

THE IDEAL EDUCATION FOUNDATION CELEBRATES THE 31ST

INFINITE HOPE

SCHOLARSHIP GALA

CHANGEMAKERS

They're not the future. They're leading now.

IDEAL

EDUCATION FOUNDATION

PROGRAM/AD BOOK



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Greetings to Our Honored Guests,

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of the IDEaL Education Foundation, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the 2026 Infinite Hope Scholarship Gala held in memory of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. With heartfelt appreciation and gratitude, thank you for your support of the Foundation and our community partners. We are extremely excited to be able to share the great work that we've accomplished during the last year, especially as we launched our Inaugural Gun Violence Prevention Workshop for high school students last summer. This year's Gala is especially memorable as it marks thirty-one years of committed service and impact by the Foundation in the Chicagoland Community.

Generous donors like you have enabled the Foundation to award more than \$270,000 in scholarships to hundreds of high school and college students since our inception; to provide funding to over a hundred students who have attended various Leadership Development Institutes across the Midwest; to support Cub Scout Pack 350 and BSA Troop 350 in the Dolton/Riverdale/Burnham communities for over eighteen years; to mentor outstanding young men from Leo Catholic High School for the last eight years and most recently, students attending Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. College Preparatory and Kenwood Academy High Schools. Our students have graduated from college and entered the workforce as educators, engineers, scientists, physicians, computer specialists, and businessmen. Your support has opened doors for young people that otherwise may have remained closed for a lifetime.

As we celebrate thirty+ years of service, we realize there's still much more work to be done. That's why we launched a Gun Violence Prevention Initiative in partnership with the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) and the Black Community Provider Network (BCPN). Over 3 weekends, we mentored dozens of young men at UCAN Chicago to reduce the incidence of gun violence in the south and west sides, thus positioning them for a brighter future with endless possibilities.

We hope you enjoy the program this afternoon and we humbly request your support later in the Infinite Hope Scholarship Gala as we present additional opportunities to partner with us as we continue to make a difference in Chicago and its surrounding areas.

Yours in service,

Marcus A. Payne
Chairman, Board of Trustees, IDEaL Education Foundation





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May 1st, 1968

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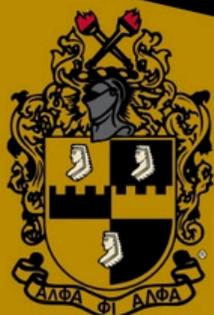
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ALPHA PHI ALPHA FRATERNITY, INC.

Iota Delta Lambda Chapter

505th House of Alpha

P.O. Box 805527
Chicago, IL 60680

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Greetings and Salutations,

It is with great honor and immense gratitude that I stand before you as the incoming President of Iota Delta Lambda Chapter and welcome you to the 31st Annual Infinite Hope Scholarship Gala. Today, we gather not only to celebrate this milestone but also to reaffirm our unwavering commitment to empowering the next generation of young Black men through education.

For three decades, the IDEaL Educational Foundation has served as a beacon of hope, providing scholarships and resources to talented, driven students who aspire to achieve greatness. Our mission is deeply rooted in the principles of leadership, service, and brotherhood-values that continue to inspire us to make a lasting impact in our communities.

As we look around this room, we see the strength of a collective vision-the unwavering support of our members, partners, and donors who believe in the power of education as a transformative tool. Your generosity, whether through contributions, sponsorships, or silent acts of support, has fueled this initiative, ensuring that countless young scholars have the opportunity to pursue higher education and realize their dreams.

To our scholarship recipients, you are the reason we are here. Your resilience, ambition, and dedication remind us why we must continue this important work. You represent the future, and it is our privilege to invest in your success. As Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. so profoundly stated, "Intelligence plus character-that is the goal of true education." Today, we celebrate you and the boundless possibilities that are ahead.

I must also take a moment to acknowledge our immediate past President, Dr. Keith McGee, for his outstanding leadership and dedication to this chapter and foundation. His contributions have been instrumental in bringing us to this moment, and I am honored to build upon the foundation he has laid.

Brothers and distinguished guests, as we celebrate this momentous occasion, let us renew our commitment to this cause. The road ahead is filled with challenges, but together, we can continue to elevate our legacy through leadership, service, and brotherhood.

Thank you for your presence, your support, and your belief in the power of education. Let's enjoy this afternoon and, most importantly, let's continue to make a difference.

Fraternally,
Bro. Donald L. Ramsey Jr.
President, Iota Delta Lambda Chapter
Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.



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Trustee and Director of Educational Activities, Cortez Watkins, would like to extend his heartfelt congratulations to the awardees on receiving their scholarships. Your dedication to academic excellence and commitment to your future have earned you this well-deserved recognition. We celebrate your hard work and perseverance and look forward to seeing all that you will accomplish.

