



**30**  
*years*

Scholars  
**Unlimited**

**ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2023**

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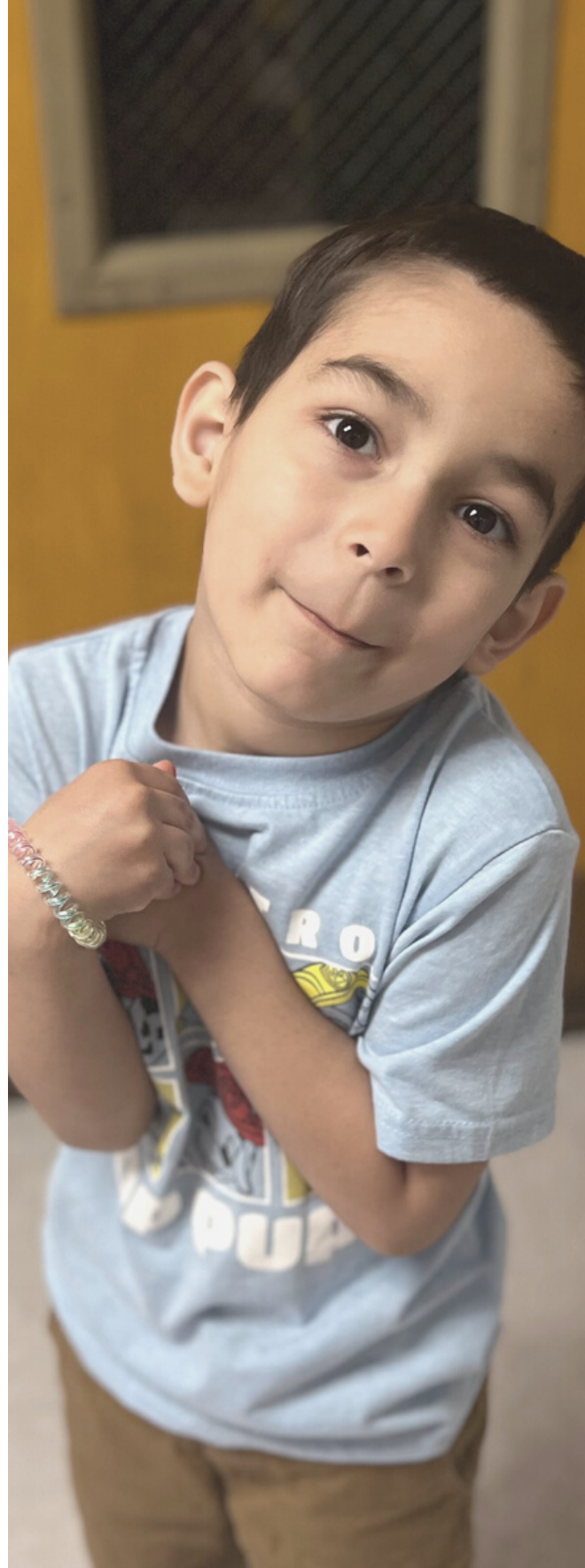


# UNSTOPPABLE

On an early summer morning, if you entered Harris Park Elementary School, you were likely met with a chorus of scholars singing and shouting about being unstoppable. Each day, they kicked off the morning with Sia's bold affirmation song, "Unstoppable."

The song embodies vulnerability and strength and includes the lyrics, "I'm so powerful, I don't need batteries to play. I'm so confident. Yeah, I'm unstoppable today." It was easy to be overwhelmed by the power in their voices and their conviction to be unstoppable. How incredible to start each day grounded in this message!

Our mission strives to walk alongside young people as they discover a love for learning and a love for self. We have the honor to watch them grow academically and also witness how they build character and relationships. It would be too simple to say we are an out-of-school time literacy program, for we are truly a community fostering academic, social, and emotional growth, all while learning with each other and from each other.



## DID YOU KNOW?

**94% of Summer scholars reported they made a new friend during this program**



In May, we celebrated Diana Romero Campbell's exciting new chapter as Councilwoman for District 4. As an organization, we are so proud of Diana and the many ways she's championed our mission! Her full career has supported children and their families and the City and County of Denver is lucky to have her. We can't wait to see what great things happen next for Diana!



## NEW BEGINNINGS



In August, we welcomed Dr. Abenicio Rael. Abenicio's strong background in higher education and education equity is a great fit for our mission. His belief is the earlier we expose young students to the possibilities of further education, the more they will thrive. He is excited to see how Scholars Unlimited will continue to grow and be thought leaders in the out-of-school time space.





