



# **STRATEGIC PLAN**

**June 2016**

# ASCENDING LIGHTS LEADERSHIP NETWORK STRATEGIC PLAN

## **Mission Statement:**

The mission of the Ascending Lights Leadership Network is to develop leaders, through community college scholarships and mentoring, who can significantly enhance the crucial efforts of urban Christian churches to reduce poverty and violence in the poorest areas of Los Angeles County.

## LONGER VERSION

The Ascending Lights Leadership Network is a non-profit scholarship and mentoring organization that works with Christian churches to combat the poverty and violence prevalent in the urban neighborhoods of greater Los Angeles. The efforts of these churches are enhanced by utilizing properly trained college graduates to serve as ministry leaders and role models in their urban communities.

Ascending Lights recruits young men and women from urban churches who demonstrate an authentic faith in Christ, strong track records of service in their church communities, and viable academic prospects. Through financial support, urban leadership training, and focused academic, social, and spiritual mentoring, Ascending Lights helps them to graduate from community college or transfer to a university.

With a college degree, Ascending Lights graduates have greater prospects for meaningful professional employment, which empowers them with the confidence, resources, and ability to give back to their churches and their neighborhoods through community service and peer leadership.

## Goals and Objectives

**Goal: To continue a program that consistently achieves the purpose of our mission to provide Christian churches with college educated community leaders.**

- Objective: To maintain an ethnically diverse student population of between 35 and 45 individuals.
- Objective: To maintain program graduation and university transfer rates of 75% or better.
- Objective: To strengthen and formalize the relationships with our churches so that they can be a consistent source of high quality Christian students and maximize the impact that our students and graduates have in their communities.
- Objective: To continue to recruit and select students who demonstrate an authentic faith in Christ, viable academic prospects, life and leadership skills, and a strong desire to serve their churches and communities.
- Objective: To have each of our participants capable of assisting with recruitment of students for scholarships and implementing iGraduate mentoring programs in their churches.
- Objective: To maintain and enhance the current effective model of focused holistic mentoring
- Objective: To use our Leadership Training events to teach effective academic, employment, life, leadership, and spiritual growth skills that will enable student success in life, in their church ministries, and in their communities.
- Objective: To seek innovative ways of delivering services more effectively and efficiently.
- Objective: To institute additional metrics that enable the agency to better track program outcomes.

**Goal: To sustain the organization into the future**

- Objective: To maintain a Board that represents our stakeholders and provides expertise and governance in all key operational areas.
- Objective: To establish expectations of board members with respect to attendance/financial contributions and/or donated time.

- Objective: To develop a plan for resource development utilizing the latest 21<sup>st</sup> Century strategies for marketing, donation solicitation, and economic growth.
- Objective: To include and promote planned giving in our development strategy.
- Objective: To have a board, donor base, and donation levels that reflect the interdenominational Christian diversity of our student population.
- To always seek to be the best possible stewards of our donated resources.
- Objective: To leverage our resources to maintain our target student population of 35-45 students.
- Objective: To manage our endowment in such a way as to maximize the amount of funds available for operations while preserving its permanently restricted principle.
- Objective: To seek innovative strategies for increasing public awareness of our agency's work.

**Goal: To explore opportunities for strategic collaborations, partnerships, and other relationships that will benefit the Ascending Lights program.**

- Objective: To increase the use of volunteers where their expert services can be utilized.
- Objective: To reach out to leaders of business, civic, religious, and educational entities to be advisors in key operational areas.

## **ASCENDING LIGHTS iGRADUATE STRATEGIC PLAN**

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of Ascending Lights iGraduate is to accelerate and increase the community college graduation and transfer rates of economically disadvantaged youth and adults living in Los Angeles County

**Goal: To continue a program that consistently achieves the desired outcomes of our mission.**

- Objective: To seek innovative ways of delivering iGraduate services more effectively and efficiently.
- Objective: To continue offering our services to any organization or college educated individual interested in assisting community college students.
- Objective: To seek ways of collaborating with community colleges, high schools, and civic organizations to extend the impact of the program and promote the value of community college education.
- Objective: To provide a level of ongoing support to agencies and individuals who have been trained that perpetuates the success of their iGraduate mentoring programs where they have been established.
- Objective: To develop a plan for resource development utilizing the latest 21<sup>st</sup> Century strategies for marketing and economic growth.