



OUR NEIGHBORHOOD IN THE DIGITAL AGE

IMPACT REPORT
2019-2020

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD



HELLO ONE AND ALL,

It still amazes me that over 20 years ago, Jodie Moore and Tom Johnson, as students at the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary were sitting in a room one day and said to themselves, “Why don’t we start a school?” Today, if you turn onto Black Street and North Aiken Avenue in Stanton Heights, you will find two magnificent buildings on seven acres of land... a testimony to Tom and Jodie. Their beliefs, dedication, enthusiasm, and passion for youth pushed them to overcome in the face of adversity to establish The Neighborhood Academy as we know it today.

I grew up in an Italian neighborhood of St. Louis. My father and mother had third grade and eighth grade educations, respectively. When applying to high school, I took an exam and was accepted into an all-boys Jesuit high school. The Jesuit priests are some of the best teachers in the world, and this education changed my life’s course. After being exposed to Jesuit

priests’ teachings and attending such an excellent school, for the first time in my life, I had friends whose parents carried briefcases and were professionals, doctors, and lawyers. This education made my world bigger and it was my TURNING POINT.

I first met Tom Johnson when he coached my sons’ lacrosse team at Shady Side Academy. I attended his graduation from the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and then lost touch with him. Coincidentally, we reconnected, and with my involvement and passion for Boys Hope Girls Hope, an organization that houses, supports, and educated underserved youth, I was immediately drawn to The Neighborhood Academy’s mission. I supported the capital campaign and soon joined the board. I believe that TNA is the TURNING POINT for our students by exploring their potential for greatness, but also expanding their worlds.

Since the day Jodie Moore and Tom Johnson opened the TNA doors in 2001, the school has provided an excellent education, support, and opportunity for students to succeed. In 2011, a state-of-the-art academic building and field house were built on our current campus. Since then, The Neighborhood Academy has strengthened its admissions program, received its Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools’ 10-year accreditation, added Middle School grades 6 and 7, more than doubled enrollment, increased curriculum opportunities, and required every senior to

complete a Senior Seminar Research paper in either the humanities, science, or chemistry. Even through the COVID-19 pandemic, The Neighborhood Academy’s faculty seamlessly transitioned to a virtual learning platform and our students began learning remotely without ever missing a day of school. Our graduates are attending higher quality colleges than ever before, and we expect our future students to seek and acquire success at progressively higher levels as we continue towards meeting our mission after the 20th year.

These accomplishments and feats have exemplified the tenacity of the The Neighborhood Academy community, which is capable of meeting any challenge or obstacle in order to improve the lives of its students. I know my life would be quite different without that first opportunity to better myself through education.

While this year was challenging, it was also a year for The Neighborhood Academy to prove itself worthy of investment as we continue to be the pivotal TURNING POINT in the lives of our students.

Thank you very much for your continued support of our students and belief in our mission.

My best,

Charlie Ferrara
Chairman, Board of Directors

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2019-2020

Thank you to the following board members for their continued service:

Kirsten R. Albert
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Sally Ann Bensusan
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Daniel ‘Mac’ Lynch
D. Bryant Mitchell
Madelyn E. Toliver
Winthrop Watson
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Blair Arthur William

Thank you to board members who have rolled off, including:

The Reverend Thomas E. Johnson, Jr.*
Gary J. Niels*
Jonathan McAnney, Esq.
Timothy B. O’Brien
John Robinson III

*Ex-officio

MISSION STATEMENT

The Neighborhood Academy (TNA) is a faith-based, college preparatory, independent Middle and High School whose mission is to break the cycle of generational poverty by empowering youth and preparing them for college and citizenship.



HISTORY

The history of the school begins in 1993, when co-founder Jodie Moore began working with at-risk adolescents in Larimer, then, and now, one of Pittsburgh's most desolate and underserved neighborhoods. What was then known as the Larimer Avenue Youth Club evolved into a nine-year summer skill-building program for at-risk 7th through 11th graders, run by The Reverend Tom Johnson in the basement of Allegheny United Church of Christ.

