

Grant Outcome Assessment Reports

GRANTS COMPLETED AS OF JUNE 2010

IN THIS REPORT

2007:

Adoption Coalition of Texas
Recruitment and Outreach

College Forward
Round Rock College
Readiness Program

Indigent Care Collaboration
Williamson County Uninsured
Helpline

Rude Mechanicals
Grrl Action

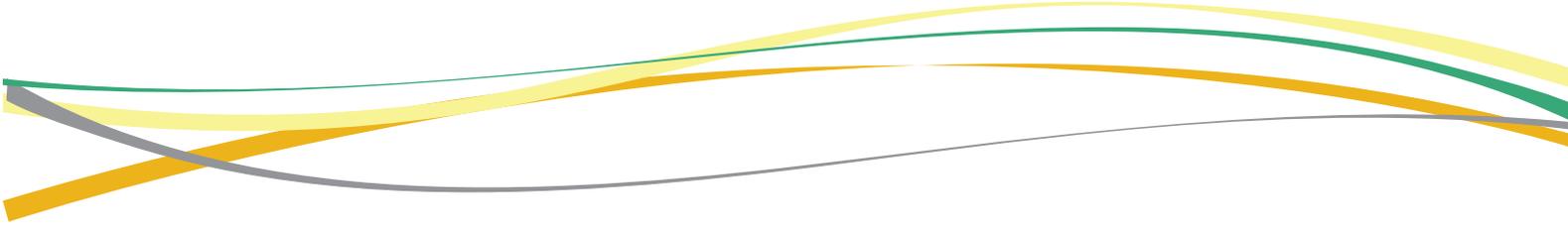
2008:

Breakthrough Austin
Middle School Summer
Sessions 2008 and 2009

**Goodwill Industries of
Central Texas, Inc.**
Project Reboot



Ordinary women...extraordinary impact®



DEAR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS,

In this second issue of the Grant Outcomes Assessment Report, we are pleased to feature our Community Partners selected in 2007 and 2008 which have completed their grants as of May, 2010. This report provides a brief description of these six organizations, the specific programs we funded and the results they achieved.

(The first issue of this report published in 2009 covered programs selected in 2004, 2005, and 2006. Next year's report will include those chosen in 2008 and 2009 which complete their grants by May, 2011.)

Our investment in the future of these organizations reflects our commitment to transforming lives in Central Texas. We learn alongside our Community Partners as they face unforeseen challenges and achieve measurable successes. We have made lasting friendships that forever change our hearts--individually and as an organization.

Many thanks to member, Susan Blount, for writing this report and for including personal stories about the lives that have been changed. By putting a 'face' on each grant, we can connect more meaningfully which helps us deepen our commitment to the community.

Our Community Partners are the hands and feet of our dreams for Central Texas!

With appreciation and gratitude,



Rebecca Powers, *Founder and CEO*

ADOPTION COALITION OF TEXAS

Recruitment and Outreach

Focus Area.....**Family**

Grant Amount.....**\$104,000**

Grant Year.....**2007**

Grant Period.....**7/07 to 8/08**

Contact Person.....**Tracy Eilers, D.M., Executive Director**

Website.....**www.adoptioncoalitiontx.org**

Program Description:

The Adoption Coalition of Texas focuses on finding a “forever family” for every child waiting in foster care in Central Texas. The organization collaborates with five adoption agencies and the State of Texas Child Protective Services to move the hardest-to-place children in the foster care system into permanent, safe and loving families through adoption.

The Adoption Coalition sought funds from Impact Austin to take their recruitment and outreach efforts to the next level through the following programs:

- “Forever Families” weekly television segments on News 8 Austin: Develop 20 potential issue-oriented segments focusing on older kids, sibling groups and hard-to-place children.
- 2007 Heart Gallery of Central Texas: Prepare an exhibit of professional portraits of children in foster care to raise awareness of the opportunity to adopt them. Impact Austin funds would be used to identify at least 75 children for the program, solicit photographers, do the photo shoots, frame the portraits, develop the exhibit plan, and transport The Heart Gallery to exhibit locations around Central Texas.
- Kids Helping Kids Program DVD: Create a DVD featuring kids who have gone through the process for use as an adoption preparation tool for teenagers reluctant to talk about adoption, foster care, transition from foster care to adoption, and aging out of the foster care system.
- Ambassador Program: Match at least 30 community volunteers with a child for five months to advocate for that child and help find a permanent home.
- Foster Care and Adoption Expo: Host this event to provide training for families and staff, to help expedite licensing and to provide adoption networking and support.



