



2022 - 2023 Impact Report



Transforming the
lives of students
and preparing the
next generation of
teachers in Houston
since 1995

Who We Are

Our Mission

Breakthrough Houston works with highly motivated, traditionally under-represented students to achieve post-secondary success and empowers aspiring leaders to become the next generation of educators and advocates.

Our Vision

We envision a nation where educational equity and access to excellent opportunities propels aspiring students on their path to college and aspiring teachers on their path to the classroom.

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Dear Breakthrough Community,

My last 15 years at Breakthrough Houston have truly been rewarding and I say goodbye with so many fond memories. I've had the pleasure of meeting students as rising 7th graders and then seeing them graduate from college, ready to pursue their dreams. I've personally mentored Teaching Fellows, many of whom decided after their Breakthrough Houston experience to pursue a career in teaching. None of this would have been possible without the terrific staff members who over these 15 years helped to grow the program from 1 to 3 sites, from 25 new students to 180 new students a year, and from 12 to over 100 Teaching Fellows each summer. As an affiliate of the national Breakthrough Collaborative, we have leaned into collaborative efforts with other education non-profits as well as with our other 24 affiliate sites across the country.

Even in this past 2022-2023 school year, our program has experienced tremendous growth and improvement.

- Attendance has increased at our signature middle school program which launched a new Project Based Learning curriculum with a focus on projects in STEM and the humanities. Breakthrough Houston remains one of the city's most well respected academic and socio-emotional enrichment programs for middle school students.
- The growing College Bound Program now has 120 students enrolled and participating in Saturday workshops as well as summer intensive programming including an Essay Writing Workshop for rising high school seniors and a Breakthrough Bridge Program for recent high school graduates.
- For Breakthrough Houston students currently in college, we hosted a holiday reunion over the winter break for students to reconnect, play games, share a meal, and exchange stories of their college journeys. We also offered an online Career Fair in April which featured speakers from the fields of banking, architecture, pharmacy management, nursing, and software engineering.

I am truly excited to introduce Breakthrough Houston's new Executive Director. Angie Wedlick joins the team with a great deal of leadership experience in traditional and charter public schools. She also has recently worked for another education non-profit in Houston with a mission similar to Breakthrough Houston. Angie began her tenure in July and I am confident that she will lead the organization to even greater heights.

I thank all of you who have believed in our work and mission and have invested in our growth and impact. With your continued support, I know that one day educational equity and access to excellent opportunities will propel aspiring students on their path to college and aspiring teachers on their path to the classroom.

Kathy Heinzerling

What We Do

Breakthrough Houston has a dual mission: 1) to recruit and prepare a diverse teaching workforce and 2) to provide students from underserved communities an opportunity for post-secondary success.

More than ever, there is an urgent need for highly qualified educators in public education, and Breakthrough Houston understands that a diverse teacher workforce is essential for meeting this demand. As a local chapter of a nationally recognized non-profit organization, Breakthrough Collaborative, Breakthrough Houston recruits a diverse candidate pool of prospective teachers from across the country and offers them a transformative opportunity to spend their summer teaching middle and high school students in Houston. This immersive summer teaching internship not only provides aspiring educators with invaluable hands-on experience but also equips them with the essential skills and knowledge necessary to excel in the classroom.

Middle and high school students benefit from this “students teaching students” model by receiving academic and non-academic enrichment from near-peers. Breakthrough Houston offers summer and year-round programming that prepare students to succeed in a rigorous college preparatory high school and post-secondary program. By investing in both students and aspiring teachers, Breakthrough Houston makes a transformative impact on the state of public education.

STUDENT ENRICHMENT

MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

Summer Program

The six-week program covers a wide range of subjects, including literature, writing, math, science, and exciting electives. Alongside academic enrichment, emphasis is placed on fostering social-emotional growth, developing leadership abilities, and nurturing character strengths through various daily activities.

School Year Program

Students continue to receive academic support from Breakthrough Houston during Saturday sessions. During these sessions, students receive 1:1 tutoring to maintain strong academic profiles.

COLLEGE BOUND PROGRAM

College 101 and 201 Classes

Rising 9th and 10th graders learn the importance of selecting rigorous courses throughout high school, participating in extracurricular activities, and preparing for standardized tests.

College Preparatory Enrichment

Breakthrough Houston forms community partnerships to ensure students have a wealth of experiences to prepare them for post-secondary success. Students receive free standardized test preparation and tutoring through Advantage Test Prep, individual tutoring through Rice University, and summer internship and job opportunities through various other partner organizations.

College Application Support

Students receive personal college counseling through Breakthrough Houston throughout their senior year of high school. Breakthrough Houston staff meet with students and their families to create a target college list, complete financial aid applications, and analyze offer packages.

Essay Writing Workshop

Over the summer, students attend a week-long workshop to craft their personal statements for college applications.

Texas College Road Trip

Students visited University of Texas at Austin, Huston Tillotson University (an HBCU), and Texas A&M University on an overnight college tour. Highlights of the trips included a panel with current college students and an information session with Dr. John Cavolowsky from NASA.

COLLEGE COMPLETION PROGRAM

Rising college freshmen participate in a Bridge Summer Program before attending college to learn about finances, academic habits, and college life. This year the program was hosted at the Honors College at the University of Houston.



“At Breakthrough, it feels like they’re genuinely trying to help you get to wherever you want to go. Breakthrough has given me a lens to see what I really want in college.”

