



**THE COLLEGE CRUSADE**  
OF RHODE ISLAND

*Inspire. Support. Believe.*

## MILESTONES

### 1989 TO 2011

**2011** The College Crusade presents the Americo W. Petrocelli Award for Distinguished Service to founding board member **O. Rogeriee Thompson**, during our June 2011 annual meeting.

New members joining the board of directors this year are: **José V. Monteiro**, Relationship Manager, Commercial Lending, Navigant Credit Union; **Mim L. Runey**, Providence Campus President and Chief Operating Officer for Johnson & Wales University; **Manuel J. Vales IV**, Senior Vice President, Commercial Real Estate Division, for Sovereign/Santander Bank, and **James Vincent**, Manager of Constituent Advocacy at Rhode Island Housing.

The College Crusade awards \$1.3 million in college scholarships to 396 Crusaders. (Since 2001, The College Crusade has awarded over \$23 million in scholarships to more than 3,000 Crusaders who have successfully completed high school and gone on to higher education.)

**2010** The College Crusade marks its 20th anniversary with a celebration at the Rhode Island State House, featuring congratulations from **Governor Donald L. Carcieri** and many other honored guests.

**Todd D. Flaherty**, Ed.D., is hired as full-time President & CEO of The College Crusade.

**Raymond Di Pasquale**, RI Commissioner of Higher Education; **Colleen Callahan**, Director of Professional Issues, RI Federation of Teachers & Health Professionals; and **Saikon Gbehan**, Esq., an alumnae of The College Crusade, join the Board of Directors.

The College Crusade awards \$1.1 million in college scholarships to 349 Crusaders.

**2009** Board member **Todd D. Flaherty**, Ed.D., is appointed Interim President & CEO of The College Crusade.

**Deborah Gist**, RI Commissioner of Elementary & Secondary Education, joins the Board of Directors.

The College Crusade announces the findings of its latest Annual Report Card, which shows that Crusaders in the class of 2008 graduated from high school and went right on to college at much greater rates than their peers in the state's urban school districts.

The College Crusade awards \$1.88 million in college scholarships to 467 Crusaders.

**2008** The College Crusade announces the findings of its 2007 Annual Report Card, which shows that Crusaders in the class of 2007 graduated from high school and went right on to college at much greater rates than their peers in the state’s urban school districts – and at greater rates than Rhode Island students in general.

The College Crusade awards \$2 million in college scholarships to 580 Crusaders.

**Mary Sylvia Harrison**, president and CEO, leaves to become Vice President of Programs for the Nellie Mae Education Foundation.

**Jami Ouellette**, of Im-aj Communications and Design, and **Stuart Yarlus**, of Yarlus, Kaplan, Santilli & Moran, Ltd., join the Board of Directors.

**2007** The College Crusade of Rhode Island changes its name (from the Rhode Island Children’s Crusade) to better reflect its mission: to help low-income students who are committed to achievement get the tools and resources they need to go to college.

The College Crusade recruits the first class of Crusaders who enroll in sixth grade, a time when students are ready to commit to a college-readiness program and to invest the time and energy necessary to succeed.

The College Crusade awards \$2.6 million in college scholarships to approximately 800 Crusaders.

The College Crusade introduces Ways to A’s, a new summer study-skills program for Crusaders entering sixth grade and ninth grade. It also launches Cru Club, a new program held afterschool and on Saturdays that features academic enrichment, career speakers, Advisory services, and other college-readiness activities.

Board member **Warren Simmons** is named Vice Chair.

**2006** The first small cohort of Crusaders, enrolled in 1996, graduates from high school.

The College Crusade undertakes a major evaluation of its effectiveness since 1996, when the original program approach was refined. The results show many positive correlations between the refined program model and Crusader success in school.

**2005** The College Crusade wins a second GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The grant is for \$16.4 million total, to be administered over the next six years.

The first large cohort of Crusaders, enrolled in 1991, graduates from four-year colleges.

**2004** The College Crusade forms the Providence Educational Excellence Coalition (PEEC), a broad-based group of leaders from nearly 30 community organizations dedicated to ensuring high-quality education for all Providence public school students. The coalition immediately mobilizes to create a forum for community response and to advocate for radical improvements at Hope High School in Providence.

**Paul Moran**, a partner at Yaras, Kaplan, Santilli & Moran, Ltd., is appointed Acting Chair of the Board of Directors.

**2003** Over 900 Crusaders are attending colleges, universities and trade schools on College Crusade Scholarships.

**2002** A major research evaluation of The College Crusade called “Every Child Holds the Answer” is published by the Center for Youth and Communities at Heller Graduate School of Brandeis University. Funded by the Nellie Mae Education Foundation and the Rhode Island Foundation, the report affirms the effectiveness of The College Crusade as a college-access program for RI students from low-income communities.

