

LEARNING  
UNLIMITED



2

year





## *Welcome to LU!*

*By engaging college students as volunteer leaders of educational programs for middle and high school students, we aim to:*

*Give every 7th-12th grade student the opportunity to find what they are passionate to learn, and give college students a chance to explore teaching, leadership, and social entrepreneurship.*

*This is what we've been up to!*

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*Dear Supporters,*

A 10th-grade girl first discovers that she loves astrophysics when a college student shows her a picture of another galaxy. An 8th-grade boy, also in a class led by a college student, finds joy in a discussion about the political ramifications of the Arab Spring. We have all been touched by people around us, like these college students, who have taken an interest in our growth and helped us achieve it.

Over a thousand college students across the country volunteer to change lives through our programs. If you are reading this, then you are one of the people who have touched us — perhaps by volunteering, or donating, or advising us — and so you’ve made what those college students do possible. Thank you!



I’m here to tell you what we’ve been able to do with your support, and it’s a lot! Here’s just a small taste of our last year:

- **5 new programs, at Boston College, the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, UCLA, Southwestern University, and a program run by Granite Hills High School for area middle school students.**
- **Over 6,000 middle and high school students reached by over 1,000 university volunteers.**
- **\$60,000 in startup funds raised.**
- **Finalist status in MassChallenge, the world’s largest global startup competition.**
- **More Parents’ Programs, better software for our chapters, and a new Splash manual for how to create a successful program.**

I hope that you’ll enjoy the rest of this update to you. Once again, thank you for everything you’ve done to make Learning Unlimited possible.

*Sincerely,*

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "Daniel Zaharopol". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Daniel Zaharopol**  
**CEO, Learning Unlimited**



## Our Programs

Learning Unlimited engages college students as volunteer leaders of educational programs for middle and high school students. The most popular program is [Splash](#), a weekend where students choose between hundreds of different courses and find what they love to learn.

## Our Classes

Our classes are designed and taught by college students. Here are a few popular examples:

[Quantum Mechanics and Semiconductors](#) (UCLA)

[Draining Relationships: Exploring Gender Dynamics in the Twilight Saga](#) (Boston College)

[Chemistry of Flavor](#) (University of Maryland, Baltimore County)

[Toilets!](#) (an engineering course - MIT)

[The Philosophy of Star Wars](#) (Stanford)

[Boom Boom Pow: An Introduction to Street Drumming](#) (University of Chicago)

[Mad Science, Mad Math](#) (Southwestern)

[From Heathcliff to Harry: Creating Characters](#) (Duke)

It's a Win...



Students, Grades 7-12

- Find an intellectual community
- Build their self-image as scholars
- Find what they love to learn
- Meet college role models

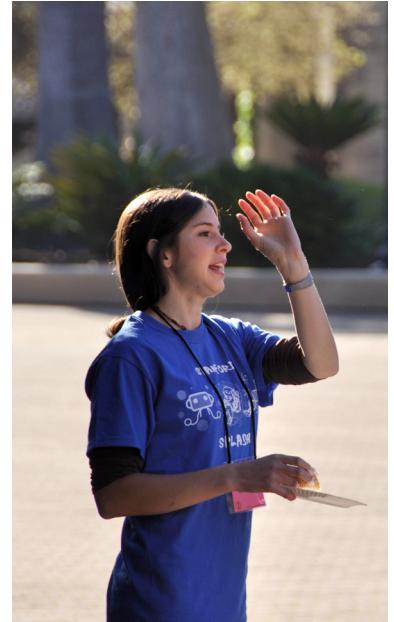
Win,



College-Age Teachers

- Get a first taste of teaching
- Explore a meaningful volunteer opportunity
- Build presentation & public-speaking skills

Win!



College-Age Leaders

- Become social entrepreneurs
- Design and lead programs for up to 2000 kids
- Gain leadership skills while making a real difference

## From the Lab to the Classroom: Jeff Simon's Story

Jeff Simon told his parents he was leaving his graduate program at Stanford University, where he was earning money to study sustainable plastics, during a family vacation in Jamaica.

