

# 2022 SOCIAL BOND FUND IMPACT REPORT

## ABOUT AMERICAN STUDENT ASSISTANCE

American Student Assistance® (ASA) is a non-profit that aspires to help students know themselves, know their options, and make informed decisions about their education and career goals. We aim to build a generation of individuals who are confident, competent, and ready to realize the future they envision. ASA achieves this mission with a variety of programmatic activities including ASA-created direct-to-student digital programming; grants and investment into partner organizations with a common mission; and by driving systemic change through thought leadership and advocacy. Since 2018, ASA has committed more than \$50 million in funding to drive change for students, and, among other goals, implemented digital programming that reaches more than **12 million young people**.

## BACKGROUND

In March 2021, ASA secured a \$100 million social bond to further its mission. Since then, ASA has used bond proceeds to expand availability of and access to high-quality products, services and opportunities centered on 6th-12th graders—both in-person and digital—throughout the nation, with emphasis on marginalized or economically disadvantaged communities, and students who have faced barriers to education success. Additionally, ASA has funded programs that seek to achieve wide-reaching system change and fundamentally shift education systems to ensure every student is ready for life after high school. In 2022, ASA funded **\$17.44 million** in program activities with the use of bond funds and provided funding to **47 organizations**, reaching nearly **13 million students** through in-person and digital direct-to-student programs.

**In addition to the digital programs ASA has created, ASA provides multi-year commitments to innovative organizations, programs or partners looking to implement ambitious ideas and drive long-term student success outcomes with particular attention on:**

- innovations that will transform education, with specific attention on digital solutions and/or solutions to increase student engagement
- partners and programs to reach underserved learners
- programs to build skills that foster employability and build social capital
- programs that encourage postsecondary education success including access to non-traditional paths
- programs that provide professional development for educators to effectively leverage innovative solutions to prepare students for life after high school
- partners to engage in collaborative research, dialogue and collective action to solve nationwide education challenges

## IMPACT FROM BOND-FUNDED PROGRAMS:

Total Bond spend in 2022 (January 2022- December 2022) **\$17.44 million**

As ASA explicitly stated in the Bond offering, ASA issued the Bonds to:

- increase support to a larger number of students and partners
- expand the population served geographically
- bolster digital offerings
- direct funds to marginalized or economically disadvantaged communities, and students who face barriers to education success
- affect wide-reaching system change and fundamentally shift education systems to ensure every student is ready for life after high school

While too early in the process to see significant change in student outcomes or systems change, below is a summary of how the Bond has allowed ASA to meet some of these goals at an early stage.

## MORE STUDENTS REACHED

Leveraging both internal capabilities and partnerships with others, ASA's strategic goal is to impact at least 15 million students (totaling approximately 50 percent of the 6-12th grade US population) by 2023.

### In 2022:

Funding provided: **\$17.44 million**

Students reached: **Nearly 13 million**

Organizations funded through direct or pooled funding: **47**

## INCREASED NATIONAL IMPACT

Prior to 2021, two-thirds of ASA's programmatic funding had been committed to organizations primarily serving the New England region of the United States. One of the goals of the ASA Social Bond was to impact the great unmet need nationwide. With the proceeds of the Bonds, ASA has continued in its current service area, while strategically expanding to serve other areas of the country with new and innovative partner opportunities, in-person programming, and/ or digitally enabled education solutions that provide a larger opportunity for scale and impact. In 2022, **85% of funding** went to national organizations or state-based/local initiatives in communities outside New England.

- **National organizations: 16**
- **State-based or local initiatives serving a targeted community outside of New England: 24**
- **Organizations only serving a New England state or community in New England: 7**

## REACH INTO SPECIFIC STATES

In addition to the direct-to-student ASA digital initiatives happening in every state, ASA funding went to dedicated initiatives happening in California, Colorado, Delaware, District of Columbia, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Wisconsin.

## FOCUS ON DIGITAL INITIATIVES

### Sixty-four percent of ASA bond-funded initiatives

included some component of scaling programs through digital solutions. Such programming included the creation and launch of the new ASA digital program, Next Voice™. Next Voice is a free digital platform that gives teens the chance to gain valuable and actionable real-world advocacy skills through the lens of the world issues that matter most to them, while providing opportunities to test and apply in real time what they've learned along the way. Additionally in 2022, work was initiated on EvolveMe™, a free online tool that helps youth make the process of exploring the future more manageable by allowing them to learn about themselves and their interests; learn important life skills that can help with any future job; experiment with different jobs through online games, mini-lessons, and quests; and earn points that can be redeemed for rewards for completed activities. EvolveMe is set to launch in early 2023.

