

Small Schools, Big Future Video Transcript

Produced by: Technical Assistance and Leadership Center: TALC New Vision

TALC New Vision's efforts, in partnership with the Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS), are supported by a \$17.25 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to create fifty new small high schools in Milwaukee, both within and outside of MPS, by 2008.

Produced through a youth internship program at TALC New Vision, this video demonstrates the impact of small high schools in Milwaukee through the perspective of students and teachers.

Introduction

There are a lot of opinions on how to make more students successful with their education. In this video you will hear about one option in particular—the options of small high schools. Small schools provide real world experience and more personalized relationships with teachers, students, and families. Small schools have demonstrated positive results with student learning. This video will show you what high school students in Milwaukee are saying about small schools.

Student quotes:

I like small schools because it gives you all more individual attention. The teachers are more like a tutor to you than just a teacher teaching to the whole class. They can give you what you need.

They're not really there to tell you what to do. They're just there to help you and keep you focused on your work.

Here in Milwaukee there are more ways to start a small school than in any urban area. Small schools may start in the Milwaukee Public Schools. For example, as a district charter school or simply as a traditional school. Small schools may also start in partnership with the district, which means they are run by independent organizations that have a contract with the district to educate students. This includes partnership schools that are legislatively defined as "at risk students." And finally, small schools may be created outside of the district as charter schools authorized by the city of Milwaukee or UW Milwaukee. Or even as private schools.

No small school is the same. Each one is unique in its focus and educational missions. Some schools encourage students to craft their learning around individualized projects. Others offer a more structured learning environment with an emphasis on taking courses for college credit. Small schools have a range of specialties, including aquatic studies, aviation, project-based learning, bilingual/bicultural, business, community service, public safety, sign language, technology and more. Small high schools make it possible for you to choose an education that is suited to your needs and interests.

Student quotes:

It's just...it's funny. We joke a lot with some of the teachers. They have a very good sense of humor.

They're like your sisters and brothers. Pretty cool.

I talk to some of the teachers here at CHS because they are like really helpful and want you to succeed. They're not just like, "You can't do it," or ignoring you. They know your name and that was something I didn't get.

[Note: Narration is complete. The remainder of the video is a series of quotes from students and teachers who are involved with small schools in Milwaukee.]

ONE SIZE DOESN'T FIT ALL—THINK SMALL

One of the things that inspires me about working in the smaller classroom setting or smaller school is that I would get an opportunity to have one-on-one with the students. A lot of times students are lost or behind or falling through the cracks because they don't have the ample resources there on a regular basis. So it gives me an opportunity to get to the students that I need to get to in order to help them succeed in the classroom. (Sharon Green, CEO Leadership Academy).

I think the benefits are that it's a small high school so you have a better connection with the teachers and with the students and you actually learn your work because they're not so busy trying to quiet all the other kids down.

In a larger school sometimes you'd just be getting to know the student and he'd go onto the next class, you wouldn't have contact with him again for a year, maybe even two years. Whereas here, you see the students all the time. (Mary Ellen McCormack-Mervis, Town of Lake College Preparatory High School).

You meet people faster. You get cool with everybody faster. Everything's so convenient with all the classes on one floor. You just get to know everybody real quick.

You're with the same group of kids all day long now, so all these 90 kids by week two I know them all and they know me, everyone else on staff. And they will continue as long as they're a part of this school. (Roxane Mayeur, Community High School).

Size, okay, and that's one of the things we're concentrating on. We're concentrating on having a small number and when you have that small number you are able to have that success. That structure is there. But once you start tampering with that small number, that degree of success is going to be tampered with also. (Darrell Terrell, Humanities High School).

Will small schools help? I think it will. I think there's certain students that just generally benefit from smaller numbers. But, okay, if you can't do smaller classes, then let's do smaller schools. (Lamar Wilson, Milwaukee Academy of Science [MAS]).

In the classroom you don't have as many students so then you have teachers that pay more attention to you. (Jerome Trammel, Humanities High School).

