Strategic Plan and Priorities
Draft 2020-2023

Working Group:
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Purpose: Future Link’s goal is to develop a strategic plan to guide the organization over the next three years. The plan will consider:
• our future goals and directions
• the students’ needs
• Future Link’s internal resources and capabilities
• the external competitors and their effects
• the required integration, coordination and scope of actions to bring about the desired outcomes

Mission Statement: Future Link seeks to close the opportunity divide for economically disadvantaged, first-generation-to-college, high potential young adults in Montgomery County, Maryland by providing them with the resources, knowledge, skills, and personalized support needed to achieve their education and career goals.

Vision Statement: We envision a community that offers all young adults equitable access to education and career development opportunities to position them to thrive in the workforce; one that invests in their abilities and partners with them to maximize their talents. Our efforts help strengthen communities.

Core Values: We believe:
• every young adult has potential and each deserves the chance to achieve that potential
• in the value of building long-term, respectful, trusting relationships with those we serve
• that helping young adults achieve their goals requires an individualized and not a “one size fits all” approach

Appendices: (1) Committee Structure and (2) Outcomes and Indicators
Goals

Program - Phase I: Seminar

Responsible Party: Program Committee and Staff

Future Link provides opportunities for its students for personal and professional development through the seminar curriculum. The seminar is an innovative, experiential 15-week journey where for 2.5 hours weekly, young adults develop self-advocacy skills, explore careers, set goals and begin developing their professional network. Students come away with a detailed education and career plan as well as their resume, increased confidence and the “soft skills” essential for employment.

Goal 1.1. Recruitment Plan. Develop a seminar student recruitment plan that generates approximately 75 applicants per semester who meet the general admission criteria (6 months).

**Responsible Party: Staff**
- Clarify population served (12 Months) **Responsible Party: Program Committee**
- Develop relationship with MCPS College and Career Counselors to identify students who plan to attend MC and meet our eligibility requirements. (12 Months) **Responsible Party: Staff**
- Enroll 45 qualified students in 3 classes each semester (10 days prior to the semester start date). (12 Months) **Responsible Party: Staff**

Goal 1.2. Achieve a 90% graduation rate each semester. All graduates will have a resume, conducted an informational interview, and a documented education and career plan. (12 Months) **Responsible Party: Staff**

Goal 1.3. Review seminar curriculum annually. (12 Months) **Responsible Party: Staff**

Goal 1.4. Review seminar application annually. (12 Months) **Responsible Party: Staff**

Program - Phase II: Post-Seminar Support Services

Responsible Party: Program Committee and Staff

Future Link provides support services to seminar graduates who enroll in Phase II based on their individual needs.

**Services:** Mentoring, Paid Internships, Scholarships, Tutoring, Academic Guidance, Check-ins, Financial Aid, Bridge Meetings, Networking, Workshops, Career Readiness Support (resume, job interview prep, LinkedIn, transfer shock), Informational Interviews, Emergency Support.
Mentoring  **Responsible Party: Allison**

Goal 2.1. Develop a Mentor recruitment plan. (12 Months)

**Responsible Party: (Program Committee)**

Goal 2.2. Of all students graduating the seminar, 60% are matched with mentors within three months (18 months)
  - Of all graduates in each seminar class, 75% submit a mentor application.
  - Of all graduates in each seminar class, 90% are eligible for a mentor and are matched within 3 months of graduation.

Goal 2.3. Of all mentorships, 75% last for 12 months (18 months)

Goal 2.4. Of all mentorships, 50% last for 24+ months (18 months)

**Academic Guidance and Career Readiness**

Goal 2.5. Create a plan for implementation of the Bridge. (12 Months)  **Responsible Party: Staff and Program Committee**

Goal 2.6. Create and conduct progress reports for all students for update on education and career status/planning. Note: Consider two versions (one for students with mentors and one for students without). (12 Months) **Responsible Party: Program Committee**

Goal 2.7. Develop a support program for students who are within one year of entering the job market. (12 Months) **Responsible Party: Program Committee**

**Internships and Part-time Jobs  Responsible Party: (Staff + Board)**

Goal 2.8. Increase the number of relevant career-related work experiences (part-time job or paid internship opportunity) to 35-40 per year. (18 months)

Goal 2.9. Create and implement a plan for cultivating a pipeline of career-related part-time jobs. (36 months)

**Outcomes (See Appendix 2)**

Goal 2.10. Review and improve existing outcomes and quality measures (6 Months)  **Responsible Party: Program Committee and Ken**

**General**

Goal 2.11. Assess the effectiveness of other program activities in helping students achieve the end goal of the program.
Marketing and Communications

Responsible Party: Communications/Marketing Committee

Future Link works proactively with local businesses and individual volunteers to support our work and the organization at large.

Responsible Party: Communications/Marketing Committee

Goal 3.1. Develop a marketing plan for various stakeholders (mission statement, annual report, printed materials, messaging, etc.) prospective corporate sponsors, mentors, volunteers, and other stakeholders. (6 Months)

Goal 3.2. Develop a comprehensive communication plan that promotes connections with businesses and engages those who conduct informational interviews. (12 Months)

Goal 3.3. Substantially increase the number of relationships with businesses and individuals that lead to volunteerism and financial support. (Note: Coordinate with Development Plan) (24 Months)

Advocacy and Influence

Responsible Party: Communications/Marketing Committee

Future Link engages County Council Members, State Legislators and Community Leaders to support the work we do.

