



'22-23 IMPACT REPORT

Journey from



LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As a former high school counselor of nearly 20 years, I am acutely aware of the difficulties and challenges our schools and educators face in nurturing, educating, and preparing our young people for life. One of the most significant challenges is the lack of resources available to adequately address the diverse needs of our students; such as high student-to-counselor ratios, budget constraints, and limited access to support services. This is why The San Marcos Promise exists.

Since 2014, we have proudly served the San Marcos community, providing support, guidance, and resources to students and their families as they navigated the path from high school to their futures. Over the years, our programs have evolved and expanded, reflecting the changing needs of our students and the educational landscape.

It is with great excitement and gratitude that we announce our evolution and rebranding as Project Next! This transformation is not merely a name change; it is a reflection of the incredible success of our programs, the resounding support of our community, the recognition of the positive impact we have made on countless lives, and our commitment to reaching more students in the region. We have always been driven by the belief that every young individual deserves access to education, opportunities, and support to achieve their dreams, and this belief knows no bounds. As we expand and begin partnerships with new districts, we look forward to helping even more students develop the confidence, clarity, and connections to build their best tomorrow.

I extend my deepest gratitude to our staff and Board for their unwavering commitment and to our community partners for their trust and ongoing support. Together, we are creating a brighter, more promising future for high school students, and I am truly honored to have the privilege of leading this remarkable organization.

Lisa Stout

LISA STOUT | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Proud Recognitions

Recipient of the San Diego County Office of Education's Inaugural 2023 Community-Based Organization of the Year Award

San Diego Business Journal 2023 Nonprofit & Corporate Citizenship of the Year finalist

Project Next (formerly known as The San Marcos Promise) helps high school students plan and prepare for their future- *a future that's best for them.*

We aim to open students' eyes to the many pathways out there- from college to trade school to the workforce- and help them choose and pursue one that fits them best, so they can move into the real world with confidence.

This impact report highlights our work in three crucial areas:

Equity & Access:

Talent is universal but opportunity is not. Though resources and programs exist to help students prepare for their future, many students are not participating in them due to access and opportunity gaps, leaving them ill-prepared to navigate their next step after high school.

We created high-tech Future Centers onsite at all partner high schools that provide year-round college and career readiness programs, services, and events. Our full-time presence on campus ensures equitable access to and participation in foundational opportunities before graduation so that no student is left behind.

Transitions:

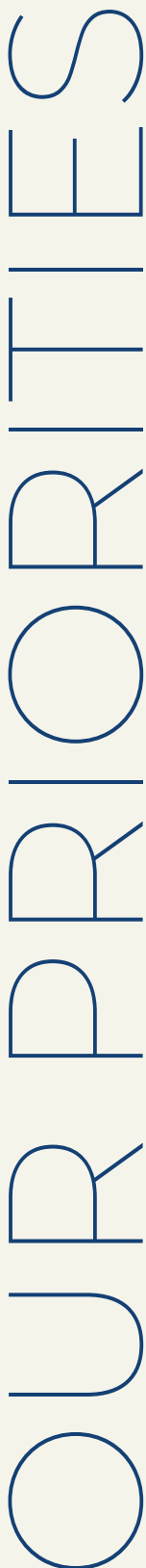
Far too many high school students are transitioning into the adult world without a clear plan for their future or the essential skills required to thrive in the 21st-century workforce.

Through various programs, resources, and opportunities, we show students all their options after graduation and connect them with the support, experiences, and resources they need to choose and pursue the best path for them.

Cross Sector Collaboration:

Collaboration across various sectors is critical to help students see what is possible and prepare for their futures- we can't do this crucial work alone.

We unite school districts, nonprofits, businesses, and post-secondary education and training programs to collaboratively and creatively fill opportunity gaps and prepare students for the workforce.



FUTURE CENTERS

are our welcoming high-tech hubs for college and career readiness program and service delivery

Innovative Features

Located onsite at partner high schools and staffed by highly-trained Career Coaches before, during, and after school.

Designed by students to reflect their preferences and needs.

Leverages the resources and expertise of cross-sector partners to cost-effectively strengthen and expand services.

Offers support tailored to students' needs, from drop-in services to robust year-long programs.

Eliminates participation barriers like transportation issues, time conflicts, needing to work, and stigmas.

Enables collaboration with school staff for referrals and accountability.

