

Education and Student Success

We're committed to strengthening student experiences, educator support, and collaborative efforts to address inequities and set all Rhode Islanders up for educational success.

A thriving state depends on a public education system working equitably and urgently to prepare all students to succeed in life and access pathways to opportunity.

Focus Areas

- Strengthening educator capacity, including efforts to diversify the teacher workforce by expanding recruitment and retention initiatives.
- Improving secondary (middle and high school) student learning experiences (especially high-needs populations), focused on youth development, mentorship, and leadership opportunities – with additional focus on increasing out-of-school support for students in underserved communities.
- Collaborating on policy, procedure, and use of resources at the state and local level, particularly centering on revisions to the school funding formula, multilingual student supports, creating relevant student opportunities, and addressing workforce challenges.
- Innovative, collaborative initiatives beyond the stated focus areas with the potential to drive greater impact on education and student success – particularly those with an equity focus and/or advancing solutions across multiple community priorities.

Case Studies

College Visions

The Foundation has long been a College Visions (CV) funding partner, granting half a million dollars since 2010; donor advisors have contributed another \$1.2 million.

Foundational to CV's work is the premise that any student who wants to go to college should be supported in that process.

- CV was founded in 2004 to provide holistic college access for low-income, underserved students. Twenty years later, CV is celebrating 500 college graduates, each of whom has been helped with all aspects of their college applications, including identifying schools that meet their needs and abilities and that offer ample financial aid.
- CV's college advisors, with whom the students meet weekly one-on-one, work hard to make the students feel comfortable. Advisors are all 'first gen' themselves, so their background and experience help them build a level of comfort and trust.
- Most of CV's students will qualify for the maximum Pell grant. Typically, it is not just tuition that is a barrier – it's also transportation, housing, food. CV has created an emergency fund to help students with unexpected expenses, and they do have students who are managing to navigate problems like these with their support.

FabNewport

Engagement keeps youth returning. Belonging builds trust and confidence. And opportunity is what's needed for all.

The three – engagement, belonging, and opportunity – FabNewport says, create the necessary identity for youth to make well-informed positive future visions (PFV). Research says a PFV—a mental image of a fulfilling future as a mathematician, dancer, or veterinarian, just to name a few – is a more powerful indicator of long-term success than grades and test scores.

"What we know is out-of-school-time programs offer important learning opportunities for youth," Executive Director and Co-Founder Steve Heath declared recently.

Heath continued, "Every Rhode Island young person deserves to participate in after-school and summer learning."

The Rhode Island Foundation has been a supporter since its inception, giving nearly \$360,000 for a variety of the nonprofit's endeavors which include its initial development, capacity building, a summer camp for girls' program in 2015, and \$60,000 in 2022 for its Growing the Ecosystem strategic initiative.

"FabNewport has been a critical partner in creating the conditions for art and creativity to exist as a pathway for our youth to imagine and shape their destinies," said Joe Wilson Jr., Director of Providence's Department of Art, Culture and Tourism (ACT). He wanted to be a lawyer before an acting class in college changed his life.