



ENSURING THEIR **SUCCESS**



uplifteducation
annual report 2013

TAKES THE
EFFORT OF US

ALL



uplifteducation
annual report 2013



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LETTER FROM
OUR
CEO

We all play a vital role in the success of our scholars.

—Yasmin Bhatia

Dear Friends,

What does it take to help a child succeed academically? A great many things impact scholar success: an effective academic model, excellent teachers, distraction-free schools, parental support, and resources. All of these things are important, but the essential driver of success is people who are committed to our students and are determined to have an impact.

Our families have always been first to the starting line. Whether they were among those who helped found our first school, Uplift North Hills Prep, or those who enrolled their children for the first time in 2012, Uplift families desire a place where their children reach their highest academic potential. They want schools that support their children as they become problem-solvers and eager learners. They look to us to offer educational opportunities not always available in our North Texas communities. By seeking options, they become key drivers of the new levels of educational quality Uplift works to provide.

The teachers, deans, counselors, school leaders and staff who comprise our school teams and central office departments are also here because they want to move the needle. For them, education is a calling, a place where they can invest in the lives of the scholars of our region. Every classroom lesson, every advisory session, every college trip, is an opportunity to expand their impact, and it is not something they can do on their own.

Creating an environment where scholars will learn and grow takes every member of the Uplift team. It's why I refer to all of us as educators, whether we are teaching and counseling scholars, directing schools, maintaining the buildings, serving meals, or analyzing academic data. Every one of us must be focused on expanding our impact.

Our community partners and donors also play an essential role in helping our scholars succeed. We work with partners who help us identify best practices, find and train new employees, and guide our scholars to college. We also have donors who help us start schools, establish libraries, and launch innovative programs.

All of this support has a direct impact on our scholars' academic success. In 2013, 283 scholars graduated from our five Uplift high schools. Every one of them was accepted to a four-year college. As our number of graduates continues to expand, the need for a strong support system expands as well. So as we do each year, we thank everyone involved in helping our scholars reach their goals. We also ask that you continue to look for ways to further your impact by supporting the mission of Uplift Education.

Sincerely,



Yasmin Bhatia,
CEO, Uplift Education



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EXPANDING OUR
REACH

Expanding our reach means not only expanding into new geographical areas, but also expanding in neighborhoods we currently serve to meet the demand for quality public education.

expanding our reach

expanding their future

expanding our impact



Robert Matejek of the Matejek Family Foundation and Lisa Simmons of the Harold Simmons Foundation have been instrumental in helping Uplift open new schools in Dallas, like Uplift Triumph Preparatory and Uplift Luna Preparatory Secondary.

Luis Moran wants a life full of options for his son, Luis Jr., a kindergartner at Uplift Triumph. Mr. Moran is an artist and marketing manager from Guatemala, and he knows the power of college. He studied for five years, earned two degrees, and embarked on a professional career before bringing his family to the United States.

He now lives in northwest Dallas, where his school choices had been limited. When he heard that Uplift would be opening a public, college preparatory elementary school near Love Field, he quickly applied for a space for his son. “I want my son to be happy. That means freedom, stability, health. All these things come through learning. Already, the school pushes him. He’s learning how to better himself, to push himself and to always keep working. What he gains here no one can take away from him,” Mr. Moran passionately explains.

Uplift Triumph opened its doors to more than 280 kindergarten through second grade scholars in 2013 and represents an important step forward in expanding high-quality college preparatory educational options to parents like Mr. Moran in the northwest Dallas neighborhoods around Love Field. Already, Uplift Williams Preparatory, which opened in 2007, educates more than 1,300 scholars in K-12 and will grow to 1,500 scholars. Uplift Triumph will expand our reach to an additional 500 scholars in the Bachman Lake/Love Field area.

None of this expansion happens without the commitment of our philanthropic partners. To help the network launch Uplift Triumph, the Harold Simmons Foundation made the lead gift, which will offset any operational budget deficits during the first few years. This was part of the \$5 million gift the foundation made to Uplift to support new school starts during the next three years.

The support of organizations like the Harold Simmons Foundation is substantial. In Texas, only 11% of low-income students will graduate from college. By helping us open schools like Uplift Triumph, foundations across North Texas are working to improve the outlook for thousands of parents like Mr. Moran and his son, Luis.



Uplift Education's purpose of providing a high-quality, public education to all students across North Texas is a desire shared by all parents, but for years remained unrealized across the region.

The idea of publicly funded charter schools operated as an alternative to traditional public school districts took shape in 1991 when Minnesota approved the first charter school laws.

