

ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year 2024



BUILDING STRONG YOUTH, FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES

MESSAGE FROM CEO

This year marked a powerful milestone — our 10th anniversary — and with it came so many moments of pride: our second graduating class stepping into college and career programs, hundreds of students sharing their artistry in *Arise!* and *El Alebrije*, and the joy of welcoming 50 new young dancers into our community. These achievements reflect the strength, talent, and brilliance that our youth and families bring to A Step Beyond every day.

I’m incredibly proud of our dedicated team, whose commitment to mentorship, creativity, and support fuels everything we do. And I’m deeply grateful to you, our supporters and partners, for walking alongside us. Your investment is not just in our programs, but in possibility, in belonging, and in the future of our community.

With a strong foundation and bold vision ahead, we’re excited for what’s next. Together, we are creating a space where young people are empowered to lead, learn, and thrive.



James K. Wright

James Wright
Chief Executive Officer
A Step Beyond

My daughter loves dance — it is her passion. She wants to go to college and get good grades because of this program. I am very proud of her, and I will support her in anything she does.

ASB Parent



MISSION

To prepare underserved youth for success in college, career, and life through dance education, academics, and family services.

VISION

Empower youth to step beyond their circumstances and succeed.

OUR APPROACH

At A Step Beyond, Creative Youth Development isn’t just a framework — it means centering young people’s voices, experiences, and creativity through dance, academics, and family support. We foster a culture of belonging and growth where youth are empowered to lead, express themselves, and shape their future.

PROGRAM



DANCE EDUCATION

- ▶ Weekly classes
- ▶ Annual performances
- ▶ Professional mentorship

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

- ▶ Tutoring and literacy intervention
- ▶ College and career readiness
 - College preparation
 - *World of Work* career education
 - Financial literacy

FAMILY SERVICES

- ▶ Expressive arts and trauma-informed counseling
- ▶ Workshops, groups, and events
- ▶ Case management and crisis intervention



What sets A Step Beyond apart is its 10-year, no cost commitment to each young person and its holistic approach that combines dance, academics, and family services to create lasting impact. Youth thrive then they have the tools to succeed in the studio, the classroom, and at home.

