



THE EXECUTIVES' ALLIANCE TO EXPAND OPPORTUNITIES FOR BOYS AND MEN OF COLOR



 **EXECUTIVES' ALLIANCE**
TO EXPAND OPPORTUNITIES
FOR BOYS AND MEN OF COLOR

INVESTMENTS FOR CHANGE: YEAR IN REVIEW
FEBRUARY 2015

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE:

Robert K. RossThe California Endowment, Co-chair
Tonya Allen..... The Skillman Foundation, Co-chair
Risa Lavizzo-Mourey.....Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
La June Montgomery Tabron..... W.K. Kellogg Foundation
Ken Zimmerman.....Open Society Foundations

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Damon Hewitt.....Open Society Foundations

MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVES' ALLIANCE TO EXPAND OPPORTUNITIES FOR BOYS AND MEN OF COLOR

Andrus Family Fund
The Annie E. Casey Foundation
Arcus Foundation
The Atlantic Philanthropies
Boston Foundation
Butler Family Fund
The California Community Foundation
The California Endowment
California Wellness Foundation
Casey Family Programs
Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo
Community Foundation of South Jersey
East Bay Community Foundation
Denver Foundation
Ford Foundation
Foundation for the Mid South
Headwaters Foundation for Justice
JPMorgan Chase Foundation
The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
Kaiser Permanente
Kapor Center for Social Impact
Kresge Foundation

Liberty Hill Foundation
Living Cities
Lumina Foundation
Marguerite Casey Foundation
Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation
Nathan Cummings Foundation
NEO Philanthropy
Open Society Foundations
Public Welfare Foundation
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Rosenberg Foundation
The San Francisco Foundation
Schott Foundation for Public Education
Sierra Health Foundation
Silicon Valley Community Foundation
The Skillman Foundation
Southern Education Foundation
Southern Education Fund
Tides
W.K. Kellogg Foundation
Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation

A VISION OF OPPORTUNITY

The foundations that comprise the Executives' Alliance to Expand Opportunities for Boys and Men of Color hold a shared view that America is better positioned to realize its greatness as a nation when all of its' people are valued and able to contribute to and enjoy its progress and prosperity. Boys and men of color – like all Americans – should have the opportunity to achieve their greatest hopes and dreams. Both historically and today, they make significant contributions to this nation's health,

wealth, and security. By removing systemic barriers, as well as increasing economic, educational, civic and health opportunities, more of our boys and men of color will flourish. Ultimately, this work will make all families, communities and our nation stronger.

The Executives' Alliance brings together philanthropic institutions to propel the work of expanding opportunity for boys and men of color in ways that we could not do on our

own. We leverage one another's work, as well as the work of others outside philanthropy – including government and business – to identify and pursue strategies for transformative change. Through our efforts, we align attention, resources and action in ways advance our vision of providing real opportunity for our sons and brothers.



INVESTMENTS FOR CHANGE: 2014 YEAR IN REVIEW

The Executives' Alliance to Expand Opportunities for Boys and Men of Color is a network of over 40 national, regional and community foundations driven by a bold vision that all boys and men of color enjoy full inclusion in all of the opportunities this nation has to offer, and that America's prosperity will grow as these men and boys flourish. Since its inception in April 2013, the Alliance has aggressively engaged in efforts to create pathways that enable our boys and men of color to achieve their greatest hopes and dreams – continuing a decades-long commitment by many foundations to improve the life outcomes for this population.

The Executives' Alliance creates opportunities for philanthropy to partner and engage with one another and others who are committed to providing opportunities for men and boys of color to succeed. These efforts demonstrate that there are leaders within philanthropy who can respond nimbly in the short-term while furthering a longer-term agenda for change.

Each Executives' Alliance member addresses different aspects of the challenges and opportunities our sons and brothers face. Working at the local, regional, and national levels, the network is able to execute the comprehensive vision needed to open up unprecedented pathways of opportunity – both for boys and men of color and the communities in which they live. In addition, the Alliance enables foundation executives to use the collective power of their leadership to hold each other accountable, while demonstrating the difference they can make, both individually and together.

Already, the Executives' Alliance has begun to play a significant role toward achieving its vision by investing in critical intervention points and core policy solutions. Over the past year, Executives' Alliance members have provided resources for cradle to career strategies proven to impact success in school, the workforce, and in life. Our efforts are helping to scale up successful initiatives, support promising new approaches, and advance important policy and systemic reforms.