Since 1996, Uplift Education has started 27 schools and has grown to serve over 7,300 scholars, with plans to enroll more than 13,000 by 2015.

expanding our reach

expanding their future

expanding our impact



1991
Minnesota passed the first charter school legislation in the country



1995
The State of Texas approved the formation of charter schools



1996
Texas Education Agency grants a charter for Uplift North Hills Preparatory



1997
Uplift North Hills Preparatory opens in Irving, Texas



2004
Uplift opens its first inner city school, Uplift Peak Preparatory, in Dallas



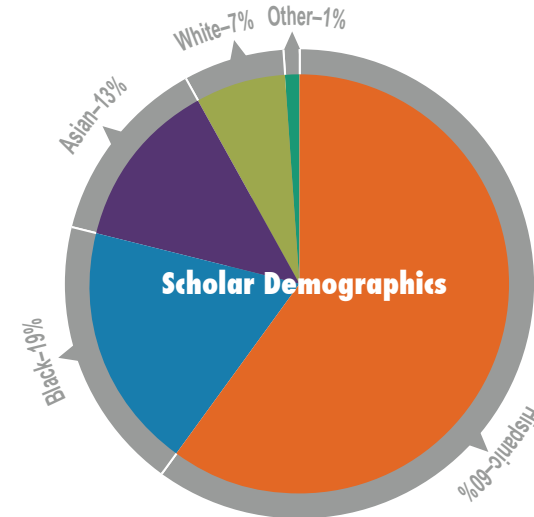
2012
Uplift consistently grows to reach 27 schools on 12 campuses



2015
Uplift plans to continue its steady and scalable growth to serve 13,000 scholars

2013 Highlights

- Uplift North Hills and Uplift Williams were awarded gold medals on the report of Best High Schools in the Nation by *U.S. News & World Report*.
- Uplift Summit International and Uplift Peak were awarded bronze medals on the report of Best High Schools in the Nation by *U.S. News & World Report*.
- Uplift Williams, Uplift Peak and Uplift Summit were named by *Newsweek* among the Top 25 Transformative High Schools in the nation.
- 5 out of 5 Uplift Education Districts met the Texas Education Agency's accountability standards for 2012-13.



27
SCHOOLS

7
IB AUTHORIZED SCHOOLS

12
CAMPUSES

479
TEACHERS

7,395
SCHOLARS

1,130,856
FREE/REDUCED MEALS



As an entrepreneurial charter network with an effective academic growth model, we expect to start two to four new schools each year. In 2012-13, Uplift launched three schools in Fort Worth (Uplift Meridian Primary and Uplift Mighty Primary and Secondary) and one in east Dallas (Uplift Luna Secondary).

At the beginning of the 2013-14 school year, we opened Uplift Triumph Preparatory, which will grow to a K-5 primary school. In 2014-15, we will add a primary and middle school to our network when we open Uplift Grand Preparatory in the D/FW suburb of Grand Prairie.

expanding our reach


expanding their future

expanding our impact


Campuses and grades for the 2013-14 school year

 **Uplift Hampton Preparatory**
Southwest Dallas
Grades: K-4, 6-12


 **Uplift Heights Preparatory**
West Dallas
Grades: K-2, 6-9


 **Uplift Infinity Preparatory**
South Irving
Grades: K-3, 6-8


 **Uplift Luna Preparatory**
Downtown Dallas, Deep Ellum
Grades: K-10

 **Uplift Meridian Preparatory**
Southeast Fort Worth
Grades: K-2


 **Uplift Mighty Preparatory**
Southeast Fort Worth
Grades: K-3, 6-8


 **Uplift North Hills Preparatory**
Irving/Las Colinas
Grades: K-12

 **Uplift Peak Preparatory**
East Dallas
Grades: K-12

 **Uplift Pinnacle Preparatory**
Oak Cliff
Grades: K-3

 **Uplift Summit International Preparatory**
Arlington
Grades: K-12

 **Uplift Triumph Preparatory**
Bachman Lake/Love Field Area
Grades: K-2

 **Uplift Williams Preparatory**
Bachman Lake/Love Field Area
Grades: K-12



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EXPANDING THEIR
FUTURE

Expanding their future is all about options. A college-preparatory education not only prepares our scholars for university life, but also for real life. We set lofty academic goals for our scholars and encourage community service, clubs and sports to build well-rounded graduates. Uplift seniors are poised to be successful no matter what they decide to pursue after high school.

expanding our reach

expanding their future

expanding our impact



Through our partnership with Commit!, Uplift is developing workshops that will teach juniors across North Texas how to select colleges and write essays and help seniors understand all the steps involved with fully completing the complex college application process.

