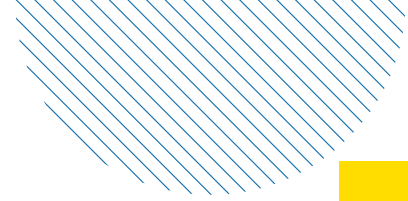


# BUILDING JOBS-FIRST HIGHER EDUCATION



**2022**  
**ANNUAL**  
**REPORT**



## WHAT WE DO

Our country's education and workforce systems fall short of the needs of America's most marginalized young people, lacking programs that structure the transition between high school and upward career mobility. Young adults – especially young adults of color – are pressed into an inequitable and false choice after high school: forgo income and accrue often-times significant debt in pursuit of a traditional college degree or forestall education altogether to take a low-wage job with limited opportunities for advancement.

Simultaneously, the demand by employers for middle-skill jobs is growing tremendously. Propel America focuses specifically on healthcare given the sector's need for a talented, diverse workforce and current data that shows an impending substantial shortage of labor – a gap of more than 3.2 million workers within five years. By 2030, the healthcare industry is expected to grow by 16%.

**Propel America is filling talent demand in healthcare through building quick, accessible, supported pathways to upward mobility for some of our country's most deserving young people.**

**13M**

young people who are unemployed, not enrolled in school, or are working a low-wage job

**2.6M**

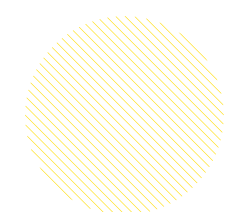
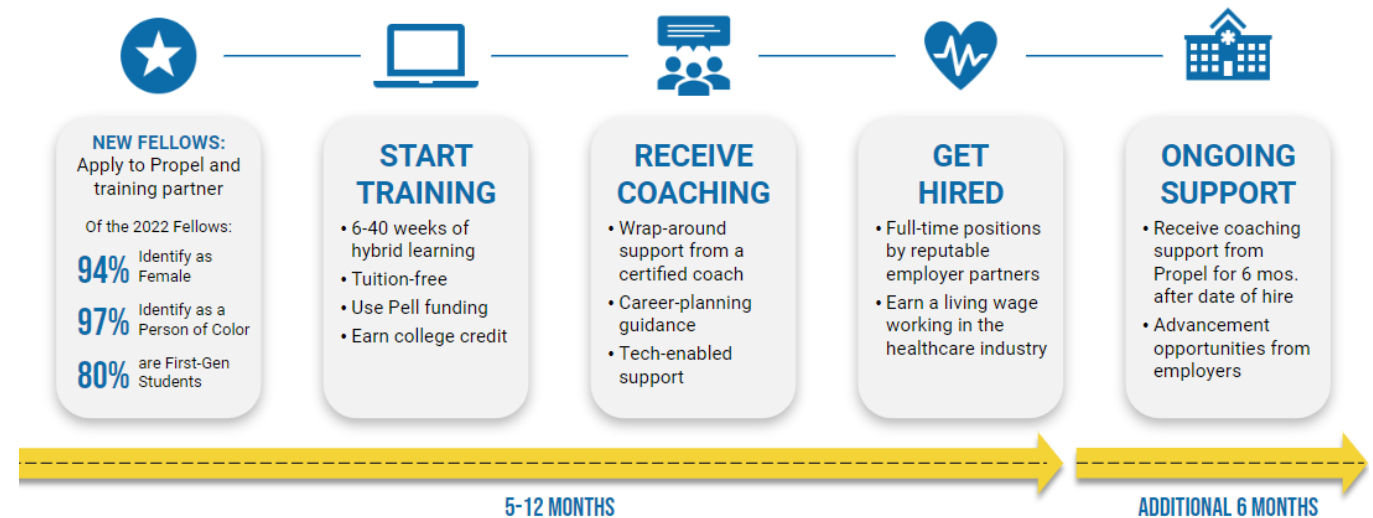
new healthcare jobs added by 2030

**Middle-skilled jobs are 52% of the labor market, but only 43% of workers are trained at that level.**

**Propel sees an urgent opportunity to provide high school graduates with more supported options to build wealth and to provide employers with a reliable, diverse talent pipeline to fill their demand while building greater equity in the workforce.**

**Propel is building a more equitable option – one we call jobs-first higher education.**






## HOW JOBS-FIRST HIGHER EDUCATION WORKS FOR FELLOWS





## KEY PROGRAMS

Propel operates in four (soon to be five) regions:

-  Baton Rouge, LA
-  Camden, NJ
-  Newark, NJ
-  Philadelphia, PA
-  Los Angeles, CA *(launching in Fall 2023)*

### Propel's training partners:



### Propel's employer partners:



## Propel currently offers three pathways:



**MEDICAL ASSISTANT**



**BEHAVIORAL TECHNICIAN**






**STERILE PROCESSING TECHNICIAN**

### TRAIN TO EARN:

**Fellows** learn technical and durable skills, acquire credentials, and earn college credits during a 6-8 month training program to help them access employment.

