Our Story
DECA | ANNUAL REPORT | 2018

OUR STORY BEGAN 16 YEARS AGO WITH A
GROUP OF LIKE-MINDED INDIVIDUALS WHO BELIEVED THAT
ALL CHILDREN—DAYTON’S CHILDREN—DESERVED THE
CHANCE FOR A ROCK-SOLID EDUCATION. DECA, THE FIRST
EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL IN OHIO, WAS BORN.
Dear DECA Friends,

DECA's story began 16 years ago with a group of individuals who believed that all children—Dayton's children—deserved the chance for a rock-solid education. DECA, the first early college high school in Ohio, was born. DECA's mission; prepare students for college and beyond, hasn’t changed since we opened our doors.

Acting on that mission, DECA continues to celebrate our college graduation rate. The National Student Clearinghouse documents DECA grads complete college at five times the national rate for students of our demographic. Turn to page 5 to see DECA compared to other area schools. DECA breaks the cycle of generational poverty and racial inequity through education. The roads to high-skill, high-wage jobs are varied, but college remains the pathway to the higher income careers. The Dayton community needs a deeper pool of skilled professionals, especially in STEM careers, and DECA is responding.

In this Annual Report, we identify DECA's DNA, The Five Building Blocks of Success: Building Relationships, Investing in Quality Teaching, Focusing On Academics, Leveraging Community Resources, and Enrolling Early in College.

You'll observe DECA's sustained focus on the singular goal of preparing students for college—academically, socially, emotionally, and financially.

Quality schools do not result from flavor-of-the-month or sloganeering reforms. Rather, DECA's journey is one of steady growth and careful attention to achievement and culture. We pay attention to critical partnerships among parents, teachers, and the community, all rowing in the same direction. We strive to have little contradiction between our actions and our words. We focus on results. The trajectory of our students' lives, and often their families' lives, change because of DECA.

Building a stellar school system is complicated work amid competing demands and pressures. However, the sheer energy of seeing Adam and hundreds of other DECA graduates mature into successful professionals reminds us that Dayton can count on DECA! With your continued help, DECA changes lives!

Judy Hennessey,
Superintendent & CEO

David Taylor,
Deputy Superintendent

“High achievement always takes place in the framework of high expectation.”
—Charles F. Kettering
Building Relationships

Recognizing that freshmen always have discreet needs from upperclassmen, DECA faculty decided to establish freshmen-only advisories.

Freshman advisor Alec Wade emphasized, “The goal was to help freshmen find their place in our DECA community, while also making them independent and resilient learners.” Colleague Christine Thobe added, “High school anywhere can seem like a big place. It can be hard to find your niche, your squad. DECA freshmen now have a team that pushes and advocates for their success. Success is an expectation, not an option.”

The change was a resoundingly smart move. More students completed gateways in their first year and almost 100% of our freshmen are on track academically in their sophomore year at DECA. According to teacher Brittany Jones, relationships drove the impact, “We work hard not only to build a strong relationship within our team, but also among freshmen students and families.”

The DECies

Hollywood isn’t the only place you can receive an Oscar (or a Dundie from *The Office*). DECA also holds its own version of the Oscars each year for faculty and staff. The festive event is an opportunity to reflect on the passions, commitments, and skills of our talented team. It’s the one thing we do each year that’s personally designed for me. DECA groomed me to be an exceptional student, one that would not accept mediocrity. After graduating from Wright State, Adam joined the Air Force where assignments have taken him to four states. He is currently on a team responsible for the training and education of 1,500 Air Force members. Also a husband and proud father, Adam appreciates his mother and DECA, “My mom did everything she could. She did everything right. She ensured I had the tools to be educationally successful. She got me to DECA.”

Investing In Quality Teaching

DECA’s physics teacher, Stew Miller, knows the power of STEM experiences in and out of the classroom. Stew’s curriculum includes a project on the physics of floatation. Students are required to assemble a boat, sturdy enough to hold a person, constructed with only cardboard, heavy adhesive tape, and garbage bags. Mr. Miller invariably has to convince students it can be done, applying the physics concepts introduced in class. When “float day” arrives, excited students line up for test runs at the UD RecPlex. Cheering one another on as they paddle across the pool in their cardboard boats, students can’t miss Mr. Miller’s delight. He knows the best STEM lessons force students to apply their newly gained knowledge outside the classroom.

