

2019

ANNUAL REPORT



Breakthrough
Silicon Valley

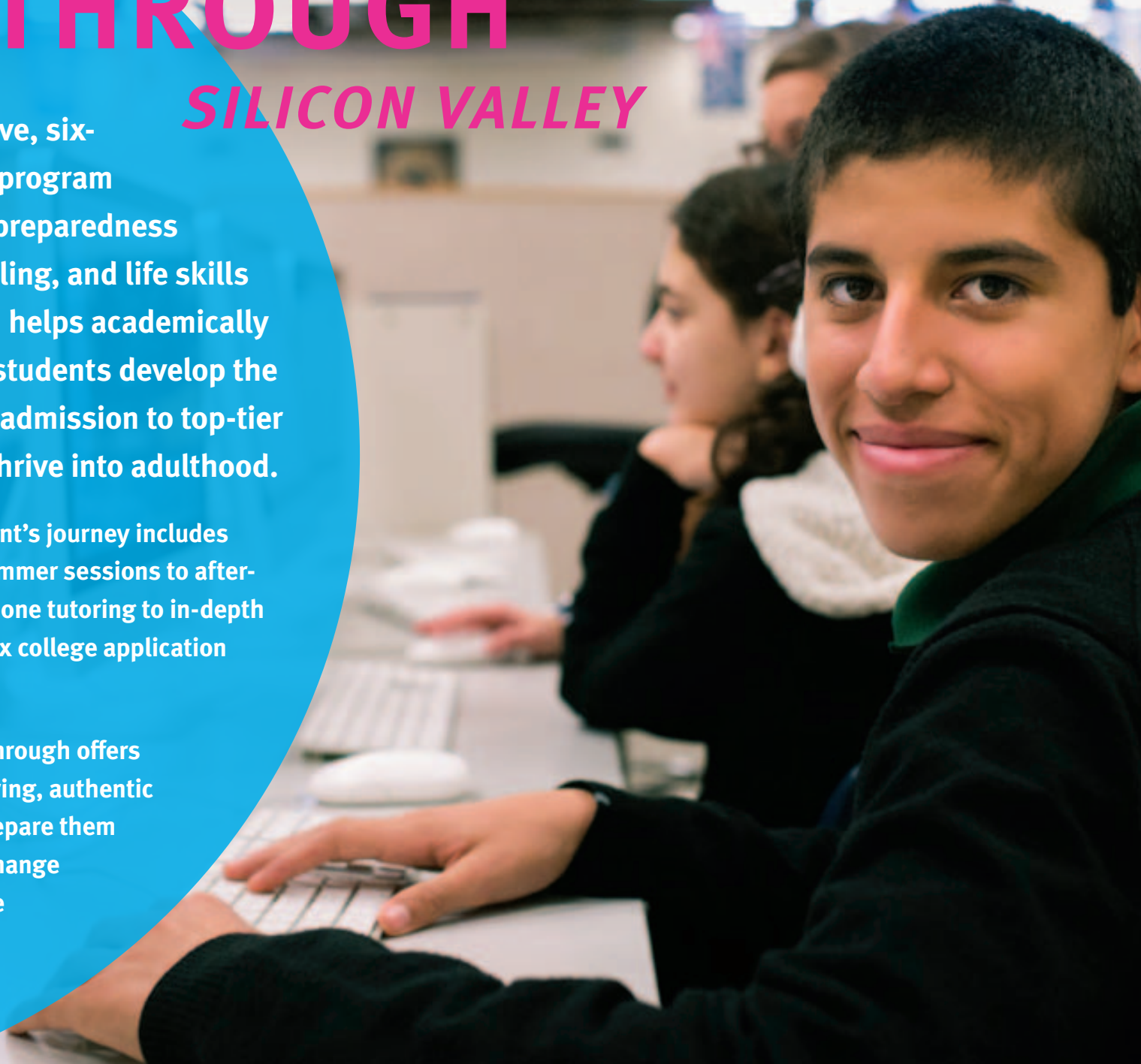
BREAKTHROUGH

SILICON VALLEY

provides a comprehensive, six-year out-of-school time program consisting of academic preparedness courses, college counseling, and life skills coaching. Breakthrough helps academically motivated, low-income students develop the skills they need to gain admission to top-tier four-year colleges and thrive into adulthood.