Ms. Moore and Reverend Johnson, who met at the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, quickly realized that the psychosocial burdens of poverty weighed heavily on these students and impeded learning. They believed that if these young people could be immersed year-round in a caring environment with high expectations, they could become educated young people with the potential to lead fulfilling lives. With generous support from pioneering community members, this vision evolved into The Neighborhood Academy.

The college-preparatory school opened its doors to its first class of 8th and 9th graders in September 2001, and has since grown to 142 students in grades 6 through 12. In 2011, the school moved to its new home at 709 N. Aiken Avenue in Pittsburgh's Stanton Heights neighborhood.



UPDATING...

TNA received a \$25,000 Challenge Grant from the Jack Buncher Foundation. TNA thanks all donors who helped us meet the challenge.



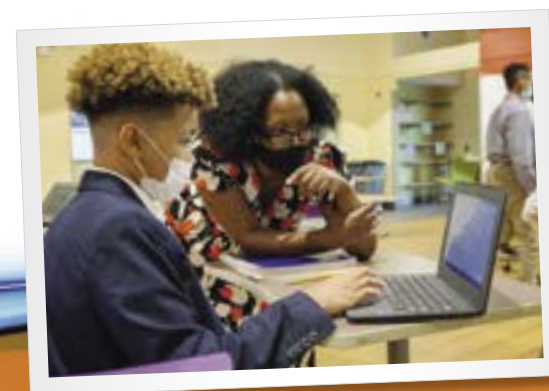
The Neighborhood Academy community mourns the recent passing of Ms. Bernita Lee Buncher, Jack Buncher's daughter and President of the Foundation. Ms. Buncher was a longtime friend of The Neighborhood Academy as she believed in our mission of breaking the cycle of generational poverty by empowering youth and preparing them for college and citizenship.



We were honored to host author Mark Whitaker in the fall of 2019 for the Nancy & Paul O'Neill Speaker Series. Whitaker discussed his book, *Smoketown: The Untold Story of the Other Great Black Renaissance*, and the culture of African Americans Pittsburgh in the 1920s-50s.

Presenting Sponsor: PwC

Also in the fall of 2019, **Comcast and their Internet Essentials Program generously provided 142 laptops for TNA's 142 students.** Students were able to begin learning virtually when the COVID-19 pandemic began.



STUDENT CHALLENGES

- **80%** had a taxable family income of less than \$30,000
- **70%** lived in a single-caregiver household
- **50%** had families with a history of drug and/or alcohol abuse
- **46%** had families with a history of domestic violence
- **29%** had experienced incarceration in their immediate family
- **84%** of students would otherwise be enrolled in a school categorized as 'low-performing' by the Pennsylvania Department of Education

YOUR IMPACT

- **Largest class of Seniors**, 18, graduated in May 2020
- Awarded **nearly \$500,000 in scholarship** money from 43 colleges and universities
- **100%** college acceptance rate
- Over **28,500 hours** of counseling
- Over **20** Student Life Activities
- Monthly volunteering at Valley View Presbyterian Church's food pantry booth
- **142** students served throughout the year
- **10** after-school art excursions as part of the Arts Connection Program
- Alumni boast a **76% five-year college graduation rate** (three-year average).
- Nationally, **16% of low income college students** graduate from college (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017)

In December 2019, TNA welcomed the legendary Smokey Robinson.

- Jazz performed by the Manchester Craftsman Guild
- Wine tasting from Robinson's exclusive collection
- All proceeds benefited the student scholarship fund

Presenting Sponsor: The Wilson Group



Join the Legacy Society

Consider creating your own legacy of support by investing in our students' futures.

The Neighborhood Academy's Legacy Society recognizes and honors those who have included TNA in their estate plans which sustain the school in profound and pragmatic ways.

Consult with your financial advisor as you plan your legacy gift to the school.



Ready to Join the Legacy Society?

Sheila Rawlings,
Director of Development, 412-626-6851 or
sheila.rawlings@theneighborhoodacademy.org

Carolyn Sanford,
Assistant Head of School for Development, 412-362-2021
or carolyn.sanford@theneighborhoodacademy.org



Over 1,200 meals were delivered to TNA students and their families over the course of 10 weeks, beginning, March 23 — the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. These meals ensured that students and their families would be well fed.

