



College Summit

VPP Investment Partner Series



■ College Summit

Sending a child to college is one of the surest ways to end the cycle of poverty within a family. The college graduate will make \$1 million more over a lifetime, and his or her children will be nearly twice as likely to go to college themselves. College Summit is demonstrating that this solution is not only possible, but also sustainable and scalable. It works to ensure that every student who can make it in college makes it to college, thus increasing the college enrollment rate of low-income students.

Since 1993, College Summit has been nearly doubling the college enrollment rates of low-income students. These results have been achieved with nearly 10,000 students: 79% of College Summit students have enrolled in college--nearly double the national rate of 46% of high school graduates from the same income level; 80% of College Summit students stay in college--remarkable for almost any group of students, but especially those who weren't even expected to enroll; and College Summit students have obtained over \$40 million in college scholarships, attending the full range of schools that match their academic, financial, and social needs.

One of those students is Jahi Davis. Jahi grew up in the Raymond Rosen Housing Project in North Philadelphia. After initially doing well in school, in the 10th grade he became distracted and his grades dropped. Then, in the hospital after a serious car accident, he decided to turn his life around. He returned to school, raised his grades, and joined a youth program where he quickly became a leader. But with a cumulative 2.2 GPA and combined 850 SAT, Jahi was told by his counselor that he wasn't college material. Fortunately, Jahi's youth program recognized his leadership skills and nominated him for College Summit. With their support, Jahi was admitted to Temple University with a substantial scholarship and is now a social worker preparing for law school.

The impact of the College Summit model also provides the foundation to change the conversation in this country about who does and doesn't go to college--and opens up a system whose doors have been long closed to many talented youth in the Washington, DC area and all over the nation.



■ Profile

College Summit increases the college enrollment rate of talented low-income students by putting college access “know-how” and support within the reach of every student.

Facts

Founded: 1993

Executive Director: J.B. Schramm

Chair, Board of Directors: Charles (Chuck) Harris III

2005:

Local Staff: 4

Local Budget: \$689,000

Children Served in the National Capital Region: 800

Mission and History

College Summit’s mission is to increase the college enrollment rate of low-income students by ensuring that every student who can make it in college makes it to college, and by putting college access “know-how” and support within the reach of every student.

College Summit was founded in 1993 by J.B. Schramm, a graduate of Yale University and Harvard Divinity School who was directing a teen center in the basement of a low-income housing project in Washington, DC. J.B. was alarmed by the large number of talented, motivated, and college-capable teens not enrolling in college. Having worked as a freshman advisor while in graduate school, J.B. knew that college admissions officers throughout the country were aggressively searching and competing for talented low-income and diverse students to enter their freshman classes. Mobilizing the support of a Harvard University writing instructor and a community youth worker, J.B. designed a college transition system to help all capable talent in a low-income school make the transition to college, the first step toward a brighter future for students who are often the first in their families

to do so. This led to the creation of College Summit, a national organization headquartered in Washington, DC with significant operations in the District, California, Illinois, Colorado, and West Virginia. As it refines and grows its programmatic reach in these existing regions, serving thousands more students, College Summit is also in the midst of a new round of site expansion into prospective communities across the country.

Services

College Summit provides a combination of tools and approaches aimed at changing the culture of high schools and creating new norms among students so that they value a college degree, and truly believe it is within their reach. These resources include the College Summit proprietary on-line application management tool, CSNet; teacher training to fill the role that college-experienced parents play for their children in middle-class communities; the “Navigator” curriculum for high school seniors; an “Educator’s Navigator” manual for teachers; intensive 4-day college application and transition workshops; a peer leader and alumni development program; youth facilitators; and an ever expanding network of school district and college/university partners.

Notable Awards and Honors

- College Summit feathered as one of 112 premier organizations that offer college grads the best entry-level job opportunities on the market in the Princeton Review’s 2007 edition of Best Entry-Level Jobs.
- Skoll Foundation recognizes College Summit as leading social entrepreneur; makes it its largest grantee for 2006
- Three-time winner of the Fast Company/Monitor Group Social Capitalist Award, 2004, 2005, 2006
- Recipient of the Manhattan Institute’s Award for Social Entrepreneurship, 2002

■ Performance Summary and Fact Sheet

Summary

College Summit has begun building out the DC operations and programs of their very successful national model and recently completed business planning.

Key Information

- *Date, years, and stage of VPP Investment:* December 2004; 1 year (early stage; partially funded)
- *Capital committed and disbursed by VPP:* \$740,000 committed; \$631,000 disbursed
- *Estimated children to be served in 2010:* 4,000
- *Revenue increase & % budget growth:* DC FY 04-05 budget \$360 thousand to DC FY 05-06 budget \$689 thousand – 91% increase in one year
- *Leveraged funding:* N/A
- *Expansion to new places and coverage:* Five new high schools and three new universities in Virginia, Maryland, and the District

Aspiration and Goals

College Summit aspires to increase the college enrollment rate of low-income students by ensuring that “every student who can make it *in* college makes it *to* college.” It has targeted the DC metro area to establish a proving ground for a metropolitan college access model that will potentially send 3,000 students from lower income

families living in this region to college annually, many of whom would not otherwise attend. And, in meeting this aspiration, it seeks to reform the college access systems in the high schools served, and close the college access gap between students with low family incomes and students with middle and high family incomes. A chief strategy is to establish a regionally successful fee-for-service platform that can be replicated, and erase college enrollment gaps nationally.

