

# One Million Degrees

Knowledge Cities Forum

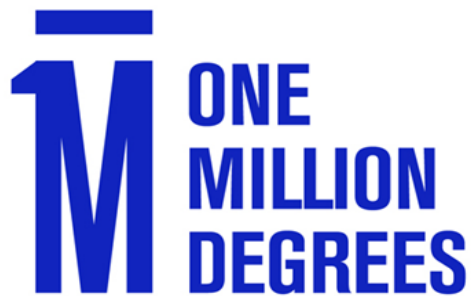
*Voices from Tomorrow –  
the Next Generation*

**David Scherer**

Principal, Origin Capital Partners  
Co-Founder and Board Chair,  
One Million Degrees

Chicago

November 2013



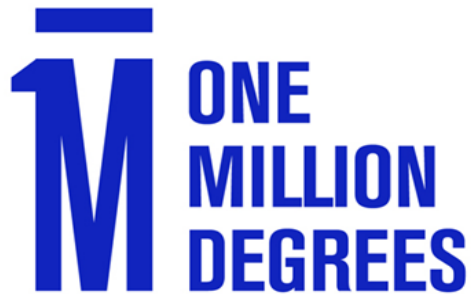
The Community College Project



# The Facts

- 6.7 million students – almost half of all undergraduates in the US – attend community colleges.
- In Illinois, 64% of all undergraduate students are enrolled in community college.
- Nationally, fewer than 21% of these students will earn an Associate’s Degree or certificate within 3 years.
- In Illinois, fewer than 15% of community college students will earn a degree or certificate within 3 years.
- For those students who earn an Associate’s Degree, their earnings will be 20-30% higher than their counterparts with only a high school diploma.
- Graduates provide a significant return on investment – every taxpayer dollar invested in a community college student yields \$3 in taxes from economic growth.
- In Illinois, over one million jobs – 45% of all job openings through 2016 – will be middle-skill jobs.

Achieving the Dream fact sheet,  
National Center for Education Statistics,  
and Skills2Compete-Illinois



# The Facts in Chicago

- Chicago's unemployment rate hovers around 9%.
- This is driven, in part, by a skills mismatch. Last year there were 240,000 Chicago residents out of work and 200,000 local job postings.
- Chicago has seen growth in job training programs offering residents technical expertise, but more employers are seeking soft skills in applicants.
- Closing the skills gap and strengthening Chicago's competitive edge requires innovative partnerships which promote degree attainment, career readiness, and soft-skills attainment.



# Our Mission

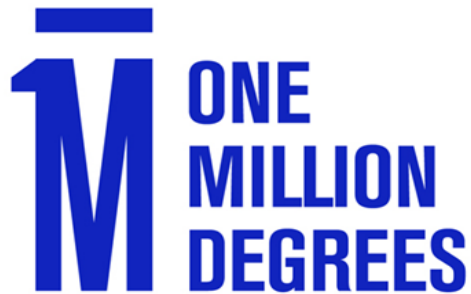


One Million Degrees empowers low-income, highly motivated community college students to succeed in school, in work, and in life.

One Million Degrees is the only organization of its kind in Illinois, and one of the few in the entire country, dedicated to serving community college students.

We believe that, when given a solid system of support, every student has the ability to reach his or her full personal and professional potential.

OMD partners with private partners and public institutions to help close skills gaps and develop a diverse talent pool, well-equipped with technical expertise and soft skills and prepared to contribute to the Chicago workforce in high-demand fields.



# Our Scholar Development Model



Long-term, personalized one-on-one coaching with volunteer professionals who receive ongoing support and training.



Immediate, individualized, sustained interventions and support to succeed academically.



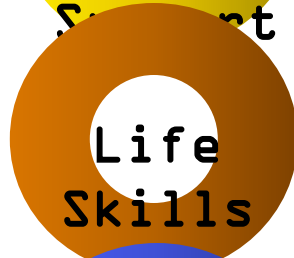
"Last dollar" scholarships to supplement federal and state financial aid and stipends to defray educational costs.



Proactive support to map out and plan for degree completion, transfers to universities, and career paths.



