

# OMD DEGREES OF IMPACT REPORT

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# A LETTER FROM BOARD LEADERSHIP

At One Million Degrees (OMD), we believe in the incredible potential of community college students, and we're committed to helping them succeed in school, work, and life.

As OMD Board Leaders, we've seen firsthand how our holistic student support empowers scholars to achieve their college and career goals. This work changes scholars' lives. But OMD's impact doesn't end there—it ripples through families, communities, and the systems in which we live and work.

As we reflect on the past year and look toward an exciting future, this impact is clearer than ever. Now two years into our expanded partnership with City Colleges of Chicago, we've grown from serving 650 students in 2022 to over 2,000 this year, and we're already seeing promising results. Halfway through the first phase of this expansion, our scholars are demonstrating strong persistence from fall to spring and fall to fall semesters—a powerful predictor of college completion. This is just one signal that our work continues to make a measurable, meaningful impact on scholars' lives.

In this report, you'll learn more about that early impact data, and read stories that bring it to life.

You'll meet Deyssi, who, despite many obstacles, persisted in school with the support and guidance of her OMD Program Coordinator, Shatera. You'll also hear from Ameer, who has grown into a confident leader, finding his voice and purpose through opportunities like our AI cohort in partnership with Microsoft.

You'll read about OMD's ever-widening impact within our professional community from Mark Anthony, a former OMD staff member who is now Program Officer for the Angell Foundation, one of our generous funders. You'll see the ripple effect our impact has via scholar alumni who have returned as coaches, mentoring the next generation of OMD scholars.

As you read these pages, we hope you feel as proud as we do of all we have accomplished together. Every engaged scholar, new coach, and transformative partnership is a testament to your commitment to this mission. Thank you for standing alongside us.