## SELF-BELIEF

Self-belief is a powerful force! As we invest in building the self-assurance of our budding scholars, we cultivate not just students but future leaders, compassionate collaborators, and resilient individuals. Together, we forge a path where confidence is not just a virtue but a catalyst, propelling each of them towards futures of boundless possibilities.

We take the most pride in the role we play in putting smiles on the faces of the students we serve, due to the pride they feel in themselves.

## PERSEVERANCE

Scholars Unlimited provided our scholars 169,462 program hours during Scholars After School and Summer Scholars. Over 80% of our scholars identify as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) and in Colorado, there is a 50% achievement gap between white and black and brown students combined.\*

Confronted with systemic barriers and education inequities that seek to hinder our scholars, they embody the spirit of perseverance. Through tenacity and an unwavering commitment to learning, they are continuously rising above adversity. It is a testament to their strength that, despite the systemic hurdles, they are flourishing academically within our programs.

\*Colorado Department of Education





# POWER OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT

We have amazing humans of all ages within our community! Education is at the heart of our work and our joy comes not only from being alongside them on their education journey, but also being able to learn together and from each other.

“The most meaningful thing that came from my summer experience with Scholars Unlimited would be the relationships I was able to build with my students.

One thing that I learned from my students is to enjoy the little things in life.

Life in itself is stressful at times, but my students taught me to smile more, laugh, and be grateful with what I have. I had the younger students this summer, but these little ones taught me to enjoy the small things life has to offer.”