Professional portrait from the Heart Gallery of Central Texas

The Adoption Coalition intended to use Impact Austin funds to hire a project director and administrative assistant to implement these programs.

The key measure of success would be the number of adoptions resulting from these efforts. The Adoption Coalition expected to increase adoptions by at least 40 children (10% annually).

Final Outcome Assessment:

First and foremost, the adoption numbers far exceeded the goals. In 2007, there were 643 adoption placements, up from 518 in 2006, an increase of 125, up 24%. Clearly, the outreach programs funded by this grant were very effective in raising the number of adoptions.

News 8 Austin featured the Forever Families segments on Sunday mornings and this impactful program continues to this day.

The 2007 Heart Gallery of Central Texas featured 106 portraits of more than 140 kids, up from 91 the previous year and exceeding the goal of 75. The Gallery toured Central Texas for eight months, generating tremendous interest along the way. In the first 16 days alone, there were over 1000 inquiries and families were found for five sets of children.

In addition, Wendy’s Restaurants created a Heart Gallery collage which was displayed in all 31 Wendy’s locations around Austin, Round Rock and Cedar Park for several months, helping to promote adoption of children from foster care.

The Adoption Coalition developed two videos for the Kids Helping Kids Program in spite of numerous complications and delays. With the help of photographers from News 8 Austin and freelancers, the Adoption Coalition captured video of five subjects including kids, adoptive families and prospective

families. From this, an adoption information video was created for use with older kids. However, the segment featuring five kids in a round-table discussion about adoption was beset by issues in the lives of the kids themselves. Finally individual segments were taped and pieced together into one video.

The Adoption Coalition held the Foster Care and Adoption Expo in November, 2007, and it was a huge success. Two hundred twenty-six people attended, by far the largest expo they have hosted, the highest prior attendance being 83.

The Ambassador Program exceeded its goal of 30 ambassadors with a total of 52 by the end of the grant period.

A Personal Story:

At 17, Adriana was featured in a Forever Families segment. She had spent a lot of time on the streets and was in foster care for only about three years. She doubted that anyone could possibly want to adopt her. As a result of very intensive recruitment and adoption preparation work with Adriana, a family was found in Ohio.

Unfortunately, it was not as easy as connecting child to parent because many in the system (the shelter she was living in, her therapist, her case worker) did not necessarily support adoption for her; they thought we should just let her age out of the system. Aging out for Adriana meant going back to the only world she knew, an abusive situation where she would be alone and potentially homeless not too long after turning 18. Even the judge involved in this case doubted we could make this work. All involved thought Adriana would run away from her adoptive home, that she simply could not handle it.

Not only was everyone wrong, but Adriana has flourished in her adoptive home. She was adopted on her 18th birthday and now provides counseling to older teens about adoption. This is one of those instances where you cannot ever give up and thankfully, for Adriana, we did not.



Professional portraits from the Heart Gallery of Central Texas

COLLEGE FORWARD

Round Rock College Readiness Project

Focus Area.....**Education**

Grant Amount.....**\$104,000**

Grant Year.....**2007**

Grant Period.....**7/07 to 6/09**

Contact Person.....**Lisa Fielder, Founder & Executive Dir.**

Website.....**www.collegeforward.org**

Program Description:

College Forward provides college preparatory and retention services to motivated, economically disadvantaged high school juniors and seniors, to facilitate their transition to college and to make that process exciting and rewarding.

The Round Rock College Readiness Project extended College Forward's after-school, college-preparatory curriculum to Williamson County's Stony Point High School (SPHS). College Forward planned to provide services to 80 economically disadvantaged students at SPHS in this four-phase curriculum:

- Phase I: Self-exploration; investigation of college selection criteria
- Phase II: Preparation for the ACT and SAT
- Phase III: Completion of college, scholarship, and FAFSA applications
- Phase IV: College retention strategies

Impact Austin funding primarily supported after-school college-prep classes and supplementary events, including a series of workshops, the Summer Tour of Colleges; Peer Mentoring Workshops; College/Universidad 101 for Parents; and the ongoing College Retention Program.

Final Outcome Assessment:

Aiming to provide services to 80 students, College Forward actually served 114 of which 85 successfully completed all the requirements of the College Forward program, a 75% student retention rate.

