



## **The DEF Partnership for Career Achievement (PCA) – Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is the desired outcome of the Partnership for Career Achievement?**

The goal of PCA is to break the cycle of generational poverty by providing assistance and funding that allows students to pursue training that will lead to living wages and job opportunities.

### **What is Partnership for Career Achievement?**

The Partnership for Career Achievement is a DEF program in partnership with Decatur High School. The goal is to help low-income students who are interested in vocational/trade programs gain the training that will provide solid job prospects and income potential. The program pairs each student with a community advocate who will help guide the student through their senior year and subsequent training program, as well as provide the funding required to cover associated costs.

### **Why is the Decatur Education Foundation championing PCA?**

The mission of DEF is to harness community resources to provide educational and enrichment opportunities for all Decatur youth. Right now, our college-bound graduating seniors have a lot of support and scholarships available to them, but lower-income students who are not on that track do not have as many options. DEF seeks to create a parallel opportunity for students who want to pursue industry training and certification but who lack the information and resources to make that happen.

### **How will students be identified for PCA?**

DEF will pilot the program during the 2016-2017 school year in conjunction with Decatur High School. Working with a team of DHS educators, students who meet the criteria will be identified in August. Team members will meet with students to assess interest and gain parent permission. Students who meet program requirements will receive funding to cover costs associated with the vocational/technical program they choose.

### **What is the role of the PCA Advocate?**

Each student who joins the program will be matched with an advocate. The advocate will be a volunteer from the community who will help the student research and identify programs, register for any required tests, visit schools, complete applications, register for classes, and any other tasks necessary for the student to successfully enroll in and complete a training program.

### **What is the time commitment for PCA Advocates?**

The students will meet with assigned advocates a minimum of once per month, with more meetings and communication as needed, depending on the student's goals and how much support is required. It is best if advocates have a "whatever it takes" mentality since each student has different needs. While we understand that life isn't perfectly predictable, our goal is for PCA advocates to remain paired with their student through senior year, help them transition to the program of choice and remain in contact through completion of the program and securing a job.

### **How do I sign up to be a PCA Advocate?**

If you are interested in learning more and possibly signing up to be considered as an advocate, please complete the interest form at the bottom of the page at [www.decaturreducationfoundation.org/mentoring](http://www.decaturreducationfoundation.org/mentoring)