Making a real difference in the lives of thousands of children and young people throughout the National Capital Region

Collaboration. We know the education and health challenges that low-income youth face aren’t experienced in a vacuum – so how effective could solutions be if they were created in one?

When we launched VPP’s second portfolio in 2009, we wanted to focus on three key areas: early childhood education, educational attainment, and youth transitions – making sure that young people move successfully through school to be healthy, productive adults.

Having made our final investments in the portfolio, we are proud to say we are making brighter futures for the most vulnerable youth in the region. We have already served more than 16,600 youth, and will reach nearly 30,000 over the term of these investments.

These successes would not be possible without dedicated support from nonprofits, businesses, philanthropy and governments.

From the federal Social Innovation Fund’s investment in the youthCONNECT collaboration to the companies that are hiring at-risk youth in programs such as Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection, sectors are coming together to address the complex obstacles that our young people face. If we want to have the greatest impact on youth, it’s the only way.

“ALONE WE CAN DO SO LITTLE; TOGETHER WE CAN DO SO MUCH.”

Helen Keller

venture philanthropy partners
AppleTree develops and provides proven early childhood education programs to preschoolers from low-income families. AppleTree has developed a comprehensive instructional model for early childhood education called Every Child Ready, which is currently in practice at AppleTree Early Learning Public Charter School and six other public schools in the region.

VPP committed $3.2 million in December 2013 to increase the number of preschoolers AppleTree directly serves to 1,200, and enhance its innovative preschool model.

With VPP’s investment, AppleTree is giving more preschool students access to quality education.

VPP’s investment in AppleTree Institute for Education Innovation will enable AppleTree to serve 1,200 students at its Early Learning Public Charter School by 2017, doubling its current reach.

It is also allowing AppleTree to finalize Every Child Ready, an innovative and award-winning early childhood education instructional program that offers a robust curriculum for preschoolers and targeted support for teachers and students. The program is accessible to classrooms throughout the region.

As part of AppleTree’s efforts to scale its program, AppleTree is moving forward with strategic partnerships with three key charter schools in the region.

Results:

- At AppleTree’s partner schools, 880 additional preschoolers are benefiting from AppleTree’s curriculum.
- AppleTree was awarded almost $1.7 million in grants or commitments from national philanthropies.

AppleTree has been widely recognized for its leadership in the field of early childhood education. In 2013, US Education Secretary Arne Duncan cited AppleTree’s charter school as “a great example of early learning innovation.”

AppleTree is partnering with Center for Inspired Teaching to serve as a residency site for the Inspired Teacher Certification Program.
At-risk high school students are graduating thanks to Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection (HW-SC). VPP is helping them reach even more.

HW-SC is VPP’s newest investment and marks the final organization to join Portfolio II.

HW-SC’s mission is to help at-risk students in Prince George’s County, Md., successfully graduate from high school. HW-SC provides them with academic support, mentoring, skills training and the opportunity for part-time work. Students are paired with a professional youth advocate up to two years post-high school. That youth advocate works closely with students to address their individual needs and obstacles impeding their success.

HW-SC seeks to more than triple the number of students it serves by 2017. To do so, VPP’s investment is helping HW-SC hire and train the necessary additional talent and expand the network of local employers participating in the program.

Results:
- During the first quarter of VPP’s investment, HW-SC increased youth served from 253 to 390 and expanded into two new schools.
- HW-SC hired 16 youth advocates to support its increasing cohort of students.
- HW-SC is securing additional jobsites that will provide students with paid employment opportunities in the healthcare and tourism sectors, including at National Harbor in Maryland.

Regional and national organizations are supporting HW-SC’s work. It was recently named as a recipient of a Youth CareerConnect grant from the US Department of Labor, which is working to strengthen America’s talent pipeline. The NEA Foundation, an education grantmaker, also recently supported HW-SC.

“VPP’S INVESTMENT IN HILLSIDE SHOWS THE GROWING CAPACITY OF NONPROFITS IN PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY TO AFFECT LARGE-SCALE CHANGE IN OUR COMMUNITIES.”