*—Denise Castañeda,
Director of College Admissions, Uplift*

DiBrieka Miller, a 2013 graduate of Uplift Hampton Preparatory in southwest Dallas, is the first person in her family to enroll in college. She attends Texas Woman’s University in Denton, and when you talk to her you can see the determination in her eyes. DiBrieka is pursuing a psychology degree and hopes to become a school counselor.

“My teachers, my counselors and my parents pushed me to work for what I want. They taught me how to motivate myself and were real about what was going to be required if I was going to reach my goals,” DiBrieka says. She fondly recalls the investment teachers like Sherri Holden, who taught several of DiBrieka’s AP classes, made. Ms. Holden may have given DiBrieka as much work as she could handle, but encouragement and study sessions went hand in hand with the work.

Uplift Hampton’s college counseling staff did their share as well. DiBrieka earned a Presidential Scholarship at TWU, but the road to the full-ride award was rough. “I would get overwhelmed,” DiBrieka says, describing the life of an AP student, “but my college counselors wouldn’t let me quit. When I received a couple of B’s on my report card, they pressed me to stay on top of my classes and improve those grades.”

The singular focus to help scholars like DiBrieka define their goals and pursue them through college permeates every school in the Uplift network. And recently, through strategic relationships with organizations like Commit! (www.commit2dallas.org), Uplift is pushing this motivating value out to other districts and networks across the North Texas region.

Through a newly formed Commit! program called Texas College Access Network, Uplift Road to College staff are helping to increase the number of seniors across North Texas enrolling in post-secondary education by five percent by 2016. This allows our Uplift team the opportunity to share best practices on what we know works to get all students into college.

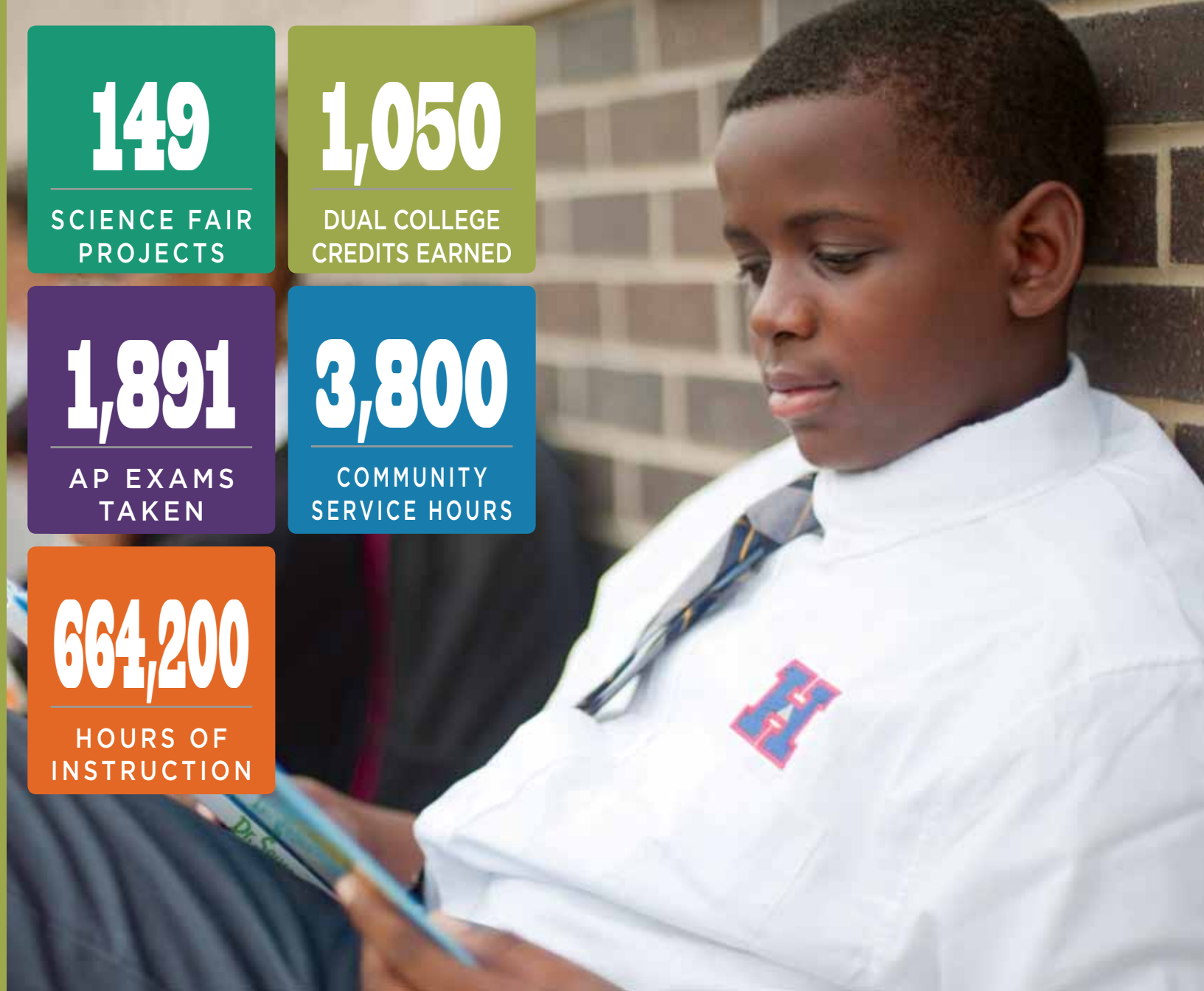
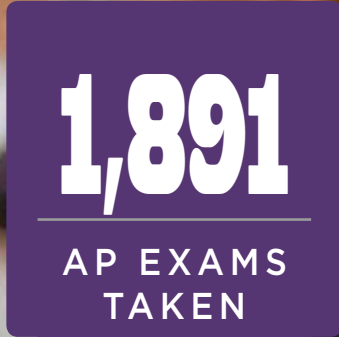


