



2018–2020

Program Report

A program of the
University of Wisconsin–Madison Institute for Research on Poverty
and Schmidt Futures Alliance for the American Dream



Table of Contents

Chancellor's Remarks.....	2
Director's Note.....	3
About DreamUp WI.....	4
DreamUp WI Secures Two \$1 Million Winners in Two Years.....	5
DreamUp WI Second Place Winners Secure \$900,000.....	7
DreamUp WI Semifinalists.....	9
IRP Puts Equity Into Action With DreamUp WI.....	10
DreamUp WI Proposal Review Committee.....	10
DreamUp WI Investments.....	11
Adapting to COVID-19.....	12
Outreach Summary.....	13
Proposal Summary.....	14
Reflections From Our Alliance Mentor.....	15
Thank You to Our Advisors.....	16
Moving Research into Impact.....	17
Pictures from Events and Participant Testimonials.....	18-19

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Chancellor's Remarks | Rebecca Blank



When Eric Braverman reached out in 2018 to ask whether UW–Madison would be interested in participating in a unique challenge to address poverty in our community, I was delighted to say yes. As I said when we gathered at the UW–South Madison Partnership nearly three years ago to announce this initiative, this is personal for me.

In my past life as an academic teacher and researcher I did quite a bit of work on topics related to poverty and income mobility, and I care deeply about these issues. I also have a deep commitment to this work as chancellor of UW–Madison. It is difficult to imagine a more ‘Wisconsin’ project for a few reasons:

First, we are home to the nation’s premier Institute for Research on Poverty, the first of its kind in the country. IRP is dedicated not only to understanding the causes and consequences of poverty in the U.S., but to applying that knowledge to help change lives.

Second, UW–Madison has a commitment to public service that’s woven right into our DNA. The Wisconsin Idea has enabled us to create the kinds of trusting relationships with community organizations, businesses, and policymakers on which initiatives like this are built.

And third, we believe deeply in a multi-disciplinary approach to problem-solving. We know that bringing together people from many backgrounds with different experiences and skills is the best way to address complex issues.

But you do not build successful programs on mission, vision, and values alone. You also need talented people who are willing to work hard. I want to thank Associate Vice Chancellor Lonnie Berger and his team, who built DreamUp Wisconsin. Their work with community partners, leaders in business and government, and faculty, staff, and students was critical to our success.

I also want to thank the many individuals and groups, both on and off campus, that stepped up to this challenge. DreamUp Wisconsin forged new partnerships and produced outstanding ideas to address problems in very different domains.

I was honored to sit on the committee that reviewed these entries and selected the finalists that would compete nationally, but it was also difficult to choose from among many worthy projects. Thanks to Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education Steve Ackerman, we were able to provide an additional \$1.4 million in funding for related research to give these innovative ideas a boost. And I could not be more proud that UW–Madison was the only university to advance multiple teams to the finals and the only one with two \$1 million winners and two runners-up who won \$900,000 between them. These projects will change many lives.

I want to thank Eric and Wendy Schmidt and Schmidt Futures for dedicating the Alliance for the American Dream to the idea that this country can live up to its promise of opportunity for all people. And for inviting UW–Madison to find ways to bring that idea to life. Their multi-million-dollar investment in Wisconsin will pay dividends for years to come.

Director's Note | Lawrence Berger

Nearly three years ago, the University of Wisconsin–Madison was selected as one of four universities to participate in Schmidt Futures' Alliance for the American Dream initiative, known locally as DreamUp Wisconsin. Schmidt Futures tasked each university with producing a pipeline of proposals to meet the audacious challenge of increasing household net income by 10% for 10,000 local—in our case, Dane County—families over a one- to two-year period. Recognizing that this was an ideal opportunity to demonstrate the power of the Wisconsin Idea, we designed a process to cultivate community-university partnerships to generate initiatives to meet the DreamUp challenge. The response was tremendous. We met with hundreds of individuals and groups. Over the course of two rounds of competition, we received 55 proposals. Each round the community-university review committee completed two phases of local competition to select three teams to advance to the Alliance semifinals.



Of those six teams, four—LIFT Dane, We Care for Dane Kids, Opportunity Calculator, and Connect Rx—competed for \$1 million in capital investment from Schmidt Futures. We were the only university of the four participating to advance two teams to the finals in both rounds. Incredibly, we were also the only university with \$1 million winners—LIFT Dane and Connect Rx—in each round. Moreover, We Care for Dane Kids and Opportunity Calculator, round 1 and 2 runners-up, won \$400,000 and \$500,000 prizes, respectively. Finally, in each round, Schmidt Futures committed \$500,000 to match (at a 50% rate) other funds DreamUp applicants, in addition to finalists raised. These funds were fully drawn down.

In all, the DreamUp process has, to date, resulted in nearly \$5 million in investment in our community from Schmidt Futures and has also attracted more than \$4 million dollars in additional investment. The University invested heavily in this process as well. The Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education held a competition investing \$1 million in research on Contemporary Social Problems and committed another \$400,000 to evaluating our winning initiatives.

