

# 2023

# Annual Report

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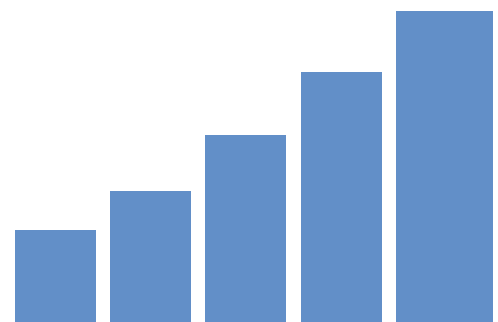
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# About Us

Founded in 2012, “A Bridge for Kids” is a San Diego-based independent non-profit organization that empowers underprivileged and under-resourced teenagers to achieve their full potential by providing them with the resources and opportunities they need to succeed. We believe that every teenager has unique skills and abilities that can be developed and nurtured to help them become thriving adults.

A Bridge for Kids is committed to nurturing the development of teenagers into prosperous adults through a range of programs. These include tutoring, career discovery, internships, preparedness programs, access to technology, wellness initiatives, financial sponsorships, and other programs aimed at teaching life skills. All our programs inspire creativity and offer transformative experiences that propel teenagers to evolve into flourishing adults.

As we journey through this new decade, we remain committed to our vision: a world where every teenager, regardless of their economic circumstances, has the chance and encouragement to pursue their dreams. Our goal is to become the leading non-profit organization in San Diego County, bridging the gap for disadvantaged teens by providing resources to help them achieve their academic, athletic, and artistic aspirations.



# Vision & Mission

## Vision

A Bridge for Kids envisions a world where every teen has the opportunity and support to pursue their dreams and reach their full potential, regardless of their economic background. We aim to be the leading nonprofit organization in San Diego County that connects underprivileged and under-resourced at-risk teenagers with our program and resources to empower them to achieve their academic, athletic, and artistic goals. We aspire to create lasting positive change in the lives of young people and society.

## Mission

A Bridge For Kids' mission is to build bridges to brighter futures for teenagers who have big aspirations but face barriers to achieving their full potential.





# Meet Our Grads!



## **THU**

MIT, ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING

In essence, A Bridge for Kids is an opportunity for low-income kids like me who are normally restricted by a high fence called money. Issues like not wanting to place financial burdens on our parents for tutoring services, college tours, sports equipment, or simply just not having the money, become easier with a sponsorship. Through their work, my life has greatly improved, and for that, I am truly grateful.



## **LYNNA**

YALE, ECOLOGY & EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY

I was able to connect with other first-generation low-income students from around San Diego at the ABFK annual events and learned that I was not alone in my journey to obtaining college after high school. The financial support was extremely helpful for me and my family because it allowed me to play tennis and participate in extracurriculars without a financial burden.



## **ANDREA**

UCSD, WOMENS SOCCER

The most helpful part of the sponsorship was that I was able to purchase athletic gear that helped me boost my athletic performance. I now play semi-professional soccer and the sponsorship really helped me financially. I am beyond grateful and humbled to have received the support from A Bridge for Kids.

# Our Programs

**FINANCIAL SPONSORSHIP** | We interview hundreds of students each year to identify high-achieving, low-income teens who have demonstrated potential in academics, athletics, and/or the arts. Once we have identified a student, we attempt to match that child with a sponsor. If successfully matched, the student receives financial support of at least \$1,000 that can be used to further their academic, athletic, and/or artistic endeavors. Students have used this money to purchase school supplies, athletic apparel, and over 1,000 other items. This stipend has also allowed students to play a travel sport, take a dance class, attend prom, and pursue numerous hobbies.

*"It's not easy, as a low-income teen, to live in a society filled with privileged kids, expensive stores, and a school that asks for money for literally everything. It was with the help of an incredible non-profit organization, A Bridge for Kids, that has faded my worries of how I'm going to afford the things I need." - Eric T.*

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**COLLEGE CAMPUS TOURS** | ABFK offers East Coast and West Coast college campus tours, which allow teens to visit schools that they would otherwise not be financially capable of touring.

These trips allow students to interact with current students, professors, and members of the admissions department. This allows a prospective student to get honest feedback about the school and get a better sense of the day-to-day life and overall community atmosphere.

