



EDUCATION PHILANTHROPY UPDATE



Great Lakes 2017 Education Philanthropy Report Summarizes Ambitious Year of Grantmaking

Building on What Works Highlights Investments in Evidence-Based Strategies for Helping At-Risk Students Succeed

Each year, Great Lakes publishes a philanthropy report outlining the previous year's grantmaking activity. This year's report, *Building on What Works*, describes our efforts over the past year to leverage existing knowledge to address barriers that prevent many students of color, students from low-income households and first-generation students from completing their degree or credential.

Great Lakes committed \$73 million in grant funding in 2017, our highest annual total by far. The report details several grants that collectively illustrate how our philanthropy builds on the experience and insights of respected researchers and practitioners as we work to evaluate and scale strategies likely to have the greatest impact. Those grants are called out in three sections of the report:

- **Building on Emergency Aid** explores grants designed to (1) assist colleges in implementing programs that help students weather unexpected financial crises; and (2) provide colleges with the necessary knowledge to establish and sustain last mile completion grant programs for students nearing graduation who have unpaid campus balances.
- **Connecting Developmental Education and Guided Pathways** describes Strong Start to Finish, an initiative launched with pooled funds from Great Lakes, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and The Kresge Foundation aimed at improving social, racial and economic equity by helping more students get through college-level math and English courses in their first year.
- **Building on Better Academic Probation Practices** highlights two grants aimed at helping colleges adopt policies and practices that help students who struggle to meet federal Standard Academic Progress standards avoid or rebound from financial aid probation.

Building on What Works also outlines Great Lakes' unique three-pronged funding approach, designed to support projects that explore promising ideas, evaluate approaches believed to be effective, and expand the reach of programs with proven impact. And finally, the report includes a brief preview of a few of the grants on tap for 2018.

The 2017 Great Lakes Education Philanthropy Report, *Building on What Works*, is available online now.