This achievement is not only a testament to your diligence but also a reflection of the support and encouragement from your families, mentors, and educators who have guided you along the way. Education is a powerful tool that opens doors to endless opportunities, and we are confident that you will use this scholarship to further your knowledge, expand your horizons, and positively impact your communities. Your success serves as an inspiration to others, demonstrating that with determination and focus, anything is possible.

As you embark on this next chapter, remember that learning is a lifelong journey, and the skills and knowledge you acquire will shape the path ahead. Embrace every challenge as a chance to grow, and continue striving for excellence in all that you do. We look forward to witnessing your continued success and the contributions you will make to society. Congratulations once again, and best wishes for a bright and promising future!

Yours in service,

Cortez Watkins

**Trustee and Director of Educational Activities
IDEaL Education Foundation**

CONGRATULATIONS

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FOR 31 YEARS OF FAITHFUL AND
DEDICATED SERVICE TO OUR YOUTH.



IOTA DELTA LAMBDA CHAPTER
505TH HOUSE OF ALPHA





To the Brothers of Iota Delta Lambda,

I want to thank you for your service to the Chicagoland community. The impact that you have made on the lives of families is immeasurable.

To chapter leadership and the IDEAL Educational Foundation's leadership, I commend you on your investment in our youth, who need our guidance more now than ever.

Finally, to the planning committee for the Infinite Hope Scholarship Gala, your commitment to excellence is a testament to who we are as Alpha men and as supporters of education.

Much success on your gala!

Fraternally rooted,

Franklin Stacy, Jr.

Brother Franklin Stacy, Jr.
29th Midwestern Regional Vice President
Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated.

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THE DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS

Congratulates



**THE BROTHERS OF IOTA DELTA LAMBDA
ON A SUCCESSFUL INFINITE HOPE SCHOLARSHIP GALA**



XI LAMBDA CHAPTER

Congratulates the

IDEAL EDUCATION FOUNDATION



IDEaL
EDUCATION FOUNDATION

On their

31st Annual

Infinite Hope Scholarship Gala

Proving yet again that Alphas:

Develop Leaders | Promotes Brotherhood
Academic Excellence

While providing service and advocacy for
our communities.



CONGRATS IDeal

EDUCATION FOUNDATION

For more than three decades of unwavering commitment to the well-being and development of young individuals, the IDeal Education Foundation continues to transform lives and strengthen communities.



SPRING 21

CONGRATULATIONS!!!

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FOR OVER 31 YEARS OF DEDICATED
SERVICE TO YOUTH AND YOUNG PEOPLE!





BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®



IDEAL EDUCATION FOUNDATION



RECOGNIZING OUR BOY SCOUT TROOP & PACK

MEETINGS ARE EVERY 3RD SATURDAY AT 10 AM

NEW LIFE CELEBRATION CHURCH OF GOD, 14243 S DANTE AVE, DOLTON, IL

CONTACT NICHOLAS MARTIN, 901-497-8946 OR DERRICK GLASBY JR., 424-303-0254 FOR MORE INFORMATION

BSA PACK 350 BSA PACK 350



Congratulations



For more than three decades of unwavering
commitment to the well-being and
development of young individuals!
We also want to congratulate every
Scholarship and Community Award winner!!!



Lance Wallace, MD, FACP



Executive Medical Director
Specialty Physicians of Illinois
20939 S.Cicero Avenue
Matteson, IL 60443
708-679-2770

Medical School: Southern Illinois University School of Medicine, Springfield, IL – 1990

Internship: Northwestern University – 1990-1991

Residency: Northwestern University – 1991-1993

Fellowship: Chief Medical Resident – 1993-1994

Certifications: Diplomate, American Board of Internal Medicine

Admitting Privileges: St. James Hospital & Health Center, Ingalls Memorial Hospital
Practicing Medicine in the South Suburbs Since: 1995

What is blood sugar?

The main sugar found in the blood and the body's main source of energy

What is diabetes?

A disorder in which blood glucose (sugar) levels are elevated

Whatever your primary healthcare needs are:

General healthcare
Diabetic treatment & education
Cholesterol treatment & education
Gynecological exam
Blood pressure screening
Asthma/Bronchitis care
Osteoarthritis
Headaches/Migraines
Plus much more

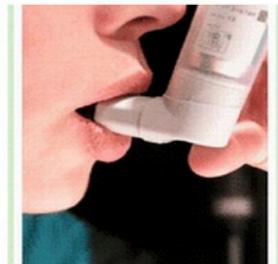
What is cholesterol?