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**SAT/ACT PREPARATORY PROGRAM** | Many of our students have strong GPAs but struggle to achieve commiserate scores on standardized entrance tests that are required by most colleges. ABFK has partnered with Revolution Prep to provide a "best in class" 6-week online preparatory course that we offer free to all of our students. The "retail" price of this class is well over \$1,000 and would be cost-prohibitive for the families we support.

*"My experience with the SAT/ACT prep class during my senior year provided me with a lot of reassurance and adequately prepared me for the exam. It was always discouraging to see the costs for the SAT/ACT prep programs, so I was grateful for the opportunity A Bridge for Kids provided me. I was able to learn test strategies, utilize practice tests that familiarized me with the exam format, and improve my pace. The program gave me the support and reassurance I needed to complete the exam when I walked into the test center. As a current college student, I still apply the study tips and test strategies I learned in the prep program to my college exams." - Claire T.*

# Our Programs

**COLLEGE APPLICATION COUNSELING** | All of our students have a story to tell; and, if articulated effectively, it can give them a competitive advantage over their peers when applying to colleges. Our College Application Counseling allows our students the opportunity to separate themselves from the crowd with an impressively prepared application and an engaging, thoughtful, and well-written admissions essay about their success in the face of adversity, but articulating that to a stranger is no easy task.

*"I took advantage of ABFK's essay editing services by Judy A. Bernstein. After writing my college essays and supplements, Ms. Bernstein offered to edit and provide feedback so I could fully express myself over paper to the admissions committee. With this extra resource, I understood techniques to "show, not tell" in my writing. With free and accessible resources, I felt more supported throughout the stressful application season." - Stephanie N*

**TUTORING PROGRAM** | We believe that maintaining a strong GPA is paramount when applying to the colleges of a student's dreams. Therefore, we offer financial support for academic tutoring to any of our students who need extra help. We work in concert with the Study Smarter and, sometimes, Revolution Prep to acquire tutors that meet both the student's and tutor's schedule. Progress is monitored; and provided the student complies with requirements, tutoring is ongoing until the extra help is no longer needed. Progress is monitored, and provided the student complies with requirements, tutoring is ongoing until the extra help is no longer needed.

**COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS** | Every year we give out college scholarships to students who have continually excelled academically, athletically, and/or artistically. In 2023 we awarded \$30,000 in college scholarships. This alleviates some of the financial burdens of attending college and allows our students to do what is best for themselves academically, without the intimidation of cost. Funds awarded can go towards anything from college tuition to textbooks, housing, dorm essentials, and more.

*"I've been blessed with the opportunity towards higher education through ABFK, specifically their college scholarship. ABFKs offers both sponsorships and scholarships, which seek to improve our sociability even throughout times such as the pandemic. Before ABFK I was not able to enjoy many of the luxuries my friends were able to afford. Today, I've had the chance to improve upon my quality of life, although through other means." - Lex L.*

# Our Programs

**TECHNOLOGY EQUALITY** | In March 2020, we launched our Technology Equality Program. In doing so, we committed to providing every student, who had a demonstrated need, with a free laptop and ensured they had in-home access to the internet. This initiative was truly life-changing! Our students are now able to attend online classes, do assignments at home instead of at the library, and complete school work on functioning laptops instead of their phones.

*“With my sponsorship I was able to receive school supplies such as the laptop I am using to write this. Prior to the purchase, I used my phone to work on school assignments and I struggled to do my homework effectively. A common struggle with texting is making spelling errors due to clicking the wrong letter key, but it's manageable because you normally aren't texting essays to people. I had to master how to text essays on my phone. At times, it was very frustrating and often discouraged me from wanting to do any work at all. Once I got the laptop, I used it to complete assignments from school at home.” - Angelina G.*

**CROSSING THE BRIDGE** | The Crossing the Bridge program addresses the needs of graduating ABFK students heading to college, particularly those who are first-generation Americans. Recognizing the stress and uncertainty associated with dorm room essentials, the program offers a thoughtful solution. Graduates are offered a customizable dorm room essentials kit, including items like comforters, bed sheets, towels, and more. The initiative aims to ease the transition to college for these students, who often face unique challenges. A Bridge for Kids expresses pride in their achievements and emphasizes ongoing support as they embark on this exciting new chapter in their lives.

