

ELEVATION SCHOLARS
2021-22
ANNUAL REPORT





TABLE OF CONTENTS

3	Letter from the Board Chair and President
4	Our Why
5	Our Program
6	Rothchild's Elevation Story
8	At a Glance
9	10 Years
10	Rebecca's Elevation Story
12	It Takes a Village
13	Community Partners
15	Financials

MISSION

We invest in high-need, high-achieving students who have demonstrated community impact, helping them to and through the nation's most competitive colleges and universities.

VISION

To be the premier community organization celebrated for college success among high-achieving, high-need students throughout Central Florida.

VALUES

- Student Success
- Observable Alignment
- Social Return
- Operational Excellence
- Performance Standards

LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR AND PRESIDENT

Dear friends,

As we reflect on the 2021-2022 school year and look ahead to 10 years of service in our community, we are overwhelmed with gratitude.

In 2013, we started by awarding just one Elevation Scholar award. Since then, we've grown into the only organization in Central Florida that recruits, coaches and supports high-achieving students from high-need families starting in high school, all the way through their dream of college graduation.

For many of our students, despite excelling in academics, they are faced with roadblocks that prevent them from pursuing the nation's most competitive colleges and universities. We want to remedy that inequity.

To do that, we focus on four critical areas: high school programming, college admissions, college success and career connection. This requires an investment of five years with our students. An investment of time, resources and expertise that is only made possible because of our dedicated team and supporters like you.

There is a saying that says talent is universal, but opportunity is not. This is why we believe in this work, our mission and our students. Elevation Scholars are driven world changers that maintain a standard of excellence unmatched by your typical high school student.

As you read this report and learn more about Elevation Scholars, know that we are thankful for your continued support to invest in the best and brightest in Central Florida.



**Elevation
Scholars**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott Lee', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Scott Lee
President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Orosz', with a large, looping flourish at the end.

Steve Orosz
Board Chair

OUR WHY

THE ISSUE

Information Deficit

When a lack of easy access to information about college admissions results in a first-generation college student making mistakes with lifelong consequences.

Undermatching

When students enroll in colleges that are less academically selective than those for which they are academically prepared, the results are lower graduation rates, lower lifetime earnings, less social capital and higher debt.

ELEVATION SCHOLARS OUTCOMES

Enrollment



67%

Low-income students' national immediate college enrollment

VS



100%

Elevation Scholars

Persistence



50.7%

Six-year graduation rate for all low-income students

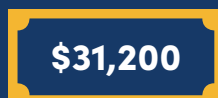
VS



100%

Elevation Scholars
0 college dropouts after six years

Debt



\$31,200

Average debt for low-income college graduate

VS



<\$5,000

Elevation Scholars
on track to graduate with < \$5,000

OUR PROGRAM

All Students



HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMMING

Fellow & Friends

A monthly fellowship opportunity featuring guest speakers from the community.

Bootcamp

Half-day seminars with college admissions experts and educational leaders who walk high school students through the nuts and bolts of college admissions basics.

Elevation Scholars Award Winners



COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

While high school programming is open to all students, Elevation Scholars Awards are provided to selected juniors who are high-need, high-performing who have a demonstrated community impact.

The selection process is rigorous and includes a 20-page application along with interviews with the student, their parents, and teachers. Typically one-third of applicants earn admission to the program.

The five-year commitment includes admissions coaching, test prep, college trips, assistance with applying for financial aid and scholarships, and Horizon Events, which allow students to explore various careers.



COLLEGE SUCCESS

Working alongside Elevation Scholars continues as they transition to college, while they're in school, and even when it's time to look for internships and career options. This type of support includes regular communication by our team and funds to support retention and graduation (i.e., stipend, travel home, clothing, family visits).



ROTCCHILD

At a number of our partner schools, engagement with students begins in the ninth grade. In fact, many students participate in these in-school programming opportunities before deciding to apply to become an Elevation Scholar.

That's how Rotchild was first introduced to Elevation Scholars at Evans High School.