Senior Accomplishments:

- 34 Stony Point High School seniors completed the two-year after-school college preparatory program.
- 100% applied to at least one college or university. Seniors submitted 179 college applications in total, averaging 5.7 applications per student.
- 32 of the 34 seniors were accepted into at least one college or university by the end of the grant period, 31 into four-



A proud group of College Forward participants

year institutions. Seniors received 2.7 acceptances on average, giving students choices for the school which would best meet their goals.

- 32 successfully completed and submitted either the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the Texas Application for Student Financial Aid (TASFA).
- Seniors improved on their ACT scores by 17% on average (2.4 points).
- At the end of the grant period, SPHS seniors had earned a total of \$356,000 in grants and financial aid (not including loans).
- 29 of the 34 SPHS seniors signed contracts to join College Forward's College Persistence Program to receive ongoing college advising, care packages, virtual mentoring, and college transition support services next year.

Junior Accomplishments:

- 51 SPHS juniors completed the first year of College Forward's two-year after-school college preparatory program
- 48 completed college search activities and compiled a list of colleges to which they will apply in the fall
- 38 completed at least one ACT diagnostic test
- 44 took the ACT exam in April, 40 took the SAT, and 39 took both
- 29 applied for scholarships

Other Accomplishments:

- Participants contributed almost 1,000 hours of community service to the Round Rock area.
- 15 joined the College Forward Summer Tour of Colleges and met with admissions and financial aid professionals at Baylor University, Texas A&M University – Commerce,

Texas Woman's University, University of North Texas, and University of Texas at Arlington.

- 60% of the SPHS parents attended at least one College/Universidad 101 Workshop. An additional 9% met with College Forward College Coaches either at a Parent/Coach Gathering or during a Parent Leadership Council meeting.

A Personal Story:

As a young Nigerian-American and daughter of refugee parents, Stephanie came to the College Forward program in her junior year of high school when College Forward made its first recruitment presentation at Stony Point High School. Stephanie's parents had emigrated from Nigeria several years before to seek opportunities and better lives for their children; both parents attended night school while working throughout the day – her father eventually becoming certified as an accountant and the mother as a nurse. Though they struggled to make ends meet, they kept working so that their children would have the opportunity to attend college.

With the help of College Forward, Stephanie was able to fulfill her parents' wishes. Stephanie earned a 3.75 GPA while strengthening her skills as an orator through involvement in debate and speech clubs. Despite being a model student, she did not know where she wanted to apply or how to go about the process. Working with College Forward College Coaches to determine which schools would best fit her academic and personal needs, she eventually applied to and was accepted at Howard University, Rice University, Trinity University, the University of Chicago, and the University of Texas at Austin.

Even with assistance provided by several schools, finances continued to be a concern for Stephanie. College Forward told her about the Gates Millennium Scholarship, which would cover all tuition, boarding, textbooks, and some incidental expenses for low-income and minority students pursuing higher education – for up to ten years! The application for this scholarship required eight separate essays as well as the completion of a comprehensive survey of the applicant's academic and financial situation. With the help of both College Coaches and several Impact Austin volunteers in December, 2008, over 30 deserving students like Stephanie were able to apply for this scholarship.

College Forward is extremely proud to report that Stephanie received the Gates Millennium Scholarship in April 2009. She headed to Rice University in the fall of 2009 to pursue her passion for writing and speech, staying within a few hours' drive from her family, who continue to support Stephanie's dreams of being the first in her family to earn a college degree.

INDIGENT CARE COLLABORATION (ICC) Williamson County Uninsured Helpline

Focus Area.....**Health and Wellness**
Grant Amount.....**\$104,000**
Grant Year.....**2007**
Grant Period.....**7/07 to 8/08**
Contact Person.....**Carl Angel, acting Executive Director**
Website.....**www.icc-centex.org**

Program Description:

The Indigent Care Collaboration (now known as Integrated Care Collaboration) was established by safety-net healthcare providers in Travis, Williamson, and Hays Counties to address healthcare issues for the benefit of both the medically indigent and the community at large. Since its inception in 1997, ICC has developed programs in primary and dental care, mental health, and urgent care for the region's uninsured and underinsured. The ICC has also been on the forefront of the integration of technology in healthcare through its I-Care Database and the Medicaid Screening Tool, an online tool case workers use to quickly screen an individual's eligibility for Medicaid, CHIP, and other federal, state, and local insurance programs.

