



IMPACT REPORT FY 2024–2025



Inspiring students. Developing teachers.

Together, we are Breakthrough.

ONE PROGRAM. DUAL PURPOSE.

Guided by our vision to reach educational equity and diversity, Breakthrough of Greater Philadelphia is a single program with a dual mission:







Breakthrough is an eight-year, tuition-free academic accelerator for highly-motivated, traditionally underserved students in Philadelphia's public, charter, and parochial schools. Breakthrough nurtures a love of learning and helps Scholars reach top-choice high schools and colleges, setting the foundation for postsecondary and career success.

Breakthrough builds the next generation of diverse, talented teachers through its intensive teacher-in-residence program, designed to train and inspire college students to pursue careers in education.

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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

OCTOBER 2025

Dear Friends,

Thirty years ago, a group of visionary educators and leaders united around a mission to expand educational access and opportunity for students in Philadelphia. Today, Breakthrough of Greater Philadelphia (BTGP) is proud to celebrate three decades of impact and has educated over 1,675 Scholars and trained more than 525 Teaching Fellows since 1995.

We are grateful for Breakthrough Philly's families and our steadfast community of partners and supporters, who enable us to create innovative programming and training to support Breakthrough Scholars and Teaching Fellows in new and meaningful ways.

I am excited to share that for the first time in BTGP's 30-year history, Scholars can now receive 8 consecutive years of free academic enrichment from 5th through 12th grades. Breakthrough's end-to-end experience begins with High School Ready, a program for 5th through 8th graders, followed by a Summer Capstone project in the summer before 9th grade, and culminates in College Bound, a program for high school Scholars. 84% of Breakthrough Scholars are admitted to their top two choice high school, with 100% planning to attend select high schools.

The Teaching Fellow (TF) portion of our program has made important progress, as many more Fellows in the Summer 2025 TF cohort seriously consider careers in education. Our deeply experienced Deans of Faculty and Instructional Coaches supported 30 Summer TFs during their 9-week residency. TFs received unparalleled professional development, coaching, and feedback in real time. 78% of Summer 2025's TFs were fellows of color, surpassing last year's record high. At the national level, Breakthrough recently reported that 3 out of 4 of Teaching Fellows pursue careers in education, with over two-thirds of current teachers stating that they plan to teach for 5 or more years. I am very hopeful seeing this data, which demonstrates Breakthrough TFs' long-term commitment to the teaching profession.

I'm energized by the collaborations among education and community organizations, businesses, local/state-level officials, and news outlets throughout Philadelphia to bring increased awareness to educational equity and discuss actionable solutions. Breakthrough believes that we can support students at an individual level, but we must also explore and address system-level solutions. To

this end, Breakthrough invites you to join our first Educational Equity Summit (EES) on October 25, 2025, hosted with media partner WURD. Moderated by Dr. James Peterson (WURD), we are excited to explore pressing issues surrounding educational equity and diversity, and highlight innovative approaches, systematic challenges, and actionable solutions to promote inclusivity in education systems and communities. View EES' esteemed panelists and register for the summit here.

As we conclude our 30th Anniversary year, my focus turns to ensuring that our programs - High School Ready, Summer Capstone, and College Bound - continue to be innovative, relevant, enriching and rigorous. We want Scholars to reach their educational and career goals, and we want them to be uniquely knowledgeable and wellprepared for 21st-century challenges in both school and work environments. We want Teaching Fellows to fall in love with teaching and stay in the profession. We hope TFs will recall Breakthrough's leadership lessons, professional development, energy, camaraderie, and optimism as they begin their new teaching roles this fall.

We are excited to explore pressing issues surrounding educational equity and diversity, and highlight innovative approaches, systematic challenges, and actionable solutions to promote inclusivity in education systems and communities.

To support our students' bold aspirations, one of my top priorities continues to be identifying sustainable funding sources and Advisory Board members to support our expansion and high-quality programming.

For the fourth consecutive year, we ended the '24/25 fiscal year in a solid financial position, with approximately \$1.6 million in revenue received to cover expenses of \$1.2 million.

Thank you for your continued confidence in Breakthrough's students, and for supporting our mission. I invite you to visit our program, get involved, and provide your valuable support and ideas. I look forward to seeing you at the Breakfast of Champions on October 16 at 8:15am. Until then, enjoy reading this year's Impact Report, and please join me in launching Breakthrough into a successful future.