TNA received a Reimagine grant from PwC.

- Established Middle School coding program during Summer Session
- Purchased 15 Virtual Reality headsets to assist and engage visual learners
- Provided transportation to and from a local university for coding classes during winter and spring breaks



REMEMBERING Paul O'Neill

In April of 2020 we lost a longtime supporter and friend to TNA, Paul O'Neill. Paul and his wife, Nancy, dedicated much of their lives to helping our students and living out the mission of our school. The O'Neill family has supported TNA from the beautification of TNA's campus, to initiating the development of The Nancy and Paul O'Neill Speaker Series. Paul will always remain in our hearts.



Use your tax dollars to provide scholarships for our students

Just like businesses, YOU, as an individual, can receive up to a 90% tax credit against your personal PA state taxes by contributing to The Neighborhood Academy.

For more information on this program, call Carolyn Sanford at 412-362-2021 or Sheila Rawlings at 412-626-6851.

MIDDLE SCHOOL...



Swimming with the "Sharks"



In early March 2020, **Jennifer Kane's English class turned into an episode of "Shark Tank."**

Students had the opportunity to present their five-minute pitches to a panel of judges from various companies in the Pittsburgh region. The pitches centered on original app ideas developed by the students in a thesis-driven paper they had written in class, followed by Q&A from the judges.



Judges awarded fictional money to each student for his/her idea and presentation.

FAST Learners

Understanding the importance of making the projects creative and fun while teaching science concepts, Abbey Mae Pitcher and her **6th and 7th graders designed and built DC-motor powered cars.** Student teams collaborated and used the engineering process to construct these vehicles out of supplies such as popsicle sticks, K'nex, bottle caps, straws, and hot glue.

In her physics unit, she offered a roller coaster design activity that challenged the students to apply the concepts of potential and kinetic energy to a real-life scenario. The teams competed to earn points for the complexity of their tracks, adding turns, hills, and loops to make them more difficult and challenging.





A new wrestling program was introduced for the TNA Middle School coached by John McClelland. Many of the boys were first-time participants learning the fundamentals of wrestling. The team went to 2 dual meets, and it was a great first experience for all.



League Champs!

TNA's Middle School basketball team, coached by Fred Underwood, brought home the league championship trophy after being the runner-up in the previous season.



MIDDLE SCHOOL BY THE NUMBERS:



71% of students performed above grade level after their first year of attending TNA as a middle school student



97% attendance rate Pre-COVID-19 pandemic



53% honor roll rate in terms 1, 2, 3 & 4



12% attrition in grades 6-8



85% of middle school students passed all of their courses through the three terms during the pandemic.

HIGH SCHOOL

We are excited to share with you what our High School students have been up to this past year...



Six of TNA's High School girls biked to Cincinnati in March 2020 with Pittsburgh Youth Leadership. Once in Cincinnati, they visited the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center.

TNA's juniors completed excellent history capstones. Some standout papers included Cashmere Starks' "Racial Disparities in the Medical Field: A Focus on Maternal Care," and Kennedy Bose's "The LGBTQ Community and the AIDS Epidemic."

TNA's sophomores also had the opportunity to complete World History Capstone projects, which this year centered around African history.

For the first time in several years TNA had a very enthusiastic and talented cheerleading squad.

Under the leadership of Board member Bob Dapper, some of TNA's students had the opportunity to compete in a statewide mock trial on cyberbullying.

Through our Arts Connection Program, students saw incredible shows last year, including "The Lion King," "One Night in Miami," and "Cirque du Soleil: Ovo."

TNA's faculty and staff visited each of the 18 seniors at their homes. Dr. Williams gave a personal toast, and each family celebration was unique.



2020 Senior Jonathan "JJ" Morris graduated from TNA as the first athlete in our school's history to receive a NCAA Athletic Scholarship to compete at the collegiate level at Wheeling University.



Jocelyn Hargrove



Kennedi Bose

TNA is proud of Jocelyn and Kennedi for being voted to SWPAA All-League team Volleyball.



The 2019 Undeclared flag football champions



100% of our 18 seniors were accepted to college!