To expand their support for Williamson County, the ICC proposed to establish the Williamson County Uninsured Helpline. The principal goal of this innovative program was to create a centralized screening and referral system to connect people in Williamson County to primary care and thereby prevent unnecessary visits to the ER. In one toll-free phone call, an individual would be screened for federal, state and locally-funded healthcare coverage and scheduled for an initial primary care appointment at one of Williamson County's publicly-funded clinics. A caseworker would follow up with all callers eligible for healthcare coverage, offering face-to-face application assistance, answering questions about benefits and assisting clients in the renewal process.



ICC Helpline operator assisting a client with a health insurance application

This project would be made possible through a collaboration of ICC with insure-a-kid (iak), the Lone Star Circle of Care (LSCC), and other entities in the community. iak was already operating a helpline in Travis County and using the Medicaid screening tool. LSCC, a Federally Qualified Health Clinic, operated at the time seven community health clinics for the uninsured and underinsured in Williamson County.

ICC sought Impact Austin funds to support the staffing for the Williamson County Helpline: a project coordinator, an outreach worker, and a Helpline operator.

In the first year alone, ICC expected to connect 6,000 individuals to a primary care home, to enroll 1,500 individuals in Medicaid, CHIP, or other health insurance programs, and to significantly reduce preventable emergency room visits by the individuals served.

Final Outcome Assessment:

The launch of the Helpline was delayed by two months because of the addition of a new partner, Williamson County and Cities Health District (WCCHD). This partnership proved to be extremely valuable and was worth the wait. WCCHD fielded numerous calls from Williamson County residents needing information about healthcare or other social service assistance and by using their existing phone number known by many residents in the community, the Helpline hit the ground running.

In March, 2008, the Helpline added Samaritan Ministries Healthcare clinic as a partner, providing a clinic option for individuals living in Northwest Williamson County.

ICC had three overall objectives:

- Increase the number of eligible individuals enrolled in healthcare coverage
- Increase the number of individuals accessing a primary care home
- Reduce the number of preventable Emergency Room visits by the clients served

During the grant period, 1,641 individuals contacted the Helpline and of these, 1,560 individuals were screened for healthcare coverage eligibility, allowing them to meet their first objective. A total of 1,356 individuals were enrolled in Medicaid and CHIP, just shy of the goal of 1,500.

Their second objective to increase the number of individuals accessing a primary care home was not as easy to accomplish. The Helpline Operator scheduled medical appointments for 494 individuals. In addition, through the partnership with WCCHD, 343 clients were scheduled for pre-natal appointments. This total of 837 was far below the expected outcome of 6000 targeted by ICC in their grant application.

ICC reported two major challenges that constrained the results of this objective. First, many of the 1,641 individuals that contacted the Helpline needed specialty care, not primary care, the service the Helpline was positioned to offer. Unfortunately, Williamson County does not have a referral network to link the uninsured to specialists willing to see them at little or no cost. Thanks to the partnership with WCCHD, the Helpline staff was able to refer the cases to a social worker who attempted to assist callers in finding the specialists they needed.

Another barrier for families was the co-pay requested by the Lone Star Circle of Care Clinics. As a Federally Qualified Health Center, LSCC is required to charge for appointments, fees ranging from \$15 to \$50, depending on the patient's income bracket. The Helpline explained to callers that LSCC was willing to set up payment plans but many opted to forgo the visit because of the expense.

Their third objective was to reduce the number of preventable Emergency Room visits by the clients served. Of the 120 callers ICC was able to track in their database, 64 of them visited the ER within six months of their Helpline-scheduled appointment for a condition that could have been treated by primary care. This was a much higher rate than ICC had hoped but these patients had chronic conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, and depression, conditions that are difficult to manage without significant behavior change which often takes time.

Though the project was unable to greatly reduce emergency room visits, it did lead to system changes that have increased access to primary care for Williamson County residents. Lone Star Circle of Care, the main primary care provider, has implemented a call center for all its patients giving same day and next day appointments for those needing to be seen immediately. In addition, a group of providers are collaborating to implement a specialty care referral system for uninsured patients much like the system in Travis County.

A Personal Story:

John, a truck driver, was dismissed from work due to his illnesses. His former employer sent him to a company doctor who assessed that he was unable to drive for the company because of his health; he is diabetic and has other conditions such as glaucoma, high blood pressure, sleep apnea, and high cholesterol. The only family income is John's wife's Social Security Disability Insurance benefit of \$800 per month. John is uninsured and does not have a primary care physician. He sought assistance from the ICC helpline with scheduling a follow-up doctor's appointment to evaluate his ability to

return to work. John explained that his only job skill is driving a truck. The helpline staff suggested he consider applying for Social Security Disability Insurance if the doctor determines he is not able to resume work as a driver.

