

College Bound AZ

Annual Report



2021

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2021



Message from Carol Lain

Dear Friends,

In 2021, College Bound AZ saw major successes with its RISE Scholars, Jr. RISE Scholars, and Fueling Minds with Heart programs despite the unprecedented challenges the caused by the pandemic, COVID-19. College Bound took all the necessary precautions to ensure our students' success while keeping them healthy and happy along the way.

Due to COVID-19, schools were in disarray, having the students transition between virtual schooling to in-person schooling and back to virtual schooling whenever there was an uptick in COVID numbers. Many schools closed for most of the school year. This created a sense of instability in our students' lives and education was severely disrupted. Many students had reduced access to their guidance and college counselors at their home schools. It became more important than ever for College Bound AZ to continue its services and support education.

Partially due to students' limited engagement with their counselors and partially due to our program's past proven success, College Bound AZ saw an unprecedented number of students enroll into the RISE Scholars program to get help applying to higher education. We hit an all-time high of assisting 178 high school seniors, more than double from the previous year, from the East Valley Institute of Technology and Sequoia Charter School enroll into the colleges of their dreams. The grand total of financial awards and scholarships our students received was \$6.2 million. To further resource our most vulnerable kiddos, we gifted 50 students with laptops to get them through their first years of college.

We also provided a record 2591 meals through Mesa Community College's drive-up food program to help students and families impacted by job loss, illness and other pandemic stressors. We could not do what we do best without the support of generous donors. Because of you, we were able to almost triple last year's success and help our most vulnerable population pave a new path into their bright futures. We want to say thank you to our advocates, community partners, and friends for coming along side us to support the community.

Thank you!

Carol Lain



Carol Lain, Board President

College Bound AZ



Mission

Our mission at College Bound AZ is to share the journey to college with aspiring under-represented students through mentorship, guidance, and support resources for their advancement to a better future through education.

Programs



RISE Scholars

College Bound AZ's RISE (Reaching Impact through Student Excellence) program is our college access program that is offered to low-income, first-generation students attending the East Valley Institute of Technology (EVIT) and Sequoia Charter School. Students are guided and mentored through the college going process through monthly college readiness workshops on topics such as budgeting, resume writing, and scholarship searches. College access professionals also conduct multiple one-on-one sessions with students in their classrooms to better engage students in the college going process and help troubleshoot any college application or financial aid problems they might have. RISE also helps by supplying the most vulnerable students with laptop computers. Students are also taken on a field trip to nearby colleges so they can envision what their futures will look like.



Junior RISE Scholars

At the middle school level, College Bound AZ engages 7- 8th graders in college and career readiness activities so that they enter high school with college as a motivating factor. The program provides direct mentoring service, educational seminars, and fun volunteer and experiential outing experiences. Junior RISE Scholars is a foundation for the necessary college prep work needed throughout high school. Jr RISE increases the number of low-income students who pursue higher education. Low-income students are otherwise 20% less likely to pursue college than their more affluent peers.





Fueling Minds with Heart

Fueling Minds with Heart is our college food pantry program that works in conjunction with Mesa Community College and Midwest Food Bank. Our food pantry program provides relief to college students by providing canned meat, vegetables, fruit, power drinks, cereal, protein bars and other items through a partnership with a local food bank and donations from the community. College Bound AZ helps stock the college's food pantry to offer relief for the estimated 59% of community college students facing food insecurity to complete college. Hygiene kits are packed with toiletries including shampoo, shaving supplies, toothbrush and toothpaste to help the estimated 13% of community college students who are homeless. Food items and hygiene kits are both distributed through the food pantry.



RISE Scholars Pandemic Response

EVIT, which serves over 35 high schools, continued with in-person instruction. We continued to leverage ASU’s Promise Program of full tuition funding for Pell-eligible students. Additionally, we expanded our program to include students applying to community college to serve more students. RISE Scholars one-on-one coaching better ensured seniors completed the financial aid process.