- Allegheny College (3)
- Berea College
- CCAC
- Coppin State University (3)
- Eastern Kentucky University
- Seton Hill University
- Slippery Rock University
- Spelman College
- Washington & Jefferson College (3)
- Wheeling University
- Xavier

ARTS CONNECTION

- African Dance and Drumming
- Outdoor recycled sculpture
- Visual Arts
- Spoken Word
- Publication & Bookmaking
- Fashion Creation/ Jewelry Making
- Photography
- Ceramics
- Stained Glass
- Arts Excursions

HIGH SCHOOL BY THE NUMBERS:



97% attendance rate Pre-COVID-19 pandemic



49% average honor roll rate



100% College acceptance



GIVING TNA
STUDENTS A

BOOST



In 2018, as part of a two-tiered scholarship, Mr. Michael Schenz and Dr. Beverly Harris-Schenz, Ph.D., endowed the Mary Martin Tinsley (MMT) Scholarship Fund and joined the Over The Bridge Society by supporting the cost of educating a student for three years. Their student is Quentaja, class of 2021.

“Quentaja is a very focused young woman who is committed to her education and the goals she has set for herself. She is quite independent and wants to be a role model for her siblings... she takes that role very seriously,” said Dr. Harris-Schenz. **“We communicate regularly and I’m pleased with the relationship we’ve developed! Quentaja just got her first college admission letter, which is very exciting, and she has plans for a career in the medical field.”**

Created by Dr. Beverly Harris-Schenz, Ph.D., the MMT endowed scholarship helps outstanding students in their pursuit of higher education.

“This was a first for me to set up an endowed scholarship alongside an Over the Bridge pledge. I was moved by Dr. Schenz’s desire to extend her support into perpetuity, while helping a student in real time,” said Sheila Rawlings, Director of Development.

Dr. Harris-Schenz, Associate Professor Emerita at the University of Pittsburgh, had a successful academic career as professor of German and director of undergraduate studies at the University’s Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures. Her specialty was language with a focus on German children’s literature, foreign language pedagogy, and teacher training. In 1988, she received the Chancellor’s



Distinguished Teaching Award.

At Pitt, she also served as Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies.

She received her doctoral degree in German studies from Stanford University in 1977. At that time, there were no African Americans in the German department. In fact, she was only the second African American to earn a Ph.D. in German at Stanford.

Dr. Harris-Schenz and her husband, Michael, became involved with TNA through their church over 15 years ago and have been supporters ever since. **“Many children need to have more than a school environment that just focuses on academics. They need to have an opportunity that helps them realize who they are and how they can contribute and be a part of something bigger than themselves and TNA does that... TNA is much more than a normal ‘nine-to-five’ school,”** said Dr. Harris-Schenz.

The couple believe that education is the key to opening doors to opportunities. In addition to their scholarship at TNA, they set up The Samuel Vanworth Harris Memorial Scholarship at the University of Pittsburgh more than 20 years ago. Both scholarships were named by Dr. Harris-Schenz in honor of her parents.

Giving students a boost is Dr. Harris-Schenz’s way of giving back and following the example of those who have helped her. She believes that no one achieves success on their own, and that it is important to ‘pay it forward.’

“In my life, many people were instrumental in helping me obtain the goals I set for myself, and those people were generous and kind. They didn’t need me... I needed them,” Dr. Harris-Schenz said. **“My obligation was that once I was in the position to give back, I wanted to demonstrate that gratitude by assisting others to realize their educational goals.”**

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

To learn how to become a member of the Over The Bridge Society **contact Sheila L. Rawlings**, Director of Development at The Neighborhood Academy at **412.626.6851** or **sheila.rawlings@theneighborhoodacademy.org**.

TNA STUDENTS APPRECIATE ALL OF OUR SPECIAL DONORS



POWER UP

With a bright future ahead of her, Carrington Williams has set her sights on a future career in education.

Carrington, who will graduate from The Neighborhood Academy in May 2021, has applied to 10 colleges and universities in Pennsylvania - all of which have offered her scholarships!

