



# ANNUAL REPORT 2016



*Building critical skills and mindset for a college bound future*





Dear BFN Supporter,

Building Futures Now (BFN) has had another successful year helping students improve their academic and non-cognitive skills. Our students have adapted to the more rigorous learning environment, which includes direct instruction twice a week for our elementary and middle school public school students, and small group work which allows for more individualized attention. Physically, our site space is better utilized and every class is in a classroom this year, allowing for more productive class time. These changes have resulted in our students making tremendous progress on their reading, writing and math skills, all of which are essential for a college bound future.



Partnerships are critical to our success, and this year our partners have given our students new experiences and helped improve our facilities and program. Through the Halford Program at Castilleja School, our fourth and fifth grade girls are being mentored by a high school “older sister”. They have provided leadership development for our young girls and have opened new avenues in their lives. In addition, Castilleja selected BFN as the recipient of their Arts with a Heart annual fundraiser. It was a great dance production that allowed our students to perform on stage for the very first time and collaborate with the Castilleja students in a dance performance.

IKEA of East Palo Alto created a total makeover of our main shared space, which resulted in better utilization of our facility. Children’s Empowerment, a nonprofit food service provider, collaborated with BFN to serve nutritious meals for our students. In addition, AJ Tutoring tutored our middle school students for their independent high school entrance exam. Two students from the Stanford Graduate School of Education worked with BFN staff to help integrate social emotional learning with our curriculum. We also began our discussions with ALearn, a nonprofit that focuses on math acceleration classes, for our summer academy.

We are grateful to our generous donors that have supported us throughout our endeavor to help our students thrive. It is through your continued support that we are able serve more students better each year, giving them hope for college and beyond.

Sincerely,

Rosemary Kamei  
Executive Director, Building Futures Now

## OUR GOAL

Building Futures Now (BFN) believes that helping students attain a high quality education through college is the key to economic opportunity and becoming engaged and productive members of their community.



## OUR APPROACH

- We help every child find a path to be successful.
- We share a mutual commitment with our students. We give students access to exceptional educational opportunities and they must do the work to realize those opportunities.
- We believe that social/emotional support is equally important to academics in the development of the whole child.



## OUR MISSION

Building Futures Now (BFN) develops the academic and interpersonal potential of underserved students from East Palo Alto and East Menlo Park. We offer access to exceptional educational opportunities that build a solid foundation. By combining academic rigor, leadership development and long-term comprehensive support, we empower students with the academic and self-advocacy skills needed to thrive in high school, college and early career.



## WHO WE SERVE

- Over 100 Students from 4th through 12th grades from 74 families.
- Students attend 30 different schools from elementary, middle and high school; 45% of BFN elementary and middle school students attend Ravenswood City School District schools.
- 100% live in East Palo Alto/East Menlo Park.
- 85% Latino, 8% African American, 6% Pacific Islander and 1% mixed race.
- 100% are the first generation in their families to attend college.
- 88% are English Language Learners.
- 90% qualify for free and reduced lunch at their elementary schools.
- Our “Dreamers” are currently attending 13 different colleges/universities.
- 100% of our students are working hard in our program on improving their educational opportunity.





**Elementary 4th - 5th Grades**  
Academic Preparation

**Middle School 6th -8th Grade**  
Academic Advocacy

**High School 9th - 12th Grade**  
Engagement and Leadership

**College Freshman - Senior**  
College Transition and Engagement

## 2016 PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We appreciate all of our partners that work so hard to help our students achieve success. Here are a few examples of the tremendous partnerships from this year.

- 100% of 4th and 5th grade students have improved their focus, organization and mindset towards their education.
- 71% of fifth graders were at or above grade level in reading by the end of 5th grade.
- 62% of middle school students and 38% of elementary school students were accepted into a private middle or high school.
- 95% of students in independent schools and 71% of students in public schools maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- 100% of our 9-11<sup>th</sup> grade students are enrolled in four to six A-G courses at their high schools
- 56% of the students in the high school program have a 3.0 grade point average in their college preparatory (A-G courses)
- 100% of high school students participated in workshops on college access and career pathways
- Two of our college dreamers came back to intern at BFN over the summer to help the next generation of students.
- 81% of parents are engaged in supporting their children's education by attending BFN parent education workshops and volunteering their time for BFN.

## STUDENT SUCCESS

### ELEMENTARY PROGRAM

In the BFN Elementary Program, students develop critical skills for academic success as well as non-cognitive skills to prepare them for their future. An example of their growth and development occurred with a very unique experience this past year, through a partnership with Castilleja School.