That affects in whether you put effort into your classes or not, because if the teacher doesn't pay attention to you, then why would you pay attention to the teacher. (Ana Sierra, Advanced Language & Academic Studies [ALAS]).

I used to be a substitute teacher and it was huge high schools. And I didn't like the atmosphere at all because some of the kids were kind of lost. Although the curriculum variety is maybe more because the school is bigger. But the small atmosphere gives the students more individuality where they can express themselves. (Lula Abusalih, Salam High School).

Sometimes I think some people get the perception that a small school means that it's automatically for the unsuccessful kids or the kids that can't cut it elsewhere, but all of that is completely wrong. Just because it's a small school doesn't mean it's for the delinquents, for the bad kids, the drop-outs, whatever. It's not at all. This is very challenging for all types of students. (Stafford Kramer, Professional Learning Institute [PLI]).

If you really are serious about your work and you really want the attention, then you should definitely come to a small school because it will help bring up your grades. (Brittini Patterson, Milwaukee Academy of Science [MAS]).

I think the students in a smaller high school have the opportunity to have more projects, to have more time with technology, to have more time with the teacher. They have the opportunity to pursue their own interests a little bit more because we have the flexibility to tailor to them. Like the students that said they wanted an art class. Alright, let's talk about that because it's something we can do. (Beth Mudlaff, Salam High School).

I think it's important for people to understand when they're making decisions and they're making judgments that small schools is just another choice to offer kids, especially kids with limited income and limited choices. To really let parents and students make a decision with what they feel is best for the student.

OPPORTUNITY TO CHOOSE

I wanted to be by our neighborhood school so then I can get here as fast as I could or my family could get here as fast as they could if anything happened. But then when I really knew about the school and read the paper and the book about the school I found out it was related to a lot of arts and stuff then I was like, "Oh yeah, I really want to come." (Jerome Trammel, Humanities High School).

Even like now when I like tell some of my friends about the school it's like they don't believe me, you know, because they don't believe we get to sit at the computer all day and work on the computer and set up our own schedules without teachers throwing work at us. (Levar Garry, Professional Learning Institute [PLI]).

I feel I've been more challenged than I've ever been because right here you challenge yourself, you can push yourself to your limits. (David Puma, Professional Learning Institute [PLI]).

It's cool how they take care of you. It's fun, but at the same time they try to help you to be somebody in the future, not to be a loser. They try to get you to be somebody important. (Julio Ortega, Advanced Language & Academic Studies [ALAS]).

The teachers trust us to get into class like at the time we're supposed to. And they trust us to go to whatever class we have to. So when we look at the clock we know it's time to go to the next class. (Ana Ramirez, Advanced Language & Academic Studies [ALAS]).

The like to make you challenge yourself and make you want to be challenged by the work they give you and they tell you you can do it. They never tell you you can't do it. They always encourage you to achieve whatever it is you are trying to do. (Rosie Pitts, Community High School).

Being able to tap into their motivation by letting students choose their own topics, that allows them to also then stay motivated. (Stafford Kramer, Professional Learning Institute [PLI]).

You can just do it by teaching a class. So you learn, but at the same time, you're teaching other students to learn. I've taught one class on PowerPoint. I had four students. One was an advisor, and then three other students.

I think I'll be prepared for college work. Right now being in the 9th grade in the first year of high school we get prepped for college material. They're not talking about so much as when you get out of high school you go onto a job. They talk about when you get out of high school you go to college. (Terrence Robinson, Milwaukee Academy of Science [MAS]).

It's a great opportunity. I mean, look at me; I'm getting college credits in my junior year. You can do anything you want, learn anything you want, but we still have to push ourselves at our own pace.

And I really think it's our responsibility to provide those opportunities and I think that's where the small school initiative comes in. (Mary Ellen McCormack-Mervis, Town of Lake College Preparatory High School).

BEYOND TEXTS AND TESTS...CURRICULUM

Well I know we have a mission to be one of the best site schools in the area and to prepare our kids for science related careers, go onto college and technical things of that nature, which is good. (Lamar Wilson, Milwaukee Academy of Science [MAS]).