While building well-rounded, globally-minded citizens is our goal, we are fully aware that it all starts with the basics. Our scholars continue to improve each year on standardized tests, and we have hard evidence that shows that tenure within the Uplift system yields even greater improvements. We are also fully aware that we have room for improvement in certain areas. We continue to move the bar a little higher, not only for our scholars, but for each employee at Uplift.

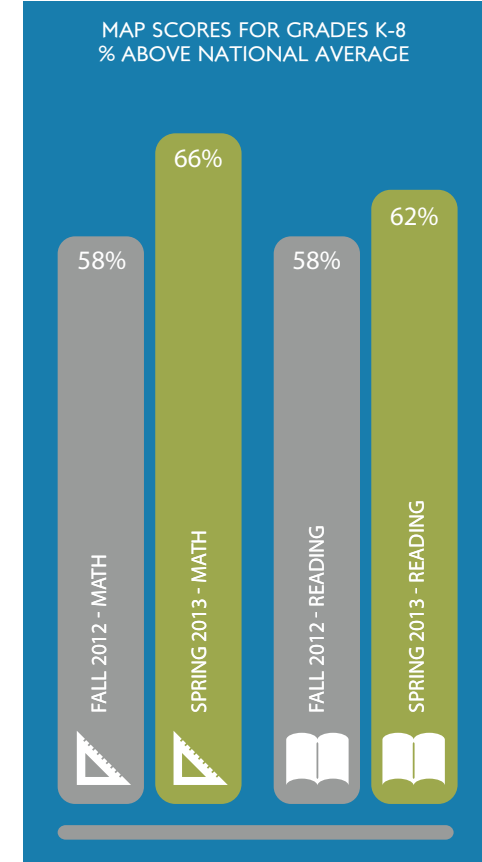
expanding our reach

expanding their future

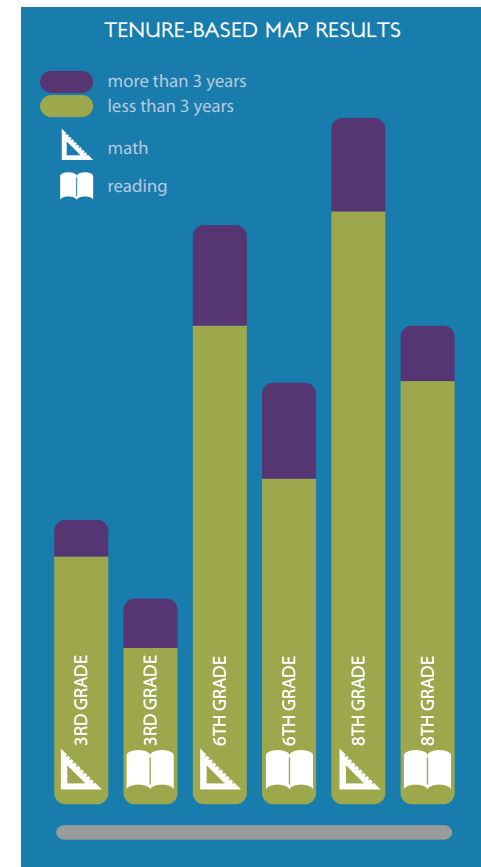
expanding our impact



Uplift scholars scored above the national average on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) by more than 30 points in 2012-13. Our ultimate goal, however, is to insure every senior reaches the college readiness benchmark (as defined by SAT). We are making gains but there is still much work to be done.