“But why? You’re so smart,” Simon recalls his parents asking.

Perhaps the contrast of the lush beaches for tourists with the harsh realities of life for hotel employees reminded Simon of the contrasts he felt at Stanford: in a position to be envied by any scientist from the outside, but feeling frustrated and out of place within.

When Simon arrived at Stanford in Fall 2009, he quickly became involved in Stanford Splash. Simon’s first Stanford Splash class was a powerpoint lecture titled, “How Science is Saving the World,” in which he lectured on bulletproof vests and medicines.

“It was boring. The students didn’t like it, I didn’t blame them,” Simon said.

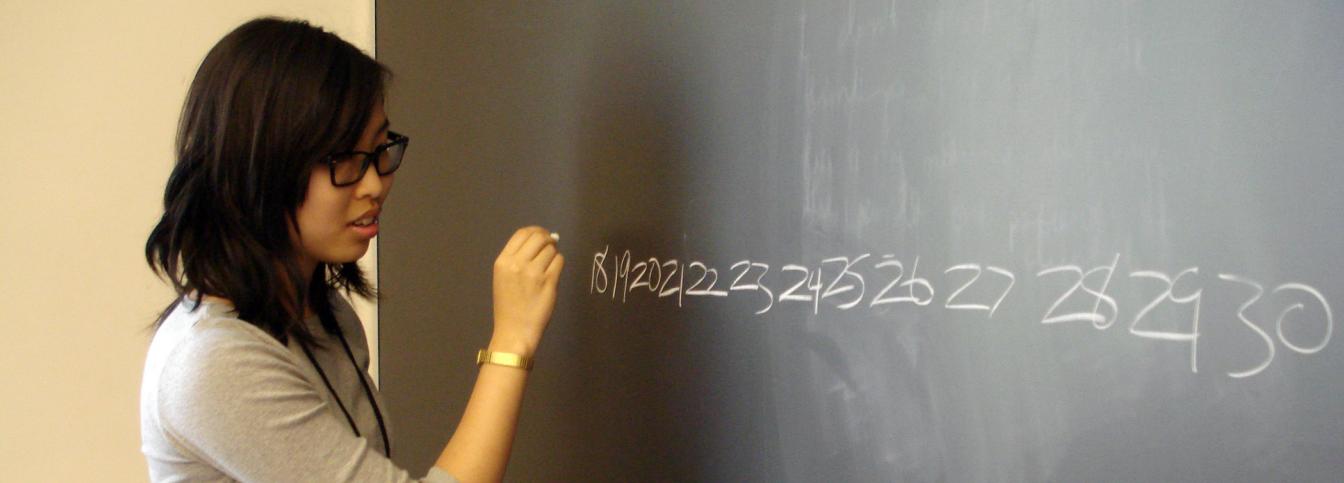
In the following months, Simon became more involved with Stanford Splash, even traveling to underserved high schools to teach science classes on Stanford Splash’s behalf – this time, using hands-on demonstrations to motivate scientific concepts in lessons that he continued to teach at Stanford Splash.

“Science is not old and in a textbook and dead. It’s alive and needs to be discovered, and it can be discovered through asking questions. You don’t need to tell a student why the concept is important. You make it obvious,” Simon said.

Due in part to Simon’s outreach, last year over 600 students attended Stanford Splash for free, and Stanford Splash subsidized transportation for over 400 students.

Jeff started teaching high school chemistry at Passaic High School in New Jersey this fall through Teach for America.





## Impact

“[The programs] have become very important pieces of who I am. It’s given me the opportunity to get out of my boring high school classes and discuss much more interesting and applicable things.” – *Mike, a student at MIT Splash.*

“It’s opened opportunities for postsecondary education for students who have no other opportunity to do so.” – *Sinnika, a counselor at Collins Academy High School on the West Side of Chicago, where over 96% of students are low-income. One of her students switched to an honors math class after attending Splash! Chicago, because he discovered he wanted to be an actuary.*

“At the end of the class, two students asked me for help with a homework problem from their high school chemistry class. Looking at the abstract, scientifically meaningless problem, I realized that the students might not be learning about the really interesting stuff—the scientific and technological challenges of the near future—in their high school science coursework. To me, filling that gap is what Splash is all about.” – *Martin, a teacher and leader at Northwestern Splash.*

“I have found my work here to be extremely exciting simply because it is so unusual that someone as young as I is able to hold so much responsibility.” – *Michelle, program/chapter leader as an MIT undergraduate; now part of Teach for America.*

# LU: A Timeline

Since its founding two years ago, Learning Unlimited has grown to 12 campuses nationwide, dramatically accelerating the Splash movement.