A substance normally made by the body, but also found in foods from animal sources, like beef, eggs, and butter. Too much cholesterol in the body can lead to narrowing and blockage of the arteries

Dr. Lance Wallace is available



Blood Sugar screening



Asthma/Bronchitis Care



Headache/Migraine Care



Blood Pressure Screening

Lance Wallace, MD, FACP
Internal Medicine

Looking forward to taking care of your healthcare needs



Hi, I'm Yolanda.

At RC Funding, LLC, we proudly provide Financial Services to Business Owners and Real Estate Investors.

Our team can assist you with SBA Loans, Term Loans, DSCR, Construction, and Bridge Loans—tailored to meet your unique needs. We also offer solutions such as Accounting,

Fractional CFOs, Invoice Factoring, and Payment Processing to help your business thrive. Give us a call, we're happy to help and would love to discuss your next project with you!

Let's Build Success Together!

Yolanda Bouchee, Founding Principal
RC Funding, LLC info@rcfunding.com
(555) 123-4567



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BOY SCOUT TROOP 350

PRESENTATION OF COLORS



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LIFT EVERY
VOICE &
SING



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THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



Ingredion



Illinois



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THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS



Comer Family Foundation



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DR. ELIJAH KINDRED INVOCATION



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MEET OUR HOSTS



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DONTE CLEAVES

Donte Cleaves is a **changemaker**

- Transforming communities through business ownership – operating 4 McDonald's restaurants and creating opportunities across Greater Atlanta
- Breaking barriers and building legacy – proving that representation create pathways for the next generation

Continues to build, inspire, and break barriers – proving that nothing beats a failure but a TRY.



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EBONY GRAVES

Ebony Graves is a **changemaker**

- Championing the next generation of leaders – through NSBE Jr., and ACT-SO transforming young lives
- Breaking barriers in marketing and tech – leveraging her expertise to elevate and create space for underrepresented voices

Continues to create, advocate, and elevate – proving that representation heals and creates lasting change for her community.



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What is a Changemaker?



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A changemaker is...

- A **learner** — someone who looks toward the future with vision and purpose, always seeking knowledge to create a better tomorrow.
- An **advocate** — someone who stands up and fights for their community, using their voice to demand justice and create opportunity.
- An **achiever** — someone who pursues their goals with determination, breaking barriers and proving that excellence knows no limits.
- A **giver** — someone who selflessly shares their time, resources, and compassion to uplift others, believing that true change begins with generosity and care.

A changemaker is **YOU**.



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WELCOME FROM
CHAIRMAN

MARCUS A. PAYNE

IDEAL EDUCATION FOUNDATION





IMPACT REPORT

CORTEZ L. WATKINS

*DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL
ACTIVITIES*



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7

WAYS WE TRANSFORM
STUDENTS INTO
CHANGEMAKERS

2025-26



1 BUILDING A FRAMEWORK FOR CHANGE



IDENTIFY

DEFINE THE PROBLEM



DEVELOP

GENERATE CREATIVE SOLUTIONS



LEAD

PRESENT THE FINAL CONCEPT

2 BUILDING TRUST THROUGH CONSISTENCY



IDENTITY



OPPORTUNITY



TRUST



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3 MODELING PEACE THROUGH ACTION

4 SCHOOLS. 131 STUDENTS. 1 MISSION. END GUN VIOLENCE.



3RD ANNUAL MLK BASKETBALL CLASSIC FOR PEACE



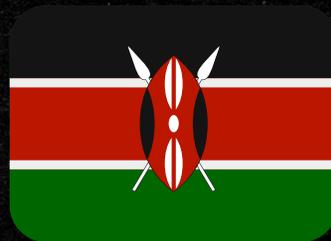
INAUGURAL HOOPS CLASSIC

ENGLEWOOD STEM
DUNBAR—BOWEN—URBAN PREP — ST FRANCIS DE SALES



4 EXPANDING OUR VISION BEYOND CHICAGO

20+ ILLINOIS LEADERS. 10 KENYAN STUDENTS. 1 GLOBAL VISION.



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5 CONNECTING TO PROFESSIONALS

100+ PROFESSIONALS. EVERY PROFESSION. EVERY PATH. EVERY POSSIBILITY.



6 EXPANDING PARTNERSHIPS



2015



2023-24



Pre-Freshman Program in Engineering and Science (PREP)



2025-26

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7

OPENING THE DOOR TO COLLEGE:

EVERY. SINGLE. SENIOR. GRADUATED.

