FALL 2026 IMPACT REPORT

OUR WORK, YOUR IMPACT

Dear Friends of Legal Prep,

What happens when a young person is given not only a great education, but the opportunity to see what is possible? That question has been at the heart of Legal Prep since we opened our doors in 2012. Each day, we challenge students to think critically, communicate with confidence, advocate effectively, and see themselves as leaders in their schools, their communities, and the world beyond.

Legal Prep uses the law as a tool to help students step into worlds they may never have imagined for themselves. Through career exploration, summer programs, judicial internships, college tours, trial advocacy, mentorships, and hands-on experiences with professionals, our students graduate with a stronger vision of what is possible and the skills they need to pursue their dreams, becoming engineers, architects, journalists, educators, ministers, lawyers and leaders.

Today, that opportunity is reaching beyond Chicago. In 2026, we opened our second campus in Indianapolis, bringing the Legal Prep experience to both middle and high school students. And next year, we look forward to opening our third campus in Las Vegas. Along the way, we are building a community of students, families, educators, professionals, volunteers, and supporters who believe that opportunity can change a life.

Our students' accomplishments are the measure of that belief. Our supporters make it possible. This report offers a glimpse of what your investment makes happen every day.

Thank you for believing in Legal Prep and in the young people we serve.

Sam Finkelstein
Founder & Chief Executive Officer

A DECADE OF IMPACT. A FUTURE OF POSSIBILITES.

Our Students

93%
Seniors Accepted to College

60%
Seniors Graduate with 12+ College Credits

17.4%
Increase in Math Proficiency

90%
Freshman On-Track

Your Support

100%
Students Engaging with Professionals

1700
Hours Volunteered

125
Volunteers Donating Time

30
Corporate, Law Firm and Community Partners

Peace Is a Practice

Peace Warriors understand that building a peaceful community is a daily practice. Under the leadership of Mr. Gerald Smith, the Peace Warrior program gives students the skills and leadership opportunities to prevent conflict, strengthen relationships, and build a true sense of community. The program has already trained 19 students and staff on its Kingian non-violence principles and aims to train a total of 50 students and staff this year. Once trained, Peace Warriors put what they have learned into action by leading circles, facilitating morning meetings, and conducting proactive check-ins with their peers.

Past Legal Prep Peace Warriors

The results are encouraging. Legal Prep Chicago is currently on an extended conflict-free streak, building on last year's trend in which periods without reported conflict grew each quarter. Importantly, the impact is extending beyond Legal Prep.

Through a Trust in Practice Award, supported by the Alliance for Social Trust, an initiative of the Aspen Institute, we are expanding the Peace Warrior model through a new Junior Peace Warriors initiative, in partnership with Moving Everest, a neighborhood elementary school. From there, the program will extend to additional organizations and generations in Chicago, training other community leaders and members who can bring these practices to their communities. What began as a student leadership program is becoming a model for building stronger, more connected communities throughout the city.

The Big Winners with Big Ideas

Two Legal Prep scholars earned top honors in the city-wide Cook County Bar Association Law Day Essay Contest, an impressive accomplishment. De'Zariyah (Class of 2027) took home 1st place, while Destiny (Class of 2028) earned 3rd place for their essays responding to this year's theme, "The Rule of Law and the American Dream."

But the real impact goes beyond the awards. For De'Zariyah and Destiny, their hard work gave them the opportunity to discover that their ideas matter, their voices deserve to be heard, and they have the ability to compete and succeed in professional spaces.

The Legal Prep Experience Takes Root in Indianapolis

This fall, the Legal Prep Indianapolis campus opened its doors to 6th and 9th graders. Since then our high schoolers have completed their first quarter of work, met with judges, and participated in their first mock trial. We are proud of the academic community our students and teachers are building together. Students are holding themselves to high expectations, taking personal responsibility for their academic growth, and developing the confidence to tackle challenges.

In our middle school, students are developing those same skills in different ways. Sixth graders are learning to communicate, resolve disagreements, and build healthy relationships, while practicing critical-thinking skills and taking greater ownership of their learning. Across all grade levels, students connect classroom learning to the world beyond school through cultural and career explorations.

A Familiar Face With Growing Impact

Katie-jo Ray has been part of the Legal Prep story since the very beginning. As a founding teacher in Chicago, she developed the skills needed to become instructional coach, department head, and then Principal, building deep expertise in teacher development, school culture, and student support. In 2026, she returned to Legal Prep as Head of Schools, bringing her experience and institutional knowledge to a growing network. She has played a central role in launching Legal Prep Indy, and next year, she will support the launch of the Legal Prep model in Las Vegas. From founding teacher to Head of Schools, Katie-Jo is helping carry the Legal Prep experience into its next chapter, and bringing what she's learned to students in new communities.

Podcasters Find Their Voice

With support from individual donors and an equipment donation from Chicago-based Shure Incorporated, Legal Prep students turned a wish into a new platform to publish their ideas: the Legal Prep Podcast Club.

The students recently recorded their first episode on YouTube and are just getting started. Their ongoing series will examine court cases and provide student analysis, perspectives, and opinions on the decisions.

This is what supporter investment makes possible: an opportunity for students to create something of their own, while developing communication and critical-thinking skills and gaining the confidence that comes from seeing their work reach an audience.

Catch the first episode on youtube: https://www.youtube.com/@LegalPrepStudentPodcast

A special thank you to Winston Taylor LLP for its generous donation of a mock trial room for our Chicago campus. This dedicated, on-site courtroom gives our students a professional space to practice during the school day, and host events. This investment in our students affirms the belief that access to real-world experiences should not depend on a student's zip code.

Why Your Support Matters

Legal Prep students are ambitious. Many are working hard toward college. But too often, they don't have access to the tutoring, mentoring, college exploration, extracurricular activities and early college guidance that give students at elite and private schools an advantage.

Each year, we work to close a $2,000/student funding gap to ensure our students have access to these opportunities and the resources they need to succeed. Your gift helps level the playing field and opens a world of opportunity for Legal Prep students.

Donate at https://legalprep.org/support-us/

Ways to Get Involved

Join our Associate Board
Email rotto@stoneturn.com for more information

Learn how to donate and volunteer your time
https://legalprep.org/support-us/

Follow us on social media to stay updated on events and student accomplishments.

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