We continue to work to make our programs accessible to every student in the country and to engage thousands more college students in leadership and volunteerism.

**1957:** MIT Educational Studies Program is founded and begins its first event for high school students, the Summer Studies Program.

**1988:** MIT ESP runs its first Splash.

**1996:** Stanford ESP runs its first Splash.

March 25: First Splash at New York University

September 29: First Splash at University of Chicago, with web support from MIT ESP

March 8: MIT launches Spark (like Splash) to meet student demand

April 5: Stanford Splash re-launched

September: First brainstorm by program alumni on what is to become LU

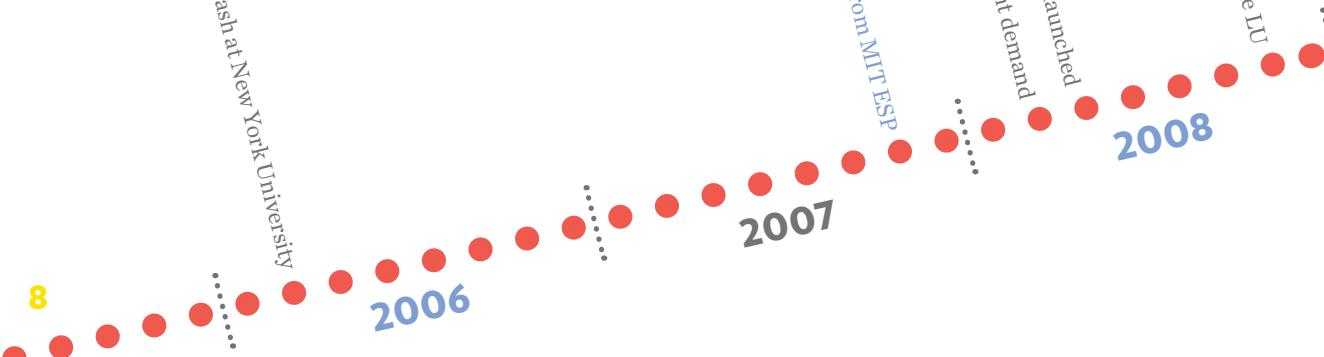
November

8

2006

2007

2008





# Chapters and Startups

## Boston College

Boston College ran their first Splash with LU's mentorship in November 2010. Founded by former MIT Splash student Hanyin Cheng, the group quickly decided to run two Splash programs per year. Their second Splash, in April 2011, drew nearly 300 students. With the rapid success they've gained on-campus and in the community, they are expanding their programs to include trips to area high schools to run more easily-accessible Splashes, and running programs on their campus for college students to learn from fellow college students.

## University of Maryland, Baltimore College

UMBC ran their first Splash in April, 2011 under the leadership of founder Mindy Or, who heard about Splash from a friend involved with the University of Chicago program. With support from Learning Unlimited, Mindy and her team recruited 60 students to their first endeavor, with popular classes such as "The Chemistry of Flavor" and "Volts and Hot Lead." With their first project successfully funded through Kickstarter, UMBC is achieving financial sustainability and is rapidly growing their program. Their next Splash will be in March 2012.