But, this process has brought much more than financial investment. The process enabled us to collaborate with and challenge our academic and community partners to generate bold, innovative ideas for substantially growing the County's middle class. These ideas and the accompanying new partnerships are a tremendous boon to our community. Together, we created a new ecosystem for innovation that marshals local resources—across scholarly, human service, technology, private, nonprofit, and government domains—to harness technologies and generate efficiencies to meet the Alliance goal. DreamUp WI has served as an anchor for our efforts to elevate local talent and facilitate new networks.

UW—Madison Program Staff and Faculty Team

Lawrence (Lonnie) Berger, Director, Assoc. Vice Chancellor, Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education
Rebecca Schwei, Research & Policy Coordinator, UW IRP
Peng Her, Community Relations Coordinator, UW IRP
Bridgit Van Belleghem, Community Relations Coordinator, UW IRP
Hilary Shager, Associate Director, Programs and Management, & Researcher, UW IRP
Laura Dresser, Associate Director, COWS; UW School of Social Work
J. Michael Collins, Fetzer Family Chair, Consumer Finance; Faculty Director, Center for Financial Security
Leslie Orrantia, Director, UW Office of Community Relations (Round 1)
Brenda Gonzalez, Director, UW Office of Community Relations (Round 2)
Vee Yeo, Research Lab Manager, UW IRP (2018–2019)



Advancing innovative ideas that can increase net household income by 10% for 10,000 Dane County families in two years.

MISSION

Bring together community, business, government, and non-profit networks to partner with UW—Madison (UW) to expand economic security and shared prosperity in Dane County.

OBJECTIVE

Seek and cultivate innovative entrepreneurial and policy ideas that use technology to raise net income by 10% for 10,000 Dane County households and help the teams proposing the idea win \$1 million in catalytic funding from Schmidt Futures.

BACKGROUND

DreamUp WI is UW's implementation of the Alliance for the American Dream initiative, a collaboration of the Institute for Research on Poverty and Schmidt Futures, a philanthropic initiative that bets early on exceptional people making the world better.

PROCESS

Phase 1 - Outreach

DreamUp MeetUps & Strategic Engagements

Phase 2 - DreamUp Wisconsin Semifinal

At least 5 teams advance & win local prize money

Phase 3 - DreamUp Wisconsin Final

3 teams advance & win local prize money

Phase 4 - Alliance Semifinals

At least 1 team advances
& wins local prize money

Phase 5 - Alliance Finals

Top 5 teams from 4 participating universities
pitch to Schmidt Futures for catalytic funding

DreamUp Wisconsin is a project of:

ALLIANCE FOR THE
AMERICAN DREAM



Institute for
Research on
Poverty

DreamUp WI Secures Two \$1 Million Winners in Two Years

ROUND 1: LIFT DANE

In the first round competition, **Legal Interventions For Transforming Dane County** (LIFT Dane), a project of the UW Law School, Legal Action of WI, and the Employment and Training Association, secured the \$1 million grand prize plus a \$100,000 teams choice award, to develop innovative technologies that empower people to increase their income by and remedy inequities in the civil justice system.

Marsha Mansfield, LIFT Executive Director, is “thrilled Schmidt Futures recognized that this new model can help families increase their income. Instead of addressing the civil legal crisis one individual at a time, we will reach and help more people with this new technology.”

LIFT is a web-based platform that uses publically available government data, to clear criminal records using the Legal Tune Up application. In the coming months, LIFT will expand Legal Tune Up to enable people to expunge criminal records, reinstate driver’s licenses, adjust child support orders, and address debt collection.

LIFT has an advisory committee and the legal infrastructure to support a project of this scale. With their website, lift.org, up and running, LIFT is establishing its online and social media presence to get the word out. LIFT hired Theory and Principle

to provide data collection, communication, and remediation through the LIFT platform. LIFT is also working with a policy advisor to craft messaging, prioritize future advocacy efforts, and identify funding opportunities.

In addition to the Schmidt Futures prize, LIFT secured \$1.2 million from the Gordon Flesch Charitable Foundation, CUNA Mutual Foundation, Alliant Energy Foundation, Wisconsin Partnership Program, UW—Madison Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education, and Schmidt Futures Implementation Matching Fund.

“Through the work, we can clearly see the potential for community-based law and policy efforts to shape the economic, physical, and social environments Wisconsinites live, work, and learn in,” says Mansfield, adding “the current economic climate is a clarion call to transform the civil legal justice system and achieve lasting impacts on the challenging issues of economic fragility and systemic inequities.”



LIFT Dane team: Mitch, UW Law Clinic; Vicky Selkow, formerly of Legal Action of WI; Stacy Rogers, Employment and Training Association; Sarah Davis, UW—Madison Center for Patient Partnerships; Carlos Bailey, Legal Action of Wisconsin; Stacia Conneely, Legal Action of WI; Jon Danforth, Employment and Training Association; Marsha Mansfield, formerly of the UW Economic Justice Institute, now Executive Director of LIFT.

