

COLLEGE BOUND AZ
ANNUAL REPORT

2022



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Message from the President of the Board

Dear Friends,

Completing its 11th year, College Bound AZ continues to advance as the premier nonprofit community resource, guiding aspiring underrepresented students with their journey to college through mentorship, guidance, and support. College Bound AZ continues to be a leader in providing the most successful college access program in the East Valley. As the President of the Board, I am proud to be a part of delivering our direct one on one services to help our underserved youth achieve their dream of a brighter future through education. Our college access program, RISE Scholars, continues to attract and assist hundreds of youth each year, and our relationship with the East Valley Institute of Technology (EVIT) continues to grow and bear fruit. Through EVIT our college access program reaches 11 school districts, charter schools, and home-schooled students. In 2021-22 we served over 400 youth with the RISE Scholars program, coordinating \$11.4 million in financial awards for these bright minds to go on to college. Students attend monthly workshops on topics that include first year budget and financial literacy. We raised funds to gift 20 laptops to our neediest students, removing one more barrier to college success.

Jr RISE Scholars for elementary students plants the seed for college through weekly workshops that involve community service, personal development, and college readiness guidance. This year's class received nearly 1,000 hours of mentoring including performing community service. One project packed food for the Fueling Minds with Heart program that delivers nutritious meals to Mesa Community College for students there experiencing food scarcity. Over 2,000 meals were delivered! A food pantry was also launched at EVIT to offer respite to students on the go there, or full, nutritious meals to take home.

We could not have done it without the unwavering effort by our Executive Director and her staff and the outstanding support from our largest ever Board of Directors and the East Valley Institute of Technology Administration and Teachers. Thank you for a wonderful and exemplary year of service to our community. Together we are Changing the History of Tomorrow by giving our youth the opportunity they deserve to make the most out of life. I am proud to be the President of the Board and look forward to growing the program in the future.

Thank you!

Robin Benning



Robin Benning
Board President



Mission

College Bound, a nonprofit community resource, shares 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

Low-income youth attending the East Valley Institute of Technology and Sequoia Charter school enroll into College Bound AZ's RISE (Reaching Impact through Student Excellence) Scholars program with the hope of attaining affordable college educations. Through this program, high school seniors attend monthly workshops on success topics such as financial literacy and budgeting, resume and cover letter writing, scholarship searches, and job searches. Additionally, College Bound AZ college access advisors go the extra mile and meet with students individually in their classrooms to troubleshoot college admissions and financial aid problems and ensure their success through the college going process. Through our annual programming, we are building resilient and educated students who will enter the workforce prepared and enthusiastic.



Junior RISE Scholars

At the middle school level, College Bound AZ partners with Mesa Public schools to offer 8th graders a during-school club that plants the college going seed early on. Junior RISE Scholars is a yearlong program that covers college and career readiness topics such as career inventories, GPA management, and resume writing. Additionally, students are taken on experiential STEAM related field trips and engage in community focused community service projects. Junior RISE Scholars is a necessary jumping off point for students to enter high school with college and career in mind. Through this program, low-income junior high students have an increased interest in pursuing higher education.





Fueling Minds with Heart

Fueling Minds with Heart is College Bound AZ's food pantry program that helps feed hundreds of food insecure community college students annually. Through partnerships with Mesa Community College and Midwest Food Bank, College Bound delivers nutritious and filling nonperishable food items to MCC's Mesa Market Food Pantry bi-weekly. Additionally, College Bound regularly holds meal packing events that engage the community and youth in a fun and insightful community service project that nourishes MCC's vulnerable student population.

A food pantry opened at the high school campus at the East Valley Institute of Technology, 1601 W. Main Street in support of our high school students. Harvest Baskets with a Thanksgiving meal for four were distributed to 15 happy families!



Figure 1. RISE Scholars high school students from the East Valley Institute of Technology receive Thanksgiving Harvest Baskets with donations to feed a family of four.