- Keiry, Scholars Unlimited Staff

## DID YOU KNOW?

**88% of our families said our programs provide a physically and emotionally safe learning environment**



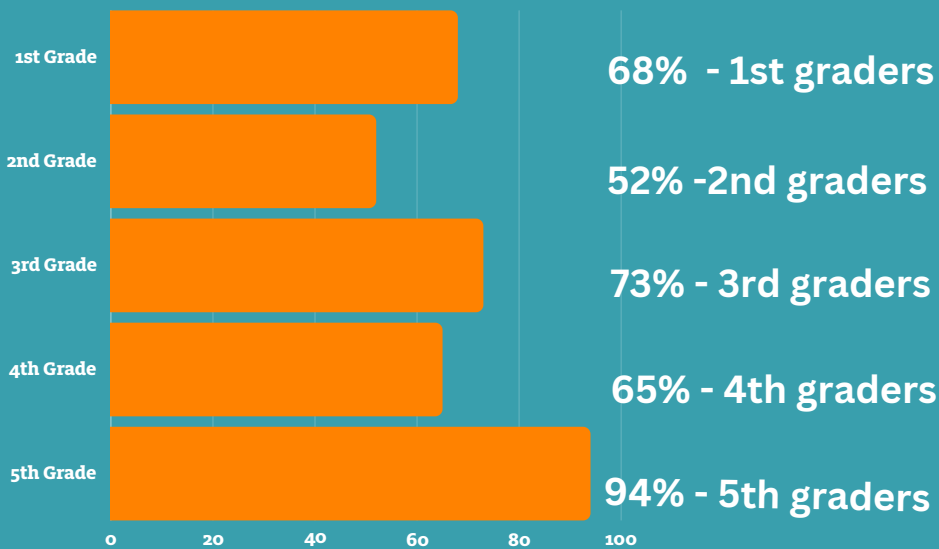
# Making Gains Scholars After School

## 30 Weeks



513 Scholars

### Percentage of growth by grade



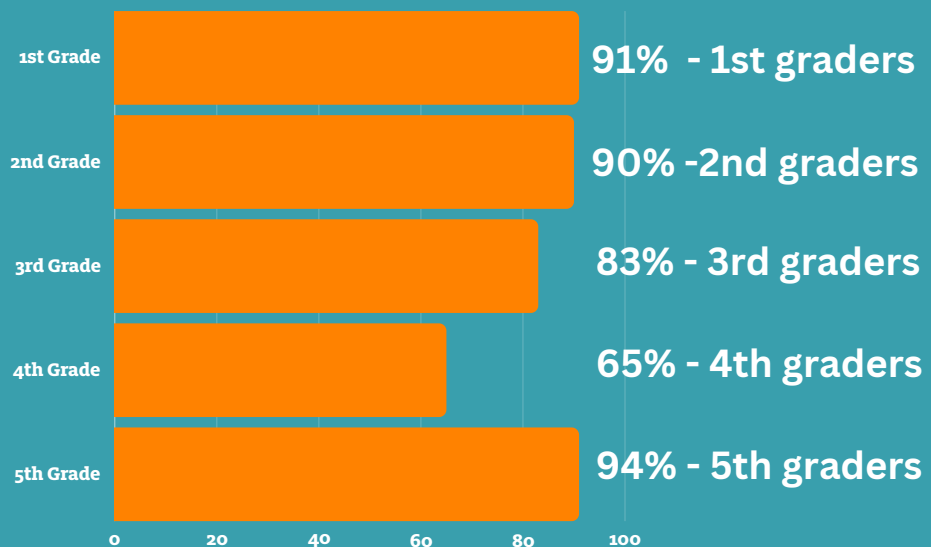
### Vocabulary Growth

A measure of how many words are likely to be in a student's expressive vocabulary.

### Fluency Growth

A measure of a student's ability to read aloud with natural ease in a student's expressive vocabulary.

### Percentage of growth by grade



DID YOU KNOW?

95% of our Scholars After School parents would recommend our program

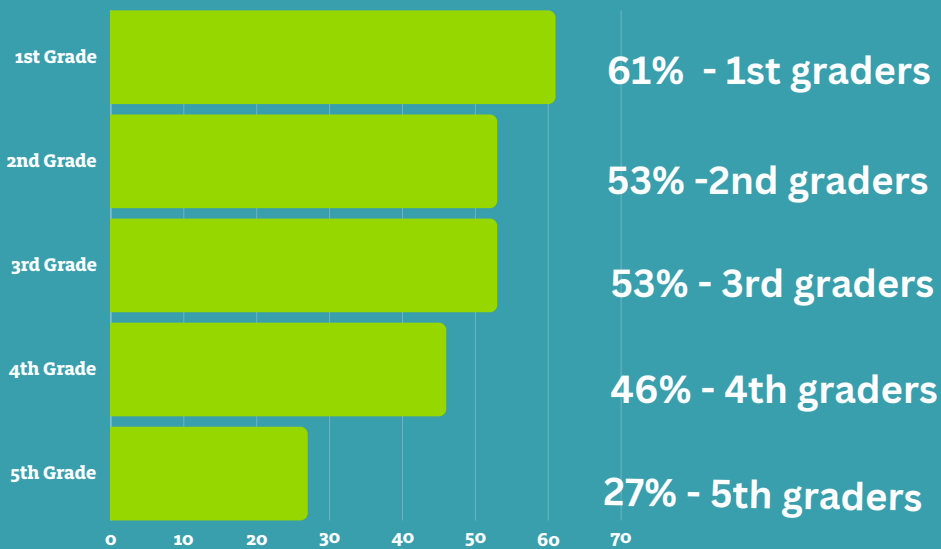
# Making Gains

## Summer Scholars

6 Weeks



Percentage of growth by grade



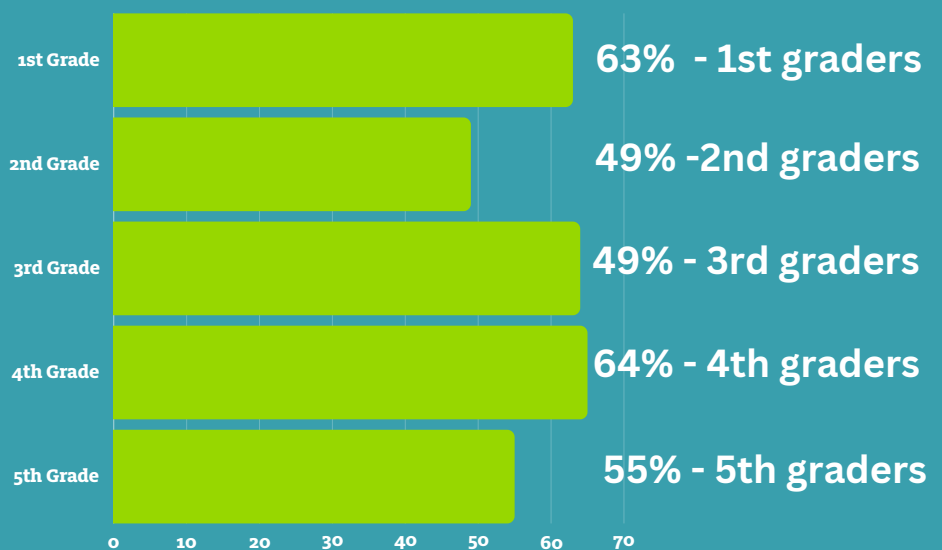
### Vocabulary Growth

A measure of how many words are likely to be in a student's expressive vocabulary.