**Employers** hire trained workers into full-time roles that pay at least a living wage.

#### Financials:





-  \$0 cost to fellows
-  Pell-eligible technical training
-  Employer partner contributes per fellow hired

### EARN & LEARN:

**Fellows** begin earning income quickly (within a few weeks) and then earn credentials and college credits while they are employed.

**Employers** hire workers into full-time roles and offer employer-embedded training

#### Financials:

-  \$0 cost to fellows
-  Technical training costs covered by employer
-  Employer partner contributes per fellow hired
-  Education is post-Propel and covered by employer benefits

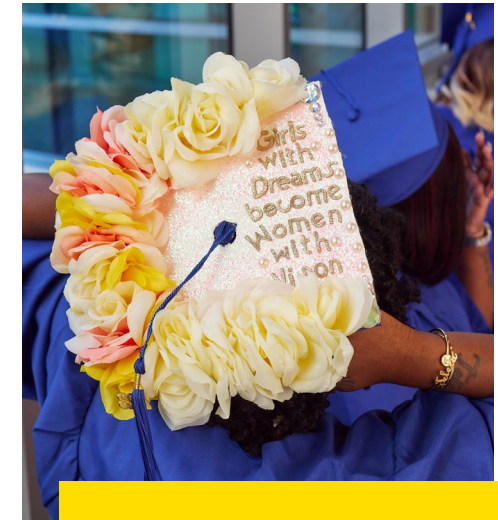
# HOW JOBS-FIRST HIGHER EDUCATION WORKS



INTEGRATION WITH PARTNERS

## TRAINING PARTNERS

We partner with higher education institutions to offer our fellows training in medical field pathways and the ability to earn stackable, competency-based credentials alongside credits, incentivizing fellows to continue education later in their career. To help maximize fellows' immediate earning potential, Propel is committed to tuition-free training and provides fellows with financial support through a stipend and emergency aid funding.



## COHORT SPOTLIGHT

### LOUISIANA FALL 2022:

- 8 graduates as certified medical assistants
- 100% Black women
- 100% mothers
- 5 hired full-time at date of publication

*Propel is providing a solution that meets the needs of rural and urban communities and the needs of young parents.*

## EMPLOYER PARTNERS

Propel works backward from employers' needs to ensure our fellowship is designed with the end goal in mind – a job in healthcare that pays a living wage and leads to an upwardly mobile career. We work closely with employers to confirm demand, assure all requirements for externships and hiring are communicated, and to understand what competencies are most important.



## RECRUITMENT

Through partnership with high schools, job fairs, digital advertising, and referrals from alumni, community organizations, and employer partners, Propel seeks out young people who are a strong fit for our fellowship.

## OUR FELLOWS

- 18-24 year olds
- BIPOC
- from lower-income communities
- first in their family to attend college
- eager to launch a meaningful career

## COACHING

During the cohort-based fellowship, all fellows have the support of a Propel success coach, trained to support our population of fellows. Coaches lead weekly durable skill-building sessions to prepare for the world of work based on Propel's 4 C's. Our coaching seeks to be culturally-responsive, relevant, relationship-based, and outcomes-focused.