ROUND 2: CONNECT RX WI

In Fall 2020, **Connect Rx WI** was awarded the \$1 million grand prize to design **a culturally responsive referral system that coordinates across every major health system in the region to administer a universal patient screener for economic insecurities (housing, child care, food, etc.) and provide referrals to relevant economic resources.** Those most in need will have the option to get support from non-profit professionals in their neighborhood. To start, Connect Rx will help households with pregnant women and children connect to existing economic resources to reduce their financial stress.

Connect Rx is part of the Dane County Health Council effort to reduce racial health inequities, including Wisconsin's high Black infant mortality rate—the worst in the nation. During the 2018 Saving Our Babies campaign led by the Foundation for Black Women's Wellness and EQT by Design, members of our Black community identified economic insecurity as a leading cause of poor birth outcomes and recommended streamlined access to community resources via the health system.

“Connect Rx is poised to meet the needs of and transform the region's healthcare and social service delivery from the inside out,” says Lisa Peyton Caire, team member and founder of the Foundation

for Black Women's Wellness. “We are confident we can do this because of the years of collaboration within the Health Council, commitment of nonprofit partners and Dane County healthcare system, expertise of technology partner Epic, and effectiveness of the 211 resource directory.”

Connect Rx will document unmet social needs and provide healthcare and government entities with crucial HIPAA-compliant data that will equip them to eliminate service gaps and barriers and advance policy change.

In addition to the Schmidt Futures prize, Connect Rx secured \$1.3 million from the American Family Insurance Dreams Foundation, Steve Stricker American Family Insurance Foundation, Marriott Daughters Foundation, Wisconsin Partnership Program, UW—Madison Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education, and Schmidt Futures Implementation Matching Fund.

According to Robin Lankton, Population Health Director at UW Health, “advancing through the DreamUp competition pushed us from concept into a reality to grow Wisconsin's middle class.”



Connect Rx WI team: Gabe Doyle, United Way of Dane County; Hayley Chesnick, United Way of Dane County; Lisa Peyton Caire, Foundation for Black Women's Wellness; Robin Lankton, UW Health.

DreamUp WI Second Place Winners Secure \$900,000

ROUND 1: WE CARE FOR DANE KIDS

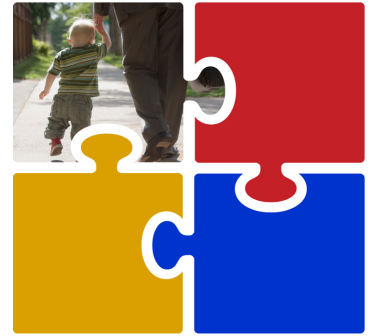
Child care is not a flashy sector, often going unnoticed until needed, which is why the **We Care for Dane Kids** team thought it would be hard to pitch an initiative without a “wow” factor. When they did though, people clearly shared their passion and were enlightened by their expertise.

We Care for Dane Kids is working to **transform the early childhood and out-of-school time care systems for the benefit of caregivers, parents, providers, and employers through four efforts:** (1) implement pretax accounts for child care; (2) increase child care worker wages to \$15/hour; (3) improve efficiency through a provider network with administrative, educational, and bulk purchasing tools; and (4) increase use of child care subsidies already available. This interlocking approach addresses challenges in both child care supply and demand in ways singular efforts cannot.

Project partners, WI Early Childhood Association (WECA), Reach, Madison Metropolitan School District, City of Madison, and UW—Madison School of Education won \$400,000 from Schmidt Futures, including a \$100,000 teams choice award, and was awarded another \$260,000 in Schmidt Futures matching funds. Project partners have since raised more than \$2.1 million from: American Family Insurance, CUNA Mutual Foundation, Dan & Patti Rashke Family Foundation, Endres Manufacturing Company Foundation, Evjue Foundation, Foley & Lardner LLP, Madison Community Foundation, M3 Insurance, MGE Foundation, NeuGen, the QTI Group, Schlecht Family Foundation, State Bank of Cross Plains, Summit Credit Union, WI Partnership Program, UW—Madison Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education, and others.

According to Paula Drew, Co-Director of WECA, “Our team worked hard to secure additional funding and has moved three of the four strategies forward.” We Care for Dane Kids launched www.tasccaresforkids.com to increase the use of Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) and is pursuing an IRS ruling allowing FSA

contributions to be pretax. And the WI Early Education Shared Services Network (WEESSN) now helps 40+ child care providers streamline practices, reduce expenses, and create efficiencies using technology and data. Over



the past year, WEESSN helped providers secure funding and procure protective equipment and hand sanitizer (265 gallons) and created a nationally acclaimed online COVID-19 comprehensive reopening guide. Lastly, WECA and 25+ organizations are launching a statewide campaign to boost child care workers' wages.

“Our team worked hard to secure additional funding and has moved forward three of four strategies forward.”

