

STATE OF ILLINOIS
CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY
JUVENILE JUSTICE AND CHILD PROTECTION DEPARTMENT

TIMOTHY C. EVANS
CHIEF JUDGE

AVIK DAS
DIRECTOR
PROBATION AND COURT
SERVICES



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Project Lifeline in Review

Annual Report for the 2019/20 Academic Year June 1, 2019 to May 31, 2020

"I am now a graduate student with a Bachelor of Science in Biochemistry from the University of Illinois at Chicago. I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to Project Lifeline for amazing mentors. They are truly the best supportive system a student can ask for. Thank you again for helping me reach my goal to be the first child to graduate from college in my family."

Winona L – Graduate University of Illinois Chicago

"I cannot believe I am about to be the first college graduate from my family. Project Lifeline has given me a lot of resources that I have used to make myself a better person.

Thank you Project Lifeline, for all of your help!"

Anthony Y – Senior Northeastern Illinois University

Now in its 32nd year, Project Lifeline continues to provide support to young men and women who have a history of involvement with the Cook County Juvenile Court. This support consists not only of financial assistance but also mentoring and academic tutoring. For many of these students pursuing a post-secondary education is the only route to escape the poverty, community violence and other adverse circumstances they live with every day.

Project Lifeline's unique public/private partnership with the Cook County Juvenile Probation Department continues to be a unique facet of the program. **The volunteer Probation Officers who serve as mentors to the participants provide emotional support and encouragement, which is crucial, especially since most of our students are the first in their family to attend and graduate from college.**

Over 150 recipients have graduated from community colleges, traditional four-year colleges, universities, and professional certification programs. These remarkable young men and women have, through their achievements, demonstrated the efficacy of the Project Lifeline approach. **The accomplishments of these students have been fueled by the financial support that Project Lifeline has provided with tuition, books, computers, housing, tutoring, and mentoring.** Even with the challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic, 9 of our students earned degrees and certificates this academic year.

Below are samples of recent success stories, including the first 3 on the list who were once wards of the court and are now probation officers at the court

- Zolottie B Cook County Juvenile Probation Officer
- Yessina R Cook County Juvenile Probation Officer
- Hector E Cook County Juvenile Probation Officer
- Yvette C - PHD - Research Associate University of Illinois Chicago
- Chaniqua C - Board Certified Chicago Public School Teacher - Chicago Teaching Policy Fellow
- Carolyn E - PHD-Dean of Students for Residential Life Langston University, OK
- Misael R - Automotive Technician - BMW of Orland Park
- Dayna W - Case Management Specialist - Le Bonheur Children's Hospital Memphis TN

Milestones:

During the past year, Project Lifeline celebrated the graduation of nine recipients. They earned degrees or professional certifications from the following institutions:

Bachelors Degrees:

University of Illinois Chicago
Florida Memorial University
Minnesota State University

Associates Degrees:

Harold Washington College
Lincoln College of Technology
Oakton College
Fox College

Professional Certifications:

Triton College - State Certification in Sonography Principles and Instrumentation
Nirvana Institute – CNA Certification

The student who earned his Associates Degree from Oakton College did so with a **4.0 GPA**. He is currently a student in the Honors Economics Program at Northeastern Illinois University.

The student who earned her Associates Degree from Fox College in Dental Hygiene has received her state certification in that field and is **now working as a Dental Hygienist**.

The student who **earned her state certification in Sonography Principles and Instrumentation** is continuing in the highly competitive MRI program at Triton College while pursuing her goal to become a technician in that field.

Financial Review:

From June 1st 2019 to May 31st 2020, Project Lifeline spent \$189,907 on behalf of 48 students. Included in this amount was \$7,688.00 for tutoring. For the sixth consecutive year Project Lifeline sponsored a five-day Writing Workshop for our new students. This program is run by the Roosevelt University Writing Department and staffed by their faculty and student writing coaches. The program is designed to enhance the specific writing skills that our new recipients will need to meet the demands of college level work. This year, the program was run virtually. The cost was \$5,500. Once again, administrative costs for Project Lifeline were held to 2% of total expenses.

Projected Budget for the 2020/21 Fiscal Year:

For the 2020/21 academic year Project Lifeline has budgeted \$260,000. This will be allocated for 36 returning students and 26 new recipients.

The generosity of Project Lifeline donors provides us with the ability to fund these scholarships. With the assistance that Project Lifeline provides, these students continue to inspire us with their ability to overcome the daunting obstacles in their path and achieve educational success.

Project Lifeline Donors:

Walter and Karla Goldschmidt Foundation	Norm & Cynthia Goldring
Steans Family Foundation	Jim Goldschmidt
Roth Family Foundation	Matt Mikkelsen
Baird Foundation Inc	Madeleine Plonsker
Jesser,Ravid Jason, Basso & Farber	Kathleen Runstrom
Tracey Ciciora	Tom Schneider
Jane & Jerry Deal	Alex & Kate Smith
Lynn B. Donaldson	Steven & Rita Spitz
Steven Eiseman	Robin Steans & Leonard Gail
Miles Taub & Susan Goldschmidt	Jeff Sirota & Karen Uselmann
Janet Etshokin	Anonymous

Conclusion:

“My mentor has been the most reliable person I have ever met. Every time I need help with something, he is always there for me. If there is something that needs to be taken care of related to college, or to further improve my wellbeing, he gets it done as soon as possible.”

George T – Current student in Computer Technology Illinois Institute of Technology

“Project Lifeline has been a blessing in my life. The support and resources offered via the program, allowed me to focus on my academics.”

Sanchez F Senior Illinois State University

Children who have a history of involvement with the Juvenile Court typically are much less likely to succeed academically than those outside the court. Project Lifeline has proven that with support and encouragement, this trend can be reversed. Project Lifeline will continue to strive to provide our students with the support and encouragement necessary to achieve that success.

