

## INVESTING IN OUR YOUNG PEOPLE



The full set of Graham SLAM services costs about \$5,400 per young person per year, an investment that yields significant returns as they grow into self-sufficient and contributing members of our community. This provides for our team of coaches (each of whom works with up to 20 young adults), program materials and supplies, financial supports for students in college, and program infrastructure.

We have been growing Graham SLAM over the years, from a handful of young people in 2014 to close to 350 in 2017. Our long-term goal is to serve close to 1,000 young people each year. We believe that in demonstrating that an intervention like Graham SLAM can produce results, we can attract interest in replication and expansion of the model across the country to impact hundreds of thousands of young people.

With sincere gratitude to our generous Graham SLAM donors:

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# GRAHAM

CARING FOR KIDS & FAMILIES

SINCE 1806



## Graham SLAM

Empowering Our Future Leaders

## GRAHAM SLAM

### SUPPORT, LEAD, ACHIEVE AND MODEL

#### CREATING OPPORTUNITY WHERE IT IS NEEDED MOST

For young people in the child welfare system, the obstacles can seem not only overwhelming, but insurmountable. Early life experiences have disrupted the flow of home life and school, and the effects of past trauma linger well beyond the childhood and teenage years.



In addition, publicly-funded career supports through the foster care system end when children go home or get adopted or at age 21, when few young people (of any background) are prepared to be on their own. Recent findings in neuroscience indicate that brain development, especially for those who have experienced delays onset by trauma, is still happening well into the twenties. It is our belief that providing intensive supports beyond age 21 will dramatically change outcomes for our young people.

#### FORGING A NEW PATH TO SUCCESS

Graham Windham has developed an innovative solution to these challenges through our Graham SLAM program. Graham SLAM (Support, Lead, Achieve, and Model) provides young people in the foster care system, as well as those at risk for entering foster care, with long-term, consistent, and comprehensive support from high school, through college or vocational school, and all the way to a living-wage career. We have committed to sticking with young people until age 25, even after they are no longer in the child welfare system.

## THE GRAHAM SLAM APPROACH

Graham SLAM provides a continuum of intensive, structured supports, centered around a coaching model. Program components include:

**Ongoing Individual Support and Planning.** Youth coaches work one-on-one with each young person to develop and follow a plan for reaching their educational and career goals. We use nationally recognized, evidence-supported models to engage and motivate young people, including Motivational Interviewing and Solution-Based Casework, a unifying framework we introduced to New York City and use agency-wide.

**College Readiness and Support.** We help students successfully complete high school, select the right college and program, apply for admissions and financial aid, and stay on track toward college graduation.

**Employment Readiness and Support.** We provide job readiness training and career-focused peer support through a model called Career Club, and help students apply to and succeed in vocational programs, internships, and jobs.

**Family Support.** We engage each young person's family in the process of developing a plan for the young person and supporting the steps along the way.

**Peer Support.** We provide for peer support through a weekly support group centered around a model called Network. We also provide leadership training, peer support, and community service opportunities through our Bengals positive peer group.

*"Every kid in foster care needs a coach."*

*-College graduate Kurt (featured on cover of brochure)*

*"The largest issue I had was the lack of support from my actual family, who told me ahead of time I would be a failure. I was able to accept the fact that my parents would not be there for me and also accept the ones that were, such as my foster mother; the Graham SLAM Supervisor who has always been there for me to talk to whenever I was fed up with school; and the assistance of great educational coaches who pushed me to points where I thought was my limit and showed me where I shouldn't settle for less. I would not even be a high school graduate if I did not have the support I received from these people here at Graham Windham. Today, because of them I have my associate degree and will continue to pursue my bachelor degree at Brooklyn College with continued support from these people."*