-Paula Drew, Co-Director, WECA



Members of the We Care for Dane Kids team: Beth Graue, UW—Madison School of Education; Ruth Schmidt, WECA; Katherine Magnuson, UW IRP; Nathan Beck, MOST; Amy Christianson, Reach Dane; Paula Drew, WECA; Coral Manning, City of Madison

ROUND 2: OPPORTUNITY CALCULATOR

Workers at all earning levels face challenges fully understanding their comprehensive earnings (wages or salary plus benefits). This is an even greater challenge for those who want to advance their careers, but depend on and could lose public benefits as a result. Understanding the benefit trade offs of taking a higher paying job can require extensive calculations across several benefit providers. Too often this process, and the fear of losing public benefits, can dissuade workers from advancing their careers.

That is why partners of the Employment and Training Association, including the City of Madison, Workforce Development Board of South Central WI, United Way of Dane County, Latino Academy of Workforce Development, and Urban League Greater Madison joined forces to develop **Opportunity Calculator**. **Opportunity Calculator will show workers their potential income changes using an online net income forecaster that compares current to a potential compensation package(s).**

Opportunity Calculator will feature real time communication providing workers 24/7 access to answers about employment and benefits using live chat, instant scheduling, links to jobs and training, and integration with the United Way of Dane County 211 resource directory. And when users create a profile, they can receive customized employment and training.

While income forecasting tools and job advancement resources exist, only Opportunity Calculator will be agile and sophisticated enough to provide user-friendly functionality and facilitate career advancement. Opportunity Calculator will also collect anonymous user data employers need to improve compensation, recruitment, and retention; benefit providers can use these data to improve access and address benefit cliffs.

According to Iliana Wood, Community Development Specialist, City of Madison, “Workforce training providers, employers, and job seekers have repeatedly expressed the need for a platform providing this information in an

accessible way,” and “with Schmidt Futures \$500,000 investment, we are well on our way to meeting this demand.”

In addition to initial funding from Schmidt Futures, the team secured another \$270,000 from United Way of Dane County, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, UW—Madison Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education, and Schmidt Futures matching funds.



“Training providers, employers, and job seekers have repeatedly expressed the need for a platform providing this information in an accessible way.”

-Iliana Wood, City of Madison, Community Development Specialist



Members of the Opportunity Calculator team: Baltazar De Anda Santana, Latino Academy for Workforce Development; Ed Lee, Urban League of Greater Madison; Iliana Wood, City of Madison; Carole Trone, United Way of Dane County

Professor Lonnie Berger speaks with round 1 semifinalists LIFT and PowerUp at the Atrium at the Villager, Madison, WI.



DreamUp WI Semifinalists

These teams made it to the semifinals of the local DreamUp competition. Clock'd (round 2) and EARN Dane (round 1) advanced to the Alliance semifinals and had the chance to pitch to a Schmidt Futures expert panel. DreamUp thanks these and all of the DreamUp teams for their hard work and commitment to making Dane County a place of opportunity for everyone.

Round 2

Clock'd | DreamUp Finalist!!

Clock'd enables food service & hospitality workers to pick up open shifts businesses post on the Clock'd shift board. Clock'd, Foodworks



AI to Reduce Student Loan Debt

A state-run artificial intelligence (AI) application to answer student loans questions or refer users to a coach that can help debt holders best accomplish repayment and avoid default. Eunji You, UW— Madison Student, WI Department of Finance

ReadyBot AI Sidekick

Career advising chat bot with the power to assess skills and make connections to individually-tailored trainings and jobs instantly using AI and data source integrations. Sidekick Education, UW—Madison Center for Research on College to Workforce Transitions, UW Health, Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce, Madison College, Workforce Development Board of South Central WI

FEED Dane

Double FEED Kitchen facility to incorporate a co-packing, pop-up restaurant, retail, and training, and develop a food cart web application and delivery service. Northside Planning Council

Mobilize Dane

Sustain a taxi-van pool, trunk-and-feeder system serving DeForest job centers, followed by other job centers in the region and establish an employers consortium to advance programs for working families. YWCA Madison, Union Cab, the Village of DeForest, UW—Madison Department of Planning & Landscape Architecture

Round 1

EARN Dane | DreamUp Finalist!!

A program to help employees advance their career through skills training, support networks, and financial literacy. Urban League of Greater Madison, United Way of Dane County, Latino Academy of Workforce Development, Dane County Human Services, One Stop Operator for South Central WI, Common Wealth Development, City of Madison



10 Steps to Increase Net Income by 10%

10 step on-line financial literacy program. UW Credit Union

Closing the Housing Gap & Opening the Door to the American Dream

Workforce housing fund, solar installation, sustainable tech job training, and affordable child care through real estate acquisition for facilities. Dane County, Dane County Housing Authority, UW Planning & Landscape Architecture

Dane County's Campaign for Working Families

Training for trades jobs with campaign to recruit changing workforce and cultural competence. WRTP-BIGSTEP

JobRide Plus

Ride share and expand transit to locations outside Madison. Madison Metro, YWCA, Village of DeForest

Cultivating Dane: A Food System Approach

Increase food worker wage, provide free lunch to all students, and increase opportunities and infrastructure to support entrepreneurs. UW Extension, City of Madison, Community Action Coalition, FEED Kitchen, FairShare CSA Coalition, Second Harvest Food Bank of Southern Wisconsin, UW Dept of Consumer Science and School of Human Ecology