## FOCUS ON UNDERSERVED LEARNERS

**Ninety percent of the bond funding** committed to external organizations in 2022 went to entities with the explicit purpose of improving the education and career outcomes for underserved learners, marginalized or economically disadvantaged communities, and students who have barriers to education success. Whether through direct programming to students or systems change efforts, ASA prioritized funding for those with a focus on changing outcomes for high-need students and communities. Additionally, funding through the Catalyze Challenge (detailed below) was focused on promoting the efforts of proximate entrepreneurs—those leaders who come from the communities they seek to serve—and/or increasing opportunity for students in rural communities.

## MOVE THE CONVERSATION

In addition to direct funding of programs, ASA also seeks to promote a better understanding of and drive conversation about Gen Z, the education ecosystem for college and career readiness, and the challenges students, educators, families and communities face. ASA's research reports and thought leadership materials are regularly discussed at national conferences, public events and online forums. ASA funds are used to drive conversation and to support programs that seek wide-reaching system and policy change to fundamentally shift education systems and ensure every student is ready for life after high school. ASA publications in 2022 included: [High School Work-based Learning: Best Practices Designed to Improve Career Readiness Outcomes for Today's Youth](#) and [Preparing Youth for the Future: Teen and Young Adult Career Readiness Programs at Big Sister Association of Greater Boston](#), while ASA-funded research on the [condition of career readiness in the US](#) was published in 2022 by the Coalition of Career Development Center.

Additionally, a narrative change campaign launched in 2021 with Jobs for the Future (JFF) aims to change the perceptions of postsecondary education paths that do not include 2- and 4-year degree programs. This work continued in 2022 with the publication of Degrees of Risk: What Gen Z and Employers Think About Education-to-Career Pathways...and How Those Views are Changing and Non-Degree Pathways: A DC Insider’s Perspective.

**IMPACT SYSTEMS:**

**Eighty percent** of bond funding to external programs went to organizations looking to impact systems change in some way or inform improved education policy as a component of their work.

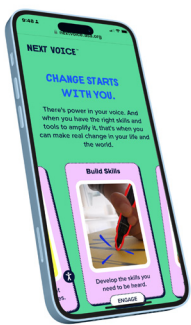
**BOND-FUNDED INITIATIVES**

Below is a summary of Bond-Funded initiatives in 2022. Most of these programs fall into one or more categories of desired impact, but they are categorized below based on the primary outcome the initiative aims to achieve. In addition, it should be noted that outcomes listed are in the early stage of impact and will be continuously tracked for long-term impact in years to come.

**INNOVATIONS THAT WILL TRANSFORM EDUCATION, WITH SPECIFIC ATTENTION ON DIGITAL SOLUTIONS AND/OR SOLUTIONS TO INCREASE STUDENT ENGAGEMENT**

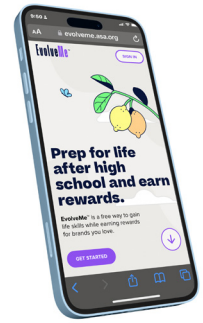
**ASA digital solutions**

ASA believes that one of the most powerful opportunities to impact students at scale is to give them the tools and information they need within the channels they interact with most. ASA has developed free digital tools for students to learn about their interests or aptitudes and match those attributes with potential career paths. We reach students with these tools primarily through social media channels where we know they are already spending a lot of their time. **ASA Committed Funds: \$9.9 million**



**Next Voice:** Next Voice is a free digital platform that gives teens the chance to gain valuable and actionable real-world advocacy skills through the lens of the world issues that matter most to them, while providing opportunities to test and apply in real time what they’ve learned along the way. Since the platform’s launch in September 2022, more than **400,000 users** have utilized the site to learn more about the social causes they care about and how to advocate for them.

**EvolveMe** is a free online tool that helps youth make the process of exploring the future more manageable by allowing them to learn about themselves and their interests; learn important life skills that can help with any future job; experiment with different jobs through online games, mini-lessons, and quests; and earn points that can be redeemed for rewards for completed activities. The build and development of EvolveMe occurred in 2022 with the launch set for the first quarter of 2023.



