

2023-2024

IMPACT REPORT



Access

Every student. Every chance. Every day.



APPROACHING 20 YEARS OF IMPACT

Access was founded in 2005 by a group of St. Louisans convinced that education was the most enduring path to economic stability.

Embracing an innovative model that emphasized extended school days, a challenging enrichment curriculum, scholarships to private high schools, and 9+ years of counseling, they started the first Academy with 15 students in a single South City middle school. In 2023-2024, Access served 454 students in three partner middle schools, 39 area high schools — including 20 private, college-preparatory schools — and 49 colleges and post-secondary institutions across the country.

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 VISION

Access envisions a vibrant St. Louis community where equity in education allows every child to think, dream, and achieve big.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Fiscal year for board and staff: September 1, 2023 - August 31, 2024

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REFLECTING ON 2023-2024

We are excited to share Access Academies' 2023-2024 Impact Report, highlighting the incredible progress we continue to make through the collective efforts of our students, staff, families, partners, and supporters like you.

While the year was filled with many impactful milestones that advanced our mission, four stood out to me:

- We guided 40 eighth graders from our partner middle schools into their best-fit, college-prep high schools.
- For the first time in Access history, our high school students made out-of-state college visits through the Summer Scholars program.
- We reached a 97% FAFSA completion rate for our high school seniors, almost twice the national average and an increase of 6 percent from the previous year.
- The Access Class of 2024 secured more than \$1.9 million in financial aid for their post-secondary education.

As we celebrate these accomplishments, we also find

ourselves reflecting on the year ahead. 2025 marks Access' 20th anniversary of making a positive impact across our region, a milestone we could not have reached without your generosity. In the coming months, we will begin a strategic planning process to elevate the impact of our work and your support. This includes exploring how we can sustain our efforts amidst an evolving donor landscape and rising tuition costs. As always, a huge part of the answer is YOU.

Your continued advocacy helps us give every student, every chance, every day, and we are deeply grateful for your partnership. Thank you for believing in us and our students. We look forward to making 2025 a landmark year together!

Peace,

Tom Wheeland
Chair, Board of Directors



ENRICHMENT

Challenging Our Youth to Think and Dream Big

Access provides a comprehensive lineup of high-quality high school and college-prep enrichment programming each year, a support that bolsters academic achievement, encourages positive behavior, and expands their horizons and definition of success. With 95% of our students accepted to a college or a post-secondary institution last year, our donors can be confident that their gifts are making a lasting difference.



COUNSELING

Individualized Support Increases Academic Success

Research proves that strong relationships are the foundation for student success. At Access, every student is embraced by a dedicated community of trusted, caring adults who help them excel and persist in school, work, and life. Our 9+ years of individualized counseling ensures every student's academic, social, financial, and emotional needs are attended to.



SCHOLARSHIPS

Illuminating a Path by Reducing 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 \$9 million in scholarships to high school and college students. It's an investment that reduces financial barriers for our families and uplifts the entire St. Louis region.



Middle School



130 students enrolled in
3 partner middle schools

\$7,041 invested in each student over three years



9+ years of counseling, mentoring, and advocacy
provided to each student

1,035 hours of extended-day, weekend, and summer
enrichment instruction



16 college visits offered
to each Access student from
8th grade to high school graduation

High School



197 students enrolled in 39 high schools, including 158 in 20 private, college-preparatory schools

\$16,560 invested in each student over four years



\$724,000 high school scholarships and fees awarded

\$3,897 average annual high school tuition scholarship awarded per student

\$164 average monthly high school tuition payment made by each family

College and Post-Secondary



127 students enrolled in 49 colleges or other post-secondary institutions



70 collegians awarded the Access College Scholarship — worth up to **\$6,500 per student** over their college career.

\$84,620 awarded to our students through the **Access at Saint Louis University Scholarship**

\$147,125 awarded in Access College Scholarships since 2020

Work-Study Program



\$17,198 paid to 21 students (and their respective high schools or colleges) for **1,182 hours of work** through our **Work-Study program**



DID YOU KNOW...

Since Our 2005 Founding:

\$9.7 million awarded in high school & college scholarships

1,437 students have benefited from our programs

OUR PROGRAMS AND STUDENTS | IMPACTING OUR REGION

Since 2005:



Accepted to college-preparatory high schools



Graduated high school on time (compared to 87% nationwide)



Accepted to college or other post-secondary institution

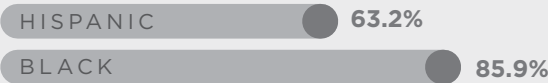
Regional High School Graduation Rates 2019-2023

The average high school graduation rate for both African American (100%) and Hispanic (97%) students active in Access Academies' programs exceeds the national averages for both racial and ethnic groups, as well as the graduation averages for schools in St. Louis City (including St. Louis Public Schools and St. Louis Charter Schools), which are less than 90%.