With gratitude,



**Thania Panopoulos**  
Co-Chair, Board of Directors



**Andrew Beideman**  
Co-Chair, Board of Directors

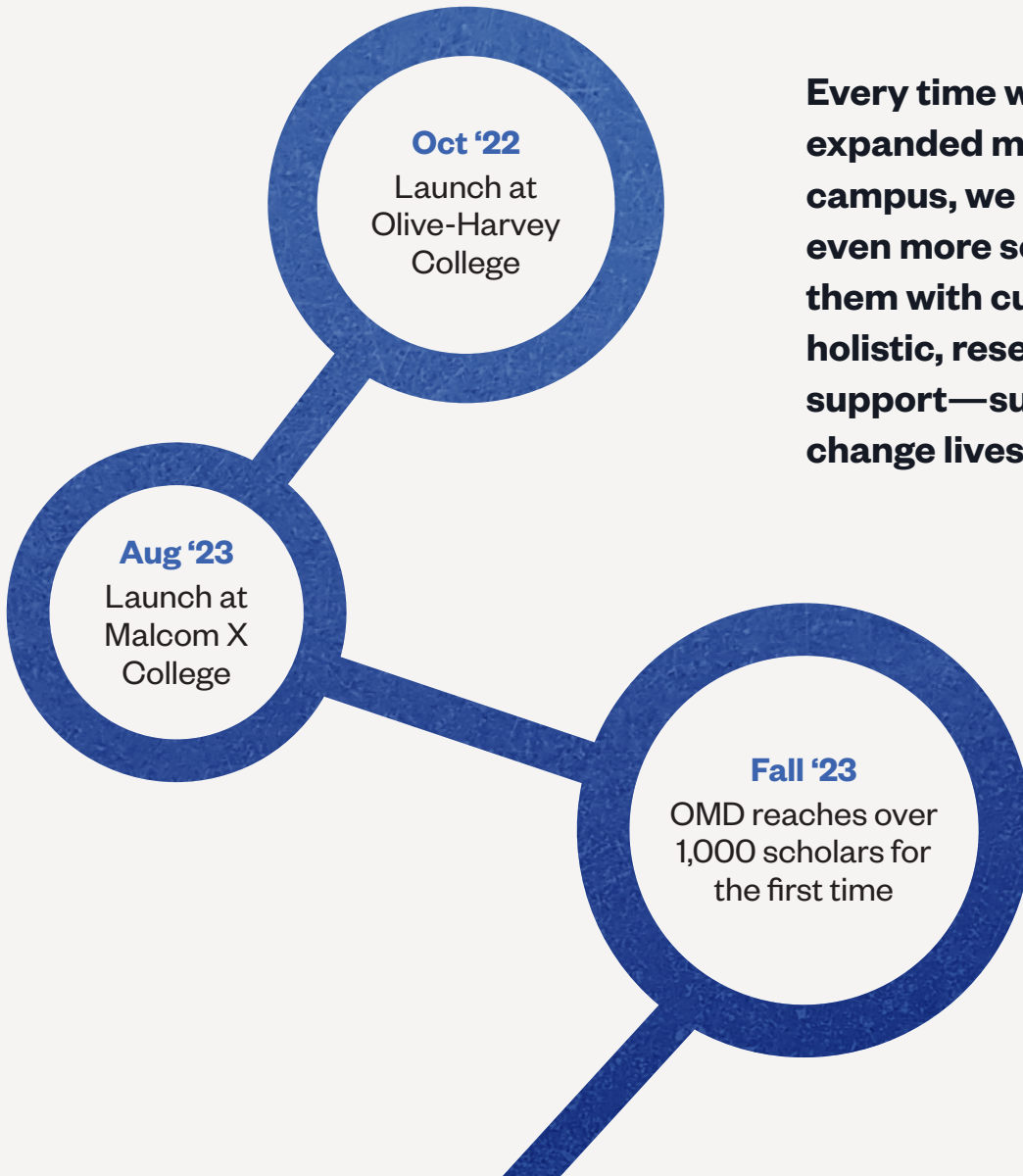
# IMPACT THAT SCALES

**One Million Degrees is serving more scholars than ever.**

2024 brought us halfway through our pilot expansion project with City Colleges of Chicago (CCC), where we are scaling to provide the OMD support model to thousands of students across all seven of the CCC campuses.

Under the expanded model, live at Olive-Harvey, Malcolm X and, as of Fall 2024, Harold Washington Colleges, all eligible students have access to OMD support—without having to apply.

**Every time we launch this expanded model at another campus, we are able to reach even more scholars, providing them with customized, holistic, research-backed support—support that can change lives.**



# OMD SCHOLARS CONTINUE TO GROW

**Aug '24**  
Launch at  
Harold  
Washington  
College

**Feb '24**  
OMD reaches  
over 2,000  
scholars

**Fall '25  
and Beyond**  
Expansion  
continues to scale  
in City Colleges  
of Chicago



Represents all scholars served across all City Colleges of Chicago campuses

# EARLY IMPACT FINDINGS

**OMD expansion drives scholar academic and career success.**

Two years into the OMD expansion, we've found promising impact data that demonstrates how our model continues to impact students' persistence.

**20%**

**Improvement**  
in fall-to-fall persistence at Olive-Harvey

**18%**

**Improvement** in fall-to-fall persistence improvement for Black male OMD Scholars

**13%**

**Improvement**  
in fall-to-fall persistence at Malcolm X

Percentages reflect internal data from the Decisions Support Team at City Colleges of Chicago



# IMPACT THAT FUELS PERSISTENCE

**“OMD and Shatera, that’s been my second family. They’re who I can run to when I need help. That’s what OMD is like—they show you you’re not alone.”**

**“I’m so proud that I didn’t give up. Literally a year ago, I nearly dropped out. And here I am now, in my second year, a couple months away from graduating.”**

We hear it repeatedly in scholar surveys and research findings: OMD Program Coordinators are one of the most impactful parts of the OMD experience. This is particularly true for Deysси and Shatera.