RISE Scholars Program Impact

In 2022, College Bound AZ’s RISE Scholars saw unprecedented numbers of students enroll into our program with the hope of receiving help in attaining an affordable education. Through Arizona’s Achieve 60 program and the in-state college’s new Promise Program being implemented, Arizonans are pushing for this generation of youth to receive the education they so deserve. ASU offers its Obama Award, valued at \$100,000, to eligible students to cover the full cost of tuition, housing, meals, and additional education materials. Further, with the new Promise Program in effect, high achieving students with estimated family contributions of 0 are eligible to receive full tuition scholarships at ASU, NAU, or U of A. With many low-income students lacking an informed family member to help them through the arduous college and financial aid applications, College Bound AZ is instrumental in connecting eligible students to the school that is right for them and to the financial awards that are available to them.

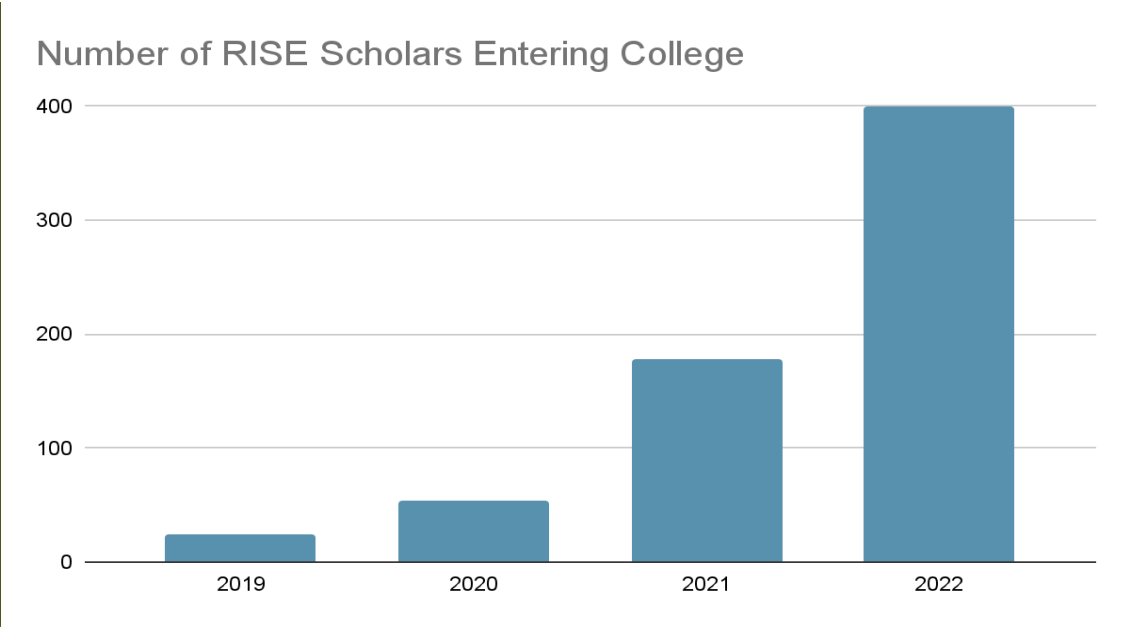


Figure 2 shows the change in the number of RISE Scholars entering college by transitioning to an in-school format.

College Bound AZ is also a Certified Autism Center, connecting families with the support resources at their student’s next school. As a Certified Autism Center, we developed Information cards which were printed and sent to Special Needs students to help them connect with Disability Resource Centers.