GRADUATION RATES:



NATIONAL AVERAGE FOR BLACK
MALE STUDENTS: ~30%



OUR STUDENTS: 90%

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SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

MASON A. POSEY,
JONATHAN WHITE JR.
& DR. JAMIE ENGE

*EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES
COMMITTEE*



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2026

SCHOLARSHIP
RECIPIENTS



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SHI BOOKER WILLIAMS

DONTE AND KUIANA CLEAVES SCHOLARSHIP
UCHICAGO CHARTER SCHOOL: WOODLAWN

“Good character isn’t about being perfect. It’s about being honest and treating people with respect.”



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CHANDLER BRADY

MLK SCHOLARSHIP

TIMOTHY CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL

*"My goal is to promote literary diversity
and remind others that greatness does
not depend on fitting in."*



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BOBBY WASHINGTON

MLK SCHOLARSHIP

KENWOOD ACADEMY HIGH SCHOOL

“True education is measured by how we show up for others when they need us most.”



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NATHANIEL AIBANGBEE

MLK SCHOLARSHIP

KENWOOD ACADEMY HIGH SCHOOL

*“I want my education to lift me, but
I also want it to lift the people
around me”*



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AARON EMMANUEL

EDDIE JONES MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP
MOUNT CARMEL HIGH SCHOOL

“Education is incomplete if it only benefits the individual. Its true value is revealed when growth extends outward and strengthens the community.”



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SAGE MCROBERTS

MLK SCHOLARSHIP

WHITNEY M. YOUNG MAGNET HIGH SCHOOL

“Service builds social intelligence and character. Volunteering forces one to act with selflessness and kindness towards a community.”



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DEVIN SCATES

MLK SCHOLARSHIP

OGDEN INTERNATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

“Change is never in an instant. It's built, action by action, story by story. My voice is just one among the many, but together we can create a chorus that cannot be ignored.”



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BRYCE BLYTHE

MLK SCHOLARSHIP

WHITNEY M. YOUNG MAGNET HIGH SCHOOL

"I hope to return to my neighborhood, Englewood, —a place that often faces culturally insensitive medical care—so I can provide compassionate treatment, advocate for health equality, and inspire the next generation of young people growing up there."



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QURAN MUHAMMAD

URBAN PREP ACADEMY
PAYNE - GRAHAM & HARDING
SCHOLARSHIP

"He takes his work and himself seriously, resulting in high standards and a high quality of work. He is of good character, he's personable and has integrity." –Educator



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ADAM WISEMAN

MLK SCHOLARSHIP

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

“Education has never been only about academic achievement; it has been about how I choose to show up for others while navigating the adversity of my own.”



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AURICE BLANTON

MLK SCHOLARSHIP
NATIONAL LOUIS UNIVERSITY

“Intelligence may open doors, but character determines how you lead once you walk through them.”



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COMMUNITY
AWARDS

DERRICK GLASBY

COMMUNITY AWARDS CHAIR,
INFINITE HOPE 2026 CO-CHAIR



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2026 COMMUNITY AWARDS RECIPIENTS



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LEGACY OF HOPE AWARD

DR. EUGENE ROBINSON JR.

Eugene is a **changemaker**

- CPS's first Director of Black Student Success – leading initiatives that close gaps for over 100,000 students
- Two decades of advocacy – championing college access, and educational equity despite criticism



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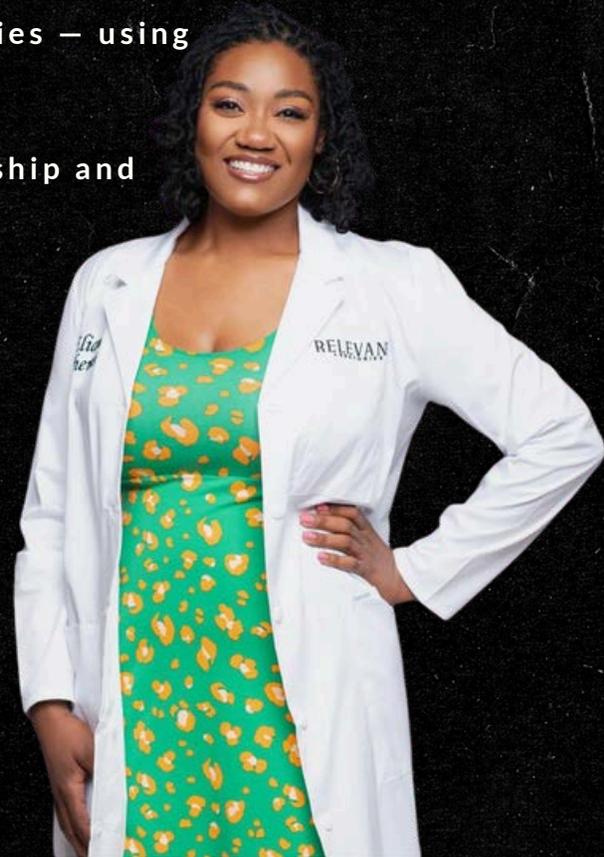
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HOPEFUL MINDS ADVOCACY AWARD ELIANE TREADWELL