Now John is under the doctor's care for his diabetes. He is on medication and was given a blood glucose meter so that he can check his glucose level. Recently his wife reported that he was so happy because his level that morning was at 150. He is waiting for the latest test results to see if he can return to work. John and his wife expressed their gratitude and happiness for the assistance ICC provided in scheduling the appointment and for the opportunity to see a doctor.

RUDE MECHANICALS

Grrl Action

Focus Area.....**Culture**
Grant Amount.....**\$104,000**
Grant Year.....**2007**
Grant Period.....**7/07 to 6/09**
Contact Person.....**Madge Darlington, Co-Managing
Program Director**
Website.....**www.rudemechs.com**

Program Description:

Rude Mechanicals is an ensemble-based theater company committed to creating a community space for artists of all ages and disciplines, promoting collaboration within the artistic community and producing socially conscious work. A specific focus is aiming to ensure a safe environment for young girls to develop artistic talent and individual strengths. To this end, Rude Mechanicals developed Grrl Action, a mentor-based education program for young girls incorporating autobiographical writing, performance and presentation skills. Targeted participants were girls thirteen to sixteen from a range of ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. For the seven years prior to receiving the Impact Austin grant in 2007, Grrl Action was run as a three-week summer program with great success.

Rude Mechanicals sought the Impact Austin grant to expand Grrl Action into a year-round program. Participants would research, plan, and execute long-term projects inspired by their own interests and passions, projects that could set the groundwork for future careers both inside and beyond the arts. The main components of the expanded Grrl Action program included:

- Summer workshop: existing 3-week intensive workshop in which girls build writing and performance skills.

- Mentorship: 1-1 collaborations with professional women to develop long-term projects.
- Collective support: bi-weekly group meetings and long-term planning workshops.
- Arts education: group field trips to performances, art exhibits, and community events
- Intensive focus: a weekend retreat of concentrated work on personal growth and individual projects
- Community engagement: a final public sharing in which each girl presents her creative work in the form of a performance, screening, reading, installation, or portfolio presentation.

Rude Mechanicals planned to use the Impact Austin grant to expand recruitment, to purchase materials and equipment for the girls' projects and productions, to build out a classroom/rehearsal annex, and to pay part-time salaries for the two co-managing program directors and fees for the Grrl Action staff.

Final Outcome Assessment:

Rude Mechanicals reports that the year-round program for Grrl Action has been a great success, with the number of participants continuing to grow every year, more girls creating more projects and learning techniques in more art forms.

During the grant period, a total of forty-one girls were served, each paired with a professional mentor to provide support during the development of her project. The community has been so responsive to the call for mentors that more have volunteered than Rude Mechanicals can currently match with Grrl Action participants.

Per the plan, Rude Mechanicals acquired equipment to enable a variety of projects, including a video camera, video projector, two iMac computers for film editing and graphic design, software for professional film editing, an external hard drive, and various other video-related materials, books and software.

The build out of the classroom/rehearsal annex took much longer than expected and wasn't completed until nearly a year after the end of the grant period. After receiving the Impact Austin grant, Rude Mechanicals obtained a pro bono architectural design for the space which was more expensive, requiring additional funds to be raised before the project could be started. Renovations began in the fall of 2009, and at last in April, 2010, the city issued the occupancy certificate for "The Off Shoot" (as dubbed by Grrl Action), located in a wing off the Rude Mechanicals main facility, "The Off Center". On May 15, 2010, The Off Shoot premiered its first event, Grrl Wrap 2010,"A Festival of Art and Performance by Teen Girls."

The girls now have a space to call their own, where they can dream up their projects, meet with their mentors, develop new

skills and share their works with the public. Rude Mechanicals reports that the Impact Austin grant enabled them to reach more girls throughout the year while keeping their commitment to individualized support for each girl's artistic goals.

