

# 2022-2023

## ANNUAL REPORT

*OUR MISSION IS TO INSPIRE CHANGE IN THE LIVES OF YOUTH THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION, COUNSELING, RECOVERY, HOUSING AND LIFE-SKILLS IN A CHRIST-CENTERED ENVIRONMENT.*



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# MANIFESTO



Dear Student,

We all have a story we believe to be true about ourselves – a story woven from the past we’ve lived, the things that have happened to us, the actions that were modeled for us, the affirmation we have or haven’t received. It might be influenced by a parent who let us down or a teacher who focused only on our shortcomings; a story that tells us who we are, what we’re worth, and who we’ll become.

But if that story is anything short of “I have hope and a future,” it’s a lie. Your story isn’t finished being written – and you have the power to change it. And at Eastside Academy, we believe change happens when you allow yourself to trust and be known.

But being vulnerable – letting someone in to know the real you – can feel terrifying, even unsafe. That’s fair. Maybe your trust has been broken one too many times, or maybe you’ve let down your guard before and been hurt so much you swore you would never make the same mistake again. Maybe you’ve never had someone who deserves your trust at all. Trust is earned, not given – and maybe no one has ever done the hard work of earning your trust. We will. We’ll walk alongside you and share whatever burden you carry. We’ll welcome you into our classrooms, offices, and hearts until it feels safe to let down your guard. We’ll love you – the whole you, the real you – because you’re worth loving.

You are not “too dumb,” “too ugly,” “too broken,” “too much,” or any of the lies you were taught to believe about yourself. What is true about you is that you are worthy of being known. And when you allow yourself to be known, you can let go of those lies and finally begin to write your own story; the story that God desired for you: one with big dreams, wild hope, and a bright future.

You are not alone. Your next chapter is waiting to be written, and we’ll help you turn the page.

With all of our love,  
Your Eastside Academy Family

”  
**We’ll love  
you– the  
whole you,  
the real you–  
because  
you’re worth  
loving**

# BIG PICTURE

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Ruby Jean, Class of 2014

”  
**THEY ALL  
TOLD ME  
THAT I  
MATTERED.**

I have Eastside Academy to thank for the trajectory of my life. I first learned about EA from a peer after I showed up intoxicated to work. I was only fourteen. Yet, unbeknownst to me, my peer had been dealing with her own demons; and without judgment, she listened. She shared with me her testimony and how much Eastside Academy had changed her life.

I was wrestling with my own undiagnosed mental health challenges, traumas, and addictions. Everything triggered my use both big and small. It felt like everything and everyone was against me. But at Eastside Academy, for the first time in my entire life, I felt like my entire existence was validated. Teachers, my counselors, the staff, they all told me that I mattered. And that mattered. Eastside Academy taught me how to care about myself.

Eastside Academy takes a different approach to a troubled child, not through discipline but through listening and through support. It's hard to compare EA to another school or even completely describe the all encompassing care you experience as a student who's not used to receiving that kind of love. Teachers go above and beyond teaching. They walk with you through life's hurdles and they stay with you beyond graduation.

During the pandemic, I found myself at rock bottom. It was a dark and terrifying place. But EA was there to support me with arms wide open; receiving me, listening to me, and helping pay for the six months of treatment I desperately needed.

Today I am in a completely different place. I am working at Harborview Medical Center as the Program Coordinator for the Opioid Treatment Program and I am on the Board of the Peace Coalition in South King County, recently nominated to be the co-chair of the board. I love being able to give back to the community and to make a difference in the lives of others who are experiencing the same sorts of challenges I did. It's because of Eastside Academy that I am able to have the life that I do, that I'm able to see a different future for myself, and that I'm able to make a difference. Thank you for believing in Eastside Academy, because by doing so, you've also believed in me.





