The Mind Trust awards $25,000 to ProAct Indy for service learning partnership with two Indianapolis schools

Indianapolis - (September 21, 2020) - The Mind Trust today announced it has awarded $25,000 to ProAct Indy to support Kids in Action programming at Circle City Prep and Kindezi Academy, two public K-8 schools on the eastside of Indianapolis. Funds will support weekly leadership and social equity workshops for students and monthly service projects that connect employees from local businesses and organizations with the two school communities.

"ProAct has been an absolute gem in our city, and has led the important work of bridging schools, non-profit, and for-profit entities in service of students. All students, regardless of race, school type, or zip code, deserve to have meaningful opportunities to interface with community leaders of all sectors, and work side-by-side to glean leadership lessons from those leaders," said Joe White, Senior Vice President of School Support at The Mind Trust. "Once these sectors come together in meaningful ways, we will see powerful outcomes for students, and local businesses that can now empathize a bit more with students in our city."

ProAct Indy is guided by the mission to stand in the gap for vulnerable populations while empowering youth to actively transform their communities. The organization’s signature concept is to build Proactive Communities, an innovative approach that seeks to integrate the education, nonprofit, and business sectors to help groups cross social, racial, and economic boundaries. Within each Proactive Community, ProAct Indy arranges human-centered service projects and social justice training workshops where employees from local businesses and community members serve and learn alongside vulnerable youth to help sustain and amplify youth voice and action. Since 2010, ProAct Indy’s diverse and experienced team has engaged more than 20,000 Indianapolis residents in human-centered social action.

"We truly believe that intentional relationships empower youth and transform communities – equipping youth with the 21st Century skills they need to improve upon and adapt to the modern work environment," said Derrin Slack, Founder and Chief Program Officer at ProAct Indy. "We are grateful for the support of The Mind Trust, who is committed to investing in these relationships we are building with youth this year."

Funding from The Mind Trust will support ProAct Indy’s Kids in Action programming at Circle City Prep and Kindezi Academy. Kids in Action combines the experiential learning of community service with the transformative power of weekly character education and social equity workshops. ProAct believes that engaging youth in community service that has a deliberate focus on social justice will equip youth with the 21-century skills required to adapt and improve upon the modern work environment, teaching participants about the root causes of the social issues they address through service.

Youth cohorts are facilitated by corporate employees supervised by ProAct Indy’s team. Every program year concludes with a legacy project where students create, plan, and implement a service project demonstrating skills they have learned, leaving a lasting impact on their school, and generating interest for ProAct’s youth programs among younger peers.
A past program participant, Le’Asia Williams, reflected on her experience with ProAct Indy stating, “I struggled with poverty myself and joining ProAct gave me the opportunity to give back to others and really show compassion to people who experience what I experienced.” Kids in Action participants are a key element of creating and maintaining Proactive Communities as youth are empowered to stand in the gap for vulnerable populations while actively transforming their communities.

“Kindezi Academy’s school model is rooted in the philosophy of communities collectively educating children with love and preparing them to be future leaders of society. Through our partnership with ProAct Indy, we are able to extend our students’ understanding of their leadership roles and potential for impact in their communities, while also partnering with community members that are equally invested in our students’ growth and success,” said Shanae Andrews, School Leader of Kindezi Academy at Joyce Kilmer School 69. “We are thrilled to be able to offer this experience to our students and to continue expanding our Kindezi village through community partnerships.”

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**About ProAct Indy**
ProAct Indy was established in 2010 guided by a mission to stand in the gap for vulnerable populations while empowering youth to actively transform their communities. Since inception, ProAct has refined an innovative concept model to address poverty and prevent or reduce societal issues by breaking down silos among the education, nonprofit, and business sectors through intentional community engagement. Our concept creates ecosystems called Proactive Communities, an innovative approach that integrates the education, nonprofit, and business sectors to help groups cross social, racial, and economic boundaries. Within each Proactive Community, we arrange service projects and social justice training workshops where employees from local businesses and community members serve and learn alongside vulnerable youth. For more information about ProAct Indy visit proactindy.org or please contact: Derrin Slack, Founder, 317.399.5800, derrin@proactindy.org.

**About The Mind Trust**
The Mind Trust is an Indianapolis-based education nonprofit organization 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 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 38 schools and helped place more than 1,600 teachers and school leaders in Indianapolis classrooms. More information can be found at themindtrust.org.

**For Immediate Release**

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