Why is it important that The Greater Cincinnati Foundation and its donors invest in the area of educational success?

Too many children in the Greater Cincinnati region are entering kindergarten not prepared for school, not succeeding educationally in elementary school through high school, nor successfully transitioning into post-secondary education. Nearly half of all adults in our region currently lack any education beyond high school. It is estimated that by 2018, two-thirds of all jobs will require some type of post-secondary credential or degree. Research shows that investing early — particularly in the first five years of life — produces the highest return on investment.

What are we doing to create change?

Through the generosity of donors past and present, GCF is able to make an impact through a collection of grants, impact investments, grantwriting assistance, and partnering with other funders. These are long-term problems and we are in it for the long haul. Effective change doesn’t happen overnight but the Greater Cincinnati area is making great strides.

The following are examples of our strategies and results for educational success and its results:

**STRATEGY:**
Help individuals prepare for and complete post-high school education and training to secure gainful employment.

**HOW WE SUPPORT THIS STRATEGY:**
GCF invested in Education Matters’ College Bridge Program which provides a continuum of education and support to non-traditional, first-generation-to-college students by re-engaging them in their education, preparing them to succeed in college, assisting them in the college enrollment process and supporting their retention in college. Students need various levels of support with some needing all four listed above while others only needing one or two.

Through a close partnership developed with Cincinnati State Technical and Community College, professors teach entry-level college courses on-site at their Lower Price Hill location. Providing on-site courses allows students to develop the necessary level of confidence to then succeed as they transition onto the college campus.

**RESULTS:**
For the 2013-14 school year the College Bridge Program served 131 students. Of those:

- 56% of students tested out of one remedial college course
- 61 students enrolled in on-site college courses at Cincinnati State
- 76% of students enrolled in the Bridge Program re-enrolled for next semester (in comparison retention rate at Cincinnati State is 30%)
- 25 students reduced their debt through financial support from Education Matters
When she was 10 months old, her mother dropped her off at day care and never came back. She was adopted by kind people but kids at school teased her about her second-hand clothes.

In seventh grade she stopped doing homework and the As and Bs she'd earned in elementary school turned to Cs and Ds. The cycle of teasing, being bullied, and responding by fighting, had made Ellen a bully herself.

A math teacher knew that Ellen was different. With her encouragement, Ellen was able to attend the Cincinnati Arts and Technology Center (CATC). CATC helps 400 students per year earn fine arts or elective credits needed to graduate on time. At no cost to the students and their families, it re-engages students with arts-based experiences. An average 93% of CATC students graduate, year after year.

At CATC Ellen learned to channel the assertiveness that led her to stand up for herself in misguided ways like fighting. She learned to channel her assertiveness by speaking up, asking questions, and saying what she wanted. Ellen graduated and will attend the University of Cincinnati Blue Ash.

“CATC gave me the opportunity to use my gifts and showed me sometimes you have to get out of your comfort zone,” Ellen said.

**STRATEGY:**
Provide quality early learning opportunities to ensure a strong foundation for success in school and life.

**HOW WE SUPPORT THIS STRATEGY:**
We awarded support to 4C for Children, our region’s designated child care resource and referral agency serving a 23-county area. 4C’s dual mission is to assist parents in finding and choosing child care, and to increase quality early learning for all children. GCF’s investment helped support training for family childcare providers to enhance daily interactions and activities with children using a home visitation model.

**RESULTS:**
90% (54 of 60) of providers completed program.
92% of providers gained and using new skills.
96% of providers implemented specifically designed school readiness activities.

**STRATEGY:**
Ensure children are supported to succeed in school and out of school.

**HOW WE SUPPORT THIS STRATEGY:**
GCF invested in Cincinnati Arts and Technology Center’s (CATC) High School Arts Program which in partnership with Cincinnati Public Schools, uses the transformative power of the arts to re-engage students in their learning, helps them to graduate and prepares them for success after high school.

**RESULTS:**
• In 2013-14 school year, CATC served 338 urban teens from 12 CPS Schools, 82% of whom were economically disadvantaged and 125 or (37%) of students had an identified disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
• 75% of active participants received course credit.
• 95.7% (of 138) seniors served graduated.

Cumulatively, since 2013 CATC has accomplished the following: Enrolled: 4,419 urban teens; Active Participants: 3,282; Received course credit: 2,873 or 87%; Graduated: 1436 of 1547 seniors or 93%.

**What can you do to help?**
You don’t need your own fund at GCF to support favorite causes. Select from GCF’s new Community Funds, such as the Educational Success Fund, and make a donation of any size, with any type of gift. By giving to one of the funding priority areas, you support the current and greatest needs in our community. Our funds include: Cultural Vibrancy Fund, Economic Opportunity Fund, Environmental Stewardship Fund, Health & Wellness Fund, Job Creation Fund, and Strong Communities Fund. A member of our Giving Strategies staff will be happy to talk to you about a gift.