While philanthropy has stepped up its collective efforts, flashpoint events throughout the country have shown these challenges need more attention than ever before. The killings by police of a number of African-American men and boys, and the protests that have followed, demonstrate both the urgent need for broad-scale change, and a sense of readiness for action in communities nationwide. The deaths of Michael Brown, Eric Garner, and Tamir Rice, among others, spurred a national debate and outcry to reaffirm the very humanity and importance of black lives. And they are an important reminder that the solutions we seek must go beyond specific programs, to heal and change whole systems, too.

While these challenges are significant, they are not insurmountable. One year ago, an injection of new energy and focus came from President Barack Obama's [My Brother's Keeper](#) initiative – a national call to action to create ladders of opportunity for the nation's boys and men of color, inspired by the President's personal reaction to the death of Trayvon Martin. In just one year, this initiative has helped to galvanize support for boys and men of color in new sectors, including the faith, political and corporate sectors, while reinvigorating those groups and individuals who have long sought change. Several members of the Executives' Alliance stood with President Obama at the launch of this initiative in February 2014, and pledged to invest at least \$200 million in aligned efforts over five years, alongside additional investments from

their peers in philanthropy and the business community. Since then, these foundations and others in the Executives' Alliance have made significant progress towards this goal, investing at least half that amount in the last year alone while making countless contributions through their grantee networks. As some of our members indicated with respect to their support for the MBK initiative, these investments do not represent a short-term effort or a "quick spend" approach. Instead, they demonstrate a commitment to significant investments that align strategic focus and collective resources between our organizations, in coordination with other funders, over the long haul.

Some of the more recent efforts have involved working with the White House and federal agencies to support local efforts, often in conjunction

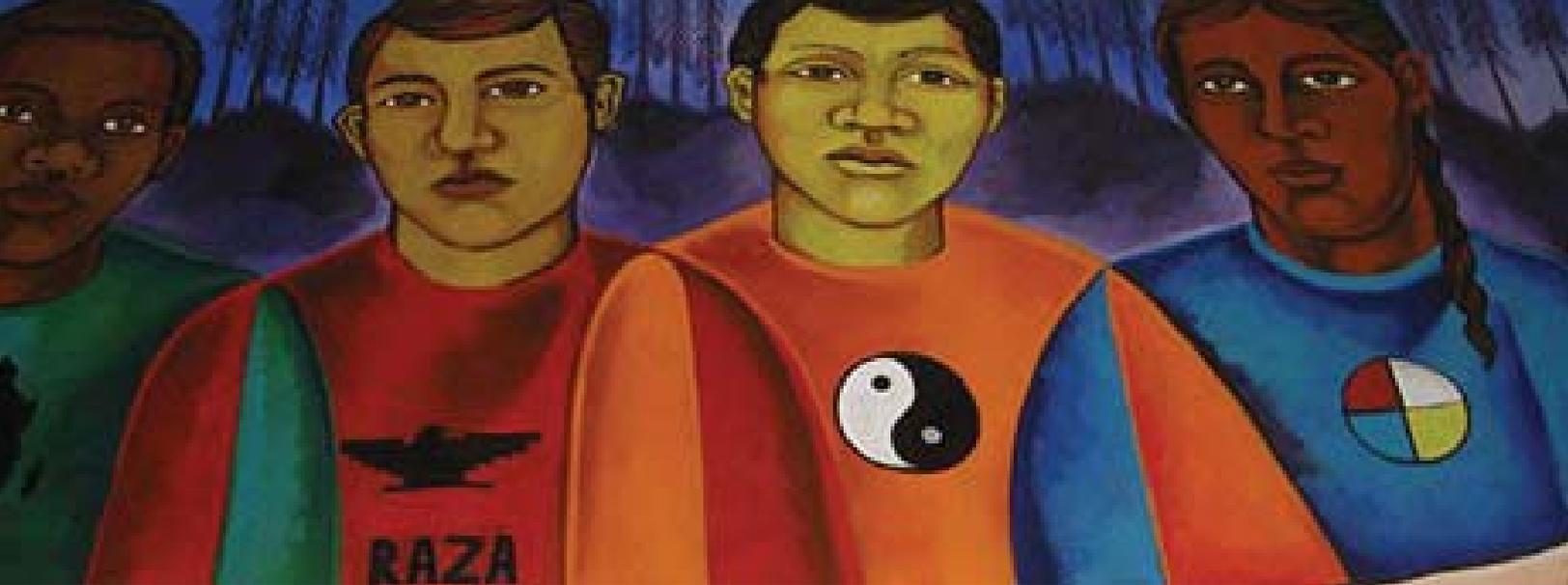
with the many city, county and tribal elected officials who have accepted the White House's [MBK Community Challenge](#). In addition, many Alliance members and allies have gone further by crafting regional efforts such as the California Executives' Alliance and the Minnesota MBK Funders' Learning Table.