The Health Wealth Connection

Medical debt forgiveness via receivables donations from medical providers to a non-profit paired with tech based financial literacy class. Green Path, Rural Dynamics

PowerUp Dane County

Increase use of electric vehicles and expansion of jobs in renewable energy sector. Renew WI

SkillUp

A path to the middle class through skill building, degree completion, and credentialing. Madison College, Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce, Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin, United Way of Dane County, UW School of Social Work

IRP Puts Equity Into Action With DreamUp WI | Annette Miller

As CEO/Founder of EQT By Design, I was hired by IRP to bring an equity lens and process to the DreamUp Challenge. Specifically, an equity lens analysis seeks to discover and redesign how policies, processes, and systems can host forms of inequity both hidden and overt. This approach seeks to address decisions and design that can lead to racial inequities.

DreamUp managers sought to engage diverse audiences and solicit a wide breadth of community generated proposals. To do this, they selected two community and governance engaged Community Relations Coordinators, Peng Her and Bridgit Van Belleghem, who, along with other program staff and students, held listening sessions, interviewed residents, and presented to more than 600 people and 300 community organizations at engagement events throughout Dane County. Additionally, program staff worked with me to analyze how equity or inequity could impact each layer of the process: proposal eligibility criteria, interviews, proposal review, and review committee engagement. For example, DreamUp Wisconsin made decreasing racial, ethnic, or geographic inequities a significantly weighted criterion for the local selection process. And once the semifinalists were selected, IRP leveraged their network and resources to bolster and advance proposals that could positively impact diverse and broad community constituencies.

IRP applied what they learned in round 1 to round 2 and more deeply embedded equity into the process and design. For example, I met with the semifinalists about how they would ensure equity in process and outcomes. UW faculty will use equity-related indicators to determine if teams are implementing their vision and if needed, correct course to ensure they are. Ultimately, the finalists reflected strong ideals, outcomes, and design that aim to ensure all impacted people experience equitable outcomes.



DreamUp WI Proposal Review Committee

Meet the community and university committee members who selected the local DreamUp semifinalists and finalists to represent Wisconsin and pitch to Schmidt Futures.



Rebecca Blank
Chancellor
UW-Madison



Cedric Ellis
Executive VP &
Chief Enterprise
Services Officer
CUNA Mutual
(Round 1 panel)



Jan Greenberg
Former Assc. Vice
Chancellor
UW-Madison
OVCERGE



Rich Halverson
Assc. Dean of
Innovation
School of
Education
UW-Madison



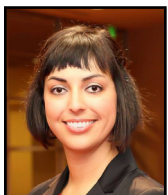
Janel Heinrich
Director
Public Health
Madison &
Dane County



Forbes McIntosh
President
Government
Policy Solutions



Jennifer Noyes
Provost, Academic
Operations,
Vice Chancellor
Academic Affairs
UW-Madison



Leslie Orrantia
Deputy Mayor
City of Madison
(Round 2 panel)



Saran Ouk
Founder
conNEXTions
(Round 1 panel)



Eugenia Podestá
Owner
Synergy
CoWorking Space



Parmesh Ramanathan
Assc. Dean of
the Graduate
School
UW-Madison



Alex Shade
Director
Corporate Social
Responsibility
CUNA Mutual
(Round 2 panel)



Wes Sparkman
Director
Dane County
Grisby Office
for Equity &
Inclusion



Karen Timberlake
Principal
Michael Best
Strategies LLC

DreamUp WI Investments

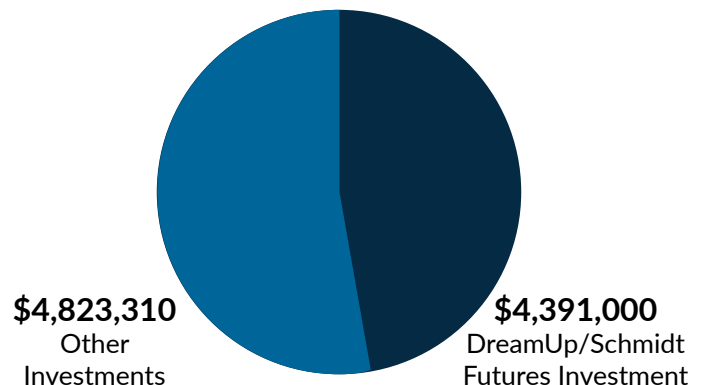
Wisconsin's participation in the Alliance for the American Dream has attracted both innovative ideas and financial support. With an initial investment of \$1.7 million from Schmidt Futures to administer the first two rounds of the competition, DreamUp Wisconsin and its teams have raised \$9.2 million to implement their ideas.

Almost half of the funding to support teams has been generously provided by Schmidt Futures through local and national prizes and matching grants. DreamUp Wisconsin leveraged the Alliance for the American Dream grant to allocate small prizes to winning teams in each phase of the competition to help them further their idea and prepare to pitch to Schmidt Futures. These investments paid off as Wisconsin teams earned \$3 million in Schmidt Futures grand prizes across rounds 1 and 2 of the national phase of the competition, considerably more than any of the other Alliance for the American Dream universities. For both rounds, Schmidt Futures also set up a \$500,000 matching fund to incentivize other funders to invest in the ideas generated by the challenge. DreamUp Wisconsin opened this opportunity to any team that competed in the challenge.