*If you **are** or **know of** a student interested in **starting an LU Chapter**, please get in touch: [email info@learningu.org](mailto:info@learningu.org)*

## LU CHAPTERS

**Boston College:** Education for Students by Students  
<http://bcsplash.learningu.org>

**MIT:** Educational Studies Program  
<http://esp.mit.edu>

**Stanford:** Educational Studies Program  
<http://www.stanfordesp.org>

**University of Chicago:** Splash! Chicago  
<http://splashchicago.learningu.org>

Duke University  
<http://dukesplash.learningu.org>

Granite Hills High School  
<http://granite.learningu.org>

Northwestern University  
<http://nusplash.learningu.org>

Southwestern University  
<http://susplash.learningu.org>

Splash at UCLA  
<http://splashatucla.learningu.org>

University of Maryland, Baltimore County  
<http://splashumbc.learningu.org>

Yale University  
<http://yale.learningu.org>

## LU STARTUPS

**Harvard:** Educational Studies Program  
<http://www.hcs.harvard.edu/~esp/>

**NYU:** cSplash  
<http://www.cims.nyu.edu/~csplash/index.php>

## OTHER

## Growing a Movement

LU employs a small number of paid staff that coordinate a large, geographically diverse team of volunteers to work with students (via e-mail, phone and in-person visits) organizing Splash events at universities across the country.

With our help, new programs can get off the ground much faster, and with more success, than they would otherwise. Our software, resources, and publicity can quickly accelerate the growth and success of an established program. Finally, the continuity of knowledge that we provide can be essential to a college student group.

We recognize that there is a balance to be struck between exploiting economies of scale and fostering independent, grassroots volunteer efforts at universities. To that end, we:

- Offer detailed advice and mentoring on planning and recruiting, without specifying governance structures or target audiences for our chapters. Our job is to facilitate their program, not control it.
- Provide a knowledge base of best practices and how-to guides.
- Develop open-source software (60,000 lines of code) providing the automation necessary for small teams of administrators to manage hundreds of teachers and thousands of students.
- Create a national community enabling student leaders to network, collaborate, and learn from each other.



## Learning Unlimited 2010-2011

*Students Served:* 6,000

*Courses Offered:* 1,000+

*University Volunteers:* 1,000+

*Campuses:* 12

*Total value provided:* \$1.4M\*

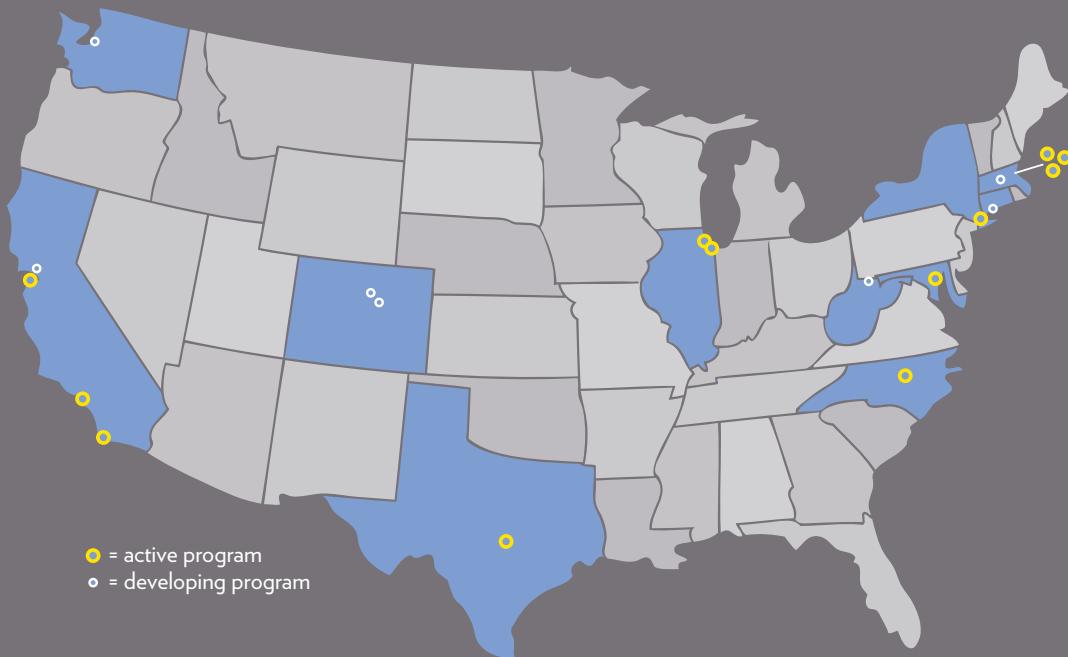
*Value:* \$10/student to LU is leveraged by volunteers into value of nearly \$250/student