Fully directed and funded through Project Next

DR KEVIN HOLT FUTURE CENTER

Career
Closet

Career
Planning

Job
Searching

Interview
Prep

Personal
Finance

Resume
Writing

Virtual Reality
College & Career
Exploration

627 Professional resumes created using Career Edge

1,436 Students took the SuperStrong® Interest Survey and received guidance in career and post-secondary education options based on their individual results

83 Classroom presentations to 3277 students

10 Skillshops to 275 students

1,561 1:1 coaching sessions



EQUITY & ACCESS

Promise Pathways (now called Focused Futures) helps the most vulnerable students envision a promising future, find their paths, and develop the skills and confidence necessary to transition to their next step after graduation.

Through 1:1 coaching, career exploration and readiness activities, financial aid support, and visits to local businesses and post-secondary training/education institutes, more students choose and pursue post-secondary training/education programs as their best next step.

We piloted our program at Twin Oaks High School, San Marcos Unified School District's alternative high school that serves students at risk of not graduating on time. Due to the program's success, we are expanding it to serve 50 students at each of our partner high schools.

Program Services



“ I liked having someone take a special interest in my future. We always talk about how I'm feeling about life after high school and at first, my word was panic. After being in this program and meeting with my career coach, the word I'd use is possibilities. -Gloria S. ”

98% of participants graduated with a career plan

76% applied to post-secondary training/education programs and completed the FAFSA. Over half of these students said they would not have considered post-secondary training/education had they not secured financial aid.

18% decided to join the workforce; nearly 50% of these students applied for jobs at companies offering benefits and career advancement potential.

2% enlisted in the military

These students face such significant challenges in their personal lives that they are in survival mode; school is not a priority. Many work to help support their families, some lack stable housing, and others deal with other personal issues.

57% of TOHS students identify as socioeconomically disadvantaged

5% as unhoused

4% as foster youth

18% as English Learners

49% as having disabilities

82% as students of color





“ I always liked working with my hands but wasn't sure what I wanted to do after graduation. I didn't want to spend 4 more years in school so when Mrs. Sanchez told me about the HomeAid Program I was really interested. She helped me apply and I was accepted! **It made me excited about after graduation.** The only trouble was transportation and TSMP helped arrange funds so I could do it. I learned so much from the Superintendents and all the other workers who showed us their different trades. Now that I graduated from the program I am interviewing with different companies and will hopefully get a full time job soon. - Anthony R.

Promise 360 (now called Xcelerate) aims to show non-college-bound students all their career options and shift them towards more economically secure careers aligned with their strengths and interests. Students gain critical career insights through trips to apprenticeship programs, vocational and technical schools, and Career Expeditions to local companies offering higher-paying entry-level jobs with benefits and advancement potential.

100%
of participants

graduated with a career plan aligned with their strengths and interests and improved their professional preparation skills

90%

had an entry-level job before graduation

35%

enrolled in a post-secondary training or education program

- Palomar
- Mira Costa
- Mira Costa TCI
- UTI (mechanics school)
- Action Air Academy
- Palomar Institute of Cosmetology

Survey Feedback

88% expressed confidence in their ability to secure a more economically secure job that aligns with their strengths and interests

88% of survey respondents expressed confidence in applying their skills and learning to future jobs

96% felt that participating in this program has helped them feel better about their future

83% pursued a different career than they originally planned

100% felt that participating in this program had helped them realize that adults care about them and their future.



Ambassadors are our eyes, ears, and voice, serving as liaisons to their respective high school campuses. Our Ambassador Program empowers students to bring their voices to our planning while building crucial personal and professional skills.

“ I have worked with TSMP since my freshman year and it has made a significant impact on my future. I'm proud to be one of the students who helped design the Future Center at Mission Hills High School. After working on this project with a lead architect at Qualcomm, it inspired me to pursue a career in Architecture.

Through events such as Connect to Careers, I learned how to interact in a professional setting and the power of networking. I met professionals who connected me to other networks and I ended up being offered an internship this summer with an architectural firm!

TSMP helped me prepare for the real world and my next steps after high school. I'm so lucky to be part of this organization. - Shagun K.



KELLY AMADOR
Mission Hills High School



JENNI CRUZ
Mission Hills High School



KELLY GRANADOS
Mission Hills High School



DIEGO GONZALEZ
Cal Safe San Marcos



KELLY HOPKINS
San Marcos High School



BRIANNA JORDAN
Mission Hills High School



SHAGUN KAMBOJ
Mission Hills High School



JAMES LOWETH
San Marcos High School



PAYTON MUNRO
San Marcos High School



ANDREW PRESA
San Marcos High School



RIA RAO
Mission Hills High School



SUBHASHINI SUBRAMANIAN
San Marcos High School



LAYLA VAHEDI
San Marcos High School



THIEN VU
Mission Hills High School



CHARLEY WALSH
San Marcos High School





“ As a first-generation college student, I felt confused and overwhelmed. But I had my career coach to guide and support me. Her assistance over this past year impacted my future more than anyone. She guided me with college applications, essays, financial issues, emotional support and most importantly she was patient because **I didn't have anyone at home to help me.** Ms. Garcia would break down all the steps for my financial aid for each college and have a discussion to help me **make the best decision for my future.** - Jarisbel ”