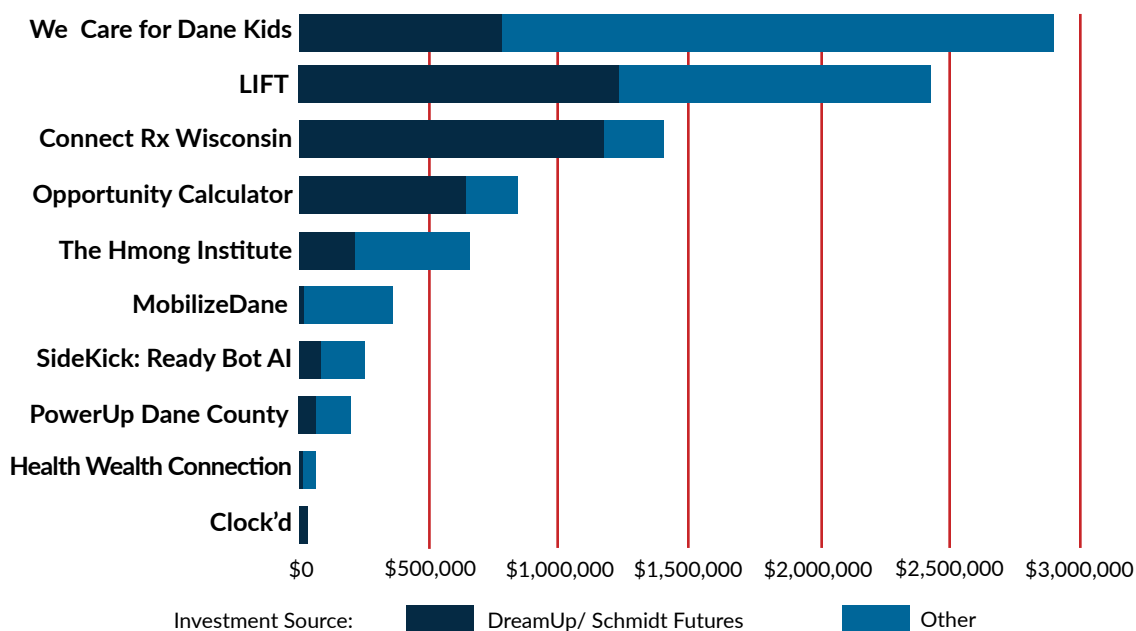
With help from the matching fund, DreamUp teams were able to leverage their success in the competition to attract other funding. By the end of 2020, DreamUp teams secured another \$4.8 million from local, state, and national funders. Combined with funding from Schmidt Futures, these efforts garnered \$9.2 million in investment for strategies, tools, and technologies that will help Dane County families increase their income.

The bar graph highlights the teams that attracted the greatest combined investments from the Alliance program and other fundraising efforts.

DreamUp Teams Raise More Than \$9M



Top 10 Highest Earning Teams



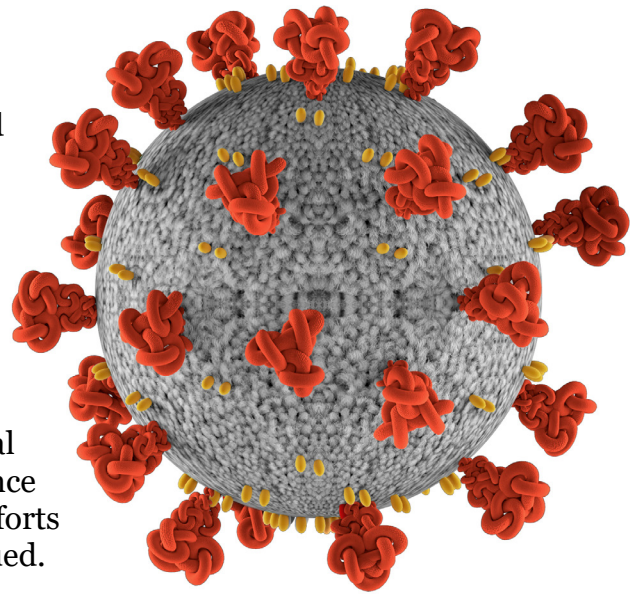
Funding awarded through the Schmidt Futures competition was provided by the Eric and Wendy Schmidt Fund for Strategic Innovation.

ADAPTING TO COVID-19

COVID-19 has greatly impacted the well-being and daily life of people across the globe. At the onset of the pandemic, DreamUp's top second-round three teams, Opportunity Calculator, Connect Rx, and Clock'd, were preparing to send their proposals and give their pitch to the Schmidt Futures expert panel in New York City. This came to a screeching halt as team members and Schmidt Futures were called to work on the health crisis.