If you're looking for just strict education, this is the place to be. If you're looking for a good time, or party time, or they just don't care, this isn't the place to be. If you come into MAS High, you better be prepped for college, thinking about college and thinking about your future. Sometimes for an assignment we'll go to a museum, or

we're in the studio, or we're in IMAX taking notes. So it's really fun to be here. (Terrance Robinson, Milwaukee Academy of Science [MAS]).

The poetry class is the best thing that's ever happened to the school. I mean, the two poets that come in, they make everybody so happy because they're [xxx] and just oh my goodness, they're just amazing. The poems they have have the boys crying. I mean the boys are just in tears, so emotional. (Brittini Patterson, Milwaukee Academy of Science [MAS]).

Me, personally, I love poetry. You know, poetry can turn someone who doesn't even like poetry into a poetry lover. And when they brought it into the school, it was like everyone was so involved in it. The people that did the poetry it was like every time they expressed their feelings about the poetry or they said a poem it hit us. You know, it hit us in the heart, like that's how I grew up, that's how I feel, that's a person I grew up with, that's how he lived, so we really connected with it.

It's like just a big step out of the regular curriculum. It's like a break, but you still learn stuff as you go along.

The first thing they can look for is a class where they're not just doing worksheets, where they are constantly being stimulated and challenged and asked to think outside the box, and take a little academic risk and really reach beyond what they have been. (Mary Ellen McCormick-Mervis, Town of Lake College Preparatory High School).

If there are like classes you're struggling with, all you've got to do is go to that class and tell the teacher your problem and they'll help you. (Quenton Anderson, Town of Lake College Preparatory High School).

I mean I talk to people that go to other schools and you know the stuff that they learn, I've learned it in like 7th or 8th grade. It's just a repeat. Here I don't know a lot of this stuff, so it's all new to me. (Brittany Balash, Town of Lake Preparatory High School).

Humanities is learned or expressed through the art and in the artist. It's what I consider to be a secretary society. They record everything. They record our thoughts. I teach art differently. I don't teach art as a drawing skill. I teach art as a perception skill. We talk a lot about your eye being a carrier. It is showing the details that you are seeing. (Darrell Terrell, Humanities High School).

In a project-based high school, you know, I get to work on stuff that I'm interested in and stuff I'm interested in doing. (Levar Garry, Professional Learning Institute [PLI]).

Some kids that's difficult for because they're like, wow, he's not just going to teach me about math. He wants to see me be polite and he's actually teaching me how to talk on the telephone and making sure that I meet people outside of school, and that I learn in the community and do service. And that's challenging for a lot of students. (Stafford Kramer, Professional Learning Institute [PLI]).

Right now I'm doing a project. Well, actually it's a paper/research type thing on car engines and how they work and then later I'm going to take an old 350 V8 or

something and for my senior project I'm going to rebuild it. (Jerris Vandenberg, Professional Learning Institute ([PLI])).

I'm into architecture. So last year I studied Frank Lloyd Wright, and I sketched out one his designs that he did, which was *Fallen Water*, and then I created my own home based on his design. It was myself and three other students. We divided up the work so like one person was responsible for certain things that they were assigned to.

And each student has their own desk. It's like an office space. It's their permanent desk. They don't move throughout the day. They stay put and the advisors move. So I rotate from room to room. So they are treated as professional, where they have a home. I go to them. I go over to their desk and I say, "Okay, let's talk about math. What have you done for math today? Let's check in and see your homework. I want to see how you did." And the student next to them might be doing something completely different on math. So it's individualized for every student. It's still a challenge for all of them, but very individualized.

This year, it's like I'm working on stuff that I just like want to know more about. Like the last project I did was about Alzheimer's disease.

At this school they are trying to teach you like classes from universities. It's like AP classes. They try to help us to understand what they are trying to learn in the universities. (Julio Ortega, Advanced Language & Academic Studies [ALAS]).

My first language is Spanish, and I started to, with my English classes and everything, I get to speak English more fluently. And I have Advanced Placement classes and some of them are not easy. (Ana Sierra, Advanced Language & Academic Studies [ALAS]).

