

NEW FUTUREs

New Futures Reimagined:
Pathways to
Possibility



Strategic Plan

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Pathways to
Possibility

Goals



Scholar Success



Ecosystem of Impact



Resilience



Dear New Futures Community,

The future of New Futures is rooted in bold possibility.

For the last 25 years, New Futures has been laser-focused on steering young people to high-demand jobs in the Washington, DC region through postsecondary opportunities. We began as a scholarship organization, helping young people from high-need communities overcome financial barriers. But we quickly learned that money alone wasn't enough to support their dreams. We learned that they need a coach, an advisor, and general support to manage not only the complexities of the postsecondary system but life itself. We realized in our evolution that the journey toward a flourishing career can't be compartmentalized—it all happens at the same time.

So we expanded. We focused on building a community where we raised the level of support through advising, community building, skill-building, and career readiness sessions. This deepening and widening of the work we do with our Scholars helped us reach more young people, take them farther in their journeys, and help them reach new heights.

As we enter the next quarter-century, we explore the next iteration of New Futures—one that has many roads, possibilities, and potential for greater impact. It's a continuation of our mission, sharpened by what we've learned and guided by what still lies ahead. It's about reimagining the work—being innovative in our approach and strategic in how we pursue greater achievement, greater equity, and greater outcomes.

The New Futures community is special. Our devotion to young people thriving is matched only by our desire to see the communities they represent—and the community we all share here in our region—thrive as well. Our Scholars are nurses, construction managers, entrepreneurs, technologists, educators, and more—not training for the future, but shaping it today. They are already contributing to the region's health, growth, and prosperity. And we know that with deeper investment and stronger support systems, their impact—and ours—can be even greater.

This plan reflects the collective input and shared vision of our staff, board, Scholars, alumni, and partners. Together, we charted a direction that honors our past, meets the needs of the present, and prepares us to lead boldly into the future.

New Futures Reimagined: Pathways to Possibilities is about reaching new levels of Scholar success, strengthening the infrastructure and relationships that power our work, and building a more resilient New Futures. It calls us to invest not just in our Scholars, but in ourselves—our people, our systems, and our shared capacity to grow. There is more work to be done. And we are ready to do it.

We are deeply grateful to the entire New Futures community for your unwavering belief in what's possible—and for walking alongside us as we build it.

In service,



Sherrod Williams, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Officer



Kim Vinick
Board Chair



DR. SHERROD WILLIAMS

Chief Executive Officer



Our Mission

Educational opportunities for rewarding careers.

Our Vision

At New Futures, we envision a vibrant and equitable Washington, DC region where every person has an accessible and valued path through higher education, the opportunity to thrive in a fulfilling career, the choice of where and how to live, and voice in the decisions made in their communities.

Our Values

In all we do, we value the power and voices of our community of Scholars, Alumni, partners, educational organizations, supporters, and staff while embracing the unique gifts, needs, and perspectives of each individual. We hold equity as central to our ethos and strive always to center traditionally marginalized voices. We approach our work with honesty and humility and hold ourselves to high standards of integrity.

Goal 1 | Scholar Success

OBJECTIVE 1.1 Advance the long-term success and empowerment of Scholars through the provision of holistic, mission-driven support that fosters personal agency, celebrates educational attainment, and engineers meaningful career development.

ACADEMIC ADVISING

Provide personalized advising, early intervention strategies, and access to essential resources by fostering strong mentoring relationships and cultivating a supportive environment that enables Scholars to thrive during their academic journey and beyond.

CAREER PIPELINES

Facilitate early career exposure to employers by providing networking and job shadowing experiences and sharing relevant internship opportunities that build clear and accessible pathways from education to meaningful employment.

ECOSYSTEM OF SUPPORT

Develop collaborative networks of advisors, mentors, employers, and families to deepen student engagement and community building, with a focus on personal development, wellness, and mental health.

CAREER COACHING

Deliver individualized guidance, workforce training, and rally post-graduation support to help scholars develop career plans, build essential job searching skills, understand workplace culture, and successfully transition into or sustain meaningful employment in their chosen fields.

OBJECTIVE 1.2 Enhance New Futures programs by expanding access to diverse, high-impact educational pathways that align with Scholars' passions, career aspirations, and evolving workforce needs, ensuring they are equipped with credentials and confidence to drive economic mobility and open doors to rewarding workforce opportunities in the region.

CAREER PATHWAYS

Actively evaluate and refine New Futures' career pathways to reflect current and future workforce needs, expanding high impact options and streamlining programs to create clear, meaningful routes to economic mobility for Scholars.