**Futurescape:** This immersive digital platform offers a journey to self-discovery that helps kids realize their passions and find careers that match who they are and what they love. Offering real-world information on career and other criteria, Futurescape enables high school students to form a greater connection between postsecondary education and their intended career path. In 2022, over **6.5 million users** used Futurescape to explore careers ranging from actor to biomedical engineer to fashion designer.

**Future Network:** The Future Network is a series of original videos that span five categories and follow Gen Z as they explore and learn about different careers from professionals themselves. Future Network episodes received over **5 million video views** in 2022 alone



**Solve Together:** This national competition was conducted digitally and worked with schools to encourage career exploration and real-world skill building among middle school students through project-based learning and teamwork. Students worked together to solve one of four challenges: Public Health, Climate Change, Colonizing Mars, or a Passion Project, based on a problem they care about. In 2022 the contest awarded two winners, one for students working in a classroom and one for direct learners who completed the project outside



the classroom with the support of caring adults. First Place for a classroom project went to Franklin Avenue Middle School in Franklin Lakes, New Jersey, where a team of seventh grade science students created a prototype and blueprint to enhance transportation systems, after learning that transportation conditions are a leading cause for the declining bee population. First Place for Direct Learners was awarded to a group of teens in Tacoma, Washington, who produced a podcast with characters representing different opinions about how to best create a society on Mars, based on their careers (e.g., mayor, professor, and attorney). The winners were selected from more than **500 registered teams across 49 states** nationwide.

**ASA Committed Funds: \$47,500**



Big Picture Learning (BPL)'s Learning Through Interests and Internships (LTI) implementation continued in 150 locations across the state of California, which provides work-based learning opportunities for more than 40,000 high school students. This was accomplished by providing professional development to more than 1,400 educators and school leaders as well as access to ImBlaze, Big Picture Learning's proprietary internship management system app. In addition to ImBlaze, ASA is supporting the expansion of B-UnBound, a version of ImBlaze for direct learners. This pilot will bring nearly 50,000 work-based learning experiences to students out of the classroom.

**ASA Committed Funds: \$500,000**

**CLARK**  
UNIVERSITY



ASA continued to fund a research and innovation lab at the Becker School of Design & Technology at Clark University to improve our understanding of how commercial video games can teach young students important 21st century skills, facilitate their self-discovery, and provide meaningful career exploration opportunities. Clark college students have developed a career exploration game created purely for fun (Project Alpha) and in 2022 they added a Veterinary Technician simulation designed specifically to expose kids to a particular career. Game results will be compared to test which approach, "fun first" vs. specific training, is more effective in helping kids learn about themselves and durable skills.

**ASA Committed Funds: \$200,000**



ASA is working with Roadtrip Nation to develop and host a middle school digital student hub. Through this work, Roadtrip Nation will provide access to its opportunity youth, work-based experience for mentors

and educators to help students develop the skills necessary to successfully navigate career exploration. This middle school digital hub will be distributed to the Association of Middle Level Education's membership of more than 20,000 educators.

**ASA Committed Funds: \$106,000**



U.S. Chamber of Commerce  
Foundation

The US Chamber of Commerce Foundation will develop EPIC (Employer-

Provided Innovation Challenges), a national network of accredited clearinghouses to provide problem-based learning experiences to learners that are designed and delivered by employers from the private and public sectors. The Chamber will work to build the prototype platform for organizing and managing challenges, as well as begin engaging a mix of schools, universities, community colleges, employers and business associations in developing and implementing the challenge. The process for micro-credentialing and credentialing durable skills will also be a component of this phase.

**ASA Committed Funds: \$500,000**

## PROGRAMS TO BUILD SKILLS THAT FOSTER EMPLOYABILITY AND BUILD SOCIAL CAPITAL



**AMERICA**  
S U C C E E D S

America Succeeds will establish an industry-backed rubric for measuring durable skills and assessing student

preparedness for employment. As part of this initiative, America Succeeds and CompTIA have committed to bringing employers from a variety of industries together to define what an individual – upon entering the workforce – should be able to know and do relative to durable skills.