A Personal Story:

Trey is a resident of The Settlement Home and has been a member of Grrl Action for three years. Last year, as Trey faced the prospect of turning 18 and "aging out" of the CPS system, she was struggling with severe depression. For her Grrl Action project, she decided to do a performance about the stigmas of mental illness and her own struggles with the disease. Her performance included a slide show of research on mental illness, personal narrative about her experience, and singing. This powerful performance was a breakthrough for Trey, a way for her to call attention to the disease and the taboos surrounding it, and a chance for her to say: "I'm here, I'm strong, and I am not ashamed." She was asked to perform her piece again at the Mental Health Day presentation at Austin City Hall to a riveted audience.

Now, Trey is a Grrl Action intern/leader, a person the other girls lean on and look up too, successfully making her way through Austin Community College and planning to apply to Texas A&M next year. Currently she is working on a photography project.



Grrl Action summer workshop performances

BREAKTHROUGH AUSTIN

Middle School Summer Sessions 2008-09

Focus Area.....Education

Grant Amount.....\$102,000

Grant Year.....2008

Grant Period.....6/08 to 8/09

Contact Person.....Dr. Barry Aidman, Executive Director

Website.....www.breakthroughaustin.org



Smiling face of a Breakthrough Austin student

Program Description:

Breakthrough builds a path from middle school to college for low-income students who will become first-generation college graduates for their families. By developing skills and nurturing aspirations, Breakthrough prevents school attrition, increases achievement, and prepares young people for the future.

Breakthrough's intensive, comprehensive, and sustained interventions address fundamental gaps in students' skills and resources. By working individually with students via a case management approach and providing a core program for all participants, Breakthrough aims to build critical knowledge and skills while tracking and supporting progress throughout middle and high school.

Breakthrough's Middle School Summer Session is a six-week academic enrichment program held at University of Texas. It was developed to combat 'summer slide' and help students prepare for success in rigorous college preparatory coursework. The experience improves students' academic and study skills and cultivates a college-going attitude via a positive school experience on a university campus.

Breakthrough's goal was to enroll 90 seventh and eighth grade students in both the 2008 and 2009 Summer Sessions.

Final Outcome Assessment:

The 2008 and 2009 Summer Sessions were very successful and represented a milestone in Breakthrough's programmatic development. Breakthrough met nearly all goals while simultaneously developing, implementing and operating a new summer program to prepare rising 9th grade students for successful transition to high school. Enrollment was 92 in 2008 and 90 in 2009.

Short Term: During Middle School Summer Session

| GOAL | RESULTS |
|---|--|
| Students exhibit meaningful academic growth on pre- and post-tests | All showed statistically significant gains on the reading, writing and math portions of tests. |
| 95% attendance rate | Over 90% |
| 100% participation in 7th grade student-teacher-parents conferences to explore academic progress and challenges | 98% |
| 100% participation in 8th grade high school workshops to discuss high school expectations and options | 100% |
| High levels of participants satisfaction | Nearly 100% of parents agreed/strongly agreed that the Summer Session prepared their child to enter next grade level |
| Increased educational aspirations and academic self confidence | 17% more students passed all their regular 9th grade classes following the Summer Session than in the previous year |

Intermediate: By End Of Middle School

| GOAL | RESULTS |
|--|---|
| 90% of middle school students enroll in advanced coursework | 95% |
| 85% of 8th graders enroll in a rigorous, college-preparatory high school program | In 2008, more than 90% of Breakthrough students were admitted to college prep high schools/programs. In 2009, 100% of Breakthrough 9th graders were accepted into and enrolled in a high school that met Breakthrough's criteria as a high-performing high school. |

Long Term: By High School Graduation

| GOAL | RESULTS |
|--|---|
| 90% complete high school in four years | It will be 2014 before the middle schoolers in the 2008-2009 Summer Sessions graduate but it is worth noting that 94% of Breakthrough's pioneer senior class of 2008 graduated from high school in four years and 75% enrolled in college |
| 85% go to college | Of the 2009 class, 91% graduated and 80% enrolled in college |

A Personal Story:

Rondal is a 12 year-old rising 7th grader. His 12th grade sister is also a Breakthrough student. Rondal is energetic, excited, and eager to advance his education.

“My mom first encouraged me to join Breakthrough, like my sister. She said that it would be a good change for me, but I didn't really know what to expect. I thought it was going to be all work, and, although we do a lot of work during the day and for homework, I didn't expect it to be as good as it has turned out! It's way more than I expected!