WORKFORCE AND INDUSTRY TRENDS

Proactively monitor talent pipeline needs and emerging job market trends to adapt and shape the educational pathways we support, ensuring Scholars pursue degrees or certifications that lead to high-demand, high-opportunity careers.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Advance Scholars' career readiness by integrating immersive learning experiences—such as skill-building workshops, peer support, and career exploration—while connecting them to high-quality external opportunities like internships, apprenticeships, and fellowships.

Goal 1 | Scholar Success

OBJECTIVE 1.3 Build on the success of current Scholar programs by identifying new strategies and opportunities to expand access to the program and support persistence to education completion throughout the Scholar journey and beyond, with an intentional focus on engaging a broad spectrum of underrepresented and historically marginalized communities and creating the environment they need to thrive.

DATA STRATEGY AND INSIGHT

Leverage data-driven insights to identify and address disparities in Scholar outcomes, guiding targeted strategies that promote persistence, completion, and equitable success for all Scholars.

BUILD NEW PARTNERSHIPS

Forge new partnerships with community organizations, educational institutions, and industry leaders to broaden outreach efforts and expand opportunities for Scholars from underrepresented or historically marginalized communities.

LIFELONG LEARNERS

Champion a culture of lifelong learning by equipping young adults with the skills, mindset, and support to pursue upskilling or reskilling opportunities—and to confidently navigate evolving career pathways throughout their lives.

DEVELOPMENT TOUCHPOINTS

Intentionally embed development milestones throughout the Scholar's experience to develop skills in career readiness, strengthen leadership capacity, and build professional confidence at every stage of their academic and career journey.

OBJECTIVE 1.4 Strengthen the long-term impact of New Futures programs by facilitating connections between alumni and current scholars through structured programming that fosters community, shared learning, and mutual growth.

MENTORSHIP AND LEADERSHIP

Build the capacity of alumni to act as leaders and mentors to current and future scholars, with a focus on knowledge transfer and the opportunity to contribute to the success of the next generation of scholars and professionals.

ALUMNI NETWORKS

Strengthen the alumni community through tailored events, communications, and engagement opportunities that keep graduates connected to each other and to New Futures.

ALUMNI-LED SESSIONS

Facilitate skill-sharing and career learnings from alumni to Scholars, to share insights, practical advice, and professional inspiration/support.

COMMUNITY CIRCLES

Explore the creation of alumni and Scholar affinity groups based on shared interests, career fields, or identities to deepen connection and expand opportunities for collaboration.

Goal 2

Ecosystem of Impact

OBJECTIVE 2.1 Elevate the visibility and awareness of our mission and impact by amplifying our brand presence, expanding marketing efforts, and curating compelling content to engage new audiences and deepen community connection.

LEVERAGE STORYTELLING

Share powerful Scholar, alumni, and staff narratives that are grounded in lived experience to reflect our economic and human impact, inspire action, bolster support, and authentically connect with diverse communities.

TRUSTED REGIONAL PARTNER

Build critical relationships with partners across industries and sectors to create ambassadors, advocates, and reinforce the organization's role as a reliable and impactful collaborator in education and workforce spaces.

INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS PLANS

Develop and deliver cohesive and coordinated messaging strategies across digital, print, and in-person platforms to ensure consistent and engaging outreach.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Bolster New Futures as a credible voice in the education and workforce development space by shaping and participating in relevant conversations and attending key convenings to amplify voices of Scholars, alumni, and staff in a public forum.

OBJECTIVE 2.2 Expand and strengthen our partnership ecosystem by leveraging existing relationships and cultivating new strategic alliances to drive enhanced program delivery and create greater opportunities for program participants.

INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

Collaborate with employers and industry leaders to align programs with workforce needs and unlock new and relevant opportunities for Scholars.

CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

Cultivate strategic partnerships with corporate organizations to provide financial support, expand career learning opportunities and mentorship pathways, and strengthen brand alignment.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Build authentic relationships with local organizations and leaders, ensuring that programs reflect the voice of the community, respond to local needs, and participate in ongoing dialogue and engagement that supports Scholar and community success.

GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIPS

Support broader policy-related efforts by developing strategic partnerships with government entities and fostering relationships that can expand brand presence and open doors to new opportunities.

COLLECTIVE ACTION

Participate in cross-sector efforts that bring together diverse perspectives to address systematic barriers, align shared goals, and enhance opportunities for scholars through coordinated, mission-driven action.

Goal 2 | Ecosystem of Impact

OBJECTIVE 2.3 Engage every member of our New Futures community through curated communications tailored to each audience, meeting people where they are, building trust, fostering collaboration, and creating a cohesive, supportive network around our mission.

