

Every student.  
Every chance.  
Every day.



2021-2022 Annual Report





## LETTER FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

Dear Friends and Supporters,



The theme of this year's Celebration Dinner was 'Making Our Mark,' and it proved to be an inspiring front-row seat to the incredible work and dedication of our students. As I listened that evening to our young alums share their success stories, I was reminded not only of how many Access Academies graduates are indeed 'making their mark' in the world today (over 1,300!) but how many are still on that journey and benefiting from your generosity.

Let me be specific. Thanks to your kindness and unwavering commitment to Access this year, 506 students — from 6th grade to college — had unlimited access to our Graduate Support Directors, establishing a network of caring and supportive adults to propel every student forward. Over 220 families saw their financial burden eased with real high school tuition relief — on average, each family paid \$195 a month to support their child's education at a top private high school. And 156 Access Academy middle school students received over 1,000 hours of additional instruction in our after-school and summer enrichment programs.

But that's just the beginning of how your gifts have helped change lives. Gifts for which we are profoundly grateful. As we emerged from the pandemic and returned to a state of normalcy, we launched a handful of exciting new initiatives through our partnership with Saint Louis University aimed at driving equity in education across St. Louis. You can read about them in more detail on page 4. We also:

- Guided 41 eighth graders from our three partner middle schools into their top-choice college-prep high schools, and celebrated 42 high school seniors as they received over 80 college acceptances and \$1,550,000 in scholarship offers.
- Held our first fully in-person dinner since 2019 and awarded Marian 'Bo' and Terry Mehan the inaugural Access Academies Founders Award for their years of generous support, distinguished leadership, and passionate dedication to Access' students and its mission. Congratulations to Bo and Terry!

- Expanded our enrichment offerings by forging important community partnerships with Pianos for People, New Dimensions Soccer, and the Black Rep. And in a testament to the long-lasting relationships we form with our students, Maryville University graduate Erika Valenzuela returned to her alma mater, St. Cecilia, to teach an enrichment course in graphic design.
- Invested over \$805,000 in tuition and fees so Academy students could attend one of our scholarship partner high schools, and awarded 55 collegians with the Access College Scholarship. With your support, we have continued to grow our financial commitment to our college and post-secondary students and have invested over \$34,550 to date.

As you will see, 2021-2022 was a successful year for the students of Access Academies, and I am excited and proud to share this annual report with you. Not only does it demonstrate our success together, but it also emphasizes the importance of our partnerships as we work to address inequities in our students' lives.



*Terry and 'Bo' Mehan receive the Access Academies Founders Award.*

On behalf of our scholars, graduates, families, staff, and board, thank you for believing in our mission, trusting us with your gifts, and joining in this endeavor. Most importantly, thank you for helping us give every student, every chance, every day.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Brian Day'.

Brian Day  
Chair, Board of Directors



# 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



**223**

**STUDENTS**

in 40 high schools, including 195 in 21  
private, college-preparatory schools



**156**

**STUDENTS**

in 3 city  
middle schools



**127**

**STUDENTS**

in 47 colleges or other  
post-secondary institutions



**11+**

years of counseling,  
mentoring, and advocacy  
for each student



**18**

college visits offered to each  
Access student from 6th grade  
to high school graduation



**1,035**

hours of extended-day  
and summer enrichment  
instruction provided annually



**\$805,914**

total amount awarded in  
high school scholarships  
and fees



**\$34,550**

total amount awarded  
in Access College  
Scholarships since 2020



**\$3,486**

average annual  
high school tuition  
award per student



**\$195**

average monthly high  
school tuition payment  
per family

SINCE OUR FOUNDING IN 2005:

**\$8.2 million**

awarded in high school  
& college scholarships

**1,349 students**

benefited from  
our programs

## Equity in Action

Access Academies creates countless opportunities for youth in underserved communities across the St. Louis region. Annually, we support the development of over 500 students from 30 different zip codes, and we work hard to make a sustainable impact and counter the systemic inequities that our young scholars and their families have faced for generations. With your help last year, we worked to create equity in education by:

- Launching our Access 2 College (A2C) Program, an exciting college-prep initiative that guides Access high school juniors and seniors through four critical areas of development: writing, leadership, career exploration, and college planning.
- Preparing 23 Access high school students for the ACT exam through 60 hours of weekend instruction. The results were impressive: Our scholars raised their composite scores by an average of three points from the first practice test to the actual ACT exam.
- Helping our incoming high school freshmen and their families open MOST 529 college savings accounts and apply for the My Missouri 'MyMO' Scholarship Promise Program – ensuring they receive the \$10,000 per student award by graduation.
- Strengthening our partnership with Saint Louis University as the SLU School of Education continues its comprehensive two-year evaluation of our programs. This year, 10 Access high school seniors enrolled at Saint Louis University and over \$185,000 was awarded in the Access at SLU Scholarship.