**ASA Committed Funds: \$200,000**



**Catalyze Challenge**

ASA is a leading partner in the

Catalyze Challenge—a collaborative funding initiative with other national philanthropies-- to award over \$5 million to accelerate bold career-connected learning solutions. In 2022, 25 grants were awarded to community-based organizations, entrepreneurs, and cross-sector partnerships from across the country to pilot, launch and scale solutions designed to prepare young people for tomorrow's workforce. Grantees with proximate leadership (leaders who come from the communities they serve),

that serve a historically underserved group or a rural population, were prioritized. ASA's bond funding was committed to this initiative in 2021 but executed in 2022.

### Funded organizations include:

**Abretech** - AbreTech is building a new path to upward mobility for English language learners by developing emerging bilingual talent for in-demand careers in the tech industry. Their cross-sector model includes paid bilingual internships, employer-valued certifications, and access to social capital.

**BAYADA Home Health Care** – National nonprofit BAYADA's solution connects young people with careers in nursing and applied behavior analysis while meeting the nation's urgent healthcare needs. BAYADA is the first employer to use apprenticeships for home healthcare using an earned revenue model.

**The BroadStreet Institute** – The BroadStreet Institute's Community Data Project supports women of color advancing in data and leadership by addressing the gender disparities in a remote, hands-on internship work experience that removes barriers to entry by providing one-on-one support and creating customized learning paths.

**Builders and Backers** – Builders and Backers, in partnership with the Education Design Lab, aims to help underrepresented entrepreneurs and learners gain the skills and real-world experience they need to pursue their ideas, whether that be launching a business or exploring a pathway in a high-growth career.

**Code the Spectrum** – Spectrum Career Pathways aims to build IT career-oriented technical training and professional development programs for grade 13-14 students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), connecting them with job opportunities such as website development and bridging the digital divide in employment for people with ASD.

**Cowden St. Collaborative DBA Segue Academy** – The Segue Institute for Learning/Legacy High School for Education helps BIPOC students pursue professions in education, by creating learning environments that center the importance of eradicating inequities and having educators reflect the communities they serve.

**Ella Baker Institute** - Intersecting the key skills and mindsets of community organizers and entrepreneurs, the Young People's Leadership Cooperative (YPLC) will position young people to identify challenges in their communities and design, then implement, enterprising solutions that foster community well-being.

**Global Grid for Learning** – Global Grid for Learning has created a unique Certified School Passport Administrator

(CSPA) internship program that aligns with IT certificate pathways (Grow with Google and Coursera IT) and provides students with virtual work-based learning experiences.

**Hopeworks Camden** – Hopeworks works with employers to provide paid-training opportunities to learners in the IT field. High school seniors are dually enrolled in the Hopeworks program and a paid internship that can lead to stable, full-time employment and a livable wage.

**Innovators for Purpose** – Innovators for Purpose is a BIPOC-led youth design and innovation studio that is reimagining the STEM learning experience for grades 7-12 by integrating art, design, STEM and youth voice within a social justice framework.

**MindSpark Learning** – MindSpark Learning and its partners are working to bring Geospatial Intelligence/ GIS (GEOINT Tech) apprenticeships to Colorado via a high school STEM pathway for students from under-resourced and underrepresented communities in grades 6-14.

**Moving Mountains, LLC** – Moving Mountains provides accessible, tech-enabled, and culturally-relevant job shadowing for Black male college students to help participants access navigational capital in Corporate America.

**National Indian Education Association** – Building Career Pathways for Native Students is a middle through high school pipeline to college project to increase tribal workforce with earned construction degrees or certifications to address the housing and infrastructure needs for three Native American nations: Menominee, Stockbridge-Munsee and Ho-Chunk.

**NuPaths** - NuPaths has partnered with the South Central Pennsylvania's Workforce Development Boards to create a Cybersecurity Careers Ecosystem that addresses the lack of cybersecurity and IT career pathways for middle school, high school, and post-high school graduates.

**OneGoal** – Many Paths, One Goal answers the call for high-quality post-secondary options for low-income high school students in New York City who want to pursue a path outside of a traditional two- or four-year college, by informing new advising tools and identifying non-degree pathways that will connect students to in-demand careers.

**OneInFive** – OneInFive provides students with lived mental health experiences rich, practice-based training that leads toward peer specialist careers while they are in school, improving both student well-being and their career opportunities.