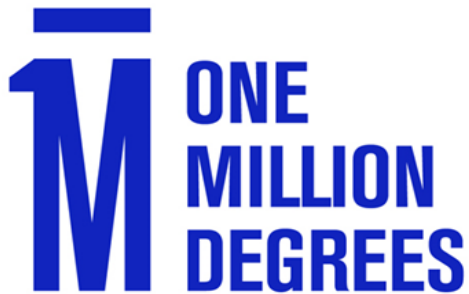
Ongoing intensive support from a dedicated staff, and coaching from a licensed clinical social worker.



A three-year curriculum of professionalism and communication skills, financial literacy training, and civic engagement and leadership development.



Regular opportunities to visit Chicago-area workplaces and learn first-hand about different industries and functions.



# Our Scholar Development Curriculum

## Year 1

### Professional Skills

Scholars build critical soft skills they can apply to their personal and professional relationships. Following a sequence of six workshops and three supplemental professional development experiences, OMD Scholars demonstrate an increased mastery of professional norms and gain a competitive advantage in job and internship searches.

## Year 2

### Financial Literacy

OMD Scholars represent a population of under-banked, low-income individuals with limited knowledge of financial institutions, personal budgeting, and financial planning skills. Offered in partnership with the Heartland Alliance, OMD Scholars participate in financial wellness workshops, personalized financial counseling, and if eligible, match savings programs. This program provides scholars with the tools needed to move out of poverty.

## Year 3

### Civic Engagement & Leadership

Community College students are part of a growing population of future leaders. Learning and professional aspirations are made more meaningful by connecting them to issues they care about within the larger political and social context. In their third year, OMD Scholars increase their knowledge of local issues, participate in community service, and develop a set of policy recommendations which they share with local stakeholders.





# Our Scholar Experiential Events

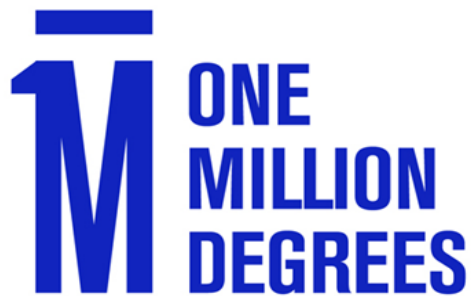
At the **One Million Degrees Etiquette Dinner**, hosted each year at the Standard Club in Chicago, scholars learn the nuances of business dinner etiquette and social networking.



**Suited for Success**, part of a unique collaboration with Brooks Brothers, hosted at their store in The Rookery. This unique event provides One Million Degrees Scholars with high-quality clothes and shoes for job interviews and subsequent employment.



**'It's Who You Know' Mocktail Networking Night**, hosted by JP Morgan Chase, is an event designed to hone communication skills through speed networking sessions and a reception with leaders in diverse fields including finance, health care, education, science, and philanthropy.



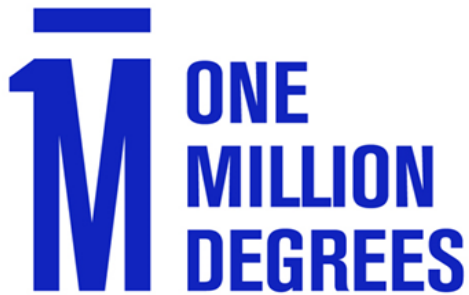
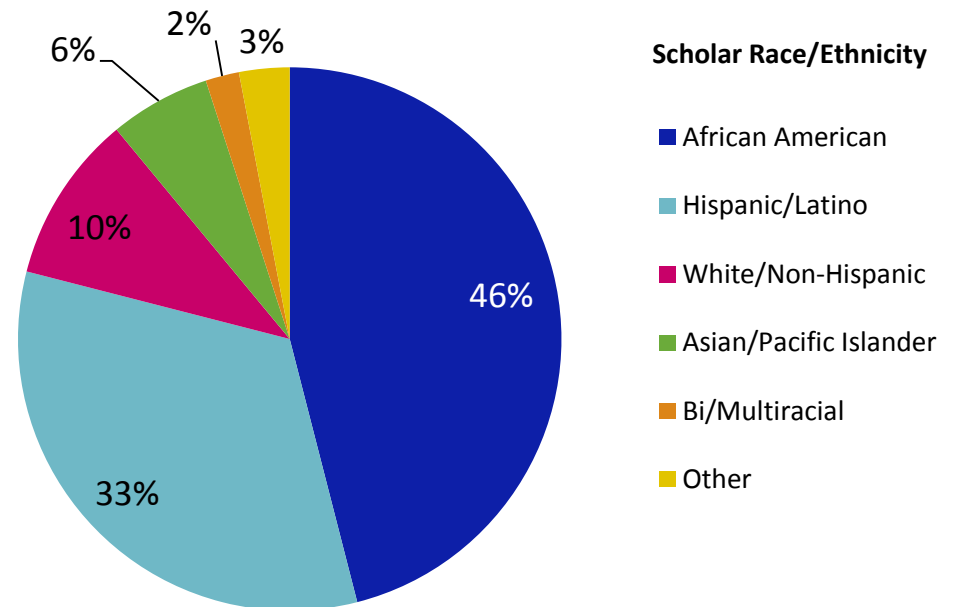
# Our Scholars: 2013-2014