The above chart illustrates the percentage of Uplift scholars who scored above the national average on Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests. Not only did they exceed the national average, but the scholars also made impressive gains on those exams from the fall to the spring in 2012-13.



Results have shown that the longer a scholar attends an Uplift school, the better he/she scores on standard assessment tests. The above chart illustrates the MAP test results for scholars who have been with Uplift for fewer than three years versus scholars who have been with Uplift more than three years.



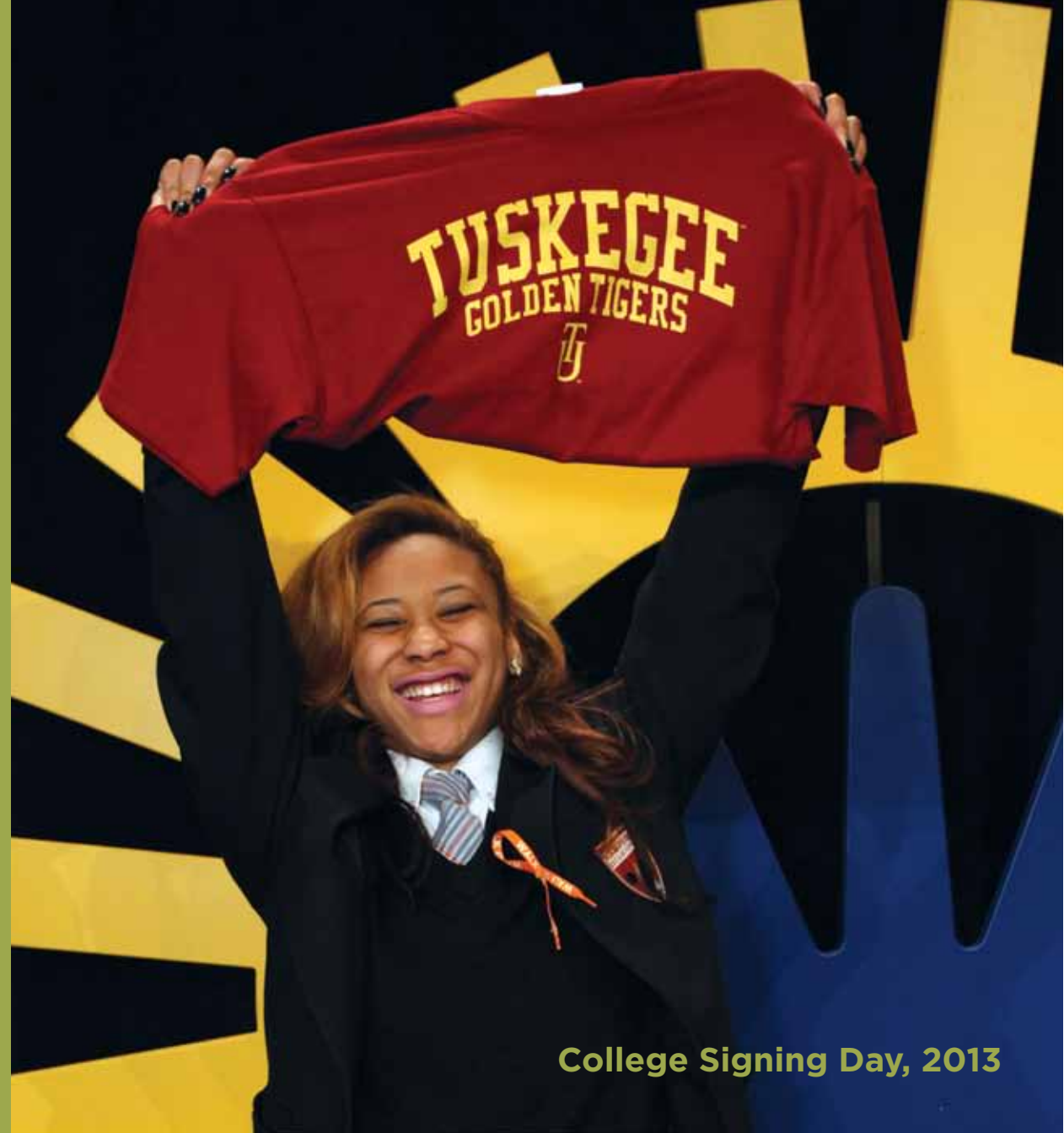
Uplift's Road To College program begins in kindergarten where our scholars are first introduced to the idea of going to college. It culminates in the 12th grade as our scholars receive their college acceptance letters. Once our graduates have reached their senior year, taken their exams, submitted their applications, and received their acceptance letters, we take the time to celebrate them.