“JK Rowling said it right when she said, ‘We do not need magic to change the world, we carry all the power we need inside ourselves already; we have the power to imagine better.’”

— DECA teacher, Christi Pham accepting her DECie Award

A Graduate’s Story

“Heaven only knows where I’d be without DECA,” says first-generation college grad Adam Wilks. Returning for his ten year reunion this summer, Adam reminisces, “Looking back, it seems like everything about the program was personally designed for me. DECA groomed me to be an exceptional student, one that would not accept mediocrity.”

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This is the third year the Ohio State Tests (OSTs) have been administered. Markedly more challenging than the previous exams, the OSTs are given from 3rd grade through high school. Additionally, the ACT or SAT is required of all high school students. DECA’s 2018 results are evidence of great achievement as well as challenging areas that need focused improvement.

### Did you know?

DECA grads are on par with upholding this important national statistic: 59 percent is the 6-year graduation rate for first-time, full-time undergraduate students who began seeking a bachelor’s degree at a 4-year institution in fall 2009. That is, 59% had completed a bachelor’s degree by 2015 at the same institution where they started in 2009.

One college graduate can shift the trajectory of an entire family. An education is the passport to a better life. DECA is a public school system where 75% of the student body is at or below the poverty rate. Yet, nearly 100% of our graduates attend college. Better yet, the National Student Clearinghouse reports DECA grads are completing their college degrees five times the national average for our demographic. See graph below:

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“Brains are not handed out by gender. They are not handed out by race, so we have a capable pool of people that just need to have the opportunity and experiences in STEM.”

— Pamela Jackson, Retired Vice President Technology, Emerson, B.S. Chemical Engineering and Chemistry, MIT, MBA, Boston University

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**Percent of students graduating from college within 6 years:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oakwood</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centerville</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECA</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northmont</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montgomery County</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kettering</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miamisburg</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dayton</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The chance of a low-income, first generation student earning a bachelor’s degree within 6 years of high school graduation is less than 1 in 10...and dropping.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics/KELP

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Loren celebrates her DECA diploma with family.

Focused academics. Photo credit: Tobias Ellis, DECA grad ’16

DECA High students
Leveraging Community Resources

“Because our firm has resources in cities around the world, we can help make connections like this one between a DC lawyer and a former DECA student.”
—Donna Smith, WilmerHale Finance Managing Director

Westminster Presbyterian Church

It takes immense resources and commitment to provide the all-in support DECA students need. Westminster Presbyterian Church continues a vital partnership with DECA Middle and has met the behind-the-scenes needs of our students and teachers. Jenne Gross, Westminster’s Mission Associate, says that the congregation’s goal is to support DECA staff so they can do the hard work of teaching students.

Charlie Bull, Principal, describes the congregation as standing in the gap by providing countless volunteer hours and kind deeds. Just a sample of their support includes serving as academic tutors, hosting events and clubs, collecting uniforms and school supplies, painting and cleaning, and making dinner for teachers on late work nights.

WilmerHale

WilmerHale is a global legal and business services company serving clients worldwide. The WilmerHale Dayton office announced its two-year philanthropic partnership with DECA in 2017. Employees have volunteered as Saturday tutors, Mock Trial coaches, and sponsors for job shadows. Most recently, local WilmerHale staff reached out to a D.C. affiliate to meet with Ariel Giles, a DECA grad considering law school. Law partner Craig Goldblatt shared, “I was impressed by how bright, eager, and hardworking Ariel is. We had a long, thoughtful conversation about changes in the legal profession and how those changes are affecting the opportunities for young lawyers. It was clear that he already had a sophisticated understanding of these issues... DECA really does have a profound impact on its students.”

Because our firm has resources in cities around the world, we can help make connections like this one between a DC lawyer and a former DECA student.

—Donna Smith, WilmerHale Finance Managing Director

Enrolling Early in College

Presented by GreatSchools.org*, the College Success Award recognizes public high schools whose graduates are prepared for college and beyond. DECA is proud to receive this national award which celebrates college enrollment, persistence, and performance.

The GreatSchools report states, “College enrollment rates don’t tell the whole story. In far too many high schools, students don’t receive the level of academic preparation, social-emotional support, and pre-college counseling required to thrive in a college setting. It is critical to look not just at how many students are enrolling in college, but if they are set up to succeed in that setting.”

“The College Success Award recognizes practices that lead to successful high school-to-college pipelines.”

CONGRATULATIONS!
YOUR SCHOOL HAS WON
THE COLLEGE SUCCESS AWARD!