Last year in school, my math teacher didn't give me much of a chance, but my Breakthrough teachers actually help me to learn. I can even call my teachers after school and they will help me. Also, I'm learning new things in new ways. It's cool because I can pass these new ways on to other people. In this way, I feel like I am affecting everyone's future. Breakthrough has brought out the side of me that I never knew I had – my LEARNING side! If I weren't in Breakthrough this summer, I'd be playing video games, watching TV, and getting in trouble for not doing my chores.

Ever since I was younger, I was always interested in cooking. I actually wrote a cookbook when I was ten, but lost it. Now



Group of Breakthrough Austin students

I want to make a positive change in the world by creating new recipes and combining foods to make new flavors that people will like. Like many other Breakthrough students, I want to go to The University of Texas for college, and then go to Austin Culinary Institute to become a chef. Even though my goal is far away – so far I can't see it – if I keep reaching, I now know that it will come to me.”

GOODWILL INDUSTRIES OF CENTRAL TEXAS, INC.

Project Reboot

Focus Area.....**Family**
 Grant Amount.....**\$102,000**
 Grant Year.....**2008**
 Grant Period.....**10/08 to 10/09**
 Contact Person.....**Laura Griebel, Youth Services Program Manager**
 Website.....**www.austingoodwill.org**

Program Description:

Goodwill Industries' mission is to enhance the quality and dignity of life for individuals, families and our community by providing job-related services for people with barriers to employment. The vision of Goodwill Industries of Central Texas is to be the premier provider of vocational services for people with barriers to employment. They strive to provide a work environment that allows employees to be a catalyst for change.

Goodwill Industries of Central Texas created Project Reboot to equip at-risk youth with the skills needed to succeed in the high-demand computer industry, while diverting e-waste from Central Texas landfills. “At-risk youth” includes teen parents, those who are homeless, in foster care, deficient in basic academic skills, disabled, or have a prior history of substance abuse or criminal activity. With the support of two full-time job skills trainers, the participants refurbish and recycle donated computer equipment while learning technology-related job skills to prepare them for the world of work.

Goodwill aimed to enroll 60 participants in Project Reboot, expecting that at least 50 would master the training in technology-related job skills and 50 would either complete high school or obtain their GED. Furthermore, thirty-five would enroll in post secondary education or secure employment. As for environmental impact, the program intended to divert 800 tons of e-waste from Central Texas landfills.

Final Outcome Assessment:

Goodwill considers Project Reboot a great success and has kept it in operation after the grant period to continue serving the community. Goodwill organizations from other areas have taken notice and are investigating how to replicate the program for their constituencies.

Initially, there were some challenges. Project Reboot encountered more difficulties than expected in enrolling participants and retaining them in the program to completion. The first year numerous people wanted to sign up, but typically they were younger with severe life issues. Trying to meet their intake goals, Goodwill took some into the program but this population did not work out. Goodwill learned that participants in their early 20s who have some previous work experience are more successful in learning to focus on tasks and in developing a work ethic.

Even so, fifty participants were enrolled, forty of which achieved mastery level at graduation. At the end of the grant period, twenty-seven either graduated from high school or obtained their GED; seventeen were still enrolled in high school or pursuing their GED. Twenty-one youths secured employment and seven enrolled in college.

Based on their experience, Goodwill adapted their original plans for Project Reboot to better the students' needs and to ensure the success of the program. As students entered the program, more one-on-one time was spent discussing their individual vocational goals and ways to meet them. Training was expanded beyond technical topics to include job readiness skills such as safety, nutrition, motivation, time management, ethics, active listening, anger management, and financial fitness. In addition, based on feedback from clients placed into employment, sales floor experience was incorporated so that participants could be exposed to the end result of their efforts and could gain crucial personal interaction experience.

As for the environmental objectives, Goodwill Computer Works processes about 250 tons of electronic waste per month. Of this, Project Reboot dismantles, sorts and refurbishes approximately 25%, averaging 750 tons per year which is either reused by consumers or recycled. In addition, on a daily basis about \$300 to \$600 of material is refurbished and redirected for sale in the Goodwill Computer Works store, to the benefit of Goodwill financially.

A Personal Story:

Robert came to the program in the summer of 2009 as a high school dropout. His older brother was in prison, his father never mentioned. While at Project Reboot, he received his GED and was promoted to a mentor position. He was given additional responsibilities and was able to stay in the program longer than the other participants. Robert was a great leader and mentor to the other participants. He helped train the others and kept the group motivated. With the help of his Goodwill case manager, he enrolled in ACC and is currently attending classes in general studies.



Project Reboot students refurbishing computers

