

Every
student.

Every
chance.

Every
day.



Access

2018-2019 Annual Report

“We believe every child can reach his or her potential if given the right structure, environment, education, motivation, and inspiration.”

— JOHN C. VATTEROTT, FOUNDER & EMERITUS CHAIR

LETTER FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR



Dear Friends and Supporters,

What makes Access Academies successful? It's a question I'm asked frequently and one I often answer with a single word: Commitment. From the moment our students enter a 6th grade classroom until they accept their high school diplomas, we walk alongside them. And now, thanks to your generous support, we stay with them beyond high school.

This year we doubled down on our steadfast commitment to helping students unlock their potential and achieve their dreams. First, we launched our College and Career Program, thus extending our graduate support relationship with each student from seven to 11+ years. Now, when an Academy graduate needs help navigating the unfamiliar territory of higher education, submitting financial aid paperwork, selecting college classes, and editing their resume, we are there to help.

Second, we completed a fruitful first year of enrichment with our new partner, Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School in East St. Louis. We couldn't be happier with the relationship and are excited about shepherding even more students through our program and onward to success.

And third, we reduced the financial hardship on even more Access families by covering the cost of registration and technology fees, and by paying for orientation programs for our rising 9th graders.

Indeed, it has been a successful 12 months for the students at Access Academies. That success, however, wouldn't have been possible were it not for the commitment of our many partners — from parents, teachers, and principals, to Graduate Support Directors, middle and high schools, and colleges too. And, of course, our dedicated donors. Everyone's collaborative investment in our students continues to bear fruit, and we are grateful for all of your contributions. On behalf of the entire Access team, thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Mathias". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly informal style.

Robert Mathias
Chair, Board of Directors

OUR MISSION

Access propels at-risk middle school students through high school and on to college and career success with enrichment, counseling, and scholarships.

OUR HISTORY

Access was founded in 2005 by a small group of St. Louisans convinced that education was the most enduring path out of poverty. Embracing an innovative model that emphasized extended school days, a challenging enrichment curriculum, and hands-on counseling, they started the first Academy with 15 students in a single South City middle school. Today, Access partners with four middle schools and 25 private high schools, and it serves over 500 students across the St. Louis metropolitan area.

OUR VALUES

Access is committed to...

- Supporting a top-quality, values-based education
- Focusing on the individual student
- Strengthening our communities
- Leveraging our partnerships

2018-2019 Highlights

Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School Joins the Access Family

Access expanded across the Mississippi River by partnering with Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School to open a new Academy in East St. Louis. After helping usher the inaugural 6th grade class through an exciting first year of enrichment programs, Dean of Students Carmelita Spencer joined the team as Graduate Support Director.

Annual Dinner Celebrates Access' 507 Students

What a special night we had celebrating the achievements of our 507 students, including our 58 hard-working 8th grade Academy graduates. The 11th Annual Celebration Dinner, held in June at the Ritz-Carlton, was a huge success and raised a record amount toward fulfilling our mission.

College and Career Program Launches

Amy Clark joined Access in June 2018 as our first College and Career Counselor. She's now had a full year helping our high school graduates negotiate the challenging transition from high school into college and other post-secondary programs.

Summer Scholars at SLU

The annual one-week Summer Scholars program provided our rising juniors and seniors with an opportunity to experience dorm life at Saint Louis University, tour local colleges, and attend invaluable seminars on the admissions process, financial aid, essay writing, and ACT preparation.

The Winter Party Returns

Our popular Winter Party was back in February at John D. McGurk's Irish Pub in Soulard. More than 125 supporters enjoyed an evening of food, fun, and trivia.



Our Impact



99%
ACCEPTED

to college-
preparatory
high schools



98%
GRADUATE

high school
on-time
(compared
to 84%
nationwide)



96%
ACCEPTED

to college or
other post-
secondary
institution



11+
YEARS

of counseling,
mentoring, and
advocacy for
each student



600
HOURS

of annual
extended-day
and summer
enrichment
instruction

SINCE OUR FOUNDING IN 2005:

\$5.2 million

awarded in high
school scholarships

1,200 students

have benefitted from
our programs

Our Partner Schools



**Our Partner
Middle Schools**



**Our Partner
High Schools**

Althoff Catholic High School
Bishop DuBourg High School
Cardinal Ritter College Prep
Chaminade College Prep
Christian Brothers College High School
Cor Jesu Academy
De Smet Jesuit High School
Incarnate Word Academy
Lutheran High School North
Lutheran High School South
Marquette Catholic High School
Nerinx Hall
Notre Dame High School
Principia School
Rosati-Kain High School
Saint Louis Priory School
St. John Vianney
St. Joseph's Academy
St. Louis University High
St. Mary's High School
Trinity Catholic High School
Ursuline Academy
Villa Duchesne
Visitation Academy
Westminster Christian Academy

MISSOURI

ILLINOIS

**St. Louis Catholic
Academy**

**Most Holy Trinity
Catholic School**

**Sister Thea Bowman
Catholic School**

St. Cecilia School

Our Students

186
STUDENTS

IN
4

city middle
schools

179
STUDENTS

IN
22

college-preparatory
high schools

142
STUDENTS

IN
57

colleges and other
post-secondary
programs

97%

represent minority
populations

94%

qualify for free/
reduced lunch

66%

live in
single-parent
households

ALUMNA UPDATE:

Kyra Harris

Kyra Harris comes from a family of nurses. Her grandmother was a nurse. Her aunt was a nurse. And when she entered Avila University in the fall of 2015, the Rosati-Kain graduate was determined to continue the family tradition.

