



2020 IMPACT REPORT

A Year Like No Other



About Us

Our Mission: BestPrep prepares students with business, career, and financial literacy skills through hands-on experiences that inspire success in work and life.

BestPrep envisions a community in which every Minnesota student is work-ready and career-bound. Our programs provide students with:

- 1 Business Skills:** BestPrep equips students with workplace skills that help them achieve success personally and professionally. Participating in mock interviews, learning about entrepreneurship, and practicing public speaking are skills that all students can use in their future careers.
- 2 Career Exploration:** BestPrep empowers youth to envision life after high school and understand steps they can take to prepare for success. Students are introduced to careers through in-class presentations, online mentors, and workplace tours that highlight career fields and paths.
- 3 Financial Literacy:** BestPrep ensures that students can make sound money management decisions and take control of their financial future. Participating in stock market simulations, learning how to create a budget, and understanding needs versus wants gives students a real-world perspective on becoming financially capable.

Dear Friends,

We are delighted to provide BestPrep's Impact Report. 2020 was a year like no other. When the pandemic hit and schools closed, BestPrep quickly made the decision to continue providing all of our programs and services, regardless of the challenges. We never considered abandoning our teachers and students who relied on us to provide real-world context to academic learning. We asked our staff to literally reinvent our program delivery, from virtual board meetings, to recorded presentations, to hosting all seven programs online.



Here is a listing of the highlights:

- We began a re-examination of our organization and its commitment to racial equity.
- We held our summer camp, Minnesota Business Venture virtually for 332 students which involved large group, breakout, and one-on-one experiences.
- We hosted the Technology Integration Workshop virtually, in which 95 teachers participated, learning how to incorporate technology into their classroom. The program provided a virtual job shadow with each teacher being assigned a volunteer in the business community.
- Our volunteers recorded more than 40 presentations for our online presentation library, focusing on financial literacy and career preparation for teachers to use for distance-learning or in-classroom curriculum.
- Our Annual Luncheon awards and recognition event was held virtually and resulted in an engaging experience highlighted by Melinda Gates, Thomas Friedman, and Jeannine Rivet, Retired Executive Vice President of UnitedHealth Group.
- We initiated a Mask Up for Students campaign, partnering with Bolder Options, The BrandLab, College Possible, Minnesota Twins, The Sanneh Foundation, and Thomson Reuters.

In spite of the many challenges of 2020, BestPrep continues to receive tremendous support from our board, organizations, and individuals. Thank you to all as we prepare Minnesota students for a successful career journey.

Sincerely,

Roz Tsai
BestPrep Board Chair
Thrivent

Robert Kaitz
President and CEO
BestPrep



"I love the positive environment that BestPrep virtual programs created, even with the pandemic. It made me more motivated for the future."

– Eden Prairie Senior High School student

School-Year Programs

CLASSROOM PLUS

Inspiring students to create a vision for the future through career exploration

About the Program: Classroom Plus offers classroom presentations, mock interviews, workplace tours, and career days at local companies.

Pre-pandemic, Classroom Plus served more than 10,000 students from 73 schools with 106 teachers participating. After schools closed, BestPrep pivoted to providing recorded presentations and live-streaming events. A 32-video online library covering career and college readiness topics helped teachers to continue to add a real-world flavor to their curriculum content. A half-day virtual Career Day for Apple Valley, Burnsville, and Minneapolis South high school students was held with UnitedHealth Group in which students interacted with employee volunteers from eight career areas. Another Career Day will be held with Minneapolis Southwest High School and and Prior Lake High School's MNCAPS students with Cargill employee volunteers in Spring 2021.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Motivating students to make sound money management decisions and become financially savvy

About the Program: Financial Matters offers classroom presentations focused on money management, credit, insurance, and taxes.

112 educators participated in Financial Matters prior to schools closing, providing more than 10,000 students with financial literacy skills. Due to the pandemic, volunteers recorded 12 videos for our new online library covering Financial Matters content for students during distance learning. Additional customized recorded presentations were made for specific class use. With the help of volunteers, the "Housing Matters" and "Tax Matters" presentations were updated, and a new presentation "Buying a Car" was created.