### Fluency Growth

A measure of a student's ability to read aloud with natural ease in a student's expressive vocabulary.

Percentage of growth by grade



DID YOU KNOW?

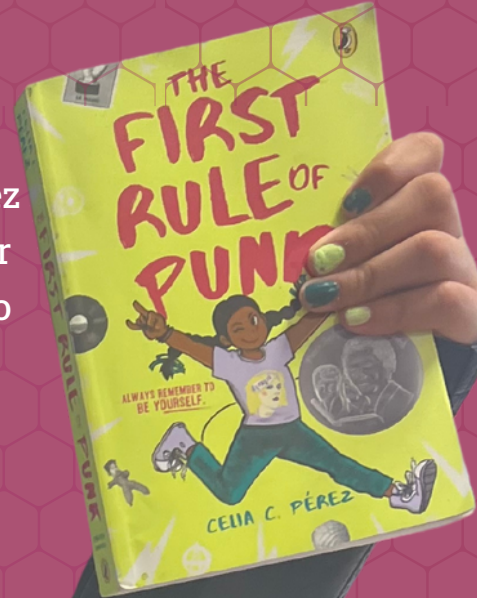
98% of our Scholars After School parents would recommend our program



# Our Book

Each summer, we choose one book to help guide our curriculum, but selecting one is not an easy task. There are not enough words to express how appreciative we are to the community members who participated in our Book Selection Committee. We wanted more voices at the table as we selected a book that would resonate with and reflect our scholars.

This group read several books and provided feedback and insight as we selected *The First Rule of Punk* by Celia C. Perez for our intermediate level scholars. If you all are not familiar with the rules of punk, the first and most important rule is to “Be Yourself.”



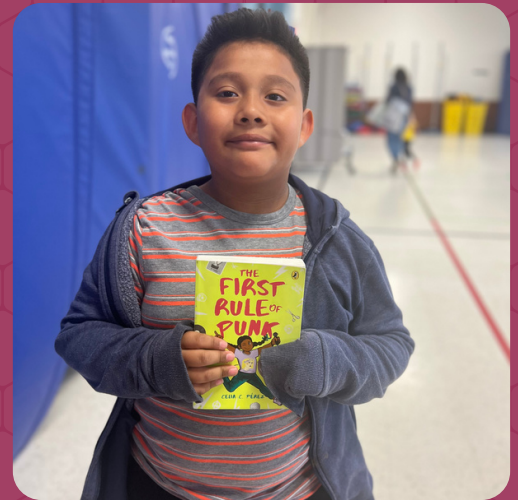
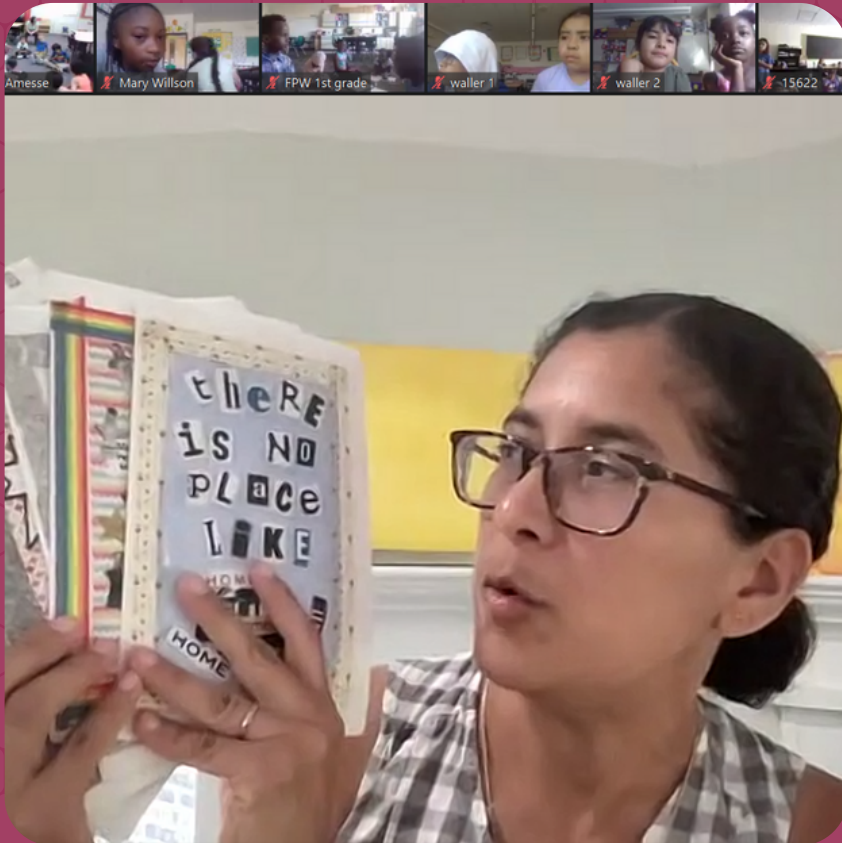
## Thank You to our Book Selection Committee:

Alicia Biggs  
Brooke Dilling  
Caitie Dougherty  
Diana Romero Campbell  
Jamie Villarreal-Bassett  
Jennie Merrigan  
Miranda Cook  
Rowena Alegria  
Tiffany Wachtler  
Yvette Redwood



# The Author Visit

We are delighted that author Celia Pérez took the time to chat with our scholars, bringing *The First Rule of Punk* to life, and share in the joy of literature.





# LUNCH OF SCHOLARS



This June, Upper Larimer was filled with great energy for our Lunch of Scholars. It was a delight to raise a glass to the success of Scholars After School and to share the exciting things our Summer Scholars had in store!

**Cha'rel Wright's incredible rendition of "Greatest Love of All" ignited the room and set the stage for a great program. We were honored to have Scholars Unlimited parent Amber join us to share ways her daughter, Sarai, has flourished within Scholars Unlimited programs. It was a joy to also have alumna Aliyana tell her story of finding belonging within her time as a scholar and her passion to pay it forward.**



Our theme was "Soaring to New Heights" and it really encapsulates the value you bring and how you help us continue to grow and support our scholars. We are immensely grateful to each of you who could join us in the room, and those there in spirit.



“

**Scholars Unlimited is helpful and all about being involved and safe.**

**Hearing about and seeing how your child is learning is important.**

**Scholars Unlimited allows you to be yourself and contribute your best qualities.**

**- Amber**

”



# Scholars Unlimited



## Meet Aliyanna

Scholars  
Unlimited

"Scholars Unlimited became my safe haven, my sanctuary. It was a place where I was not judged for my past, my inability to be able to read or my circumstances. You see my mom was looking for a place of love, with caring adults while at the same time a place where I could grow in my academics. We wanted a place where I was embraced for who I was and the potential that lay within me.

Scholars Unlimited was a community that welcomed me with open arms, providing me with a nurturing environment where I could grow academically, socially, and emotionally.

The impact of Scholars Unlimited on my life cannot be overstated."



# Birthday Bash

This summer, Scholars Unlimited made a splashing return to the Park Hill neighborhood to celebrate the 30 years of joy our scholars and their families bring to the organization. Each year, we are honored and humbled by the fact numerous families return back to our program, and entrust the organization to provide a safe learning environment for their children.

We hosted families at Park Hill Elementary School for a bash filled with games, water balloons, and delicious hot dogs and burgers! We were joined by board members and wonderful volunteers to help facilitate the fun activities planned. It was great to see the connections being built and all the excitement of the day!





# Cyndi & Jessica Awards

In August, we had a blast recognizing some of our exceptional scholars at the Cyndi and Jessica Awards (named for our founders, Cyndi Kahn and Jessica Pearson) in a ceremony held at City Park Pavilion!

The energy in the room was infectious as we acknowledged 15 scholars who truly embodied outstanding character. With friends and family by their side, we transformed the celebration into a carnival of joy, complete with pizza and well-deserved awards.

The evening was nothing short of fantastic, and our gratitude extends to the founders, our families, our site staff, and our community award selection committee!



## CONGRATULATIONS

Amir	Gabriela	Khadija	Obey
Ben	Ian	Luke	Olivia
Camilla	Israel	Muhammad	Xavier
Emely	Kevin	Novah	



“ It meant the world to me that people saw in my son what I see in him every day. It is more impactful when others outside of family recognize the outstanding qualities in a child.  
- Nicole, Scholars Unlimited Parent ”



# Joy in the Community



## Raising a Glass

This past fall, Scholars Unlimited rose some glasses to celebrate the connections we have made through the years! We welcomed our community at Jagged Mountain and Grandma's House for a fun, casual, happy hour evening. We mixed, mingled, had a couple laughs, and shared what's in store for Scholars Unlimited!

