

2020

IMPACT REPORT

2020 was an
unforgettable
year of challenge
– and triumph!



DEAR FRIENDS,

If there was ever a year for Breakthrough Birmingham to demonstrate what was possible, this year was it. Tumultuous does not even begin to describe the year 2020 — from a global pandemic that stopped the world in its tracks to social unrest the country over. The effect that this will have on the nation's children is unprecedented. The reality continues to be that this COVID crisis has widened already dire inequity gaps. It is expected that students from low-income families will bear the brunt of academic learning losses — estimated to be at least 5 months of losses in reading and about 8 months worth of losses in Math compared to previous years. This does not even take into account the very real and very important social emotional and mental health needs that are at an all time high. It is with this in mind that Breakthrough Birmingham operated this summer.

Amidst the chaos of the world, our scholars and teaching fellows made a mountain out of a molehill during Breakthrough's first ever virtual program. We worried about relationships — it turns out, kids just need to know that you care and they show up to the tune of 94% on average. We worried about academic gains — it turns out that when held to high expectations, our scholars made two months of gains in Reading and sustained no losses in Math. We worried about scholars not having enough exposure to new experiences — it turns out that over 70 individuals and 10 organizations wanted to volunteer their time with our program. We worried about parents being disconnected from our program — it turns out that 100% of families attended at least three events in our 5 ½ weeks together. In short: Relationships are key. Growth is possible. Rigor is necessary.

Our kids are watching us. They watch us as we struggle and overcome. They watch us as we make decisions. They watch us as we inch forward or stagger back. They make notes about their own capabilities and what is possible in the world based on what we choose to say out loud and how our actions match up with those words. I'm proud to say that our Breakthrough scholars watched us persevere through various ups and downs, remain agile as we learned from mistakes, and — most importantly — they watched us consistently put them and their needs first.

We cannot pretend to know what the future holds but I am a big believer in controlling what can be controlled and shrugging off the rest. In that light, Breakthrough demonstrated that if we focus on inspiring students and developing teachers, we could truly live up to our name and break through such a difficult time. For all of the challenges we may be navigating, we are also finding the opportunity to recreate the world of tomorrow with our scholars today.

Sincerely,



Mariohn Michel
Executive Director

OUR MISSION

Breakthrough Birmingham works with highly motivated, traditionally under-represented students in Birmingham to achieve post-secondary success, and also empowers aspiring leaders to become the next generation of educators and advocates.



SUMMER 2020

This summer demanded that we remain flexible while aiming for excellence.

We focused on minimizing learning losses that came from a shortened school year, building strong relationships across screens, and finding opportunities to help scholars produce outcomes they could be proud of. To that end, we offered

short morning and afternoon sessions that scholars picked to attend consistently then had friendly off-screen "challenges" for scholars in addition to working on their cross-curricular end-of-summer presentations.

BREAKTHROUGH SCHOLARS 102 SCHOLARS SERVED

- We had a 94% daily attendance average (with a 91% completion rate)
- 100% of our scholars are of color while 86% are from low-income communities
- Our scholars made 2 months of reading gains and no losses in math skills — during a pandemic!
- 96% of our scholars believe they are capable of going to college after a summer with BTB
- 72% of our scholars felt prepared to use digital tools/technology during the coming school year
- 78% of our scholars felt more prepared for the coming school year

TEACHING FELLOWS 100% OF FELLOWS RECOMMEND BTB

- Our Teaching Fellows came from 10 universities around the US; 35% were from HBCUs
- 23% of our Fellows were returners from BTB's Summer 2019 program
- 53% of our Fellows were majoring in education while 18% were STEM majors
- 71% of our Fellows were people of color and 41% were from low-income backgrounds
- 71% of our Fellows are more likely to become a teacher after a summer with BTB
- 100% of our Fellows felt they better understood the demands of teaching after this summer

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT 78 VOLUNTEERS HELPED THE BTB COMMUNITY