**HEALTH & WELLNESS** | Over the past year, participants have ventured to the Grand Canyon for moments of inspiration, scaled new heights with rock climbing at Vertical Hold, explored underwater realms through paddleboarding and snorkeling, embraced teamwork on the beach volleyball court, demonstrated environmental stewardship through beach cleanups, and experienced the joy of ice skating during winter months, and much more. This holistic approach to well-being encompasses physical challenges, leadership lessons, and personal growth. A Bridge for Kids remains dedicated to expanding the horizons of our Health and Wellness Program, offering enriching experiences that inspire growth, health, and adventure.

*“I love that we can challenge ourselves. It was even better that we had to rely on each other for safety and fun. I have learned how to cooperate better with my teammates. I also appreciate that I had the opportunity to face my fear of heights” - Vy T.*



# Program Highlights



## HEALTH & WELLNESS

Our Health & Wellness program found its footing and was a huge success! Our students have participated in paddleboarding, bowling, ice skating, beach volleyball, nutritional seminars, mental health seminars, rock climbing, and more!

Our students who were most active in this program got to attend our Grand Canyon Trip for 3 days. We hiked, learned about the geology, and had a blast

## CROSSING THE BRIDGE

Our newest program! Launched summer of 2023, we provided our class of graduates with a “graduation gift” filled with dorm room essentials that will arrive at their college prior to their arrival.

We want our teens to succeed in High School AND college. This support will allow them to focus on success without worrying about the cost of bed sheets or other dorm room necessities.



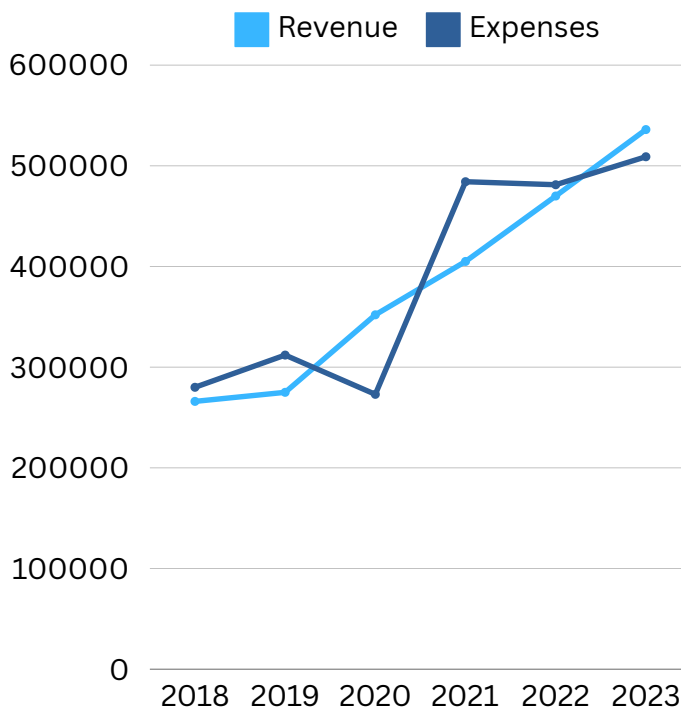
## COLLEGE TOURS

Our West Coast College tour was our BIGGEST tour to date - consisting of 23 students!

We visited 7 schools over 5 days. For some of our students, this was the first time venturing out of San Diego County. For many, it was the first time they had visited a campus outside of San Diego, and for all of them, it was a life-changing experience!

# Financial Statements

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Revenue	\$275,000	\$352,000	\$405,000	\$470,500	\$536,000
Expenses	(\$312,000)	(\$273,000)	(\$484,000)	(\$481,000)	(\$509,000)
Net Income	(\$37,000)	\$79,000	(\$79,000)	(\$10,500)	\$27,000



## Other Statistics You May Like:

- **\$75,000+** was spent on technology for our students through our *Technology Equality Program* with over 50 laptops purchased and wi-fi guaranteed for each of our students.
- Our College Scholarship program awarded a record amount of **\$25,000 in 2023** (with over **\$75,000** contributed since its launch in 2020).
- **500+ total participants** in our Health & Wellness program during 2023 - including activities such as ice skating, paddleboarding, rock climbing, and even going to the Grand Canyon.
- **23 students** went on our West Coast campus tour this year.

# 2024 Goals & Outlook

**In San Diego, a city of over 1.3 million people, over 160,000 families are living at or below the poverty level (families of four with incomes of \$26,500 or less).** As a result of this economic dislocation, there are countless underprivileged youth who face daunting societal and economic barriers. High-achieving low-income teens exist within this discouraging statistic, but their gift need not be buried there. Urgent intervention and the expansion of ABFK programming are needed to deepen our community impact and bolster support for underserved youth.