EVENTS

Offer a diverse range of inclusive, high-impact events that nurture connections, celebrate Scholars and alumni, and deepen community engagement.

ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

Curate a communications strategy that keeps alumni actively engaged, highlights stories and progress updates, and offers opportunities to engage and contribute through events and campaigns.

TAILORED OUTREACH PLANS

Refine our messaging and outreach strategies to ensure we meet the individualized needs of Scholars, alumni, families, volunteers, community members, and partners in a timely and relevant manner.

FEEDBACK LOOP

Continue building a culture of listening and learning by refining and embedding regular, intentional feedback channels that actively inform decision-making, program enhancements, strategy, and communications practices.



Goal 3 | Resilience

OBJECTIVE 3.1 Secure sustainable funding by diversifying revenue streams, strengthening donor relationships, implementing strategies to manage donor variability, and pursuing strategic grants to ensure long-term organizational stability, growth, and an investment in our community and neighbors.

FUNDING CHANNELS

Expand and diversify funding sources by identifying and pursuing a wide variety of mission-aligned income strategies, including donations, grants, sponsorships, and other emerging revenue streams.

DONOR STEWARDSHIP

Enhance donor stewardship by prioritizing personalized communication, proactive engagement, and long-term relationship building, with a focus on leveraging storytelling and data to transparently report our impact.

DONOR BEHAVIOR

Anticipate and adapt to changes in donor behavior by using data to assess trends, conducting scenario planning and revenue projections, understanding and adapting to donor preferences, and creating flexible fundraising plans that can pivot quickly based on donor behavior in an evolving philanthropic landscape.

BOARD FUNDRAISING

Engage board members to identify new funding streams by deploying them as active ambassadors, connectors, and advocates on behalf of New Futures, leveraging their connections to open new opportunities for revenue diversification.

OBJECTIVE 3.2 Prioritize team and organizational culture and well-being by investing in individualized support and benefits that fosters professional growth and long-term success and retention of our exceptional staff—recognizing that continuity, a shared commitment to fiscal responsibility, and sustaining institutional knowledge is essential to delivering on our mission and maximizing impact for those we serve and partner with.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Champion continuous professional development for all staff by providing access to learning opportunities, training, leadership/mentorship exposure, and skill-building resources, with a focus on empowering staff to take ownership over their own career journey and goal-setting.

SUCCESSION PLANNING

Develop and implement a succession planning framework that proactively identifies and develops staff to support long-term sustainability and growth, focusing on continuity, knowledge transfer, and strengthening the leadership pipeline.

CULTURE AND RETENTION INITIATIVES

Strengthen staff's long-term investment by continuously reviewing our compensation and benefits to remain competitive, providing opportunities for personal and professional growth with clear career advancement pathways, and fostering an inclusive and supportive workplace that believes in personal wellbeing and a passion for our mission and impact.

SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY

Build internal capacity and deepen industry expertise of staff by emphasizing continuous learning and development, providing upskilling or cross-functional training, and monitoring and understanding industry changes or best practices.

Goal 3 | Resilience

OBJECTIVE 3.3 Enhance internal infrastructure to support organizational growth by leveraging technology and innovation, and actively engaging the Board, Associate Board, and Alumni to strengthen governance and fiscal responsibilities, expand networks, and contribute strategic expertise.

BOARD AND ASSOCIATE BOARD RECRUITMENT

Employ a strategic, values-aligned board, associate board, and alumni board recruitment strategy that identifies current strengths and opportunities in board participation, ensures diverse perspectives, and prioritizes effective onboarding and engagement.

BOARD NETWORKS

Leverage the networks and connections of Board Associate Board, and Alumni Board members by providing specific, clear roles and tasks related to expanding brand awareness, cultivating relationships, and engaging in strategic campaigns.

DRIVERS OF INNOVATION

Evaluate and adopt new tools, methodologies, and technologies, and optimize existing processes and systems, to improve operational efficiencies and remain adaptive to changes in the industry and landscape.

REVIEW OF PRACTICES

Establish a process for regularly reviewing and refining technology systems, modalities of work, and governance practices to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in achieving our strategic goals.



Goal 3 | Resilience

OBJECTIVE 3.4 Evaluate and optimize our cost and operational structure to ensure long-term efficiencies, resilience, sustainability, and alignment with strategic priorities, designing a structure that is agile and poised to navigate future challenges and opportunities.

