



COMMONWEAL FOUNDATION



For the Common Good

Annual Report

JULY 1, 2011-JUNE 30, 2012

“Nothing in the world can take the place of Persistence. Talent will not... Genius will not ... Education will not ... Persistence and Determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan 'Press On' has solved, and always will solve, the problems of the human race.”



American President John Calvin Coolidge’s quote - a favorite of Commonwealth’s founder and my father, Stewart Bainum - graces the homes of all my family members. It is the underpinning of our commitment to support educational opportunity, and it inspires the Commonwealth Foundation’s culture and core values: Continuous Learning, Integrity, Collaboration and Commitment.

These core values embody our work as we operate programs for underserved children and youth and engage with partners to provide high-quality literacy-based services that make student achievement a priority and an outcome. These values were the bedrock of how we were raised – trying to improve ourselves, being open and transparent, being accountable and having a strong work ethic. I admire my parents for instilling these values in us.

Continuous learning requires that we work with people and organizations that are experienced, motivated and eager to improve. We use the latest research-based methods to ensure that our programs are the highest quality. We embrace change and seek growth in staff and program development. Continuous learning is evident in our annual leadership forums, student internships, staff development and board member engagement.

Integrity is deeply embedded in my father’s genetic makeup, and the Foundation is diligent in maintaining it in our interactions with staff, stakeholders and grantees. Integrity is an integral part of the Boarding and Day School Program’s extensive reevaluation of our school partnerships. We value the open and transparent conversations we have had with our partners, and believe this strengthens us all as we carry out our missions together.

Collaboration is an essential aspect of the relationship between Commonwealth’s staff and partners. We work in partnership internally and externally, as evidenced in our very successful summer program, Camp Promise.

Commitment through hard work and persistence informs our mission to support the youth we serve. Consider our School Enhancement Program’s Continuous School Improvement framework, which aims for strong school leaders who provide teachers with the instructional support necessary to ensure academic success for all students. Good leaders are less resistant to change; good partners are committed to change.

My personal goal is to exemplify the core values both personally and professionally. It will take time for these core values to envelop every act of Commonwealth, but we are on the right track. As Coolidge suggested, we will “press on” until these core values guide our every step and decision. In the end, that will translate to better services for the children and youth who remain at the center of our mission.

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Our Mission

The Commonweal Foundation operates and supports educational programs and projects assisting underserved children and youth. The Foundation focuses on primary and secondary education.

Contin Learni

Embrace change and grow

Continuous Learning

We pursue feedback and training that will improve the quality of our work. As continuous learners, we are always asking, “What’s next?”

Continuous Learning

The Sixth Annual Leadership Forum

Sharing visions and lessons strengthens partnerships and makes positive educational outcomes for underserved children and youth possible. That was a very important take home message from the Commonwealth Foundation's Sixth Annual Leadership Forum in October 2011.

With the theme "Shared Vision, Greater Impact: Collaborate, Educate, Innovate," the forum brought together 172 leaders who serve the Foundation's partner schools and organizations. In keeping with Commonwealth's commitment to continuous learning and embracing change and growth, the executive directors, school presidents, principals and conference leaders listened to leadership training experts and had a chance to share their own best practices.

Commonweal is committed to preparing underserved children and youth for a successful future. During these economic times, strong partnerships with dynamic and well-trained leaders guiding the schools and other non-profit organizations are essential to achieving this goal. Because of that, the Forum was designed to strengthen the skills of these educators in a myriad of areas, including enhancing program quality, handling underachieving students, boosting students' reading abilities and dealing with peer pressure.

The keynote speaker at the Sixth Annual Leadership Forum was Dr. Vickie Bernhardt, a nationally recognized leader in continuous school improvement. Dr. Bernhardt shared her

experience in using research-based methods to use data—perceptions, demographic information, processes, and student achievement data—to make informed decisions in schools. Her vibrant session on data use inspired the attending school leaders to think about how to make well-founded decisions about instruction and school processes that can have the most positive impact on student learning.

Attendees listened intently to the story of Ben Carson, M.D., who knows firsthand about beating the odds and making the right choices. Carson shared his transformative life journey from an angry inner-city youth to a neurosurgeon. Understanding the plight of underserved children, Dr. Carson shared his real-life experiences which ultimately led him to become a world-renowned pediatric brain surgeon.





The two-day forum allowed for Foundation partners not only to learn techniques and strategies to embrace change and improve, but also to network with others devoted to helping underserved youth make positive choices, overcome challenges and prepare for their futures.

Internship Program

Sarah and Abby describe the Commonweal Internship Program as a “life changing” experience that will stay with them for years to come.