With gratitude,

Michelle Palmer

Executive Director Breakthrough of Greater Philadelphia

BREAKTHROUGH

211

Scholars served

3.7

Incoming
5th grade GPA

60% female, **40%** male

78% participate in free/reduced lunch

78% single parent household

18% first generation college bound

Race/Ethnicity



90[%] Black/African American

● 3[%] White

2[%] Latino

● **2**[%] Multiracial

2[%] Asian American/Pacific Islander

Middle schools represented by 2025 Summer Scholar cohort



● 43[%] CHARTER

28[%] PUBLIC

29[%] PAROCHIAL

Top 5 Zip Codes

represented by 2025 Summer Scholar cohort 19144

19150

19119

19138

19141



ATAGLANCE 2024

SCHOLAR IMPACT

average GPA increase from last summer

were admitted to 1st or 84% 2nd choice high school *

100% plan to attend select high schools *

increase in average Scholar SAT scores +19% after Breakthrough College Bound test prep +

1295 average Scholar SAT score +

hours of community service completed **232** by College Bound Scholars

TEACHING FELLOW IMPACT

40

Teaching Fellows trained in '24-25

77%

Fellows of color (Summer 2025 TF Cohort)

BTGP Fellows recommend Breakthrough to a friend **

*of BTGP 8th grade class who were surveyed, Summer 2025 ** BT National Survey, Summer 2023 + of College Bound Scholars who participated in BTGP test prep, '24/25

TOP SCHOOLS REPRESENTED BY BREAKTHROUGH SCHOLARS

Thomas Mifflin (4) **PUBLIC**

Overbrook Educational Center (6) Masterman Middle School (4)

Wissahickon Charter School - Fernhill Campus (10)

Wissahickon Charter School - Awbury Campus (8)

Ad Prima Charter School - Overbrook Campus (8)

The DePaul Catholic School - IMS (18) **PAROCHIAL** St. Raymond Catholic School - IMS (11) Holy Cross Catholic School - IMS (6)

CHARTER

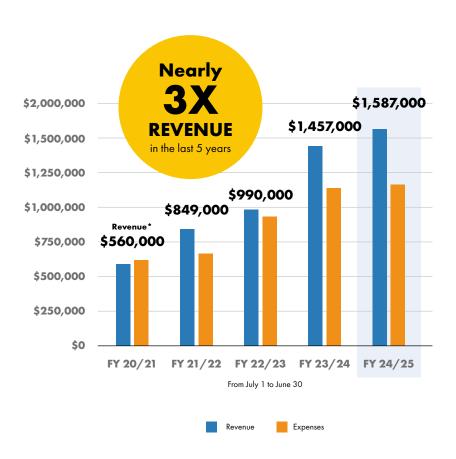
FINANCIALS

Breakthrough is an independent 501(c)(3) that relies solely upon the generosity of our funders to realize our mission.

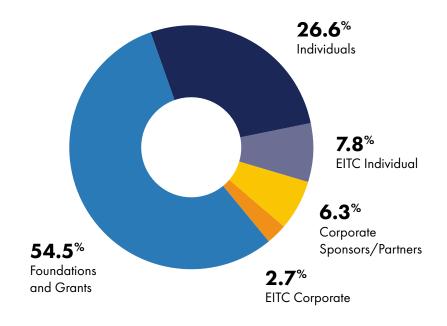
Revenue and Expenses

Last 5 Fiscal Years

*Without donor restrictions | **FY 24/25 numbers pending final audit



Fundraising Sources FY 24/25





PROGRAM INNOVATION AND ENHANCEMENTS

Thanks to your support, Breakthrough has increased its menu of services for Scholars and Teaching Fellows over the past three years. Here in our 30th Anniversary year, we're excited to share that the Scholar Experience is now an 8-year program designed to support students and their families throughout their educational journey (see pages 16 & 17 for the full Scholar Experience).

Here are some program innovation and enhancement highlights from 2024-2025!



1. High School Ready curriculum adds STEM-focused content

High School Ready Scholars (current middle schoolers) spend the fall exploring physical science through LEGO. Students use scientific skills to explore changes in motion and the laws of motion. In the unit "Science of Sports," students are challenged to apply their scientific inquiry skills to provide evidence of the change in an object's motion based on its force and mass. They apply Newton's three laws of motion as they design, develop, and optimize a solution involving the collision of two objects.

Throughout these lessons, they strengthen oral communication skills in collaborative discussions, presenting and analyzing their solutions. In the unit, "Invention Squad," Scholars apply engineering design skills to each step of the design process by defining a problem and success criteria, making different prototypes, establishing systematic testing procedures, analyzing data to improve their solutions, and describing why their solution is the best. Students will tackle a range of scientific inquiry-based engineering design challenges.