At Eastside Academy, we believe change happens when you allow yourself to trust and be known. We are an alternative Christian high school that offers a holistic and integrated support system for students who need more support than the traditional high school experience offers. Our purpose is to walk alongside students, families, and alumni in their journey toward hope and a future, with a strong emphasis on “alongside.” From education to counseling to recovery to housing to mentoring and everything in between, we foster true, honest relationships with our students in a faith-based environment that helps them heal and thrive. Since 2001, Eastside Academy has made a difference in the lives of many, ensuring every student has the opportunity to receive the education and services they deserve.

## LOOKING BACK

Throughout the 2022-2023 school year, we experienced a student body with greater needs than years prior, requiring a greater level and intensity of care. The long lasting effects of COVID on the mental health of students is continuing to create more intense challenges for their well-being. This year our students averaged 1.5 sessions of mental health care per week to help them work through challenges and past traumatic experiences. As they put in the work, and receive the support from our highly trained and caring staff, we've seen them achieve a tremendous amount of success.

We are honored and excited to share their stories and their journey with you in the pages that follow.



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# ELYSE NICHOLSON

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**Thank you for joining us in this work throughout the past year. We hope you too feel a sense of pride in the accomplishments of this past year.**



47 STUDENTS SERVED

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67 FAMILIES/ALUM SERVED

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114 TOTAL

## OUR PURPOSE IS TO WALK ALONGSIDE STUDENTS, FAMILIES, AND ALUMNI IN THEIR JOURNEY TOWARD HOPE AND A FUTURE.

The 2022-2023 school year marked an important year of growth for Eastside Academy in the lives of students, their families, and for us as a non-profit organization. This year due to an intentional investment in our communications strategy, combined with an increased presence in the community, we were able to serve 47 students, representing a 46% increase in student enrollment over last year. We were also able to serve 67 families and alumni and offered support to a total of 114 people in our community. As we worked hard this year to rebuild in the wake of the pandemic, we are excited to build on these successful new strategies in the upcoming year.

Our partnerships with community businesses, organizations, and individuals has continued to be an important element of transforming the lives of our students. Through career days, job shadow experiences, snow-boarding lessons, and academic experiences beyond the classroom, we have been able to spark curiosity and instill a newfound belief within our students that they can trust in their future.

With a sense of joy and pride we graduated four seniors in June, each of whom received scholarships through the Gregory McBride Scholarship Fund, the Windermere Foundation, or as an Act 6 Scholar, enabling them to invest in their future. Our halls and classrooms were filled with cheers upon learning that one of our graduates received a four-year, full-ride scholarship at Pacific Lutheran University through the highly competitive Act 6 Program. It was a beautiful moment of possibility and example for all of our students.

Our graduation ceremony also brought about a beautiful full-circle moment. For the first time, we had an alumnus serve as the keynote speaker. Jonathan Janssen, Class of 2016, shared about his growth and the impactful lessons he took with him from his four years at Eastside Academy. Jonathan said:

*"I learned about respect, responsibility, and the importance of taking ownership of my actions. I learned to listen, that no one fights alone. More importantly, Eastside Academy showed me the true meaning of support and what it means to help others in their fight."*

It is these powerful, full-circle moments that remind us that the work at Eastside Academy is lasting and filled with transformative change.

We are a non-profit that partners with our community to make change happen. We believe that these partnerships bring a large measure of mindfulness and care to our work because we represent your desire to serve, care, and impact young lives. We do not take this responsibility lightly, and your trust in us is inspiring and helps propel us forward. Thank you for joining us in this work throughout the past year. We hope you too feel a sense of pride in the accomplishments of this past year.

With gratitude,  
Elyse Nicholson  
Executive Director





# STUDENT SUCCESSES

*"THE BEAUTIFUL PART IS SHINING THE LIGHT ON THE KIDS - NOT JUST ON THEIR ACADEMIC PROGRESS - BUT ON THEIR EMOTIONAL, SPIRITUAL AND MENTAL GROWTH. NO MATTER HOW BIG OR SMALL THE STEPS MAY BE, IT IS IMPORTANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND BE PROUD OF EVERY STEP THEY TAKE." - EA TEACHER*





# 01

## SENIORS

We celebrated four graduating seniors this year! Elijah is attending PLU, Eva & Kingston are attending Bellevue College and Jude is attending Berklee College of Music.