If they were easy, I'd be getting bored. But here it's really fun because it challenges me and it's harder. (Ana Ramirez, Advanced Language & Academic Studies [ALAS]).

There is no Islamic High School in the state, so its offering the students a chance to go forward with that. As well as a chance to take advantage of some of the technology-based, project-based, different kinds of instruction, where we can really create something new. (Beth Mudlaff, Salam High School).

I would describe my school as where we're treated in an equal way. We all get good education and I think it's a good school. (Ola Abuhanak, Salam High School).

Our conversations during class time really are a lot more like that—conversations. Not necessarily me standing up in front and lecturing.

I'm taking biology this year and I found that I might want to be a neurologist in the future or if I don't get to do that, a heart surgeon. And so I think the biology classes will help. (Tameesha Jackson, Salam High School).

They look forward to coming over here and to hear very simple stuff like the morning assembly where they will hear the recitation of some verses of [xxx]. I think that helps them throughout their day, plus they feel the care and the nurture from their teachers. So I think they feel like this is their second home. (Lula Abusalih, Salam High School).

You don't really learn it until you're really facing the challenge before you. You don't just want to do work that's easy for you or that you just know it. You want something that is a challenge so that you can actually learn something. (Latisa Brown, CEO Leadership Academy).

I'm learning how to share and learn how to be a better leader than I already am. Being the president of the school I have to set the example for the school. I'm the first president. (Britell Higgins, CEO Leadership Academy).

It's a good challenge, not a hard challenge. Because they help us and we know exactly what we're doing, so it's a fun challenge. (Mercedes Morales, CEO Leadership Academy).

I like the vision. CEO Leadership Academy's vision is to produce responsible Christian leaders through academic mastery, community service education, and the fostering of lifelong learning in any environment. I mean, if you want to go to college, they'll help you go to college. If you don't have enough money to get to college, they'll find a scholarship for you.

I think the one thing I want people to know about small schools is that it doesn't just deal with the academic side of students, it deals with the character of the student. We have an opportunity to build not only on academic success, but character. (Sharon Green, CEO Leadership Academy).

IT'S A FAMILY REUNION

It's easier to get to know everybody because it's so small and it's more comfortable because they're like your family since it's small. (Uzma Ahmed, Town of Lake College Preparatory High School).

They're part of my family. You know, because the way that they treat me is similar to my family. They might remind me of my uncle or my auntie or my brother, so I can trust them and they can keep my secrets. (Terrance Robinson, Milwaukee Academy of Science [MAS]).

Anything that I need help with, I won't have to be afraid or ashamed to go talk to them because they're just open-hearted and have an open mind. (Latisa Brown, CEO Leadership Academy).

If the class is boring, you can tell the teacher, "Hey teacher, this is boring. I'm sleepy. What can I do?" (Julio Oretaga, Advanced Language & Academic Studies [ALAS]).

We call them by their first names. They know us. At my last school my teachers didn't know my name. They be like, um, "quiet girl" and I'm like, I have a name you know. They wouldn't really know who I was and sometimes they would miss me in attendance because I didn't say a lot, because I just didn't feel a connection with them. (Trinisa Johnson, Community High School).

After school, most of the teachers will stay about 30 minutes to an hour to help if you didn't understand something.

When they see you depressed or with a problem or you don't look okay, then they ask you. They don't ask you in front of the whole class, sometimes when the class ends they just say, "Can you stay for a while so I can talk to you?" And even sometimes when we don't feel like we can talk to them because it's something really private, they respect the position you make. (Ana Sierra, Advanced Language & Academic Studies [ALAS]).

What people may overlook is that closeness that students not only get with their teachers, but with each other (Mary Ellen McCormack-Mervis, Town of Lake College Preparatory High School).

Walking around school it's like everyone is brothers and sisters. If it's a whole group of us leaving to get on the bus, we tell everyone we're brothers and sisters. We do just normal childish, immature stuff.

We help each other whenever we have problems or whenever we don't understand something. We ask each other questions. So I think we're really close with each other. (Ola Abuhanah, Salam High School).