We acknowledge their achievements at College Signing Day each spring. This high energy event allows all of Uplift, along with parents and community partners, to congratulate our seniors on their hard work.

expanding our reach

expanding their future

expanding our impact



College Signing Day, 2013

Uplift graduates are earning their degrees at these fine schools.

- Art Institute of Dallas
- Assumption College
- Austin College
- Austin Community College
- Babson College
- Baldwin-Wallace College
- Bates College
- Baylor University
- Boston College
- Bowdoin College
- Brandeis University
- Brookhaven College
- Bryn Mawr College
- Cameron University
- Cedar Valley College
- Clark University
- College of Saint Benedict
- College of the Holy Cross
- Collin County Community College
- Dallas Baptist University
- Denison University
- Eastfield College
- El Centro College
- Emory University
- Full-Sail University
- George Mason University
- Georgetown University
- Georgia State University
- Haverford College
- Hope College
- Iowa State University
- ITT Technical Institute
- Jarvis Christian College
- Johns Hopkins University
- Lafayette College
- Lamar University
- Louisiana State University
- Lubbock Christian University
- Mars Hill College (North Carolina)
- Middlebury College
- Midwestern State University
- Morehouse College
- Mountain View College
- Navarro College
- New York University
- North Lake College
- Northern Virginia Community College
- Northwood University, Texas
- Oglethorpe University
- Oxford College of Emory University
- Paul Quinn College
- PCI Technical Institute
- Pomona College
- Prairie View A&M University
- Pratt Institute
- Rhode Island School of Design
- Richland College
- Saint John's University
- Salem College
- Sam Houston State University
- Sewanee, University of the South
- Smith College
- Southern Methodist University
- Southwestern University
- Spelman College
- St. Edward's University
- St. Gregory's University
- St. Louis University
- St. Mary's University of San Antonio
- Stephen F. Austin State University

283
GRADUATES
IN 2013

- Syracuse University
- Tarleton State University
- Tarrant County Junior College
- Texas A&M University
- Texas A&M University-Commerce
- Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
- Texas A&M University-Galveston
- Texas A&M University-Kingsville
- Texas Christian University
- Texas College
- Texas Lutheran University
- Texas Southern University
- Texas State University
- Texas Tech University
- Texas Wesleyan University
- Texas Woman's University
- Trinidad State Junior College
- Trinity College
- Trinity University
- Tuskegee University
- Tyler Junior College
- Union College
- United States Air Force
- University of Arkansas
- University of Dallas

100%
COLLEGE
ACCEPTANCE

\$57 MILLION
IN GRANTS &
SCHOLARSHIPS

- University of Kansas
- University of Miami
- University of Michigan
- University of Missouri
- University of Missouri Columbia
- University of North Texas
- University of North Texas at Dallas
- University of Rochester
- University of Southern California
- University of Tampa
- University of Texas
- University of Texas at Arlington
- University of Texas at Dallas
- University of Texas at Permian Basin
- University of Texas at San Antonio

2,100
ACCEPTANCE
LETTERS

95%
COLLEGE
PERSISTENCE*

*From college freshman to sophomore year.

3
DELL
SCHOLARS

- University of the Incarnate Word
- University of Tulsa
- Vassar College
- Washington University
- Webster University

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EXPANDING OUR
IMPACT

The future of our scholars is the responsibility of each of us. Whether it is with your time, talent or treasure, you can make a difference.

expanding our reach

expanding their future

expanding our impact



It took vision for a determined group of parents to start a new free, public, college-preparatory charter school in 1996. There were few examples at that time of what such a school could look like. It took even more vision a few years later to take that school model (Uplift North Hills) and replicate its success throughout North Texas. That's exactly what Phil Montgomery, a concerned citizen and philanthropist with the Communities Foundation of Texas, believed was possible. He wanted high quality educational options to be available where they did not currently exist. Armed with this vision, Phil teamed with Uplift North Hills co-founder, Rosemary Perlmeter, to establish Uplift Peak Preparatory in East Dallas and then more than 20 additional schools from there.

We lost Phil this fall to cancer, but the vision he inspired lives on through a very motivated team of teachers, school leaders and network partners determined to see all students in North Texas receive a college preparatory education and reach their highest academic potential. It is because of his passion for better educational options that organizations like the Hamon Charitable Foundation committed \$12.5 million in the form of a challenge grant to partner with Uplift to start more schools.