2. New *Summer Capstone* program for 9th grade Scholars

Launched this past summer by Breakthrough's College Bound Lead, Sue Chen, our brand-new Summer Capstone serves rising 9th grade Scholars. 2025 Summer Capstone's three-week intensive curriculum included civics programming by Pennsylvanians for Modern Courts, financial literacy workshops provided by numerous industry experts and PHLY, Truist, and BLBB, community service work at

Share Food Program and St. Luke's Food Pantry, and field trips to TD Bank, Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, and Top Golf.

This free summer program is designed to help Scholars develop leadership and life skills and nurture a passion for community engagement and lifelong learning. We believe this is critical as Scholars embark on their high school experiences.



3. College Bound expands to serve 9th through 12th grade Scholars

Nearly 30 Scholars attended Breakthrough's *College Bound* program. This free program serves Breakthrough Scholars in high school and takes a multidisciplinary approach to prepare Scholars and their families for high school, college, careers, and beyond. Programming takes the format of 6-8 workshops throughout the academic year to accommodate for busier Scholar/family schedules.

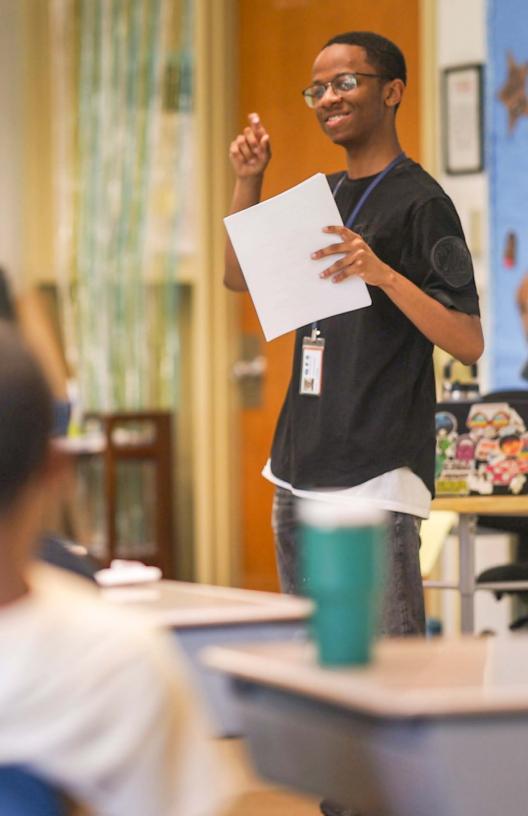
Highlights of this year's program encompassed community service, career panels, personal finances and budgeting classes, and resume building and networking skills hosted by Boston Consulting Group (BCG). Programming focused on postsecondary/college life, SAT test prep, insights on the admissions process, financial aid review, application support, and college tours in the Washington, D.C. area. We also held a memorable team-building event at Tree Top Quest.

Thanks to NAIOP, a few Breakthrough Scholars had the opportunity to participate in the NAIOP-Drexel Summer Program, where they received certificates of completion and interacted with Philadelphia's top Commercial Real Estate executives, and will receive the opportunity for ongoing mentorship.

We are grateful for the many volunteers, guest speakers, and in-kind donors who provided content to make this program robust, engaging, and relevant!

4. Teaching Fellow professional development and career support continue to grow

Breakthrough's Summer 2025 Teaching Fellow (TF) cohort totalled ~30 college students, many of whom are pursuing careers in teaching and education. A number of partners speak in our summer program, including collaborations with Teach for America, School District of Philadelphia (SDP), KIPP, and University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education. Penn GSE offers a \$20,000 scholarship to Breakthrough TF Alumni who are accepted and enroll in their masters' program. SDP and KIPP presented to TFs about teaching careers in their organizations, and step through the process to apply for teaching jobs in their schools. Our goal is not only to continue strengthening professional development, but also share a variety of education-related career options after college graduation.



THE BREAKTHROUGH

4TH GRADE

APPLY TO BREAKTHROUGH

Visit us at **breakthroughphilly.org** to complete your application. We can't wait to meet you and your family!



ETU TO OTU CDADEC

5TH TO 8TH GRADES

HIGH SCHOOL READY

- Join a community of motivated students who are excited to learn and meet new friends in Philadelphia. You'll be taught and mentored by passionate college students, and exposed to a wide range of academic interests and career paths through field trips, guest speakers, and unique elective courses. We'll help you prepare for the school year ahead, and navigate high school admissions and selection
- Program is FREE and includes SEPTA passes, breakfast, lunch
- Opportunity to participate in a near-peer mentor program and apply for a research course in Costa Rica
- Scholars must be middle schoolers who currently attend Philadelphia public, charter, or parochial schools
- High School Ready program runs from June August: Monday - Friday for 6 weeks (9:00a to 3:30p)
- September May: Saturdays (10a to 2p)