College Success Award winning schools:

- Provide access to rigorous academics.
- Systemic supports for at-risk students at every grade level.
- Have more robust staffing for academic counseling.

GreatSchools.org is funded by some of America’s largest and most respected foundations supporting education, the Carnegie Corporation, the Schwab, Kresge, and Gates Foundations.

DECA Prep students take part in DECA High graduation activities

DECA students interacting with community volunteers

EVERY VOLUNTEER LEAVES DECA MIDDLE FEELING WELCOMED AS PART OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY AND KNOWING THEY MADE A DIFFERENCE TO SOMEONE.

—Jenne Gross describes Westminster’s return on their investment

Building Blocks of Success

4

Building Blocks of Success

5

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**Financial Report**

DECA's continued growth in enrollment to 1,165 students increased our recurring revenues by 10% to $11.9 million. Recurring revenues are primarily related to State and Federal funding rates per student. This year our revenue growth was slightly higher than our enrollment growth due to an increase in students with special needs and the timing of Federal funds receipts.

Recurring expenses increased by 7% to $11.9 million as we added staff to support the increase in students and absorbed inflation in many spending categories. We continue to focus our spending on classroom activities with 87% of spending dedicated to instructional and support services as shown in the chart below. The net of our recurring revenues and expenses was a positive $28K which indicates that we operated slightly better than break even on a recurring basis. We will strive to achieve this in future years but will be challenged by government funding rate increases below our inflation rates and uncertainty in the timing of funding receipts. (DECA benefited from a significant carry-over in Federal Title I monies in FY18. This will not occur in FY19.)

Our non-recurring revenues of $1.01 million were primarily the result of the generous contributions of our many dedicated supporters. Our cash balance improved to $2.1 million which exceeds our goal of two months of expenditures on hand.

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**Operating Funds**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY 2017</th>
<th>FY 2018</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beginning Balance</strong></td>
<td>$1,244,994</td>
<td>$1,367,872</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Recurring</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expenditures</td>
<td>$11,181,313</td>
<td>$11,818,504</td>
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<td><strong>Balance</strong></td>
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<td>$28,731</td>
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<td><strong>Non-Recurring</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Revenue</td>
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<td><strong>Ending Balance</strong></td>
<td>$1,367,872</td>
<td>$2,157,147</td>
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*Report does not reflect the impact of the construction project at DECA PREP funded by an OFCC grant and private philanthropy.

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**Unrecurring Revenues**

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**DECA’S IMPACT IS BEYOND DAYTON—YOU CAN COUNT ON DECA’S STORY TO CHANGE LIVES!**

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**Lives Changed Luncheon**

On May 1st, more than 250 DECA supporters packed the second Lives Changed Luncheon at the Dayton Country Club. The program showcased current DECA students and graduates who shared how a DECA education shaped their lives. Ariel Giles, a DECA ’08 grad was an impressive master of ceremonies. Ariel returned from Washington, D.C. where he works as a policy analyst in the Mayor’s office. Current students also spoke, including members of the Mock Trial Team who demonstrated their closing arguments from this year’s competition. Thanks to many generous supporters, this event raised $178,000 to support DECA’s academic programs, including summer bridge, ACT prep, and Saturday Reading Boot Camp. Thanks to your continued support, the luncheon has outgrown its location each year. Save the date, April 23, 2019, for next year’s Lives Changed Luncheon to be held at Sinclair’s Ponitz Center. If you would like to invite a table to join you or engage your company as a sponsor, please call the DECA Development Office, Bethany Renner at 937-251-8353.

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"The lessons I learned at DECA directly transferred to the self-starter attitude and intellectual curiosity necessary to succeed in college…Proudly, I stand before you today and say DECA changed my life.”

—Ariel Giles, DECA, B.A. University of Dayton, M.P.A. American University
DECA PREP
200 Homewood Ave., Dayton, OH 45405
937-610-0110

DECA Middle
110 N. Patterson Blvd., Dayton, OH 45402
937-528-6808

DECA High
300 College Park, Fitz Hall, Third Floor, Dayton, OH 45469
937-229-5780

FACEBOOK: Dayton Early College Academy
INSTAGRAM: @deca_sup | @decaprep | @decamiddle | @DECAHigh
TWITTER: @DECA_Schools | @decaprep | @decamiddle | @DECA_HS

DaytonEarlyCollege.org