Moving forward, the Executives' Alliance will focus on removing social and systemic barriers that burden boys and men of color; replacing the false, deficit-based narratives about them; and increasing the economic, educational, civic and health supports necessary for systems change, while helping them overcome the odds and succeed. Though institutional philanthropy cannot take on this challenge alone, the Alliance will continue to lead and push foundations to do their part to support boys and

men of color, in partnership with others who want to do the same. Together, we will help men and boys of color, their families, and their communities, achieve a brighter future.

This report provides highlights of only a select number of activities and investments, along with early indications of impacts that Alliance members and allies have made, both individually and collectively. Many of these investments were made over the past year. While the report does not reflect the full breadth of activity that has taken place, it illustrates the significant and long-standing commitment by philanthropy to improve outcomes for boys and men of color today and for generations to come.





Building a Pipeline of Innovation, Data and Research

Research is vital for crafting and informing policies and practices that create opportunity and equity for boys and men of color. An in-depth understanding of the unique needs and assets of boys and young men of color, along with similarities and differences facing Black, Latino Native American and Asian and Pacific Islander communities is essential. We must use research and data analysis to support innovation, test new strategies, and build on best practices and lessons learned that will lead to better outcomes for our sons and brothers.

To that end, [RISE \(Research, Integration, Strategy, and Evaluation\) for Boys and Men of Color](#), was launched as a cross-foundation effort focused on developing a better understanding of strategies that improve life outcomes for boys and men of color in four key areas: education, health, criminal justice, and economic opportunity/workforce development. This \$10 million, three-year project, funded in large part by **The Atlantic Philanthropies**,

The Annie E. Casey Foundation, and the **W.K. Kellogg Foundation**, will support better coordination among researchers, educators, and community leaders to share knowledge about what works, fund research and evaluation to spur greater innovation and identification of solutions, and create a web-based portal to house and make more readily available information on effective interventions.

The release of [Black Lives Matter: The Schott 50 State Report on Public Education and Black Male](#) demonstrates the power and necessity of timely data. This comprehensive report issued by the **Schott Foundation for Public Education** provides national and state-by-state data documenting how black male students remain at the bottom of high school graduation rates at a national and statewide level, and shows that the opportunity gap between black and white male students continues to widen. It draws public attention to the serious realities facing young black men, and articulates a series

of actions and recommendations that can lead to healthier living and learning environments that provide all students with an opportunity to learn – regardless of race or ethnicity.

Furthermore, **JPMorgan Chase** committed \$10 million in 2014 to support the Urban Institute, a nonprofit research organization based in Washington, DC, to examine the firm's philanthropic initiatives focused on increasing economic opportunity and strengthening communities. As a part of this partnership, the Urban Institute will draw upon its deep expertise to produce research and analysis that further strengthens JPMorgan's efforts to improve outcomes for boys and men of color, as well as assess other critical initiatives that support these young men.

Ensuring Academic Success

Our investments focus on providing a strong system of supports that build the academic and social-emotional skills of boys and men of color, starting in early childhood and continuing through college. We aim to have all boys and young men of color reading proficiently by 3rd grade, put them on track to graduate from high school, and build their readiness for college and careers.

[The Fellowship Initiative](#), sponsored by **JPMorgan Chase Foundation**, is one such example. The program, which began in New York City in 2010, provides hands-on academic and social skills enrichment for young men of color in their sophomore year of high school, in addition to one-on-one mentoring with JPMorgan Chase employees. To date, all of the participating students graduated on time, all gained admission to four year colleges, and earned scholarships totaling \$8.4 million. Three of the fellows also received the prestigious Gates Millennium Scholarship. In 2014, JPMorgan expanded operations in New York City and added sites in Los Angeles and Chicago.

Meanwhile, the **Foundation for the Mid South**, has invested in the [Males of Color: Cultivating Leaders for Today and Tomorrow](#) initiative, which helps improve the academic performance, high school graduation rates, college preparation and career readiness for young men of color in Arkansas,

Louisiana, and Mississippi. This initiative provides male students of color in the 10th to 12th grades with much-needed jump starts to economic success. These young men receive valuable academic and social supports such as tutoring, coaching and career development that are necessary to ensure they are academically prepared for the future.