"I just felt I could do more as a nurse than I could as a doctor," says Harris, who puts a high priority on bedside manner. "Doctors might talk to you for 15 minutes, but the nurse is there all day watching over their patients."

After an admittedly challenging four years of nursing school, Kyra officially earned her degree — and her scrubs — this May. She graduated from Avila and returned to St. Louis to join the critical care team at DePaul Hospital in Bridgeton, where she spent the summer working 12-hour shifts in the intensive care unit. It's been a busy and demanding few months, Harris says, but one

she was prepared for thanks to her education.

"Nursing school was rough," says Harris, who enjoys painting watercolors to relax from the stress of the hospital, "It was a hard degree." But she credits the encouragement she received from her Access Graduate Support Director, as well as the financial assistance from the Work-Study program and enrichment classes at Most Holy Trinity Catholic School as contributing to her success in both high school and college.

"Access definitely prepared me to go to private school," Harris says. "It was a good foundation. It exposed me to a lot of things that made Rosati a comfortable place." And the time management skills developed through the program, she notes, proved invaluable when juggling a full course load and two jobs during her senior year.

"The program gave me skills that I wouldn't have had otherwise," Harris says. "Like managing my time, and being responsible for my work. They do a good job of making kids learn responsibility early."

While Kyra is excited about her new job, she still has one

***"No matter where I
have been, Access has
always reached out."***

eye on the future. "I want to go to grad school next year to get my MSN

to be a nurse practitioner," she says, noting that a year of work experience is required to apply to most programs.

And while she's unsure where she'll apply, Kyra is certain of one thing: Access Academies will be there for her if she needs help. "No matter where I have been, Access has always reached out."



Our Programs



ENRICHMENT IN ACTION: Book Club Brings History to Life

Book Club helps foster a lifelong love of reading while providing students with an in-depth look into important historical subjects. This spring, the 6th graders at Sister Thea Bowman read *I, Dred Scott: A Fictional Slave Narrative Based on the Life and Legal Precedent of Dred Scott*.

In addition to giving each student an autographed copy of Shelia P. Moses' book, Access also invited the award-winning author, poet, and playwright to visit the school and share words of encouragement. The program culminated with an exciting field trip to the Old Courthouse where students reenacted the historic case in the courtroom where it was tried.

Enrichment

Through our extended-day enrichment program, we use extra class time to reinforce academic lessons, expose students to new subjects, and foster creativity. We offer a selection of more than 80 after-school (and summer) enrichment classes to challenge students in important STEM subjects like robotics, coding, and computer science, as well as in key areas such as leadership and character development, entrepreneurship, and languages. Last year, we added a number of new courses including writer's workshop, financial literacy, and Newsroom — where students learn to write, shoot, and edit their own newscast.

Counseling

"I like how the Graduate Support Directors push us. They want our hard work to pay off, and they want us to succeed. Their philosophy is: 'Shoot for the moon and if we miss, at least we

end up in the stars.'"



Gio V,
8th grade,
St. Cecilia
School

Counseling is the cornerstone of our program. Starting in 6th grade and continuing through high school graduation, our Graduate Support Directors build strong, enduring relationships with each student, providing individualized mentoring, guidance, and advocacy at every step of their educational journey. Our GSDs are located within each partner middle school and maintain frequent, consistent contact with our high school students throughout their entire four years.



College and Career Counseling

“Ms. Amy is one of those people who likes her job, and you can tell she’s excited to help her students. She was helpful in a thousand different ways.”



Cameron Matthews,
Missouri Western State
University '22

Our new College and Career Program reaffirms our long-term commitment and ensures that Academy graduates — and their families — receive the assistance they need to successfully make the jump to college.

In addition to organizing seven campus visits and hosting five informational sessions, our College and Career Counselor helped over 80 students and their families select a best-fit post-secondary path, process financial aid paperwork, and choose classes towards completing their degree. Through hard work, family support, and Amy’s help, our students secured over \$400,000 in financial aid. She also sent 41 care packages loaded with snacks and goodies to enrolled collegians.

Scholarships

Thanks to the continued generosity of our committed donors, we invested over half a million dollars in scholarships, ACT preparation and testing, and registration and technology fees.

\$685,386

Total amount
awarded in
scholarships
and fees

\$3,250

Average annual
high school
tuition award
per student

Work-Study

At Access, we teach our students the importance of giving back to their communities. Through our Work-Study program, Academy graduates in high school and college return to their former middle schools to tutor younger students. In the process, they earn money toward their education and gain valuable work experience.

