

# THE BREAKTHROUGH LEADER

## More Breakthroughs & Brighter Futures

### Breakthrough Announces Expansion Into Del Valle ISD

Higher education has never been more important in our community where two-thirds of new jobs created require a college degree, but just six percent of low-income middle school students go on to graduate from college. As our community and the economic inequality within our community grows, so too does the need for our unique program.

Last year, we launched our More Breakthroughs, Brighter Futures Growth Campaign to expand the geographic reach of our services beyond Austin, as our recent name change and rebranding reflects, and grow to serve nearly 1,700 students in Central Texas by 2018.

As a result, Breakthrough is thrilled to announce that we are expanding into the Del Valle Independent School District with the enrollment of our first 60 sixth graders this spring.

Why Del Valle? Nearly 87 percent of Del Valle ISD students are considered economically disadvantaged. District officials and teachers have been working hard to create a college-going culture for their students, but the path from middle school to college remains challenging for the many Del Valle students blazing a new trail for their families.

The 12-year Breakthrough program is proven to greatly increase the odds of lower income students enrolling in and graduating from college, and we believe that this partnership will make a meaningful difference in the district's efforts and the lives of these students.

The Del Valle partnership was made possible by the generous \$1 million matching donation we received from Gregg and

Diana Lowe last year. Under the leadership of campaign chair Walt Penn, Breakthrough was able to ultimately raise a total of \$2.3 million for the purpose of increasing enrollment by 600 students to create even more first-generation college graduates.



**Richard Topfer, Michael Griffith, Diana & Gregg Lowe, Board Chair Neil Webber**

We cannot thank our supporters enough for answering Gregg and Diana's challenge. The Breakthrough program is dependent on donations such as this and from our dedicated school districts partners, Austin ISD, Manor ISD and Del Valle ISD. Thanks to community supporters, Breakthrough will serve nearly 1,425 students in 2017, and enrollment will increase by 44 percent by 2018 from when we launched our More Breakthroughs Brighter Futures Growth Campaign in 2016.

To learn more about all the exciting happenings at Breakthrough, please visit our new website at [breakthroughctx.org](http://breakthroughctx.org).

# 12<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL Champions Celebration

Breakthrough students inspire record-setting support at the 12th Annual Breakthrough Champions Celebration

Three-hundred Breakthrough friends and supporters gathered at Breakthrough's 12th Annual Champions Celebration on April 4 at East Austin's Historic French Legation Museum. The event raised a record-setting \$355,321 to support this year's 1,425 Breakthrough students on their path to becoming first-generation college graduates!

Special thanks to our event chairs, Susan and Charlie Avant, and event speakers, Breakthrough high school student Natalie and Breakthrough student-parent duo Yasmin and Shelly, for sharing their inspirational journeys of defying adversity to pursue their dreams of a college education and a better life. The event's success was due in great part to three supporters who inspired record level giving. The Webber Family Foundation and the Topfer Family Foundation generously matched \$100,000 in donations made in support of the Champions Celebration. And a very special thank you to Breakthrough "super fan" and event emcee, Mike Aviles, who along with his wife Aileen, underwrote this year's Champions Celebration.

View more photos at [breakthroughctx.org/champions2017](http://breakthroughctx.org/champions2017).



## A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Friends of Breakthrough,

We talk a lot about growth at Breakthrough. Our growing number of students, staff, and supporters is always front of mind. We even have the privilege of watching our students grow from 12-year-old middle school students to college graduates embarking on a career. We witness their transformation from adolescents to well-spoken, hardworking, and caring young adults. Our experience in watching this transformation over and over again reinforces our belief in something called growth mindset - an understanding that intelligence and ability can be developed through dedication and hard work. Though our students aren't ready for college and career as 6th graders, if we give them the right opportunity to learn and reinforce their innate desire to grow, they can and will get there.

It's a powerful mindset and one that infuses our entire organization. We think critically about our work with students and look for ways to serve even more. To that end, we launched a growth campaign in March to expand to serve an additional 600 students by 2018. I encourage you to grow with us, to stretch your giving as Breakthrough students are stretching courageously every day to break down the barriers that stand in their way of a college education.

To learn more about our [More Breakthroughs, Brighter Futures Growth Campaign](#), please contact Holly Wissman at 512.692.9444 or [holly@breakthroughaustin.org](mailto:holly@breakthroughaustin.org). Thank you for helping us create a legacy of opportunity for our growing community.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Michael Griffith".

Michael Griffith

## LET'S TALK!

### WE WANT TO GET TO KNOW YOU BETTER

Over the next six months, Breakthrough leadership will be reaching out to a sampling of Breakthrough friends and supporters, just like you, to learn more about you, why you support our programs, and what you hope for the future of the organization and our students.

If you are willing to visit with us about Breakthrough, please let us know at [letstalk@breakthroughctx.org](mailto:letstalk@breakthroughctx.org) today!