THE STOCK MARKET GAME (SMG)

Teaching students about the global economy, business, and the power of investing

About the Program: Students in grades 4-12 work in teams to invest a virtual \$100,000 in the stock market, which teaches business, economics, investing, teamwork, decision-making, and critical thinking skills.

The Stock Market Game continued to perform well in the midst of the pandemic. Thousands of students participated in the Fall, Spring, and Year Long sessions. For the first time, the program allowed one-student teams. New resources were developed in partnership with the Security Industries Financial Markets Association (SIFMA) to support teachers' facilitation of SMG during distance learning.



“BestPrep helped me learn to be brave. My mentor gave me lots of good college advice, and I’m appreciative of all I gained.”

– Coon Rapids High School student

School-Year Programs

eMENTORS

Empowering students with the knowledge and skills needed for success in school, career, and life

About the Program: eMentors pairs business volunteers with high school classes to participate in an eight-week email mentorship.

Teacher and student participation has continued to be strong, as eMentors transitions well in distance learning. Corporate participation also demonstrated steady interest, and in some cases, increased volunteerism. During the pandemic, in-person Meet & Greets were replaced by virtual discussions with students and mentors. Other activities included scavenger hunts, a “Get To Know Me” slideshow, and a career panel. An update of our online portal was conducted with the help of Accenture which provides an improved student and teacher experience. Two new curricula were created: eMentors for STEM and eMentors for Financial Literacy.

99% of teachers reported that due to eMentors, their students gained a better understanding of the skills needed for a career in the professional world.

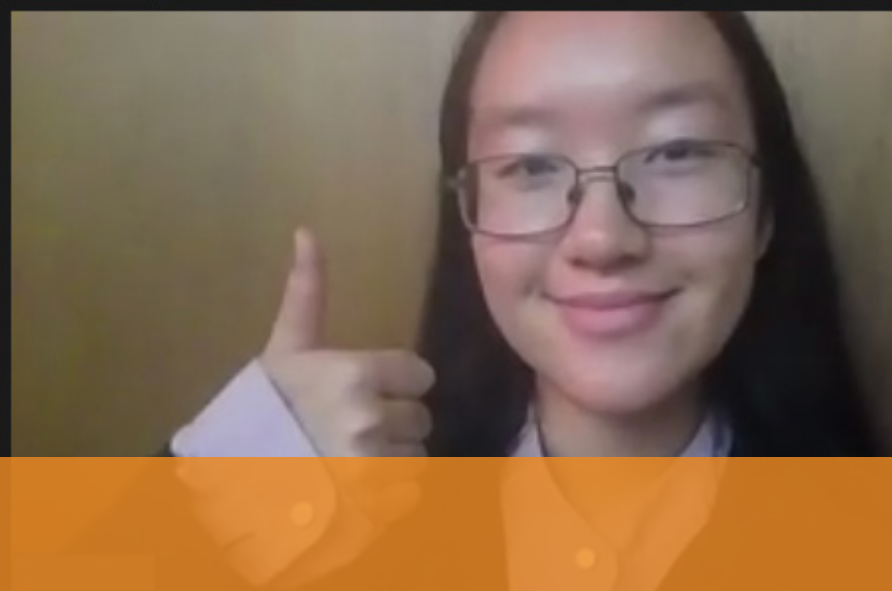
CLOUD COACH

Strengthening student motivation to succeed in school and beyond

About the Program: Cloud Coach is a research-based online mentoring program that partners a entire ninth grade classes with volunteer mentors from a local company. Each student is matched 1:1 with a mentor who walks them through a guided conversation aimed at helping students develop career aspirations and understand the importance of graduating high school.

Cloud Coach transitioned to a virtual platform extremely well, with online mentoring being the focus. The in-person Cloud Summit was replaced by a 60-minute virtual experience produced by an AV company. Thirteen Summits were held this winter with one more scheduled this spring. Participating schools included Como Park Senior High School, Highland Park Senior High School, Minneapolis North High School, St. Paul Central High School, Washburn High School, and Washington Technology Magnet School. The program included special messages of encouragement for students from St. Paul Mayor Melvin Carter, Minnesota Twins player Tommy Watkins, and Minnesota Timberwolves and Lynx’s Vice President of Basketball Development, John Thomas.

89% of students reported that because of Cloud Coach, they know their high school performance matters to their future.



