New generations of independent, fulfilled individuals centered in their strengths and committed to social responsibility.
message from the chair
dear friends,

In 2004, Project: VISION launched a small, free drop-in tutoring program serving about 20 youths per week at our local Chinatown library and Boys & Girls Club. In the years since, we have reached over 600 youths, and every year we have grown to serve more youths and provide more programs. This year was no different. Like the youth we serve, when given the opportunities, we rise to challenges and grow.

Our biggest challenge and accomplishment this year was our move to a new space in the heart of Chinatown, a location that is safer and more accessible while offering 40% more space than our previous youth center. With a new home equipped with larger classrooms and activity spaces, we served over 165 youth, providing more than 29,000 hours of programming during the school year and summer, to help our youths LEARN, encourage them to SERVE, and finally empower them to LEAD.

This was a tough year for social service organizations, including after school programs like ours. From the stalled Illinois state budget to proposed funding cuts at the federal level, many programs were faced with serious funding challenges. Although Project: VISION does not receive any government dollars, we still felt the effects, as funding continues to tighten for all nonprofit organizations. We stepped up to this challenge by participating in community events such as the Chinatown 5K and Chicago International Dragon Boat Festival to rally our individual donors, and we raised more with our Giving Tuesday campaign than ever before. This support allowed us to continue building our track record of 100% on-time high school graduation and college acceptance for our seniors.

As we conclude 2017, we look forward to growing into our new youth center. With the support of our community and all of you, we are confident that we will continue to be able to create and share many more of our youths’ success stories. On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, and youth of Project: VISION, we again thank you – our generous supporters – for your continued commitment to our mission.

Sincerely,

Ian Sharping
Chair of the Board
Karen Chiu
Executive Director

Project: VISION is a nonprofit organization with a mission to help youth of Chicago’s Chinatown, Bridgeport, and surrounding communities achieve their full potentials by providing them with tools for educational, personal, and civic development.

Support academic success by helping youth develop effective study skills, master knowledge of critical core subjects, and nurture a love of learning through tutoring, enrichment, and college readiness activities.
Judy joined Project: VISION during her sophomore year of high school. As a child of immigrant parents, who worked long hours and struggled with a language barrier, Judy often was not able to find the guidance and opportunities she needed to reach her potential. PV’s High School Scholars Program was there to fill the gap.

Judy took full advantage of PV’s academic support programs such as tutoring, test prep, and help with college applications. But the programs that really made a difference for her were the service and leadership opportunities that helped her discover her interests and build her strengths. Judy eventually began volunteering in the community on her own, far exceeding the hours required for our program. Also, through mentoring and summer internships she gained through the program, Judy gained confidence and learned the skills she needs for college and the workplace.

Judy has since graduated from PV’s program and ultimately chose to attend DePaul University. She is now a sophomore double majoring in management information systems and communications. She also returned to PV this year as an intern, now in the position to help impact and inspire more youths like herself to succeed!

Foster a sense of community and social responsibility by encouraging community engagement and providing opportunities for meaningful service learning.

Serve

Build character, confidence, positive attitudes, and leadership skills that empower youth to be positive examples for their peers, an asset to the community, and ready for the workplace.

Lead
Project: VISION was founded in 2003 by a group of five young professionals, students, and community volunteers. Each had a passion for education and youth development and saw the need for teens in the neighborhood to have a safe place to call their own, where they can find support and guidance as they navigate through high school and pave a path for a bright future.

In fall 2004, with the help of volunteers and borrowed space from the Chicago Chinatown Public Library and Valentine Boys and Girls Club in Bridgeport, Project: VISION piloted a drop-in tutoring program serving about 20 students each week. Since then, our programs have reached over 600 youth and continue to be provided free to families.

What difference has PV made in my life?

“PV has given me many opportunities to become a better version of myself. PV has also helped me think more about my future, such as the different career and college options I have. It has helped me and many other students thrive and learn many new life skills.”

SHIRLEY, GRADE 11

“Not only did PV help me improve academically, they helped me find my strengths and interests. As an immigrant, life was hard, but being a part of PV gave me many meaningful experiences and helped me find a place in the community.”

WILLIE, GRADE 12

“For me personally, PV is a safe haven and a development for me in the Chinatown area, which we live. Volunteer programs which we live in the community.”

