LETTER FROM OUR CEO

DEAR SUMMER SEARCH COMMUNITY,

This past year has been one of learning and change as we set out to chart a course to meet the needs of the next generation of Summer Search leaders. Our new four-year strategic plan, ‘Unleashing Potential,’ is informed by feedback from our stakeholders—students, alumni, staff, donors, and board members—and will guide us in supporting young people to thrive.

We heard from our students and alumni that thriving requires more than a college degree. In addition to graduating from college at remarkably higher rates than students with similar backgrounds, our students’ hopes and dreams for our program’s impact extend to launching their career and securing their financial future. Derrick Duplessy, a Boston Board Member and Alumnus, summarized this new direction best:

“My Summer Search journey was never about educational attainment. It was about upward mobility.”

Going forward, to provide what our students and alumni have told us they need to thrive, Summer Search will make thoughtful, rigorously evaluated changes to our program model. These changes include activating our Alumni Network to serve as mentors to postsecondary students to increase their educational attainment and job readiness and scaling peer group mentoring across our National network.

With income inequality rising in the United States, our work to create greater equity for young people has never been more urgent. I am inspired by the collective leadership and impact of more than 7,000 students and alumni, and I am inspired by the Summer Search community—it is a special combination of commitment and connectedness.

Thank you for your partnership—we couldn’t do this work without you.

DR. MARC SPENCER
“My summer experience and my mentor made me realize that if I push myself enough, I can do things I never imagined possible.” – Marilyn, Summer Search Student
WE OFFER MENTORING AND TRANSFORMATIVE OPPORTUNITIES to high school students from under-resourced communities to support them to achieve their full potential in school, work, and life.

We believe that young people deserve the resources and support to succeed based on their talent, intelligence, and capabilities. Many young people possess strengths, resilience, and tremendous potential, yet face systemic inequities that can limit their ability to obtain postsecondary degrees, participate in the workforce, or gain financial stability.

Our comprehensive program supports students in navigating and challenging systemic barriers to postsecondary education, workforce participation, and financial stability so that every Summer Searcher can thrive.
“My Summer Search trips gave me so many leadership skills like delegating, communication, problem solving, and many more. They gave me the courage to lead with confidence and literally changed me into a more powerful and confident woman.”

—Jackie, Summer Search Student
WE CURRENTLY SERVE 3,645 STUDENTS IN 5 REGIONS

The young people we partner with possess unique strengths, resilience, and tremendous potential. Yet, they have unequal opportunities due to systemic inequities. 96% qualify for free or reduced lunch and 97% are students of color.

49% LATINO
24% BLACK
16% ASIAN
8% MULTI-RACIAL/OTHER
3% WHITE

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS
“I had to push through my barriers and step out of my comfort zone to be able to excel on my wilderness trip. When I finally accepted my challenges and took them on, I was able to become a leader.”
IT’S MORE THAN A PROGRAM. IT’S A PARTNERSHIP.
We take a holistic approach to empower students to achieve their potential through a combination of:

MENTORING
Starting in their sophomore year of high school, our students are partnered with staff mentors who build authentic and long-lasting relationships in order to provide support for many facets of a student’s life. That mentoring support continues through high school and beyond, as each student navigates toward their long-term goals.

Our staff spent 24,000 hours mentoring and engaging with students last year.

TRANSFORMATIVE EXPERIENCES
Last year, 900 students spent their summers on life-changing wilderness, community service, academic, and internship experiences all over the world. On their journeys, Summer Searchers:

Hiked 26,407 miles
Paddled 13,160 miles
Climbed 15,910 feet

Completed 10,217 hours of academic work, which included attending classes, studying, & exploring the arts and sciences
Completed 24,121 hours of service, which included building homes in international communities, working on conservation projects, & teaching in schools
“Thanks to my mentor’s advocacy and support, I received a full ride to Williams College, one of the best schools in the country!”

—Anne, Summer Search Alumna
Last year 97% of our high school seniors were accepted into a 4-year or 2-year college.

94% are first in their family to go to college.

They earned more than $7M in financial aid and scholarships.

68% of our students earn a bachelor's degree compared to 21% of their peers.

Our students are accomplishing remarkable things.
“With the guidance of my mentors and all of the support given to me through Summer Search, not only did I find my voice, I learned how to use it.”  
—Jahlil, Alumnus and Middle School Teacher through Teach For America

“Summer Search is about changing narratives so that each and every one of us can become our best selves.”  
—Marie, Alumna and Admissions & Student Inclusion Counselor at the University of Washington
ALUMNI LEAD THE WAY

Our alumni are 3 times more likely to graduate with a 4-year degree than their peers and become the kind of leaders our country needs—civic leaders, advocates, industry leaders, teachers, mothers, and fathers.

3,425 Summer Search Alumni worldwide
76% of alumni have helped raise money for a charitable cause.
66% said they volunteered in the past 12 months.

We are so proud to have more than 75 ALUMNI LEADERS on each of our boards, on our staff, on committees, and as volunteers throughout our program.

Alumni giving reached record-level highs, both in dollars and participation, with nearly 385 alumni contributing $195,140 in gifts, pledges, and matching gifts.
ONCE A SUMMER SEARCHER, ALWAYS A SUMMER SEARCHER.

