



EPAAF

EAST PALO ALTO
ACADEMY
FOUNDATION

Reimagining Success

IMPACT REPORT
2022-2023



DEAR FRIENDS,

Together this year, EPAA and EPAAF have supported our high school students and graduates in pursuing careers of meaning, lives of choice, and positive community impact.

As we have evolved to meet students' needs, we have engaged in a corresponding process of reimagining success. While the bachelor's degree is still the most powerful lever of upward mobility, it is not the only lever. We have identified three essential career benefits that help first-generation students break the cycle of poverty and access long-term wellness: paid time off, health insurance, and retirement plans. In response, we have committed to exposing students to multiple postsecondary pathways that lead to transformative careers and to supporting them in making active choices about their future.

We are honored to meet students where they are, listen to them and respond to their needs, and walk alongside them on their educational journeys. In an effort to make our 10-Year Promise more equitable, we're taking what we've learned about sustaining a strong continuum of support between the beginning of high school and the attainment of bachelor's degrees, and we're strengthening support for students choosing to pursue associate's degrees and vocational training.

In alignment with our broadening concept of success, we at East Palo Alto Academy Foundation proudly release our updated Vision and Mission below. Throughout this impact report, you will find stories from our students, updates from our programs, and data from the year. We invite you to join us on this journey of reimagining success!

We hope you will enjoy this annual update, and we thank you for your support.

With our deepest gratitude,



Amika Guillaume
PRINCIPAL,
EAST PALO ALTO ACADEMY



Kate Hyle
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
EAST PALO ALTO ACADEMY
FOUNDATION



VISION

All students will have the opportunity to pursue lives of choice that uplift themselves, their families, and their communities.

MISSION

Our mission is to support the students and graduates of East Palo Alto Academy through high school and postsecondary pathways into meaningful careers by providing academic, navigational, social-emotional, and financial resources.

Scholar Stories

Our EPAAF scholars embark on many different journeys, and we are incredibly proud to support them along the way. Below, we spotlight three scholars who have forged postsecondary pathways that align with their individual strengths, passions, and dreams. They powerfully represent how different postsecondary pathways lead to lives of choice and careers of meaning. Congratulations, Gil, Noelia, and Ricardo!

GILBERTO



“Studying Business Administration at UC Berkeley, I learned a lot about myself in terms of my learning style and what my goals are. I realized, ‘college is not working for me right now; let’s switch it up for one year and see how it goes.’

I signed up for YearUp [a vocational training program] and interned at Meta for six months. Then, I interviewed and got accepted to Meta’s IT residency program — that’s what I’m doing now. I help Meta employees with whatever comes up, from software to hardware issues. Once the residency ends, I’m going to keep earning certificates and growing my IT knowledge.

I love helping people, and I love learning. As long as I’m working towards my better self, I’ve learned that it’s okay to make mistakes, change, and grow. I would say I’m most proud of my inner peace, learning how to listen to myself and search for happiness over any specific degree, job, or salary.”

NOELIA

“After graduating from EPAA, I came straight to UCLA. At the end of my sophomore year, I decided to change my major from Biochemistry to Physiological Science to better align with my career goals.

Because of my family’s economic situation, I would have had to work a lot in order to cover my cost of attendance at UCLA. Donors’ support truly allowed me to focus on my education and explore opportunities that wouldn’t have been possible otherwise. I was part of a Mexican traditional dance club, and I was also a member of an organization that provides free health care to residents in Tijuana, Mexico. In addition, I had the chance to participate in research and made a connection with the Chief of Autopsy Pathology and Cardiothoracic Pathology, which allowed me to observe autopsies as well.



After graduating college, I spent the summer as a volunteer at EPAA, supporting newcomer students and teaching ballet folklórico! In the fall, I start my postbaccalaureate program at UC Davis to prepare for medical school. Next, I plan to attend med school and become a medical examiner one day.”

RICARDO



“I first came to the United States at the beginning of high school. Back then, one of my biggest challenges was learning English, but I knew that I wanted a higher education and a career, so I worked hard. My parents thought it was a risky goal to pursue, and, to be honest, it wasn’t easy.

At one point, I even dropped out of community college to work full time and pay the bills. But Ms. Wong [a former EPAAF staff member] got in touch, and she convinced me to reapply for the scholarship and keep going. Thanks to her, I went to college. She helped me a lot — step-by-step, she helped me fill out all the documents to transfer to a university. Here I am, I graduated from San José State, and I think it’s the biggest accomplishment that I can say that I’ve achieved.

I’m always trying to learn new things. Right now, I’m working on my portfolio to apply for graphic design jobs at tech companies. Someday, my dream is to have my own graphic design firm.”

Meeting Students Where They Are

To honor the strengths and meet the unique needs of first-generation, low-income students, EPAAF provides a wide range of programs and services at EPAA.

Here, we highlight three of our high school programs.