# 02

## SCHOOL RETREATS

In the fall and spring, students and staff get away for a long weekend to build relationships and make memories. It is a meaningful time for students to get to know one another and explore their spiritual journey.



# 03

## GREGORY MCBRIDE SCHOLARSHIP

Every EA student receives a generous scholarship through the Gregory McBride Scholarship Fund that helps them gain economic independence. Grads have used these funds to establish housing, secure reliable transportation, purchase computers for school, buy tools to help them start their trade, and so much more.



# 04

## **JUDE, CLASS OF 2023**

Jude was our Student of the Year! He graduated with a cumulative GPA of 3.99 and will be starting college at Berklee College of Music.



# 05

## **ELIJAH, CLASS OF 2023**

Elijah has been a student at EA for 2.5 years and lived in the Renew Homes for more than half of that time. This year, he was awarded the Act 6 Scholarship, which is a full ride to Pacific Lutheran University!



# 06

## **RUBY, CLASS OF 2014**

Ruby works at Harborview Medical Center as the Program Coordinator for the Opioid Treatment Program and is on the Board of the Peace Coalition in South King County, recently nominated to be the co-chair.





# 07

## STUDENT JOBS

We have helped students obtain part-time employment at many local businesses to help them learn responsibility and personal finance.



# 08

## BUSINESS CTE CLASS

Students created a product and business plan to learn hands on skills in leadership, marketing, product development, and launching a business.



# 09

## SERVICE PROJECTS

Our students do one community service project every quarter as part of their curriculum.

*"I like getting community service hours and spending time outside in the sun as part of school" - Lacey, EA Student*

# RENEW HOUSING HIGHLIGHTS

## Partnerships in the Community:

- The Hyatt Regency Bellevue provided weekly meals to our homes. This represents over **10k meals served** in the past 10 years!
- A group of individuals continued to provide hot meals to the homes once a week. This marks their **10th year serving meals** to our homes on a weekly basis.
- Residents and EA families were **provided with Christmas gifts** through our partnership with Clark, Raymond, & Co.



PREVIOUSLY HOMELESS **42%**

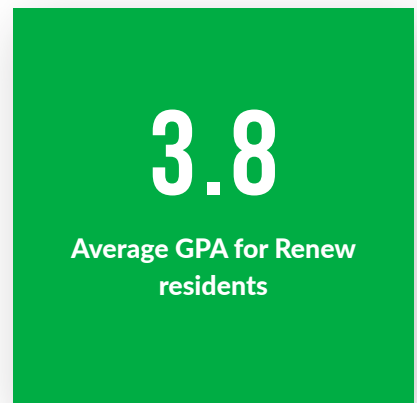
MINORITY BACKGROUND **40%**

CAME FROM TREATMENT **25%**



## Academics:

- 4 residents were on honor roll 4th quarter
- Renew Residents have the highest rate of attendance
- Two residents graduated in June



## Personal Growth:

- Eight student residents acquired and maintained employment, working jobs in retail, childcare, and food industry
- Renew residents attended summer camps at BelPres Church
- Students participated in SOS Snowboard Outreach





RENEW  
EA STUDENT HOMES

IN 11 YEARS

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127

TOTAL RESIDENTS  
SERVED

23

STUDENTS WHO  
WOULD HAVE BEEN  
HOMELESS WITHOUT  
THE RENEW HOMES

29

STUDENTS WHO CAME  
DIRECTLY FROM A  
TREATMENT FACILITY

+ 28,100

NIGHTS OF SAFE  
HOUSING PROVIDED





# MENTORSHIP IS A KEY ASPECT OF STUDENT LIFE AT EASTSIDE ACADEMY

## MENTORS

13

## STUDENTS WITH A MENTOR

48%

## HOURS SPENT WITH A MENTOR

170+

## MENTOR EVENTS

7

STUDENTS WITH MENTORS INCREASED THEIR GPA **TWICE** AS MUCH AS STUDENTS WITHOUT A MENTOR

IT HELPS STUDENTS BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF LISTENING, **TRUSTING** AND VALUING ADULT FEEDBACK