As ABFK journeys through this new decade, **we remain committed to our vision: a world where every teenager, regardless of their economic circumstances, has the chance and encouragement to pursue their dreams.** During our annual DreamMakers gala in October 2022, Michael Nance, Founder and Executive Director, boldly declared an audacious goal: to double the size of our organization by the end of 2025. This ambitious endeavor would open doors for at least 200 students, granting them full access to A Bridge for Kids (ABFK) and its life-transforming suite of programs.

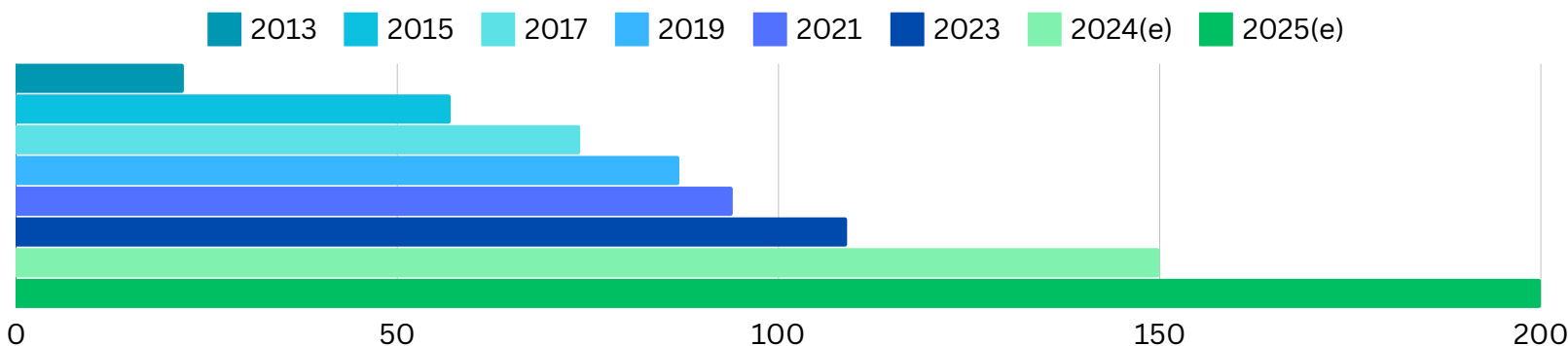
In 2024, we stand on the brink of remarkable growth. Our mission is to deepen our community impact and bolster support for underserved students. Our strategic priorities encompass:

- Expanding College Tours: To meet rising demand, we'll widen our college tour offerings.
- Enhancing College Preparatory Programs: We're committed to enriching and diversifying our college preparatory initiatives.
- Advancing Technology Equality: Our goal is to equip every student we serve with a laptop and home Wi-Fi access.

**We estimate an additional investment of \$350,000 in 2024 to achieve these vital goals.** Due to the inherent scalability of our infrastructure, we are confident that over 95% of this investment will directly contribute to the enhancement and expansion of our programs, with less than 5% allocated to non-program-related expenses.

Now, more than ever, it is crucial to galvanize the support of our community, philanthropists, and all stakeholders to invest in the boundless potential of San Diego's youth. Together, we can forge a future where every young person has the foundation to thrive, shine, and rise above the circumstances of their birth.

*# Students Actively Sponsored*



# Thank YOU!

Dear Supporters and Donors,

**On behalf of everyone at A Bridge for Kids, we extend our deepest gratitude.** Your unwavering generosity and commitment have been the bedrock of our organization's success. Through your kindness and compassion, we continue our mission of providing essential support and resources to underprivileged youth, empowering them to realize their full potential. Your contributions ripple through countless young lives, offering hope, opportunity, and a brighter future.

As we move forward, we eagerly anticipate continuing this meaningful journey together. You are the bridge that connects deserving young souls to a world of possibilities.

**To our dedicated volunteers: Your selflessness and tireless efforts form the backbone of our organization.** Whether mentoring, organizing events, or fundraising, your passion exemplifies the spirit of community and compassion. Your invaluable contributions illuminate the path toward a brighter future for our youth. Thank you for being the guiding light.

With heartfelt appreciation,

A Bridge for Kids



## Contact Us



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