ENRICHMENT: DREAM LAB MAKERSPACE

The Dream Lab Makerspace is a state-of-the-art space where students engage in hands-on, project-based learning. Over the summer, students participated in a six-week “Tinker, Design, Create” course in partnership with the Stanford Graduate School of Education. In the fall, students worked with Foothill College Professor Carol Johnson to submit a proposal to NASA’s TechRise Future Engineers Challenge.

“The Dream Lab had a big impact on my decision to major in engineering. I chose this career because of what I was doing every day after school, learning how to use CAD (computer-aided design) and then 3D print. It also helped A LOT to have engineers as mentors, so I could ask them questions about the engineering field.”

—Edgar, San Francisco State



WRAPAROUND SERVICES: MENTAL HEALTH

Students learn best when they feel safe, healthy, and connected, so we strive to support them through our mental health services. Our program provided 100% of students with information about depression, anxiety, substance use, and healthy relationships, while providing intensive group counseling, individualized therapy, and referrals to community partners as needed.

“For the first time, I have the opportunity to express myself and have someone to listen to what I am going through...I now better understand myself and my struggles, and can better support myself with what I have learned.” – EPAA student

COLLEGE/CAREER PREPARATION: SENIOR SEMINAR

Senior Seminar demystifies the college application process, from selecting a college list to applying for college, submitting financial aid applications, choosing a school, and successfully enrolling. Senior Seminar teacher, Philip Wong, guided the Class of 2023 every step of the way to Cal Poly Humboldt, Foothill College, Sacramento State, San José State, UC Berkeley, UC Davis, UC Merced, and more!

SAN MATEO COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION’S “SUSTAINABLE AND CLIMATE RESILIENT SCHOOLS CHALLENGE” WINNER

This fall, Eva Tang’s biology students created two solutionary projects: (1) cultivating native plants to make our school campus drought-resilient and (2) launching a community garden to increase our families’ access to fresh vegetables. With the support of this \$500 award from San Mateo County, we are looking forward to the growth of these projects.

GIRLS’ VOLLEYBALL LEAGUE CHAMPIONS

Our Bulldogs won the Private School Athletics League’s volleyball championship! EPAAF supports our student-athletes in developing leadership and teamwork skills, investing in their physical and mental health, and participating in organized competition.

After students graduate from EPAA, they embark on a variety of postsecondary pathways with the Foundation's support.

Here, we highlight three of our alumni services.

NAVIGATIONAL SUPPORT

Through the 817 individual meetings that they held this year, starting with the Summer Strength meeting, EPAAF staff members connected students to tutors, career coaches, mental health resources, and financial aid support in alignment with students' individual needs.

"When I was overwhelmed by all my different responsibilities at home and at school, Kate Hyle [EPAAF Executive Director] was the person that I'd talk to the most. I always knew that she'd hear me out, help me dissect all my different thoughts, and help me figure out my next step."

– Gilberto, YearUp

PEER LEADERSHIP

This year, we launched our Peer Leadership Program at six hub colleges: UCLA, UC Merced, UCSC, San Francisco State, San José State, and Sonoma State. The Peer Leaders are upperclassmen who have specialized knowledge about how to navigate these specific campuses, and they are creating a strong community away from East Palo Alto for their younger peers. The program increases a sense of belonging and expands access to resources, while providing leadership development opportunities for the Peer Leaders.

"I was motivated to serve as a Peer Leader because it's exactly what I needed as a lower-classman, especially as a first-generation college student."

– Alicia, Sonoma State Peer Leader

CAREER COACHING

As part of a growing Workforce Transition/Career Development Program, all third-year college students had the opportunity to be paired with Career Coaches in their respective professional fields for an informational interview. Some of the fields of interest included banking, business, law enforcement, mechanical engineering, physical therapy, and school counseling. Scholars can choose to remain connected to their coaches for further career conversations, specific inquiries, or consultations.

"I had the opportunity to meet with an engineer, which allowed me to ask questions that have been on my mind and understand more about my career after college. It gave me a better idea of the aspects I might prefer and feel most comfortable with in a job."

– Daniel, UC Merced

SCHOLARSHIPS

During the 2022–2023 school year, EPAAF awarded \$430,684 in scholarships. This financial support covered expenses like tuition, dorm fees, meal plans, and school supplies.



Your impact is hugely appreciated because, without your contribution, I wouldn't be able to attend UC Santa Cruz. From the bottom of my heart, I am thankful for every dollar.

– Angel, UC Santa Cruz

Our 10-Year Promise

BY THE NUMBERS

YEAR 1

Roughly
67%
of EPAA students enter high school below grade level in reading.

YEAR 3

With EPAAF support, students learn and grow through the Dream Lab Makerspace, Early College, athletics, clubs, and community service.

Thanks to Early College
35%
of the Class of 2023 are beginning college with credits already completed.

YEAR 4

95%
of the EPAA Class of 2023 earned their high school diploma, compared to the 84% national average across income groups.