People would say, "What's wrong?" And they wouldn't leave me alone, so I'd tell them what's wrong. So they actually care about me and they tell me they care about me. And they'll help me.

I found again, especially working with urban kids, that it doesn't matter what color you are, it doesn't matter what age you are, it doesn't matter what you do, they will accept you if you're real. If you come to them with who you are, faults right out there, interests right out there, and accept them in the same way, then the relationships grow really fast. (Roxane Mayeur, Community High School).

At school you like to be comfortable and you like to have relationships with the teachers and with the students and that's what we have here.

SAFETY AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

We don't have any principals, vice principals here. I'm also the disciplinarian. I'm not going to say, "Oh, you were bad, you're going to the office." I'll say, "You did something inappropriate, we have to talk about it right here, right now, us." So there isn't a good cop/bad cop thing. There isn't mom versus dad dynamic going in. It's that you're going to have to deal with me in the class, your peers. (Stafford Kramer, Professional Learning Institute [PLI]).

If there's an argument or something, we'll sit downstairs and as long as it takes we'll talk about it until it's settled. Because we have a small school we don't have to worry about thousands of other kids that have to be in the conversation.

There's only 100 students, six teachers, and like you really can't get away with that much like in normal schools. (Stephen Jahn, Community High School).

Suspensions really don't solve anything, you know what I'm saying? It's like, if a student wants to do something because they're going through something, then they get sent home. What's that going to help? Instead of just suspending them, the

teacher is there to talk to them first to see what's going on. And then they try to fix that based on what the student is saying. (Levar Garry, Professional Learning Institute).

Safety is like the number one thing. It's cool. It's like you can go up to a teacher, like if anything is happening, go up to an advisor and tell them what's going on and they'll help you out. (David Puma, Professional Learning Institute).

People talk about their problems and how it all started and what's the solution, and what we should do about it. (Britell Higgins, CEO Leadership Academy).

You know a lot of times the disciplines come out of boredom. Students get bored, they don't like what's going on. They don't understand. That's when they get into trouble. (Stafford Kramer, Professional Learning Institute).

Some children may be disobedient because they need attention. Or sometimes something happened bad to them and they don't know how to express their anger. And the teachers don't know that. But there are certain teachers that do notice it, and they'll be the ones that most people bond with. (Terrance Robinson, Milwaukee Academy of Science).

I can head off discipline issues a lot more easily because I can just know, "Okay, this student, this is a trigger." I know to not get involved in this. Or, this student just needs five minutes to cool off. Or this student just needs to be challenged a lot more. (Stafford Kramer, Professional Learning Institute).

When there's a problem in school, we don't just talk to that one person, it's the whole school's problem. We just all try to talk it out and find a solution together. (Latisa Brown, CEO Leadership Academy).

Everybody just knows each other and it's so cool, so there ain't no reason to hate on this man or hate on that female, or whatever. Most everybody kick it together or stay hanging in their own little group. (Quenton Anderson, Town of Lake College Preparatory High School).

There's cameras all over the place so they keep watch on everything that's happening almost everywhere in the school, so I don't have to worry about anything, or any drugs or gangs or guns or anything. (Tameesha Jackson, Salam High School).

I feel safe here because nothing really happens here. Everyone knows everybody, so that cuts out a lot of problems of violence or assuming things. We get down to the bottom of the problem. (Trinisa Johnson, Community High School).

PARTNERSHIPS AND INTERNSHIPS

We believe at our school that you don't just learn in school. It would be a disservice to our students to say that you do—that that's where you learn is here in school only. So we put that into action then by requiring students to do community service work, to do job shadows which is where they go to learn about careers they are interested in and see what it takes to do it. And then possibly get into internships. (Stafford Kramer, Professional Learning Institute).

Most jobs you get you have to get some experience. And while you're here you're getting experience so you can put that down on job applications, and plus for college, you know, to show you did community service. (Stephen Jahn, Community High School).