Prince George’s County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III

OVERVIEW

Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection (HW-SC) is a youth-development program that for nearly three decades has helped at-risk students stay in school and successfully graduate. HW-SC identifies promising middle and high school students at risk of dropping out and provides them with academic support, mentoring, skills training and the opportunity for part-time work.

VPP’s $1.95 million investment in Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection, made in February 2014, will give 870 more middle and high school students in Prince George’s County, Md., access to these services.
OVERVIEW

KIPP DC is a network of high-performing, college-preparatory charter schools in Washington, DC, that serves the city’s under-resourced communities. KIPP DC is building on its strong track record of preparing students in underserved communities for success in college and in life as well as changing the face of public education in DC.

VPP has committed $5.5 million over four years to increase the number of students KIPP DC serves, from 1,550 to at least 3,600 students by 2015.

VPP has helped KIPP DC become stronger and more sustainable.

VPP funding has enabled KIPP DC to attract and retain strong operational and school leadership and extend its reach with the addition of a new elementary school and the expansion of its high school to a new location that will allow it to serve more students.

KIPP DC has surpassed all end-of-investment milestones and continues to perform highly against key metrics. KIPP DC is currently serving more than 3,600 students across four campuses and it continues to grow.

KIPP DC is starting new schools and filling its growing campuses. In fall 2014, KIPP DC will open a new middle school at its Webb Campus in Ward 5. KIPP DC is also relocating its high school, KIPP DC College Preparatory, to a newly developed site in Ward 8.

In February 2014, the DC Charter Board also approved KIPP DC to take over failing public charter school Arts and Technology Academy in Ward 5, which will begin in fall 2014. This will be its first experience turning around an existing school, and will serve as a model for KIPP National.

By the time these schools are open in fall 2015, KIPP DC will be running 16 schools and serving more than 5,000 students from low-income families in the District.

Results:

- 97% of KIPP DC middle school alumni are on track to graduate high school.
- 83% of KIPP DC high school students have matriculated to a 2- or 4-year college or university.
- 94% of KIPP Through College students have received a high school or GED credential within five years of completing middle school.

KIPP DC’s KIPP Through College (KTC) program is also thriving. More than 1,700 students, ranging from eighth grade to college graduates, are working with KTC to make it to and through college even after they leave a KIPP school.
VPP is helping Urban Alliance better support youth in the search for meaningful employment.

With VPP funding, Urban Alliance has begun to scale its program with a successful launch of its high school internship program in Northern Virginia, where it is already serving 25 students.

VPP is also helping strengthen Urban Alliance’s capacity in the areas of key leadership positions, finance, development and marketing. With VPP support, Urban Alliance created and filled two new senior management positions.

As part of its work to support students to and through college, Urban Alliance’s Northern Virginia office is launching a dual enrollment program with Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC). Starting this fall, successful completion of the Urban Alliance program will fulfill a college credit for “Student Development 100,” a course required for all incoming NVCC students.

Historically, one quarter of students in Urban Alliance’s Northern Virginia program apply only to NVCC. This partnership will offer both a free college credit and additional incentive to matriculate to college. It will also serve as a model for other Urban Alliance-community college partnerships.

Results:
- 144 students participated in Urban Alliance’s year-long high school internship program.
- 76% of 2013 program graduates enrolled in a 2- or 4-year college or university.
- 35 Urban Alliance alumni are receiving alumni support services.

Urban Alliance is working on a white paper to showcase its work in the youth employment space, to be released with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in the fall.

OVERVIEW

**Urban Alliance** is a year-long employment program for under-resourced high school seniors. Urban Alliance places high school students into paid internships with local employers and the federal government while providing students with professional development workshops. After graduating the program, students have access to Urban Alliance alumni services.

VPP committed $2.8 million in November 2012 to help Urban Alliance expand its workforce skills training to more than 1,000 youth, as well as expand the program into Northern Virginia to serve an additional 200 youth and 70 alumni and explore growth into Maryland.
OVERVIEW

Year Up National Capital Region puts urban young adults on a path to living-wage careers and opportunity. The year-long workforce-readiness program includes six months of job skills training with an IT focus, and a six-month paid internship with local corporate partners.