Financial Award Totals

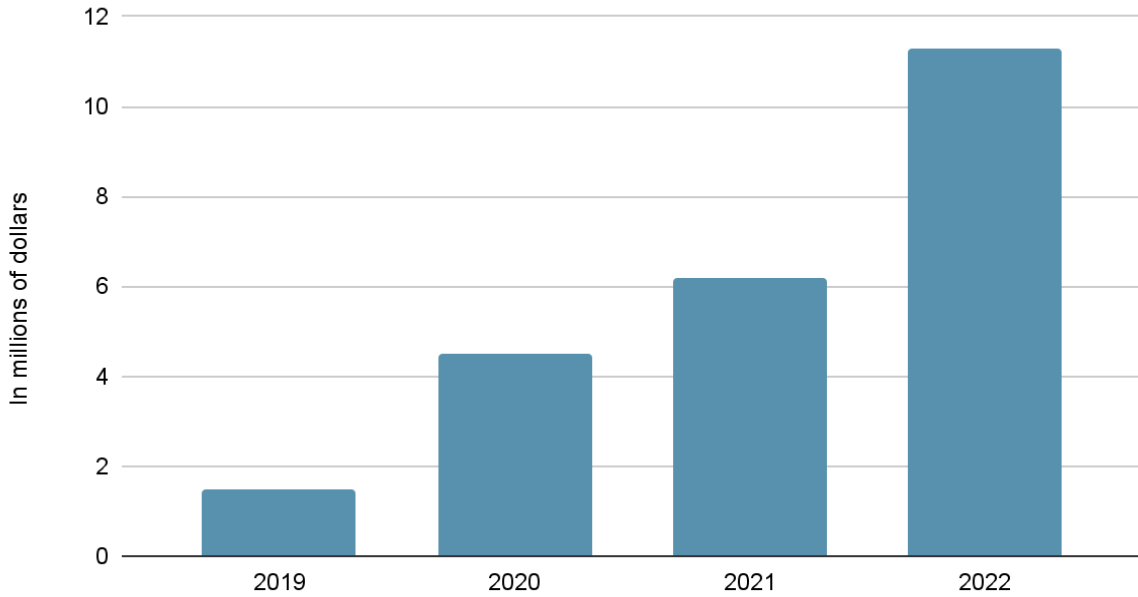


Figure 3 shows the change in financial awards distributed to RISE Scholars.

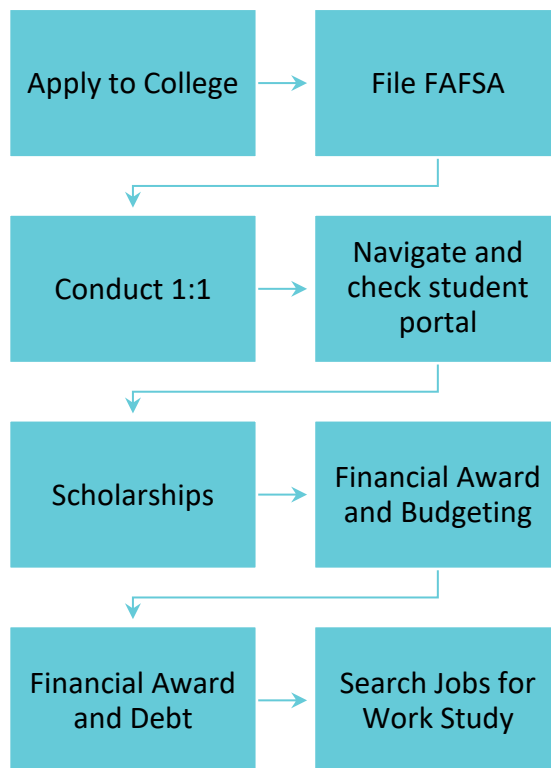


Figure 4 shows RISE Scholars annual calendar of workshops.



Junior RISE Scholars Highlights

Junior RISE Scholars

Coaching on study skills, community service, career exploration, resume writing
24 students mentored
1,000 total mentoring hours



Figure 5 shows Jr RISE Scholars 2022



Fueling Minds with Heart Highlights

Fueling Minds with Heart

Delivery of Food and Hygiene Items to Mesa Community College
2,791 lbs of food.
200 hygiene kits.