**Confidence**



**Competence**



**Commitment**



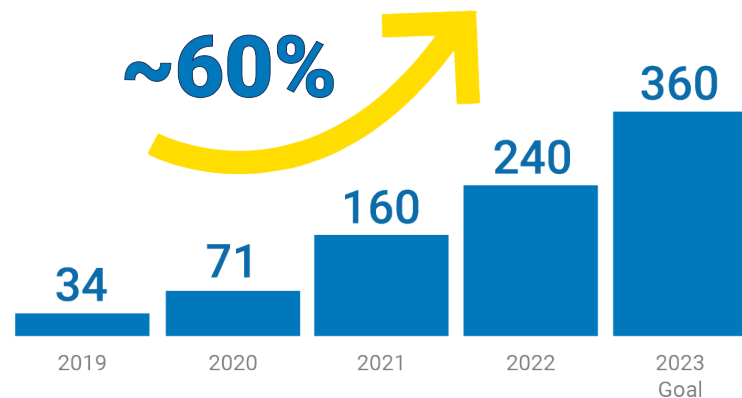
**Collaboration**



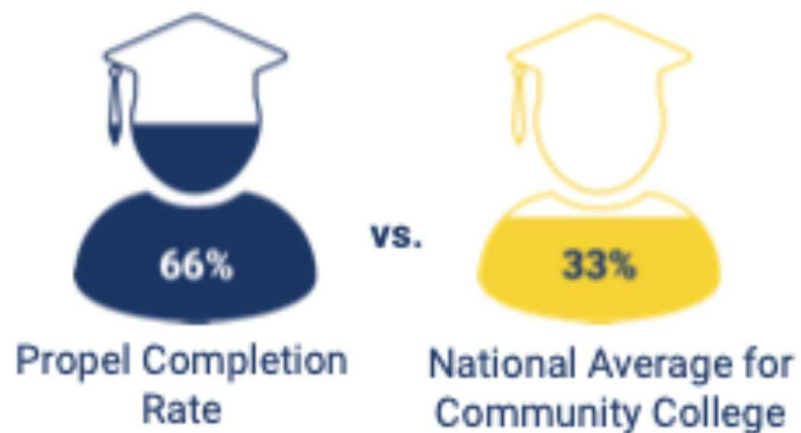
## OUR IMPACT

Outcomes with Fellows:

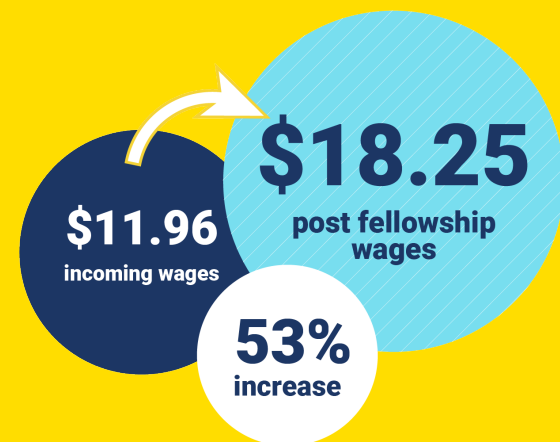
**394** fellows enrolled since launching in 2019



annually increasing our enrollment by an average of 60%



## Wage Gain\*



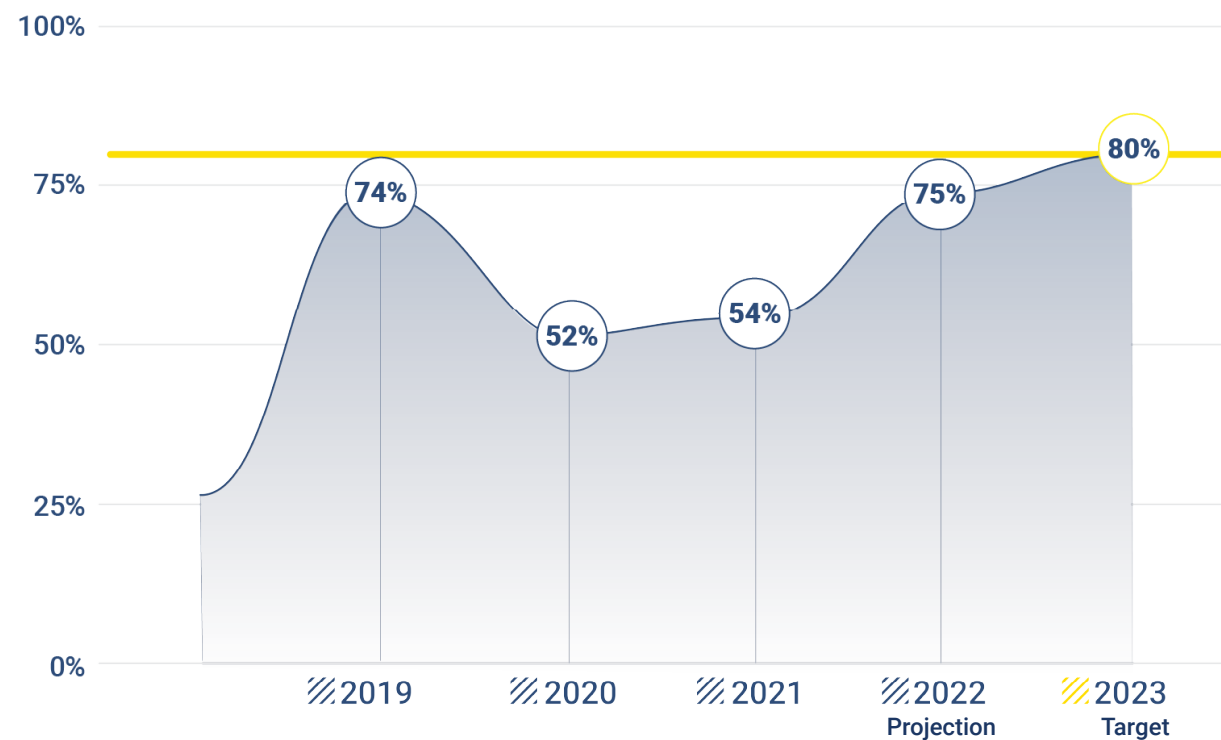
\* Propel uses MIT's living wage calculator to assure living wages are being earned with as many jobs as possible, and these starting/ending wages are aggregate, but vary across our regions.

