

## **Vision**

Our vision is that all children, regardless of socioeconomic background, will have an equal opportunity to complete high school, achieve postsecondary education, and fully capitalize on their talents and aspirations to become productive global citizens.

## **Mission**

The “I Have A Dream” Foundation’s mission is to help children living in under-resourced communities achieve their full potential by delivering a long-term program that promotes personal empowerment, high school graduation, and postsecondary success, and provides financial support for postsecondary education.

## **Program Overview**

Our local chapters sponsor cohorts of students in under-resourced public schools, and work with these “Dreamers” from early elementary school all the way through high school. Upon high school graduation, each Dreamer receives guaranteed tuition assistance for higher education.

At each of our sites, our local Sponsors and program team work with a broad segment of the community — ranging from school districts and colleges to businesses, religious organizations, civic groups, and others — to provide Dreamers with the academic and social services they need to overcome tremendous obstacles and achieve higher education.

## **How We Got Started**

The “I Have A Dream” program was launched in 1981, when founder Eugene Lang returned to his alma mater, P.S. 121 in East Harlem, to address the graduating sixth grade class. When he learned that three-quarters of the school’s students would probably drop out of school, Lang promised college tuition to every sixth grader who graduated from high school. This impromptu promise sparked a national movement that now stretches from coast to coast.



## **Impact**

Currently, over 3,100 Dreamers are on the pathway to and through college in 14 cities, following the nearly 12,700 Dreamers who came before them. Dreamers often graduate and enter college at double the rates of other students in the local population, and surpass the overall statewide average for students in their peer group.

External evaluations have found that our students demonstrate improvements in grades and school attendance; are better able to resist peer pressure; and show higher aspirations and more positive attitudes about school, life, and the future.

“I Have A Dream” has also inspired other initiatives across the nation, including the federal program GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) and nonprofit organizations including Say Yes to Education. In addition, many of our Sponsors, while new to education when they first became involved with “I Have A Dream”, have since become some of the nation’s most influential education leaders.

## **The National “I Have A Dream” Foundation**

The national “I Have A Dream” Foundation was established in 1986 to coordinate and expand the network of “I Have A Dream” sites, now numbering 16 affiliates running 36 programs around the country.



For more information, visit [www.ihaveadreamfoundation.org](http://www.ihaveadreamfoundation.org) or contact:

“I Have A Dream” Foundation  
330 Seventh Ave, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10001  
Ph: (212) 293-5480 Fax: (212) 293-5478  
[info@ihaveadreamfoundation.org](mailto:info@ihaveadreamfoundation.org)