And although he was involved with high school programming, he initially didn't plan to apply to the award program.

"It's easy to limit yourself because of where you are and try to get over the mentality of 'I can be more and go far,'" shared Rotchild. "It wasn't until the team encouraged me to apply that I submitted my application. I initially planned on only applying to local schools."

Not only did Rotchild get accepted into the program, he discovered a passion for the financial field while on a tour at AndCo, a national investment consulting firm with their headquarters located in Winter Park that also has been a longtime supporter of the Elevation Scholars program.

He eventually went on to Wake Forest University to earn a degree in economics and minor in entrepreneurship, and even earned an internship at AndCo while attending college.

"When we first met Rotchild, we were blown away by not only what his teachers had to say about him but how many of his peers looked up to him," said Aminah Harris, program director of Elevation Scholars. "As a lead volunteer at a nearby elementary school, he was already setting an example

of what meaningful service looked like in our community. It was no surprise when he created a similar program as a student at Wake."

Over the years, the AndCo team has participated in the annual selection process for Scholars, conducted mock job interviews, invited students to job shadow their team and collected dorm kit donations for college-bound Scholars.

"There is no doubt in our minds that the students who are part of Elevation Scholars are going to be future leaders in their respective industries," said Mike Welker at AndCo Consulting. "As a growing firm, not only are we able to give back to a worthy cause, we're able to expose high-caliber students to a field to which they may not otherwise have been exposed. We're proud of the tiny part we're able to play in the lives of these talented young people."

In May 2022, the team AndCo and Elevation Scholars had another reason to celebrate when Rotchild's story came full circle and he was hired as an associate with the firm — an opportunity that is allowing him to continue pursuing his passion in finance.

"Elevation has had a huge impact on my life," said Rotchild. "Not only did they help me apply for college, they helped me along and checked in along the way. They also introduced me to a lot of spaces that I didn't know about. They introduced me to a different world."

2021-2022

AT A GLANCE

Program Scope

- Five partner high schools
Edgewater | Evans | Colonial | Jones | Oak Ridge
- **147** served in high school programming
- **18** Scholars currently being coached through college admissions as high school seniors
- **72** Elevation Scholars currently attending college (12 graduated May 2022)

Program Impact

100%
College
Graduation Rate

18
Number of Scholar
Awards Given

\$271,405
Average Scholarship
Package Earned

Our Students

4.59
Weighted GPA

\$37,657
Median
Household Income

94%
First-Generation
College Students

College Acceptances

In 2022, our Class 8 Scholars were accepted to 45 colleges including those listed below.

Boston University
College of William & Mary*
Duke University
Grinnell College*
Lehigh University

Pomona College*
Princeton University*
Wake Forest University
Florida A&M University
Florida State University

Smith College
University of Central Florida
University of Florida

**First time admissions for Elevation Scholars*

We are proud of the caliber of colleges and universities our Scholars earn acceptance to each year. Since our inception, 92% of our Scholars are accepted into a Top 30 institution, 94% are accepted into a Top 50 institution and 100% are accepted into a Top 100 institution, as rated by U.S. News & World Reports.



- 2013** Founded as a program of the Elevation Foundation by Chris King and Elevation Financial Group.
- 2014** Awarded first Elevation Scholars Award at Oak Ridge High School
- 2015** UCF's Burnett Honors College partners with Elevation Scholars to provide interns and students to serve as tutors
- 2016** Added Colonial and Evans High School as partner high schools
- 2017** Develops formal pipeline relationship with Wake Forest University
- 2018** Name changed to Elevation Scholars, Inc. and became a public charity with a fully independent, community board; expanded program into Seminole County
- 2019** First Ivy League University acceptance — Harvard University; First Scholar enters the workforce as a software developer for a Fortune 500 company
- 2022** Program reaches 100th Elevation Scholar
- 2023** Celebrate 10th Elevation Scholars class!