“It’s pretty nerve-wracking receiving all these scholarships because I have so many choices in the next few months, but it’s a good problem to have,” said Carrington. **“My top three schools are Seton Hill, Gannon, and Slippery Rock.”**

Carrington has drawn up a solid blueprint for her future with goals including the completion of a “four plus one” program, receiving her bachelor’s degree in Early Childhood Education and then obtaining her master’s degree in Special Education.

“TNA really got me interested in Early Childhood Education—we have such amazing teachers there. I want to be like them and put myself out there to

help kids. Teachers really help kids get to where they are later down the road, and I want to be a part of that,” said Carrington.

She also plans to focus on building skills in entrepreneurship by starting her own daycare!

“When I was younger, I had to go to my grandparents’ house in the morning because my father had to go to work early. Someday, I would love to start my own daycare and provide resources to help families, so they have an outlet for their kids when they have to go to work. It could even have an after-school program, too, for parents who work later in the day,” said Carrington.

Somewhere in between her higher education and building her dream job, Carrington hopes to get involved at TNA after graduation!

“I was thinking of working at TNA during a summer to get a feel for the students and get some experience,” said Carrington.

We can’t wait to see more from Carrington in the future.

“IT’S PRETTY NERVE-WRACKING RECEIVING ALL THESE SCHOLARSHIPS BECAUSE I HAVE SO MANY CHOICES IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS.”



STRONG SIGNALS



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

TNA CLASS OF 2016 CHEYNE FRANCIS

University of Pittsburgh

Cheyne Francis, a 2016 alumna of The Neighborhood Academy, graduated from Indiana University of Pennsylvania in May 2020.



“To be successful in college, I would remind myself three things: I know how to read. I know how to write. I know how to think. You can do anything you set your mind to if you can do these three things, and I credit TNA for

teaching them to me,” said Cheyne.

“TNA prepared me for college, so when I finally went to college, I was ready for anything... although, living away from home was completely new to me.”

Like most college students, Cheyne explored her options and then decided on a course of study.

“During my freshman year at IUP, I had my heart set on Speech Pathology as my area of focus, but the classes didn’t quite spark my interest. I ended up switching gears and became immersed in disability advocacy, which was

the perfect combination of Special Education and Law and Policy,” said Cheyne.

Her passions landed her in a variety of college clubs, such as the Sign Language Club, three different honorary fraternities, and the Women and Gender Club, which she oversaw as President!

After earning a Bachelor’s degree with a Major in Disability Services and a Minor in Women and Gender Studies, Cheyne now studies for her Master’s Degree at the University of Pittsburgh’s Social and Comparative Analysis in Education (SCAE) program.

Cheyne will graduate from Pitt in the Fall of 2021 and seeks a position as an Education Policy Analyst.

“The Neighborhood Academy is the place to be your best self while you’re working on your best self.”

TNA CLASS OF 2016 CYDNEY FRANCIS

Chatham University

Cydney Francis graduated from Chatham University in December 2020 with a Bachelor’s in Exercise Science and a minor in Women and Gender Studies. Cydney, who is focused on a successful career-driven future, credits The Neighborhood Academy as integral to her college success.

“I came from predominantly white schools and white churches, so being exposed to black teachers and black students who were all focused on seeking higher education and making the best of their situations was important to me,” said Cydney. **“TNA taught me so many things that I’ve taken with me – in both life and in my academics.**

The ‘infamous’ reading and annotating skill that TNA taught me is something that has become instinctual to me and has made studying and completing assignments so much easier.”

Cydney always had an interest in healthcare and medicine, so when she went on to study at Chatham University, she decided to do a shadow study in Occupational Therapy at The Children’s Institute. Through this shadow study, Cydney realized her passion for OT, but also her love of working with kids.

“I’ve always been a ‘kid person.’ I gravitate towards kids and kids gravitate towards me.

Having a career in OT and working with kids... it all clicked for me!” she said.

Cydney hopes to receive a doctoral degree in Occupational Therapy one day, and she would love to work for an organization that serves underprivileged families and children.

“I’ve always wanted to give back and help people – either through an organization or by myself,” she said. **“I’m all about helping people live healthy, successful, independent, and confident lives.”**



CLICK TO OPEN

A NOTE FROM OUR HEAD OF SCHOOL,
ANTHONY WILLIAMS, Ed.D.