There were 22 of our elementary students who took the stage in their Arts with a Heart dance production. For many of our students, this was the first time that they had ever been part of a formal performance. They worked with several Castilleja students throughout four months of weekend rehearsals to learn their dances, the art of costume change, and stage presence. Throughout the experience, our BFN students were able to learn the importance of commitment, accomplishing a common goal, and the confidence to perform on stage in front of an audience. "This experience added a new chapter to my life. It inspired me to dance with confidence," Gerardo, a 4th grader, commented. Kiara, a 5th grader, added, "It helped me to not be as shy around new people. I learned to work with a bunch of different people from different neighborhoods. I also learned to not be as nervous or shy on the stage."



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## MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

The Middle School Program emphasizes increasing student skills for academic success. Students also participate in monthly workshops on topics such as self-identity, self-advocacy and promoting a growth mindset. Throughout their middle school years our students grow and develop to prepare them to navigate a high school college prep environment. We would like to share the story of Mele who exemplifies the growth that occurs for our students.

Mele joined BFN as a rising sixth grader excited to be a part of our close-knit community. As a student athlete and dedicated scholar, she kept very busy. Mele managed balancing school, sports, and BFN obligations through her middle school experience. As an eighth grader, she received individual reading tutoring once a week and grew close to two years in her reading comprehension and fluency. Mele's tenacity has equipped her with the preparation to thrive in High School at Eastside College Preparatory where she is currently a freshman.

Mele recently shared her thoughts by saying the following. "BFN helped me a lot. They prepared me for what was going to come in the future. I'm glad I got to be in BFN because their tutorial classes helped me review so that I could understand the problem. It also helped me become a very strong student because it made me see that if I work hard then I would be able to do anything and face the toughest things in life."



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## HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

The BFN High School Program ensures that students are prepared to stay on the college track by having 100% of our students take at least four to six of the necessary A-G courses necessary to be accepted to a University of California or California State University. Our students also participate in various workshops, career oriented field trips, college tours, leadership development and engage in up to 100 hours of community service.

As part of the summer program, BFN encourages students to plan early and apply for internships as well as gain experience through service programs at their school and local community. It was during this last year that a hard but good lesson was experienced by our student when time and planning did not coincide for him. Armando learned from one year to the next that leaving things to the last minute can be extremely stressful. He had learned in a workshop in January that internship opportunities are competitive and that deadlines are early. There seemed to be too much time before summer so that it was of no urgency for him.

By May, he began to panic by not having anything in place recalling, "this was the reason for starting early, to find a program I wanted and that was meaningful, I needed to put time and effort into my search and not wait for the last minute." Armando was finally able to participate in a program but he says, "it was a miracle that I got in but was extremely stressful." This year, when the topic of summer internships came around he had a flashback of the stress and immediately took action. He recalls, "I knew I couldn't repeat the mistake. They mentioned the summer program at our high school workshop and that same night during the meeting, I got a flashback and knew I wouldn't go through the same stress again. So the next day I applied to Bridge, which is a program at my school. I applied and in three weeks they told me I got in. It paid off and I had so much time to think of other things to do during the meetings at BFN like look at scholarships."



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## COLLEGE - I HAVE A DREAM (IHAD) PROGRAM

IHAD students received financial assistance and educational support through our BFN academic advisor. This year, we would like to share the thoughts of one of our Dreamers that has served as an example to her younger siblings who are also in the BFN program.

Karina is a senior at Notre Dame de Namur University recently transferring from Sonoma State to be closer to her family. She will be the first in her family to graduate from college. When asked about what the IHAD and BFN program mean to her and her family she says that it has been, "the opportunity to be mentored by individuals who offered the tools necessary to reach success in life."