Figure 1. Number of RISE Scholars Entering College

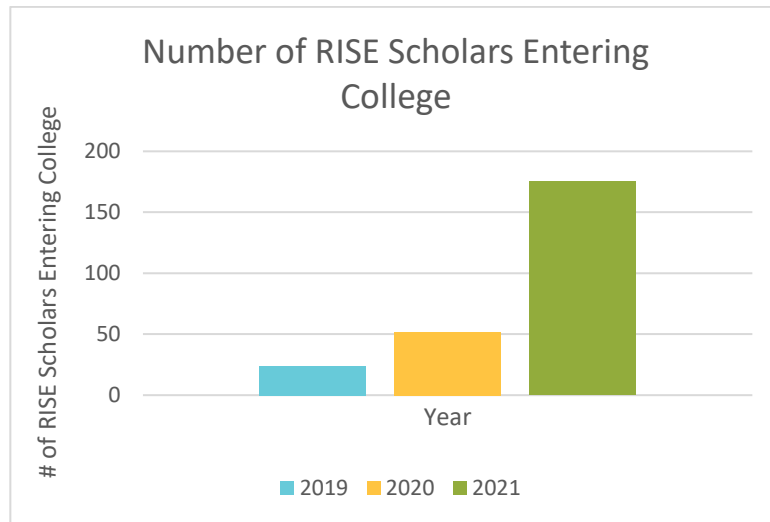


Figure 1 shows the increase in the number of RISE Scholars entering college. Although the pandemic caused most high schools to offer college advisement virtually. During the pandemic, College Bound AZ increased support to area students and increased outcomes.

Figure 2. Yearly Financial Aid Totals

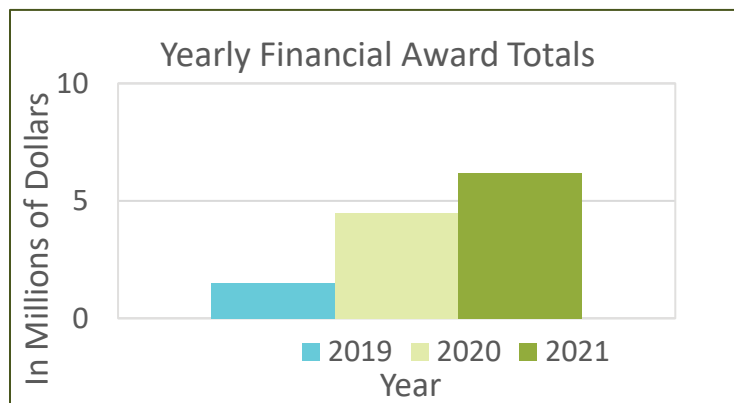


Figure 2 shows annual totals for financial awards distributed to RISE Scholars. Awards may be scholarships or federal aid.



More Laptops for RISE Scholar Seniors

The community responded in many ways to ease the impact of COVID-19. This year we received enough in grants and donations to ensure that our students with a maximum Pell grant award received a laptop for college. Dell came to the aid with a steady supply of 50 new laptops for our neediest students. A local company Affinity Technology prepped the laptops with updates and select software for maximum functionality. Other contributors to this much needed equipment: Mesa United Way, AZ Cardinals, Valley of the Sun United Way, and Season of Sharing.

Figure 3. RISE Scholars seniors at EVIT Receive New Dell Laptops



Figure 3 shows one group of students receiving new Dell laptops at a Recognition Ceremony.