While College Summit is a national organization headquartered in Washington, DC, currently they have larger programs in other cities, such as Chicago, so they must first demonstrate local economies of scale with a viable and replicable regional platform and solution. The DC metro area, with its large school districts, high concentration of college-educated citizens and officials, large investment in schools, region-wide focus on closing the achievement gap, and growing numbers of talented, college-ready students from low income families, has the most favorable conditions for College Summit to achieve its primary aspiration, and demonstrate a successful regional solution that establishes a platform on which to grow nationally. More broadly, College Summit believes that talent among low-income students is undervalued, and it seeks to correct this “market inefficiency” so that the value of these young people can be realized in a way that serves them well and serves the self-interest of institutional players in the college access arena: public high schools, colleges and universities, and corporations.



Investment Rationale

J.B. Schramm, an Ashoka fellow, graduate of the Harvard Divinity School, and winner of *Fast Company* Magazine's "2003 Social Capitalist of the Year Award," has demonstrated exceptional leadership skills as he has grown College Summit from an after school program associated with Good Shepherd Ministries in the Jubilee Housing Development in DC, to a national organization with an annual operating budget approaching \$7 million. College Summit presents a special opportunity for VPP to invest in national leadership that is focused on the Washington metropolitan area. College Summit, because of its innovative and unique focus on the transition from high school to college, is well positioned to form alliances with other college preparatory and college access programs. Its programs and systems are distinct and focused enough so as not to compete with programs offered by others, yet provide resources and tools that complement them. Because of this, alliances can be formed that would likely strengthen all partners and improve opportunities for all the youth who participate in them. College Summit has also demonstrated that it can close the persistent college attendance achievement gap between students from low-income families and those from more affluent families. Moreover, it has demonstrated exceptionally high college retention rates (80%). College Summit also had developed a strong technology infrastructure and capability for participant tracking that can be used to develop even more advanced outcomes management and analysis functions. College Summit is an outcomes-driven organization and has established clear metrics for itself.

Key Accomplishments

Partnerships with five key universities and seven schools around the region (including three VPP investment partners) have paved the way for quick growth in the number of children served—doubling from 400 to 800 in one year.

Other noteworthy accomplishments that will contribute to increased effectiveness and improved capacity include:

- **Planning and Focus:** Completed business planning in February 2006, facilitated by Monitor Group, resulting in a well-defined plan that describes relationship between the local and national operations and management.
- **Human Capital—Board and Management:** Hired executive director after long recruitment period to complete six-member local staff team. Significant progress building new board—recruited five of eight needed members.
- **Operational Effectiveness:** Business planning helped College Summit gain greater clarity to move the organization to a higher level of impact by:
 - Shifting to a “geographic” model for all sites that calls for tighter calibration across site-specific program, sales, and development strategies;
 - Redesigning criteria for selecting strategic partners (schools and school districts). Criteria designed around research-based principles that must be in place for the College Summit program to be successful.
- **Capitalization/Revenue:** Obtained unsecured, low-interest, three-year line of credit for \$5 million. Received \$1,247,774 in total government earmarks for calendar year 2006.
- **Local Fundraising:** Secured 50% of total fundraising needed for DC Metro Region build-out.



■ Leaders

J.B. Schramm

Founder and Executive Director



J.B. Schramm is Founder and Chief Executive Officer of College Summit, Inc. He is a graduate of Yale University (1986) and Harvard Divinity School (1989). Schramm founded College Summit while directing a Teen Center in the basement of a Washington,

D.C. low-income housing project.

For his skill in conceiving the idea and creating an effective organization to implement it, Schramm was one of the first four North Americans named to the Ashoka Fellowship for social entrepreneurs (2000), and received the highest award in the field of college access from the National Association for College Admission Counseling (2001). In 2002, Schramm won the Manhattan Institute Award for Social Entrepreneurship. In 2003, J.B. was profiled in *The New York Times*, won the Skoll Foundation Social Innovator Award, was named one of the top 20 social capitalists in the United States by *Fast Company* Magazine and Monitor Group, and won the Gleitsman Citizen Activist Award.

This year, Schramm is profiled in David Bornstein's book, *How To Change The World*, and most recently has spoken about his organization at The University of Chicago, at The Kellogg School of Business at Northwestern, and at New York University. In addition, Schramm won the "First Decade Award" from the Harvard Divinity School in 2000 and was named the Graduate Public Service Fellowship from Echoing Green (1997-2001).

He lives in Washington, D.C. with his wife Lauren, and their two boys, Jacob and Luke.

Charles (Chuck) Harris III

Board Chair



Charles (Chuck) Harris III is Managing General Partner of Harris Capital Partners, L.P., a family investment partnership. Harris retired in November 2002 as Managing Director at Goldman Sachs, where he served most recently as co-head of the High Technology Department in investment banking. He also serves as a director of Scholastic Corporation, Critical Power, Inc. and IP Value Management, Inc. He is a director of the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers, Inc., which administers the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, and a trustee of Phillips Exeter Academy, where he chairs The Exeter Initiatives, Exeter's first comprehensive capital campaign in over twenty years. Harris serves as chair of College Summit's Proof Fund and as a member of the New York City Advisory Board of Teach for America. He is a graduate of Harvard University and the Sloan School of Management at M.I.T.

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