

**MEDIA ADVISORY
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



Breakthrough Central Texas Celebrates Graduation at Historically Marginalized East Austin School
Eastside Early College High School graduates first class of Breakthrough's Schoolwide Program

WHAT: "Your Journey, Your Future" High School Graduation Celebration

[Breakthrough Central Texas](#), Austin's leading college access and career success nonprofit organization, will host "Your Journey, Your Future," on Thursday, May 22, 2025, from 3-4:30 p.m. at Eastside Early College High School (Eastside ECHS) to commemorate the graduation of 146 students from the organization's Schoolwide Program who receive comprehensive, year-round postsecondary advising.

The "Your Journey Your Future" celebration honors all students' progress on the postsecondary pathway of their choosing, including associate and bachelor's degrees, trades, vocations, licensures, and certificate programs. The event will feature representatives from local colleges and universities, a video with special messages to graduating students from parents and care givers, and student testimonials from senior letters.

Through a combination of individualized student advising services and capacity-building services for school personnel, Breakthrough's Schoolwide Program implements systems to improve postsecondary outcomes across an entire high school. The program launched at Eastside ECHS in 2023 with the enrollment of all eleventh-grade students. Students receive up to six years of advising and career readiness support to complete their postsecondary goals. Since the launch of the program, the number of students completing steps to enroll in college has doubled. Nearly 80% of students from the class of 2025 completed college applications with a total of 309 acceptances.

"Breakthrough instills students with life-changing confidence," says Chief Schools Officer Kendra Strange. "We are the boots on the ground, working with students day in and day out to help them identify their goals and ensure they receive the tools they need to reach them. As this first class of Eastside Panthers graduates from the Schoolwide Program, you can feel the culture shift and the positive belief that continuing education is an accessible possibility for all students in East Austin."

Eastside ECHS is the first school within Austin Independent School District to receive Schoolwide Program services from Breakthrough Central Texas. Originally L.C. Anderson High School, the school served East Austin for 82 years before being closed by a federal court as part of desegregation in 1971. A dedicated group of L.C. Anderson alumni fought to have the school reinstated to demonstrate that quality education can be

achieved in East Austin. As an educational partner dedicated to students' long-term success, Breakthrough aims to honor Eastside ECHS's past and build a promising future for all students, even in one of the city's most historically marginalized communities.

"Breakthrough's Schoolwide Program has had a transformative impact on our scholars' postsecondary preparation and long-term success," says Eastside ECHS Interim Principal Dr. Susan Thames. "The program's design—rooted in sustained, individualized support—has effectively bridged gaps that often hinder low-income and first-generation scholars from accessing and thriving in higher education. At Eastside, where scholars often face systemic barriers to college access, Breakthrough's presence offers clear pathways. From college exploration and application assistance to financial aid guidance and transitional support, Breakthrough equips students with the tools, confidence, and resources to succeed beyond high school."

Media must RSVP to "Your Journey, Your Future" by emailing Mary Green, Mary@liveoutloudpr.com by Wednesday, May 21.

WHEN: Thursday, May 22, 2025
3:00 – 4:30 p.m.

WHO: Kendra Strange, Breakthrough Central Texas Chief Schools Officer
Dr. Susan Thames, Interim Principal, Eastside Early College High School

WHERE: Eastside Early College High School
900 Thompson Street
Austin, TX 78702

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ABOUT BREAKTHROUGH CENTRAL TEXAS

Breakthrough Central Texas is the leading college access and success nonprofit in Central Texas. For more than 20 years, we have partnered with thousands of middle and high school students who aspire to be the first in their family to graduate with a degree or certificate. We make a radical, long-term commitment to students, to and through college, unlocking the power of education and a lifetime of opportunity. We support the whole student with personalized services, work closely with community partners, campuses, and employers, and advocate for our students with lawmakers. Breakthrough students attend 60+ public schools and persist at nearly 100 colleges and universities. The result is that nearly 60% of Breakthrough students graduate from college, compared to 14% of low-income students in our region. Our work has resulted in more than 430 college graduates, with 3,700 on their way, positively impacting families for generations, our region's educational equity, and the Central Texas economy. Join the conversation at [@BreakthroughCTX](https://www.instagram.com/BreakthroughCTX), Instagram [@BreakthroughCTX](https://www.instagram.com/BreakthroughCTX) and at [Facebook.com/BreakthroughCTX](https://www.facebook.com/BreakthroughCTX). To learn more, visit www.breakthroughctx.org.

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