**62%** First-generation college-goers

**26** Average age

**\$21,000** Median household income

**18%** Support dependents





# Our Outcomes

## One Million Degrees Scholars

90%

OMD's **annual retention rate**, while half of the general community college population will drop out before the end of the second year.

3 years

The **time it takes an average OMD Scholar to graduate** – half the time of a traditional community college student.

70%

The **rate of OMD Scholar graduation** vs. traditional community college students in Illinois.

\$50,000/year

The **average salary after graduation** reported by OMD alumni compared to average across all Associate's Degree holders.

## General Community College Population

50%

6 years

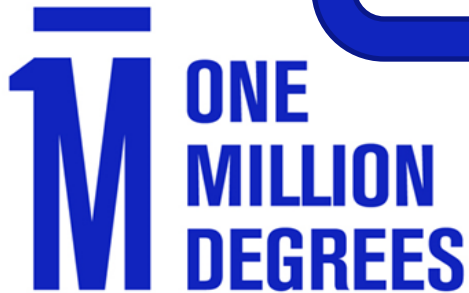
15%

\$32,000/year

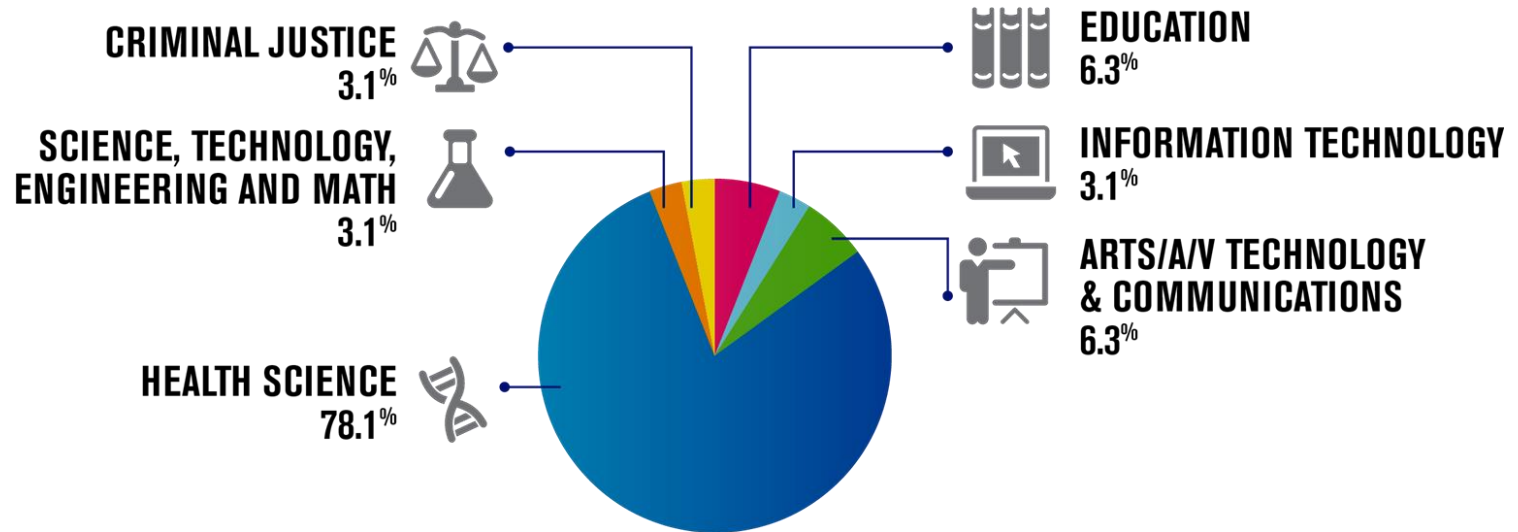


**Exponential**

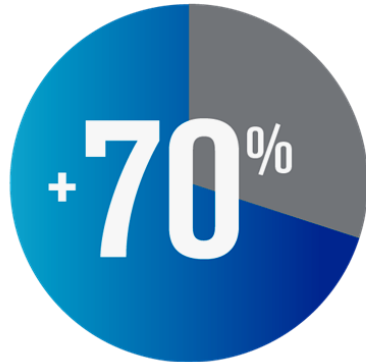
As the first in their families to go to college, the success of an OMD Scholar has profound, positive implications for their communities and future generations.



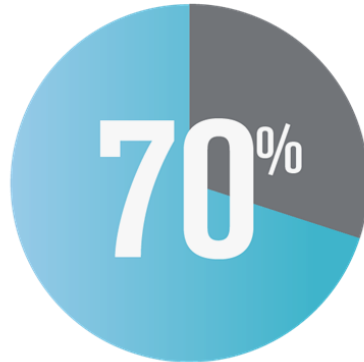
# Our Alumni Pursue Careers in High-Growth Fields



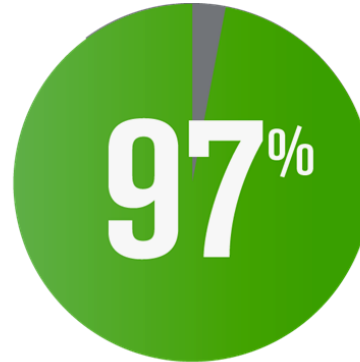
# Our Alumni are Achieving Financial Security



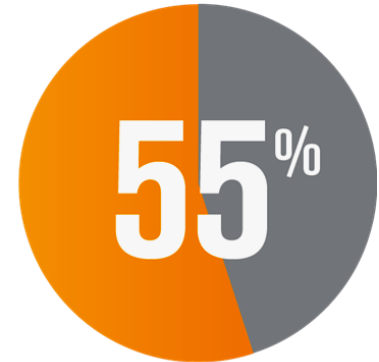
Graduated from community college without any student loans