*“At Access, we believe every child should be free to dream big and achieve big. Our work to address the profound inequities we see in education across our region starts by building trusted relationships with every Access student and their family. We gain an understanding of the individual needs of every student, make an 11+ year commitment to their success, and invest in practices that increase access and equity for all.”*



—SHELLY WILLIAMS  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



### OUR MISSION

**Access propels middle school students who have been historically underserved through high school and on to college and career success with enrichment, counseling, and scholarships.**

### OUR VALUES

Access is committed to...

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

### OUR HISTORY

Access was founded in 2005 by a 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 11+ years of counseling, they started the first Academy with 15 students in a single South City middle school. In 2021-2022, Access served over 500 students in three partner middle schools, 40 high schools (including 21 private, college-prep high schools), and 47 colleges and post-secondary institutions across the country.

# Impacting Our Region



## Our Partner Middle Schools

St. Cecilia School & Academy (South St. Louis)  
St. Louis Catholic Academy (North St. Louis)  
Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School (East St. Louis)

## Our High Schools

Althoff Catholic High School\*  
Belleville High School East  
Bishop DuBourg High School\*  
Cahokia High School  
Cardinal Ritter College Prep\*  
Carnahan High School of the Future  
Chaminade College Prep\*  
Charles H. Sumner High School  
Christian Brothers College High School\*  
Cleveland Junior Naval Academy  
Collegiate School of Medicine and Bioscience  
Confluence Academy  
Cor Jesu Academy\*  
De Smet Jesuit High School\*  
Duchesne High School\*  
Gibault Catholic High School\*  
The Grand Center Arts Academy  
Granite City High School  
Hazelwood East High School  
Incarnate Word Academy\*  
Jennings Senior High School & College Prep Academy  
KIPP  
Lift For Life Academy  
Lutheran High School North\*  
Lutheran High School South\*  
Marquette Catholic High School\*  
McCluer South-Berkeley High School  
McKinley Classical Leadership Academy  
Nerinx Hall\*  
Normandy High School  
Notre Dame High School\*  
Principia School  
Purpose Driven Academy  
Ritenour High School  
Rosati-Kain High School\*  
St. John Vianney High School\*  
St. Joseph's Academy\*  
Saint Louis Priory School\*  
St. Louis University High\*  
St. Mary's High School\*  
Soldan High School  
South Technical High School  
SIUE East St. Louis Charter High School  
Ursuline Academy\*  
Villa Duchesne\*  
Visitation Academy\*  
Westminster Christian Academy\*

\*Denotes Scholarship Partner



**99%**

**ACCEPTED**

to college-preparatory  
high schools



**98%**

**GRADUATED**

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



**96%**

**ACCEPTED**

to college or other  
post-secondary institution



# Providing Critical Programming



## Counseling

### *Individualized Support Increases Academic Success*

Research proves that strong relationships are the foundation for student success. At Access, every student is embraced and supported by a community of trusted, caring adults who help them succeed in and persist in school, work, and life. Our individualized counseling ensures every student's academic, social, financial, and emotional needs are met.



## Enrichment

### *Challenging Our Youth to Dream*

Access provides over 1,000 hours of high-quality after-school and summer enrichment programming to our middle school students each year, a support that promotes student achievement, encourages positive behavior, and expands their definition of success. Our donors can be confident that their support is making a lasting difference. According to the Afterschool Alliance, "Afterschool programs also provide a significant return-on-investment, with every \$1 invested saving at least \$3 through increasing youth's earning potential, improving their performance at school, and reducing crime and juvenile delinquency."\*



## Scholarships

### *Illuminating a Path by Eliminating Financial Barriers*

At Access, we believe in equity: that every student should have every chance to thrive every day. Since our founding in 2005, Access has contributed more than \$8,182,020 in financial scholarships to high school and college students. It's an investment that eliminates financial barriers for our families and uplifts the St. Louis region.

\*"This is Afterschool" Fact Sheet. Afterschool Alliance. (2020, March). <http://afterschoolalliance.org/documents/National-One-Pager-2020.pdf>



# Support Our Students

A gift to Access helps pay for essential after-school enrichment programs, eases the tuition burden on our students' families, and ensures Graduate Support Directors are available at every stage of the 11+ year education journey. Help our students create a brighter future for themselves by giving today.

## ONLINE

Make a donation by credit/debit card or set up a recurring gift at [accessacademies.org/donate](https://accessacademies.org/donate).



## MAIL

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Fitzgerald Hall, Room 200  
St. Louis, MO 63103



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## College Bound!