9TH GRADE

SUMMER CAPSTONE

- In the summer before high school, participate in a unique capstone course to gain leadership experience, engage in the community, and dive into rigorous academic and life skills classes
- Program is FREE and includes SEPTA passes, breakfast, lunch
- Summer Capstone program runs from July - August: Monday - Friday for three weeks (9:00a to 3:30p)

SCHOLAR EXPERIENCE





COLLEGE BOUND

- Throughout your four years in high school, participate in several workshops to prepare for the rigor of high school and college. You'll dive deeper into academic interest areas and career paths through field trips, career conversations panels, and college tours. Sessions include standardized test prep, community engagement opportunities, resumebuilding, public speaking, and networking skills workshops
- Program is FREE and includes SEPTA passes and lunch
- College Bound program includes 6-8 sessions meeting yearround: Saturdays (10a to 2p)





BREAKTHROUGH ALUMNI

- · Continue the connection to Breakthrough as an Alum! Email us at info@breakthroughphilly.org to join our mailing list, reconnect at quarterly events, and volunteer in our program
- For Alumni considering careers in education, contact us to explore a Teaching Fellow position!

SUMMER 2025 HIGHLIGHTS

High School Ready Program

(Rising 5th to 8th grades)

Sakina Parks, Program Manager

The 2025 Summer Program at Breakthrough was transformative for both our Scholars and Teaching Fellows. Each day was filled with meaningful learning, growth, and community-building experiences that left a lasting impact on the entire Breakthrough community.

From June 16 through August 13, 30 eager and deeply committed Teaching Fellows completed a rigorous nine-week summer residency, where they taught 200 Breakthrough Scholars for six weeks. Scholars ranged from rising 5th-8th grades, and they were selected for Breakthrough's program through an application and family interview process. 25 rising 9th grade Scholars participated in our new *Summer Capstone* program as well.

After a two-week intensive orientation, Teaching Fellows stepped into their roles as lead teachers in the classroom. TFs were supported by daily professional development provided by an experienced and passionate team of 7 teachers from GFS and the School District of Philadelphia. This team included Deans of Faculty Matt Greenawalt and Ceora Wearing-Moore, along with specific subject areas covered by Instructional Coaches Brittani Davis, Gabby Goodman, Adam Hotek, Najah Spruill, and Eddy Yu.



Once in the classrooms, Teaching
Fellows successfully assumed their roles
as lead teachers. They worked diligently
on lesson planning, navigating student
engagement, social-emotional learning,
and communicating with families to create
meaningful teacher-student relationships. In
addition, Fellows participated in valuable
workshops about postgraduate learning and
employment opportunities, career advice,
and personal finance support. In addition to
classroom responsibilities, Fellows embraced
leadership opportunities as committee chairs
and grade-level leaders, sharpening their
skills as future educators.



200 Scholars from rising 5th through 8th grades engaged in a robust six-week-long program that included four academic courses daily, All School Meeting (ASM), teacher-created electives, and Small Learning Community (SLC) sessions Monday through Thursday. Fridays were set aside for community building and adventure, including roller skating and visits to the Camden Aquarium, Urban Air, and Upper Darby Summer Stage. A special thanks goes to Karr Barth Associates-Equitable for volunteering as field trip chaperones.

Partnerships enriched the program further, including weekly golf lessons through Walnut Hill Golf/First Tee. Scholars delighted in Wacky Wednesdays and spirited SLC competitions, with groups earning thousands of points in friendly challenges and our culminating Celebration Day, planned and led by our amazing Teaching Fellows. Classroom experiences were enhanced by interactive lessons and the high school readiness series, where representatives from respective high schools shared about the admissions process.

Stewart Calloway, Sue Chen, and LaShundra McCook, our dedicated Deans of Students, provided invaluable support to both Scholars and Fellows in the areas of student engagement and modeled the Breakthrough way.

We are deeply grateful for the generosity of our in-kind donors, including Frosted Fox Bakery, Walnut Lane Golf Club, Karr Barth Associates / Equitable, and Cradles to Crayons, whose contributions kept our programming engaging and fun.

Celebration Day: A Grand Finale

The program culminated on August 8 with Celebration Day, organized by the Arts and Celebration Committee and hosted by our Teaching Fellows. Scholars proudly showcased their work from elective courses and enjoyed a vibrant day featuring field games, performances, a giant water slide, special time with their SLCs, a funnel cake truck, and plenty of other treats before saying goodbye.

We extend a heartfelt thanks to our amazing BTGP parents for their unwavering support and donations. They truly helped make this summer a success.

Summer Capstone Program

(Rising 9th grade)

Sue Chen, Founder & Lead

A new summer at Breakthrough means that many of the projects that the BTGP staff works on throughout the year come to life!