"I had a blast participating in BestPrep programs. I'm really glad I didn't lose this opportunity."

– Harding Senior High School student

Summer Programs

MINNESOTA BUSINESS VENTURE (MBV)

Igniting students' passion to achieve success and develop career aspirations for the future.

About the Program:

While MBV is typically an in-person week-long residential camp providing Minnesota high school students with business, career, and financial literacy skills, the program was transitioned to a completely virtual platform during the summer of 2020 and 2021. Due to the impressive production, the program maintained a similar experience, offering company meetings, business plans, breakout sessions, mock interviews, and more.

New sessions were added to the program including celebrity drop-ins, camper shout-outs, and student emcee activities.

Although nothing beats the in-person camp, the program broadened its reach to include students and volunteers from beyond Minnesota with 332 students participating from 93 schools.

Special thanks to the Schulze School of Entrepreneurship at the University of St. Thomas and the Donald McNeely Center for Entrepreneurship at Saint John's University for their continued partnership.

TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION WORKSHOP (TIW)

Empowering educators with technology tools and business exposure to prepare students for today's workplace.

About the Program:

Though the TIW is a normally a four-day in-person workshop helping K-12 educators enhance their curriculum with new and emerging educational technology skills, we converted the program to a three-day online experience for 2020 and 2021.

TIW experienced increased educator participation, totaling 95 teachers from 46 schools.

The workshop was highly produced and maintained a majority of the agenda, including interactive breakout sessions, teacher collaboration, and the job shadow experience with a volunteer from the business community. New and relevant sessions were added, including "Rethinking Education for a Post COVID-19 World" from the Dean of the School of Education at the University of St. Thomas, Kathlene Campbell and "What You Can Do to Address Inequities" by Macarre Traynham of the Minnesota Department of Education. 94% of educators said they left the program with a greater knowledge of technology-focused strategies to enhance students' learning.

We are indebted to the University of St. Thomas' Opus College of Business for their support.



BestPrep Virtual Events

ANNUAL LUNCHEON

The Annual Luncheon, typically in May, was rescheduled for BestPrep's first ever virtual event on October 5, 2020. BestPrep supporters tuned in online to celebrate the 2019-2020 school year by recognizing the great work of its most outstanding students, teachers, volunteers, and sponsors. The event featured a surprise welcome from Melinda Gates, a video performance from the OneVoice Children's Choir, a message from Thomas Friedman, and keynote address "Climbing the Ladder Without Getting Dizzy or Falling Off" by Jeannine Rivet, Retired Executive Vice President of UnitedHealth Group.

The Don Friborg Student of the Year Award was given to MBV student alum and University of St. Thomas student Khadra Sharif for her participation in BestPrep programs and leadership. Optum's Ashley Erickson received the Bunzel Volunteer of the Year Award for her longterm commitment and coordination of volunteers. The Carpenter Educator of the Year Award was given to Jenna Gomer-Weyh of Eastview High School for her advocacy and use of BestPrep programs in her classroom. Adam Taylor of Securian Financial received the Board Member of Distinction Award for his volunteerism in all seven BestPrep programs, spearheading relationships, and chairing several committees.

BIRDIES FOR BESTPREP

Due to the pandemic, the Birdies for BestPrep annual special event was transitioned to a virtual program and a successful Silent Auction on January 28, 2021. The event and silent auction raised \$60,000 to support BestPrep's educational programs.

Boston Scientific was honored with the Humanitarian of the Year Award for more than 20 years of volunteer and financial support. The program also featured a welcome from Minnesota Business Venture alum and University of St. Thomas student Alexa Chesley and a unique performance from *The Voice's* Nicholas David.

A special thank you to our event and production support for helping BestPrep host our fundraising and program events: AVVR, EideCom, Eventive Meetings, and Heroic Productions.