**"YOU HAVE BEEN OUR
HOPE THROUGH THESE
UNFORESEEN TIMES."**

My thoughts and prayers remain with each individual who has been impacted by COVID-19 within our nation. The ongoing implications of the global pandemic have deeply impacted the ways in which we live our lives today. While the impact of the pandemic has presented various challenges to our school, it has also presented an opportunity to strengthen the core components of our school, so that we continue to educate our students in a holistic manner.

We began the 2020-2021 school year by offering two learning models for our families: a blended learning model and a virtual learning model. Through both of these models, learning takes place every day of the week, and our students are challenged by a rigorous college preparatory curriculum.

Through both models, we continue to offer our students a holistic education that has proven successful in preparing our students for college readiness. We currently educate 140 students in grades 6-12, and I am very enthusiastic about the promise of their futures.

We continue to begin our academic day with morning

worship in order to ensure that we develop the minds, bodies, and souls of our students. We provide our students with the necessary academic support which enhances their academic aspirations while reinforcing our high academic standards. We offer our students three meals a day to ensure they have the nourishment which is necessary to fully sustain their physical and mental well-being. These meals are offered on our campus and delivered to our families on a daily basis. Finally, we continue to provide our students' with counseling services, which are critical in supporting our students mental health needs.

I am pleased with the response of our students regarding their active engagement within their learning. Our daily attendance rate is currently 89%. In my opinion, that exemplifies our student's commitment to our core values, which are ability, belief, resilience, and transcendence. Even in the midst of a global pandemic, our students demonstrate their desire to learn and rise above these unprecedented times.

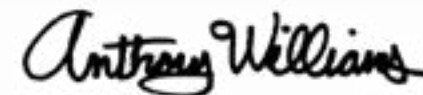
I am also proud to say that 100% of our seniors have been admitted to college and 76% of our alumni have graduated from college in five academic years or less. This year, we celebrate our largest graduating class of 26 seniors. I could not be more proud of the academic achievements and the sound character of these young women and men. I am very confident that they will make a deep contribution within their families, the Pittsburgh region, and the society in which we live.

I am very grateful and thankful for the impact that you have made within our school community. Your gifts of time, talent and prayers have provided us the opportunity to advance our mission and to deeply impact the lives of our students. You have been our hope through these unforeseen times. Your care and concern for our students have provided an opportunity for our school to further our efforts and impact, despite the circumstances that are upon us.

Due to your generosity, we have the opportunity to further develop the academic skillsets of our students so that they will be able to achieve their dreams of college attainment and enrollment. Because of your ongoing belief, we are able to continue to break the cycle of generational poverty that has all too often plagued the lives of our students. Thanks to the impact that you make in the lives of our students, our mission will continue to have generational impact on the lives of current and future generations. For that, I am forever grateful.

I conclude this letter by expressing gratitude for the impact that you have made. Please know that you remain in my thoughts and prayers. Stay safe and be well.