VPP committed $4.5 million over five years to increase the number of Year Up students and serve over 800 alumni in the region. It also more than doubled the internal capacity of Year Up for serving students and employer partners. A full $1 million of the investment assisted Year Up to implement a national influence strategy to leverage its model as an example for workforce development programs across the country.

Direct Investments

VPP helped Year Up expand and make important inroads with key stakeholders including the federal government.

VPP concluded its direct investment in Year Up NCR in December 2013. When VPP invested in Year Up NCR in 2009, the organization was at a critical juncture: it had emerged from its start-up phase and was running full-speed ahead to being fully operational, raising questions about programmatic growth, leadership transitions, board development and financial sustainability.

VPP helped Year Up NCR build up its internal capacity in order to make programmatic scaling possible. Year Up NCR grew from 26 staff in 2009 to 45 staff in 2013. With VPP’s guidance, Year Up NCR also navigated a successful leadership transition.

Over the course of VPP’s investment, Year Up NCR was able to increase the number of youth it serves in its year-long education and internship program, develop and strengthen internship and college partnerships, and ensure that participants complete its program successfully and go on to postsecondary studies or living wage careers.

Results:

- Year Up NCR increased enrollment from 144 to 240 students per year.
- Student retention rates increased from 48% to 78%.
- 83% of Year Up NCR graduates secured full-time employment at $15 per hour, or enrolled in full-time postsecondary studies within four months of graduation.
- Year Up NCR actively engages with 600 program graduates a year.

Of VPP’s $4.5 million investment, $1 million was to help Year Up National become a catalyst for broader change. The funding helped Year Up implement a national “influence strategy” to inform and influence the nation’s approach to closing the Opportunity Divide through systemic change.

Through close collaboration with other organizations, Year Up is reframing the national perception of out-of-school and out-of-work youth from liabilities to assets.

I CAN’T IMAGINE WHERE I’D BE RIGHT NOW WITHOUT MY EXPERIENCE IN YEAR UP. THE PROGRAM ISN’T JUST ABOUT GETTING YOU A JOB … IT TRULY SETS YOU UP FOR A CAREER AND A LIFETIME OF SECURITY AND SUCCESS.

Roxanne Cano, Year Up NCR Graduate

Year Up NCR graduate Roxanne Cano has risen from intern to assistant team lead at IT consulting firm New Signature.
The youthCONNECT network is testing how collaboration can transform the way organizations serve young people.

YouthCONNECT partners are continuing to learn from and support each other in serving the region’s young people. Through their collaborative work, youthCONNECT partners are building their internal knowledge, skills and organizational capacity while ensuring young people have access to a more comprehensive suite of resources than any organization could offer alone.

From our network partners:

“Being a part of the network has allowed us to think more strategically as a group ... we’re able to concentrate on the best practices for working together, connecting students to services and tracking the success of our young people.”
- Susana Martinez, Director of Youth Development, Latin American Youth Center

“Not only are we collaborating; we’ve developed deep relationships ... I know I can hop on the phone with any other partner to make sure our young people succeed.”
- Nate Cole, Executive Director, Urban Alliance DC

Results:
- 89% of youthCONNECT youth receiving career training demonstrated an improvement in career readiness skills that are imperative for success in the work place.
- 73% of youthCONNECT youth who enrolled in college in 2012 persisted from their first year to their second year of college.
- youthCONNECT partners continue to test a place-based pilot program providing services to students and teachers at the LAYC Career Academy.

Now, VPP is looking ahead to expand youthCONNECT throughout the region. Network partners have joined VPP in developing a plan for bringing youthCONNECT into Prince George’s County, Maryland.

Over the summer, VPP is building out that work and preparing to bring the network to Suitland High School.

**OVERVIEW**

**youthCONNECT** is a network of nonprofits that seeks to help young people successfully transition to adulthood. Over five years, the network aims to directly increase the education and employment outcomes of an estimated 20,000 low-income youth ages 14 to 24. The youthCONNECT network provides youth with a continuum of support, while network partners gain valuable experience collaborating with one another.

VPP created the youthCONNECT model in 2010 with support from the Social Innovation Fund (SIF), a signature program of the Obama Administration. Capital from SIF, VPP and youthCONNECT match partners will result in a $36 million investment in the region over five years.