Annual Luncheon 2020 Award Winners

Don Friborg Student of the Year Award

Khadra Sharif, *University of St. Thomas*

Carpenter Educator of the Year Award

Jenna Gomer-Weyh, *Eastview High School*

Bunzel Volunteer of the Year Award

Ashley Erickson, *Optum*

Board Member of Distinction Award

Adam Taylor, *Securian Financial*

Teacher of Excellence Award Winners

Eric Bartosh, *Valley Middle School*

Susan Beers, *Luverne Public School District*

Tracy Byrd, *Washburn High School*

Raquel Gudiel, *Cristo Rey High School*

April Johnson, *Murray County Central High School*

Julie Johnson, *Minnehaha Academy-Upper School*

Michael Krech, *Washington Tech Secondary Magnet School*

Kevin Neff, *Rockford Elementary Arts Magnet School*

Julie Onken, *Woodbury High School*

Sadie Oraskovich, *Champlin Park High School*

Elizabeth Rojas, *Cristo Rey High School*

Kathy Romero, *Como Park Senior High School*

Tyler Soderstrom, *Isle High School*

Becky Wallerick, *Jefferson High School*

Mandy Wineberg, *Robbinsdale Cooper High School*

Mainong Yang, *Upward Bound - Century College*

BestPrep Service Award Winners

Melissa Adams, *UnitedHealth Group*

Dean Barton, *Ameriprise Financial, Inc*

Richard Benton, *Ecolab*

Jacqueline Berry, *3M*

Mathew Haag, *Ecolab, Inc.*

Christopher Hunsaker, *General Mills*

Emma Keeler, *Medtronic*

Jennifer Kriha, *Versique Search & Consulting*

Elizabeth Krogh, *Artisan Financial Group*

Shoua Lee, *Wells Fargo*

Joshua Lehman, *Allianz Life*

Jessica Lo, *Beckman Coulter Diagnostics*

Evan Loenser, *U.S. Bank*

Michael Martin, *Thrivent*

Casey Meyer, *Securian Financial*

Jess McCoy, *Federated Insurance*

Christine Noonan, *Minnesota State Fair*

Stacy Nystrom, *KPMG*

Meghan Paulson, *Cargill, Inc.*

Michael Remington, *Xcel Energy*

Darcy Roessler, *Best Buy*

Brian St. Martin, *Allianz Life*

Valerie Young

BestPrep Donors

BestPrep wishes to thank the following corporations, foundations, and individuals for their generous financial support from September 1, 2019 to August 31, 2020. Please contact us at 763-233-6321 for errors or omissions.

CORPORATIONS & FOUNDATIONS

21st Century Bank 3M Affiance Financial Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union AgriBank Allianz Life Insurance Company of North America The Allstate Foundation Amazon Ameriprise Bank, FSB Andersen Corporation Apex Systems Arby's Foundation Bernick's Best Buy Birchwood Financial Partners Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota BMO Harris Bank Boston Scientific Bridgewater Bank The Burchfield Group, An Aon Company C.H. Robinson Worldwide Cargill Carlson & The Carlson Family Foundation Carlson Capital Management Castle Rock Bank Charles Schwab Foundation Charterpoint Wealth Strategies Choice Bank	Citizens Independent Bank Community Foundation Comcast Coulee Bank Crown Bank Cummins Power Generation Deerwood Bank Dell Dellwood Foundation Deloitte Donaldson Foundation ECMC Group Ecolab Emerson EY F. R. Bigelow Foundation Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath Federated Insurance Fidelity Bank Financial Planning Association of Minnesota The Fingerhut Family Foundation First National Bank of Milaca First Western Bank & Trust Flaherty Family Foundation Fred C. and Katherine B. Andersen Foundation FS Foundation Genentech USA General Mills Great Clips Great River Energy H.B. Fuller	Highland Bank Hiway Federal Credit Union Hubbard Broadcasting Foundation K.A.H.R. Foundation KPMG Land O' Lakes Leonette M. and Fred T. Lanners Family Fdn. Logistics Health Incorporated Margaret Rivers Fund Matching Grant Program Fund of The Minneapolis Foundation McVay Foundation Medtronic Microsoft MidWestOne Bank Minneapolis/St. Paul Business Journal Minnesota Bankers Association Minnesota Timberwolves and Lynx Minnesota Twins MNCast Morgan Stanley NetApp New Market Bank Nordson Corporation North American Banking Company North Second Street Steel Supply North Shore Bank Of Commerce North Star Resource Group
---	---	--