## Fellows Served



**100%**  
100% of fellows completing their training without any debt.

## Hire Rates vs. Long-Term Goal





**PROPEL HAS SUPPORTED EMPLOYERS IN FILLING FULL-TIME POSITIONS AND BUILDING A MORE LOCAL WORKFORCE THAT REPRESENTS THEIR PATIENT POPULATIONS.**

## EARLY WINS WITH EMPLOYERS

While we've worked with the majority of our partners for under two years, we are already seeing how **our work is catalyzing change in hiring and retention practices.**

**31**

### 31 NET PROMOTER SCORE (NPS)

from training managers at our employer partners on their likelihood to recommend hosting Propel fellows to others



#### QUAESSA, NEWARK FALL 2022 IS IN NEWARK IN WEEK 4.

"Quaessa is super friendly, punctual, and Epic-knowledgeable; she has a go-getter mentality and is open to any suggestions given by upper management and her colleagues. She knows how to take and enter vitals for and fully triage each patient. It is truly a pleasure to write a review on Quaessa. We love her; she is amazing."

- Practice Manager, RWJBH Clinic

## EMPLOYER SPOTLIGHT

When some fellows who had been performing well in externship did not pass their MA certification exam on the first try (a requirement for hire), our employer partner strategized with us to develop a retention solution while our fellows studied to retake the test. Our partner hired them as patient care technicians (no cert. required) and offered support for studying.

## SUCCESS STORIES



“

*“Having an externship with a real employer gave me hands-on experience I needed, and my coach, Hassan, helped me; he was there if I needed anything personal, emotional, or spiritual.”*

Tafari Maignan, Newark, Fall 2021

Tafari is a newly certified medical assistant in New Jersey; Working in healthcare has been a lifelong dream of his. He began his training with Propel in fall 2021, earned his certification this past spring, and was hired to be working as a full-time medical assistant in summer 2022. Tafari continues in his full-time role and has come back to speak to future cohorts of Propel fellows about the opportunities ahead.

# WHAT WE LEARNED

## ESTABLISH NEW PATHWAYS & PARTNERS



We need to diversify our pathway offerings and partnerships to include even faster paths to paychecks and appeal to a wider array of fellows. We will support 1,000 young adults into living wage jobs by the close of 2025.

## INVEST IN TECHNOLOGY AND DATA ANALYTICS



We need to leverage technology to amplify the impact of our coaches and predictive analytics to provide the most impactful support to fellows.

## WORK AT THE SYSTEMS-LEVEL



We need to amplify how critical jobs-first higher education is to creating more equitable pathways to choice-filled lives. We need to advocate for policies and infrastructure that legitimize non-traditional pathways on a systems-level scale.



