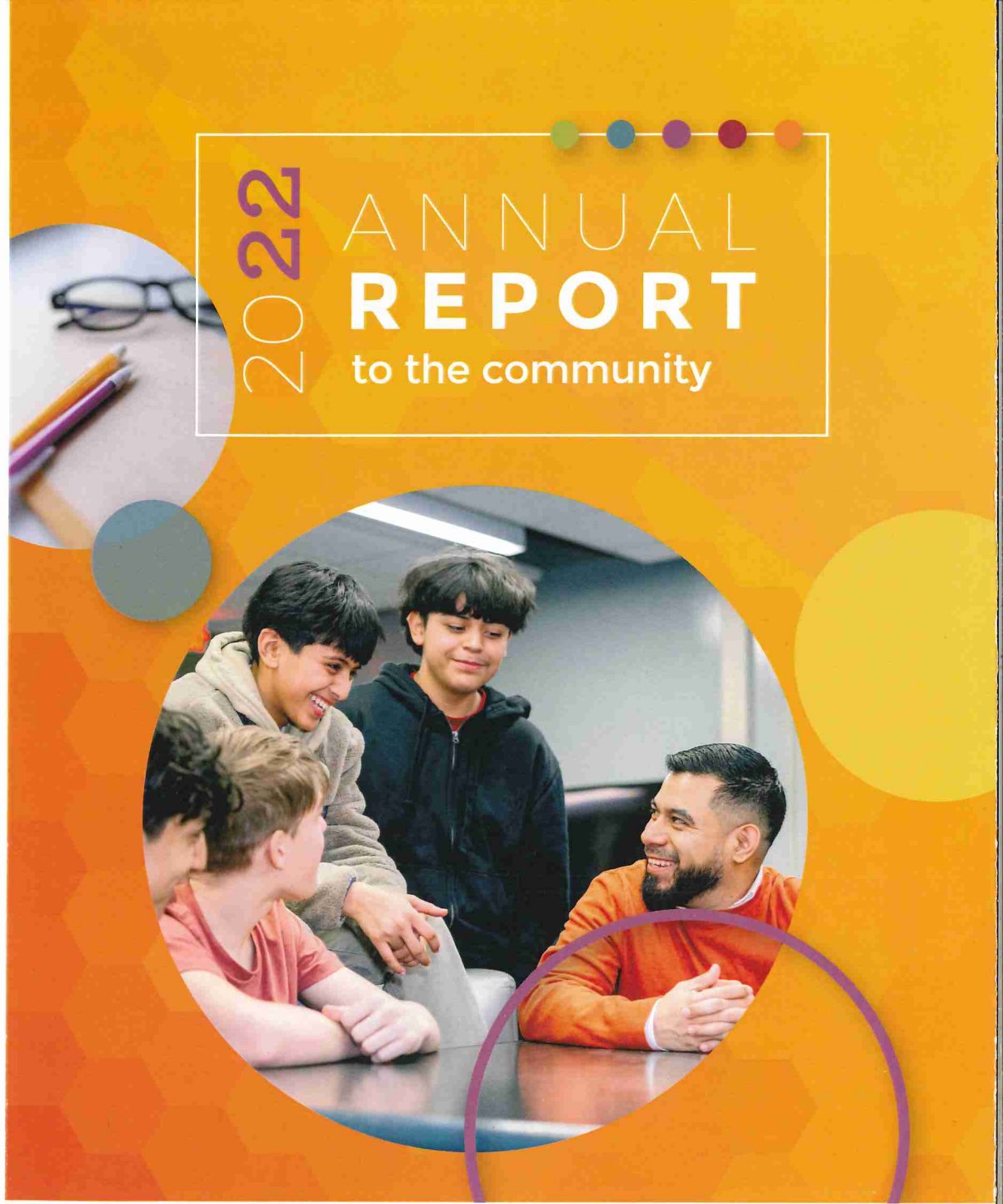


LEARN MORE!

For more information about our work in the Austin community, our data and programs, visit:

austinaspire.org
or scan here



2022

ANNUAL REPORT

to the community

COLLECTIVE IMPACT IN ACTION

In the collective impact model, we talk about resources including time, talents, and treasures. 2022 found Austin Aspires leveraging all of those to grow programming in the areas of mental health, academic support, and mentorship to meet the needs of our community.

Treasures were made possible through generous donations from local, state, and national donors. Time and talent were provided by our incredible education, community partners, and staff. See our list of partners for those involved!

SUMMER MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Austin Public Schools are part of a county collaborative that does incredible work to provide mental health supports to scholars during the school year. Knowing the need for mental health support does not rest, we worked with community leaders to extend those services through the summer months. Plans to grow the program for 2023 are underway.

INCREASED ACE TUTORING

The ACE Tutoring program started in 2020 and continues to evolve to meet the needs of scholars and families. New for 2022, tutors were available during the school day at Austin High School. Additionally, the amount of tutoring and the space dedicated to tutoring at the

incredible partnerships. 53 students were helped and over 230 hours of free tutoring were provided in 2022.

COMMUNITY MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

In the 2022 Minnesota Student Survey, more than half of high school students indicated adults in their community care about them “a little” or “not at all”; a quarter of these students identified at least one adult outside of their family who cares about them.

Partners from local school districts and community partners are developing a mentoring program to address this concern. Using grant dollars, Austin Aspires identified a Mentorship Coordinator, and we are extremely excited to put this program into place for 2023. Our trained mentors will be there to support the child and their family. It takes a village and we are proud to be a part of it.