A typical Breakthrough student's journey includes everything from academic summer sessions to after-school math classes, one-on-one tutoring to in-depth guidance through the complex college application and financial aid process.

A parallel path within Breakthrough offers idealistic young people inspiring, authentic teaching experiences that prepare them for careers as teachers and change agents ready to transform the face of education.



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends and Supporters:

At Breakthrough Silicon Valley, we work with a sense of urgency. We believe that every hour our students spend with us should lead them further down the path toward college. We wouldn't have it any other way – not given the harsh reality that only one in ten low-income students complete college.

Breakthrough students are defying those odds. 98% of our alumni have matriculated to college. 80% of Breakthrough's Class of 2011, our first six-year cohort, have earned their bachelor's degree, and the remaining 20% are on track to finish soon. It is no overstatement to say that the Breakthrough experience is transformative – our graduates not only enroll in college, they thrive.

After nearly four years with Breakthrough Silicon Valley, I believe more than ever that real transformation – the kind that can erase poverty from our students' lives forever – takes real

commitment. It takes the kind of determination my colleagues bring to work each day. It takes committed students who trust that their academic risks will lead to academic rewards. Most of all, it takes a community of believers who refuse to accept that a student's family income level should dictate his or her life outcomes.

It is with this mindset that we embark on an exciting phase in our brief history. Over the next three years, we will increase our enrollment by 50% and form meaningful partnerships with local schools, universities, and community organizations who rally behind our students. We will work tirelessly alongside more than 600 volunteers dedicated to closing the achievement gap for low-income students.

But, before we jump into tomorrow's work, it is my pleasure to pause and reflect on a successful year. In the following pages, you will read stories that celebrate the journey families take with Breakthrough by their side. You will get a

glimpse of our programming and values as an organization, and you will see the company you keep as a generous supporter of our mission.

From the first day of our largest summer session to date in June 2015, when 66 teaching fellows joined 242 middle school students across three sites, to our record-breaking – not to mention, wildly exhilarating and fun – annual fundraiser, “Are You Smarter than a Breakthrough Student?,” 2015 was a year filled with achievement and opportunities to grow.

It is with a grateful heart that I look ahead to more to come.

In partnership,



Melissa Johns
Executive Director

FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

I've been in Silicon Valley for many years; in that time, I have built and sold companies and been involved in all aspects of the business, from product to operations. What I've seen over time is that there are certain traits that spell success in our Valley, characteristics like tenacity, resourcefulness, and professionalism. These are the same qualities that Breakthrough Silicon Valley instills in its students.

I care about the long-term strength and sustainability of our region's economy; and we can't deny that as an industry, the technology sector is experiencing a severe shortage of diverse talent. It's one of the many reasons I am a big proponent of Breakthrough's work, which invests time and energy into predominately low-income, under-served, academically motivated kids in San Jose. Breakthrough kids will be the future leaders of Silicon Valley – they are smart, savvy, and prepared to succeed in college and in life.

The other side of Breakthrough's program is the teachers. The students-teaching-students model is an important career development path for future educators. There is a serious teacher shortage in the Bay Area, even more so in math and sciences. Meanwhile, Breakthrough is recruiting and training a pipeline of future

teachers who will already have job experience, know-how, and ties to our community.

As an organization, Breakthrough is at an exciting point in its lifecycle. We've figured out an effective model for reaching kids and training teachers, and we know how to maximize the six years we spend with our students so they get into college and thrive there. Our alumni stories are heartening (read on for a profile of one of our great young alums); these young leaders are the living outcome of our years of hard work. We're moving out of the start-up phase and into figuring out how to make the program scale, all with an eye towards organizational sustainability, quality, and meeting long-term needs – both for Breakthrough and for Silicon Valley.