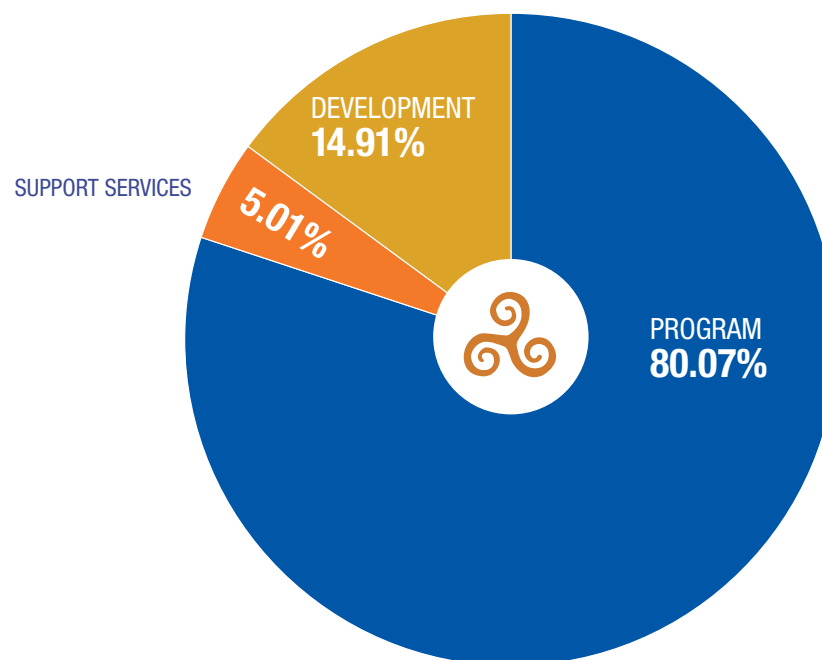
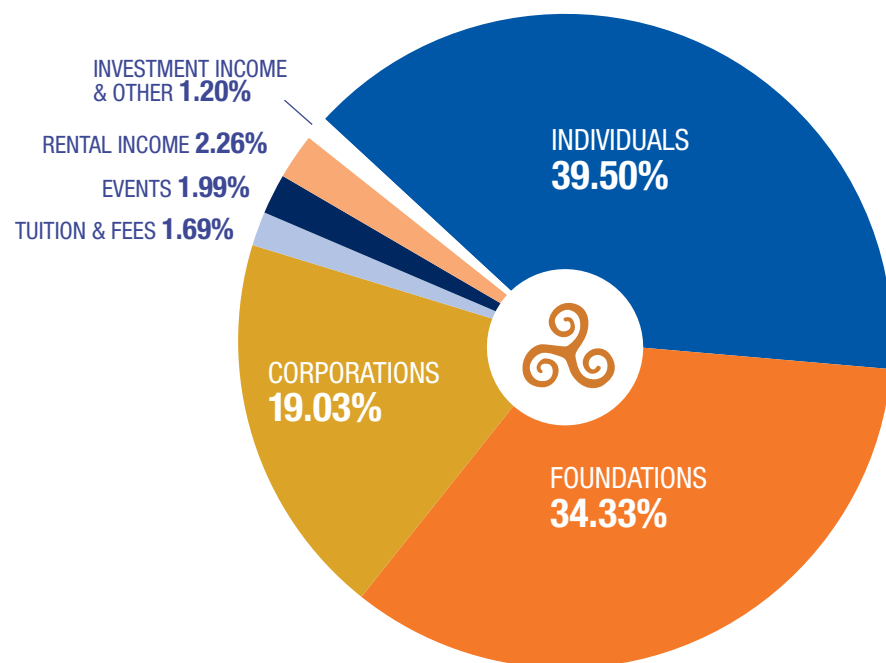
Sincerely yours,



Anthony Williams, Ed.D.



FINANCIAL SUMMARY



SUPPORT AND REVENUE

Individuals	1,720,187
Foundations.....	1,495,319
Corporations.....	828,816
Tuition and Fees.....	73,585
Events	86,601
Rental Income.....	98,412
Investment Income and other.....	52,368
TOTAL	4,355,288

EXPENSES

Program	3,195,490
Support Services	200,041
Development	595,113
TOTAL	3,990,644
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	364,644

NET ASSET

Beginning of the Year	9,614,766
End of the Year.....	9,979,410
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	364,644

ANNUAL FUND GIFTS

BETWEEN 9/1/2019 – 8/31/2020

OVER THE BRIDGE

(These donors support the cost of educating a student for three or more years at a cost of \$25,000 per student.)

Mr. Philip Beard ^{1/2}
 Ferrara Family *
 Mr. & Mrs. Henry E. Haller III
 Ms. Elizabeth S. Hurtt &
 Mr. Douglas M. Branson
 Mr. (*) & Mrs. D. Bryant Mitchell ^{1/2}
 Mr. & Mrs. Philip R. Roberts
 Dr. Beverly Harris-Shenz and
 Mr. Michael Shenz ^{1/2}
 Third Presbyterian Church

BULL DOG SOCIETY

(\$19,999-\$1,000;
 three-year pledge)

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(\$20,000 or more)

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(\$19,999-\$10,000)

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(\$9,999-\$5,000)

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