



Entrepreneurs: Robert Clarke, Kristin Puleo, Mary Kay Brown, and Tahon Ross (not pictured)

Through our collaboration with the Regional Employment Board, additional funds were made available to redesign the Springfield School-to-Career office's outreach strategy to employers and students. As a result, we increased our internship placements by 67 percent connecting more young people to a real world work experience.

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The City of Springfield is an urban district faced with the enormous challenge of preparing students to meet high academic standards as well as the changing demands of adulthood. Seventy-two percent of Springfield Public School students – mainly youth of color – live in households that are below the poverty line. From its inception in 1993, Springfield CS<sup>2</sup> has acted as a critical catalyst in bringing together schools, businesses, and community partners and convening regional multiple pathways to academic proficiency, social support, and career readiness for all students. Key programs in 2006-07 included:

### Summer of Work and Learning

This school-to-career program served 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students who did not pass one or both parts of the MCAS. Direct recruitment this year to parents of eligible students supported the district goal of increasing parental involvement. CS<sup>2</sup> provided the Research and Accounting department at UMass Amherst with the first two marking period results for students in the Real Game intervention group versus the control group – 9<sup>th</sup> graders in the Springfield Public Schools who did not receive a career education component in the curriculum. Their analysis of the data on grades, attendance, and office referrals for the year is aiding CS<sup>2</sup>'s understanding of the effect of Career Development education on students' academic performance.

### Middle School Portfolio Process

With continuing support from the Superintendent, CS<sup>2</sup> focused on a process that ensures that each middle school in the district provides students with critical Career Development education needed to make informed choices in selecting a high school. The program highlighted what each high school offers and positioned high school selection as the first and most important career choice. The process impacted 2,300 students.

### Internships

CS<sup>2</sup> increased student internships by 67 percent this year (530 students), meeting the Connecting Activities grant requirement for student placements.

### Freshman Transition Program

A CS<sup>2</sup> Entrepreneur continued to manage the Freshman Transition Program at The High School of Science and Technology. It is designed to meet the social and emotional needs of 9<sup>th</sup> graders; the program impacted 625 students this year.

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### Job Shadowing

One Entrepreneur organized an outing which took 350 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders from 12 Springfield schools to learn first-hand for a day what is involved in positions at various workplaces. Participating employers included: The Springfield Sheraton, the Republican newspaper, American Saw, Mercy Hospital, and the Hampden County Regional Employment Board.

### Trips to Colleges and Worksites

CS<sup>2</sup> partnered with the Guidance Department this year to send eight buses of students to the College Fair at the Big E, and offered trips to learn about colleges to all the middle schools.

### Workplace Readiness Certificate Program

This year, CS<sup>2</sup> Entrepreneurs made available to community organizations a curriculum that helps young people develop workplace skills. They trained staff at Dunbar Community Center and the Health and Human Services Department so they may offer the certificate program to students who work in city offices. An application module was added to the curriculum, all of which was made available online.

### Regional Dropout Prevention Action Plan

CS<sup>2</sup> collaborated with the Regional Employment Board and the cities of Chicopee and Holyoke to share best practices in dropout prevention strategies. Springfield Public Schools is interested in developing an action plan for the region and CommCorp is assisting with this goal.

## Grants

### Grants

Funding was secured and managed from these sources:

- U.S. Department of Education – Smaller Learning Communities
- Massachusetts Department of Education – Connecting Activities
- Massachusetts Department of Education – Academic Support
- Donations from businesses – The Summer of Work & Learning

### STEP UP Springfield

CS<sup>2</sup> served as key school-district staff working with STEP UP Springfield, a major effort by the Springfield Schools, in partnership with community organizations in a city-wide collaboration to ensure that all students achieve academic proficiency.

### Career Center Support Services

CS<sup>2</sup> Entrepreneurs serve on the Advisory Board of the Putnam High School Career Center. The center provides a multitude of services for students at the school, from career exploration to income tax help. CommCorp contributed expertise.

### Career Development Course

CS<sup>2</sup>'s Career Development course continues to be offered and expanded in most of the district's high schools. This course offering is highly valued by the principals, who greatly appreciate the role that CS<sup>2</sup> Entrepreneurs play in teaching this critical class.

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β Member of CS<sup>2</sup> network since 1993

β 28 schools involved in CS<sup>2</sup>: Four high schools, three alternative high schools, six middle schools, and on a limited basis, 15 elementary schools

β 3 Entrepreneurs

β 5,321 students participated in CS<sup>2</sup> programming

β \$275,094 public and private funds secured

β \$171,150 in-kind donations secured