On the West Coast, the [African American Male Achievement \(AAMA\) Initiative](#) is leading efforts to dramatically improve academic and life outcomes for African American students in the Oakland United School District. **The San Francisco Foundation** provided \$250,000 to expand this program, along with AAMA receiving financial support from the **Kapor Center for Social Impact**, **East Bay Community Foundation**, **The Stuart Foundation**, **The Atlantic Philanthropies**, **Kaiser Permanente**, **Open Society Foundations** and **The California Endowment**. These investments helped the AAMA initiative implement its Manhood Development Program on a district-wide basis. This work, in combination with school discipline reforms and full-service community schools, effectively cut the suspension rates of African American male students in half while improving academic achievement. The program has successfully led to more students reading at, or above, grade level, improved GPAs, and increased

African American male graduation rates from 42 to 57 percent. As stated in The [Black Sunrise](#) report, which details the AAMA initiative's progress, the key to the program's success was, "Oakland dared to name institutionalized racism – and not the children – as the problem."

And as these Executives' Alliance members engage in efforts to boost high school graduation rates, the **Lumina Foundation** has led investments to enable more Latinos, African Americans and Native Americans to obtain high quality postsecondary degrees and credentials, and reduce the widening postsecondary attainment gap among these students of color. [The Community Partnership for Attainment \(CPA\)](#) project, a \$13 million investment supported by the **Lumina Foundation**, aims to increase higher education attainment in communities with high percentages of students of color. The project was launched in 2013 in 55 cities throughout the U.S. with a three-year investment of \$8 million. In 2014, 20 new cities were added with an additional investment of \$5 million. CPA mobilizes core institutions and key stakeholders in higher education such as community colleges, universities, students, faculty, researchers and trustees in participating cities to develop action plans to close achievement gaps.



Improving School Climate and Reforming Discipline Policies

Academic achievement is often predicated on a simple notion – staying in school. Yet, Black, Latino and Native American males are suspended, expelled, and arrested at an alarming and disproportionate level to their peers in schools throughout the United States. These punitive measures, often combined with law enforcement, limit students’ academic opportunity and result in a “school-to-prison pipeline,” pushing young people out of school and increasing their contact with the justice system. Research shows that every suspension doubles the chance a student will drop out of school and triples the chance they will be involved with the justice system. To keep young men of color on track for success, we must eliminate unnecessary suspensions, create calmer education environments, and give students the supports they need in and outside of school.

In the past few years, a national movement has been building, and schools have begun to make critical reforms to their discipline practices and improve school climate overall. In 2014, the **W.K. Kellogg Foundation** invested \$15 million, alongside other donors, to support the Advancement Project, The Schott Foundation for Public Education, and the Just and Fair Schools Fund to improve school

climate on a national scale. These investments will help districts and communities remove the structural barriers that prevent students from getting a quality education and implement changes related to the [2014 federal school discipline guidelines](#). Schools that implemented these guidelines, along with using a [restorative practice model](#), have already decreased suspensions by as much as 58 percent and expulsions by 87 percent.

At the state level, California became one of the first states in the nation to pass legislation that mandates common sense school discipline policies in all of its schools. These new policies limit suspension of children for subjective, and often discriminatory, “willful defiance” offenses while holding them accountable for their conduct. **The California Endowment** invested \$7.5 million to advance school discipline reform at the both the state and district levels, which included helping hundreds of young people become engaged in their communities. Many of these youth were responsible for bringing public attention to suspension-first discipline policies, and advocated for the successful adoption of this policy by Governor Jerry Brown. With these important efforts, suspensions have dropped in

California by 27 percent in the past three years.

Furthermore, more than 800 members of the Brothers, Sons Selves Coalition in Los Angeles worked throughout 2014 to implement progressive policies that ban suspensions in the Los Angeles Unified and Long Beach Unified School Districts. With support from the **Liberty Hill Foundation**, the Coalition led efforts demonstrating how to pioneer new alternatives and discipline programs that improve student behavior and keep them in the classroom. Their efforts also played a pivotal role in making the case for the statewide school discipline reform policies signed by the Governor.

These investments and impacts complement the ongoing work of the many funders who are a part of the donor collaborative known as the [Just and Fair Schools Fund](#), which supports grassroots organizing initiatives to eliminate harsh school discipline policies and practices, and uphold the right to education for all youth on the local, state, and national levels. Housed within **NEO Philanthropy** (formerly Public Interest Projects), the Fund’s donors include **The Atlantic Philanthropies, Ford Foundation, Arcus Foundation, Open Society Foundations, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, The Skillman Foundation**, and several others.