Other Program Impact Highlights

Junior RISE Scholars

Coaching on study skills, community service, career exploration, resume writing



40

Mentoring hours per student

Junior RISE Scholars was the only operating club during COVID at Rhodes Junior High throughout 2021

Fueling Minds with Heart

Delivery of food and hygiene items to Mesa Community College

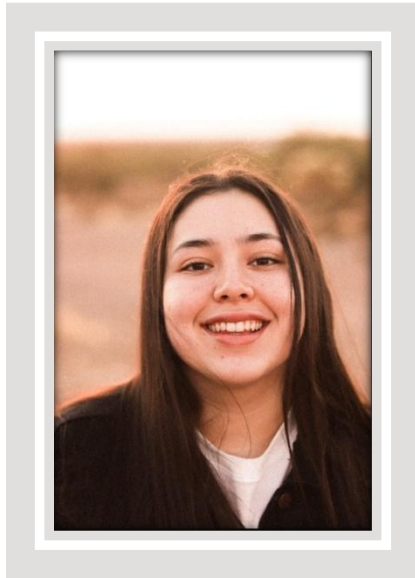
2591

Meals

An increase of
55%



Determination Wins



Vivian Pelayo
RISE Scholars 2021

Vivian joined College Bound AZ at the beginning of the school year in September. She was a phenomenal student and active community member. She earned high marks in her academics, participated in sports and student council, and engaged in many volunteering events within her community. Vivian entered our program with the intention of applying to ASU and pursue her undergraduate degree in architecture.

However, as COVID-19 has made its impact globally, Vivian also experienced the indiscriminate devastation caused by COVID-19. Her family's family business lost revenue due to closures necessitated by safety protocols. To help their few employees, her family continued to pay them their regular wages. Vivian held a job at Taco Bell to help her family stay afloat. Vivian's family eventually caught COVID themselves, resulting in more income loss in addition to concerns for her mother considering how she required stomach surgery at the time. While her immediate family eventually recovered from their

illnesses, her uncle was not fortunate. Vivian began her senior year of high school in the throes of family tragedy and major loss in income.

In the face of major tribulation and change, Vivian has proven herself to be a force to be reckoned with. She joined College Bound with the vision of establishing a present and future for herself that she could be proud of. College Bound helped Vivian apply to Arizona State University's architecture program and gain admission into the college. We helped her complete her Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), but the final determination would leave her with little financial aid due to the application requiring her 2019 tax documents, information that hardly painted and accurate representation of Vivian and her family's current circumstances.

With College Bound's efforts and Vivian's determination, Vivian began applying for scholarships to help fund her upcoming college education. College Bound worked closely with Vivian on her applications, even helping her edit an essay application for ASU's Leadership Scholarship Program. With the help of College Bound AZ, Vivian has been selected as a one of only twenty-five students to be a member of the Leadership Scholarship Program this coming school year. To further support Vivian on her journey, College Bound offered her a chance to work with one of its board members in the field of architecture. This Summer 2021, Vivian will be interning with Sketch Architecture Company. Additionally, College Bound has supplied her with a brand-new laptop to meet her technological needs upon enter college. Vivian will be studying architecture at ASU's Herberger Institute for Design and Arts.



Future Teacher



Carlos Rios
RISE Scholars 2021

When Carlos joined College Bound AZ in September 2020, he remained a very reserved student. He appeared shy, but he had big aspirations to one day become a History teacher. As College Bound worked with him throughout the year, he became one of our most engaged members.

As COVID-19 has had its impact upon families across the world, Carlos has experienced the financial and mental toll that has come with the pandemic. The pandemic put his brother out of a job and reduced his mother's work hours causing an immense financial instability within his family. His mother took on a new job to make ends meet, a job that Carlos and his brother helped her with. Due to the nature of the job and the odd hours they worked, Carlos's family lost much sleep, an added factor to the family's mental and emotional health. In 2021, Carlos also suffered many personal losses in his life, losing close friends and family members to COVID-19. Despite the tremendous grief and financial burden,

with the help of College Bound AZ, Carlos completed every step of the college admissions and financial aid processes to attend ASU in the fall. His perseverance through these trying times will be the source for generational change within his family.