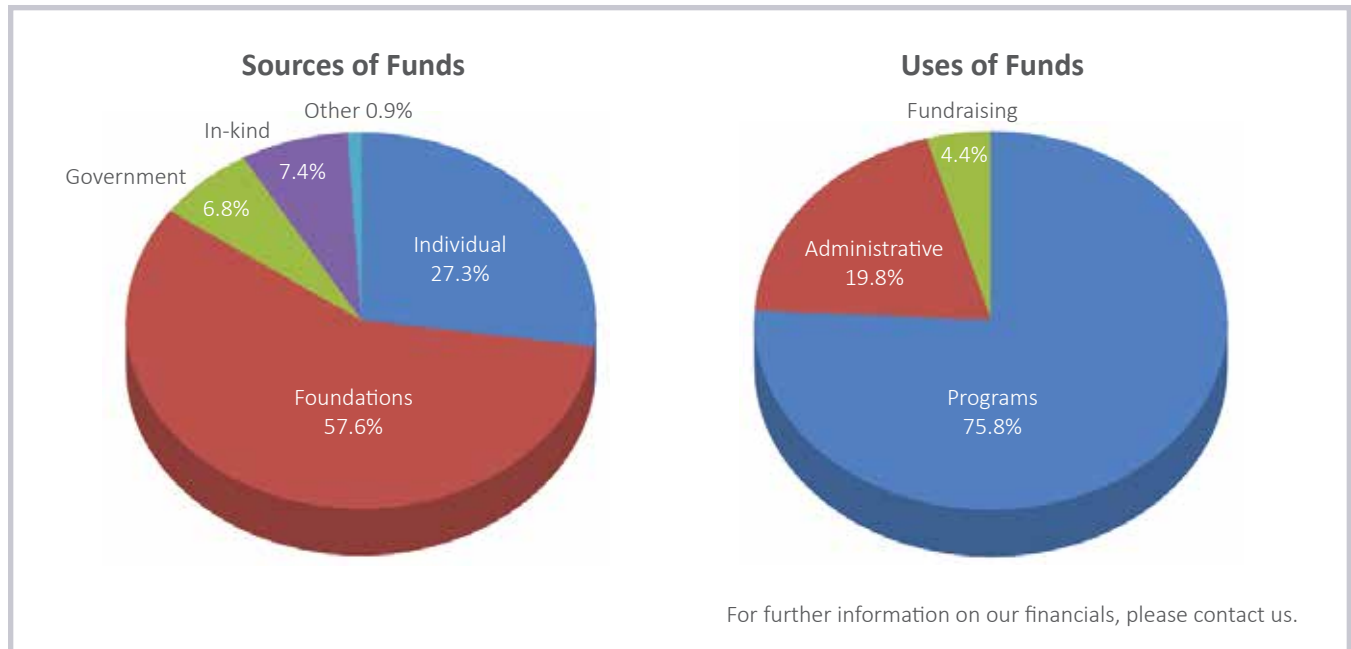


## DONORS

Building Futures Now (BFN) is truly grateful for the support of all our donors that help make our programs a reality. Please note that the following reflects donations made in our fiscal year from June 1, 2015 to May 31, 2016. (We make every effort to be accurate but for questions or changes, contact us at 650-380-9038.) Thank you!

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- AJ Tutoring
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- Boys Scouts of America
- Castilleja School
- Children’s Empowerment
- Eastside College Preparatory School
- Exploratorium
- The Girls’ Middle School
- IKEA, U.S. West, Inc.
- Menlo School
- Menlo Masters
- Menlo Swim and Sport
- Public Allies (AmeriCorps Program)
- Ravenswood City School District
- Ravenswood Family Health Center
- San Carlos Children’s Theatre
- Second Harvest Food Bank
- Woodland School
- Woodside Priory School
- Youth Empowerment Strategies for Success (YESS)
- YMCA –East Palo Alto

\*Partner organizations donate time and/or resources to BFN on an on-going basis.

### Colleges Attended By “I Have A Dream” Students

Colleges attended by our IHAD students:

- Cal Poly San Luis Obispo
- California State University, Chico
- California State University, Northridge
- College of San Mateo
- De Anza College
- Foothill College
- Humboldt State University
- Mission College
- Pomona College
- San Jose State University
- Santa Clara University
- Sonoma State University
- Spelman

*"BFN has helped me by knowing that I can do anything. That even if you come from a family that hasn't gone through college you can be the first." - 7th grader*



**JOIN US TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE –  
MAKE YOUR DONATION TODAY!**

Return the enclosed envelope or donate online at:  
[www.buildingfuturesnow.org/support](http://www.buildingfuturesnow.org/support)

**HOW YOUR DONATION HELPS:**

- \$15,000 funds our summer Math Academy for Middle School
- \$6,000 funds comprehensive support for one student for a year
- \$2,500 funds curriculum materials in math, science, reading or writing
- \$1,200 funds a student's summer program
- \$500 funds classroom supplies for a cohort of 15 students

*All donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Tax ID #77-0348803. Donations to securities are welcome. Please contact us if you would like to volunteer. We really appreciate those who are also able to give of their time. For questions contact Rosemary Kamei at [rkamei@buildingfuturesnow.org](mailto:rkamei@buildingfuturesnow.org) or 650-380-9038.*



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