Expanding our impact takes creative thinking, enduring will, a ton of vision, and the willingness to roll up our sleeves and get involved. Phil embodied these attributes and would have enjoyed watching the many other partners who are joining Uplift to do the same.

We hope you will help us expand our impact and embrace the vision of providing all North Texas students with a college preparatory education. Working together, we will help open up opportunities they need to reach their goals and dreams.



*Phil Montgomery
Uplift Founding Board Chairman*



This report represents the success of our scholars and education as a whole, none of which would be possible without the contributions of our valuable partners—partners like you.

Your time and your dollars are vital to the continued operation and progression of Uplift, and we always strive to be good stewards of both.

The need to continually improve education for our children is urgent. How will you expand your responsibility?



Brent Christopher
President & CEO, Communities Foundation of Texas

Your Dollars At Work

At Uplift, we make the most of every dollar we receive. We have established relationships with local organizations, such as the Communities Foundation of Texas, which put a priority on education. In 2013, The Hamon Charitable Foundation awarded a \$12.5 million challenge grant to Uplift. This challenge will help us serve more families across North Texas. The challenge grant is as much about getting additional partners involved in the work as it is about generating \$25 million for Uplift in the next two years. We are still in the process of raising matching funds.

You can make an immediate impact by contributing to this effort.

expanding our reach

expanding their future

expanding our impact

Your Time and Your Talent

We understand that your time is a precious commodity, but even a small amount of your time can have be impactful. Uplift has a variety of opportunities to work with either scholars, teachers, or community friends. Whether simply reading to scholars or sharing your wisdom and life experience as a mentor, Uplift has a wide variety of volunteer opportunities. Let us help you determine where your time and your talent are best served.

Below are just a few examples of ways to volunteer with Uplift:

- Read at a primary campus
- Help with classroom setup
- Volunteer for various events and projects
- Join the Friends of Uplift group
- Become a HERO Mentor
- Host a summer intern
- Participate in career panels
- Volunteer on a fundraising committee

For all inquiries regarding volunteer opportunities for groups or individuals, or to schedule a special project for a large group, please contact:

Cassie Hubbert, Fundraising and Signature Events Manager
chubbert@uplifteducation.org or (469) 398-0084

To donate to Uplift, please visit:
www.uplifteducation.org/donate

For corporate gifts and partnership opportunities, contact:
Deborah Bigham, Chief Development Officer
dbigham@uplifteducation.org or (469) 621-8493



Volunteer Melinda Lafitte with scholars at Uplift Summit International Preparatory



Uplift operates as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that serves a predominantly minority (91%) and low-income (63%) student body. Ninety percent of Uplift's funding comes from the state and federal governments. Ten percent comes from private philanthropic donations. Of that total, 84% goes directly toward academic instruction.

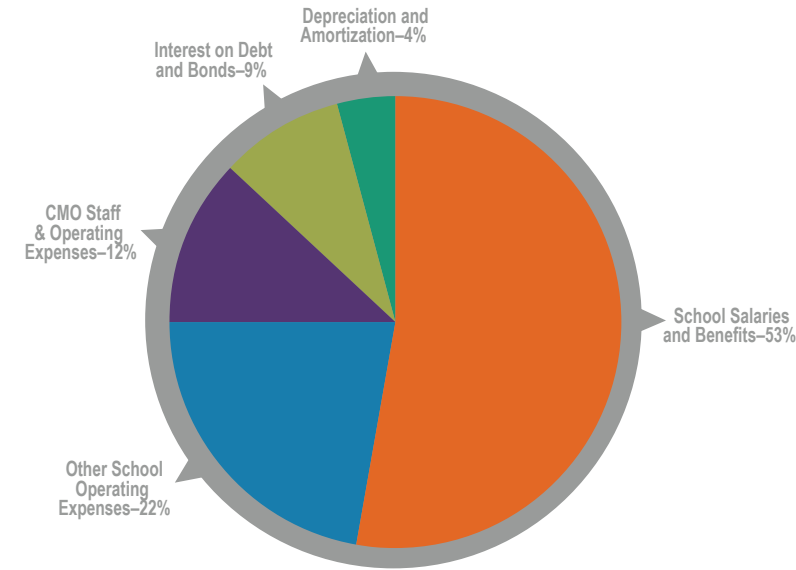
We are proud of our investment-grade debt ratings from S&P and the fact that Uplift schools are self-sustaining after the first three years of operation.