College Bound AZ helped Carlos complete his application to ASU, file his FAFSA, complete verification tasks, and conducted multiple follow-ups throughout the year to ensure each step was done to completion. This is no small feat as the financial aid application can be daunting with all its income and residency questions, family income, and citizenship details. Verification tasks continued the process even after the application was filed. Staff worked closely with an ASU representative to track Carlos's progress through these tasks and into ASU to ensure his full admittance.

Carlos completed high school with a 3.9 GPA. His academic prowess and community engagement, along with the interventions from College Bound AZ ensured Carlos was set to enter ASU with four years fully paid tuition and fees. College Bound AZ also gifted Carlos with a new Dell laptop that he will use for his coursework.



Adjusting to the Impacts of COVID

With COVID-19 closing schools on and off and transitioning to digital platforms, the disparities between affluent families and those without the same resources were further unmasked. While attaining a college education was already difficult to attain for First Generation students, the pandemic presented new obstacles potentially preventing these students from pulling themselves and their families from generational poverty.

Underrepresented students have the same academic talent as their more affluent peers, but oftentimes this demographic assumed more responsibilities to help their families and experienced greater family disruption during the pandemic. Some willingly shared their stories through [essays](#). These are very eye-opening about the unprecedented circumstances and disruptions that happened to some through job loss and lack of internet access. Students were shut in and shut out at the same time.

Online instruction was a necessity the entire high school senior year for the Class of 2021 which may make course completion in college more likely. We were extremely grateful for the grants and donations that allowed us to purchase new Dell laptops with video capability for our neediest students going to college. The devices issued by their high schools needed to be turned back in at the end of the school year. However, a large number of students don't fare well with online learning, causing lower rates of course completion or not getting passing grades. Other factors that are part of the normal college experience include socializing to help adjust to a new environment and forming study groups for academic success. These activities were disrupted to accommodate social distancing to keep our community safe. Reading the essays will help you understand the turmoil surrounding the lives of the students we serve. What impact will the pandemic have on their college success? Follow up will help us learn how well they finished academically.

At the community college level, we continued our food pantry program, even increasing the delivery of meals from the prior year. Food pantry access underwent a redesign because of social distancing requirements. For safety, food distribution changed to a drive-up method with students and families receiving pre-packed bags of food items. Little choice comes with pre-packaged grab bags, so the COVID Meal Kits was invented. Volunteers crafted 10 meal cards from items typically distributed by local food banks such as rice or canned chicken and tuna. Sponsors donated funds to purchase fresh ad-ons like onions and lemon juice to complete the meals. Food packing events brought the community together to pack ingredients that matched the meal cards and feed a family of four. A single packing event fed 200 people with nutritious dinners and the COVID Cookbook was created.

A few changes allowed College Bound AZ to pivot and continue its support throughout the trying pandemic period. We broke records for students going to college, laptops gifted to the most needy, and in meals provided to the hungry. We are more than grateful for those who came along side us with support to ease the burdens faced by others.



Income and Expenses

Gift Support	Income	%
Individuals	\$24,908.98	18%
Corporations	\$16,600	12%
Foundations	\$38,750	28%
In-Kind	5,000.04	4%
Total Revenue	\$85,259.02	

Other Revenue	Income	%
Fundraising	\$50,490.98	37%
Interest returns	\$13.62	<0.1%
Total Support & Revenue	\$136,763.62	

Program Services for Students	Expenses	%
On-site Assistance	\$31,413.99	27%
Leadership training	\$281.50	<.1%
Scholarships	23,634.57	20%
Total Program Services	\$55,330.06	



Supporting Services	Expenses	%
Fundraising	\$47,813.41	41%
Management and General	\$14,091.21	12%
Total Supporting Services	\$61,904.62	
Total Expenses	\$117,234.68	

Net Assets	Net Assets	%
Net Operating Revenue	\$30,660.91	53%
Long-Term Assets	\$27,066.10	47%
Total Net Assets	\$57,727.01	



Looking Forward

Looking forward, we see the number of students enrolled in RISE Scholars growing and the need for food pantry items continuing. To meet our high school needs we're exploring growing our volunteer pool to coach students and will continue resourcing laptops for college success. We will continue our partnership with EVIT, Sequoia and Rhodes Junior High as well as Mesa Community College while we seek the resources to meet an increased demand for services.

