The Mind Trust invests $50,000 in five local community organizations serving Indianapolis youth of color

Indianapolis – (July 17, 2020) – The Mind Trust today announced that it has awarded $50,000 in School-Community Partnership Investments (SCPI) to five local nonprofit organizations that primarily serve Indianapolis youth of color. The five organizations are: Asante Children's Theatre, a program of Asante Art Institute; Bloom Project, Inc.; Kheprw Institute; La Plaza; and The Champion Project. SCPI funds will be used to deepen the impact each organization is able to have on student outcomes with new or existing programming for youth in Indianapolis.

“The Mind Trust is deeply committed to the Indianapolis community. We actively engage neighborhoods and schools, lead discussions on important education issues, and work to ensure parent and family voices are heard,” said Shannon Williams, Senior Vice President of Community Engagement at The Mind Trust. “SCPI awards allow us to go a step further by making financial investments in local entities that provide vital programming and opportunities for our city’s youth. We believe we must use our resources to help reduce the financial burden of organizations that do great work for our city’s students and families.”

School-Community Partnership Investments are awards that empower community organizations to partner with schools in creating programs that expand educational opportunities for Indianapolis students and families. Recognizing that strategic community partnerships can be difficult for nonprofits and schools to develop and maintain due to funding, The Mind Trust continues to prioritize these investments as a way to broaden its commitment to the community and deepen the impact of organizations that work to support students and their families. Since the inception of SCPI awards in 2019, The Mind Trust has awarded over $225,000 to local organizations including Boys & Girls Clubs of Indianapolis, Edna Martin Christian Center, and Gleaners Food Bank of Indiana.

One of The Mind Trust’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion commitments is to work to eliminate the predictability of outcomes associated with race or identity markers. Each organization receiving a SCPI award has been working toward this goal for Indianapolis youth, and The Mind Trust believes the awards will strengthen their capacity to continue their missions. All five organizations are led by African American or Latino men and women. Funded projects will be completed during the 2020-2021 school year.

“Each of this year’s SCPI recipients do amazing things in the community, for youth specifically. We are incredibly proud to provide additional financial support to help them execute their goals,” said Lauren Peterson, Senior Director of Community Engagement.

“We know there are nonprofit organizations doing impactful work all across the city. I am proud The Mind Trust is able to use SCPI grants to help these entities sustain their critical programming and initiatives,” said Brandon Brown, CEO of The Mind Trust.
Asante Children’s Theatre, a program of Asante Art Institute has been awarded $10,000 to provide culturally authentic and relevant programming that facilitates a deeper understanding of cultural bias, racial disparities, and the historical factors that caused them in charter and Indianapolis Public Schools’ (IPS) Innovation Network Schools. Asante Children’s Theatre emphasizes the vibrant legacy of African and African American performing arts, with programming that informs, inspires, and empowers families, especially those from marginalized populations with children.

Bloom Project, Inc. has been awarded $10,000 to facilitate the Royal MENtality program, which equips young men of color with professional skills, networking opportunities, and academic support to help them make well-informed decisions about their transition into post-secondary education and the workforce. The Bloom Project, Inc. provides service projects, college preparation, character building, and career exploration opportunities to prepare youth, ages 12-18, for secondary education and their career paths.

Kheprw Institute has been awarded $10,000 to sustain the Democratizing Data project, in partnership with New America, which will train and develop intergenerational, grassroot efforts to use public data to inform community projects and public policy in Indianapolis. The Kheprw Institute works to create a more just, equitable human-centered world by nurturing youth and young adults to be leaders, critical thinkers and doers who see the people in any community as the most valuable assets and are committed to working with marginalized communities to bring about change that leads to empowered self-sustainable communities.

La Plaza has been awarded $15,000 to fund Tu Futuro and Leadership Institute for Latino Youth (LILY) programs in Lawrence Central and Lawrence North High Schools. Both programs support and encourage Latino students to complete high school and pursue post-secondary opportunities and career exploration. Tu Futuro and LILY increase future employability, while helping students overcome language, citizenship, and economic barriers. As Central Indiana’s premiere Latino organization, La Plaza strengthens youth, families, and our community through our linguistically and culturally appropriate services and community events.

The Champion Project has been awarded $5,000 to provide college coaching and tours to IPS Innovation Network School and Indianapolis charter school students. The Champion Project provides college tours, one-on-one college admissions coaching, and college application support to students that would typically not have the chance to access those opportunities. It is led by Leila Champion, a young African American woman from Indianapolis who experienced the struggle of being a first-generation student researching and applying to prestigious universities. Leila will be a sophomore at the University of Notre Dame.

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About The Mind Trust
The Mind Trust is an Indianapolis-based education nonprofit that works to build a system of schools that gives every student in Indianapolis, no exceptions, access to a high-quality education. The Mind Trust does this by building a supportive environment for schools through policy and community engagement, empowering talented, diverse educators to launch new schools, and providing existing schools with the support they need to hire world-class talent and achieve excellence. Since 2006, The Mind Trust has supported the launch of 37 schools, 13 education nonprofit organizations, and has helped place more than 1,500 teachers and school leaders in Indianapolis classrooms. More information can be found at themindtrust.org