



PRESCHOOL PARTICIPATION and transportation was increased as a result of several conversations with local preschools, United Way of Mower County, SMART Transit and the work of the Aspires' early childhood navigators.

Helen Keller said "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much". We witness this every single day in our collective impact work! We are so grateful for our many wonderful community partners – you truly do make our community a better place for all!

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:



According to the StriveTogether website, collective impact was first coined in 2011 by the Stanford Social Innovation Review. It was used to describe a community that came together around a set of common goals and shared data to solve complex community challenges that limited opportunity for young people.

A decade later, this model is evident in the work that Austin Aspires is doing with our numerous community partners. During 2021, working with more than _____ families and _____ students, Austin Aspires and community partners enrolled children in preschools, increased access to transportation, ensured more students were on track to graduation and helped families get connected to basic needs and more.

We are blessed to be part of a resource rich community. Note the number of incredible partners that we work with regularly to provide supports for students and families in our community. Author Margaret Wheatley wrote, "There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about." Thank you to our partners and the community of Austin for demonstrating your tremendous care for the children and families. I am very excited to see what the future holds for our community

For Our Children,

Jayne

Jayne Gibson
Executive Director



301 North Main Street, Suite 104
Austin, MN 55912

GET INVOLVED

The success of our work depends on the commitment of our community to our young people. Learn more about how you can help support our vision of educational excellence for all.

Visit: austinaspires.org

or scan here



2021 ANNUAL REPORT to the community



OUR 5 KEY OBJECTIVES:

All learners will be ready for kindergarten.



All learners will be challenged to achieve their academic potential.



Our community will support and enhance parents and mentors in their role as the primary influencer of our learners.



Our community will provide equal access to opportunities which encourage our learners to explore areas of personal interest and prepare for post-secondary education or career.



Our community will address social, emotional, mental and physical barriers to success for all learners.



COLLECTIVE IMPACT IN ACTION

At the core of the work Austin Aspires does is the idea of Collective Impact. "We are stronger together" is a phrase that is heard often. I don't know who coined that phrase; however, I fully acknowledge the truth behind it! We are very fortunate to work collectively with so many incredible individuals and organizations in our community to make each of us better!

Some examples of the Collective Impact work we have been part of during 2021 include:

ACE TUTORING PROGRAM

provided FREE tutoring to students in grades 4-12. This was a partnership with the Austin YMCA, United Congregational Church, Austin Public Schools and Pacelli Catholic Schools. Dollars were secured through a ConnectedMN and Minnesota Department of Education grant.

COMMUNITYWIDE BACKPACK PROGRAM

provided food to students over weekends and school breaks. This happened much more efficiently and effectively because of collaboration between the United Way of Mower County, Austin First United Methodist Church, Salvation Army of Austin, Austin Public School and numerous community volunteers! Food items were secured through donations by Hormel Foods and cash donations from many in our community.





STORY OF IMPACT WELCOME TO AUSTIN

Detra Austin and her two children moved to Austin in June of 2021. Moving to a new community is always a challenge but moving during a pandemic made this move especially challenging. “I was very fortunate to be referred to Austin Aspires. MaKayla was right there from the beginning since getting my referral. She has been there everyday for myself and my children.”

Detra’s five-year old son attends preschool regularly and is looking forward to starting kindergarten in the fall. His confidence has grown, as well as his academic and social skills, in the short time he has been enrolled in preschool. “MaKayla is very resourceful

and knowledgeable in knowing what is available to me and my family to help us. She is very understanding not only of my needs, but of my children’s needs also,” Detra shared when talking about the challenges she faced trying to register her son for preschool and transportation.

Working together, Detra and MaKayla have been able to address additional barriers to ensure Detra and her family have what they need to make Austin their home and thrive as a family. “Austin is a great community and Austin Aspires was able to provide a great additional environment for my kids to grow and succeed in,” says Detra sharing her beautiful smile with all as she shared her story!

STORY OF IMPACT IT TAKES A VILLAGE

As a collective impact organization, Austin Aspires is fortunate to work closely with the schools in our community. In June of 2020, Summer Elementary School reached out to us to help a family with registration. That gave us the opportunity to meet Nyanyieth Kak and her six beautiful children. During that interaction, a relationship was formed and they soon became a team working to ensure the family had what they needed.

“Jessica, you are always there for my family. When I don’t know what to do, I know I can call you and you will help me. My children are always happy to see you and always talk about you,” writes Nyanyieth in a note to Jessica.

Nyanyieth is determined to be the best mom, and the best person, she can be. With Jessica’s help and some technology support

from Austin Aspires, Nyanyieth has secured full time employment and enrolled in EL classes at Riverland Community College. In addition to educational supports, Jessica has connected the family to our community partners for medical resources, COVID testing and vaccinations, and legal support. Nyanyieth smiles broadly when she speaks of being a better mom because of her work with Austin Aspires.

“I love the Austin community, especially their school system. The last town I lived in did not support my children in school. My job as a U.S. Citizen is to work hard and provide for my family and you are helping me do that. Thank you Austin Aspires and thank you Jessica for caring about my family.”

“MY JOB AS A U.S. CITIZEN IS TO WORK HARD AND PROVIDE FOR MY FAMILY AND YOU ARE HELPING ME DO THAT.”



STORY OF IMPACT PARENT TO PARENT



To whom it may concern:

The monthly Parent To Parent events have been so much fun! Me and my kids ages 7, 9, and 10 all enjoy going and meeting up with other parents and children for dinner, craft, and social time. Jessica and her girls are so amazing and have a ton of handouts for things we never knew about. They answer all our questions from school tips to fun activities we can do together at home. It has been a great safe and fun asset to our community ❤️ Keep up the great work ladies and thank you for welcoming us to the group with love

Natalie Rodriguez

[PLACEHOLDER AREA FOR QR CODE TO ADDITIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES/EDUCATION METRICS]



OUR TEAM

(L-R): Jessica Anderson, Teresa Lugo, Jesus Alvarez, Jayne Gibson, Jwokamer Debock, Sylvia Hernandez, MaKayla Oxley

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COMMUNITY PARTNERS

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Austin Noon Kiwanis
Austin Police Department
Austin Positive Action Coalition
Austin Public Library

Austin Rotary Club
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HyVee
Mower County
Mower Refreshed
Parenting Resource Center
Quality Pork Processors
Science Fair Mentorship Program
SEMCAC

SHIP
SMART Transit
Sweet Reads
The City of Austin
The Hormel Institute
United Congregational Church of Austin
United Way of Mower County
Welcome Center
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