KELSEY, GRADE 11

“Project: VISION has given me many opportunities to become a better version of myself. PV has also helped me think more about my future, such as the different career and college options I have. It has helped me and many other students thrive and learn many new life skills.”

SHIRLEY, GRADE 11
Our community, which remains a hub for Asian American immigrant families, is all too often overlooked as among the most underserved neighborhoods in Chicago due in part to the “model minority” stereotype. In reality, many of our youths, like those in many other Chicago neighborhoods, face barriers to succeeding in school and beyond:

We know under-resourced youths face many challenges and are more vulnerable, often less likely to graduate high school and college. They are also less college and workplace ready and therefore have limited job and career prospects. Here is how Project: VISION aims to level the playing field for all youth aspiring to reach their goals.

- Help youth overcome barriers to success and gain equal access to education and ultimately career opportunities
- Equip youth with skills, confidence, and sense of social responsibility that empowers them to give back to the community and become future leaders
- Provide a safe space where youth can come together to support each other and share in common identities and experiences
- Advocate for access to resources and opportunities our youth need to succeed

For me personally, and I’m sure for a lot of other students, Project: VISION is not only after school, but it is also a place that allows for me to concentrate on my as a student-leader. Project: VISION provides a sanctuary for students own-Bridgeport area, many who are underprivileged and don’t have as to helpful resources. Project: VISION also allows me to give back through projects that help us build a strong relationship with the community in. The leadership programs here also help students develop their leadership skills to potentially help make the community a better place. ON builds well-rounded students who are capable of achieving success.
I am thankful for the dedication Project: VISION staff and tutors have to helping youth like me.

during the 2016-2017 school year...

Project: VISION programs provided academic support that youth need to navigate middle school and high school successfully to reach their college goals, while also encouraging them to find an appreciation for knowledge and learning. We served 144 youths through our After School Homework Tutoring Program, and 54 high school students prepared for the college application process through test prep, essay writing, financial aid workshops, and college campus visits.

Our students took control of their academic futures, and their hard work showed:

- **83%** Made an improvement by at least one letter grade in a core class
- **77%** Met at least one personal academic goal
- **100%** Promoted to the next grade and on track to graduating high school on time
- **100%** High school seniors were accepted and committed to attending college in fall 2017
When I first started coming to Project: VISION in the sixth grade, I thought that it was only a youth center where I could receive help with my homework. I quickly realized that it was much more. Over the years, I benefitted from working with and learning from tutors who are engaged, excited, and willing to help me fully understand the hard concepts. I sometimes struggle with math, and they often create extra practice problems to ensure that I can apply the concepts to problems, especially when I am preparing for quizzes and tests.

PV helps with homework, but they also offer a lot of guidance through the college application process which is very important for a high school senior like me. Besides getting help preparing for the SAT and ACT, the financial aid workshop was also very helpful, guiding my parents and me through completing the entire FAFSA application. As a Project: VISION student, I am also proud to be a part of many service and leadership projects, which gave me an opportunity to talk to people, serve my community, and learn about issues, all experiences which I believe will make me an even better student.
Service is an integral part of positive youth development. Project: VISION strives to foster a positive sense of community and social responsibility in youth by encouraging volunteerism and providing opportunities for meaningful community engagement. Service learning is built into PV’s program because youth get to use what they have learned in school and develop the service-oriented mindset that future leaders need.

This year, 141 youth (98%) volunteered with us to serve community organizations, including food pantries, recycling centers, and parks, collectively earning more than 1500 service hours.

“Service is important because it helps me think about creating a better tomorrow.”
I never really understood the purpose of volunteering until I joined Project: VISION. Before, when I volunteered, I always dreaded the day and looked forward to when the service project was over. That mentality changed after volunteering at Benton House Chicago. That particular service event made me realize the impact I could make on the community and how important it was to help the less fortunate. "Thank you for volunteering. I can now feed my family for the week." This simple expression of gratitude has made a lasting impact on my life. It was truly inspiring to see the effects of my contributions. Now, volunteering is no longer a ‘chore’, but an empowering and enjoyable activity. No matter the time needed to complete the service project, I have grown to appreciate every minute I spend helping others.