Eliane Treadwell is a **changemaker**

- Building products that center Black women's health as Founder and Chemist of Relevant Laboratories – using STEM for community care
- Empowering entrepreneurs through mentorship and education – transforming doubt into belief



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HARMONY OF ARTS AWARD

TROY O. PRYOR

Troy Pryor is a **changemaker**

- Award-winning producer amplifying voices across film, television, and digital media through Pryor Holdings and Creative Cypher.
- Vice President of SAG-AFTRA Chicago and founder of the XL Film Festival – using storytelling to unite and advance inclusivity.



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EDUCATIONAL EQUITY AWARD

DR. PHYLLIS P. HAYES

Dr. Hayes is a **changemaker**

- Four decades of advocating for underserved students
- Founded UIC's CHANCE Program and the Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement



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TECH TRAILBLAZER AWARD

GREG BUSH JR.

Greg Bush Jr. is a **changemaker**

- Created Phaze – bringing project management tools to small businesses and underserved communities
- Leading the only Black-owned cloud solution – proving technology drives equity and opportunity



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HOPEFUL MINDS ADVOCACY AWARD MARY POUNDER

Mary Pounder is a **changemaker**

- Building equitable health care systems – using harm reduction to prevent overdose and HIV/HCV
- Empowering the communities through funding the Chicago Racial Justice Pooled Fund – transforming \$10 Million into movements for justice



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UNSUNG HERO AWARD

TINO JACKSON

Tino Jackson is a **changemaker**

- Meeting critical community needs through back-to-school drives, meal distributions, coat collections, and resource tables
- Serving quietly without recognition – building connection and becoming a pillar of care



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JAYLEN BURNS GUARDIAN AGAINST GUN VIOLENCE AWARD

Live Free Illinois is a **changemaking organization**

- Mobilizing community to end gun violence and incarceration – organizing to demand justice
- Empowering Illinois through healing, voter mobilization, and investment – proving faith-based organizing transforms systems

LIVEFREE

ILLINOIS

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CITY SONS

BRADY MIDDLETON

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES
COMMITTEE & INFINITE HOPE
2026 CO-CHAIR



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ART AUCTION



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PADDLE RAISE FUNDRAISER



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LEGACY LEADER

Create lasting impact with full semester mentorship programs and educational initiatives for 100+ youth.



\$2500+

CREATES & SPONSORS EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR 100+ YOUTH

OPPORTUNITY CREATOR

Open doors to higher education through college prep courses, application workshops, and scholarship fees.



\$1000

FUNDS A FULL SEMESTER MENTORSHIP PROGRAM FOR A STUDENTS

\$500

COLLEGE VISITS- FOR 2+ STUDENTS

\$250

COVERS SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION FEES

FOUNDATION BUILDER

Build the pathway to college with mentoring sessions and prep materials for students.



\$100

PROVIDES COLLEGE PREP MATERIALS FOR 5+ STUDENTS

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A CENTER FOR
YOUTH
ADVANCEMENT
AND
COMMUNITY
ENRICHMENT

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Our Goals

REDUCE GUN
VIOLENCE
AMONGST
YOUTH

INCREASE
GRADUATION
RATE OF
TEENS

INCREASE #
OF JOBS FOR
TEENS &
ADULTS

INCREASE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND IMPROVE
QUALITY OF LIFE

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We Aim to Provide

MENTORSHIP & TRAINING

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORT

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

CREATIVE & PHYSICAL PROGRAMMING

OPERATIONAL SPACE



For More Information



<https://idealfoundation1906.org/capital-campaign/>

Thank You!



THANK YOU FROM
OUR CHAIRMAN
MARCUS A. PAYNE
IDEAL EDUCATION FOUNDATION



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BENEDICTION

REV. JAMES FLINT

VICE CHAIRMAN, IDEAL
EDUCATION FOUNDATION





Ingredion



Congratulates IDEaL
Education Foundation
and Board Chairman

Marcus A. Payne
on 33 years of service!

Every day, Ingredion employees bring their skills, creativity, and passion together to deliver ingredient solutions that enhance people's lives.

We are innovators who combine the power of technology with the best of nature to delight customers and consumers.

We hold ourselves to the highest standards in ethics, safety, quality, and sustainability.