Report following a monthly budget

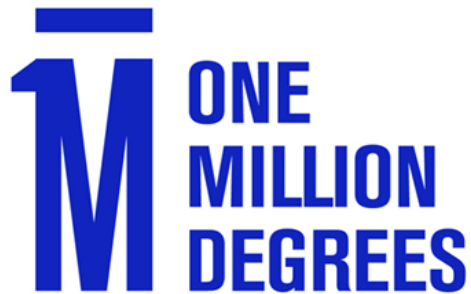


Report banking at traditional banking institutions\*



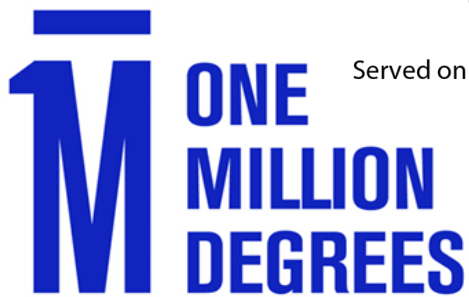
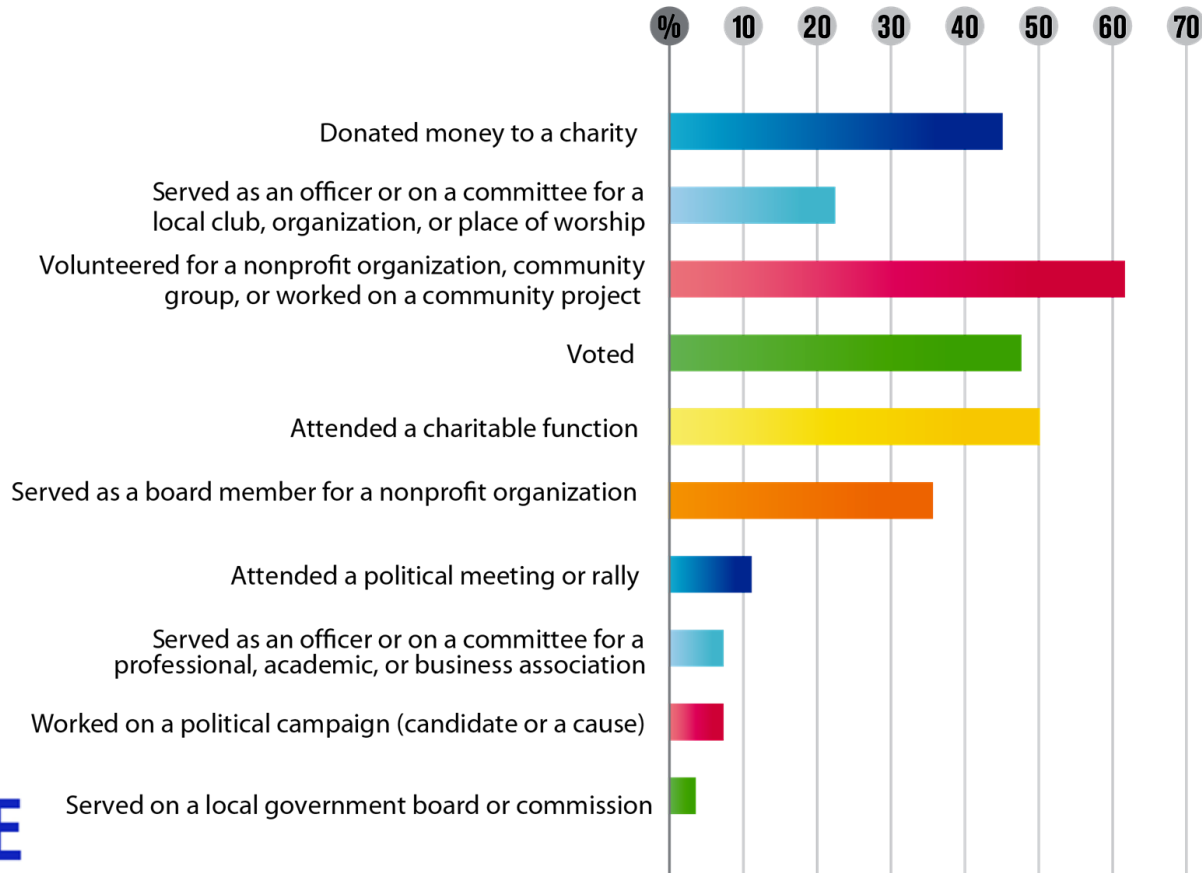
Are saving for retirement

\*Many of our scholars come from very underbanked communities without access to traditional banking institutions. Without access, it's harder to save, build credit, and avoid predatory lending practices.



# Our Alumni are Engaged and Leading in their Communities

## IN THE PAST YEAR, OUR ALUMNI HAVE



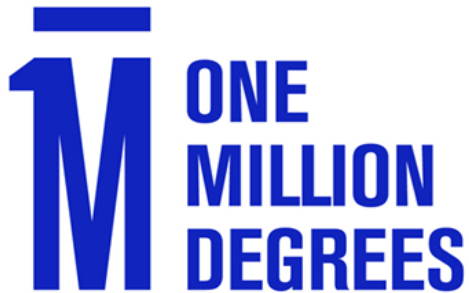
Thank you!

**THE POTENTIAL OF A SINGLE DEGREE**

**TO CHANGE A LIFE, A FAMILY, A COMMUNITY,**

**INSPIRES US TO THINK BEYOND THE**

**BOUNDARIES OF WHAT IS TO WHAT COULD BE.**



The Community College Project

For more information, please contact  
Paige Ponder, CEO  
[pponder@onemilliondegrees.org](mailto:pponder@onemilliondegrees.org)  
(312) 920-9605 x301