**2001** The first large cohort of Crusaders, enrolled in 1991, graduates from high school. The College Crusade administers its first year of scholarship awards.

The College Crusade wins a 5-year \$8 million grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York to work as a core partner with the Providence School Department on an initiative to redesign the city’s public high schools. The partnership is called READY (Raising Expectations and Discovering Our Youth).

The College Crusade relocates its headquarters to 134 Thurbers Avenue in Providence, its current address.

**2000** The College Crusade wins significant funding from the Nellie Mae Education Foundation and the Rhode Island Foundation to undertake a major evaluation of the first 10 years of its program. The report is released in 2002.

The College Crusade Scholarship Collaborative grows to over 60 members.

The Hon. **O. Rogeriee Thompson** succeeds **Robert Spink Davis** as Chair of the Board of Directors.

**1999** The College Crusade receives a five-year \$9 million federal grant from GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) to provide college readiness programs and services to Rhode Island youth. The award is eventually extended to a six-year \$11 million grant.

The original community-based mentoring program shifts to the current College Crusade Advisory system, which places young professionals directly in schools where Crusaders attend.

**1998** The College Crusade is named a model for a new \$300 million federal initiative from the U.S. Department of Education called GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs). (For more information about GEAR UP, go to <http://www.ed.gov/programs/gearup/index.html>.)

In connection with the establishment of GEAR UP, The College Crusade is honored at the White House by **President Bill Clinton**. In attendance are Executive Director **Mary Sylvia Harrison** and **Senator Jack Reed**, a dedicated advocate for The College Crusade.

A financial study by MetLife overseen by College Crusade Board Member **Sheldon Whitehouse** determines that the organization is well positioned to meet the scholarship needs of its ten classes of Crusaders.

**1997** The College Crusade moves from its original location at the state Office of Higher Education to a new headquarters on Allens Avenue in Providence.

**1996** With approval from the Board, The College Crusade adopts a new program model that is anchored in child and youth development theories and that defines academic, social, and employability outcomes for students. Annual enrollment of students is limited to smaller cohorts of 500. Crusaders are now enrolled from selected urban schools where 80 percent or more of students qualify for federal lunch subsidies. With the smaller cohorts, services targeted to individual students increase dramatically.

**1995** The College Crusade wins a five-year \$1.6 million National Early Intervention Scholarship and Partnership (NEISP) grant from the U.S. Department of Education to help fund programs for middle school Crusaders. With the help of NEISP funds, The College Crusade creates an adventure education program that builds social skills and teamwork among adolescents. Eventually called the Crusade Academic and Adventure Program, or CAAP, it becomes a core required activity for all middle school Crusaders.

**Robert Spink Davis** succeeds **George Graboys** as new Chair of the Board of Directors.

**1994** **Mary Sylvia Harrison** is appointed as President and CEO of The College Crusade. Drawing on many professional strengths and extensive experience working on behalf of underserved populations, she begins to transform the organization into a national model for youth development and college access.

The College Crusade wins a three-year \$1.5 million grant from the newly formed Corporation for National and Community Service/AmeriCorps. The funding deepens The College Crusade's reach into local communities and increases the number of students served.

**1993** The College Crusade scholarship fund reaches \$3.2 million. To augment the fund and keep pace with growing enrollment, The College Crusade establishes the Scholarship Collaborative with postsecondary institutions. Wellesley College is the first member. By fall 1993, every four-year public and private college in Rhode Island, and many other schools from across the region, agree to provide scholarships for Crusaders who have earned admission.

**1989 to 1992** The College Crusade is founded (under its original name, The Rhode Island Children's Crusade for Higher Education) based on a concept developed by state Commissioner for Higher Education Americo W. Petrocelli. The premise is that by combining early intervention with sustained mentoring and a scholarship incentive, more Rhode Island students will graduate high school and go on to postsecondary education.

In 1991 the first cohort of 2,774 Crusaders is enrolled from third grades in schools across the state. Enrollment averages about 3,000 students annually for the next few years. A Mentorship Academy is opened at Rhode Island College to recruit and train mentors for Crusaders. In a subsequent partnership, 32 community agencies establish student mentoring programs. The number of afterschool mentoring programs eventually rises to 70.

In 1992 **George Graboys**, a highly respected bank executive with a strong commitment to education, is named chair of the Board of Directors. Other individuals who get involved early with the organization and go on to make long-term contributions include **Robert Spink Davis, the Hon. O. Rogeriee Thompson, Douglas Johnson, Senator Sheldon Whitehouse, State Representative Tony Pires, Senator John Chafee, and Senator Jack Reed.**