(36 months)

Goal 4.1. Expand relationships with elected officials, policy makers and people of influence and corporate leaders.

Goal 4.2. Expand collaborations with other organizations that have mutual goals and interests and become the voice about the needs of first-generation, low income youth.
  o Host a meeting with leaders of like organizations

Goal 4.3. Establish relationships with media and a media plan.
Sustainability of Future Link

Responsible Party: Fundraising Committee

Future Link generates resources needed and employs sufficient staff to sustain the organization and enable students to achieve the long-term goal(s) of its program.

Responsible Party: Fundraising Committee

Goal 5.1. Create a fundraising plan. (6 Months)

Goal 5.2. Develop a corporate volunteer strategy. (6 Months)

Goal 5.3. Expand Board Capacity (Responsible Party: Governance Committee)
  o Define committee structure (At October 2019 Meeting)
  o Improve on-boarding process for new Board members (12 months)
  o Increase individual member engagement (12 Months)

Goal 5.4. Create a technology plan to ensure that we have the necessary infrastructure (hardware and software) and protocols that enable efficient data management. (12 Months) Responsible Party: Mindi

Goal 5.5. Increase the number of FTE staff to 4.5 by end of FY 20 and 5.5 by the end of FY21. (12/24 months)

Goal 5.6. Achieve a more balanced set of revenue sources across foundations, the public sector, individuals and corporations. (24-36 months) Responsible Party: Mindi

Goal 5.7. Increase revenues to $600K by end of FY21 and $650K by end of FY22. (24/36 months) Responsible Party: Mindi
Appendix 1

Proposed Committee Structure

Communications/Marketing Committee (Staff: Mindi and Allison)
Chair: Ken
Members: Marilyn, Julia, Yamu, Jim

**Charge:** To ensure that all messaging for the organization (including the mission statement, supporting documents and published materials) effectively represents who we are, what we do and our impact.

Fundraising Committee (Staff: Mindi)
Chair: Kelly
Members: Jeff, Leigh, George

**Charge:** To ensure the creation and implementation of a realistic and achievable fundraising plan that generates the fiscal resources necessary to sustain the organization.

Program Committee (Staff: Allison and Mindi)
Chair: Max
Members: Leigh, Ebonie, Tonya

**Charge:** To ensure that the seminar and post-seminar support programs meet the needs of participants by preparing them for success in the workforce.

Executive Committee/Governance Committee (Staff: Mindi)
Members: Officers (Leigh, Marilyn, Yamu, Tim, Ken)

**Responsible for:**
- Overseeing the organization's budget, finances and staff compensation
- Board development
- Identifying and nominating potential new board members
- Review strategic plan and priorities annually
Appendix 2
Outcomes, Outcome Indicators, and Measures of Quality

Short-term Outcomes:

Outcome: Program participants make a commitment to a successful future
Indicator: % who graduate the seminar (including connecting with a professional and establishing an academic and career plan)
Data Source: Future Link
Indicator: % who report an increase in self-confidence
Data Source: Student post-seminar questionnaire

Quality Measure: % who would recommend the seminar to a friend
Data Source: Student post-seminar questionnaire

Intermediate-term Outcomes:

Outcome: Program participants persist in achieving their academic goal
Indicator: The one-year persistence rate (from fall to fall) of seminar graduates enrolled at MC
Data Source: Future Link
Indicator: The number and % of seminar graduates actively enrolled at MC or 4-year institutions*
Data Source: Montgomery College and student self-report.
Indicator: The number and % of seminar graduates during each academic year who have completed an AA degree or certificate or who continue to actively pursue an associate or bachelor’s degree
Data Source: Montgomery College and student self-report.

* Which years to base this calculation on is yet to be determined, since in the early years of the program there few, if any, post-seminar services offered to seminar graduates.

Outcome: Program participants seek help in achieving their personal, academic, and career goals by accessing Future Link services

Indicator: The number and % of seminar graduates who enroll in the Future Link post-seminar support program, including:
- The number and % of seminar graduates who have been in an active mentorship
- The number and % of seminar graduates who have participated in a paid internship arranged by Future Link
- The number of seminar graduates who attend workshops and events each fiscal year
- The number of seminar graduates who seek tutoring assistance each fiscal year
Data Source: Future Link
Indicator: The number of seminar graduates who receive scholarship assistance
Data Source: Future Link
Indicator: The number of seminar graduates who access academic and career guidance from staff or volunteers  
Data Source: Future Link

Long-term Outcome:

*Outcome: Program participants achieve self-sufficiency*  
**Indicator:** The number and % of seminar graduates who have completed the necessary academic credentials for their career of choice and/or have achieved full-time employment at $18+ per hour with advancement opportunities**  
Data Source: Montgomery College and student self-report

** Which years to base this calculation on is yet to be determined, since in the early years of the program there few, if any, post-seminar services offered to seminar graduates. Also, seminar graduates in the 2 or 3 most recent years should likely be excluded, since it is still early in their academic careers at MC.