In November we brought together nearly 300 Summer Search alumni from across the country for our National Alumni Summit & Leadership Conference, the largest alumni gathering in our history! The conference allowed Summer Searchers to connect with one another as leaders, engage industry experts, and explore how to effect positive change in their personal and professional lives.

“My life and career have benefitted greatly from my time with Summer Search—from the opportunities, to the connections, to the continuous support and encouragement.” —Ronald, Alumnus, Boston Alumni Board Member, Sales Consultant at State Street Corporation
FOR MORE INSPIRING STUDENT & ALUMNI STORIES, FOLLOW

BLOG.SUMMERSEARCH.ORG
“Being the first in my family to attend college, my parents’ professional network was pretty slim, so engaging the Summer Search community was key in extending my own community and getting that first internship. I’m excited and inspired by the idea of serving as a mentor to younger students and giving back to an organization that was so impactful in my own life.”  –Jordan, Alumnus and Summer Search NYC Board Member
During the strategic planning process this past year, students and alumni shared that they have broad visions of success for themselves. In addition to graduating from college at remarkably higher rates than students with similar backgrounds, our students’ hopes and dreams for our program’s impact extend to LAUNCHING THEIR CAREER AND SECURING THEIR FINANCIAL FUTURE.

To ensure we are supporting young people to thrive, Summer Search will broaden our partnership with students to include workforce participation and financial stability in addition to educational attainment goals. We remain committed to our core model of long-term mentoring paired with summer experiential opportunities and will enhance this model by:

1. Scaling peer group mentoring across our national network
2. Activating our alumni leaders to increase the educational attainment and job readiness of our postsecondary students
3. Transforming the field of mentoring by launching a Summer Search Institute to train our staff and the field

A BOLDER VISION OF SUCCESS
WE’RE IN THIS TOGETHER

Summer Search is able to offer our students exposure to many different opportunities and experiences thanks to our generous network of partners and supporters: high school partners, summer program partners, corporate partners, and donors are all critical to the success of our young people.

All of our donors, supporters, and partners are listed at: SUMMERSEARCH.ORG/ANNUALREPORT

SUMMER PROGRAM PARTNERS

Adventure, Risk and Challenge
Amigos de las Americas
Bike Works
Boston University Summer Term
Camp Encore/Coda
Center for Creative Youth
Cheley Colorado Camps
Chewonki
College Orientation Workshop
Colorado Outward Bound School
Concordia Language Villages
Cottonwood Gulch Foundation
Cushing Academy
Deer Hill Expeditions
Deva Healing Center
Duke University Summer Academy
Economics for Leaders Program
Environmental Traveling Companions
Experiment in International Living
Futures and Options
Global Glimpse
Global Leadership Adventures
Global Routes
Global Works
Global Youth Village
Go Adventure
Hun School of Princeton
Hurricane Island Outward Bound School
Idyllwild Arts
Ithaca College Summer College
Junior Statesmen Summer School
Longacre
Loomis Chaffee School
Maine Teen Camp
National Outdoor Leadership School
North Carolina Outward Bound School
Northfield Mount Hermon Summer Session
Northwest Outward Bound School
Outward Bound California
Philadelphia Outward Bound School
Putney School Summer Programs
Road Less Traveled
Sierra Nevada Journeys
Skidmore College Precollege Program
Snow Farm: The New England Craft Program
Student Conservation Association
Student Diplomacy Corps
Summer Academy at Suffield
Summer Science and Engineering Program
Summer@Brown
Super Camp
Syracuse University Summer College
Teton Science Schools
University of New Hampshire - Project SMART
University of Delaware Summer College
University of Miami Summer Scholars Program
Visions Service Adventures
Voyageur Outward Bound School
Wasatch Academy
Where There Be Dragons
YMCA Camping & Outdoor Leadership
PARTNER SPOTLIGHT ON CHRIS LONG

Chris Long—Defensive End for the Philadelphia Eagles, philanthropist, humanitarian, and 2018 Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year—has been a game-changing supporter of educational equity and Summer Search.

Through his Pledge 10 for Tomorrow campaign, the Chris Long Foundation donated an entire season of his NFL game checks to support educational equity in America, and Summer Search Boston and Philadelphia were both recipients of that generosity. The campaign officially kicked off at one of our student events in Philly, ultimately generating $435K in new gifts to Summer Search.

Chris Long helped promote the importance of filling out the FAFSA, alongside Summer Search and former First Lady Michelle Obama’s Reach Higher initiative. Chris’s platform and influence has greatly raised our organization’s profile, from local and national articles, to social media posts to his 576K followers, to being featured on a national TV commercial reaching 33 million viewers. This increased visibility for Summer Search supports us to partner with more young people.
SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THESE CORPORATE AND FOUNDATION PARTNERS

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KEY
● Summer Search Alumni
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Vice Chair
Outgoing Chair
Trustee Emeriti
Summer Search maintains a strong financial position. In 2018 we developed a four-year strategic plan which outlines a vision of growth and deeper impact.
THANKS FOR SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO THRIVE IN SCHOOL, WORK, AND LIFE.

SUMMERSEARCH.ORG