

A group of young boys and a man are smiling and waving. The man is in the background, wearing a grey long-sleeved shirt. The boys are in the foreground, wearing orange and dark blue t-shirts. One boy in the center is wearing an orange t-shirt with a green logo and the text "STOP BE" and "Don't Learn". Another boy on the right is wearing a dark blue t-shirt with "STAR WARS" written on it. A large orange text box is overlaid on the bottom half of the image.

# ANNUAL REPORT 2020

**A STEP BEYOND**

# LETTER FROM OUR NEW CEO

## James Wright



As I begin my tenure as CEO at A Step Beyond (ASB), I enter with great admiration and appreciation for the strength and resilience demonstrated by our students, parents, volunteers, and staff in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Without a doubt, our programmatic year was like no other and filled with an abundance of change, especially in our program delivery to our youth. I am grateful for the continued engagement by our community, and the generosity of our donors who have all stepped up during these unprecedented times. The ASB community is strong and thriving.

Earlier this fall, ASB's Founder and Executive Director, Frank Foster, retired after seven years of service. Frank's vision, leadership, dedication to our students and families, and tireless efforts to build our organization have put ASB in a position to be successful for years to come. On behalf of the entire organization, we thank Frank for his service and pioneering work. I am thrilled, humbled, and privileged to carry on this momentum and lead our talented team into the next chapter. Frank will continue to support ASB on our Board of Directors.

In September of 2019, our first and oldest cohort of students began their freshman year of high school giving us four years to prepare them for college admission. With this in mind, ASB launched the Middle & High School Leadership Initiative, which focuses on teaching students leadership skills, providing education and support on college admissions, and offering work-based learning opportunities. In year two, ASB will build on this initiative by adding on a College and Career Readiness program. This program will accelerate the ways we are nurturing essential skills among our students, helping them to better understand their unique strengths, interests, and workplace values and how they are aligned to the world of work. You can read more about the program on page 6.

In December of 2019, ASB hosted its 2nd annual Ballet Performance of The Nutcracker. The success of this performance was followed by three guest choreographers working with our students to create new pieces for our annual concert, which was sadly cancelled due to the pandemic. Nevertheless, our students found ways to participate in dance classes online over Zoom, creating dance for film during their summer dance intensive program. Our students also made great strides academically, as well as socially and emotionally, with strong participation in online tutoring, counseling sessions, and new enrichment opportunities focused on Sean Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens and the Girls With Ideas curriculums.

As we enter the 2020-2021 school year with a hybrid model of both on-site and online classes, our students have not only proven resilient despite the many challenges they face, but they have continued to persevere, work hard, and find new ways to connect with their peers and instructors, build community and support one another. I continue to be inspired and humbled by the dedication of the ASB community and look forward to a successful year ahead.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Wright'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

James Wright



# Student Story

## Building Resilience one day at a time

### *Excerpts from an interview with Alin Sotelo*

#### **How has A Step Beyond benefited you?**

**Alin:** Before coming to A Step Beyond I was not as confident in myself. When I would experience challenges, I would want to give up. I didn't believe I had the strength and support to overcome them. My grades were not very good and I needed a lot of help.

At A Step Beyond I started participating in homework help, in counseling groups and in dance. The teachers pushed me really hard to keep trying, to do better, to ask questions, and to improve. I realized that the teachers were pushing me because they cared about me and saw how great I could become if I worked hard. Through this, I started showing myself that I could do anything I put my mind to. My grades started getting better, my dancing improved, and I started feeling more confident.

In dance, I began challenging myself by practicing dance at home and working hard to get more flexible and practice choreography. Now, I have performed solos on stage as a lead dancer in the Nutcracker, I have a 4.0 GPA and I am much more confident in myself and in my abilities.

#### **What do you see for your Future?**

I think I want to become a lawyer and a professional dancer. Maybe I can do both! I know that to get there, I will have more ups and downs, but because of my experience with A Step Beyond I know that I can overcome those obstacles. What will stay with me is the smiles of my A Step Beyond teachers encouraging me along the way and telling me I can do it.

*"...dance makes me feel present and happy. I can let all of my worries go, let go of any stress, and feel happy. I want that for all kids everywhere."*



# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

A Step Beyond sustained its programs during the COVID-19 pandemic despite the volatile economy, thanks to the generosity of our donors and supporters