One of our main tasks this year was to reimagine summer at Breakthrough for our rising 9th grade cohort. Through feedback from our Scholars, past Teaching Fellows and staff, we recognized that 9th graders needed more engagement and differentiation from the middle school summer program. In response to this feedback, a new program was born: a three-week 9th grade summer capstone experience that culminates Breakthrough's middle school program and serves as an orientation to the *College Bound* program for high schoolers.

The Summer Capstone experience contained 4 different modules: civics, financial literacy, community service, and leadership. BTGP partnered with Pennsylvanians for Modern Courts to bring our students a robust three-week series regarding topics including how laws are made, our first amendment rights, and limitations of those rights. The highlight of our civics coursework included a trip to the 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals in Center City, where we listened in on a sentencing hearing.

In the financial literacy module, staffed by volunteer speakers from BLBB, PHLY, Truist, Wells Fargo, and Parke Bank, Scholars learned about a variety of financial literacy topics, from basic banking skills to investing in the stock market. Included in



this module was a trip to a TD Bank branch where we learned how to write checks, balance a check book, and ways to avoid fraudulent scams.

The Capstone participants also learned how to be active citizens in our community. We spent time organizing the food pantry at St. Luke's Church in Germantown and packing food boxes for the elderly with the Share Food Program. Within our own Breakthrough community, 9th grade Scholars led the trivia portion of All School Meeting every Thursday, and mentored a few of our 5th-grade classes through a playground playdate.

The students were certainly more engaged this year, and they agreed that they benefited more from the programming than in years past. We will continue to improve upon the *Summer Capstone* program to prepare our 9th graders for high school and beyond.

MEET BREAKTHROUGH PHILLY'S SUMMER 2025 TEACHING FELLOWS!

A dual-mission program, Breakthrough is committed to providing free academic enrichment for middle and high school students to help reach their educational aspirations AND provide pre-professional training for college students to pursue teaching careers.

Known fondly as Breakthrough Teaching Fellows (TFs), they are the pillars of Breakthrough's program! About 45 TFs train at Breakthrough every year.

Introducing the Summer 2025 Teaching Fellows. To view their full profiles and reflections, <u>click here</u> or scan this QR code.



Aisha Doucoure

Howard University

Annora Bradley

Temple University

Breeann Leggs

Arcadia University

Charles Andrew Miranda

University of Pennsylvania

Chloe Coleman

Temple University

Christina Ly

University of Pennsylvania

Dange Martin

Pennsylvania State University

Delia Ford

University of Mississippi

Diamond Jackson

Tuskegee University

Eden Richman

Wesleyan University

Eva Sliker

Gardner-Webb University

Georgie Williams

The University of Chicago

Hanif Goins

Morehouse College

Hope Polhill

New York University

Jamylah Sykes

North Carolina A&T

Joshua Zacharia

Johns Hopkins University

Kalea Albanese

La Salle University

Kayla Banks

Howard University

La'Mon Perry

Loyola University-Maryland

Lily Mehta

Penn Charter

Ma'at Smith

Tufts University

Mallory Applegate

Kansas State University

Marissa Prager

The University of Pennsylvania

Markeese King

North Carolina A&T

Maya Walker

Stanford University

Miles Baldwin

Lower Merion High School

Nacala McDaniels

Clemson University

Nia Walcott

Hampton University

Noelle O'Brien

Virginia Tech

Renia Butts

North Carolina A&T State University

Xavier Woodhouse

Morehouse College

VOLUNTEERING AT BREAKTHROUGH

Michelle Reyes Aleti, Communications Manager

Volunteers are critical to Breakthrough Philly's program content and delivery. From chaperones to guest speakers, admissions interviewers to resume coaches, Breakthrough volunteers bring their deep and diverse experiences to inspire and guide Scholars.

Here's a sample of the myriad ways to get involved with Breakthrough throughout the year. If you're interested in donating your time and talent, please complete this brief two-minute survey and we'll be in touch!

ADMISSIONS INTERVIEWERS

Help us interview and recommend new Scholar applicants and their families in the Breakthrough admissions process. This is a unique volunteer opportunity that plays a critical role in building the Scholar class, shaping Breakthrough's culture and community, and identifying highly motivated students who are passionate about growth, lifelong learning, and education.

DECK THE (SUMMER!) HALLS

Help Breakthrough's Teaching Fellows decorate the hallways for the incoming class of ~200 Scholars. No need to bring supplies, just your creativity and energy to help create inspiring classrooms and halls for the summer program.