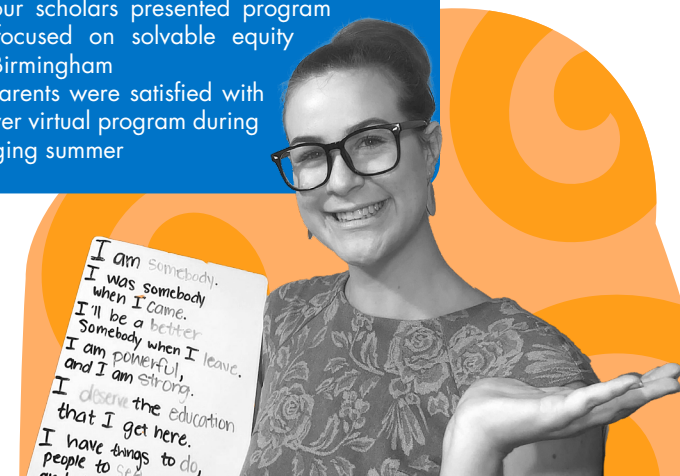
- 26 Career Day participants, including members of the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention
- 19 Colleges and Universities participated in College Day, including 6 HBCUs
- 8 special scholar programs were held, including a presentation from the 117th Air Refueling Wing
- 7 live family engagement events took place; 100% of families engaged in at least 3 events

OVERALL PROGRAM 23 DAYS OF PROGRAMMING

- Our 4 instructional coaches trained Humanities and STEM Fellows to teach social justice topics
- Our 3 high school interns and 6 staff members gave/shipped out 225 books & care packages
- Scholars spent 2 ½ hours in daily sessions covering 4 classes, including digital literacy
- Scholars deeply engaged with 5 social emotional competencies, including resilience and optimism
- 90% of our scholars presented program projects focused on solvable equity issues in Birmingham
- 99% of parents were satisfied with our first-ever virtual program during a challenging summer

TO DATE 6X MORE LIKELY TO GRADUATE FROM COLLEGE

- 437 Breakthrough Birmingham scholars have been served
- 147 Teaching Fellows have served our scholars
- Breakthrough Birmingham is about more than just one summer. It's about long term impact!
- 64% of BTB's first graduating class (2019) immediately enrolled in college — compared to 54% of Birmingham City Schools and 62% of Alabama



TEACHING FELLOWS

The next generation of educational advocates and leaders were molded over a nine week fellowship that immersed them in professional and personal growth opportunities.

MEET JANAE

Janae Giles — a sophomore Elementary Education Major at Tuskegee University — probably had the same thought that many teaching fellows had prior to this summer beginning: “I was really scared and nervous about virtual because I didn’t have a great experience with it in the Spring when COVID first hit.” But why did she insist on persevering through that fear? “I wanted to challenge myself because I don’t want my students to quit when things are difficult.” Her virtual Breakthrough experience ended up surprising her.

When asked how Breakthrough has impacted her life, Janae points to “learning to ask for help.” It’s a place for growth, she says, where “no one expects you to be perfect. They just expect you to give 100%. It was a welcoming environment where you could make mistakes and ask questions. No one is going to judge you. If I didn’t ask my questions, my students would be negatively impacted. And at the end of the day, it’s all about the kids. It’s an environment where you have room to grow. That’s helped me grow professionally and personally.”

And while she expected to form strong bonds with students over the summer, Janae was pleasantly surprised at the meaningful relationships she formed with other fellows. “It didn’t occur to me that I would come out with sixteen other friends with the same values. These are going to be lifetime friendships.”

“Seeing how much I grew in one summer, I can only imagine what kind of teacher I’ll be after three years of this.”



BREAKTHROUGH SCHOLARS

During a summer of unrest and uncertainty, scholars turned to Breakthrough to continue on their journey of learning and success.

MEET CHARLES

In a few years, you may be tasting the delights that Charles Shelton cooks up for his dessert business. That’s because Charles, a current 9th grader at Ramsay High School, is keen on being an entrepreneur who opens up a dessert shop.



Although he loves every subject because it’s an opportunity to learn about different aspects of the world, science is by far his favorite, which is important for any future professional dessert maker intrested in creating new treats. His key takeaways this summer? “Never judge a book by its cover. Challenge yourself. Stick to positive people.”

Charles loves that his teaching fellows “made us work but in a fun way” and that he spent so much time “networking with special guests who made me think about seeing the world differently.” In short, “Breakthrough isn’t like other programs. It’s very special.”

“Breakthrough puts you outside of your shell and challenges you to...collaborate. That’s something I’m still having to get used to. Before this, I was the type that wanted to work by myself.” After a virtual summer with Breakthrough, Charles, like many other Breakthrough scholars, walked away better understanding the power of relationships, even if it was only through screens.

“They’re going to put you outside your comfort zone but that’s okay.”



COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The quality of the experience our scholars and teaching fellows are able to have is directly correlated to the community support we receive. Thank you to all that have supported us in sustaining dreams of young people. Summer 2020 would not have been possible without the direct support of the following organizations and individuals.