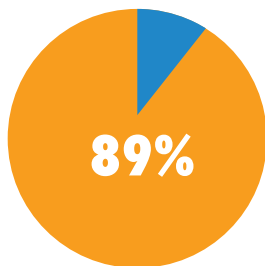


# BRIGHT FUTURES FOR OUR NEW GRADUATES

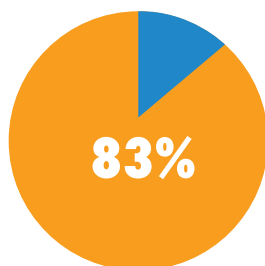
## HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES PREPARE FOR COLLEGE

In 2011, a class of fifty-five sixth graders walked through the doors of Breakthrough and made a 12-year commitment to their education. Those 6th graders have now officially graduated high school and have collectively received 157 college acceptances to 43 distinct colleges and universities.

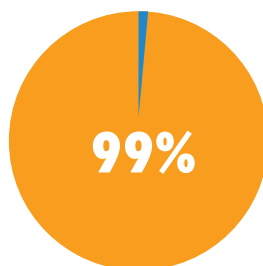
**High school graduation is the first of many milestones for our students.**



CENTRAL TEXAS  
OVERALL



CENTRAL TEXAS  
LOW-INCOME



BREAKTHROUGH



## CELEBRATING FIRST GENERATION COLLEGE GRADUATES

On May 21, more than 100 members of the Breakthrough community gathered at Headliners Club in Downtown Austin to celebrate a group of 2017 Breakthrough graduates. These graduates have achieved their dream of a college education and are not embarking on promising careers or continuing on to graduate school. To date, Breakthrough has helped 93 students become the first in their families to graduate from college.



## Breakthrough Spotlight

**Ayelet Ronen, Former 3X Breakthrough Summer Teaching Fellow & Current Monthly Donor**



“ I got involved with Breakthrough to give back to my community, but as it turned out, Breakthrough gave back to me tenfold.

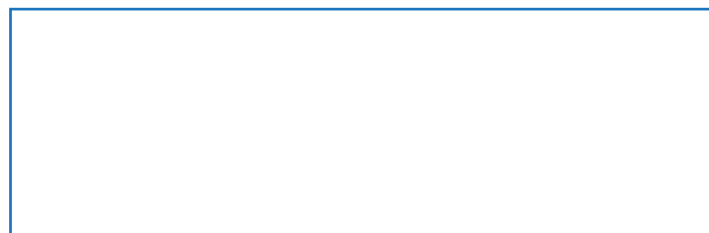
Along with my three summers as a math teacher, Breakthrough gave me the opportunity to tutor students after school during the year, teach an ACT/SAT prep course on weekends, and create, execute, and evaluate a study habits curriculum for my senior thesis. If that wasn't enough, Breakthrough staff helped me apply to and get accepted to a Master's program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and land my dream job at WGBH, Boston's PBS station. I know many of Breakthrough's students wouldn't be where they are today without the generosity of Breakthrough donors and the tireless efforts of the Breakthrough staff, and neither would I. For these reasons (and, frankly, out of homesickness for my Breakthrough family) I donate to Breakthrough every month. It's super easy and I am able to give more by giving a little each month.

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CREATING FIRST-GENERATION COLLEGE GRADUATES

1050 E. 11TH STREET, SUITE 350  
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78702



## Experience Breakthrough this summer!

Summer is an exciting time for Breakthrough, as hundreds of middle school, high school and college students kick off their summer learning with us. Join us this summer to Experience Breakthrough and see our programs in action.

### VISITORS DAYS

Join us for a special behind-the-scenes peek at Breakthrough's signature program. This six-week, academically intensive summer program is designed to prevent summer learning loss for our middle school students. Take a tour, talk to students and AmeriCorps Teaching Fellows, and see the transformative impact that Breakthrough has on the lives of our students.

**Tuesday, July 11, 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM, St. Andrew's Upper School**  
5901 Southwest Parkway, Austin, Texas 78735

**Thursday, July 13, 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM, Manor Middle School**  
12900 Gregg Manor Rd., Manor, Texas 78653

**Tuesday, July 18, 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM, UT Austin**  
West 21st Street at University Avenue, Austin, Texas 78705

**Thursday, July 20, 8:30 - 10:00 AM**  
Del Valle ISD Site, Gilbert Elementary, 5412 Gilbert Rd, Austin, TX 78724

### PRESENTATIONS OF LEARNING

Breakthrough students at each grade level demonstrate the knowledge and skills they have developed during the summer by participating in Presentations of Learning.

We need more than 300 community volunteers to provide essential feedback on student presentations, and prepare our students for both college and professional life.

#### Middle School Summer Program

**Wednesday, July 26, 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM, Gilbert Elementary**  
(15 volunteers needed)

**Thursday, July 27, 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM, Manor Middle School**  
(50 Volunteers needed)

**Friday, July 28, 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM, St. Andrew's Upper School**  
(36 volunteers needed)

**Friday, July 28, 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM, UT Austin**  
(36 volunteers needed)

#### 10th Grade Leadership Institute

**Friday, June 30, 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM, UT Austin** (30 volunteers needed)

**Friday, July 21, 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM, Applied Materials**  
(40 volunteers needed)

#### SolarWinds 11th Grade Career Institute

**Thursday, August 3, Time TBD, SolarWinds** (40 volunteers needed)

#### Future Focus College Internship Program

**Friday, August 11, Time TBD, Farm Credit Bank of Texas**  
(36 volunteers needed)