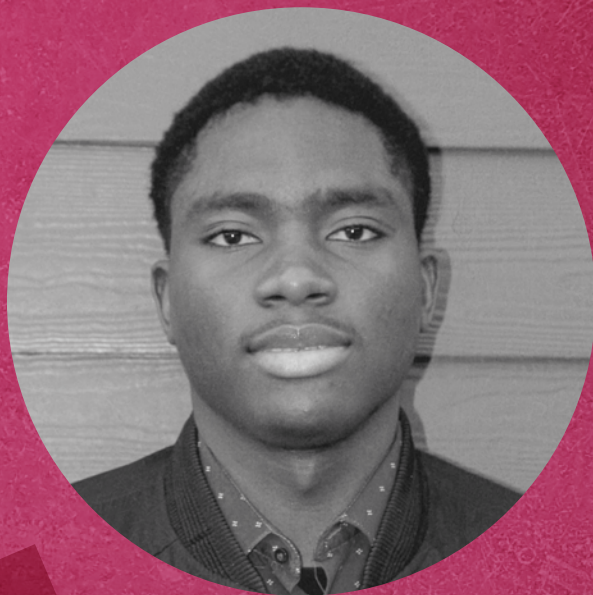
For Deysси, an OMD Scholar and participant in the Teach Chicago Tomorrow program at Truman College, the college experience has been marked by obstacles including moments of academic pressure and self-doubt. But instead of quitting, Deysси persisted—driven by a dream of becoming a teacher and fueled by the support of OMD and her Program Coordinator Shatera.

Shatera supported Deysси through some of the toughest moments of her time in college. “One year ago today,” she says, “I called Shatera up and said, ‘I’m dropping out. I don’t want to do this anymore.’ She didn’t force me to stay—but she did ask me to rethink it. She reminded me that we all fall, that we’re not perfect, and that we’re all going to go through times where we just need to continue. And that’s what I did.”

Reflecting on what it’s been like working with Deysси, Shatera says, “She shows up authentically herself and it shines through in our work together. Deysси has the courage to want things for herself, to know when to ask for help, and she has chosen her own success. I am just immensely proud of her.”

Now, just a few months before she graduates from Truman College and pursues her bachelor’s degree at Northeastern Illinois University, Deysси’s persistence is stronger than ever. “I’m so proud that I didn’t give up. Literally a year ago, I nearly dropped out. And here I am now, in my second year, a couple months away from graduating.”

Deysси’s story is a testament to the power of persistence—and to the critical role OMD Program Coordinators play in helping scholars overcome the hardships that so often stand in the way of their success.



# IMPACT THAT LAUNCHES LEADERS

**“This is just the beginning of my journey, I am excited to see where it leads.”**

**“With OMD’s support, I have been able to make the most of every opportunity.”**

When Ameer Longe arrived in the United States from Nigeria, he brought with him a determination to build a future in computer science. Since then, as a student and OMD Scholar at Olive-Harvey College, has excelled academically, emerged as a leader, and advocated for himself and his peers.

For Ameer, OMD has been more than a support system; it has been a launchpad.

Ameer hit the ground running when he began school. A dedicated student, he earned a place in Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society recognizing academic excellence. He joined the Olive-Harvey Student Government Association as a Senator, and was later elected President, a role he currently serves.

Throughout this journey, Ameer says that OMD and the encouragement of Harold, his Program Coordinator, provided mentorship, guidance, and support to help ease his path. “OMD allows me to focus on my studies, my leadership roles, and my growth,” he says. “With their support, I have been able to make the most of every opportunity.”

One of the opportunities Ameer seized was an initiative OMD launched with Microsoft as part of their generous support of our work: Generative AI for Beginners program, powered by Microsoft tools. This application-based program is designed to teach community college students about how to use generative AI technologies in their academic and professional development. Launched in 2024 with two cohorts, including Ameer’s, this pilot reached 39 students, attaining a 90% certification rate in the first cohort and 84% in the second cohort.