They're going to make sure that you're ready for college. There's no doubt because they have so much stuff like after school and internships in the summer. And they always have stuff for medical college. If you want to be a doctor than you can follow doctors around. We get a lot of opportunities. Like when they used to let us go to Marquette (University). We used to go every Wednesday and we'd always learn about another type of medical field, too. And we always enjoyed it. (Brittini Patterson, Milwaukee Academy of Science).

Some of our kids here are already in their first year of internships. The film making internship is one, and street law is another. (Roxane Mayeur, Community High School).

I have street law for community service and that's for kids that want to have an internship or do an internship in law. And they have Chrissy come up to the school or we meet somewhere and we go to the school court house and she teaches us things about law. Like next semester we're going to be doing a mock trial and competing against other teams and other schools. (Rosie Pitts, Community High School).

Trinisa's in the filmmaking, and she was always interested in film making. So that was a draw for her when they came to interview about the school. (Roxane Mayeur, Community High School).

Instead of staying here they send us out into the community to film stuff and talk to people and everything. Get to know the community more. And on Wednesdays we have community service where we like go into the community and help out. Or internships, which I have—an internship with UWM film department. They help us work with the cameras and we learn about lighting and sound and everything and then we make our own little independent films. I'm working on one right now about racism, so I have to interview people. We're editing right now, so I'm learning a lot about it. (Trinisa Johnson, Community High School).

With Trinisa especially, she has ideas in her head at all times. Not only just in the internship time that's the allotted two hours per week. She's interested in doing things outside of school. Her and a couple of her girls went to Alberta twice. They went to a peace conference and filmed at the peace conference. So it's started to extend even more so, that they're starting to understand that the film making is an agent for change. That they can use that tool as a way of informing other people about situations. (Roxane Mayeur, Community High School).

It's nice to learn it now so when I get into college I know what I'm doing and I'm not stumbling. And I think that's really good because I'm going to go to college and major in film making. (Trinisa Johnson, Community High School).

She is a very reserved girl, but when she gets behind the camera or in front of the camera, she just clicks. (Roxane Mayeur, Community High School).

We're partnering with all of the universities—..., UWM, Mount Mary—because not only is it important for students to be prepared for college, but they need to have these

connections with the colleges so they know what they're walking into before they leave high school. (Mary Ellen McCormack-Mervis, Town of Lake College Preparatory High School).

We have a car so we go to lots of places, like a couple people—me and another person—go to ROTC, Reserved Officer Training Core, which is pre-Army so to say. We do that. A couple people do ITT Tech. A couple people are looking at MATC, for like music classes and all that good stuff. (Jerris Vandenberg, Professional Learning Institute).

Myself and like a couple other students, we've already been taking college classes and getting the credit. So like there's still a couple of kids that we're going to ITT Tech and we're taking computer courses. (Levar Garry, Professional Learning Institute).

I've just finished one semester of ITT Tech. I got one college credit for the first semester, and now I'm taking the second semester for ITT Tech. I had a job shadowing at the place I was interested in. I went to a bike shop. They showed me how everything works and the hydraulic. They showed me how the bikes work, how they make the bikes, the brakes. And right now I just finished another project on trees. I'm going to involve the community in going out and planting some trees in the community by helping purify the air. (David Puma, Professional Learning Institute).

I love technology and equipment, so when we came to Discovery World and I seen the studio, I was like, we have an actual studio in the school. I'm just amazed that we've even go a studio in the school. But I appreciate it in a nice place like Discovery World, we get a lot of attention and get to do a lot of stuff that other high schools don't, like right now. (Terrance Robinson, Milwaukee Academy of Science).

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Allowing me to be here has taught me how to give back to the community. And I want to pursue my dream. My dream is to become a lawyer, and that's what I'm going to do—make tons of money so I can give back to the school. (Britell Higgins, CEO Leadership Academy).

They want you to get involved and they want your family to get involved. They have meetings—I think it's like every Tuesday or Thursday night—where the parents come in and the parents give their opinion. (Brittany Balash, Town of Lake College Preparatory High School).