Reducing Incarceration, Transforming Justice and Improving Public Safety

The juvenile and criminal justice systems lock too many young men and boys of color out of opportunity before they have a chance to fully start on the path to adulthood. Our targeted efforts, which include local, state, and national investments, will help employ practices that heal rather than punish children for adolescent mistakes.

National efforts are underway to keep more youth of color out of the juvenile justice system and to put them on the path to brighter futures. The **Public Welfare Foundation** provided \$500,000 in 2014 to support the launch of the [YouthFirst! Initiative](#), a new advocacy campaign focused on creating a national tipping point to adopt policies that end incarceration of youth in juvenile prisons and redirect resources toward effective non-residential programs. These comprehensive campaigns are intended to cut youth incarceration in half over the next few years in 15 targeted states. Other funders of the initiative include the **The Annie E. Casey Foundation** and **Butler Family Fund**.

The **Public Welfare Foundation** also made a \$500,000 grant to the W.

Haywood Burns Institute to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in pre-trial juvenile detention. The grant will also support a pilot project that tests a new model for bringing together education, mental health and juvenile systems at a local site to work on collective solutions for keeping more youth out of the system.

At the state level, California has been at the forefront of embracing smart justice approaches that move away from an overreliance on ineffective, prison-first policies that waste tax dollars and tear apart families. In 2014, the voters overwhelmingly passed a landmark ballot initiative – [The Safe Neighborhood and Schools Act](#) (also known as Proposition 47) – which reduces lower level felonies, such as drug offenses or petty theft, to misdemeanor charges. Proposition 47 will transform the lives of young people of color by enabling up to 1 million Californians to have past, nonviolent felony convictions wiped from their records, and thus improving their prospects for jobs, housing and overall stability. It will also shift \$1 billion of taxpayer dollars previously used for prisons to support K-12 schools, mental

health, victims services, drug treatment, and other services that enable more people to succeed. **The California Endowment, Ford Foundation, Rosenberg Foundation, Public Welfare Foundation, Open Society Foundations, The Atlantic Philanthropies,** and the **Fund for Nonviolence** joined a number of private individuals and corporations to invest millions of dollars in this historic, systemic public policy change. Much of the funding supported [Californians for Safety and Justice](#) (a project of the Tides Center), which built a coalition of business and community leaders, policymakers, law enforcement officers, health professionals, educators and crime-prevention experts to jointly advance these reforms. **Rosenberg Foundation** also funded Californians for Safety and Justice's expansion of their network, Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice. The network has quickly become the nation's largest progressive victims advocacy group, with 6,000 members primarily from communities of color. It advocates for policies that best serve the interests of individuals, families and communities impacted by crime and violence.



Photo by Jamaica Glimmer



Photo by Jamaica Glimmer

Responding to Ferguson and Beyond: Police Accountability and Community Engagement

We must confront the issues that cause police officers to treat men and boys of color more harshly, and provide and promote training that leads to greater trust and collaboration between our local communities and law enforcement. The juvenile and criminal justice systems must also be urged to appropriately intervene when children lose their way, while investing in their ability to grow into successful, healthy and productive adults.

In 2014, incidents of police brutality and other racially-charged violence shook the national conscience, inspiring a group of Alliance members to act collectively for reform. In addition to hosting emergency briefing calls to educate Alliance members and facilitating an in-person strategy session in Ferguson, Missouri, dozens of Executive Alliance CEOs signed an [open letter urging local, state and federal officials](#) to ensure the safety and liberty of people engaged in peaceable protest. [Published prior to the local grand jury decision](#) in the Michael Brown shooting, the statement offered a list of recommendations that echoed and furthered those from grassroots advocacy organizations in Greater St. Louis.

Our funders and close allies have also engaged in a broad array of related initiatives and activities throughout the past year. The **Deaconess Foundation** committed \$100,000 to support youth advocacy in Missouri, and established the [Ferguson Youth Organizing Fund](#)

to help coordinate investments by national foundations toward youth and community organizing among St. Louis area youth who have taken the lead in demanding policy change from civic leaders and elected officials. This investment led to additional contributions of \$50,000 by the **Schott Foundation for Public Education**, \$100,000 by the **Missouri Foundation for Health**, and \$125,000 by the **Public Welfare Foundation**, all to promote and support grassroots organizing.