expanding our reach

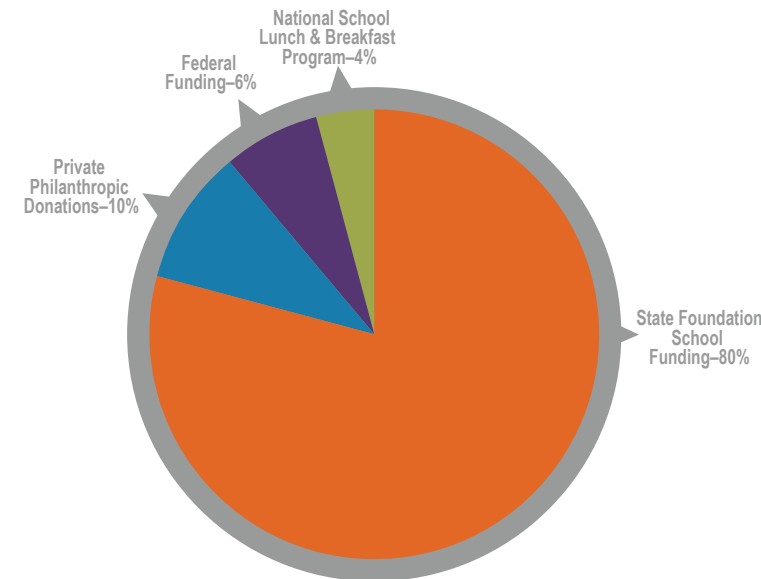
expanding their future

expanding our impact

Revenue



Expenses



Audited income statement for fiscal year 2012-13, year ended June 30, 2013.

- Uplift received the first investment-grade rating in the country for a charter school in 2000 and has retained that rating
- Since 2000, Uplift issued more than \$185M of tax exempt bonds in the public market (most recent issuance was \$44.8M in 2013)
- Uplift received first "waiver" on restriction to growth in 2009 from the Texas State Commissioner of Education, allowing for growth without approval
- On average, Uplift receives 20% less funding from the state than traditional districts to provide a rigorous college preparatory education





The Uplift board structure consists of a governing Board of Directors made up of volunteer community leaders and advocates for education. This group focuses on decisions and actions to benefit the network and the education landscape as a whole.

Each region within the Uplift network has an advisory board that concentrates on supporting the specific campuses within that region.

expanding our reach

expanding their future

expanding our impact

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Without the generosity of our donors, Uplift would not be able to provide an education for our nearly 10,000 scholars.

We extend a heartfelt thank you to the following donors for their generous gifts to support Uplift's mission.

expanding our reach

expanding their future

expanding our impact

Uplift Education extends special thanks to those donors who have cumulatively given more than \$100,000 since our inception.

\$1,000,000 +

Charter School Growth Fund
Communities Foundation of Texas
Communities Foundation of Texas-Educate Texas
The Matejek Family Foundation
The Michael & Susan Dell Foundation
The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Jake L. and Nancy B. Hamon Charitable Foundation
Rainwater Charitable Foundation
The Harold Simmons Foundation
The Rees-Jones Foundation
The Walton Family Foundation
U.S. Department of Education Teacher Incentive Fund
The Todd & Abby Williams Family Foundation

Gifts of \$250,000 and up

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Matejek Family Foundation
The Rainwater Charitable Foundation
Sid W. Richardson Foundation
Rowling Foundation
Harold Simmons Foundation
The United Way of Metropolitan Dallas

Gifts of \$50,000 to \$99,999

Citi Community Development
Mr. and Mrs. Philip Montgomery†
The Morris Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. Phillip Wiggins

Gifts of \$25,000 to \$49,999

The Broad Center
The Dallas Foundation

Gifts of \$10,000 to \$24,999

Ambit Energy
Mr. and Mrs. Vikrant Bhatia
Mr. and Mrs. Kevin Bryant
Communities Foundation Donations
Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Dona
Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund
Goldman Sachs Matching Gift Program (CF)
Jewish Federation of Omaha Foundation
Project Management Services, Inc.
The Real Estate Council Foundation
Mr. Brice Tarzwell and Mrs. Connie Stamets
Ms. Ellen Wood

Gifts of \$5,000 to \$9,999

Richard & Victoria Agnich Foundation
The Boston Consulting Group, Inc
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Mr. John Buck
Mr. Sudeep Burman and Ms. Dorothy Sherwood
Mr. and Mrs. W. Carey Carter
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Frapart

\$250,000 to \$999,999

Anonymous
The Brown Foundation, Inc.
Amon G. Carter Foundation
The Hillcrest Foundation
The Hobilzelle Foundation
M.R. & Evelyn Hudson Foundation
The Perot Foundation
The Posey Leadership Enhancement Fund
Sid W. Richardson Foundation
TI Foundation
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Gifts of \$1,000 to \$4,999

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