Executive Leadership

We have a diverse Board of Directors leading us. Each has a keen passion for providing education opportunity to First Generation students. Their talent helps us meet our goals and make a difference in the community.



Robin Benning
Vice President
Sketch Architecture



Caden Gillespie
Secretary
Arizona State University



Tim Meyer
Treasurer
City of Mesa



Levi Leyba
Board Member
Guardian Angel Council



Kina Harding
Board Member
Owner, The Harding Firm



Aryanna Thuraisingam
Board Member
Arizona State University



Felecia Rozansky
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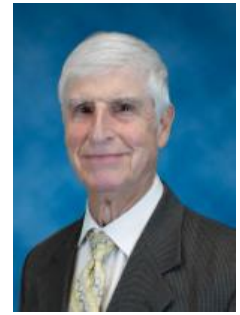
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Dr. Ralph Wilson
Board Member
Mezona Orthopedic



Tara Hall
Board Member
City of Mesa



We Need Your Help

We are growing! We want to encourage you to give generously to change the life of even one youth – everything helps! Invest in their life today so they can become the leaders of tomorrow.

Every Penny Matters

You can give online here: [DONATE](#)

You can also mail in your donation to: College Bound AZ, 4222 E. Brown Road #33, Mesa AZ 85205.

Volunteer and Help Make a Difference

Not everyone can make a financial contribution. At our workshops and events, you can assist students with activities or chaperone on our college tour. Mentors can help students proof essays or help find answers on college topics. Businesses can set up collection points for community members to drop off food items or hygiene products to help those students already attending college. You can review these ideas and more at collegeboundaz.org

Volunteer with the Veterans Day Parade, food pantry drives, or fundraising.

Volunteer around the office with phone calls and other tasks

Volunteer in a different way:

Please visit our website collegeboundaz.org to learn more or call us at 602.550.3161. Send this form by mail to our office at 4222 E. Brown Road #33, Mesa AZ 85205.

Name: _____ **Phone:** _____



Thank You to All of Our Donors!

\$15,000 and Above	\$14,999 - \$5,000	\$4,999 - \$1,000	\$999 and Below
	Arizona Cardinals	Cox	Helping Kids Go Places/ABC15
	Mesa United Way	Albertson's	Costco
	Season for Sharing	Walmart	Y2K Engineering
	Valley of the Sun United Way	Mesa Hohokams	AZ Black Bar Association
	Affinity Tech Inc.	Vehicle for Change	The Harding Firm
	Cochran Management Co.	Felecia & Steve Rozansky	I am Teen Strong
	College Chefs	Kevan Ho Family	Cortes CPA
	Liz & Jerry Paulus	ASU	Art and Sol
		Robin & Beth Benning	Mike & Sandi Cooley
		Patrick Carr	Sally Harrison
		Ralph Wilson	Juanita Dominguez
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			Lori Quizaman
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			Drew Trojanowski
			Ron Paulus
			Joel Kohn
			Patty Watson Kimball
			Larry & Sue Goldsmith



Werkheiser Family



\$999 and Below	\$999 and Below	\$999 and Below	\$999 and Below
Josephine & Rudolf Strandberg	Erika & Pete Velasquez	Amanda and Wes Forster	William & Anna Anderson
Susan Ehrlich and James Hair, Jr	Michele & Michael Gammal	Ismeralda Espinoza	Elizabeth & Dean Gambino
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Sam Hui	Don Chenevert	Paula Berger	Werkheiser Family
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Adam Ricklefs	Lisa Rivera	Kelly Grusky	Caden Gillespie
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			Julian Negrete
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Matt Watson
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