SPONSORS & PARTNERS

PROUDLY SPONSORED BY:



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- Ashley Young

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COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY PARTNERS

- Alabama State University
- Auburn University
- Augustana College
- Berea College
- Birmingham Southern College
- Boston College
- Florida A&M University
- Howard University
- Miles College
- New College of Florida
- Samford University
- Savannah College of Art and Design
- Southwestern College

- Spelman College
- Tuskegee University
- University of Alabama
- University of Alabama at Birmingham
- University of Montevallo
- University of Virginia

CAREER DAY PARTNERS

- Ashlee Ammons of Mixtroz
- Crystal T. Ash of City of Birmingham Division of Youth Services
- Maggie Bolin of Vulcan Materials Company
- Jamela Bradford of Coldwell Banker
- Christina Broderick of IgnitEDU
- Joi Brown of Birmingham Civil Rights Institute
- James L. Cason, III of Warren Averett
- Dr. Aminah Cherry of Virtual Curbside Solutions
- Kate Davis of Birmingham Zoo
- Courtney Denson of Colorado Office of the Child's Representative
- Christina Dykes of Central Six Alabama Works!
- Daniel J. Fortune of Bradley, Arant, Boul, Cummins, LLP
- Dr. Tamara Gayle of Children's National
- Bridget E. Harris of Lightfoot, Franklin & White, LLC
- Vichi Jagannathan of Rural Opportunity Institute
- Dr. Richard "Rich" Joseph of Brigham & Women's Hospital Center for Community Wellness
- Dr. Florence Kanu of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Renee Kemp-Rotan of Studio Rotan
- Dr. Dione King of Department of Social Work at UAB
- Adam Mixon of Kemper Insurance
- Ruben Morris of Alabama Aerospace and Aviation High School
- Ruth Ann Moss of Birmingham Talks
- Chissy Nkemere of Concord Music
- Dr. Tia McGill Rogers of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Niesha White of Altec and Birmingham Black Techies

- Erica Jewel Littleton of Learning Little People & City of Birmingham Mayor's Office

SPECIAL PROGRAMMING GUESTS

- Dr. Nyesha Black
- Dr. Paulette Evans
- T. Marie King
- Isaac McCoy
- Candyce Monroe
- Courtney Nelson
- Beth Sanders
- Charlsie Wigley
- Gail Harper Yeilding
- 117th Air Refueling Wing
- Birmingham Education Foundation
- Birmingham City High School Principals
- Ed Farm
- Journey to Attorney
- SpeakFirst (of Impact America)
- Southern Museum of Flight
- UAB Computer Forensics Research Lab
- UAB Institute for Human Rights

SUMMER 2020 STAFF

- Miranda Avery
- Danyell Butler
- Ciera Bryant
- Tithe-Raymond Byrd
- Bathen Cathey
- Liora Chessin, Program Director
- Cathy Clark
- Alana Colafrancesco
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- India Foster
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- Lana Higgins
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- Melissa O'Neal
- Riley Raynor
- Janiah Rutledge
- Naomi Thomas
- Kristen Wearbon
- Jessica Wright
- Gail Harper Yeilding

ADVISORS

- Miho Kubagawa
- Jared Weinstein

FINANCIALS

Revenue

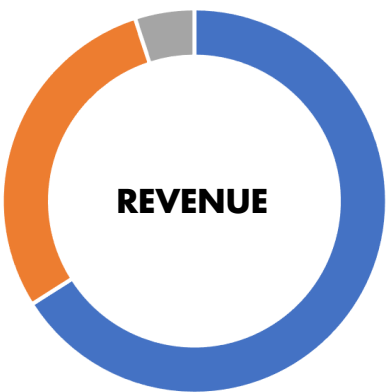
- Foundation & Corporate: 65.5%
- Government/District: 28.7%
- Individual: 5.8%

Total: \$284,205

Expenses

- Programs & Services: 75.8%
- Fundraising & admin: 24.2%

Total: \$243,769



SUMMER 2020 BY THE NUMBERS



112 Scholars



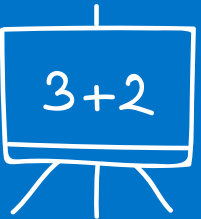
17 Teaching Fellows



12 Coaches, interns, volunteers, and administrators



7854 Hours of learning gained this summer



10

Classroom learning hours per week for each scholar

23 Days of programming over 5.5 weeks

79 Volunteers



BECOME A BTB CHAMPION!



Interested in supporting Breakthrough Birmingham? Want to partner with us? Looking for volunteer opportunities? Find out how at



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