Activities went virtual and deadlines shifted, pushing the final selection process out three months. This gave teams a chance to elevate their proposals and pitches, and relay how their efforts would be more impactful as the fallout from COVID-19 ensued.

Connect Rx, Opportunity Calculator, Clock'd, and other teams jumped to action to better serve the community and adjust their practices, pivoting and helping wherever they could, whether preparing child care centers or switching their clientele from hospitality to the non-profit volunteer sectors.



Participants engaged in a DreamUp MeetUp on housing at the UW South Madison Partnership space at Villager Mall.



Gillian Fink, Doyenne Group; Jenny Green, Collaboration For Good; Annette Miller, EQT By Design; and Andrea Nilsen, Madison Community Foundation at round 1 Showcase © Hedi LaMarr Rudd.



Round 1 review committee members choosing DreamUp finalists. Pictured left to right: Saran Ouk, Forbes MacIntosh, Cedric Ellis, Karen Timberlake, and Parmesh Ramanathan.



Round 1 top three teams, LIFT Dane, EARN Dane, and We Care for Dane Kids with Hilary Shager, Lonnie Berger, and Chancellor Blank at Schmidt Futures semifinals.

Outreach Summary

The DreamUp Wisconsin team reached out to community organizers, university professionals, businesses, public service providers, government officials, and residents in Dane County to share the DreamUp Challenge, collect the best ideas, and forge new relationships. These numbers summarize some of our efforts and accomplishments across both rounds of competition.

100+ people at the campus
65+ people at the community
KICK-OFF

OFFICE HOURS
70 DAYS
2 HOURS EACH
100+ ATTENDEES

4,000 people reached on
Social Media
f 

120+ Faculty & Staff
30+ Departments
ENGAGED



25
INVITATIONS
to present or
attend events

600+ people
CONTACTED
300+ organizations

Graduate students interviewed 168 people at schools, community centers, businesses, public events, libraries, in 2018.

This is what they heard:

What makes it difficult to get ahead financially?



Cost of Living
Unaffordable housing, food, utilities, health insurance, and taxes.



Education Costs
Post-secondary education & training (e.g. learning trades) costs are too high.



Job Market & Wages
Difficult to find jobs; wages not increasing with the cost of living.



Racial Discrimination
Systematically affects housing security, job access, healthcare, and education for people of color.



Child Care
Challenges finding available, affordable, and flexible service.



Social Benefits Access
Strict income limits and requirements make it hard to qualify for benefits.

Proposals Summary

DreamUp Wisconsin received proposals covering 12 major themes from teams of community organizers, university faculty and staff, businesses, public service providers, and government officials. These numbers describe the teams and their ideas for the round 1 and round 2 challenges.

55
PROPOSALS
SUBMITTED

250
INNOVATORS

12 major themes


workforce
development


social
capital


education


housing


labor policy
& advocacy


health
care


transportation


food


finance


energy


dependent
care


legal

160
COMMUNITY
ORGANIZATIONS
involved in
proposals

70
UW PARTNERS



How can families decrease expenses?



Affordable Housing

Lower rent, housing subsidies, rent control, more affordable housing units.



Lower Health Care Costs

Accessible health care, affordable insurance that covers all medical needs, reduced copays and fees.



Smarter Spending

Limit spending to essential needs, learn to budget, and buy used items.



Affordable Post-Secondary Education

Scholarships for low-income and returning students, low-cost post-secondary education and training.

How can families increase their income?



Financial Literacy

Increase financial literacy and budgeting skills.



Access to Education & Training

Affordable and flexible education and training.



More Job Opportunities

More options for professional growth.



Higher Wages

Increase wages and minimum wage.



Don't Know

People do all they can and need new ideas.

Respondent Household Income:

48%

\$0-\$40,000

28%

\$40,001-\$80,000

23%

\$80,001+

1%

No answer

Reflections From Our Alliance Mentor | Jennifer Erickson

As I saw the DreamUp teams bring much needed innovation to both health care and employment services, I kept thinking of a plaque that sat on President Obama's desk when I served in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy: **HARD THINGS ARE HARD**. In 2020, that was more true than ever. The Wisconsin teams were undeterred and knew how much more it mattered to get this right for the communities they serve. I think that was a huge part of their success: they stayed focused on what mattered, constantly seeking and incorporating feedback, developing a minimum viable product, and refining their message and delivery to make sure that they were telling a powerful story.

The thing about storytelling for change and innovation is you can get someone's attention pretty quickly with a shocking statistic about what is broken, or with a heartbreaking example of how what is broken affects a real person. But policymakers and investors are not short on lists of what is broken; they are short on capable teams with compelling ideas to fix what is broken.

We practiced the pitches again and again, ensuring every slide, number, partner mentioned is an opportunity to relay that this is an idea and a team to bet on. Policymakers and investors do not need to be convinced a team has all the answers. They need to know the team has a clear path forward to

accomplish what they are setting out to do. Hard things are hard, but they can be accomplished with focused, talented teams who can pick the right partners, constantly deliver and iterate on the product or program, and pivot when needed. I'm so grateful for all that the DreamUp teams are doing and am eager to see the ideas in action.