GUEST SPEAKER FOR HIGH SCHOOL READY & COLLEGE BOUND

We're seeking volunteers to share their careers and educational journeys with Breakthrough Scholars. Volunteers will have in-depth conversations and possibly share hands-on projects to help bring their jobs to life. We're seeking professionals and skilled workers across a variety of careers/industries – healthcare, real estate, visual & performing arts, engineering, life sciences, higher ed, law, tech, entrepreneurship, and business, among others.

APPEAL MAILING

Volunteers help assemble and mail our end of calendar and fiscal year appeals, both critical sources of fundraising for Breakthrough. It's a low-key and fun morning, and incredibly high-impact for Breakthrough!

BREAKTHROUGH VOLUNTEERS

Special thanks to the individuals and companies who volunteered their time this fiscal year to organize field trips, interview prospective families, support program logistics and/or serve on fundraising event committees!

Mia Adams Sean Allen Roye Alycyn Ed Andrejewski Giovanni Astorino John Barber Olivia Barndhart Marcella Baietto Daphne Baxter Rija Beares Melissa Benski Tanisha Beszue BIBB Brandon Brown Jack Burkauskas Ben Carr Joy Carroll Alexander Cassidy Mitchell Cherie Ryan Coyle Mike Crompton Robin Dagostino Jim Degnan Abe Diallo Sai Doddi Avi Doddi Walker Eboni Robyn Ettinger Patrick Falkenstein Jack Freeland Gabe Garcia Gabe Garner Sharene Ginvard Kirsten Gutierrez Ryan Hackett Nydia Han Charlette Hardy David Harris



Vito Heck Ellie Hilgen Kelley Hodge Sandra Jewitt Matt Johnston Benjamin Jones Palmer Joy Malaika Kamau Karr Barth Associates Equitable Matt Katz Marnie Kerr Kate Kim Iamie Kish Mark Konchan Dylan Lantz-Goldstein Owen Lawn Christine Lee Andre Lee Mara Lemos-Stein Kim Lewis Steven Loos Demetri Lowry

Tim Maguire Colleen Maquire Louis Manon Vince Martina Callie Mattson Miles Mattson Darlatia Nieves Rashida Ng Queade Norah Zach O'Connor Lani Okewole PHIY Ann Pilla Kacie Pisani Bonnie Pozza Anand Rajagopalan John Reilly Cheryl Rogers Jane Rosenberg **RSM** Omar Sabir Guerlio Saint-Vrestil Maya Sanseverino Gina Scandone Sandy Shen

Paul Siragusa Matt Smith Ryan Smith Tara Spencer Jemalikai Taylor TD Bank Nicole Tell Sean Thaxter Anna Todd Michelle Todd-Coleman Truist Alex Ulko Ray Vandegrift Kevin Vandegrift **Brooke Walker** Fhoni Walker **Brittany Walton** Lois Watkins Taylor Williams Colin Yablonski Sarah Yameogo David Zavitz

GUEST SPEAKERS AT BREAKTHROUGH PHILLY

Michelle Reyes Aleti, Communications Manager

Over 75 guest speakers volunteered in Breakthrough Philly's *High School Ready, Summer Capstone*, and *College Bound* programs. Speakers also provided professional development and career advice for Teaching Fellows.

SCHOLARS

Scholars learned about various careers and education journeys, and engaged in candid conversations about guest speakers' trials and tribulations. Scholars also heard from admissions officers at SDP, Independent, Parochial, Charter, and Boarding high schools. They learned what it takes to apply and be seriously considered in the admissions process. We hope these opportunities provide inspiration and concrete action plans for Breakthrough Scholars to reach their educational and career goals. Industry experts also taught key portions of the *Summer Capstone* curriculum for 9th grade Scholars.

TEACHING FELLOWS

Beyond the coaching and professional development provided by Breakthrough Staff, Teaching Fellows (TFs) received guidance from a wide variety of guest speakers to navigate next steps in their education careers. From applying to grad school to exploring teaching roles in the city of Philadelphia, Teach for America, and beyond, Fellows saw tangible examples of several paths post-Breakthrough. Guest speakers also taught TFs about financial literacy, mental health, and wellness to ensure they maintain a long-term view of the teaching profession.

THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING GUEST SPEAKERS WHO PARTICIPATED THIS YEAR:

Sean Allen

Executive Director, Wells Fargo Advisors

Marcella Baietto

Reporter, CBS News Philadelphia

Krystle Baker

Deputy Chief Integrity Officer, City of Philadelphia

Mohamed Bakry

Attorney, Marshall Dennehey

John Barber III

Corporate Citizenship Senior Manager (US), TD Bank

Reginald Barrett, Jr.