## College View Library

This year, we learned that one of our sites, College View Elementary, was hoping to revitalize their library. We partnered with them, helping with paint, carpet, and more to modernize the space and make it incredibly welcoming for all students to enjoy!



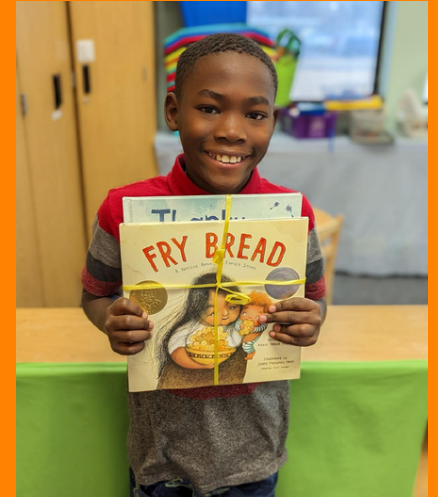
## Dr. Yemi Stembrige

In April, we were honored to collaborate with Center for Urban Education - University of Northern Colorado and Aurora Public Schools to bring Dr. Adeyemi Stembrige to share his teachings of classroom equity in a free community event!





# Joy in the Community



## Holiday Gifts

Scholars Unlimited had an amazing opportunity to spread some extra holiday cheer with a very special present for our families and site staff. We are thankful to the army of volunteers who joined us in cutting recipe cards, filling holiday bags with groceries and books, and delivering these bundles of joy to 400 families! We are especially grateful for our generous donor who helped make all this possible!

It is a blessing to have help like this around this time of year. There's so many families struggling, that when this occurs it sets a thought in their minds that says, everything is going to be alright! Again thank you! You're awesome!

- Eddie, Scholars Unlimited Parent





# Thank You to Our Board



**Tina Martinez (Board Chair)**

**Nikki Holmlund (Vice Chair & Treasurer)**

**Kristin Rozansky (Secretary)**

**Will Chan**

**Angela Choi**

**Rosanne Fulton**

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**Melissa Rosas**

**Stephen Rousey**

**Kathleen Sgamma**

**Jessica Smith**

**Dr. Franita Ware**

**Ken Warner**

**Jamie Villareal-Bassett**

“

Out of school time is often overlooked in conversations of youth development and I love supporting an organization that brings the value of OST to the forefront. Scholars is having a tremendous impact on the young people they serve, their families and their communities and I am grateful to be in support!

Jamie Villareal-Bassett,  
Board member

”

# THANK YOU TO OUR STAFF



**A special thank you to all of our outstanding site and central office staff for all your contributions to help carry out our mission. You are so dedicated and your passion for our work shines bright in everything you do!**



When a staff member at one of our sites asked "Do you like Scholars Unlimited?" I emphatically responded, "**I LOVE it!**" Everyday I see our scholars grow in their reading skills, ability to process their emotions, and their curiosity of the world.

I love that we not only give a safe place for children to be after school but that we are helping further their education and development.

I also love knowing that we are making a difference. When I see students from past years, who have aged out of our program, they tell me they miss coming to Scholars Unlimited. I even see former scholars, who are now in middle school, picking up younger siblings and they will share how they wish they could come back.

I am honored to be part of our Scholars Unlimited team, and to see how the programs will continue to expand and grow.



## DID YOU KNOW?

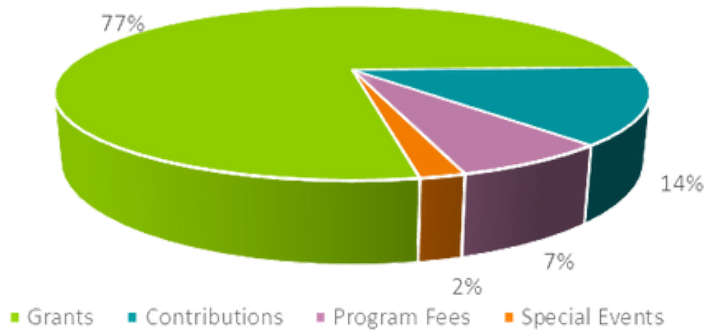
**Our focus on recruitment and retention lead to being staffed nearly 100% for Summer Scholars. This was the first time this was accomplished since prior to the pandemic.**



# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

## 8/1/2022 - 7/31/2023

### Revenue

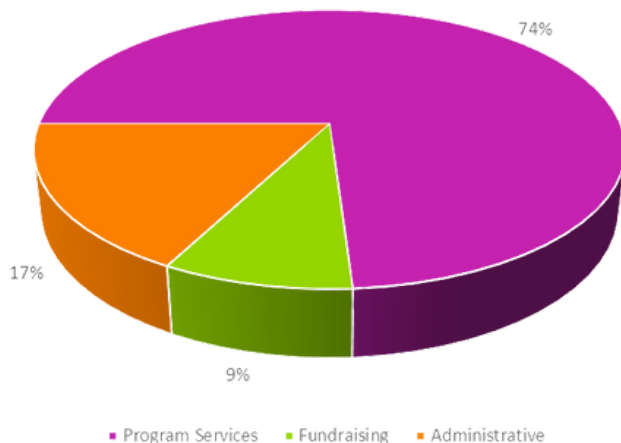


### Revenue

Grants: \$2,179,487.05  
 Contributions: \$394,773.19  
 Program Fees: \$193,400.00  
 Special Events: \$54,608.93

**Total \$2,822,269.17**

### Expenses



### Expenses

Program Services: \$1,912,968.20  
 Fundraising: \$226,912.40  
 Administrative: \$446,484.53

**Total: \$2,586,365.13**

Total Beginning Assets: \$ 2,836,220

Total Net Assets at End of Year: \$ 2,708,253

Scholars Unlimited experienced a decrease in net assets of \$127,968 in FY 2022-23. We have maintained our current levels and quality of programs, while also experiencing a decrease in program fees\* and some grants. During this fiscal year, we continued to focus on supporting the whole child. Recognizing that challenges within the family can create a barrier to a scholar's success, we utilized our resources to help our families be resilient so that each young person within our program has the opportunity to thrive. This included being able to increase our support to our community by providing rent and utility assistance on a one-time basis through designated COVID funding.

We also experienced a transition in our executive team bringing in a new President and CEO as well as a transition in our Director of Finance role just after the close of the fiscal year, and both are focused on maintaining strong financial health. Overall, we are optimistic about the future and are excited to grow as an organization with a sound financial base and an impactful program for our community.

\*Program fees are collected through grants and school partners.

# Thank You

Adele Sykes  
Alan and Sally Gass  
Alexandra Rothing  
Alice and Terrance Kelly  
Alita Pirkopf  
Allyson Bailey and Matthew McConville  
Amber Tootle  
Amos Wilder  
Amy Brady  
Angela Norris  
Angie McPhaul  
Ann and David Stolfa  
Ann Lederer and Robert Hickler  
Anna Jo Haynes  
Anne and Frank Rowe  
Anne and Paul Zeckser  
Anne and Robert Sneed  
Anne Tengler  
Annemarie H. Tague  
Arapahoe Library District  
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Ashley Lansing  
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Barbara and Howard Holme  
Barbara Caley  
Barbara H. de Jong  
Barbara Kingsolver  
Barbara Vaille  
Bayless Charitable Fund  
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Beth and Robert Duncan  
Betsy and Clyde Anderson  
Betsy Herrick and Milt Kahn  
Bill and Rhonda Crossen  
Bill and Sharon Elfenbein  
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Bob and Sandy Rhodes  
Bob Nelson  
Bonnie W. Camp  
Brandon Mason  
Brandy Davis  
Brenda and Bruce Campbell  
Brenda Jones  
Breyon LeDuff

Caitlin Henkel  
Campaign Products of the Rockies  
Candace Lewis  
Caren S. Press  
Carol Ahnen  
Carol Berg  
Carol Roberts and Steve Larson  
Carolyn E. Carleton  
Carolyn Benoit  
Carolyn Daniels  
Cathy and David Manchester  
Chaer Robert  
Charles Holum and Linda Huang  
Charon Berenbaum  
Cheri Jones  
Christine Jensen and David C. Abell  
Christine Muldoon  
Christy Cutler and Bill Walters  
Christy Murphy and Norman Mueller  
Cody Buchanan  
Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA)  
Community First Foundation - GivingFirst  
Connie Hauver  
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Cyndi and Ed Kahn  
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Daniel and Lisa Culhane  
Daniel and Martha Rodeheffer  
David R. and Linda M. DeMuro  
DCP Midstream  
Deborah and David Milner  
Deborah Froeb  
Delia Armstrong  
Denise and Peter McGuire  
Dennis and Debby Montgomery  
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Denver Museum of Nature & Science  
Denver Post Community Foundation