I want to give back to my community... I’m proud to be a part of something bigger.
Fighting Food Insecurity Together (FFIT) brought together a diverse group of students to help the Chinatown/Bridgeport community and to address the important issue of food insecurity. Before this project, I did not know what it meant to be “food insecure” and thought only homeless people had to worry about where their next meal will come from. This community is actually full of senior citizens, immigrants, and low-income families who work for minimum wage at hard labor jobs. These circumstances sometimes don’t pay enough for them to provide a full meal for themselves and their families. I learned many new skills throughout the year such as how to be professional when talking to adults and businesses, how to talk about the importance of our cause to get them to sponsor and donate to our project. I also learned how to work through a problem to come to a compromise with my peers when we ran into a problem. In the end, we organized a food drive and set up a Pop-Up Food Pantry that collected enough food to provide 900 meals for families who experience food insecurity. Not only did my peers and I develop many new leadership skills that will be useful in our careers, I feel like I made a difference in someone’s life by helping to put some food on the table for some families. That made it all worth the work at the end.

Project: VISION leadership programs aim to help youth achieve personal growth, build character, and develop positive attitudes to make good life choices and become active citizens who are prepared for the future.

By helping youth develop strengths, interests, and leadership skills, our programs aim to engage youth and empower them to be assets to the community, and ready for the workplace.

This year, Project: VISION students spent over 3,000 hours working toward being the type of leaders they aspire to be. Fifty-eight middle school youth participated in the Young Leaders workshop, and 51 high school students completed year-round community engagement projects, professional development and mentoring programs, and summer internships.
Project: LEAD is a collaboration between Project: VISION and Exelon Corporation to encourage teens like myself to stay in school and learn how to be successful once they graduate. Being in LEAD has given me the support I need to help me excel in my education and to prepare for the future. Also, the real world work experience I had during my summer internship at Constellation was monumental; I learned so much! I saw firsthand how professionals work together to achieve a goal, including how they communicate and manage their time. I also learned practical skills like how to better use Excel and PowerPoint in my work to research and compile data about renewable power plant projects for my team. This experience has helped me develop and improve the skills that school was not able to provide, and I will be able to use them far into the future.

TIMOTHY, GRADE 12
thank you!

Project: VISION’s beginnings were made possible by the generosity of those who gave their time and resources. Today, our volunteers, donors and funders, and community partners continue to provide invaluable support for our work. We thank them all for their generous commitments and contributions to our organization and, more importantly, our youths’ futures.

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Asian Giving Circle
New Frontiers Foundation
TPRc
Winthrop Foundation
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Blowitz-Ridgeway Foundation
Cathay Bank Foundation
Northern Trust Centennial Fund
TXF Foundation
WP & HB White Foundation

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Chinatown Parking Lot Corporation
Exelon Corporation Foundation
(Stay in School Initiative)
PwC Foundation
United Way of Metropolitan Chicago

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Chinese Mutual Aid Association
Communities in Schools of Chicago
Illinois Institute of Technology
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Valentine Boys & Girls Club of Chicago
in-kind donors

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ADG
Adler Planetarium
Ahjoomah's Apron
Air Aerial Fitness
Arts n Spirits
Asian American Law Enforcement Association
Asian Pop-Up Cinema
Athenaeum Theatre
Barry's Bootcamp
Bin 36
BOKA Group
Bottle & Botega
Brookfield Zoo
Chama Gaucha
Chicago Architecture Foundation
Chicago Blackhawks
Chicago Botanic Garden
Chicago Bulls
Chicago Detours
Chicago Distilling Company
Chicago Pizza Tours
Chipotle
Coco & Eve
Concerts @ Bienen
Connie Kusek
Constellation Brands
Costco
D’Noche
Del Seoul
Dine Aminic Group
DuPage Children’s Museum
Eataly
Eats & Sweets
Einstein Bros Bagels
Field Museum
Furama
Gabe Akagawa
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Mon Ami Gabi
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MyPlace
One Minute Workout
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Palette & Chisel Academy of Fine Arts
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Phoebe Craig
PNC Bank
RA Sushi
Roka Akor
RSB Defensive Solutions
Ruby Room
Runa Japanese
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Show Theater Company
Second City
Shedd Aquarium
Silk Road Rising
Skydeck Chicago
Smart Learning Center
SoulCycle
SportService
Sprinkles Cupcakes
Stage 773
Stage Left Theatre
Steep Theatre
Sweet Thyme Soaps
The Barre Code
Theater Wit
Trader Joe’s
Vanille Patisserie
Whole Foods
WTTW
Yin He Dance Company
Walgreens
Zanies Comedy Club