- Kamila Almazan, YES Prep Gulfton Class of 2024

TEACHER PREPARATION

ORIENTATION “O-WEEK”

Teaching Fellows learn the basics of adapting a lesson plan and building classroom culture to prepare to teach one core content class for the Summer Program.

SUMMER TEACHER INTERNSHIP

Weekly in-classroom observation and debrief cycles provide Teaching Fellows with timely feedback to improve their craft. In addition to teaching a core content class, Teaching Fellows are responsible for planning field trips and other activities for students.

COLLEGE SUCCESS PROGRAM

At the end of the Summer Program, Teaching Fellows conclude their internship with a week of reflection, feedback, and celebration. Each Teaching Fellow prepares a “Presentation of Learning” to summarize their highlights, challenges, and learnings after their summer with Breakthrough.

Who We Serve: Students

The pandemic continues to have a severe impact on low-income communities and public education. Particularly for students of color, educational inequities have increased and academic and postsecondary outcomes have plummeted in the past few years.

Breakthrough Houston provides academically rigorous programming to address learning loss to ensure high-achieving, under-resourced students still have the opportunity to pursue their college dreams.

97% self-identify as Students of Color

89% qualify for Free or Reduced Price Lunch

68% will be first-generation college students

4 months
of academic growth in math and reading through a 6 week summer program

2.5x more likely to get a postsecondary degree (compared to other Harris County students)

"Breakthrough has taught me the importance of school but as well the importance of my mental state and well being. I've been able to learn more about myself through Breakthrough with the help of our amazing teachers and directors and I've been able to find who I truly am and what I truly want to do in my life..."

Breakthrough has been my backbone and support and a mentor as a whole."

Hugo De La Garza

Energy Institute High School
Class of 2025

Hugo De La Garza first joined Breakthrough Houston during middle school for the summer program. He signed up initially to hang with his friends in the summer but quickly learned Breakthrough had much more to offer. "I loved it," Hugo reflected, "I specifically remember the teachers being very supportive, very positive. They were my mentors. There wasn't a day I dreaded coming; I was always excited."

Now approaching his junior year in high school, Hugo credits Breakthrough for helping him define his career goals. "At first I wanted to be a pilot," he explained, "but during a Breakthrough assignment I researched the career more and realized it wasn't for me. I want to go into design and math, and that's where I learned about Mechanical Engineering. I'm interested in heavy machinery. I want to know how it moves and design equipment. Breakthrough helped me shape my mind."

92%

Four-year college acceptance rate

37K

Avg scholarships & grants awarded per student*

78%

Avg financial need met per student*

*of students who self-reported financial aid awards



Students enrolled in the College Bound Program on a college tour of the University of Texas at Austin.



The College Completion Program provides students a chance to reflect and share about their personal priorities before attending college.

Who We Serve: Teaching Fellows

Teacher workforce shortage is having a significant impact on Texas students. More than 40,000 new teachers must be hired each year and it costs districts \$20,000-\$30,000 in recruitment, hiring, and training costs per new teacher (Learning Policy Institute).

Breakthrough Houston provides a cost-effective, early-recruitment model that provides aspiring teachers a chance to experience the profession first-hand.

92% self-identify as Teachers of Color

65% receive financial aid for college

61% are first-generation college students



Adrian Gonzalez

Breakthrough Houston 2022 Teaching Fellow
University of Houston 2023 Graduate
Teach For America Houston 2023 Corp Member

Adrian Gonzalez grew up in Alvin, Texas and enrolled at the University of Houston wanting to pursue a career in medicine. When his initial summer plans fell through, he applied to teach at Breakthrough Houston as a Teaching Fellow.

On his first day at Breakthrough, Adrian remembers meeting a lot of people, many of whom didn't see themselves ultimately going into education either. "I thought we were all in the same boat," he reflected, "I was three years into wanting to do medicine so I thought my interest in education was just a hobby." He kept both interests alive - practicing his craft in the classroom at Breakthrough while also studying for and eventually taking the MCAT that summer as well.

By the start of his senior year, however, Adrian knew he couldn't deny his true passion for education any longer. "I realized I had worked 60 hours a week over the summer and I loved every second of it," he shared. "After all this time, I realized this was where I belonged."

With his remaining year in college, Adrian added a math minor so he could teach math and was accepted into Teach For America Houston. Adrian is now a 2023 TFA Houston Corp Member and will be teaching Algebra I at Sharpstown High School in the Fall.



"I don't know of another program that gives people who haven't graduated from college yet a chance to be a full teacher. You're not a teaching assistant. You're getting observed and coached by certified teachers - but it's your classroom."

I wish I had this experience sooner. There's no other experience like it!"



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Thank you for providing more equitable education opportunities to Houston students. Your investment in these proven programs brings lasting, measurable change to Houston.

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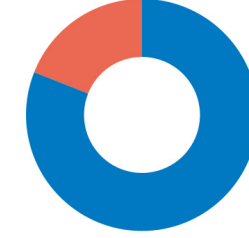
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- 43% Foundations
- 20% Individual
- 19% AmeriCorps In-Kind
- 9% Government
- 5% In-Kind
- 3% Corporate



EXPENSES

- 79% Programs
 - Summer Program: 46%
 - College Bound Program: 17%
 - School Year Program: 11%
 - College Completion Program: 5%
- 21% Administrative, Management & Fundraising

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

We enrich our programming through strategic partnerships with other community-based organizations.

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Buffalo Bayou Partnership
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EMERGE Fellowship
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