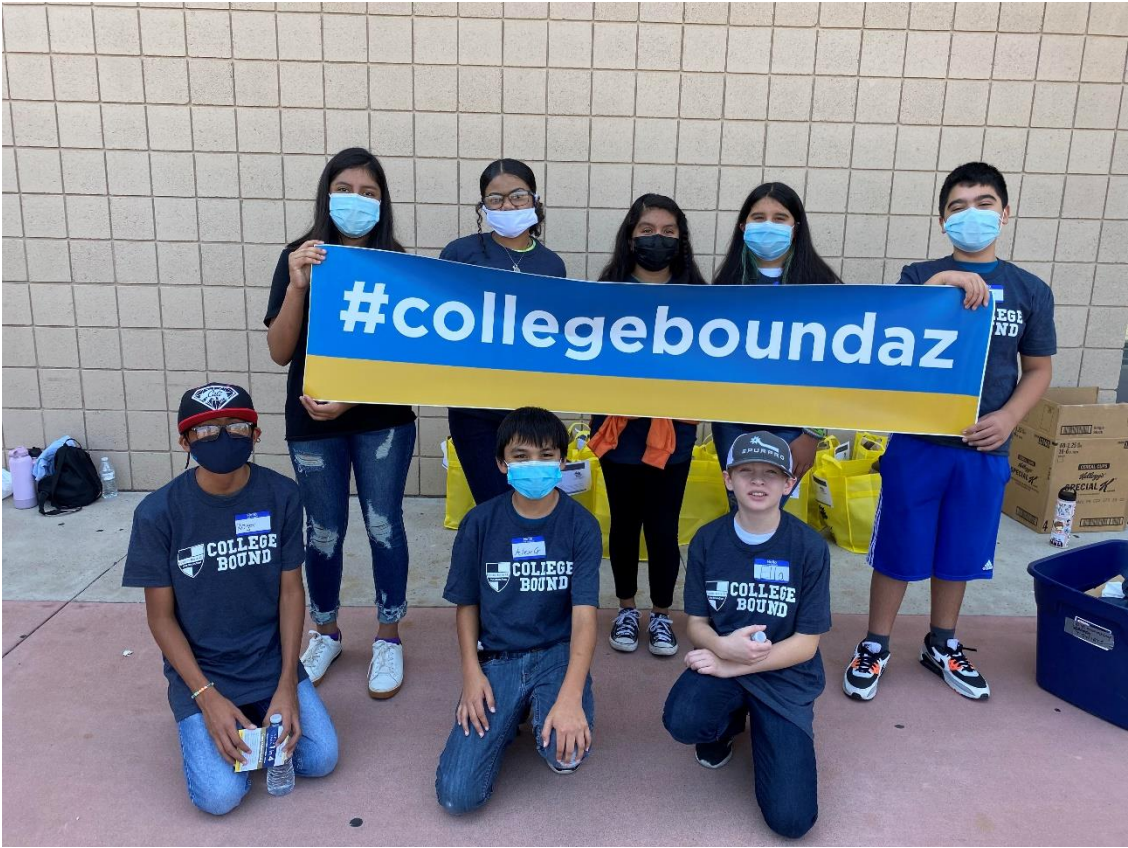


Figure 6 shows Jr RISE Scholars completing annual food packing



Impact Story 1



Samantha Isidoro Hernandez
RISE Scholars 2018

Samantha Isidoro

Hernandez joined College Bound AZ in the 7th grade with high aspirations of becoming a doctor. She graduated among the top twenty students from Mesa High School in 2018 and had built a resume packed with internships, extra coursework, summer programs, and community service. Initially given the Obama Award by Arizona State University, it was learned the scholarship had been withdrawn because of deadlines missed regarding submission of federal tax information. In addition, her FAFSA had been completed incorrectly. This was brought to her attention in July, after the university’s submission deadline had passed. Both circumstances left her with little scholarship dollars. With the crush of incoming freshmen, Samantha found it hard get help at college to resolve the problems. Her parents have English as a second language and could not help her with challenges presented by the FAFSA process.