These two young women are among the students in the Boarding and Day School pro-

gram chosen for the internship designed to offer the knowledge and skills about work ethics, leadership, public speaking, writing, organization, presentation and the value of working at a nonprofit in the field of philanthropy.

The internship – which goes far beyond helping students academically – is beneficial to the students whether they plan to attend college or head right into the workforce. Far beyond the typical stapling-and-copying-papers internship, these students are intricately involved in Commonweal work.

The internships offer separate components – a home base where they learn about the Foundation, practice entry level skills and strengthen their work discipline; learning

Continuous Learning

excursions where they learn about the government and nonprofit sector work assisting children and youth; and seminars where they concentrate on workforce development, academic skill building, public speaking, writing, professional conduct and appearance and personal financial management.

This type of learning continues long after the interns move on to their next endeavor, providing them life-long skills in work etiquette, social cues (such as proper handshakes and eye contact), resume preparation and leadership development.

Our interns learn the importance of understanding individuals, helping others and the value of networking to achieve a successful career. So often, students coming into the internship leave with a renewed sense of self-confidence and an unwavering desire to do their best at all times. Best of all, they carry with them lessons that will stay with them

throughout their lives and help them grow to be the best they can be.

Staff Site Visits

Witnessing the efforts of others often inspires us to work even harder to meet a common goal. With that in mind, Foundation employees set out on their own field trips this year – to visit Commonweal-supported programs helping underserved youth.

The 12 site visits were designed to allow Commonweal colleagues who may not work directly with particular programs to see those initiatives firsthand. The required visits enhanced the staff's professional development and personal investment in the Foundation's valuable mission. Staff members learned about their colleagues' work and how their efforts contribute to successfully implementing the Foundation's mission.

The Boarding and Day School Program hosted visits to Don Bosco Cristo Rey Jesuit High School in Baltimore, and Don Bosco Cristo Rey High School and Takoma Academy, both in Takoma Park, Maryland. The staff learned about the schools' programs, toured the schools and met with students.

Commonweal staff visited other Foundation programs, including:

- New Community for Children, which provides after school and summertime programming for youth in the Shaw neighborhood of Washington, D.C. Staff



saw the youth make homemade salsa from their community garden produce and demonstrate martial arts skills.

- Passion for Learning, which conducts an afterschool program for middle-school aged girls to improve their writing and communication skills through blogging, tweeting and using technology.
- Camp Promise, a collaboration with the Montgomery County Recreation Department on an enhanced summer learning program for underserved youth in Silver Spring, Maryland.
- After School Program (ASP) at Takoma Park Elementary School, Cresthaven Elementary School, St. Francis Elementary School, Gaithersburg Elementary School and Georgian Forest Elementary School. Commonweal staff observed the after-school tutoring and the Reading Teacher in Residence, who helps teachers study methods to ensure student achievement and learn research-based reading strategies.

The informative and interactive visits enabled Commonweal staff to see firsthand the work of their colleagues and strengthened their determination to work together for the highest good of the youth served on a daily basis.

Board of Directors Site Visits

Commonweal's Board of Directors willingly participates in continuous learning opportunities along with the Foundation staff. In May



2012, all ten board members visited three Seventh-day Adventist schools where Commonweal has been busy with improving facilities and strengthening the quality of education.

The site visits were to John Nevins Andrews School, Sligo Adventist School and Takoma Academy, all in Takoma Park, MD. The board members saw a new chapel, renovated classrooms, hallways, and energy-saving improvements. They observed small groups of students engaged in a tutoring program to enhance their literacy skills, as well as other evidence of the support offered to the schools in the areas of leadership skill-building and improved teaching that are having a positive impact on school culture and students' educational outcomes.

The board members greatly appreciated the opportunity to learn more about how the Foundation is supporting education in so many positive and tangible ways.

Integr

Be open and transparent

ity

We value and understand the importance of transparency. We think this keeps us honest, authentic and accountable.

Integrity

Boarding and Day School Program

Taking a hard look at what you are doing and finding ways to improve are often arduous tasks – not easy, but the rewards outweigh the difficulties of that process. That was the story this year for Commonweal’s Boarding and Day School Program (BDSP), which embarked on an extensive reevaluation of the Foundation’s partnerships with schools.

The BDSP works with Christian-based boarding and day schools to give students the chance to boost their academic skills, develop professional skills through engaging in work and community service, and expand their social skills through positive experiences outside their school community. Since its inception in 1994, this program has served well over 6,000 students.