BestPrep Donors

CORPORATIONS & FOUNDATIONS (Cont'd)

nVent	Terri Joe Charitable Foundation
ONB Bank	Thomson Reuters
Optum	Thrivent
Piper Sandler Companies	The Toro Company
Pohlad Companies	Travelers
Polaris	Twin City Bond Club
Prudential Financial	U.S. Bank
PwC	UnitedHealth Group
Radisson Hotel Group	University of St. Thomas
RBC Wealth Management	Uponor
Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation	Vanguard
Rochester Commercial Banks - Associated Bank, Bremer Bank, F&M Bank, Home Federal Bank, Merchants Bank, Minnwest Bank, Premier Bank Rochester, Sterling State Bank, Think Mutual Bank, U.S. Bank, Wells Fargo Bank, West Bank	Värde Partners
Roundbank - Waseca	Veritae Group
Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundation	Veritas
Salesforce	Versique Search & Consulting
School Space Media	Voya Financial
Schott Foundation	W.C. Rasmussen - Northeast Bank Foundation
Schwan's Corporate Giving Foundation	Walmart - Buffalo
Securian Financial	Walmart - Cambridge
Shapco Printing	Walmart - Vadnais Heights
SPIRE Credit Union	Walmart - Woodbury
SPS Commerce	WCCO/Entercom
Surmodics	Wealth Enhancement Group
Target	Wells Fargo
TCF Foundation	The WEM Foundation
	Wenger Foundation
	Wings Financial Credit Union
	Winnebago Industries
	Xcel Energy

BestPrep Donors

INDIVIDUALS

Debra Anderson
Julie Anderson
Paul Anderson
Stacy Anderson
Nick Anthony
Randy Ashbrook
Carly Baker
Sophia Bera
Nicholas Berger
Angela Birchfield
Andy Bittinger
Brian Boardman
Laurel Boerger and Norm
Reznicow
James and Beth Boucher
Greg Bourland
Kim Boylton
Katie Brokaw
Pam Brueck
Laida Bunzel
Penny Thompson-Burke
Dave Buschko
Sean Cavanaugh
Michael Cermak
Tiziana Cervesato
Paul and Stacey Challe
Deivanai Chidambaram
Molly and David Clark
Charitable Foundation
Kimberly Clayton
Adam Cohen
John and Donna Comer
Stacey Conaway
Linda Conley
Logan Conlon
Ian Corbett
Jefferson Cowart
William Crammatte

David Crist
Kathy Cruz
Gregg Cummings
Andy Darvell and Sarah
Cash-Darvell
Brian Davis
Ron Davis
Rhonda Dean
Sean Derrick
Brenda and Kurt Diekman
Steve and Mandy Dixon
Kristin Donnelly
Paul Drace
Cindy and Jim Drahos
Krittin Dubey
Dedra Dunevant
Paul and Ruth Durand
Joshua Edelstein
Angela Ekstrom
Pat and Jerry Elliott
Nathan Erbs
Joseph Eucher
Kathy Evans
Jonathan Faloon
Darin Farrey
Anne Finch
Finkelstein Family
Charitable Fund
Abigail Fischer
Mike Fisher
Tina Lane-Fomby
Christopher Frank
Shanda Franzen
Brett Freesman
George and Gail Fremder
Samantha and Tim Funk
Jen Gagnon
Brian Gilmore

Anita Goebel
Lincoln Goede
Jordana Green and Marc
Grossfield
Nann Green
Gregg Guimond
Adrienne and Jeff
Gustafson
Sarah Hammel
Andrea Hanson
Laura Hanson
Dave and Lillian Harkness
Lindsey Henderson
Andy and Valerie Hennig
Jay Higgins
Shana Hoffer
Mary Ann Holton
Janneke Holzenthal
Debbie Huddleston
Kim Hultgren
Jacqueline Jackson
Lindsay Jansen
Anne Jenkin
Don Johnson
Hart and Raleigh Johnson
David and Kris Jones
Tim and Maryl Jordahl
Mary Friborg Jordan
Family Fund of The
Minneapolis Foundation
Bob and Candee Kaitz
Laura Kalies
Arun Kandanchatha
Gina Kennedy
Jason Kley
Katie S. Kloster
Sridhar Koneru
Tom and Sally Kopacek



BestPrep Donors

INDIVIDUALS (Cont'd)