Together Samantha and College Bound AZ crafted her appeal and submitted it. Her perseverance paid off and her scholarships restored when the appeal was honored. She began her studies in the fall of 2018.

In May 2022, after completing a study abroad program in Italy, she graduated with a bachelor's degree in medical studies “It took a week to sink in that I had graduated college. In high school I saw so many obstacles and it was hard to imagine succeeding. It hit me during the graduation ceremony and especially during the Hispanic Convocation that I am a First-Generation college graduate. “ Samantha has been accepted at Physician’s Assistant School where she can earn the credentials to provide the medical services she set as her goal many years earlier. A dream turned into a degree through determination.



Impact Story 2

Citlali Loza Alberan joined College Bound AZ as a senior in high school. College Bound AZ staff began texting Citlali one Sunday morning because unlike most of the over 400 students in College Bound AZ’s RISE Scholars program, Citlali had not yet completed her Free Application for Federal Financial Aid (FAFSA) even though it was late March. There was a problem with some of the information submitted.

Citlali was struggling with how to resolve her FAFSA information. Hanging in the balance for Citlali was the possibility of not completing FAFSA and not qualifying for the 4 years of paid tuition offered through needs-based grants.

It’s very difficult for a youth of 18 to prepare a letter to an institution they have never seen to explain a situation they aren’t a part of. Together on a phone call, Citlali and College Bound AZ prepared an explanatory letter and added supporting documents.

The efforts paid off and Citlali’s submission was accepted within a few days. This allowed her to complete her FAFSA application to receive the grant for 4 years paid tuition.

Citlali also qualified for a laptop scholarship from College Bound AZ based on family income. The donations received by College Bound AZ are used to provide these scholarships to the neediest students. Citlali had lost her father earlier in the school year and the family relied on older working siblings for support. Despite these hardships, Citlali maintained a positive outlook. “RISE is a well-organized program that helped me with the major parts of getting ready for college. I feel more confident about going to ASU. The sessions through RISE feel like a step-by-step process that is easy to follow. I really appreciated that they would always check in with us to make sure that we are on track and to answer our questions. There is always someone I can contact, and they would always respond immediately. It’s good to have that kind of support - it makes huge life decisions look less threatening!”



Citlali Loza Alberan
RISE Scholars 2022



Thought Leadership

The state of Arizona's economic future depends upon improving education access and attainment, and CBAZ is working to change the history of tomorrow. According to a new report commissioned by Arizona's leading business organizations, "Arizona would reap economic benefits of nearly \$5 billion in additional state and local tax revenues over 10 years simply by reaching the U.S. average for educational attainment[...] Tomorrow's prosperous economy depends on improving investment in workforce development and postsecondary education today." Arizona's youth are failing to achieve bachelor's degrees. According to the study, between 2020-2030 an estimated 68,000 new jobs annually will require at least a bachelor's degree. At our current trajectory, there will be a shortage of 26,300 bachelor's degrees annually.

It is readily apparent that a key factor in whether a child escapes poverty is their access to and ability to attain a college education to secure a well-paying job in the future. Our goal is to provide our services to underserved youth to ensure access, equity, inclusion and diversity in college. For low-income students, CBAZ aims to break the cycle of poverty by engaging students in higher education-centered extracurricular activities and college access guidance to build better futures through self-discovery and resiliency. CBAZ is changing the history of tomorrow for our disadvantaged youth, one student at a time.

