organization working to economically transform the city of La Crosse and improve the quality of life through a commitment to strong education and neighborhood revitalization.



# NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRAM

The Neighborhood Program invests \$1.5 million in scholarships to leverage private investment in our most challenged neighborhoods. The program has incentivized more than \$6.8 million total private investment in newly constructed and substantially renovated houses since the program began. Once our initial program fund has been fully invested, it is projected that a total of more than \$8.5 million in newly constructed or substantially renovated homes will have been achieved.

Since 2015, the La Crosse Promise neighborhood program has strengthened the Powell-Poage-Hamilton (PPH) and Washburn neighborhoods through an innovative, nationally-unique program that provides education funding (up to \$50,000) for individuals willing to buy, build, or renovate homes in La Crosse's most challenged neighborhoods.

- In the 15 years before Promise, only two private individuals built new homes in PPH and Washburn.
- Since Promise launched the program, it has incentivized the construction of 28 new homes and six significantly renovated homes, accounting for more than \$6.8 million in construction value.
- Once initial investment funds are fully utilized we estimate more than \$8.5 million in construction value will have been invested in all of Promise incentivized homes.
- Due to the added contribution of the “halo” effect, an estimated \$10 million in neighborhood investment is expected once Promise scholarships are fully distributed.



## PROMISE HALO EFFECT

Within 500 feet of Promise homes, we tracked another 20% investment uplift in improvements made by owners of immediately surrounding homes. We project this investment to grow to \$1.7 million. Adding the projected \$8.5 million in construction value to the projected “Halo effect” we expect the total program impact at more than \$10.2 million when all scholarships have been awarded.



# FUTURE CENTERS

High School seniors are often seeking career information, completing college applications, working on financial aid, or searching for scholarships. Of the 205 students who completed the Future Center Senior Survey, 151 (74%) reported they had already been accepted into college (surveys are completed in April).

- 60 students connected with advisors for career advising
- 67 students worked with our advisors on completing college applications
- 29 students/families completed the FAFSA with the help of the Future Centers
- 90 students sought help considering financial aid and financing higher education

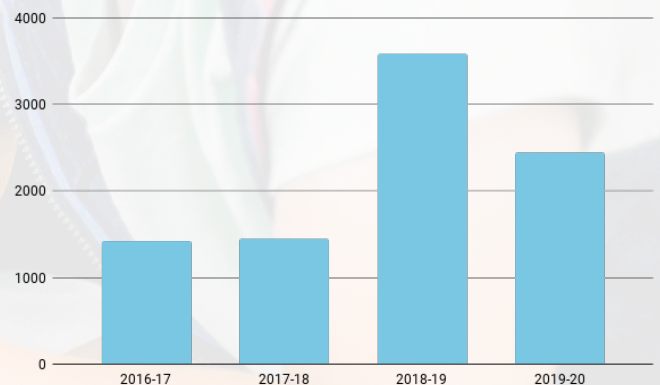
Future Center advisors have helped secure more than \$400,000 in scholarships and grants.

**\$400,000**  
IN SCHOLARSHIPS & GRANTS



70% of La Crosse School District students use the Future Centers by the time they graduate (320 students).

Future Center advisors had more than 3,500 points of contact with students during the 2018-2019 school year and more than 2,400 points of contact during the COVID-shortened 2019-20 school year.



Additionally, to better serve our community during the remote learning period, the Future Centers launched a virtual library for students/families to remotely educate people about common questions and services we often field or provide. Our 17 videos and online presentations were viewed 383 times.





# La Crosse Promise