**Oregon STEM** – Spark Oregon uses a pathfinding tool – YouScience– to develop a spectrum of culturally relevant career-connected learning resources that prepare rural Oregon students through hands-on learning projects with an earn-to-learn approach.

**Radius Learning, Inc.** – Radius charts workforce pathways to connect students with the jobs of tomorrow. Through partnerships with employers and education systems, Radius connects learners with training and employment opportunities.

**Research Foundation of The City University of New York** – Future Forward is a holistic effort to build equitable access to sustainable careers by bringing together colleges, schools, community organizations, and industry partners to create a new model that integrates wraparound support for under-served youth and provides better career-connected learning outcomes for students.

**Reve Academy** – The Rever in Residence Experience introduces high school students, largely students of color and those from under-resourced backgrounds, to entrepreneurship pathways with compensation and gives students mentorship from business professionals.

**RevX, a partner of Transcend, Inc.** - The DEEDS Framework (Discover, Examine, Engineer, Do, Share) brings real-world learning to life by asking young people to investigate a community challenge, then address it using career skills – transforming typical learning environments into training grounds for high earning careers and social justice impact.

**SkillUp Coalition** – The SkillUp Coalition/LevelUp Dallas supports students in grades 10-14 to pursue a career path based on their preferences via an online platform where students are given curated career recommendations and connected with vetted training programs to pursue these options.

**Stepmojo Education, LLC** – Stepmojo supports students to take “steps” to increase their “mojo” (special talents) by radically expanding their access to high-quality, live online courses, from best-in-class partners through one easy-to-use platform.

**unCommonConstruction** - Through unCommon Construction’s apprenticeship program, students apply to join a diverse team to earn hourly pay and school credit for building a house together, with the revenue from each project leading to a scholarship for further education and career opportunities.

**Urban Strategies, Inc.** – Niche Innovators and Social Enterprise helps low-income youth living in assisted housing gain paid work experience in the housing industry, all while creating their own housing-related social enterprise to support long-term career stability.

**ASA Committed Funds: \$1.5 million (committed in 2021)**



**CENTER FOR  
BLACK EDUCATOR  
DEVELOPMENT**

### **The Center for Black Educator Development**

The Center for Black Educator Development will work to scale access to summer and year-round apprenticeships and in-classroom teaching experiences, beginning in high school, for students interested in pursuing careers in education with the goal of building the skills of young people interested in teaching and increasing the number of Black educators in Philadelphia and Detroit.

**ASA Committed Funds: \$200,000**



### **Chica Project**

Chica Project will aim to close the opportunity gap between Latinx and other female-identifying youth of color by providing peer-to-peer mentorships. With this funding, the organization will also expand learning opportunities for young people through internships and fellowships, enhancing a peer leader pipeline and delivering career readiness curriculum, both in and out of school settings in the Greater Boston area.

**ASA Committed Funds: \$100,000**



### **Flare Education**

Flare Education will create high-quality professional training, paid workforce opportunities, and career development for high school students in the Greater Boston area to help break the cycle of poverty and systemic racism. Through this high-touch cohort model, learners will have access to workplace mentors and year-round coaching and training to ensure career readiness and long-term success. **ASA Committed Funds: \$100,000**



**MENTOR**

### **MENTOR: The National Mentoring Network (MENTOR)**

MENTOR continues its work on Relationship Nation, which involves creating technical assistance focused on prioritizing relationships and a culture of mentoring in the nation’s schools. In addition to a thought leadership campaign, MENTOR launched a Relationship-Centered Schools Initiative, partnering with school districts to bolster local mentoring infrastructure and intentional approaches to ensure young people have the adult relationships they need to thrive. The initiative supports more than 600,000 students. **ASA Committed Funds: \$900,000**

## **nfte** **Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE)**

NFTE continued to use ASA grant funds in 2022 to expand its entrepreneurial education curriculum to the Southeast, South and Midwest Regions, reaching more than 28,000 students and nearly 500 teachers. Summer BizCamps, Innovation Days and Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge Final competitions were held in all three expanded regions. NFTE also continued to spur national and global conversation around entrepreneurship, with appearances at multiple conferences in the US and the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting at Davos.