FUND YOUR FUTURE

One of the many barriers for students who wish to continue their education beyond high school is knowledge of and access to financial aid. The new AB 469 in California requires all high school seniors to complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or California Dream Act Application (CADAA). However, no additional resources were given to provide support to students and families. Identifying this as a great need, we vigorously pursued and received grant funding to staff Financial Aid Coaches at each of our Future Centers. Along with the counseling teams, our Financial Aid Coaches **helped students understand their financial aid options, assisted them through the application process, and walked them through award letter reviews** so students could make the best financial decision for their next steps. We're so proud of this collaborative effort because it opened more doors and opportunities for students beyond high school.

100%

FAFSA completion rate among students receiving coaching



1st in San Diego County Race to Submit Campaign

Helped boost FAFSA completion rates by at least 6% across all SMUSD schools, with rates nearly tripling at Twin Oaks High School

1072

30-60 min. 1:1 coaching sessions for 750 students

TRANSITIONS

School districts and individual partner high schools

Schools provide the space on campus for our Future Centers, unparalleled access to students, and a strong referral network that includes teachers, social workers and counselors.

“The San Marcos Promise has been an invaluable resource for our students in preparing for future success. The program provides access to experiences, coaching, and career readiness programs that help students make informed decisions about their future and learn more about themselves in the process.” - Mission Hills Counseling Department

Collaboration with local professionals

Local professionals who are passionate about making a positive impact in the lives of students volunteer their time and talent through various ways such as sharing their career journeys, providing a first-hand glimpse into the day-to-day in their field, participating in mock interviews, and more.

“The opportunities, experiences, and exposure to career choices that The San Marcos Promise is providing to students in the community is and will continue to be life changing. My colleagues and I wholeheartedly believe that the program is one which is vital to the future of San Diego.” - Joe Bertocchini, Senior Manager of Student, Industry, and Development-University of San Diego Burnham-Moores Center for Real Estate



332

Professionals/businesses that actively participated this year

Nonprofits

We recognize the power of collaboration, partnering with other nonprofit organizations to maximize our collective impact. As one example, thanks to the generous support of Nordson Corporation, we partnered with Tech Corps to bring Techie Camps to 42 students over the summer. Techie Camps engage students in hands-on, interactive STEM-related activities and provide exposure to careers within the industry.

"Nordson Corporation and Nordson Corporation Foundation have partnered with The San Marcos Promise to bring summer Techie Camps to students and have invested in career exploration programs through their Future Centers. We place great value and importance in the partnership and appreciate their laser focus on student success." - Sara Vaz, Community Relations Manager

Businesses

Businesses provide volunteer or financial support to our programs and events, host students at their offices, bring employees to speak at our events, or work with us to provide new opportunities for students. One of our proudest and longest-standing partnerships is with Pima Medical Institute, enabling us to secure an additional Career Coach who provides students with much-needed support in the area of career exploration, job & career readiness and personal finance.

"It is PMI's mission to make a meaningful contribution to our community and we found the perfect partner in The San Marcos Promise. Lisa and her team have been instrumental in helping us forge meaningful relationships with the high schools and make a positive impact on the lives of students. As a father of two young adults, I understand the value that TSMP brings to those students every day." - John Hanson, Chief Operations Officer, Pima Medical Institute

“ I work with approximately 60 agencies and programs that support the high school and post-secondary needs of students with disabilities; Project Next is the most creative, innovative, developed, and professional program I work with! Their enthusiasm is relentless and inspiring and their passion is evident in everything they do. Nothing else like it exists in San Diego County; we are very fortunate to have this terrific program right here in North County! Project Next is instrumental in preparing students for a bright future and we who live, work, and own and run businesses and companies in North County, are the beneficiaries of that passion and the implementation of their vision. - Karen Thompson, Workability Coordinator, SMUSD

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EVENTS

We build students' awareness about all possible career paths and provide the experiences and connections necessary to make informed career decisions.



How does a student aspire to a career that they don't know exists? **Connect to Careers** provides students with exposure to the multitude of career opportunities that exist, as well as connects them with local professionals in small group settings to learn about careers and industries, build professional skills, and gain real-world experience.