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Elaine Latham  
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Elizabeth Bennett  
Elizabeth Carter  
Elizabeth Horn  
Elizabeth Neva  
Elizabeth Windisch  
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Ellen Fitzgerald  
Ellen Lambert  
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Eric Perryman and Lori Potter  
Esmeralda Rodriguez  
Esther Romero  
Evelyn Childers  
Evelyn McClearn  
Federico Alvarez and Jennifer Heissler  
Felicity Hannay and James Wood  
FirstBank  
Flo and Dave Harlor  
Flor Alvidrez  
Florence Jabedo  
Fred and Marjory Bender  
Gannon and Sallie Kashiwa  
Georgia and Woody Garnsey  
Gerald and Rosemarie



# Thank You

Greater Horizons  
Harinderpal Singh  
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Summer Scholars  
Endowment Fund  
Henry and Melanie Kusumi  
Hilary Carlson  
Holland & Hart, LLP  
Holly Bennett and John  
Lebsack  
Hugh and Lynne Brown  
Humphreys Foundation  
Jaclyn and Cliff James  
Jacqueline Lansing  
Jagged Mountain Craft  
Brewery  
James Butz  
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Katie Faluotico  
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Kristin Rozansky  
Kupersmit Research Inc  
Kurt and Sandy Stenmark  
Lauren Aylward  
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Lawrence J. and Judith F.  
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Lindsay and Keith Campbell  
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Lisa Christian and John Walsh  
Lisa Wallace  
Lisa Weil and Steven Zansberg  
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Palenchar  
Lois and Donald G. Eckhoff  
Lois and Olan Adams

Luanne Hazelrigg  
Lucy Loomis and Tom  
Creighton  
Lydia Prado  
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Lynda and Peter Fox  
Lynne and Lance Forstot  
Mandy Potts  
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Margaret and Hans Neville  
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Margaret Roath  
Margie and Dr. Larry Feinberg  
Maria Mazin  
Marilyn and David Swan  
Marisa Allen  
Mark and Carol Zaitz  
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Martha Fulford  
Marty and Jim Hartmann  
Megan Sound  
Meghan Pitto  
Meghan Robertie  
Mekayla Ichneumon Beaver  
and Greg Brown  
Melanie Grant  
Melissa Rosas  
Michael Greschler  
Michael Marquess  
Michael and Elaine Ackerman  
Michael Kagan  
Mike and Katherine Martin  
Mira Morton Luna  
Mollie Mitchell & John Wilson  
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Muriel Green  
Myra and Robert Rich  
Nancy and Mike Farley  
Nancy Hawkins  
Naomi G Baline  
Natalie Qeaver  
Nate Collins  
Nicole Dea  
Norm Mueller  
Olga Garcia

# Thank You

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Park Hill Community  
Bookstore  
Patricia and David Shelton  
Patricia McClearn  
Patricia Pascoe  
Patricia Paul  
Patti and Tom Parson  
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Sharon O'Leary  
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Rudofsky

Sheila Cleworth  
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Susan Davenport  
Susan Friedman and Abe  
Wagner  
Susan Loftus  
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Tammy Heffron  
Tara Williams  
Teresa Knight  
Teri Chavez and Scott Murphy  
Thomas W. Bean Foundation  
Tiffany and Joe Wachtler  
Timothy and Anne Collins  
Tina and Jason Martinez  
Todd Daubert  
Topfer Family Foundation  
Tracey W Ballast  
Trinidad Rodriguez and Sarah  
Winbourn  
Ventana Harding  
Virginia and Thomas Fowler  
William H. Anderson  
Foundation, Inc.  
Xcel Energy Foundation  
Yuhua Hao  
Yvette Redwood  
Yvonne Jabedo





# Thank You Education Partners



# Thank You Community Partners & Sponsors



**Our mission is to foster academic, social, and emotional growth for children living in metro Denver communities.**

**Our Vision is an unwavering commitment to empower students to achieve academic and personal success.**



## Stay Connected



**Stay up to date on  
all our happenings!**

**Follow Scholars  
Unlimited on social  
media!**

## Support our Work



**Help fuel our  
mission with a  
gift that  
meaningful to  
you!**

## Get Involved



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