**ASA Committed Funds: \$25,000**



### **Rodel Foundation of Delaware**

In 2022 ASA continued its grant to the Rodel Foundation of DE to support expansion of Delaware's Pathways program, which links education and workforce development programs to let young people gain real-world work experience while in school. Over the past year, Rodel launched an initiative to build a scalable set of standards to improve the high school-readiness of 6,000 middle grade students by 2024; kicked off the drafting of new statewide Career and Technical Education standards for grades six through eight; identified credentials of value within Delaware's secondary and postsecondary educational systems; and began an ambitious project to redesign the state's vocational high school districts.

**ASA Committed Funds: \$566,666**



### **Social Innovation Forum**

ASA funded a track for the Social Innovation Forum's Social Innovator Accelerator, a program that helps high-performing nonprofit organizations gain visibility, expand their networks, and connect with philanthropic and in-kind resources. The 2022 ASA-sponsored track, Experiential and Work-based Learning Opportunities for Youth and Young Adults, focused on programs that provide experiential learning opportunities that allow young people to develop intentional, transferable skills for school, work and life, with a particular emphasis on supporting underserved young people. MissionSAFE, a Boston nonprofit that provides year-round programming to youth ages 14-24, was selected as the 2023 Social Innovator and will be assisted by SIF as they work with Boston's highly at-risk youth and their families to gain the skills and confidence to thrive, not just survive, and to improve their community and their world.

**ASA Committed Funds: \$100,000**

## **PROGRAMS THAT ENCOURAGE POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION SUCCESS INCLUDING ACCESS TO NON-TRADITIONAL PATHS**

### **Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area**

ASA continues to support Reach4Success- an initiative by Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area to provide free postsecondary education planning and financing information to residents of Washington, DC.

**ASA Committed Funds: \$200,000**

### **NEWPROFIT The Postsecondary Innovation for Equity (PIE) II**

The Postsecondary Innovation for Equity (PIE) II initiative, funded through New Profit in collaboration with a growing list of foundation partners like the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Lumina Foundation, Walmart, and the Walton Family Foundation, is focused on supporting young entrepreneurs in the creation of postsecondary pathways and innovations in the education-to-employment space. From this pooled funding, 20 postsecondary innovators were chosen in 2022 to build evidence behind new approaches to connecting young adults from low-income communities with the postsecondary credentials and work experience needed to access upwardly mobile careers. With ASA funds, a cohort of five organizations will launch in 2022 and receive in-depth coaching, training, and support from New Profit to scale their models.

**ASA Committed Funds: \$500,000**

### **Cara Collective**

Cara Collective engages job seekers, employers, and other organizations to build an inclusive economy by developing employment pathways to advance transformative individual and community success. It reconnects individuals from communities facing major barriers to economic mobility with the power of gainful employment. The organization's program combines leadership development, transitional job experiences, permanent job placement, and coaching services. Refined over more than three decades, the Cara Collective approach has a dual focus on both workplace competencies and socio-emotional skills to fully support members of overlooked communities and ensure the success of its program participants.

### **CodePath**

CodePath brings together employers, students, and colleges to eliminate inequities in tech education, diversify the field, and provide underrepresented students with a path toward economic mobility. It has built infrastructure that layers onto the existing postsecondary education system to ensure that students

nationwide have access to the tech sector's most competitive roles. Its no-cost programs are developed by software engineers and center on the needs and successes of students who self-identify as Black, Latinx, Indigenous, or come from low-income backgrounds. CodePath is building a two-sided marketplace for tech, cultivating job-ready students on the supply side, and trusted employer partnerships on the demand side while delivering systemic change to universities.

### Inner City Computer Stars Foundation (i.c.stars)

Inner-City Computer Stars (i.c.stars) is an educational and workforce development organization offering technology training, leadership development, and career readiness to inner-city young adults. i.c.stars was founded to close the gaps in the education-to-employment pipeline by creating a leadership development program for underserved, unemployed or underemployed people of color in the Midwest through digital skills training. The Chicago-based organization fuses digital skills training, leadership development, wraparound services, career support, and a growing network of employer and corporate partners to help people from overlooked communities secure careers in tech, become financially independent, and transform into leaders driven to affect positive change in their respective communities.

### The Knowledge House

The Knowledge House creates a pipeline of talented workers equipped with technical skills that provide economic opportunity, living wages, and career mobility. Their model combines specialized training in digital skills, coding and design, career support, and a comprehensive network of partners to help disconnected job seekers secure rewarding careers in the tech industry. The Knowledge House offers software and design job training, access to professional networks, and a diverse set of support services that meet the unique needs and positions of its graduates for successful careers in the tech sector.