REBECCA

If you've ever met an Elevation Scholar, you are likely to see a spirit of resilience and a purpose-driven mindset you might not expect to see in such a young person. As a Class 4 Scholar, Rebecca represented all these qualities and more.

In fact, when she first applied to the program, she wasn't accepted. But that didn't stop her from continuing to seek out the opportunities offered through the high school programming team. In fact, she took advantage of nearly every event or offering provided by the team. And after a full year of participation, hard work and dedication, Rebecca earned a spot and officially joined her cohort.

That same level of determination is what led Rebecca to meeting Dr. Ira M. Pinnelas, a pediatric physician at Orlando Health – a connection that eventually helped her gain access to shadow a colleague's pediatric firm during her junior year at the University of Florida.

"What makes the Scholars so special is they are giving the students the blessing to dream and put themselves first," said Dr. Pinnelas. "The program positions these students to excel and reach beyond what's comfortable for them."

After that summer, it was confirmation for Rebecca. "I loved nursing."

Today, she is a proud member of the Orlando Health team with a few more letters behind her name: Rebecca "Becca" Boreland, BSN, RN.



"Elevation Scholars provided me the tools and resources to persevere through college and land a position in my career," said Rebecca. "They look out for you. And they care for you as a student and as a person. I was always at ease knowing I could pick up the phone and ask for help."

The success of Elevation Scholars is only made possible by an experienced and passionate internal team that partners with external partners who believe the students can achieve their dreams.

"It felt amazing to be part of Rebecca's journey, added Dr. Pinnelas. "She's going to be an outstanding nurse."



IT TAKES A VILLAGE

Volunteers play a key role to the success of Elevation Scholars. During a regular school year, more than 50 community members and business leaders donate over 400 hours of their time to invest in the success of our students.

In 2015, through a community partnership event, Frantz Lumaine was first introduced to Elevation Scholars. Seven years later, he has remained a dedicated volunteer and longtime advocate of the program.

Whether it's helping during summer boot camp sessions or interviews for each new class of Scholars, it's likely that Frantz is there behind the scenes and working alongside the students.

"I believe in what Elevation Scholars is doing," shared Frantz. "I have seen the results of their

labor and strategic plan. I know it works. I wish they were in every high school and an option for every student."

Like many students who participate in the program, Frantz himself was a first-generation college student, and shares that the program is a game-changer for those who are the first in their family to attend college.

"The emotional support the Scholars team provides during a critical time in a young adult's life is invaluable," added Frantz. "Add to that one-on-one guidance with navigating a collegiate system and that's what you call a gift. The Elevation Scholars program is a gift."

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

FUNDING PARTNERS



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Scott and Amy Lee
 Steve Orosz
 Tim and Michelle Seneff
 Todd Harper
 Tommy and Barbara Beck
 Worth Oelschlager

EDUCATION PARTNERS



FINANCIALS

Income

6/30/2022 YTD

Individuals & Business Contribs

Other Direct Public Support	\$ 519,000
EFG Donations	\$ 253,000
Award Sponsorships	\$ 54,000

Total · Individuals & Business Contribs \$ 826,000

Foundation Grants

Helios Grant	\$ 229,000
Other Foundation Grants	\$ 69,050

Total · Foundation Grants \$ 298,050

Total Income \$ 1,124,050

Expense

Scholars

Scholars Staff	\$ 428,000
High School Programs	\$ 11,000
College Scholars	\$ 299,000
High School Scholars	\$ 30,000
Marketing	\$ 32,000
Training, Travel & Consulting	\$ 57,000
Community Engagement Events	\$ 42,000
Other Scholars Costs	\$ 1,000

Total · Scholars \$ 900,000

Non-Program

Administration Staff	\$ 198,000
Accounting & Professional Fees	\$ 40,000
Facility & Facility Misc.	\$ 70,000
Other	\$ 40,000

Total 9300 · Non-Scholars \$ 348,000

Total Expense \$ 1,248,000

Other Income (Forgiveness of PPP debt) \$ 72,000

Net Income \$ (51,950)



ELEVATION SCHOLARS

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