Assistant Vice President -Financial Inclusion Leader, Truist

Amy Barton

Vice President, Commercial Banking, Truist

Rija Beares

COO, U.S. & Canada Advisory and Market Leader, Greater Philadelphia Region, CBRE

NAIOP

Yvette Bell

Associate, Tucker Law Group

Melissa Benski

Senior Associate Director of College Counseling, GFS

Tanisha Bezue

Program Director, Committee of Seventy

Jerome Bland

Financial Professional, Karr Barth Associates-Equitable

Debora Borges-Carrera, Ed. D.; Chief Education Officer, City of Philadelphia

Shahirah Brown

Assistant General Counsel, School District of Philadelphia

Phillip Butler

Executive Vice President & Partner, MRA Group; NAIOP

Jennifer Coatsworth

Partner, Margolis Edelstein

Jason Cronk

Director of Financial Aid & Recruitment, University of Pennsylvania GSE

Robin Dagostino

Senior Director, Boston Consulting Group (BCG)

Barry Davis

Retired

Mal Davis

Executive Director of Recruitment, School District of Philadelphia

Zachariah Demusz

Director of Admissions & Communications, The Roman Catholic High School

Abe Diallo

Parke Bank

Robyn Ettinger

Senior Manager, Boston Consulting Group (BCG)

Page Fahrig-Pendse

Associate Head of School, GFS

Kate Garrity

Director of Library Services, GFS

Tammara Gary

Associate Director of Middle School Admissions, Agnes Irwin School

Sharene Ginyard

Director of Recruitment, Child Advocate Unit

Richard Graham

Store Manager, TD Bank

Ayize Glenn Gray

Founder & CEO, Moyo Imara Group (NAIOP)

David Green

Teacher, Constitution High School

Charlette Hardy

Breakthrough Scholar Alumna; Program Assistant, The Kingsley Association

Ivy Harris

Founder, Ivy Harris Educational Solutions

Julie Haywood

Retired

Rachel Hodas

Director of Student Services, GFS

Kelley B. Hodge

District Court Judge, Eastern District of Pennsylvania

Benjamin Jaye

Director of Attorney Training & Recruitment, PA Defenders Association

Benjamin Jones

Consultant, Boston Consulting Group (BCG)

Matt Katz

Executive Producer, City Cast Philly

Jarian Kerekes

Head of Social Impact & President, Equitable Foundation

Rep. Tarik Khan

194th District, Philadelphia County

André Robert Lee (GFS '89)

Director, Producer and Writer

Pat Loeb

Reporter, KYW News Radio

Heather Lopez

Assistant Community Store Manager, TD Bank

Mollie Maglich

Senior Buyer, The Campbell's Company

Anna Massey-Jackson

Recruitment Manager, Teach For America

Gianni Matos

Admissions Counselor, Cristo Rey

Miles Mattson

Partner, Boston Consulting Group (BCG)

Amelia McCloy

Pennsylvanians for Modern Courts

Linda Medley

Senior Vice President, Truist

Will Mega

Speaker and Political Strategist

Andrew Mele

Senior Managing Director, Trammell Crow Company

NAIOP

Jason Milner

Director of Engineering Success Alliance, Bucknell University

Nikki Montana

Instructional Coach, Edwin Forrest Elementary School

2025 Scripps National Spelling Bee Educator of the Year

Rashida Na

Presidential Associate Professor of Architecture; University of Pennsylvania Stuart Weitzman School of Design

Queade Norah

Founder, The Vocal Legacy

Daniel O'Connell, Jr., Esq.

Strokovsky, LLC

Jess Press

Author, Philadelphia Citizen

Travis Rhodes

EVP, Pennsylvania & New Jersey Regional President, Truist

Tiffany Richardson

Analyst, Mars

Marcus Robinson

Wells Fargo Advisors

Mary Russell, Esq.

Senior Counsel, Fine, Kaplan and Black, R.P.C.

Melissa Singleton

Assistant Public Defender, PA Defenders Association

Matt Smith

Principal, Boston Consulting Group (BCG)

Erica Snowden

Executive Director of the DEI Office, Episcopal Academy

Students

Engineering Success Alliance, Bucknell University

Omar Sabir

City Commissioner of the County of Philadelphia

Sandy Shen

Associate, Boston Consulting Group (BCG)

Joei Sutton

Financial Professional, Karr Barth Associates-Equitable

Ayinde Tate

Director of DEI Office, Episcopal Academy

Nicole Tell, JD, CAP

Executive Director, BLBB Charitable

Keino Terrell, Ed.D.