We got an announcement that lunch was being delayed. And I usually serve lunch everyday, just like volunteers serve lunch. So I had brought some food for lunch and I took it out of the refrigerator to warm it up, and she was like, "Don't worry, about your food, because we're not having real lunch today." I'm like, "Okay." So I get downstairs and they have all these chips and stuff. And I'm like, oh, they're probably doing a Thanksgiving thing for kids. And then I heard there were two parents, and the parents there I had seen previous times before, so I was like, oh, they're just up here regularly. But then, they're like, "Your mom's here." And I'm like, "You're joking." And they said, "No, your mother's upstairs." I'm like, "You're serious? Why didn't they tell us?" They previously had a parent meeting at the middle school. My

mom's like, "They told me they had to tell me something." I was like, "Wait a minute." And then the other parent was like, "Oh, we've known about this for a long time." And then the teacher gave an announcement that all the parents had come. They announced about bringing in can goods for the Hunger Task Force and everybody ate with their parents. (Brittini Patterson, Milwaukee Academy of Science).

Our school mission—we focus a lot on social justice, and having students become empowered in their lives right now. To start making changes in their community and in their lives. The belief of the school is to have the kids involved in community service situations and internships so they start to make connections to the real world. And particularly the positive aspects of the real world. (Roxane Mayeur, Community High School).

Last summer I was tutoring a small child with dyslexia and ADD and when I got into the school here I did two research papers. One on Attention Deficit Disorders and the difference between ADHD and dyslexia, which is an eye disease. I actually did a presentation with them in their house just to give an update about what I was doing and what I learned and sort of to teach them, too. So they can get a heads up with their child. (Jerris Vandenberg, Professional Learning Institute).

Everything that we do has to involve the community in order for it to be a project. (Levar Garry, Professional Learning Institute).

For History, we did a Get Out and Vote drive, on the 12th for the voters. We were outside. It was kind of cold. (Latisa Brown, CEO Leadership Academy).

The vote was coming up and we had to go out there and tell people to vote, hold up signs. We try to relate to what's happening today. (Kirby Luckett, CEO Leadership Academy).

You're feeding the hungry. You're going to a food pantry and distributing food. You're meeting some of these people that are in need. It's going to the Veteran's Administration Hospital and doing some really basic, but important and delicate tasks. Like transporting patients to and from their appointments and meetings, and to their exams, because maybe the people are in a wheel chair or bed ridden and can't do it themselves. So that's just exposure that we get kids to. It could be ITT Tech, it could be the Veteran's Hospital, it could be the food pantry, it could be someone who wants to be involved in the military. They go out and check it out and see what they actually want to do. (Stafford Kramer, Professional Learning Institute).

They trust us. Like when they send us out into the community we don't have teachers following us. They trust us to go where we need to go and come back on time, and do what we need to do. We get a lot of responsibilities and stuff so we're ready. (Trinisa Johnson, Community High School).

The kids are in the real world now. And the kids who are dropping out are dropping out more often because the real world is in their life in ways that they're having a hard time controlling.

FUTURE LEADERS

You can do things that you want to be in your life. Like I want to be a computer engineer, so I am going to ITT Tech so I can learn what an engineer does.

I know I want to do technology writing or something like that. I want to design clothes.

I want to become a zoologist so I can be a technician.

I'm planning to be a computer engineer or something to do with science, and as a side job an author.

I'd like to go into art, so here when you get the IBM and you get the studios, which is a big thing so I can go off and do my own [thing], like if I want to do sculptures or something. I can just concentrate on that.

I plan on probably going to the College of Wisconsin, and after I graduate I plan on getting a business degree and coming back to my community and build up centers to help low income families.

I want to go to college for computer drafting/designing. Mainly video game design. I want to become a video game designer with computer programming.

Go to college like my mom wants me to and then I want to be a fire fighter.

I have dreams of being a producer. Running a big business studio or at least being a doctor, an x-ray doctor so I can provide for my family and have enough money to support my children's children.

Me—I want to be a director.

I'm all about cars. I want to be a mechanic or a race car driver someday.

Music. That's my number one goal. Music. I will make as much music as possible.

END OF PROGRAM

If your mind can conceive it and your heart believe it, you can achieve it. (Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Jr.).