BY THE NUMBERS



zero cost to families



230 students served



~2,000 school youth served through *Fall Into Dance*



64 unique classes offered

DEMOGRAPHICS



100% of ASB students live in low-income households



72% identify as female, 28% male



90% identify as Hispanic



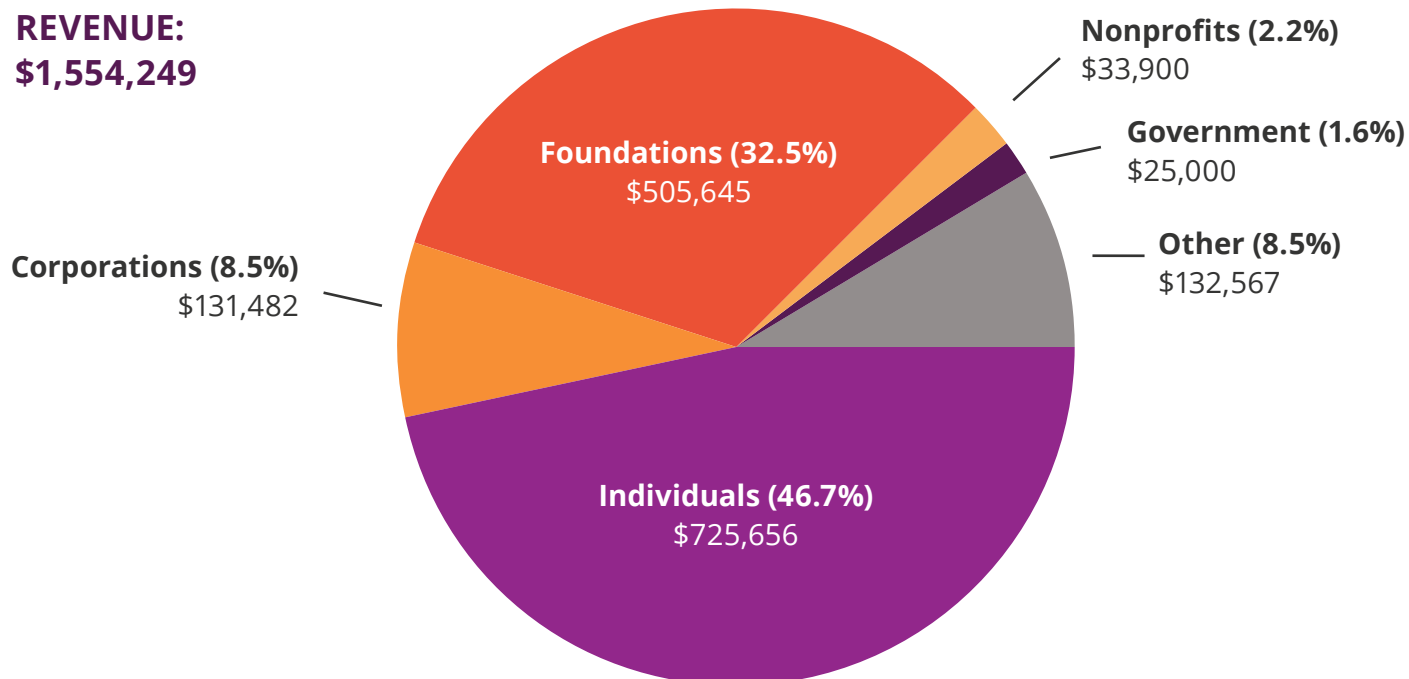
ages 8-18 served



90% Escondido residents, 10% San Marcos

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

REVENUE:
\$1,554,249



PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

As A Step Beyond celebrated its 10th anniversary serving our community, we take pride in a decade of impact — marked by our second graduating class of students and the success of our fourth annual wine tasting benefit, Creating Bright Futures.

NEW STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Our September 2024 Audition Day resulted in 70 invitations to join our no-cost, 10-year program. This is our largest cohort yet!

While parents met with ASB staff to learn more about the program, participating youth learned a dance routine from ASB alumni and performed it for a panel of ASB Teaching Artist judges.



PERFORMANCE PARTICIPATION

More than 160 students performed in *Arise!* and over 100 students participated in *El Alebrije* showcasing their growth, creativity, and dedication on stage. Our two annual performances give youth the opportunity to showcase what they love most — dancing!

Working with professional choreographers, students bring their artistry to life and share their skills and passion with an audience of family, friends, and the wider community, building confidence, discipline, and pride in the process.



ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

At ASB, academic excellence goes beyond vital core services like literacy intervention, tutoring, and GPA improvement. The College & Career Readiness Initiative and *World of Work* program expose students to higher education and career pathways through hands-on experiences and real-world learning. ASB students completed 80 Career Labs in addition to Summer STEAM and Reading Camps, seniors attended college transition courses, and parents engaged in workshops such as Raising Readers and Career Exploration.

Students participated in local college tours to USD, CSUSM, and SDSU, as well as an overnight trip for 9–11th graders to UC Riverside, University of Redlands, and Cal Poly Pomona.



FAMILY SERVICES PARTICIPATION

Family Services engaged 737 participants through family events, pop-up activities, building community, and strengthening connections among students and their families. A total of 145 parents joined workshops, 130 students participated in voluntary groups, and 125 students and parents created original artwork exploring themes of hope and community, featured in public exhibitions.

It was great having Family Services there to help my daughter and be there for her when she needed somebody to talk to.

ASB Parent

GRADUATING CLASS OF 2024

ASB celebrates the achievements of our second graduating class, who have danced with us over the past decade and successfully utilized the academic, social, and emotional resources provided to pave the way for their continued education. 100% of graduates attend local UCs, CSUs, out-of-state universities, and workforce training programs.



IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS



completed high school



accepted to a college or career program



graduate with a GPA above 3.0



average increase in reading (Lexile) scores for students in grades 3–8



average GPA for students in grades 6–12



ALIN'S STORY: LIVING PROOF OF THE POWER OF DANCE

Alin Sotelo joined A Step Beyond in 2015 and graduated with the Class of 2024. Throughout her journey with ASB, she received mentorship, support, and opportunities that helped shape her path forward. Dance became a powerful way for Alin to express her poetry, build confidence, and develop a strong sense of self-worth.

In the later years of her ASB journey, Alin volunteered as a Step Into Dance instructor and experienced the joy of watching her students perform on stage for the first time. These moments strengthened her resume, opened the door to meaningful work after high school, and led to her enrollment at MiraCosta College. Now, she is pursuing a degree in Child Development, driven by a desire to be a steady source of care and encouragement for children facing health challenges. With plans to become a hospital social worker, Alin is focused on helping young patients navigate their medical journeys. By adding a pre-law minor, she's expanding her tools to advocate for children and families in need—a reflection of her deep commitment to making a meaningful difference in the lives of others.

When she returns to the ASB campus, Alin shares her story and encouragement with current students.



Ms. Jenn told me, 'Don't give up. You got this.' Because of her and Ms. Karla, I learned how to express myself. Now, every time I come back, I tell the kiddos: I matter, I'm valuable, and I carry that with me wherever I go. I'm living proof of the power of dance — and I'm not going to stop dancing.



TESTIMONIALS

OUR STUDENTS

99%

say that they have a mentor who cares about them at ASB

96%

say they feel more successful at school because of ASB

99%

say that ASB builds their self-confidence

OUR PARENTS

A Step Beyond has been such a huge impact on my daughter. All the programming, especially academics and counseling, has helped her so much during this time in her life. At ASB, she feels free.

OUR PARTNERS

On February 17 and 18, 2024, the Jason Mraz Foundation presented Kaleidoscope, a community concert at the California Center for the Arts, Escondido, featuring eight San Diego nonprofit arts organizations. A Step Beyond joined Jason Mraz on stage, along with other talented performers, to celebrate inclusive arts education and showcase the next generation of artists.



A Step Beyond went above and beyond with their contemporary storytelling, bringing the music to life in ways I never imagined. Their creativity, passion, and energy are truly inspiring, making a profound impact not just on the performers, but on their families, audiences, and the entire community. My foundation is proud to support inclusive arts education, and A Step Beyond exemplifies the power of the arts to uplift and unite us all.

Jason Mraz



WITH GRATITUDE

To everyone who believes in the power of creativity, education, and community — we thank you. Your generosity fuels opportunity, uplifts youth and families, and strengthens the path forward. You are an essential part of our ASB family, and together, we are building something extraordinary.

INDIVIDUAL PARTNERS

- ▶ 230+ individual donors

SUSTAINING MAJOR DONORS

- ▶ Anonymous Board Members (5)
- ▶ Carl and Vicki Zeiger
- ▶ The Ginn Family Foundation
- ▶ The Raymond Family

INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS



Charles and
Ruth Billingsley
Foundation



Brookfield
Properties



Deloitte.

Samuel H. French
and Katherine
Weaver French
Fund



Hunter®



LATATTORE



Solar Turbines
A Caterpillar Company





CREATING BRIGHT FUTURES

Save the Date



5TH ANNUAL

Wine Tasting Benefit

SEPTEMBER 4, 2025 | 6:00 PM
THE WESTIN CARLSBAD RESORT & SPA

Enjoy a selection of 10 premier wines in blind tastings, rated 95 points and higher, while celebrating and supporting A Step Beyond's youth at our signature fundraising event.

Tickets and sponsorships are available now.
Please contact Niki Brown, Director of Philanthropy,
at nbrown@a-step-beyond.org or 760-705-1203.