“This program was a game-changer,” he says. “I learned not only how AI can be used to advance academic and professional goals but also the importance of using it ethically and responsibly. It gave me a strong foundation in a field I am passionate about and has opened my eyes to possibilities in technology and beyond.”

From Olive-Harvey, Ameer plans to continue his education, specializing in cybersecurity and computer science, at the University of Illinois at Chicago.



## Mark Anthony's Story



# IMPACT THAT CHANGES SYSTEMS

**“OMD is an important part of this ecosystem. On one hand, OMD is a cheerleader for community college students in Chicago. On the other hand, OMD is invested in systems level thinking and change. OMD asks, how can we nationally partner and change systems? How can we reimagine the community college student experience from top to bottom?”**

PAUL M. ANGELL  
FAMILY FOUNDATION

Mark Anthony Florido's journey with One Million Degrees (OMD) tells the story of OMD's impact, not only on the lives of scholars, but also on the careers of those who dedicate themselves to our mission and the education field at large.

Beginning as a Program Associate in 2009, Mark saw OMD, then known as the Illinois Education Foundation, in its formative, “scrappy” days. Tasks were very hands-on, ranging from tracking down suits for scholar events to locating shelter for an unhoused student.

“We were 360 degrees of support,” he says, “and at that time, no one was doing that for community college students. You could feel the impact through each student's reaction. It was clear that what we were doing mattered.”

In those early years, OMD was already proving itself as a powerful force for community college students in Chicago, expanding from serving just 15 new scholars to nearly 75 within three years. The demand was tangible, and the support OMD offered was making an undeniable difference.

Mark Anthony's experience at OMD changed his career trajectory, leading him to pursue a graduate degree in higher education and student affairs. Now, as Program Officer – Social Impact at the Angell Foundation, he continues to champion educational access—only this time, from the vantage point of one of OMD's funders.

The Angell Foundation is dedicated to advancing a world of thriving and equitable communities, and its support for OMD reflects a shared commitment to removing barriers and creating opportunities for community college students. On his work with the Foundation, Mark Anthony says, “I now work at the ecosystems level, rather than working with individual students, focusing on the full educational landscape and how we can better support students.”

About OMD, Mark Anthony continues, “OMD is an important part of this ecosystem. On one hand, OMD is a cheerleader for community college students in Chicago. On the other hand, OMD is invested in systems level thinking and change. OMD asks, how can we nationally partner and change systems? How can we reimagine the community college student experience from top to bottom?”

Through Mark Anthony's journey, OMD's impact is clear. What began as a small, community-driven organization has transformed into a growing nonprofit, providing wraparound support for thousands of scholars, building roadmaps for likeminded organizations, and shaping careers along the way.

# IMPACT THAT INSPIRES MENTORS

## Alumni Coaches

**OMD coaches act as cheerleaders, mentors, and thought partners, making a lasting difference in scholars' academic, professional, and personal lives.**

As we've expanded into City Colleges of Chicago, we've also needed to scale the number of coaches available to work with the growing number of scholars we serve. In 2024, we were able to onboard over 300 coaches through a combination of recruitment efforts, one of which involved reaching out the group who knows a coach's impact the best: OMD Alumni.



### **Elizabeth, OMD Alum & Coach**

"OMD got me out of my comfort zone and made me a better professional. Coaching is a way for me to giving back to my community."

**Meet just a handful of the OMD Alum who, because of how impactful OMD was to them, have chosen to return and coach and mentor current scholars.**



### **Ashley, OMD Alum & Coach**

"As a first-generation college student, I didn't know the value of a mentor or career coach. But after benefiting from OMD's support, I decided to become a coach myself. I relate to the students I coach because, like them, I faced struggles—working dead-end jobs, navigating community college, and figuring out my path. My OMD coach helped me manage challenges at work, school, and in life, and their guidance was crucial to my success. Now, I try to do the same for others."