# & WHERE WE ARE GOING

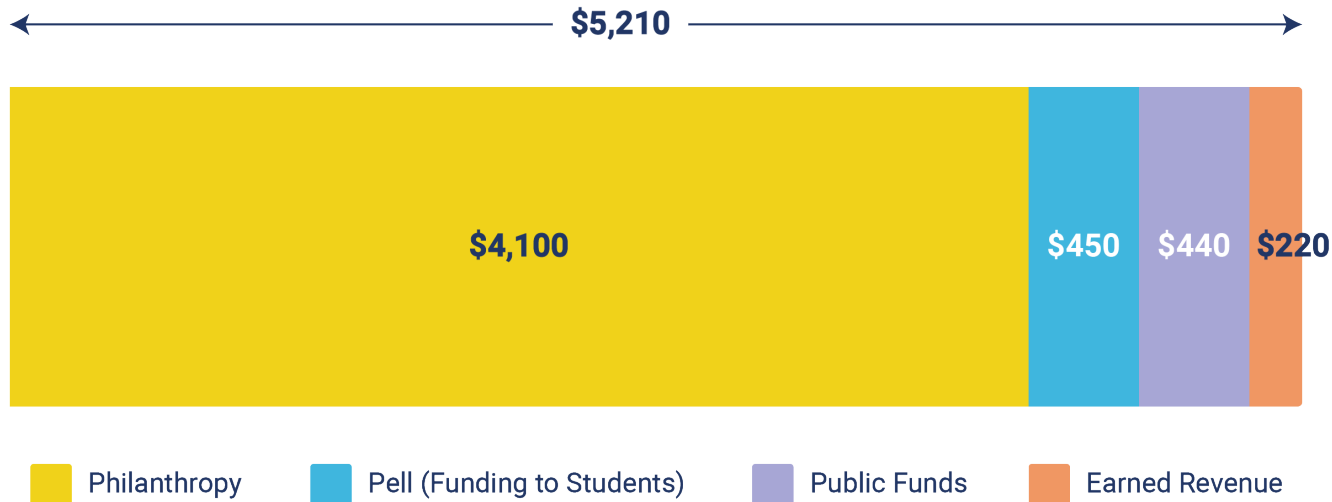


# FINANCIALS

Unaudited financials presented on a management basis\*

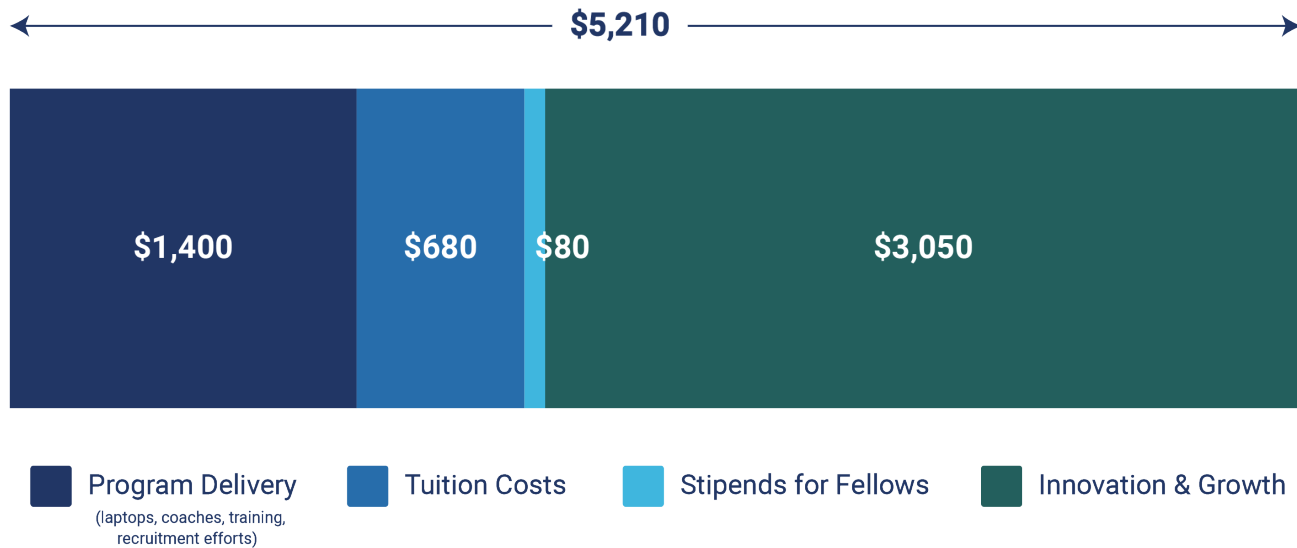
## FUNDER SPOTLIGHT

### Summary of FY22 Revenue<sup>^</sup>



**Philanthropy Breakdown:**  
 \$3,070 Foundations  
 \$1,030 Individual Gifts

### Summary of FY22 Expenses<sup>^</sup>



<sup>^</sup>Scale 1:1000



“We support Propel America because their vision to build a better system, one that seamlessly connects education and employment, is rooted in a pragmatic understanding of how disconnected our education and workforce silos are. **Propel is successfully meeting the postsecondary needs of young people by bringing together high schools, institutions of higher education, training organizations, and employers into a unified system of skill-building, mentorship, job placement, and ongoing support for young adults.**”