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:



We use the word “community” a lot, but what does that really mean? Is community defined by geographical boundaries? Is it a group of individuals with a shared trait, interest, quality, or characteristic? Is it something bigger than that?

In our work, “community” means all the above and more! The Austin Aspires team collaborates with our partners as a community within a defined geographic location to work with several incredible individuals that share identified qualities and have a unified goal of ensuring educational excellence for all from birth through to the start of their first career!

Our work is made possible because of the generosity of gifts from donors & funders. Using more than \$475,000 from outside of our community in collaboration with dollars generously donated by the community, Austin Aspires served 915 families and 975 children.

We recognize that the pursuit of educational excellence is a collective effort, and we would not be where we are today without your support. As a community, we can do so much more than we can do as individuals. We are truly fortunate to serve in, and with, such an amazing community as Austin.

For Our Children,

Jayne Gibson



S:
e
ieve
will
ance
tors
e primary
learners.
will provide
opportunities
our learners
f personal
are for
education



IMPACT SPORT FROM SCHOOL TO SOCCER

Aspires identified a need in to support Hispanic school- their families. One of our sors Jesus Alvarez stepped that roll. As a bilingual ator, he works in the schools ys in grades 6-12 to remove y keep them from graduating elps guide them to fill essen- munity. In 2018 the four- ate of Hispanic males was upportive services provided other navigators, in 2021 that Jesus said, "One of the main ob is working with the kids

to get them the extra supports that they need." Jesus remembers how impactful it was when he received a letter from a previous student. They thanked Jesus for everything he did for him and said that by supporting him in middle school, it helped give him a better future than he thought he could have. "Jesus cares deeply about us and his job," shared a current student in the program. They also shared that they like working with the navigators because they listen to the students and give them space to express and be themselves.

Jesus shared that a parent of one of the students he works with came up to him in a store and thanked him for everything he was doing for his son. He was so grateful for this mentor-

ship that he donated money to provide a pizza party for the whole group, which Jesus says the boys must earn by being on time to class and doing their homework.

Not only do the navigators support the students in school but they also provide opportunities for learning, leadership and volunteerism after school too. Through the Latinx Leadership Club, last year in connection with the Pulsera Project, the students raised over \$1,000 to help families in South America with housing, schools, food, and other basic needs. They have also assisted with local food programs like the backpack program and CLUES.

Additionally, Jesus was a big part of creating an after-school indoor soccer program.

He says, "After school soccer helped us reach some students we might not have any other way. A few of them joined the soccer team and other programs we have too." These students are grateful for Jesus and said, "Thank you for being here with us, we don't know what we'll do without you." The core group of founding soccer players are now in high school but still look back with pride and ownership. If you ask them about being the first group of students, they are not shy to share that they were the "OG's".

"Thank you for all that you have done for all of us since the day you met us," they said.

comfort place, where about their failures, uggles, and everything That's powerful and r these students."





TEAM

are, Jayne Gibson, Gema Alvarado-Guerrero, Jwokamer Debock, MaKayla Oxley, os Brigido; back: Jessica Anderson, Jacqi Ruhter; not pictured: Brandon Robinson

PARTNERS



COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- are Center
- ools
- care Center
- Community Learning Center
- Discovery Learning
- Mower County Licensed Daycare Providers
- Pacelli Catholic Schools
- Riverland Community College
- Wee Learning Center

INDUSTRY PARTNERS

- er
- ission
- nts
- ns Club
- is
- rtment
- on Coalition
- ry
- CLA (CliftonLarsonAllen)
- CLUES
- Education Minnesota
- Faith Church Austin
- Head Start
- HyVee
- Independent Management Services
- Mower County
- Mower Refreshed
- Nexus Gerard
- Parenting Resource Center
- Quality Pork Processors
- Science Fair Mentorship
- SEMCAC
- SHIP
- SMART Transit
- Sweet Reads
- The City of Austin
- The Hormel Institute
- United Congregational Church & Preschool of Austin
- United Way of Mower County
- Welcome Center
- Workforce Development Inc.
- YMCA at Austin Community Recreation Center



STORY OF IMPACT A COMFORT PLACE

Jwokamer began her career with Austin Aspires as a Tech Navigator during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. During that time, she helped families navigate the struggles of distance learning to ensure digital equity within our community.

Last year she transitioned to the program coordinator for A.L.O.T (Aspiring Leaders of Tomorrow). "As a navigator" Jwokamer says, "I've been fortunate to be a part of different opportunities for students from middle to high school. What makes me proud about the A.L.O.T program is the relationships we've built with students." While the navigators may be in different schools, they continue to work together and check on the students to follow along with their success. "You listen and don't lecture me," shared one student. "Students just want someone who will listen and acknowledge their feelings without them being judged

mentee Marie's favorite teacher for her teacher appreciation basketball game, an honor that caught Jwokamer off guard but made her proud of the relationship she built with Marie who she'd met only a year prior.

Mary, another student says "She provides not only a safe space and advice but also helps the students work through difficulties while still letting the students come to their own decision. Jwokamer doesn't just listen though, she also provides supportive services with classes as well as sports." Mary's dedication led to a college offer as a junior in high school for track. Jwokamer credits Mary's hard work, as well as the support she is receiving through the programs. "We're their comfort place, where they can vent about their failures, their wins, struggles, and everything in between. That's powerful and needed for these students." she