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Elizabeth Kusek
John Malbon
Peter Tong
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Melinda Holtz
Sophia Hou
Elizabeth Kusek
John Malbon
Peter Tong
Boris Tse
Tab Tse
Mark Yun
Catherine Zhou
### Statement of Financial Position

#### Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash and Cash Equivalents</td>
<td>55,590</td>
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<td>Contributions Receivable</td>
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<td>Refundable Lease Deposit</td>
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<td>Prepaid Insurance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepaid Programming Expense</td>
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<td>Prepaid Fundraising Expense</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL ASSETS</strong></td>
<td>64,496</td>
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#### Liabilities

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<td>Line of Credit</td>
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<td>Accrued real estate taxes payable</td>
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<td>Deferred rental liability</td>
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<td>Deferred revenue</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL LIABILITIES</strong></td>
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#### Net Assets

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<td>Temporarily Restricted</td>
<td>43,800</td>
<td>60,200</td>
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<td>Unrestricted</td>
<td>(16,285)</td>
<td>32,276</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</strong></td>
<td>64,496</td>
<td>92,744</td>
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#### Revenues and Other Support

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<td>Contributions*</td>
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<td>27,156</td>
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<td>Fundraising Events</td>
<td>57,181</td>
<td>43,989</td>
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<td>Grants</td>
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<td>Contributed services</td>
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<td>Other Income</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL REVENUES AND SUPPORT</strong></td>
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<td>240,586</td>
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#### Expenses

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<td>Support Services</td>
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<td>Management/General</td>
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<td>50,735</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL EXPENSES</strong></td>
<td>296,530</td>
<td>207,853</td>
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#### Change in Net Assets

- 2017: (64,961)
- 2016: 32,733

#### Net Assets

- Beginning of Year: 92,476
- Unrestricted: 27,515

### 2017 Revenues and Other Support

- **Contributions** (22%)
- **Fundraising Events** (25%)
- **Grants** (53%)

### 2017 Expenses

- **Programs** (79%)
- **Management** (4%)
- **Fundraising** (17%)
Loneliness was my only friend for a very long time. It kept me company and I embraced it because it was familiar and comfortable. Growing out of my shell took a lot of personal reflection to start, but what really motivated me to change, I feel, was my experience with Project: VISION. It was this experience that had one of the greatest influences on the way I think. I am grateful for PV, its services and opportunities, and its tutors especially, for how it has shaped my life.

For me, PV has always been defined by its tutors. They are as open and diverse as the center itself. Although it has been six eventful years since those first days, there are tutors who stand out to me in my mind. Each has inspired me, motivated me, given me focus. There are too many to list and thank, but Eli, Florence, Kim, Blanca, Dennis: I appreciate your work. I want to thank you for the discussions, the help, the laughter, and all of those little things that I can’t describe. Those meant a lot to me. Without them I wouldn’t have realized my passions for reading, writing, or speaking. I would not have the drive and direction that I see in my life now.

Seeing the growth of PV has led me to reflect on my own growth. The PV of my earliest memory was small, cluttered, tucked away in the corner. Now it supports hundreds of students and provides them with opportunities that aren’t available elsewhere. I am proud to have been a part of that growth. I feel pride in my own growth. Now, I am preparing for college and for the rest of my life. I know now that PV has been one of my greatest assets in preparing for my future. At the time of writing, there are six long months to senior year, but I feel ready.

Our Big Goals for 2018

- 200 students served
- 100% on time grade promotion
- 100% seniors go on to college

What we will be up to in 2018:

- Creating a long-term strategic plan for the organization
- Piloting an English Language Learner tutoring program with our local elementary school, John C. Haines
- Launching a youth leadership and mentoring program with our partner Chinese Mutual Aid Association to bring together Chicago northside and southside Asian American youth