Overview

ABOUT
iMentor partners with high schools in low-income communities to provide students with the skills and knowledge needed to be successful in college. The organization implements high-dosage, in-school programming across entire 11th and 12th grade classes, 1:1 mentoring that extends into college and a remote, post-secondary program that tailors supports based on students’ pathways.

WHY WE INVESTED
iMentor works to change the odds for every 11th and 12th grade student in its partner schools, providing students with the skills and knowledge needed to access and succeed in college. Despite progress in the last decade, most Chicago Public School (CPS) graduates do not earn a college degree. Based on recent data, 60 percent of CPS high school graduates enroll in college, but only 40 percent of enrollees ultimately graduate. iMentor Chicago is changing the path to and through college. Of the organization’s first class of high school graduates, 67 percent enrolled in college which represents nearly a 10-percentage point increase compared to a similar set of students not in the program. Recently, iMentor Chicago welcomed a new executive director who brings compelling expertise aligned to the organization's needs. With a versatile leadership team at the helm, the organization is poised to build upon its strong track record to date to expand its footprint in Chicago.

GRANTEE SINCE
2018

INVESTMENT TO DATE
$261K

CURRENT NUMBER SERVED
1,025

LEADERSHIP
Jason Friedman
Executive Director
Our Assessment

PROGRAM
iMentor Chicago graduated its first high school class in 2017 and achieved strong early results with a college enrollment rate of 67%, approximately 10 percentage points higher than a CPS benchmark. Impact on overall college enrollment is largely due to iMentor Chicago students enrolling at four-year institutions, as the organization achieved a four-year enrollment rate nine percentage points higher than the CPS benchmark. School year 2017-2018 represented the first year of implementing the organization’s post-secondary success program. As the organization continues to learn about supporting students in college, iMentor Chicago is committed to codifying the model to ensure it is effectively and efficiently addressing the biggest barriers to success.

LEADERSHIP
iMentor Chicago welcomed its new executive director, Jason Friedman, in June 2018. Friedman brings expertise well-aligned to the organization’s needs, particularly in fundraising, board development and organizational strategy. He has made tremendous progress since starting. He has already developed close relationships with key internal and external partners, launched a board development strategy and begun a vision-setting process to align the organization around a unified plan for growth. In addition to Friedman, iMentor Chicago welcomed a Senior Director of Programs in October, Nina Longino, who brings nearly a decade of nonprofit program experience in Chicago. The organization’s seasoned senior director of development and senior director of mentor engagement continue to be instrumental in supporting revenue and mentor recruitment growth, enabling iMentor Chicago to double in size from FY17 to FY18. In the coming year, it will be important that iMentor Chicago implement processes and structures from the board strategy project to evolve board engagement and support board growth.
Our Assessment

**OPERATIONS**
Despite facing an executive director transition, in FY18, iMentor Chicago unlocked new donors and diversified its revenue streams to ultimately surpass its fundraising target for the year. The organization raised $1.36 million against a $1.17 million goal, a 124% increase over FY17. iMentor Chicago also identified opportunities to optimize its budget. In the year ahead, iMentor Chicago will look to raise $1.52 million. We are confident the organization will meet or exceed this goal. Over the next 12 to 18 months, iMentor Chicago aims to become locally sustainable—relying solely on revenue raised rather than seed funding. We believe this is highly feasible as the organization is launching new strategies to diversify revenue and has additional senior-leadership capacity to support fundraising. As iMentor Chicago solidifies the role of its board, it must leverage, activate, and grow the board to support fundraising.

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**SCALE**
iMentor Chicago launched in FY16, serving just over 200 students. In FY18, the organization added more than 400 seats to serve 1,025 students. iMentor Chicago has a FY19 goal to serve 1,334 students. We have been highly impressed with organization’s growth to date, having grown by over 500 percent in just four years. What’s more, the organization has continued to ensure model fidelity, recruiting hundreds of additional mentors each year to match with students. iMentor Chicago is on-track to continue scaling with quality in the years ahead. In FY19, the organization will look to launch at a fifth school site in the coming school year, serving over 1,400 students. Over the next year, iMentor Chicago will be solidifying its vision for growth for the next five years and determining the resources required to support this vision.
Grantee Performance

KEY OUTCOME
College enrollment of high school graduates

REVENUE
In millions

SCALE
Students served

![Key Outcome Chart]

![Revenue Chart]

![Scale Chart]
Our Impact

INVESTMENT TO DATE

$261K

- Monetary grants
- Leveraged funding

MANAGEMENT SUPPORT HIGHLIGHTS

iMentor Chicago participated in a board strategy project to clearly outline roles and responsibilities for its regional board and develop a plan for growth in the coming years. The organization worked with Appreciative Solutions Group to support this work and A Better Chicago covered 75 percent of costs.
Contact Us

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