Forty-two Access seniors graduated from high school this year and were accepted into colleges and universities across the country. As a group, they received over \$1.5 million in scholarship offers. Kadira Muhammad is one of those students. An alumna of St. Louis Catholic Academy ('18), she graduated cum laude from Rosati-Kain High School, where she was on the cheer team and in the National Honor Society. This fall, Kadira entered Clark Atlanta University as a business administration major. A member of the Management Club and Morehouse Business Association, she aspires to become a business intelligence analyst and start her own haircare line.



## Access Students Named WashU College Prep Scholars

Two more Access high school sophomores – Yareli Martinez of St. Joseph's Academy and Marlene Garcia of Cor Jesu Academy – were selected to the prestigious Washington University College Prep Program in 2022, bringing the number of current Access Academy participants to six. The program, which only accepts 50 applicants from across the region each year, prepares future first-generation college students to thrive academically and socially in college.





# Thank You to Our Donors

*"Access expanded my horizons and provided opportunities that I normally wouldn't have had access to. And having someone with you for those 11+ years provides students with a sense of stability that they might not have in other parts of their lives."*

—Andrea Garcia

*Clinical Laboratory Technician at the Mayo Clinic  
University of San Diego '20 | Villa Duchesne '16  
St. Cecilia School & Academy '12*

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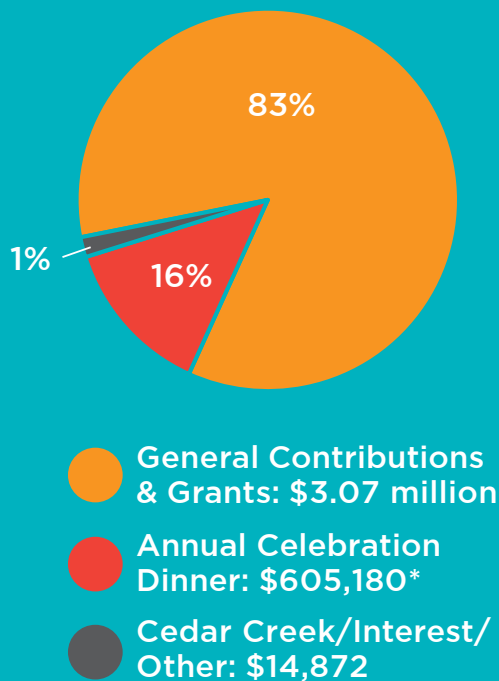
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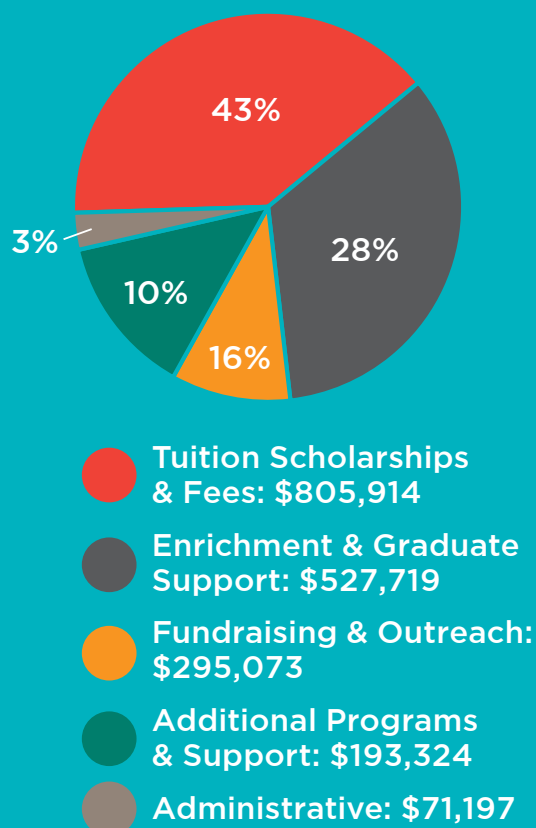
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## 2021-2022 Revenue



*\*Please note that because our 12th and 13th Annual Celebration Dinners were held in the same fiscal year (September 2021 and June 2022), this amount is larger than traditionally reflected on this chart.*

## 2021-2022 Expenses



## Investing in the Future: Our Scholarship Commitments





# Our Leadership Team

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\*Special thanks to Ron Wagner for his service and dedication as an Access Academies Board Member, and to Galicia Guerrero for her commitment to our students as the Graduate Support Director at St. Cecilia. Both moved on this year, and we wish them the best of luck in their new endeavors.

"A lot of people ask, 'How can I invest in St. Louis?' This is how we invest in St. Louis. Access is how we put St. Louis on the map. I went through the Access program. I know that it's working. I know what is possible. At the end of the day, we're changing lives for the better."

—VIVIAN GARCIA  
ACCESS ALUMNA AND  
GRADUATE SUPPORT DIRECTOR AT  
ST. CECILIA SCHOOL & ACADEMY



# Access

*Every student. Every chance. Every day.*

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Mission**

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