

# Grant Finalist Summary

## Crossover Mission

**Project:** *The Center for Achievement and Tutoring (The CAT) at the Crossover Center*



**Category:** Education

**What They Do:** Support and redirect at-risk youth through an after-school athletic and academic mentoring program. The agency uses basketball as a tool to attract and motivate student athletes while providing one-on-one academic support to monitor and promote achievement. Relevant life coaches also provide local and world exposure to young minds.

**Project Summary:** The grant will build-out and equip a 1,700 square foot multi-media learning center within the new Crossover Center, a former fruit-packing plant in Gifford, that will also house two basketball courts. The CAT will provide a quiet and efficient learning space for individual and small group instruction. It will include a multi-media library and technology center to assist with distance learning.

**More Information:** Crossover's mission is year-round. During the summer months, they shift gears and focus heavily on mentoring and life exposure. Crossover provides experiences that can shape the student's vision about what is possible in their own education and careers. Summer becomes a time of purpose-driven experiences as opposed to idleness.

**Population Served:** Crossover student athletes are between the ages of 8-18. Many live in difficult family situations in varying levels of poverty, surrounded by violence, gangs, drug trafficking and drug abuse. They are at high-risk of failing in school, dropping out, joining a gang, and facing incarceration (1 in 3 African American males will be arrested by age 25).

**Impact:** When Crossover began in 2014, 50% of its kids were failing one or more classes and had a GPA below 2.0. In the 2019-20 school year, 89% had a B or higher GPA, despite the challenges of distance learning. The goal is a 100% high school graduation rate, which this year's class of 2020 Crossover seniors met. While Crossover currently serves 70 youngsters and has a waiting list, the expanded Crossover Center will allow up to 300 children to be served each week.

**In Their Own Words:** "A Pandemic of Poverty has plagued our Gifford community for 100 years. Education is the way out for us who are in poverty. Our kids must BELIEVE that their education is important, they must have genuine and authentic support and be willing to WORK for it. Too many kids are losing hope and falling victim to street life. Symbolically, with the county jail located on 41st street and the Gifford Cemetery located on 49th street, our new Crossover Center stands in between "Jail or Hell", as a beacon of hope, on Route 1 directly off of 45th St. which is the main artery into the heart of Gifford. Route1 is the divider between those who need help and those who CAN help. With education at the heart of the Crossover Center for Achievement and Tutoring, please invest in this safe place, a home strategically located and fashioned for youth innovation and uplift. This home is within reach and is the first step out of the 'hood.'" – *Antoine Jennings (Co-Founder/Director of Operations) & Cathy De Schouwer (Co-Founder/Executive Director)*

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**From the Grant Panel Team:** “The team recognized a skilled Executive Director, a passionate and dedicated Board, and a charismatic COO (and Gifford native) who has created a following in the community.”

**Use of Funds:** Remodeling costs, library materials, bookshelves, computers and other technology, study cubicles, seating

**Sustained** by a robust fundraising schedule, continued relationships with eight local granting agencies

**Website:** [www.crossovermission.com](http://www.crossovermission.com)