\* sum of program budgets, value of volunteer time, and classroom space contributed by universities

*“I have been in education for 15 years and I have never seen a program impact so many kids on a single weekend. It changes the way kids think about their future.”*

*- Dave Hoopes, Principal  
at Impact Academy*

## The Scope of Learning Unlimited: 2011



## The Future

There are over 5,000 colleges and universities in the United States. There are Splashes at large schools and small schools; urban schools and rural schools; tech schools, liberal arts schools, and everything in-between, in diverse geographic and cultural regions. Why can't there be a Splash at all 5,000 universities nationwide?

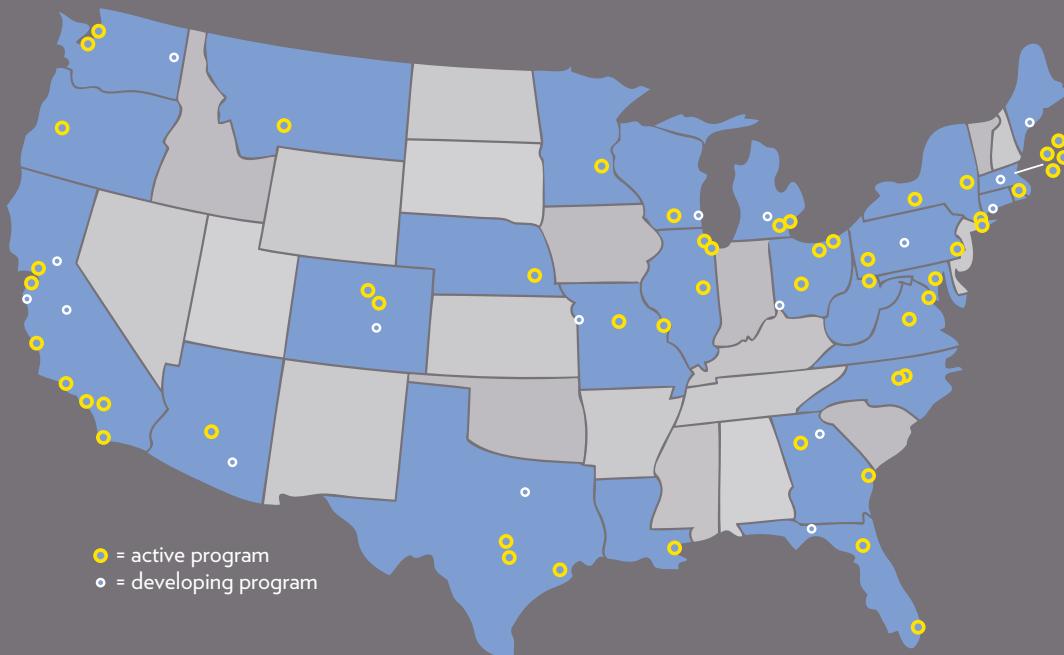
Over the coming years, LU will continue to grow the movement of college students showing younger students how to love learning. As one of our volunteers

recently put it, "Splash the phenomenon has been launched, and is on a roll."

The map below shows how the country might look in just a few years. *This coming year, our objectives are as follows:*

- 7 new Splash programs (from 12 to 19 programs)
- 8,000 pre-college students (vs. 6,000 this year)
- 1,200 college student volunteers (vs. 1,000)
- Develop evaluations system to measure impact
- Increase LU's volunteer pool by 50%
- \$150,000 in grant and donor support

### Projected Scope of Learning Unlimited: 2016



# Learning Unlimited Thanks Its Donors

## Up to \$20,000

The Baskin Family Foundation  
Google Matching Gift Program  
Mathematics Foundation of  
America  
J.D. Zamfirescu-Pereira