St. Louis Public Schools (SLPS)



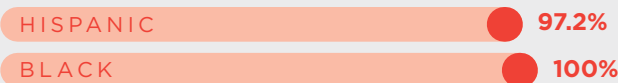
Charter Schools



Suburban/St. Louis County (Ladue, Clayton, Parkway, etc.)



Access Academies



Access Class of 2024

97% FAFSA completion rate (compared to 53% nationwide)

\$1,910,848 financial aid secured by our high school graduates

8 Access students awarded the Boniface Scholarship worth up to \$40,000 over their college journeys



On the Path to Success

40 eighth graders from our partner middle schools guided into a best-fit, college-prep high school.

139 students attended one of the nine college tours Access offered last year.

60 students attended our 2024 Summer Scholars Program, which featured 5 out-of-state college visits and 26 sessions on admissions, financial aid, scholarships, career exploration, essay writing, and more.

81 students participated in 34 hours of weekend ACT Prep and/or Access 2 College instruction, raising their composite scores by an average of 2 points from the first practice test to the actual ACT exam.



ALUMNI SUCCESS

Gabe Garcia

University of North Dakota '23
Saint Louis University '18
SLUH '13

Gabe Garcia continues to advance his medical science career at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. After earning his second Bachelor of Science degree, graduating Summa Cum Laude in Medical Laboratory Science from the University of North Dakota, Gabe passed his board exam

and is now certified by the American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP). He accepted a new position in Mayo's Hematopathology Morphology department where he analyzes blood, fluid, and bone marrow samples to identify blood cell disorders and abnormalities. In addition to his professional achievements, Gabe has also embraced a new role in his personal life: fatherhood. He and his wife welcomed their first child, Sam, in January 2024.



Kyra Harris

Eastern Washington University '24
Avila University '19
Rosati-Kain Academy '15

This spring, Access alumna Kyra Harris earned her Master's degree in Public Health from Eastern Washington University. She works in St. Louis as a Clinical Nursing Manager and Educator for BAYADA Home Health Care, where she oversees care for around 20 families and continues her deep commitment to improving healthcare access for

those most in need. Kyra began her career in 2018 on the critical care team at DePaul Hospital in Bridgeton before moving to pediatrics at Ranken Jordan Pediatric Bridge Hospital and later St. Louis Children's Hospital. She also spent a year working as an elementary school nurse through the Children's Health, Advocacy, and Outreach (CHAO) department. Kyra plans to eventually combine her medical expertise with advocacy and work for an organization to advance health equity for minority women and children.

Jaron Lewis

Westminster Christian Academy '23
Most Holy Trinity '19

Following his enlistment in the United States Navy during a ceremony at Busch Stadium last year, Jaron Lewis completed basic training at Recruit Training Command Great Lakes and was assigned to the White

House in Washington, D.C. He is now a member of the United States Navy Ceremonial Guard, where he is detailed to presidential ceremonies in and around the nation's capital. This May, Jaron served in the honor guard as U.S. President Joe Biden and Dr. Jill Biden welcomed Kenyan President William Ruto and First Lady Rachel Ruto to a state dinner at the White House.



Read more student success stories



PARTNER 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
 Duchesne High School
 Gibault Catholic 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 Academy
 Saint Louis Catholic Academy
 Saint Louis Priory School
 St. John Vianney High School
 St. Joseph's Academy
 St. Cecilia Catholic School & Academy
 St. Louis University High School
 St. Mary's South Side Catholic High School
 Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School
 Ursuline Academy
 Villa Duchesne
 Visitation Academy
 Westminster Christian Academy

Partner High School
 Partner Middle School



POST-SECONDARY ACCEPTANCES

This year, Access high school seniors were accepted to the following 55 colleges and universities.

Alabama A&M University
 Central Michigan University
 Claflin University
 Clark Atlanta University
 Columbia College Chicago
 DePaul University
 Dillard University
 Elizabeth City State University
 Fisk University
 Fontbonne University
 Fort Valley State University
 George Mason University
 Hampton University
 Harris-Stowe State University
 Illinois College
 Illinois State University
 Jackson State University
 Kansas City Art Institute
 Kean University

Lincoln University of Missouri
 Lindenwood University
 Louisiana State University
 Maryville University
 McKendree University
 MidAmerica Nazarene University
 Missouri State University
 Moberly Area Community College
 Norfolk State University
 North Carolina Central University
 Ranken Technical College
 Rochester Institute of Technology
 Saint Louis University
 Santa Fe College
 Savannah College of Art and Design
 Seton Hall University
 Southeast Missouri State University
 Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
 St. Charles Community College