Under the auspices of BDSP are:

- **Student Support Services**, which provides direct services to BDSP scholars and the partner school community through scholarship, academic preparation and enrichment, civil and social engagement, career and workforce readiness and mental health wellness.
- **Seventh-day Adventist Initiative**, which offers comprehensive support to schools in leadership, instruction, curriculum, infrastructure and finance.

While it can be difficult to engage in evaluative conversations with the schools to bring about essential change, Commonweal believes it is necessary to achieve high-quality partnerships and make the changes that are necessary to effectively and diligently serve the students. Through the assessment process, Commonweal reviewed each school’s leadership, education programs, workforce development, partnership and sustainability and then offered recommendations for improvement and clarified partnership expectations.

Both Commonweal and the partner schools exhibited resolute integrity and unwavering commitment to having an open and transparent dialogue during the evaluation process. This reevaluation also clearly demonstrated to partner schools the expectations and direction of the Foundation in helping underserved youth.

After School Program

Commonweal’s After School Program (ASP) remains committed to reaching out to help the most children with the best literacy instruction available and underwent a year of reorganization dedicated to improving the quality of its programs.

Working to extend the positive impact of literacy instruction, the ASP focused on changes that led to openness, transparency and quality improvements in its Learning Support Program (LSP). The program aids students with learning



disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder or other processing difficulties that negatively impact their ability to learn. A second program within ASP is Partners in Learning (PINL) that provides focused literary instruction to students reading below grade level.

One of ASP's key achievements this year was the pilot program Reading Teacher in Residence, which was initiated in private schools to help teachers study methods for ensuring student achievement and learn research-based reading strategies. The goal of this pilot is to improve reading achievement of students in the school.

The Reading Teacher in Residence gears the program to the individual needs of the school.

The teacher offers reading focused staff development; helps teachers identify leveled reading materials for each student; presents ways to incorporate new reading methods and strategies into the instruction; initiates individual reading instruction to students in need of remedial reading help; provides teaching model reading lessons to illustrate new strategies, and observes teachers and gives feedback about new strategies.

Commonweal plans to review the most promising practices for the Reading Teacher in Residence project currently at four private schools with the hopes of replicating the program at other partner schools.

Collabo

Respect and engage all partners

oration

We consistently seek outcomes
that will be beneficial to all
partners involved.

Collaboration



Camp Promise

School may be out for the summer, but those months can be detrimental to students' academic skills, particularly youth from low-income families who have no access to high-quality educational programs. Our Camp Promise stepped in to bridge that gap through offering 167 students fun, yet educational, programs aimed at skill building and preventing regression of academic proficiencies.

Commonweal joined Montgomery County Recreation Department for a unique and successful collaboration to put on the summer learning and recreation program for children and youth between the ages of 5 and 12 at Long Branch Community Center in the Langley Park neighborhood of Silver Spring.

Joining with the county's longstanding recreation program, which experienced reduced summer programs because of budget



cuts, Commonwealth offered strong leadership and high quality grantee programming to put on this camp. Camp Promise included comprehensive services in education, literacy, writing, swimming, art and dance for the children. The camp was a synergistic effort between the Commonwealth staff, the county and grantees including Adventist Community Services of Greater Washington, Inc., CityDance Ensemble, Inc., Class Acts Arts, Inc., Passion for Learning, Inc. and Young Playwrights' Theater, Inc. The partners learned to respect each other's contribution to the overall success of the camp.



While it was a camp offering educational programs, Camp Promise simply meant fun for these children – some of whom learned to swim, dance, draw, or how to write a play for the first time. In fact, by the end of the camp, all 167 participants were recognized as “swim safe” after participating in the swim lessons provided.



Additionally, the camp was instrumental in helping these children and youth maintain and improve essential academic skills so they can do better when they return to school after a summer of fun with Commonwealth and their partners.

Comm

Be accountable and persist

itment

We value quality over quantity.
To this end, we set realistic
goals, and create relative
benchmarks to meet them.

Commitment

School Enhancement Program's Continuous School Improvement

Commonweal's ultimate goal is providing underserved youth with a superior education that will give them the best opportunity for a successful future. Reaching that objective means ensuring that strong school leaders have the ability to give teachers the necessary instructional tools to meet student needs.

That is what the Foundation is committed to do through the School Enhancement Program's Continuous School Improvement Model, an evidence-based program to help the partner schools to continually use data to evaluate whether their instruction, curriculum, assessments and school processes improve learning outcomes for all students.