REALIGNMENT OF RESOURCES

Evaluate and realign financial and staff resources to strategic priorities by directing funding and human capital towards the programs, partnerships, and innovations that most effectively advance our vision for the future.

ORGANIZATIONAL WORKFLOWS

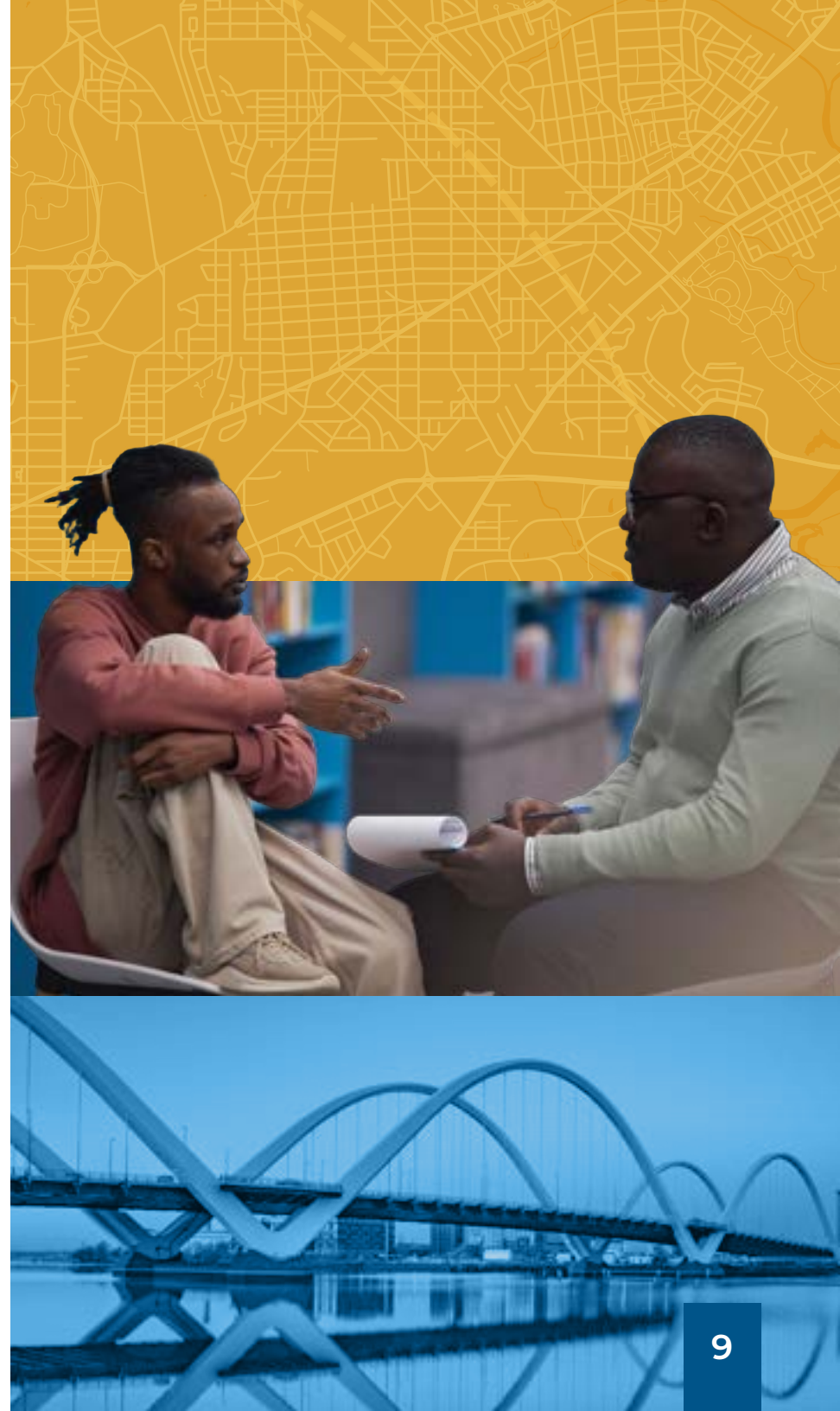
Assess and refine organizational workflows by conducting workflow and operational audits, including regular reviews of vendors, services, and contracts to identify opportunities to control costs and enhance agility and effectiveness.

TECH-INFORMED EFFICIENCIES

Leverage technology to streamline operations, automate routine workflows, and improve access to data, focusing on effectively training staff and establishing metrics to monitor and optimize.

FINANCIAL MODELS

Develop adaptive financial models that enable scenario planning and long-term resilience, ensuring the organization can navigate instability while sustaining mission impact.



NEW FUTURES

newfuturesdc.org