Additionally, although we were exiting the pandemic in academic year 2021/22, many of the problems that were brought into the open regarding the digital divide are still obstacles that many of our students are encountering. COVID-19 seems to have permanently changed the landscape of how students are now meant to conduct their schooling and reach out for help. Colleges nowadays require a reliable and up-to-date computer to conduct schoolwork, take placement tests, and attend class or counseling sessions. Though a computer is a necessity for many of life's basic, daily tasks, this is a commodity that many of the students we serve cannot afford. With our student population, we have heard stories where all the siblings in a household had to share a single desktop computer to complete their schoolwork. In other cases, students have been supplied with Chromebooks by their schools, but the specifications for these computers are not compatible with the placement tests that are necessary for college admission; the students are also required to return their Chromebooks at the end of the year. We are returning to a new normal where the digital divide is now glaringly obvious.

CBAZ has had the fortune of receiving funding from generous community partners to purchase 20 refurbished computers for our lowest-income youth this year. Our work cannot stop there. Our youth need our help to receive the resources necessary for their academic success as well as the emotional support to ensure they develop the resiliency needed to thrive in college and the workforce.



Income and Expenses

Gift Support	Income	%
Individuals	\$59,907	48%
Corporations	\$25,959	21%
Foundations	\$19,750	16%
In-Kind	\$18,612	15%
Total Revenue	\$124,228	

Other Revenue	Income	%
Fundraising	\$128,418	37%
Interest returns	\$923	<0.1%
Total Support & Revenue	\$129,341.65	

Program Services for Students	Expenses	%
On-site Assistance	\$4,614	27%
Scholarships	10,500	20%
Total Program Services	\$15,114	



Supporting Services	Expenses	%
Fundraising	\$126,602	62%
Management and General	\$38,099	19%
Total Supporting Services	\$39,640	19%
Total Expenses	\$204,341	

Net Assets	Net Assets	%
Net Operating Revenue	\$16,355	52%
Long-Term Assets	\$23,005	58%
Total Net Assets	\$39,360	



Looking Forward

This year brought our largest ever cohort of students needing help with the college-going process. The large student number requires us to grow our services and partnerships to meet the demands of three high school campuses. We also better understand our students' needs go well beyond college access assistance to helping meet financial needs because of the loss of a parent or similar extraordinary circumstance. We created our Fund-a-Dream Campaign that includes several new scholarships with the flexibility to follow the student into college with mentors and paid internships. Scholarships can be given in the name of an honoree. The Dianna Lee Sharps Achieve Scholarship was the first new scholarship funded to be awarded to a RISE Scholars 2023 recipient.

A food pantry was initiated on the high school campus with the highest number of RISE Scholars. In addition to the grab-and-go-items students can pick up on their way to or from their bus, we wanted to provide a Thanksgiving dinner to any interested family. This first year we distributed 15 Harvest Baskets to grateful families with donations from a local food bank, food purchased through a grant, and gift cards purchased with cash donations. RISE Scholars can become a future hub of support in multiple areas because of the generous hearts that care. We hope to engage community volunteers to grow these needed new services.

Executive Leadership

We have a Board of Directors representative of our community: private business, government, and education. Each wants to contribute to opportunity for First Generation students. Their talent helps us meet our goals and make a difference in the community.



Robin Benning
Board President
Partner, Sketch
Architecture



Caden Gillespie
Board VPRES
Arizona State University



Rishi Sood
Board Treasurer
Owner, Affinity Technology



Nicole Vecere
Board Secretary
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Tara Hall
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Tim Meyer
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Madalyn Becker
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Arizona State University



Dilenia Chireno
Board Member
Unilever



John Bugg
Board Member
Maricopa County
Superior Court



Elizabeth Paulus
Executive Director



Samantha Hui
Program Manager



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.

AZ Tax Credit: College Bound AZ's Charity Tax Number is **22096**. When you donate and receive a receipt, your AZ state tax is reduced dollar for dollar. The AZ Tax Credit allows you to designate where your tax dollars are applied.

Every Penny Matters

You can give online here: [Donation Page](#)

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 Fueling Minds with Heart or Veterans Day Parade.
- 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:** _____

Email: _____



Thank You to All of Our Donors!

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2022

Annual Report



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