**Farhad Ashgar**

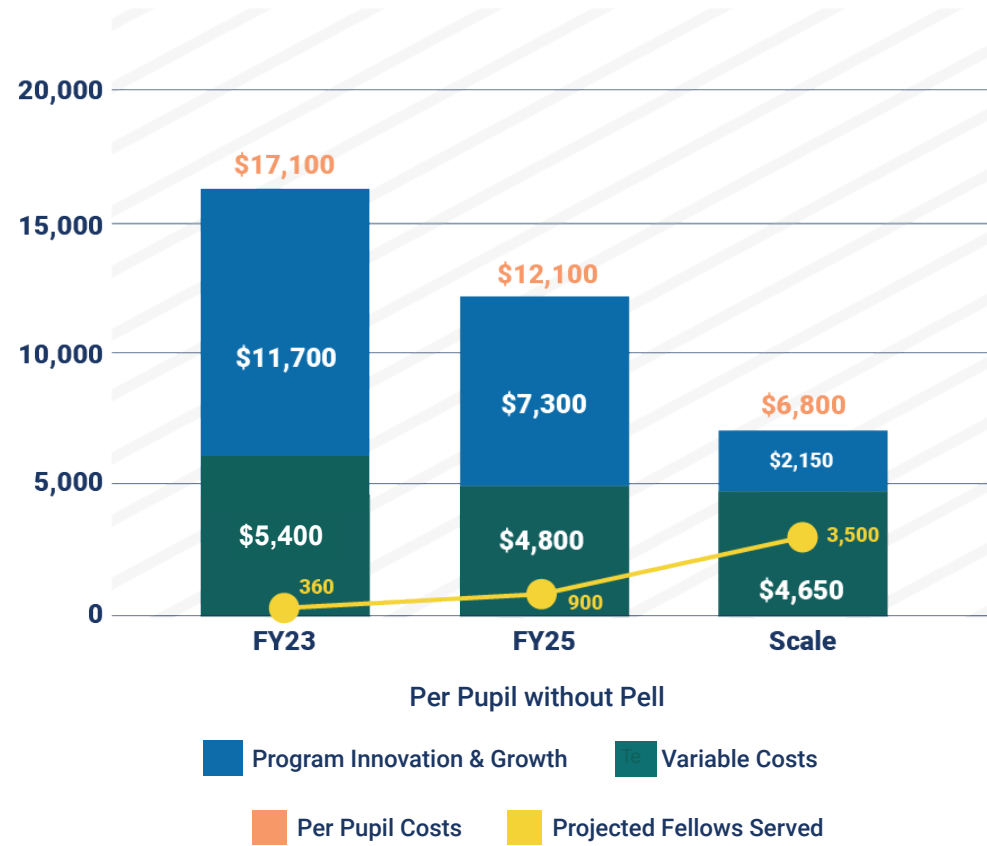
Program Officer, Pathways to Postsecondary Success

Carnegie Corporation of New York

Funder since 2019

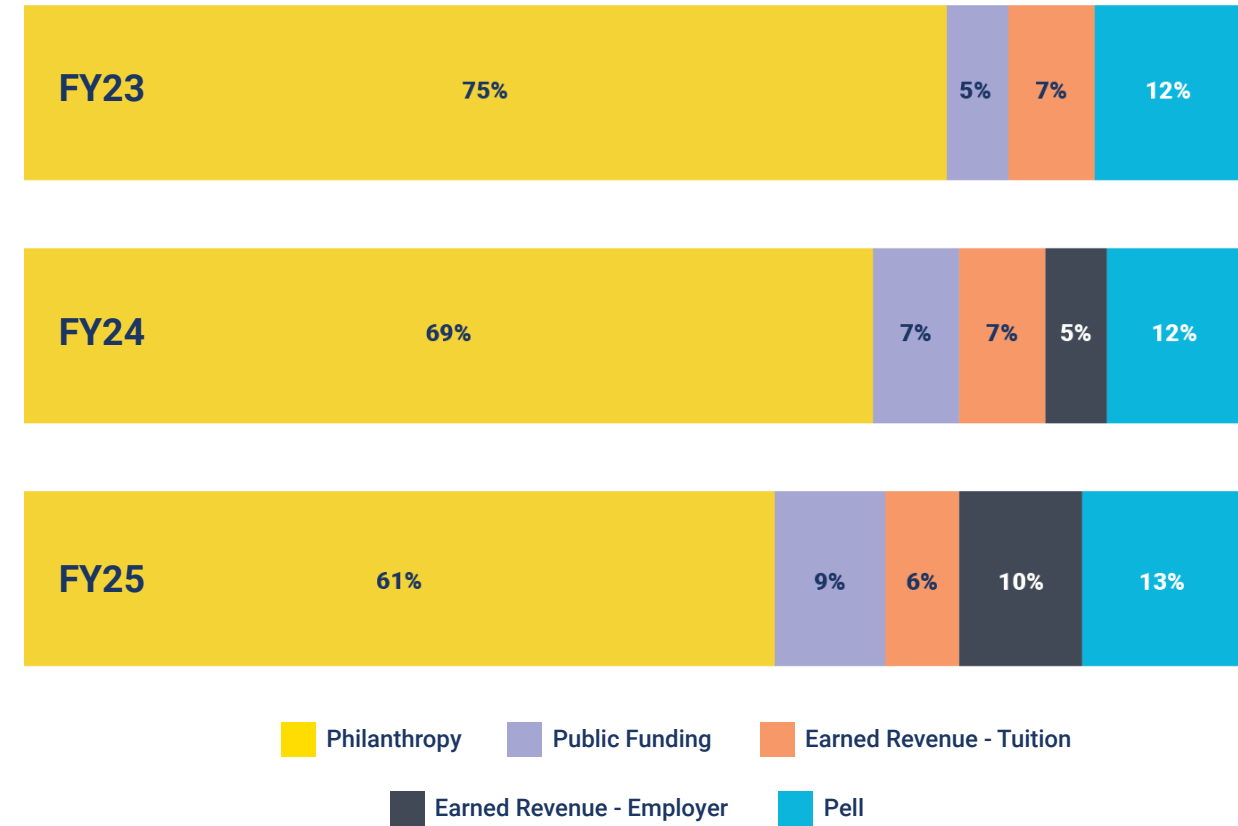
\* For purposes of presentation, the FY22 unaudited financials are shown on a modified-accrual basis; used by management to reflect cash receipts of philanthropy and adjust for non-cash accruals.