STUDENTS WITH MENTORS ARE **MORE LIKELY** TO FOLLOW THROUGH WITH POST-HIGH SCHOOL PLANS



**THE TRANSITION FROM HOMELESSNESS TO A SAFE AND STABLE PLACE TO LIVE HAS ALLOWED HIM TO GAIN STABILITY THAT HE NEVER BEFORE EXPERIENCED.**

*Eastside Academy student Nate was forced to move around to various homeless shelters after being abandoned by his mentally ill mother. He worked multiple jobs to support himself while trying to attend school. EA's Chaplain, Drew Hale, worked with Nate to connect him with the YMCA transitional housing program. Through this program, he qualified for a studio apartment with rent assistance. The transition from homelessness to a safe and stable place to live has allowed him to gain stability that he never before experienced. Nate and Drew created a solid plan for his life post-high school. Since then, Nate as started a GED program which allowed him more flexibility to continue working, and is enjoying his new found independence and stability.*



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## MENTORSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

Anna is my third mentee at Eastside Academy. I have been mentoring for four years and still keep in touch with a previous mentee. This year has been a great year with Anna and we hit it off immediately. We always have something to talk about and I love hearing about how she is doing in her classes and with her friends. She is so sweet and has grown so much!

Growing up, I spent a lot of time on my own and made some terrible decisions. I didn't have anyone to help me make better choices until later in life. I love having the chance to be there for someone who may not have anyone else to turn to, talk to, or just hang out with. I love that I get to do that for 3 years with Anna.

- EA Mentor, Stephanie



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# COUNSELING & ADDICTION RECOVERY

*At Eastside Academy, a student can have up to **70 counseling sessions** in a single school year.*

After multiple years at EA, two guarded students took huge risks during their individual counseling sessions and fully opened themselves to the counseling process. For these individuals, openness came with a cost - both students knew EA would be required to call CPS if they shared their story and knew lives beyond their own would be impacted. However, being at Eastside Academy allowed each of these students to experience healthy relationships with trustworthy adults, and in time trust was built and they allowed their walls to come down. It took these students great courage and faith in Eastside Academy's program to be transparent. They experienced pain and freedom from talking about, identifying, and processing life events with their counselor. Both said their vulnerability led to reward and that learning to trust is something they value and hope to do more of. One student said EA played a big part in being more authentic and free.



**830+**

HOURS OF 1:1 COUNSELING  
PROVIDED TO STUDENTS

**150+**

HOURS OF COUNSELING  
PROVIDED TO FAMILIES



**1.5 / WEEK**

AVERAGE HOURS A  
STUDENT MEETS WITH  
THEIR COUNSELOR

*"When I first got to EA, it was really different. I mean, I was really nervous and didn't really know what to expect. It took me a while to feel comfortable. I'd always been bullied in school in the past. But at EA, it's different. I feel like I can really be myself."  
- EA Student Nate*

THE COUNSELING DEPARTMENT ALSO PROVIDED STUDENTS **735 HOURS** OF ADDICTION RECOVERY EDUCATION AND HOSTED **TWO FAMILY FORUMS**.