YEAR 5

97%
of the EPAA Class of 2023 graduates joined an EPAAF program and identified a postsecondary pathway, compared to 48% nationally for low-income students.

YEAR 7

100%

of 3rd-year scholars had a Junior Check-In with EPAAF staff and had the opportunity to be paired with a Career Coach for an informational interview.

YEAR 9

100%

of graduating EPAAF scholars are offered individualized professional development, ranging from resume editing to interview preparation and contract negotiation.

YEAR 10

With a
213%
increase in participation in EPAAF programs since our inception in 2017, more EPAA graduates are accessing lives of choice and careers of meaning in a range of pathways. One scholar received support with the application process to earn his teaching credential and master's degree, and is now a teacher in our school district (as pictured above)!

CAREERS OF MEANING

9TH GRADE

YEAR 2

Over
30%
of EPAA students are classified as English Language Learners and receive bilingual Instructional Aides, family meetings, and newcomer counseling groups.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

POSTSECONDARY PATHWAYS

I benefited greatly from my EPAAF volunteer tutor because I was able to fully grasp and master statistical concepts. I felt much more prepared for the exams because I was guided throughout the process and my questions were answered. My tutor helped me stay on track and I appreciate the support.

—Esperanza, Santa Clara University



YEAR 6

Since the launch of the Peer Leadership Program

47

EPAAF scholars had access to a Peer Leader at one of six highly-attended college campuses in the 2022–2023 school year.

I am very grateful that there are people like you who are willing to help out and want to see people succeed and have a chance at a brighter future. Thanks to your donations, some of my financial stress is relieved, and I can focus on my studies.

—Vanessa, Sonoma State University

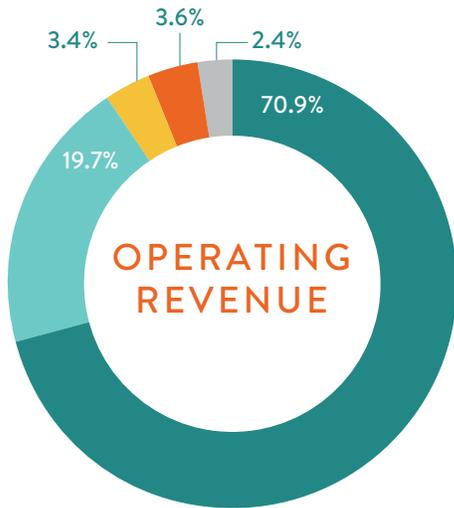
One thing that I am most proud of this year is getting a research position in the psychology department. Being a research assistant is something that I was aiming for since the start of the year, and I am glad I am now getting exposed to the kind of work they do.

—Liz, UC Berkeley

Through study abroad, I was able to travel to three countries and meet lots of people from many different backgrounds.

— Benjamin, UC Merced Class of 2023

Our Financials



■ Donations – Individuals	\$1,352,041
■ Donations – Foundations	\$375,969
■ Donations – Government	\$64,943
■ Donations – Corporations	\$69,820
■ Other	\$45,393
TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE	\$1,908,166

■ Program Services	\$1,518,180
■ Management & General	\$166,777
■ Fundraising	\$202,543
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$1,887,500

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Joanne Peters *Advancement Operations Manager*

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Aaron Cline *Finance Committee*

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Ann Mahowald *Development Committee*

Louis Newman *Programs Committee*

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Community Celebrations

In our East Palo Alto Academy community, students hold many intersecting identities related to ethnicity, race, gender, sexuality, ability, language, citizenship, and socioeconomic status.

To honor our students' identities, cultures, histories, and how these factors affect their lives today, we host celebrations and educational events with community partners throughout the year:

SEPTEMBER *Fiestas Patrias*

NOVEMBER *Dia de Los Muertos*

FEBRUARY *Black History Month*

MAY *Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month*

JUNE *Pride Month*

With love and appreciation for where they come from and who they are, we are confident that students will be able to pursue lives of choice that uplift themselves, their families, and their communities.



*I love that
EPAA is small
and you have a
chance to know others.
We are united, like family.*

— EPAA Student



The EPAAF Program has shown me that despite my family's financial hardships, I can achieve anything that life puts in front of me. I am someone who loves helping others, and with EPAAF support, I've been able to get a step closer to giving back to the world.

– Shriya, San José State University

To support our scholars, visit epaaf.org/donate or scan here:



EPAAF is one of my favorite organizations to donate to. There are fewer things in life more satisfying than being able to help a young person achieve their potential and fulfill their dreams, changing the trajectory of their life, their family, and their community.

– EPAAF Board Member & Donor

It is thanks to donors' generosity that I can proudly say that I have graduated from UCLA as the first person in my entire family to have graduated college. I want to share my accomplishment with you because I wouldn't have been able to do it without your support.

– Noelia, UCLA Class of 2023



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