### Cost Structure Change for Outyears

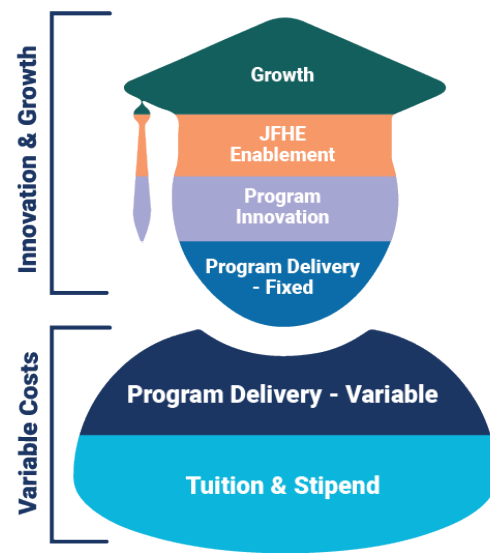


### Reliance on Philanthropy

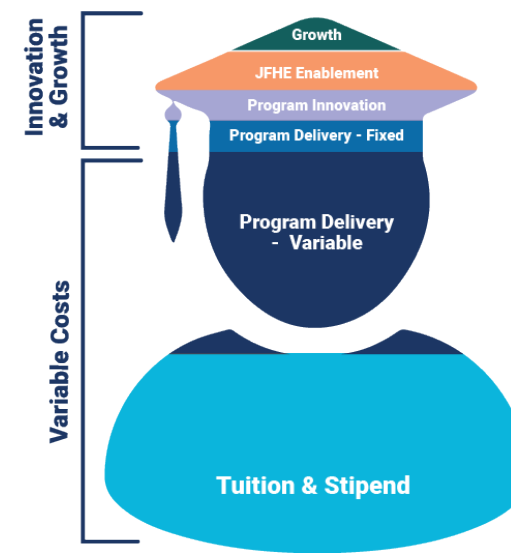
Overall percentage of philanthropy in our budget will decline by 14% from FY23 to FY25



### FY23 Budget Assumptions



FY23 Budget (\$17,100 per pupil)



At Scale (\$6,800 per pupil)

## LETTER FROM THE CEO

To our Propel community,

Over two years ago, I was honored to join the team at Propel as our founding Chief Program Officer. **With great humility, I stepped into the role of Chief Executive Officer last October**, and throughout my tenure, I have felt great urgency to provide our country’s young people of color with more equitable pathways to economic freedom.

For me, our collective aim to bring greater equity to economic mobility is deeply personal. **I share the lived experiences of our fellows who are trying to balance immediate financial needs with their drive to have fulfilling careers.** Immediately out of high school, with all the talent and ambition in the world, yet without an affordable or guided pathway to traditional college, I began my career by earning a culinary arts credential, leading restaurants before I attended college. **My forced hand to quickly earn a credential and income out of high school informs my drive to ensure high school students and recent graduates – especially those who look like me – have the opportunity to create informed postsecondary plans,** access high-quality options to quickly earn meaningful income, and build choice-filled lives while meaningfully providing for their families.

When I reflect on my personal career journey, and I think about Propel’s impact in 2022, I also think of Remy. Remy is a newly hired certified medical assistant in Philadelphia. She started her training with Propel in our January 2022 cohort and was hired this past August by Jefferson University Hospital. Remy is excited about her new role and told our team “I keep texting other people from my Propel cohort, and we’re supporting each other as we start our jobs.”She is such a believer in our model that she immediately paid it forward by serving as a paid teacher’s assistant for the summer 2022 cohort’s monthly clinical skills-lab trainings at Penn Medicine. **Remy’s career trajectory has changed as a result of her commitment and hard work, the guidance and opportunities Propel was able to provide, and the forward-thinking employer partner who is committed to hire local talent.**

**“FOR ME, OUR COLLECTIVE WORK TO BRING GREATER EQUITY TO ECONOMIC MOBILITY IS DEEPLY PERSONAL.”**

**CHAD ROUNTREE**  
CEO, PROPEL AMERICA



As we head into 2023, I am eager to continue refining our model. At Propel, we are deeply committed to learning – working to ensure our program is the most effective, efficient, and affirming training program. We will continue to prioritize strong engagement with our employer partners to ensure our design aligns to the skills they will hire for with early career professionals. **We will launch with a new partner – College of Health Care Professional – and with a new pathway – Behavioral Technicians – and in a new region – Los Angeles – as we drive toward a world in which every young adult, especially those of color and from lower income backgrounds – have more equitable access to building a choice-filled life.**