I invite you to join us as we continue to grow and change more lives. Follow Breakthrough on social media, visit us to see the program in action, come volunteer with the kids, meet the teachers, learn more, and invest in this remarkable organization. I know you'll be as impressed as I am.

Sincerely,



Greg Murphy
Chair, Board of Directors

mission-driven

All Breakthrough students will enroll and thrive in college and be prepared for 21st century careers. We also train high school and college students who want to become teachers and educators. Every aspect of our program is geared towards preparing students and teaching fellows for these goals.

commitment to excellence

Excellence permeates every aspect of our program. We acknowledge that while school can be difficult at times, the academic high road is the one to be taken. With love and commitment, Breakthrough staff helps students work towards their goals without cutting corners.

needs-responsive

Each student has individual strengths and needs. We provide a support system around each child's needs, building on their strengths to meet their academic goals. Trust is fundamental. We must have big hearts and an understanding of our students to earn trust.

CORE VALUES

honor the life of the child

We respect each child's life as it is. We find the strengths and assets in each child and family, and build on them while helping students learn how to deal with difficult situations.

laughter and fun

We teach our students to love learning and have fun in the process. Our students experience the power and enjoyment that comes when they stretch their minds.

continuous assessment

Breakthrough is steeped in continuous self-assessment so that we may offer an environment of excellence to our students and families. Teachers, staff, and students routinely receive constructive feedback and an opportunity for continued improvement.

***BREAKTHROUGH SILICON
VALLEY'S MISSION:***

1 To prepare motivated middle and high school students with limited educational opportunities for success in rigorous college-preparatory high school programs and entry into four-year colleges.

2 To prepare outstanding high school and college students to enter careers in education.



year in review

2015 was a lively, fun, growth-oriented year at Breakthrough Silicon Valley. We served **400** students on their path to college. We watched our kids learn and mature as young people and future leaders. We sat down with parents and talked about the demands and expectations of our program, student progress, the realities of paying for college, and all the wonderful strides their children have made and will make in the future. We broke one piñata and a lot of barriers.



Seniors who went to college:

100%

(80% at 4-year institutions, 20% at 2-year community colleges with plans to transfer to a university)



Teaching Fellows who went into education who said that Breakthrough provided them with skills that prepared them to be an educator:

100%



Summer Program students who said Breakthrough helps their confidence in school:

97%



Supporters at “Are You Smarter Than a Breakthrough Student?”, a record-breaking year:

375



College acceptance letters received:

136

Adults vs. Students win record at “Are You Smarter”:

3-3



Summer Program student attendance rate:

97%



Companies who volunteered with Breakthrough:

33

Pizzas ordered for our college- and career-readiness workshops:

240



Parent focus groups held to refine our program:

5



Prospective future teachers trained in the Summer Program:

60



Volunteers:

654

partnering with parents

THE BREAKTHROUGH WAY



At Breakthrough, we don't just serve kids. Our approach embraces the entire family — each student and their parents. We view our relationship with parents as a partnership; together we provide the foundation to support students through the many challenges they face on the road to college. This nurturing, team-centered approach is one of the hallmarks of our program.

Breakthrough parents often come to us feeling ill-equipped to help their children. Many never attended college or simply lack resources. Years of experience have shown us that when parents have the tools they need, they feel empowered in a way that strengthens our partnership and fuels their child's success.

To meet the needs of our parents, Breakthrough hosts a series of two-hour workshops throughout the school year. Topics include everything from *Saving for College* to *Social Media and Online Safety*, and *High School Course Selection* to *Financial Aid Basics*. As students progress from middle school to high school, workshops are structured to help parents learn what they need to know at each crucial juncture as well as anticipate what's ahead. In the spring of seventh grade, for instance, we begin to explore high school options. In the fall of ninth grade, the college admissions process is introduced. Workshops are offered

in English and Spanish with some Vietnamese language support. And like all Breakthrough programs, parent workshops are interactive with plenty of time for questions.