Jennifer's Pro Tips for Start-Ups Seeking Funds

1. The schedule is your friend

Use timelines and limits to get quick commitment and action from those you want support from.

2. Use a message triangle

Ensure that pitch points lead back to at least one of the three messages in the triangle.

3. Don't hide the ball

Be direct about what you have and still need.



Connect Rx WI celebrates the big \$1 million win with the DreamUp team and Schmidt Futures mentor Jennifer Erickson.



Opportunity Calculator teammates meet to prepare their proposal and pitch.

THANK YOU TO OUR ADVISORS

Competing in the DreamUp multi-phased accelerator process took a lot of hard work and practice, practice, practice. Neither teams, nor DreamUp staff, could have done it without the help of professionals from the innovation and equity sectors in the region. Their voluntary efforts pushed the teams to establish a strong proof of concept and prepare their best pitches to secure substantial initial investments from Schmidt Futures—two years in a row. Thank you for being in our network and inviting us all into yours.

Congrats to the DreamUp teams and UW staff for their hard work developing fantastic ideas, building strong collaborations, and harnessing the region's tech and startup community.

At StartingBlock, I had the pleasure of working with the DreamUp teams, from assessing their initial ideas through helping them hone their final—and successful—pitches. This is the Wisconsin Idea at its best.

- Chandra Miller Finen, formerly of StartingBlock and keynote at the Round 1 DreamUp Showcase

Thank you to advisors at:



**StartingBlock
Madison**

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BE AUDACIOUS



MOVING RESEARCH INTO IMPACT | J. Michael Collins & Laura Dresser

With DreamUp, the University of Wisconsin–Madison embraced the opportunity to bring research, policy, and practice experience to cultivate cutting edge ideas that could build our community’s vulnerable middle class. Researchers at IRP and beyond have long documented that families are struggling economically, and these issues go far beyond chronic poverty and welfare policy. Economists, sociologists, social workers, and other scholars have increasingly explained the precarity of the nation’s middle class, and the policies that either help to include more families in the middle class or policies that exclude people from economic stability and mobility. DreamUp challenged us to turn that knowledge toward concrete solutions for Wisconsin, starting by listening to community members and local practitioners.

Evidence and research are critical inputs to the process, but partnership and community leadership were essential to DreamUp. By listening to the expertise in our community, we were better able to identify innovative solutions for building the middle class. We heard about the financial implications of child care, inequities in legal systems, challenges connecting to job opportunities, and gaps in basic services like healthcare, among other topics. We worked with community members and non-profit leaders to use evidence and research to shape and support their projects and to foster relationships with the region’s thriving tech community. We understand that academic expertise is valuable for these projects, and we are mindful that analysis is only valuable to the extent it can be tied to, and supportive of, community strengths.

The structure of DreamUp, combining community leadership and UW researchers, has supported conversations, innovations, and new programs. Our goal, as these ideas move into implementation, is to begin to see more economic opportunities for families in our community. DreamUp teams are inspiring—they have met the challenge head on. UW students and researchers have also built new relationships and practical knowledge through this process. Working on ways to help Dane County’s middle class has been a learning opportunity for all of us.



Seven round 2 semifinalist teams attend the DreamUp orientation at the Urban League to learn more about the program and their next steps.



Professor Lonnie Berger speaks with UW–Madison faculty at the Campus Kick-off event Spring 2018. Background: Laura Dresser, COWS; J. Michael Collins, Center for Financial Security; and Donna Friedsam, IRP, discuss their ideas.



The EARN Dane team (standing, left to right) Roman Ryan, American Family; Dr. Ruben Anthony, Urban League; Iliana Wood, City of Madison; Norma Gallegos, Latino Academy of Workforce Dev; and Ed Lee, Urban League fields questions from pitch practice panelists (foreground, left to right) Chris Taber, UW–Madison Economics; Mark Richardson, GigBlender Business 608; Paul Jadin, MadREP; and Alnisa Allgood, Collaboration for Good.

DREAMUP

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“DreamUp was a great opportunity for cross sector/ agency learning and relationship building, and was catalytic for those reasons. Our project brought university and public sector professionals together for the first time to build a program that not only used the depth and perspective of our individual backgrounds, but engaged the assets and resources of our agencies and organizations.”

- Olivia Parry, Senior Planner, Dane County Planning & Development Department

“The DreamUp competition allowed us to dream big and envision a way to bring resources back to our community that will help thousands of families. We have a civil legal justice crisis and the DreamUp funding is going to make a significant dent in it.”

- Sarah Davis, LIFT team member and Director of the UW-Madison Center for Patient Partnerships

“True to its name, DreamUp is about dreaming for a better future.

The competition allowed us to imagine a more equitable world and raise our unique multi-sector partnership to a national stage. Participating and learning from our DreamUp mentors challenged us in ways that significantly elevated our efforts. Winning the grand prize is a testament to the years of collaborative work that helped carry Connect Rx to the next level.”

- Hayley Chesnick, Senior Director of Strategic Collaborations, United Way of Dane County