Propel has always existed through the generosity of our partners and supporters who, like us, believe in educational and economic equity. Partners and supporters who connect us to potential fellows at their local high schools, who invest in our innovative model, and who champion a jobs-first higher education across their communities. We look forward to all that’s to come, and **we appreciate your commitment to our deserving fellows.**

In partnership,  
Chad

# BOARD LETTER

To our community of supporters,

In 2018, I co-founded Propel as a result of my experiences working in the K-12 sector. I recognized then that despite our best efforts to improve the quality of education for our students, scores of our graduates lacked a meaningful postsecondary plan, often floundering in 2 and 4-year colleges. **John White (my co-founder) and I believed then, as we do now, that for many recent high school graduates, our country needs to provide a more structured transition to a living wage job that leads to career mobility.**

Now, more than four years into this work, **Propel has served hundreds of fellows, improved completion rates, and developed a “jobs-first higher education” model** that both addresses this need and supports the growing demand for trained workers in the healthcare industry.

Looking back on 2022, I’m inspired by the hard work of our fellows and all they’ve accomplished. And I’m incredibly proud of our new CEO, Chad Rountree, and the vision he’s brought for impact in this next chapter of the organization. **With new regions, pathways, and partners on our horizon, it is my honor to now serve as the Chair of the Board and continue to work alongside Chad.**

Paymon Rouhanifard  
*Co-founder and current Chair of the Board*

## OUR BOARD:

**JOHN COZZI**

*Founding Board Member*

**CASEY LEONETTI**

*Board Member*

**JEFF NELSON**

*Board Member*

**LISETTE NIEVES**

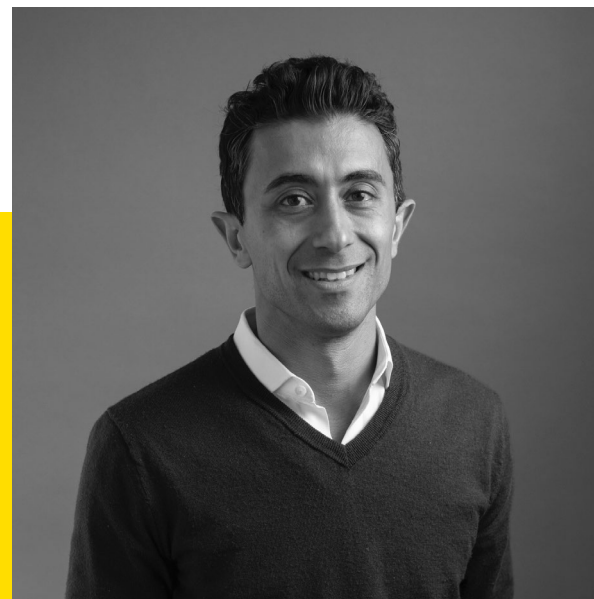
*Board Member*

**PAYMON ROUHANIFARD**

*Co-founder and Founding CEO, Chairman of the Board*

**JOHN WHITE**

*Co-founder and Board Member*



# OUR TEAM



Propel America’s staff and board members, while spread out across the country, are unified in a commitment to educational equity. We are building a jobs-first higher education model for young people, together. We are making work work, together, as we live the Propel values:

COURAGE

IMPACT

JOY

INNOVATION

EQUITY

TEAM

TO OUR TEAM OF CHAMPIONS, THANK YOU:

**THANKS**

Propel America exists for the upward mobility of our fellows. Our impact – their changed life outcomes – is made possible by the generosity of so many supporters.

In addition to our philanthropic champions, we want to thank our training and employer partners, skills labs and externship hosts and instructors, and, of course, the fellows and their families.

**TRAINING PARTNERS:**



**EMPLOYER PARTNERS:**



**\$1M+**

Bloomberg Philanthropies  
ICONIQ Impact  
Walton Family Foundation

Balson Household  
Cozzi Household  
Eltrich Household

**\$250K-\$999K**

Anonymous Foundation  
Carnegie Corporation  
Catalyze Challenge  
Draper Richards Kaplan  
Gates Foundation  
Schmidt Futures  
ECMC Foundation

Dunn Household  
Finnegan Household  
Mai Household  
Moran Household

**\$100K-\$249K**

Beth and Ravenel Curry Foundation  
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana  
The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation

Amato Household  
Pryma Household

**\$50K-\$99K**

Capital Area United Way  
Ceres Foundation  
SkillUp

**\$1K-\$49K**

The Provident Bank Foundation  
Fund for the City of New York  
RWJBarnabas Health

Spector Household  
Leonetti Household  
Forman Household  
Nieves Household  
Nelson Household



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