### **Nubia, OMD Alum & Coach**

"As OMD Alum, we've been through the fire. We understand what it takes to complete a degree while working, taking care of a family, or running your own business. I want to be the person that leads scholars to follow their dreams no matter what they may be facing."

# LEARN MORE

To learn more about the programs mentioned in these stories, visit these pages on our website.



## Impact that Fuels Persistence

Teach Chicago Tomorrow (TCT) is a program that routes CPS graduates to classroom teaching jobs in four years. OMD partners with TCT at Truman College, providing our proven support model for tomorrow's CPS teachers. Learn more about TCT on their website

[www.teach.cps.edu/teach-chicago-tomorrow](http://www.teach.cps.edu/teach-chicago-tomorrow)



## Impact That Launches Leaders

Career exploration and exposure to jobs is a key component of what the OMD model offers scholars, and a major focus of our work. We do this by partnering with employers to provide enriching work-based learning, training, and other career-oriented opportunities for community college students, just like the OMD and Microsoft program Generative AI for Beginners, powered by Microsoft tools. Learn more about this work at

[www.onemilliondegrees.org/employers](http://www.onemilliondegrees.org/employers)



## Impact That Changes Systems

OMD is proud to be supported by institutions like the Angell Foundation. To learn about our supporters and how you can get involved, visit

<https://onemilliondegrees.org/our-supporters/>

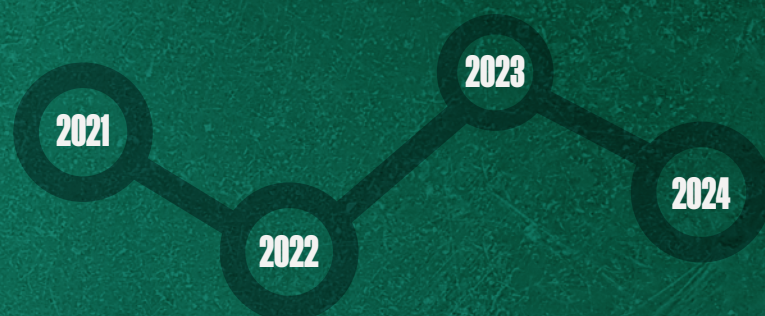


## Impact that Inspires Mentors

Interested in learning more about how to become an OMD Coach? Fill out our volunteer interest form and we'll be in touch.

[www.onemilliondegrees.org/apply-coaches](http://www.onemilliondegrees.org/apply-coaches)

# REVENUE, GAINS, AND EXPENSES



## REVENUE & GAINS

Contributions & Grants	3,720,572	4,709,139	24,588,931	5,521,916
Special Events Revenue	804,286	642,591	615,451	606,218
Less: Cost of Direct Benefits and Services	19,400	–	117,500	229,490
Donated facilities, Goods, and Services	334,885	85,000	254,638	608,468
Other Revenue	1,664	3,900	1,438	4,060
Investment Earnings	6,750	145,701	249,177	1,103,925
Forgiveness of PPP Loans	392,834	–	458,582	0
<b>Total Revenues, Gains and Other Support</b>	<b>5,241,591</b>	<b>5,586,331</b>	<b>26,285,717</b>	<b>7,928,653</b>

## EXPENSES

Tuition and Stipends	525,070	507,525	503,115	466,433
Student Development	151,585	143,426	193,965	177,354
Other Program Related	1,938,726	2,481,363	3,590,473	5,307,969
Total Program Services	2,615,381	3,132,314	4,287,553	5,951,756
Management & General	916,821	1,166,689	1,809,813	2,209,028
Fundraising	695,325	647,924	1,044,789	1,078,127
<b>Total Supporting Services</b>	<b>1,612,146</b>	<b>1,814,613</b>	<b>2,854,602</b>	<b>3,287,155</b>

# THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

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