St. John's University-New York
 St. Louis Community College
 Texas Southern University
 The University of Memphis
 University of Arizona
 University of Arkansas
 University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff
 University of Kansas
 University of Louisville
 University of Missouri-Columbia
 University of Missouri-Kansas City
 University of Missouri-St. Louis
 University of North Carolina at Greensboro
 University of San Francisco
 University of Wyoming
 Virginia Commonwealth University
 Webster University

YOUR DOLLARS AT WORK

Fiscal Year September 1, 2023 - August 31, 2024



- General Contributions & Grants: \$1,720,955
- Annual Celebration Dinner: \$596,696
- Interest/Other: \$244,393

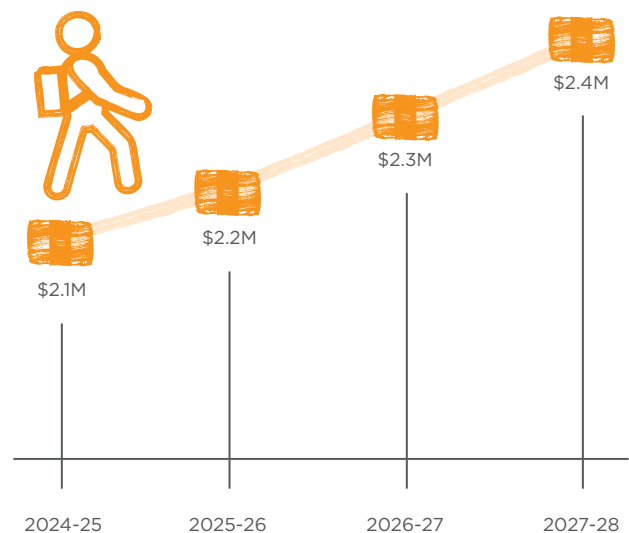


- Tuition Scholarships & Fees: \$934,917
- Enrichment & Graduate Support: \$866,325
- Fundraising & Outreach: \$314,504
- Additional Programs & Support: \$318,944
- Administrative: \$98,938

Investing In Our Future:

HELP SUSTAIN ACCESS ACADEMIES' PROGRAMMING

With private high school and college tuition steadily rising, \$9 million is needed to sustain Access' impact over the next four years.



Thank You to Our Celebration Dinner **SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS**



**Gus and
Kelly Gast**

**Chris Schmidt and
Silvia Ledesma Ortiz**

**John and
Margie Simon**



"Access gives me the courage to go after what seems impossible and the motivation I need to continue with school and pursue my dreams. For that, I'm truly thankful."

–Mckenzie Renfro
Tuskegee University '27,
Lutheran High School North '23,
Most Holy Trinity '19,
Access student since 2017



"Standardized testing can be very intimidating for some. The ACT prep classes offered by Access were a huge benefit, truly providing my daughters with more confidence and resulting in their obtaining higher scores for college admittance and scholarship opportunities."

–Gwendolyn Fitzpatrick,
Parent of Three Access Scholars

HELP US MAKE A GREATER IMPACT

ONLINE

Make a donation by credit/debit card or set up a recurring gift at accessacademies.org/donate.

MAIL

Mail your gift to our office at:
3500 Lindell Boulevard
Fitzgerald Hall, Room 200
St. Louis, MO 63103

LEGACY GIVING

A substantial impact can be made through gifts of stock, retirement accounts, or by naming Access as part of your will, estate, or legacy giving plan. Please contact Peg Lord, Development Manager, at (314) 898-0430 or Peg.Lord@Accessacademies.org, for more information.



**Pershing
Charitable Trust**



**Kent Family
Foundation**

FORV/S

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT



Thank you to everyone who made a gift to Access this year! Scan here to see our complete list of 2023-2024 donors.



"Once I was introduced to Access, it was an easy decision to become a supporter and a board member. The mission is amazing and, more importantly, the long-term commitment we make to our remarkable students and their families makes a true impact in their lives and on our region."

—Ronnie Weiss
Access Board Member



"Notre Dame High School is thrilled to be a long-time partner of Access Academies. The mission of Access is perfectly aligned with our mission. Together we partner to educate the whole person and develop our shared students to be lifelong learners with strong skills that will serve them well throughout college and life thereafter."

—Amy Bush, Head of Academics and Instruction,
Notre Dame High School, Access Partner



Access

Every student. Every chance. Every day.

3500 Lindell Boulevard
Fitzgerald Hall, Suite 200
Saint Louis, MO 63103

314.898.0430
accessacademies.org



SUPPORT OUR STUDENTS

A gift to Access helps pay for essential enrichment programs, eases the tuition burden on our students' families, and ensures Graduate Support Directors are available at every stage of the 9+ year education journey. Help our students create a brighter future for themselves by giving today.



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