



IN REACH, INC.

2001 ANNUAL REPORT



helping young people reach their potential

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Welcome to **IN REACH**'s first Annual Report. It is with delight that I share with you what has been a lifetime in the making. Never has my heart been touched as deeply by so many wonderful educators, community leaders, business members, and precious children as it has been this year here in Prince George's County, Maryland. It has been a year of many struggles, successes, and surprises. I would like to thank everyone who made this work possible, particularly our partners in education, Mrs. Mimi Eschbacher, principal of Carole Highlands Elementary School, and Ms. Yvette Wright, career counselor of Northwestern High School.

While public education is now gaining the attention it has long been deprived of, we must seize the moment. We must be relentless in our pursuit to bring community support into our schools, increase parental knowledge of the educational system so that parents can become more involved and better advocates for education, and demand more of and from our appointed and elected leaders. Our children deserve the best education and we have a responsibility to them to make sure they receive it. It is with these beliefs that I have designed a program to bring additional educational opportunities to our young people, primarily through school-based programs to support existing resources, partnerships, and advocacy.

The most important task that we can begin right now, right this moment, is making the education of all children, regardless of their backgrounds, our number one priority. Access to a quality public education is a right, not a privilege.

PURPOSE AND MISSION

Founded in December of 1999, **IN REACH** is an educational organization that seeks to be a catalyst for the improvement of public education. Its mission is to engage young people, their families, educators, and communities in the pursuit of academic excellence. **IN REACH** fulfills its mission through the implementation of several programs under three core strategic areas: education and youth development, community-building, and outreach and communications.

The primary focus of **IN REACH**'s work this year was on the development and operation of its education and youth development programs, with the overall goal of increasing educational and developmental opportunities for young people in high-poverty schools through direct service programs. We also began collecting information to design our **Outreach and Communications** strategy, with the goal of creating a forum for organizations that serve young people to convene, network, and share resources. Through its **Education and Youth Development** component, **IN REACH** supports the needs of K-12 students by creating partnerships with public schools and communities to implement its programs.

- The After School Enrichment Program focuses on improving core academic skills – literacy and math – of students in the second through sixth grades.
- Planning continued for the **Girls Are Great!** program which has been designed to work with middle school girls to improve their communication skills, increase their academic abilities and teach them how to become the keepers of their own fate. The first class of participants will be recruited during the 2002-2003 academic year.
- The *Include Me* Community Service Youth Leadership Program engages senior high school students in community and service learning, civic engagement, and leadership development to become active citizens where they live.

“Any human anywhere will blossom in a hundred unexpected talents and capacities simply by being given the opportunity to do so.”
Doris Lessing

IN REACH believes that young people should always be *in reach* of a quality education, opportunities in their communities for development, and, ultimately, their dreams.

EDUCATION AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

After School Enrichment Program



During the 2001 school year, **IN REACH** partnered with Carole Highlands Elementary in the Prince George's community of Takoma Park, Maryland, to implement its After School Enrichment Program. The program provided school-based academic and developmental activities that were exploratory, interactive, and creative to seventeen students in need of academic assistance. The goals of the After School Enrichment Program are to:

- Assist parents and teachers with improving the overall reading and math skills of students by engaging them in theme-based activities so that each student will be able to perform on grade level by the end of the program,
- Increase the interest of students in reading through the Build Your Own Library Project,
- Expand the knowledge of students and their participation in activities related to the environment through the implementation of a youth-gardening program, and
- Engage the parents of participating students in the learning process through the Parent Training Institute.

To kick-off the Program, **IN REACH** held a spaghetti dinner at the school on October 11, 2001, in celebration of the national after school awareness campaign, *Lights On Afterschool!* While parents learned more about the various after school opportunities available at the school, students enjoyed having their faces painted, receiving giveaways, and winning door prizes. It was a fun time shared by all.

The program year culminated with a variety of gardening projects, beginning in April with Earth Day. The students beautified the school landscape by planting flowers in front of the school, cleaned and prepared the courtyard for late spring planting, and potted individual containers for teachers in celebration of Teacher Appreciation Day on May 7th.

***Include Me* Community Service Youth Leadership Program**

In the winter of the 2000-2001 school year, **IN REACH** partnered with Northwestern High School through its Career Center to implement the school-based *Include Me* Program. The program began with twenty-five students from diverse academic backgrounds.

The *Include Me* Program was created in response to the lack of inclusion of young people in planning civic initiatives. Their skills are often underutilized and they are not called upon nearly enough in their communities to provide much needed services. Hence the name *Include Me*.

To further its work, **IN REACH** continued with the development of its model program framework, the Circles of Engagement. The model focuses on community and service learning, civic engagement, and leadership development with one main goal—to prepare high school students to become engaged in their communities.

During the 2001-2002 academic year, an article was written about the program and featured in *The Gazette* Newspaper, where one student was quoted as saying that she participated in the program for the “structure and support the program offers.”



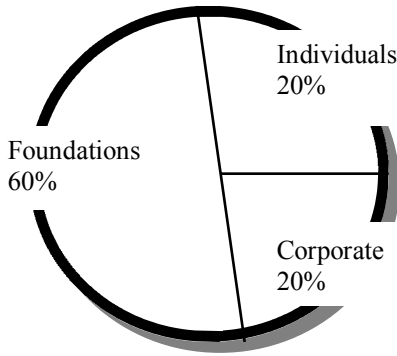
Students participate in a warm-up activity.

Participants also served as tutors to students in the After School Enrichment Program and as hosts for the celebration of the *Lights On Afterschool!* Event in October of 2001; engaged in a variety of activities to enhance and advance their knowledge of civic engagement and leadership, including a session led by the president of the Prince George's County Young Democrats; and four students attended Maryland's 11th Annual Service-Learning Conference, Maryland: The Big Green Service Machine in March, 2002 at the College of Notre Dame of Maryland.

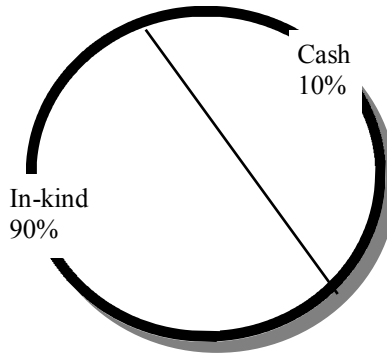
GIFTS AND THANKS

During FY 2001, **IN REACH** received over \$75,000 in in-kind support and cash donations. We are grateful to all of our donors. We would like to thank the Prince George's Education Foundation District 2 Fund, Sam's Club, and all of the individual donors and volunteers.

Sources of Donations



In-Kind/ Cash Donations



IN REACH is a tax exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service.

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Student in after school program being tutored.



Display of handmade teacher appreciation cards.



One hundred years from now,
It will not matter what kind of car I drove,
What kind of house I lived in,
How much was in my bank account,
Nor what my clothes looked like.
But the world may be a little better because I was important in the life of a child.

Anonymous



First gardening project completed.



Student holding self-potted plant for Teacher Appreciation Day.



Include Me students reviewing materials.