**The Story of Jumpstart**

In 1993, two college students from Yale University worked at a summer camp for young children. Inspired by their summer experience, they founded Jumpstart to continue to connect college students to preschoolers throughout the year.

Working out their dorm rooms, they wrote the Jumpstart mission, which is still used today.

*Jumpstart’s Mission:*

To engage young people in service
Toward the day when every child in America enters school prepared to succeed.

In 1993, 15 college students worked one-to-one with 15 preschoolers in New Haven Head Start. At the end of the year, every single teacher reported that the children had made tremendous progress.

During the 1994 – 1995 school year, two more friends from camp heard about Jumpstart and helped start the second Jumpstart program in Boston, Massachusetts.

That same year, Jumpstart outlined three major program areas. Everything we do at Jumpstart reflects these three program areas.

*Jumpstart’s Program Areas:*

School Success
Family Involvement
Future Teachers

Spurred by the success of the first two years, Jumpstart became its own non-profit organization with full-time employees, an office and our very own logo.

In December is 1995, Jumpstart’s four full-time employees sat down to create shared values for the organization. These values are still used today as our foundation for working together.
Jumpstart’s Shared Values:
Quality
Challenge
Diversity
Respect and Kindness

During the summer of 1996, Jumpstart returned to the roots of its founders by launching Jumpstart Summer, a full-time program. Ten Corps members participated in the first Jumpstart Summer, teaching 60 young children who would otherwise have no access to summer programs.

That same summer, Jumpstart received its first grant from AmeriCorps through the Massachusetts State Commission. Jumpstart summer was so successful that it became part of the two-year commitment made by every Jumpstart Corps member.

That fall, approximately 80 college students signed up as part-time Jumpstart AmeriCorps members. Even today, every college student serves a total of 900 hours through two school years and one full-time summer.

At the end of these 20 months, every college student receives an educational award through AmeriCorps for $2,400.00. This money can be used to repay loans or toward future tuition.

During the fall of 1996, Jumpstart staff, a Jumpstart parent, and a Corps member all presented at a special meeting at the White House to discuss President Clinton’s America Reads proposal. Jumpstart talked with President Clinton’s staff about the vital role college work-study students can play as literacy tutors.

In the fall of 1997, Jumpstart opened two new sites in New York City and Washington, DC. In 1997, Jumpstart had more than 250 college students tutoring in a total of four cities.

In 1997, Jumpstart made a commitment to the President’s Summit for America’s future. Jumpstart’s commitment is to engage 1,000 college students at tutors by the year 2000, thus having an impact on more than 12,000 children in Jumpstart programs. We call this commitment Jumpstart 2000.
We know we can do it, but only with the help of families of Jumpstart children, and funders help make Jumpstart 2000 possible.

In the spring of 1998, Jumpstart launched a campaign called Invest Early to help Jumpstart reach its goals for the year 2000. Invest Early is a national campaign to ignite strategic partnerships to support and promote the goals and activities of Jumpstart.

In June 1998, First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton joined Jumpstart Corps members, friends, and partners to celebrate the launch of Jumpstart Summer programs serving nearly 1000 young children in all four cities. After the rally with Mrs. Clinton, Jumpstart champions from across the country gathered to strategize how to help Jumpstart achieve its vision for the year 2000.

To reach Jumpstart 2000, Jumpstart engaged in a new strategy to have universities host Jumpstart programs right on their own campus. In the fall of 1998, Jumpstart opened two new sites—University of California Los Angeles and San Francisco State University—a significant expansion of Jumpstart’s impact.

Now that there were four Jumpstart programs, we needed a National office structure to effectively support the sites.

This was the beginning of the Executive Team, the Finance Team, the Development and Communications Team, and the Program Team. The teams got right to work. The Program Team created materials to ensure quality training, curriculum, and assessment across the network.

But Jumpstart didn’t stop there. We kept on expanding. American Eagle Outfitters, Jumpstart’s official outfitter, wanted to get more involved and proposed sponsoring a Jumpstart Pittsburg. In the fall of 1999 their vision became a reality with the introduction of Jumpstart Pittsburg at the University of Pittsburg. In the winter of 2000, Jumpstart Syracuse was launched at LeMoyne College with 8 pioneering Corps members and a Team leader. There are not 8 Jumpstart programs around the country.

As Jumpstart grows, we want to ensure a quality learning experience for every child we reach. In the spring of 1999, with the help of other experts, Jumpstart developed concrete outcomes that reflect the specific skills a child needs to succeed in school. Some of these skills include: knowing how books work, awareness of word-related sounds, recognition of rhymes, and beginning reading and writing skills.

In the fall of 1999 we started to measure these outcomes. Here are a few of the results, 34% of Jumpstart children who started as “below average” in language and literacy skills became “above average” in these skills, compared to 19% of their peers not in the program. 32% of the children moved from “below average” in all measured skills (language and literacy skills, social skills, and communication skills), compared to 25% of their peers not in the program.
In the winter and fall of 2000, Jumpstart added four more sites: Syracuse, Phoenix, Mankato (in Minnesota) and Southern California. There are 11 Jumpstart programs around the country for the 2000 School Year: Boston, New Haven, New York City, Washington, DC, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Mankato, Pittsburg, Syracuse, Arizona, and Claremont/Eagle Rock Jumpstart is really growing!

Jumpstart has plans to grow to 50 sites by 2005. With this plan Jumpstart will prepare thousands more children to enter school prepared to succeed. However this will only happen with the help of people like you.