## Up to \$10,000

The Irving Foundation

## Up to \$1,000

Anonymous  
Jason Alonso  
James J. Angel  
Tania and Narcis Aron  
Santanu Chakraborty  
Sandra Hao  
Catherine Havasi  
Jean & John Heins  
Weizhong Ji  
Charles Manski  
Lance W. Ozier  
Vanessa Ruseczyk  
Ann P. Salmon  
Mary-Jane and Marc Shaw  
Lorraine Thomas  
William James Watt  
Daniel Zaharopol  
Christina M.D. Zamfirescu

## Up to \$100

Anonymous (13)  
Stephanie Bachar  
Yakov Berchenko-Kogan  
Mira Bernstein  
Agnes Bloomfield  
Deborah Boccio  
Linda Brown  
Jane Butt  
Shuling W. Chou

## Up to \$100 (continued)

Lee-Jung Julie Chu  
Lesley Forde Conway  
Kristin Coombs  
Melanie K. Dana and  
Marya D. Zilberberg  
Fawn T. Dare  
Matthew and Cookie Davis  
Marisa Debowsky  
Deborah Devincenti  
Julia Ehlers  
Ira Fischer  
Jai Ford  
Eugene Fridman and Irina Shvidler  
Kathleen Friend  
Samatha Ganji  
Mylinh Ha-Do  
Ying Holden  
Robbin Kawabata  
David Kim  
Sophie Kim  
James W. Lacey  
Sarah Langdon  
Jian Li  
Anita Madhava  
Donna M. McLaren  
Natasha Middleton  
Ellen A. Mohnkern  
Ann S. Pollock  
Robb H. and Claudia S. Roehl  
Beth E. Schueler  
Ellen Seebacher  
Lisa Seibert  
Oleg Sokolov  
Rob Speer  
Armin Sternberg  
Kelvin L. and Janu I. Thomas  
Teri Vo  
Lori Wasserman  
Yalu Wu  
Radu Zaharopol

## Finances

LU has completed the year with more income than expenses, and we continue to grow towards a sustainable financial future.

### *Income*

Donations • \$50,000  
Grants • \$25,000  
Chapters • \$1,000  
Miscellaneous • \$1,000  
**Total • \$77,000**

### *Expenses*

Salaries and Staff \$27,000  
Chapter Services \$6,000  
Development \$2,000  
IT \$2,000  
Operations \$7,000  
**Total • \$44,000**

## Photo Captions

*Cover:* Juggling at MIT Splash

*Page 2:* Leaders of Splash at UCLA

*Page 4:* A student in a class on Non-Newtonian Fluids at MIT Splash

*Page 5:* Juggling, Splash! Chicago; Visual Illuminations Explained, Northwestern; leader at Stanford

*Page 7:* Puzzles in Combinatorics, MIT HSSP

*Page 11:* Fashion in Revolution: Fashion History from Rococo to the Napoleonic Era, MIT HSSP

“It was one of the greatest learning experiences for me ever, if not the best.”

- *an MIT Splash student*

## BECOME INVOLVED!

### Volunteer!

You can make a difference applying your skills: management, mentoring, legal advice, fundraising, and more.

[www.learningu.org/participate](http://www.learningu.org/participate)

### Donate!

A \$10 donation becomes a \$250 impact through our volunteers and partners.

Donate today on our website:

[www.learningu.org/donatenow](http://www.learningu.org/donatenow)

## WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

### Staff and Volunteers

Daniel Zaharopol, CEO

Michael Shaw, Chief of Staff

Jason Alonso, CFO

Chris Kennedy, New Chapter Mentoring

Yalu Wu, Chapter Services

Amy Estersohn, Community Relations

Luke Joyner, Graphic Design

### Board of Directors

J. D. Zamfirescu, Chairman

Roshini Zachariah, Secretary

Catherine Havasi

Weizhong Ji

Scott Meyer

Beth Schueler

Yalu Wu

*This document was produced entirely in-house, with writing by Dan Zaharopol and Amy Estersohn, photography by Amy Estersohn and Michael Price, and design by Luke Joyner.*

For more information visit us online: [www.learningu.org](http://www.learningu.org)