“ *Connect to Careers allowed me to meet with many professionals and learn about the variety of career paths available. More so, it gave me the reassurance that I would be able to find a job that would suit my lifestyle and interests. One professional detailed how she had made her career in real estate. I was amazed as I had never gotten the opportunity to learn about the management or active selling of a space that accompanies the foundation of a real estate business. She continued to tell me about the first town she had ever overseen and built. Surprisingly enough, it was the town I currently reside in: San Elijo Hills! It was a mind-boggling experience and allowed me to see future options for where and what I could do for work. Connect to Careers helped me discover my interest in real estate and now I'm considering it as a potential career!* —Student Participant ”

204

Students Participated

55

Companies Represented

187

Professionals Participated

Networking events connect students to representatives from local businesses for informal discussions about their jobs, companies, and personal journeys.

“ *I had heard of networking but didn't really know what it meant. I attended the networking pre-event skillshop in the Future Center and it helped me feel more prepared and confident walking in today. I felt a little awkward at first, but after talking with the first professional, I came out of my shell. I met so many nice people and had great conversations. One professional even worked in a field that I'm interested in and I got her business card to connect afterward.* - Student Participant ”

I was truly impressed with the networking event today and wish I would've had something like this when I was younger. Every student I met was so composed, professional, and passionate about their future. You have created a special program and place in San Diego for our young adults to learn and grow. - Professional ”



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& STAFF



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School District



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SARA MONTOOTH
Programs Director



JENNY ORLANDO
Programs Coordinator



MARISSA SANCHEZ
Career Coach



LISA STOUT
Executive Director

SUPPORTERS

\$200,000+



Leichtag
Foundation

\$50,000+



California Department of
EDUCATION



Girard Foundation



\$25,000+



SAN MARCOS COVID-19
COMMUNITY GRANTS
PROGRAM



CAPROCK
PARTNERS



KAISER PERMANENTE®

\$10,000+

ALLISON AND ROBERT PRICE FAMILY FOUNDATION
DICK MILLER CONSTRUCTION
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ISSA FAMILY FOUNDATION
NORDSON CORPORATION FOUNDATION
SAMUEL H. FRENCH AND KATHERINE WEAVER FRENCH FUND
STATE FARM FOUNDATION

\$5,000+

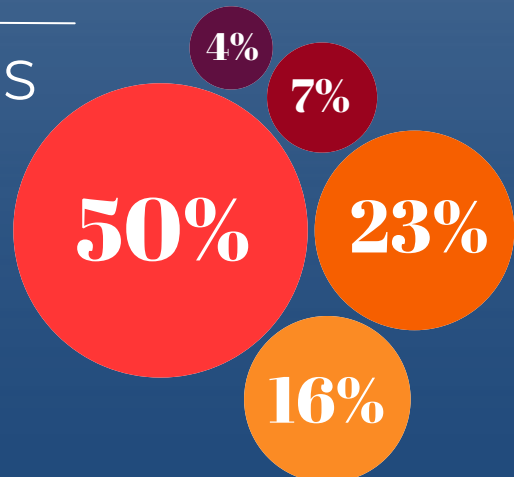
BOYS AND GIRLS FOUNDATION
COLLINS AEROSPACE
HALLMARK COMMUNITIES
PALOMAR INSTITUTE OF COSMETOLOGY
SDG&E COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUND AT THE SAN DIEGO FOUNDATION
TEGNA FOUNDATION
UNION BANK FOUNDATION

\$2,500+

ALBERTSONS, VONS, PAVILIONS SOCAL DIVISION LOCAL GRANT
ARTHUR P PRATT & JEANETTE GLADYS PRATT MEMORIAL FUND
FIRST REPUBLIC BANK
SAMUEL I. & JOHN HENRY FOX FOUNDATION
STATER BROS. CHARITIES
SUNDT FOUNDATION

FUNDING SOURCES

- Individual Donors
- Foundation Grants
- Government Grants
- Corporate Donors
- Earned Income



Stepping into our **Next**

The journey from The San Marcos Promise to Project Next reflects our determination to keep growing, learning, and evolving, just like the students we serve.

The work we do is not just a job; it is a calling, a commitment, and a shared passion. As we evolve into our NEXT as an organization, we do so with a profound sense of responsibility, knowing that our impact has a ripple effect, touching not only the students we directly serve but also their families, communities, and, ultimately, society as a whole.

We would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to our community, partners, and supporters who have been with us every step of the way. Your unwavering belief in our mission has been the driving force behind our success, and it is your trust and support that propel us forward on this exciting new chapter as Project Next.

We look forward to the future with enthusiasm, knowing that together, we can continue to make a significant difference in the lives of students in San Marcos and beyond.

Join us in helping local teens go from uncertain to unstoppable!
Get involved today... Who's Got Next?!



www.projectnext.org