The **W.K. Kellogg Foundation** also provided \$50,000 to bring Ferguson-based youth organizers, along with artists, clergy, civil rights advocates and other opinion leaders together within 48 hours of the grand jury decision. This convening helped promote racial healing and counter the criminalizing and dehumanizing portrayals of the peaceful youth protestors by installing 75 large format portraits of individual protesters in 12 locations throughout the city. The work was even featured in national news media such as *USA Today*.

The **Missouri Foundation for Health** committed \$100,000 to assist the [Ferguson Commission](#)—an independent body of diverse community members who volunteer their time and expertise to study the underlying social and economic conditions underscored by the unrest in the wake of the death of Michael Brown.

Additional investments are helping

to facilitate meaningful police reform in Ferguson and throughout the country. The Center for Policing Equity received \$2 million from the **Open Society Foundations**, along with support from other funders, to work with over 50 police departments (including the St. Louis County Police Department) to create [the first national database documenting police behavior](#) which will detail who police pull over or stop for questioning and when they use force. The database will serve as a significant tool in identifying, diagnosing and remedying racial bias in policing to better inform community advocates and help law enforcement agencies across the nation learn and improve. The grant will also support youth organizing groups that are advocating for police reform.

Additionally, the **Open Society Foundations** has committed \$900,000 to the Center for Popular Democracy to make grants and help build local capacity of community stakeholders in the St. Louis area, such as Organization for Black Struggle and Missourians Organizing for Reform and Empowerment, advocate for police reform and accountability.

Leveraging Civic and Community Infrastructure

While numerous data points affirm the disparate life outcomes of boys and men of color in this country, there are a vast number of distinctions geographically, ethnically and otherwise among this population. We must take into account how the places and communities where boys and men of color live significantly impact the approaches and solutions for making change. For instance, the circumstances for Native Americans living in rural New Mexico are far different than those of African American males living in urban Los Angeles. We will invest in community-based efforts that mobilize local resources and institutions to foster solutions, as well as place-based initiatives that support local communities and specific populations of boys and young men of color.

The **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation**, the **California Community Foundation**, the **California Endowment**, the **Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation**, the **Skillman Foundation**, and the **W.K. Kellogg Foundation** made multi-year commitments to help communities in the Southeast, Southwest and Midwest (including Arkansas, Mississippi and Michigan) leverage community-based efforts that improve outcomes for boys and young men of color.

The Skillman Foundation committed \$2 million, aligned with the My Brother's Keeper initiative, which included \$500,000 in funding for coordinating MBK projects in Detroit. **The Prudential Foundation** committed a \$3 million grant to provide technical assistance, collective impact infrastructure and capacity to the cities, municipalities and tribal nations that accepted the MBK Community Challenge. And **Open Society**

Foundations continued support for the [Young Men's Initiative](#) in New York City.

Building on the success of its \$11.5 million [Forward Promise initiative](#) that aims to improve the health and academic success of youth of color, the **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation** made a new targeted investment in rural communities this year. The new Catalyst Grant program will provide \$1.66 million to promote health and opportunity for Latino and Native American young men in rural areas of the South and Southwest, such as New Mexico, Texas, Arizona, Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi. One Catalyst Grant awardee, the First Nations Development Institute, is working to improve high school graduation rates and career opportunities for students in conjunction with the Cocopah Tribe in Arizona. The Credit Recovery and Career Exploration (CRACE) project they support was successful in helping raise high school graduation rates from 15 percent to 51 percent for at-risk and / or truant youth in the Somerton public school system.

Locally in Los Angeles, the [BLOOM](#) (Building a Lifetime of Options and Opportunities for Men) initiative seeks to create a more positive and productive future for young black men living in South L.A. With major support by the **California Community Foundation**, along with other funders, this \$5 million effort invests in community-based organizations and provides programs and services that enable more Black male students to graduate from high school and pursue higher education and careers. Thus far, evaluation results have shown that 72 percent of BLOOM participants regularly attended school, 89 percent were not suspended or expelled, and a vast majority did not re-offend while on probation.

The California Endowment continued support of its [Sons and Brothers](#) initiative, a multi-million dollar effort helping boys and young men of color stay on track to graduate from high school and succeed in adulthood. Sons and Brothers operates at the state and local levels, with a focus in the cities of Oakland, Fresno and Los Angeles. Advocates and community-based organizations work alongside school districts, business leaders, police departments and policymakers to keep our young people safe and help them to stay in school. These efforts: (1) support the development of youth leaders; (2) improve student attendance and reduce suspensions; (3) enable more children to read at grade level; (4) ensure that all eligible children are enrolled in health coverage; and (5) train school police officers on the best practices interacting with boys and young men of color.