Our partnership with parents develops through other means, as well — periodic one-on-one conferences and the small interactions that happen over six years. This is where we earn their trust and appreciation. These connections are what solidify the relationships with our families and create a network of support for our students. We encourage parents to stop by or pick up the phone any time they need help, whether that means completing a confusing school form, navigating high school course selection, or simply a sympathetic ear. We watch students grow from eager preteens to independent young adults, ready to make informed college decisions, and we are honored to partner with parents on this journey.

MARIA LOPEZ PARENT PERSPECTIVE

Breakthrough staff members Tina Briceño, Student Services and Partnerships Manager, and Christina Castro Harvey, Communications Manager, recently had the opportunity to catch up with former Breakthrough parent, **Maria Lopez**.

Maria is the mother of Adriana Lopez, BSV Class of 2014 and UC Riverside Class of 2018. Following is an excerpt of their conversation, translated from the original Spanish.

BSV: *You must be so proud of Adriana! She has come so far.*

ML: From the time she was a little girl, Adriana enjoyed learning and reading. I was always focused on her education. Adriana would always say that she wanted to do something big.

BSV: *How did you learn about Breakthrough?*

ML: I first learned about it through Adriana. At the beginning of sixth grade, she came home talking about how she wanted to apply and that Breakthrough was a program that would help her get into college. I always wanted my daughter to go to college, but I did not know how to get her there.

BSV: *How has Breakthrough impacted Adriana?*

ML: Breakthrough opened the doors to university. I don't think that she would be in the university she is today without Breakthrough. She is the first in my family to go to college. Her triumphs are my triumphs. Even today, if she has questions, she still goes to Breakthrough.

BSV: *What do you value most about Breakthrough?*

ML: As a parent, for the things I did not understand or did not know, I could always go to Breakthrough. I trusted the information and advice they provided.

Parents like me, who don't speak the language and don't understand the system, can find it frustrating not being able to help their children or give them the same opportunities.

BSV: *What was it like to work with Breakthrough staff?*

ML: I always felt that we are a team — parents, Breakthrough, and my daughter. A great team. The team that we formed together created a star.

You can't just have motivation, you need to have resources and tools. I did not have the tools. Breakthrough had the tools. They knew what steps to take. Breakthrough opened the doors for my daughter and always had her best interests at heart. It was so good and it didn't cost a nickel!



“
I always felt that we are a team — parents, Breakthrough, and my daughter. A great team.
”



THE MATHEMATICS OF **learning**

It's one thing to talk about how Breakthrough's After-School Program works, it's another thing to see it in action. These are not your typical classrooms with tidy rows of desks where students sit quietly and listen. By contrast, Breakthrough classrooms buzz with activity. Students gather in small groups to tackle a math problem. Sitting face to face, focused conversation sets the tone for collaboration. Though the work involves calculation, the focus isn't about the solution alone, it's about talking through ideas, considering alternative perspectives, and persevering through stumbling blocks.



At Breakthrough, students explain their thinking as their partners ask questions. You might hear disagreements arise, but just as likely, you'll catch the "aha" moment as a group pinpoints an error, then plunges happily ahead to revise their work. The energy in the room is palpable as students interact with each other and the problem at hand.

What's behind the After School Program's buzz are the Common Core Math Standards (CCMS), implemented through an innovative Breakthrough Silicon Valley program redesign process completed during the 2014-2015 school year. The CCMS naturally dovetail with the skills Breakthrough seeks to build – collaboration, flexibility, self-advocacy, creativity, critical thinking – skills that will ensure our students not only gain acceptance to college, but thrive once they are on their own in new environments.

