Dreams of a college education can be difficult to believe in for young people who have limited resources and little support. However, through Rochester College’s Pontiac Early College Program and their own hard work, young people from the neighboring community of Pontiac now have options to brighten their futures. In partnership with the Pontiac School District, Rochester College is hosting 30 academically gifted high school students in traditional Rochester College courses.

Our Pontiac program helps students work toward their high school diplomas and take college classes year round in pursuit of a two-year associate degree by the time they graduate from high school. The vision of the program is to give urban students from challenging environments an opportunity to dream and pursue goals they may not have considered possible in their lives.

We joined the Pontiac School District in this initiative because we believe it fits the mission of Rochester College. As Pontiac students have joined our classrooms, studying alongside traditional Rochester College students, these expectations have been delightfully affirmed.

Both Rochester College and Pontiac schools desire to train future leaders. Our stated mission is to train students with life skills beyond mere academic credentials, and the Pontiac program seeks the leadership and moral development Rochester College has emphasized for more than 50 years. In essence, we are working together to spiritually form young people who can effectively bring life and light to their communities, places of business and future homes.

At Rochester College, academic excellence is a central mission. Academically gifted learners from Pontiac qualify for the program and must maintain a minimum B average. Students with leadership potential are prioritized in the selection process. Additionally, the Pontiac partnership correlates with our emphasis on creating a healthy environment of mutual respect. We believe well educated and morally sensitive people are needed who can contribute intellect, character and compassion to change our world for the better. Our partnership with the Pontiac School District helps us meet such goals.

Through the early college initiative and their own hard work, the future is brighter for 30 Pontiac students. The future is brighter for Rochester College as well. However, we need your help. Pontiac schools provide a portion of the funding, but the larger share is underwritten by Rochester College. The cost to educate one Pontiac student is $15,000 over three years. Please consider helping us by sponsoring a student for $5,000 per year. Your donation will make a difference not only to an individual student, but also to the community of Pontiac.