The **W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF)** has also directed resources to support young men of color living in the city of Detroit, by investing \$1.6 million to expand summer employment training programs for youth ages 14-24. Additionally, **WKKF** invested in 26 organizations in Mississippi to improve life outcomes for young men and boys of color. And the foundation has awarded \$1 million to a consortium of Latino-led agencies offering programs and activities to Latino, African American and Native Americans boys and young men.

Creating Career Pathways

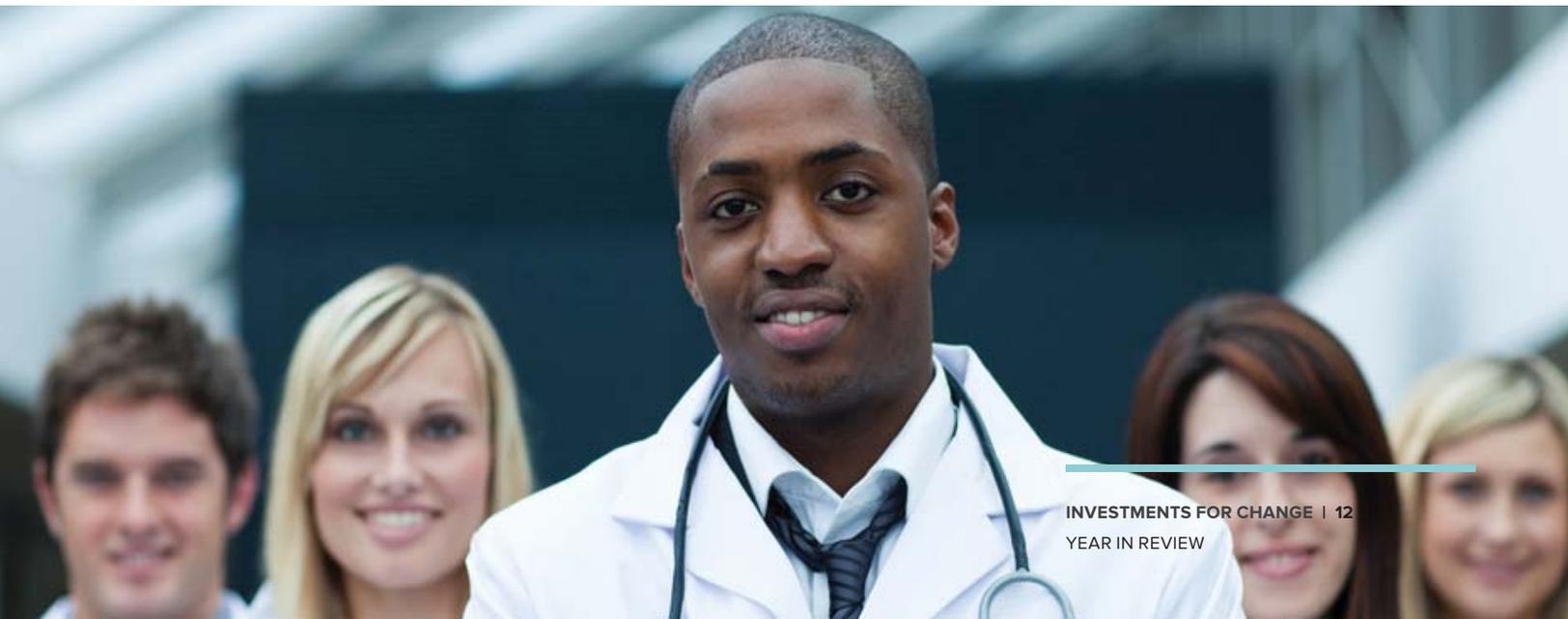
Boys and men of color have demonstrated significant talent and skills in the arts, sciences, engineering, public service and athletics that have made invaluable contributions to the American economic landscape and society at large. Yet, too many of our sons and brothers lack the resources they need to launch careers and compete for the jobs they need to support their families. With philanthropy's investments, young men of color will be better trained for jobs, get connected to entrepreneurial opportunities to further their business aspirations, and secure more sustainable employment.

A recent \$10 million investment announced by the **Prudential Foundation** will support evidence-based cradle to career strategies, assistance for financial intermediaries, social enterprise projects, and other community assets that can grow

and improve career opportunities for young men of color. These infrastructure supports will help these men obtain and retain living wage jobs in communities throughout the country.