At the heart of the program is Breakthrough's students-teaching-students approach, in which high school and college students act as role models and coaches. Our facilitators, as we call them, give students room to explore and drive their own learning. They offer support when needed, often as a guiding question, much like a project leader would in a professional setting.

“
*At the heart
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students-teaching-
students approach.*
”

We see student learning solidify through this collaborative process. Our students are indeed building math skills. They are also building skills that will prepare them for the complex workplace of tomorrow – for jobs that have yet to even be conceived – as the future innovators and change agents who will shape our world.

breaking through

Fearless. When Breakthrough Silicon Valley students graduate from high school, we hope that we have taught them to be fearless – to seize opportunities, accept challenges, and give firm handshakes. At Breakthrough, we spend six years preparing our students academically for college but also socio-emotionally, to go out into the world with confidence. We want our graduates to feel comfortable seeking out a professor during his/her office hours or advocating for themselves at the Financial Aid Office or when following up on a job lead.

Estela Lozano is one alumna who is fearless in the Breakthrough style. Estela is a Health, Science & Social Policy and Latin American & Latino Studies double major at Brandeis University, where her confidence is an asset to her every day. “If it weren’t for

Breakthrough, I would not have the same belief in myself and my abilities,” explained Estela when discussing her path to and through college. “Without Breakthrough, I would definitely not be at Brandeis, maybe not even earning a bachelor’s degree. Without Breakthrough, I would not have had the confidence to make the most out of my college years.”

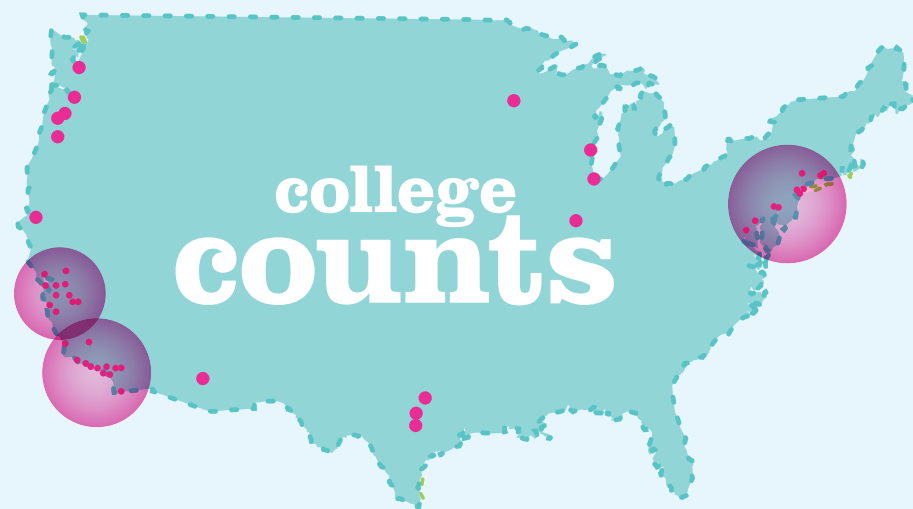
As the daughter of immigrants, Estela is working to increase awareness about the issues that immigrants face, including access to education. On campus, as co-president of the Brandeis Immigration Education Initiative (BIEI), an awareness organization, she met with her college’s administration to discuss the school’s policy against admissions of undocumented students. This past summer, Estela worked at the National Council of La Raza in Washington, D.C., one of the largest Latino advocacy groups in the country, on their immigration policy team. Estela, who is interested in going to law school after Brandeis, conducted research

AN ALUMNA GOES TO COLLEGE

on deferred action for childhood arrivals of undocumented immigrants. In a previous internship, Estela provided Spanish translation services for the San Francisco District Attorney's Office in the Victim Services department. She is using her focus and confidence to help those around her.