Gretchen Korf
Tim Kruse
Daniel Kupfer
Matthew and Kathryn Kyler
Paul and Meggie Langlois
Marta and Mark Leach
Steve & Sheri Lear - Bridge
Building Foundation,
a Fund of American
Endowment Foundation
Mike Lebens
Ryan and Diana Lepper
Jens Lillehei
Evan Loenser
Dan and Marsha
Loewenson
Jeff and Diane Lovich
Betsy Lulfs
Desiree' Lumpkin
Dan Lundin
Scott Lyon
Sara Lyons
Brian Mallaro
John and Lisa Manders
Tuesday and Nathan
Manthei
Mary and Marty Marion
Beau Martin
Doug Martin and Beth
Robertson Martin
Valerie Martinson
Aaron McCants
Shannon McGinnis
Margaret McKibbin
Tim and Lacey Mercil
Casey Meyer

Nicole Middendorf
Drew Miles
Sarah Milner
Mirela Miresan
Matt Molinaro
James Montague
Steve and Valerie Morawetz
Curt Morgan
Scott Morris
Mary Mullen
Amanda and Hazzen Munoz
Marco Munoz
Margaret and Tim Murphy
Jeff Murray
Jeane Myrkle
Theresa Neal
Amber Nelson
Dixie and Brooks Nelson
Dwayne Nelson
Tony Neuman
Jim Nichols
Dennis and Cheryl Nisler
Anh Noebels
Ben Noebels
Scott Nugent
Linda Odegard and Harlan
Cavert
Krystle Igbo-Ogbonna
Janae Olinger
Brent Olson
Byron Olson
Leslie and Josh Olson
Marc and Laurie Olson
Trysh Olson
Marco Ortiz
Mike Ottesen

David Owen
Doug Pahr
James and Mare Pate
Maria Paulsen
Peace Women's Financial
Group
Gary and Kristin Perkins
Anne and Damon Peters
Darin Peterson
Andrew Petriussi
Vikki Pfeilsticker
Mary and Steve Pinick
Jason and Hillary Plank
Bryan Polley
Sheila and Nick
Posthumus
Matteo Potter
Mukund Prajapati
Keith and Katie
Rasmussen
Anna Rassmussen
James and Jennifer
Redelsheimer
Jay and Kim Robinson
Greg Rogers
Heather Rosales
Justin Rubin
David Schimke
Tanya Schmitt
Jenni and Todd Schnobrich
Family Foundation, a
Donor Advised Fund of
the U.S. Charitable Gift
Trust
Ramalaxmi Shan
Deb Schoneman

BestPrep Donors

INDIVIDUALS (Cont'd)

Bill Schramm
John Schulte
Louis Schultz
Anne Seaquist
James Seils
Rick & Kathy Shablott
Alyssia Shrestha
Regan Sieck
Chris Sieh
Ed and Donna Silberman
Maggie Snetting
Greg and Tara Snizek
Calvin Soderquist
Diane Stamos
Nate and Jenna Steiner
Ingrid Strauss
Mary and Mark Streed
Michael Stroik
LeAnne Stutelberg
Catherine Symoniak
Travis Symoniak
Andy and Sarah Tate
Adam and Marika Taylor
Andrea Thermos
John Thompson
Xiaoqi Tian
Joe and Megan Tiegs
Robert Torborg
Cole Turnbow
Kelly Turner
Gary Turnquist
Barbara and Darren Utech
Bonnie and Paul Vagasky
Nick Vagle
Linda Valentine
Sarah Vandenberg

Cody Tresselt-Warren
Steve Weitz
Joe and Barb Welle
Jessie Welton
Lorraine Williams
David and Lisa Wolfe
Wendy Wolfe and Tim Leier
Bruce Wolfson
Roz Tsai and Chen Wong
Harry and Belle Yaffe
Family Fund of The
Minneapolis Foundation
Alex Yang
Chue and Mai Yang
Valerie and Jack W.
Young, Jr.
Brad Zastoupil
Anonymous (38)

HONOR/MEMORIALS

In Honor of Marylynn
Boone
Jill Nelson in Memory of
Kristie L. Greve
In Honor of Katherine
Kirchner
In Memory of Elaine
Nelson
In Honor of Nicholas
Wiebusch
In Honor of Mr. Wippler's
Class, Oxbow Creek
Elementary School



7100 Northland Circle North, Suite 120
Brooklyn Park, MN 55428
www.bestprep.org
763-398-0090