Director of Middle School, GFS

Sean Thaxter

Project Leader, Boston Consulting Group (BCG)

Anna Todd

Project Leader, Boston Consulting Group (BCG)

Rob Vieira

Chief Operating Officer, KIPP Philadelphia

Eboni Walker

Talent Acquisition Executive, PHLY

Sheila Watko

Reporter, NBC10 Philadelphia

Dani Gardner Wright

Chief Integrity Officer, City of Philadelphia

David Zavitz

General Manager, CTDI

Karen Zucker

Magisterial District Judge, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

WELCOME TO BREAKTHROUGH!

We are thankful to all who serve as advisors, supporters, and champions to help realize Breakthrough's mission. Breakthrough welcomed Jessica Richardson, Director of Donor Engagement, to its staff and three new Advisory Board members in fiscal year '24-25.



Jessica Richardson

Director of Donor Engagement

Jessica brings over 15

years of consulting, business management, and higher education experience to lead Breakthrough's individual and corporate engagement and development outreach. Prior to Breakthrough, Jessica managed business transformation and large-scale software implementation programs for Accenture. Most recently, she was responsible for business and community engagement efforts at Penn State Abington.

Jessica is an advocate for equitable educational opportunities for young people in the Philadelphia area. For the past five years, she has been on the board of directors as chair of the development committee for a literacy non-profit serving Philadelphia's youngest readers.

Jessica has a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration/Marketing and Spanish from Albright College.

I'm a Breakthrough Believer because...

All students deserve opportunities to reach their fullest potential, and access to quality instruction and support from a broader community of educators and learners can change lives. Breakthrough's mission motivates me, and I am inspired to tell our story in the community.



Alex Hellmuth

Business Management Senior Director, BCG

Alex Hellmuth is the Business

Management Senior Director of BCG's Philadelphia office, where she leads people development and strategy, and business operations. BCG is a global consulting firm that partners with business and societal leaders to address their most critical challenges and unlock their greatest opportunities.

Before assuming her current role, Alex was a Principal at BCG, advising clients in the Insurance and Financial Services sectors. She holds an MBA from the Yale School of Management and a B.A. in Political Science and Peace Studies from the University of Notre Dame. Alex resides in Devon, PA, with her husband and three children. Alex has supported Breakthrough with a dedicated pro-bono team from BCG.

I'm a Breakthrough Believer because...

Breakthrough's commitment to providing academically motivated students with access to transformative educational opportunities deeply resonates with my own values. I also appreciate the duality of its mission - to provide an experience for both students and teachers, learning together. I can point to teachers who changed my own course and opened doors in my life. I'm happy to support an organization that strives for equity and excellence in education.



Matt Johnston

Senior Vice President, Equitable Advisors

Matt is a dynamic and

results-driven Senior Vice President at Karr-Barth Associates/Equitable Advisors, a leading financial services and wealth management firm. With over 10 years of experience in the financial industry, Matt has built a reputation for delivering innovative strategies that drive growth, optimize client portfolios, and foster sustainable financial success.

In his current role, Matt oversees key business operations, strategic planning, and client relationship management. He leads a high-performing team dedicated to providing tailored wealth management solutions that align with clients' unique financial goals.

Prior to working in financial services, Matt was a middle school math teacher for eight years. His passion for helping others stems from his experience working with students, and he continues to foster growth in others by mentoring emerging talent in the financial services sector.

Matt attended Penn State University and Temple University and holds a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER® certification. He lives in Hayerford with his wife and son.

I'm a Breakthrough Believer because...

Breakthrough opens the doors of opportunity for bright, motivated students who deserve every chance to succeed. Their mission to nurture talent and build confidence inspires me and reminds me that investing in young people through rigorous academics and mentorship creates lasting change – not just for individual students, but for entire communities.



Kimberly Lewis

Head of Lower Division, Avenues: The World School in New York City

Kimberly "Kim" Lewis is an experienced, caring and visionary educational leader, curriculum writer, and member of program design teams. Kim has served as a beloved school administrator at Germantown Friends School and Dwight-Englewood School. Currently, she serves as Head of Lower Division at Avenues: The World School in New York City where she leads a dual-language immersion program for over 600 students in grades 1-5. She is also a member of the campus and global leadership teams and works very closely with teachers and families across the school's global ecosystem.

Kim's educational background includes a B.S. in Psychology from Howard University, a Master of Science in Special Education from Bank Street College of Education, and an MEd in Organizational Leadership from Teachers College Columbia University. She also completed study with the African American Board Leadership Institute, readying her for philanthropic leadership during these changing times.

In her free time, Kim enjoys spending time with her family and visiting her 3 adult children who live in Washington, D.C and Tempe, AZ.

I'm a Breakthrough Believer because...

Breakthrough's mission speaks to my heart and soul! I am delighted to work with a team of people who are motivated to support an organization whose mission is to change the life chances of the children and educators that it serves.

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