When Estela reflects on what she has accomplished in college, she also remembers the calls, text messages, and emails to her "Breakthrough family" made in moments of doubt. Breakthrough continues to provide individualized support and guidance to Estela and her peers throughout their college careers, including help identifying valuable internships and professional development opportunities. If necessary, we even advocate on our former students' behalf (i.e. with Financial Aid departments). While not explicitly stated in our mission, Breakthrough is dedicated to supporting our students' dreams of not only going to college, but graduating from a four-year university with the skills they need to continue to set and achieve their goals. Earning a degree will get them one step closer to fearlessly breaking the cycle of poverty in their families while also improving the economic vitality of our community.

“
*Without
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”



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SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
COLLEGE TOUR:

14

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Claremont McKenna College,
CSU Northridge,
Harvey Mudd College,
Loyola Marymount University,
Occidental College,
Pepperdine University,
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College, Scripps College,
UC Riverside, UCLA, USC,
Whittier College

OUR 2015 GRADUATES
WERE ADMITTED TO:

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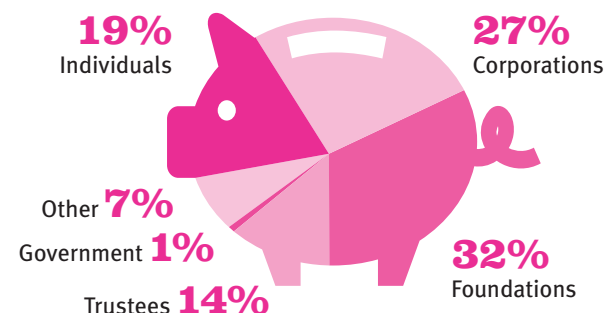
Jenny Uribe
 College Counselor

FINANCIAL DATA



EXPENDITURES

\$1,139,435.85



REVENUE

\$1,576,766.41

**Unaudited financial data for the fiscal year 2/1/15 - 1/31/16*

Jody Chang

A LEGACY OF PHILANTHROPY



Jody Chang is a Managing Director of The Campbell Foundation, a family foundation that makes grants in education and the arts, with a special interest in organizations that benefit underserved children, youth and women. The Campbell Foundation has been a supporter of Breakthrough Silicon Valley since 2013. Alongside her mother and sister, Jody is carrying on a family legacy of philanthropy that originated with her grandparents in Abilene, Texas, in the 1970s.

Jody first got involved with Breakthrough Silicon Valley through her husband Curtis Chang's social sector consulting firm, Consulting Within Reach. Jody now champions Breakthrough in The Campbell Foundation's grant-making because "the thoroughness and clarity of Breakthrough's approach is compelling. The idea of empowering kids to achieve and succeed in college is very motivating."

In addition to Breakthrough's important mission, Jody says that one of the things that most appeals to her about supporting the organization is "the relational aspect of your work and how you connect to the kids." With an intensive six-year program that allows Breakthrough to forge meaningful bonds with our students and their families, those connections are one of the hallmarks of the Breakthrough way.

As a supporter who has seen Breakthrough grow and develop over the last few years, Jody observes that "the expansion on the East Side is exciting, it's a test point for future scaling." She says she is hopeful and eager to see Breakthrough continue to learn, evaluate, and grow from our 2012 expansion into Franklin McKinley School District, in order to impact even more young lives. Recognizing Breakthrough's high touch efforts on behalf of our students, Jody says, "The longer I'm in philanthropy, the more I'm convinced the high touch [model] seems necessary."

Jody also values Breakthrough's ripple effect on the lives of students, families, and their communities. She hopes for a similar ripple effect in growing Breakthrough's network of supporters. In addition to The Campbell Foundation's funding, Jody says, "We want more people to know Breakthrough's mission and effectiveness because it's outstanding."

Jody Chang is a Managing Director with The Campbell Foundation; Director of Community Relations for Consulting Within Reach; Assistant Director of Grant Making, a Lead Partner, and on the board of the Silicon Valley Social Venture Fund; and the founder and former president of the Hammer Montessori Foundation. She graduated from Harvard University with a B.A. in History and Literature and lives in San Jose with her husband, Curtis, and two daughters.



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