\$32,082

Total amount
paid last year
for Work-Study

3,231

Number of
Work-Study
hours logged

25

High school and
college Work-Study
participants



Our Leadership Team

BOARD SPOTLIGHT:



Brian Day

Brian Day has always valued his Jesuit school education. A 1998 graduate of De Smet High School in Creve Coeur, he credits the teachers and environment, as much as the rigorous academics, with shaping the person he is today.

"The culture pushed you to do more," says Day, who went on to graduate from Truman State University, "to learn how to invest your time and energy, and to do the hard work necessary to find success."

The desire to give today's students the same opportunities is what inspired the 40-year-old Day to join the Access Board. "There's no reason why a willing and capable student shouldn't have access to the same experience, education, and culture that I did," says Brian, who has three children — Abigail, William, and Patrick — with his wife Rachael. "Access Academies is about giving students an opportunity to invest in themselves and succeed."

A 17-year veteran of Mercy Health System, Brian is the Vice President of Financial Planning and the Deputy Treasurer. He oversees revenue forecasting and capital and long-range financial planning. On the Access Board of Directors, he serves as Chair of the Finance Committee and views the rising cost of education, both in high school and college, as the biggest challenge the organization faces in the coming years.

"It's important to identify the needs of our students so that we can put them in a position to succeed over the long term," Day says. "I'm especially excited about the new investments we are making to help our students succeed beyond high school."

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Jordyn Hale

*Graduate Support Director
Most Holy Trinity Catholic School*

LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends of Access,

I'm reminded each September as we compile these pages of how fortunate we are as an organization. We have the unwavering support of so many generous and committed advocates and partners who care profoundly about the future success of our students.

I would like to extend a sincere and heartfelt thank you to each one of you, on behalf of our Access team, our Academy students, and myself. Without your generosity and shared commitment to our mission, our values, and our kids, none of this is possible. We are truly blessed.

More importantly, please know how seriously we take our role as stewards of your contributions. We are committed to using the funds with which you entrust us for the maximum benefit of our students.

To that end, our Board of Directors and staff worked together on a strategic plan for the coming years. We are targeting specific areas that put our students' academic success front and center: evaluating academic progress, developing our enrichment programs and summer school offerings, and collecting more data to further validate the results of our services.

There are also additional elements like leveraging important partnerships and ensuring long-term viability through Board, development, and communication support. We believe that focusing strategically will allow us to help more children on their paths to successful careers and happy lives.

It has been an exciting year at Access. Next year should prove even more so. Thank you again for taking this journey with us. You are truly helping our students create brighter futures for themselves.

Every student. Every chance. Every day.

My Best,



Tom Mackowiak
Executive Director

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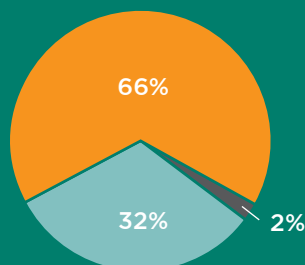
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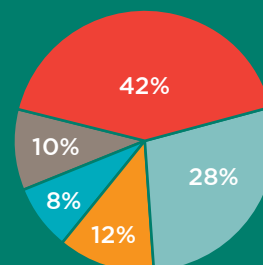
Your Dollars at Work
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2019 Revenue



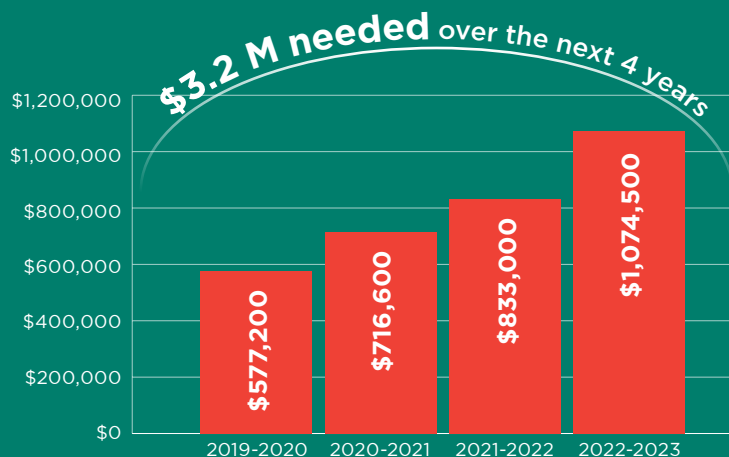
- General Contributions & Grants: \$1,509,201
- Celebration Dinner: \$721,940
- McGurk's/Interest/Other: \$39,063

2019 Expenses



- Tuition Scholarships & Fees: \$685,386
- Enrichment & Graduate Support: \$451,251
- Fundraising & Outreach: \$201,524
- Administrative: \$160,712
- Additional Programs & Support: \$121,527

Investing in the Future: Our Scholarship Commitments



*Increase primarily based on growing class sizes and the addition of Sister Thea Bowman students.

Investing in Our Students



\$16,560

Average 4-year
investment
in each high
school student



\$7,041

Average 3-year
investment in
each middle
school student



Access

Every student. Every chance. Every day.

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