In the past year, Commonweal has been diligently working to:

- Provide school heads research-based leadership skills so they can be the strongest instructional leaders for their schools;
- Help teachers improve the quality of their instructional methods to make sure the students' needs are met;
- Teach the schools how to measure the improvements in student performance and use that data effectively;

- Show the schools how to communicate that their students are experiencing improved outcomes;
- Help the schools become sustainable because successful student outcomes will draw higher-quality teachers and students, and this success will encourage more students to remain at the school through graduation.

In keeping with those goals, the School Enhancement Program has supported the establishment of Critical Friends Groups (CFGs) at each school as a way for school staff to learn how to communicate effectively with each other. The CFGs are a way to engage in structured conversations among colleagues and thus foster a shared sense of accountability for student learning among teachers and administrators. Developed through research-based adult-learning principles, the CFGs encourage teachers and senior administrators to reflect on the role they play in promoting high-quality teaching and leadership that support student achievement. This process builds and nurtures a kind of learning community that is based on mutual trust among the members.

This structured format of discussion is meant to be a reflective, collaborative and non-threatening conversation for participants to delve into how to inspire students and lead schools.



Financials

Commonweal Foundation, Inc.

Operating Expenses

July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2012

As a private operating Foundation, Commonweal operates differently from many traditional Foundations. The Foundation assists underserved children and youth through direct services that we offer in collaboration with various partner schools and organizations. In addition, the Foundation provides various types of assistance in the form of grants to other non-profit organizations. For every dollar that the Foundation spends, approximately 90 cents goes towards direct goods, services and grants delivered to the schools and non-profit organizations that the Foundation partners with. Collaboration makes our programs more efficient, and through thoughtful, long-term partnerships, we are being more effective, deliberate and sustainable in our approach.

NOTE: These figures show a consolidation of Commonweal Foundation balances and activities along with Commonweal Donor Advised Fund (DAF) at the Community Foundation for the National Capital Region (CFNCR), which is subject to recommendations from the Foundation. Since CFNCR retains ultimate authority over the management and distributions of the DAF, the consolidated presentation is not in conformity with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

Description	Amount
Boarding and Day School Program	\$3,683,931
Learning Support Program	\$1,107,879
Partners-in-Learning Program	\$995,070
School Enhancement Program	\$753,440
Seventh-day Adventist Initiative	\$689,424
Total Grants	\$11,976,746
Total	\$19,206,490

Grants Summary	Amount
Program Management	\$921,711
Family Directed	\$310,125
Community Assistance Program	\$1,107,185
Other Grants	\$9,637,725
Total Grants	\$11,976,746

Seventh-day
Adventist Initiative
\$689,424

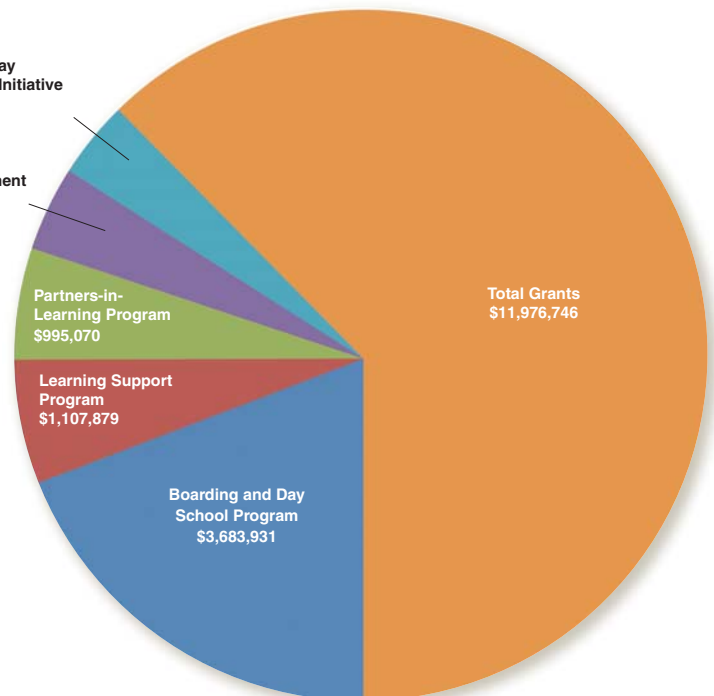
School
Enhancement
Program
\$753,440

Partners-in-
Learning Program
\$995,070

Learning Support
Program
\$1,107,879

Boarding and Day
School Program
\$3,683,931

Total Grants
\$11,976,746



Board and Staff

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Gail Williams
Program Director

Emily Winter
Program Manager



Commonweal Foundation
10770 Columbia Pike, Suite 150
Silver Spring, MD 20901
240.450.0000
www.cweal.org