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# EDUCATION HIGHLIGHTS

*Carson arrived at EA with a GPA under 2.0. He has gone on to be an honor roll student in 3 of his 4 quarters at EA. Based on what we have seen, we expect his grades continue to trend upward. We hope to see his overall GPA reach 3.5 by the time he is ready to graduate.*

- **JONATHAN JANSSEN, CLASS OF 2016, WAS OUR FIRST ALUMNI TO DELIVER THE KEYNOTE ADDRESS AT GRADUATION**
- **4 GRADUATES**
- **3.8 AVERAGE GPA FOR RENEW RESIDENTS**
- **2 STUDENTS ATTENDED RUNNING START AT BELLEVUE COLLEGE**

# \$375,675

TOTAL AWARDED IN TUITION SCHOLARSHIPS

This year, students came from **18 different** districts around the greater Seattle area.



**47**  
STUDENTS SERVED

**57**  
FAMILIES SERVED

**10**  
ALUMNI SERVED

**20**  
STUDENTS WHO  
MADE HONOR ROLL  
(GPA over 3.5)



## DEVELOPMENT HIGHLIGHTS

**\$532,495 raised from foundations** including Anderson Foundation, Bacon Family Foundation, BelPres Legacy Foundation, Byron and Alice Lockwood Foundation, Coram Deo Foundation, Harnish Foundation, Hyatt Hotel Foundation, Medina Foundation, Moccasin Lake Foundation, The Norcliffe Foundation, Stewardship Foundation, and Windermere Foundation

**Major corporate Partners:** The Bellevue Collection, Clark, Raymond, and Co., Lang Homes, Perkins Coie, Seattle Boat Company, Therapeuo Counseling, Wells Fargo Advisors

114%

Overall budget met



### Auction Recap

*Presented by Lang Homes*  
**\$504,469 total raised**  
 In-kind donations: \$35,207  
 112% of budget  
 Total in attendance: 158



**6 Luncheons** hosted with a total of 45 attendees and 8 student speakers

**Renew Breakfast:** 27 donors and \$34,000 in gifts for the Renew Homes

**\$43,609 donation** from The BelPres Christmas Joy Offering

12.7%

Increase in acquired donors

185

Acquired Donors



### Golf Classic Recap

*Presented by Seattle Boat Co*  
**\$126,010 total raised**  
 105% of budget  
 Total in attendance: 131



# \$690,000

GRANT AWARDED FROM **THE HARNISH FOUNDATION**  
TO BE DISBURSED OVER THREE CONSECUTIVE YEARS  
IN SUPPORT OF THE RENEW STUDENT HOMES.





# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

IN ADDITION TO THEIR SERVICE, OUR BOARD MEMBERS SPEND 240 HOURS PER YEAR VOLUNTEERING AT OUR SCHOOL



**PAULA MELBY**  
CHAIRMAN

**KIM BARUFFI**

**JEFF MILLER**

**MICHAEL YU**  
VICE CHAIR

**MARGIE BICKNELL**

**HEIDI SWEENEY**

**NANCY BOHLING**  
SECRETARY

**TOM COURTNEY**

**FRED JANSSEN**  
TREASURER

**JULIE KEY**





Eastside Academy continues to be a unique place with a remarkable mission that brings hope and healing to situations that seem impossible to overcome. We are excited about joining with God and His mission as a school to help students find their way into a life of freedom and health where they can thrive.

This year we're excited to continue partnering with the Bacon Foundation to research and explore the possibility of developing a Middle School that embodies the values and mission of Eastside Academy. While this is a long-term project, we are committed to exploring new ways to reach students in crisis as soon as possible.

We are also excited to begin working on a new STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math) Project for our students, exposing them to new opportunities, technologies, learning, and internships. As we continue to show students their true capabilities, their potential, and their value, we are looking forward to connect them with opportunities that help them dream about what life beyond high school might look like.

We're looking forward to another school year ahead where change is not only possible but happening every day. We're grateful for your partnership and for walking alongside of us to support the students, their journey towards health, healing, and wholeness. Thank you for your faithfulness to the mission of helping students find the help and care they need to once again thrive.

## LOOKING AHEAD



**EASTSIDE ACADEMY**  
**2022-2023**

**[WWW.EASTSIDEACADEMY.ORG](http://WWW.EASTSIDEACADEMY.ORG)**