In California, there are significant actions being taken to create career pathways for boys and young men of color. Building on support from the **James Irvine Foundation** and **The California Endowment**, A new \$11 million grant from the **The Atlantic Philanthropies** will help the Oakland Unified School District expand their career training program, [Linked Learning](#), to more students and provide them with valuable hands-on internship experiences and career support in the health professions. Since 2007, the [Linked Learning](#) program has helped boost district graduation rates and successfully enrolled 40 percent of its students in challenging

academic programs connected to real world work opportunities in the field of health care. An additional \$10 million in funding from **The Atlantic Philanthropies** for the local Alameda Health System will create an education and training center that opens the door for student internships and creates a career services program targeting at-risk students. SRI International has also received \$11 million in funding to evaluate the program and provide recommendations for how the District can reach and help connect more students to the health care field in the future.



Strengthening a Movement and Supporting Community Leaders

The many strong advocates, researchers, government officials, and activists working to advance the interests of boys and young men of color throughout the country are some of our most important innovators. It is essential that we create a coordinated and unified movement that allows these leaders to work in unison to make dramatic, sustained contributions to achieve pathways of opportunity for our young people.

The [Campaign for Black Male Achievement \(CBMA\)](#) is the only national membership network that seeks to ensure the growth, sustainability, and impact of leaders and organizations committed to improving life outcomes of black men and boys. The network includes more than 2,000 organizations from around the country. In 2014, the **Open Society Foundations** announced an investment of \$10 million to spin off CBMA from the foundation and enable CBMA to bolster its ability to serve as a critical intermediary strengthening the capacity of leaders, promoting field activities, and expanding the network of those committed to this cause. CBMA is intended to serve as a model for future efforts to provide capacity building and network infrastructure to organizations supporting boys and men from Latino, Native American, and Asian Pacific Islander communities, each of which has unique needs and valuable organizations. Other supporters of CBMA include the **Ford Foundation**, **The Skillman Foundation**, the **John S. and James L. Knight Foundation**, **Casey Family Programs** along with other notable philanthropic institutions.

[“A Gathering of Leaders”](#) is the only annual conference that brings together experts and practitioners from across the nation to build and sustain a movement where success for boys and young men of color is not the exception, but the norm. The **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF)** has been a leading supporter of this event since its inception. The 2014 conference was the most successful to date – bringing over four hundred stakeholders together, including policymakers, advocates, youth, researchers, and philanthropic organizations from over 25 cities to collectively strategize solutions and approaches to transform the lives of these young people. **RWJF** invested \$300,000 for the planning and implementation of this conference, with with co-convening support of over \$350,000 from **The California Endowment**, the **W.K. Kellogg Foundation**, **Casey Family Programs**, the **Open Society Foundations**, the **Marguerite Casey Foundation**, the **Silicon Valley Community Foundation**, the **Sierra Health Foundation**, the **Kapor Center for Social Impact**, and the **Walter S. Johnson Foundation**.

[BMe \(Black Male Engagement\) Community](#) is a national network of thousands of inspired community builders of all races and genders who are sharing and collecting real life stories and positive actions being taken by black males to challenge negative stereotypes. The **John S. and James L. Knight Foundation** provided a \$3.6 million grant to launch this new network of African American leaders working to build prosperous and caring communities. The BMe online community features videos that show how black men from all walks

of life are assets to their community. BMe Community sites include Baltimore, Detroit, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh. Through its work with 9,000 members in these cities BMe reaches over 200,000 people nationwide.

Homicide is the leading cause of death for African American males ages 10 to 24. Launched in 2011, [Cities United](#) is an ambitious national movement to eliminate the violence-related deaths of African American men and boys. It supports a national network of civic leaders committed to reducing the epidemic of violence and restoring hope and opportunity to our communities. With investments from **Casey Family Programs** and **Open Society Foundations**, the organization works to equip mayors and local elected officials with the tools, practices, skills, and resources they need to address violence and affect change. Cities United also facilitates a national network of civic leaders committed to reducing the epidemic of violence and restoring hope and opportunity to our communities. The 56 mayors (and counting) participating in Cities United intend to reduce violence by 50 percent by the year 2020, in each of their cities. And they are committed to restoring hope to their communities and building pathways to justice, employment, education, and increased opportunities for residents. Lastly, Alliance members are supporting the Youth Table, a national group of youth leaders convened by the Funders Collaborative for Youth Organizing and the Movement Strategy Center to advise on policy reforms and strategic actions to improve outcomes for boys and young men of color.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Grateful acknowledgment to the thousands of advocates, educators, parents, policymakers, nonprofit organizations, social service agencies and community leaders who work tirelessly each today to help build a brighter future for our nation's boys and men of color.