### Project Basta

Basta's mission is to close the employment gap for first-generation students of color and change the face of workforce leadership. Basta's program model works to enhance the social capital of young people, with an emphasis on first-generation college students of color. The organization's programs, products, and services achieve this by enhancing students' networks, preparing young people for the particularities of the contemporary job market, and confronting inequitable hiring practices. By addressing not only student preparedness but also employer behaviors, Basta takes a systems-level approach on both the supply and demand sides while also partnering with intermediaries such as higher-ed and nonprofit organizations working with young people.

## PARTNERS TO ENGAGE IN COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH, DIALOGUE AND COLLECTIVE ACTION TO SOLVE NATIONWIDE EDUCATION CHALLENGES



### Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE)

A grant from ASA allowed for the design of a student-focused playbook concentrating on middle grades activities that help them learn about careers and education options. The playbook will be included in the ASA/AMLE Career Exploration Resource Center, an online resource center with evidence-based best practices for the implementation of career exploration. This grant also funded a series of webinars on career exploration and work-based learning for middle grades educators. **ASA Committed Funds: \$50,000**



Coalition for  
Career Development  
Center

### Coalition for Career Development Center

In 2022, the Coalition for Career Development Center released the inaugural [Condition of Career Readiness in the United States](#) report. Through a combination of state-level data, case studies and exemplary practices, the report documents how states are meeting key career readiness benchmarks and charts a path forward toward becoming a "Career Ready Nation." To help build awareness and drive policy change, the CCDC joined ASA at several high-profile speaking events, including the ASU+GSV (Arizona State University-Global Silicon Valley) Summit, the SXSW-EDU (South by Southwest Education) conference, and the Association of Career and Technical Education Conference to promote the report's findings and elevate the national discourse on career readiness. Additionally, the CCDC developed an interactive digital State Resource Map to provide website visitors with state-specific resources and recommendations.

**ASA Committed Funds: \$300,000**



### Getting Smart

Getting Smart will work with a diverse group of leaders to author and publish a series of content on new high school pathways, unbundling and rebundling learning, and the future of credentialing. Content will include blogs, podcasts, how-to guides, white papers, and more. Additional components of the thought leadership campaign include a series of in-person and virtual events, such as webinars, town halls, summits, workshops, and sessions at regional and national conferences.

**ASA Committed Funds: \$195,000**





### Jobs for the Future

ASA worked with Jobs for the Future (JFF) on a narrative change campaign which included three reports aimed at

expanding understanding and acceptance of high-quality non-degree postsecondary pathways. With Morning Consult facilitating survey administration and results tabulation, and the firm RALLY providing creative design and public relations support, ASA and JFF published [Degrees of Risk: What Gen Z and Employers Think About Education-to-Career Pathways...and How Those Views are Changing](#), a landmark study on Gen Z and employer perceptions of education-to-career pathways; [A Universe of Possibilities: Education to Career Pathways for the Future of Work](#), which compiles data on hundreds of education-to-career initiatives to identify the most innovative pathways currently creating opportunities for young people; and [Non-Degree Pathways: A DC Insider's Perspective](#), a report that includes a survey of policy influencer views on supporting diverse educational pathways and offers policy recommendations to expand opportunities for students. Additionally, JFF launched the website [expandopportunities.org](https://expandopportunities.org) as a knowledge hub to house the research, resources and national dialogue on this important issue. **ASA Committed Funds: \$2,019,280**



### The Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy

The Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy will launch a “Student Changemakers” project to increase voice and agency through youth participatory action research. The planned project will develop student-led research projects within Massachusetts schools to empower groups of students (“Student Changemakers”) to identify areas for growth in their schools to help lead local responses to COVID recovery. The Rennie Center is currently recruiting schools for participation with a projected launch date of the pilot program in October 2023.

**ASA Committed Funds: \$100,000**

### Thought Leadership Events

By playing a major role in sponsoring education conferences like ASU+GSV, JFF Horizons, and Learn Launch, ASA was able to drive conversation and put needed attention on issues of career readiness, career connected learning, and digital-direct to kid initiatives.

**ASA Committed Funds: \$675,000**