## BREAKDOWN BY FUNDING SOURCE

### INDIVIDUALS

**\$601,391**

### CORPORATE FUNDING

**\$169,500**

### GOVERNMENT FUNDING

**\$49,339**

### GRANTS & FOUNDATIONS

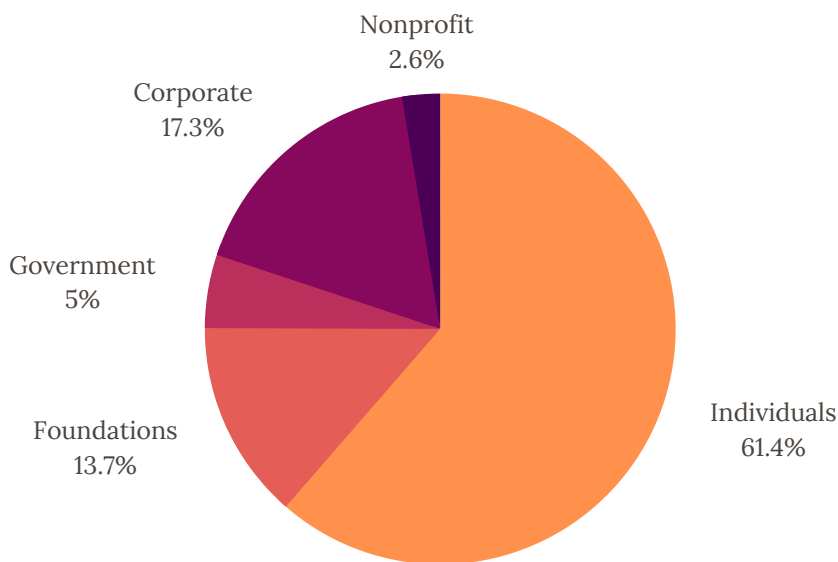
**\$134,005**

### NONPROFIT FUNDERS

**\$25,500**

### GRAND TOTAL

**979,735**



A Step Beyond is proud to report **100% Board participation** in annual giving



*I am grateful for the continued engagement by our community, and the generosity of our donors who have all stepped up during these unprecedented times. The ASB community is strong and thriving.*

James Wright, CEO



Last fall, ASB partnered with the San Diego Zoo Safari Park to learn about animal conservation and life sciences. Students visited the Park, attended workshops, then created their own dance piece reflecting their learning.

Our 5th and 6th graders participated in a partnership with the Scripps Institute of Oceanography learning about oceanic waves through dance. They took a fieldtrip to the Scripps Institute at the end of the residency.



90 students participated in this year's Nutcracker performance in December 2019

ASB launched career nights for our middle and high school students. Students heard from working professionals about careers in engineering and medicine.



**80%**

**OF STUDENTS**

participated in online dance classes during the early days of the COVID pandemic.



**213**

**STUDENTS**

A Step Beyond served 213 during the 2019-2020 program year



**HOURS OF DANCE**

**1,570**

Students have participated in 1570 collective hours of dance training since the start of the quarantine



**43**

**THERAPY SESSIONS**

Counseling sessions have been held for both students and their parents, individually and in groups



**TUTORING SESSIONS**

**572**

80% of students participating in our virtual tutoring sessions have seen their grades improve



**426**

**INDIVIDUALS**

have received food assistance from A Step Beyond



# LOOKING AHEAD...

## COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

As we head into winter, our oldest students have embarked on their sophomore years of high school, bringing them that much closer to college in three years' time. With this in mind, A Step Beyond is launching a new effort to provide greater college and career readiness support to our students this fall to ensure our youth are prepared for college and the world of work. We are committed to helping our students understand how to navigate their pathway to college acceptance and enrollment by fall of 2023!

These increased efforts will include the following program elements to be rolled out this school year:

01

### RIASEC FRAMEWORK:

This research-based framework helps students find the intersection between their personality and career environments. ASB participants will take the RIASEC survey annually and our staff will build an individualized learning plan that speaks to their strengths, interests, and workplace values.

02

### WORK-BASED LEARNING

This is an educational strategy that provides students with real-life work experiences where they can apply academic and technical skills and develop their employability through exploration opportunities like career nights.

03

### ESSENTIAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

These are the skills that people need for work, learning and life. Our college and career readiness efforts will nurture these skills: Emotional Intelligence, Communication, Creative and Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Dependability, and Resourcefulness.



## A STEP BEYOND SUPPORTERS 2019-2020

### Donors \$50,000 and above

Anonymous Board Member (4)  
The Caterpillar Foundation  
Thomas Ohana Foundation

### Donors \$25,000 to \$49,999

Anonymous Board Member (6)  
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### Donors \$15,000 to 24,999

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Luana Langlois

## A STEP BEYOND SUPPORTERS 2019-2020

### Donors \$1,000 to \$4,999 Continued...

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Steve and Suzanne Cameron  
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Tee Ness Hawthorne Cat  
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The National Christian Foundation  
Vip and Sharon Patel

### Donors \$500 to \$999

Anonymous Board Member  
Bob, Leslie and Nicole Kegley  
Chauncey and Lori Blaisdell  
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Dawn and Craig Knickerbocker  
Doug and Paula Neff  
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Robert Mairena  
The Steven D. and Karen M. Davis  
Foundation  
Tom and Linda Fogarty  
William Hamilton

### Donors up to \$499

A gift to honor Vicki and Carl Zeiger  
from Teresa Scarturro  
Alexandra Kritchevsky

### Donors up to \$499 Continued...

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