

# Impact Report 2022/23

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**TEEN  
CENTER**   
**TOGETHER, A BRIGHTER FUTURE**

We promote opportunity for students through intentional after school programming that provides education, exposure, and mentorship.

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## Message from our Director

### Hello Friends,

As I reflect on year 16 of the Teen Center, the future is expansive and full of possibilities. Our little dream, became a big dream, became a reality and grew beyond our wildest imagination.

After many years of being immersed in the program aspect of the Teen Center, I will be transitioning to an administrative role focused on development, specifically funding, donor relations and community collaborations.

We are so thankful for the foundation and support that St. Luke United Methodist Church provided the Teen Center over the years. We have been welcomed so warmly into the Burke building and feel so encouraged to be a part of the Bulldog team. Our funders, partners, board, staff and friends have all contributed greatly to this powerful transition and move. Together, a brighter future!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Abbey'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right.

**Abbey Jackson**  
Teen Center Executive Director

## A little dream, became a big dream, became a reality and grew beyond our wildest imagination.

The Teen Center is entering an exciting new phase in our mission to support students in need, as we progress by **relocating to Burke High School**.

Strategically positioned within the school, our office remains easily accessible to students, offering essential supplies like period products, school supplies, and provisions from the pantry. We also offer crucial services such as conflict resolution and mental health breaks.

Our spacious classroom includes a kitchen and laundry area, featuring various seating options and colorful windows for a welcoming atmosphere.

As the school day winds down, we're looking forward to utilizing both indoor classrooms and outdoor green spaces. These areas will be transformed into hubs of engaging activity, from skateboarding to art and STEM exploration.

During school hours, our dedicated staff will be on hand, working closely with both students and school personnel. This move has also enabled us to expand our team, introducing the role of Assistant Director of Academics and Data.

We're committed to maintaining our collaborations with all essential partners through various avenues. Stay tuned as this exciting journey continues to unfold.



**Julie Butler, JaLisa Sanford, Cassie Young, Abbey Jackson, Kyla Channita**



*If the Teen Center was inside the school when I was there, I would have ran to them instead of leaving and avoiding school. Moving into the school bridges a gap for students like me and increases accessibility for students in need. The Teen Center is such a light - loving, caring and accepting - doing it all so unconditionally.*

**Jocelyn Nice, Alumni**





Food is a magnet that brings people together to share in conversation, pleasure, learning and teaching. I'm so pleased the Teen Center is able to provide this experience for students, where they can have fun while learning critical skills and knowledge that will enhance their lives and possibly provide inspiration for future careers in the area of food and nutrition.

**Kristi Reimers**  
Director of Nutrition, Health and Wellness,  
Conagra Brands



Conagra Brands Foundation provided funding for students to access engaging cooking classes complete with nutritional education, diverse professional chefs and balanced meals.



## Board of Directors

**Deb Carlson, *President***  
President & CEO, Nebraska Methodist College

**Kristi Reimers, *Vice-President***  
Director of Nutrition, Health and Wellness,  
Conagra Brands

**Tam Webb, *Secretary***  
Events Manager, Omaha World Herald

**Kirk Kellner, *Treasurer***  
Retired, Regional Bank President, Wells Fargo

**Becky Hand**  
Para-Professional, Burke High School

**John Deardorff**  
Retired, Peterson Brothers Insurance

**Marshall Johnson**  
Pastor, St. Luke United Methodist Church

## Collaborators

Burke High School

Collective for Youth

Nebraska Methodist College

St. Luke United Methodist Church

## Teen Center Staff

**Abbey Jackson, *Executive Director***

**Cassie Young, *Assistant Director***  
*Academics and Data*

**JaLisa Sanford, *Assistant Director***  
*Operations and Finance*

**Julie Butler, *Administrative Coordinator***

**Kyla Channita, *Program Assistant***

**The Teen Center's Access Point has become a reality thanks to the generous sponsorship from Healthy Blue Nebraska.**

*"We are thrilled to have the opportunity to partner with The Teen Center! The Access Point cabinet there will provide free menstrual products to students and their families, allowing them to go to school, work, and participate fully without worrying about choosing between food and period products."*  
- Kristin Lowrey, Access Period

## Funders

**#5**

21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning  
Center Grant

Conagra Brands Foundation

James C. Semerad Foundation

Lozier Foundation

Midwest Housing Equity Group

Peter Kiewit Foundation

Sherwood Foundation

Suzanne & Walter Scott Foundation

William and Ruth Scott Family Foundation

## Legacy Dinner

Honorary Chairs: *Rebecca & James Reilly*

Donor of the Year: *Kristi Reimers & Conagra  
Brands Foundation*

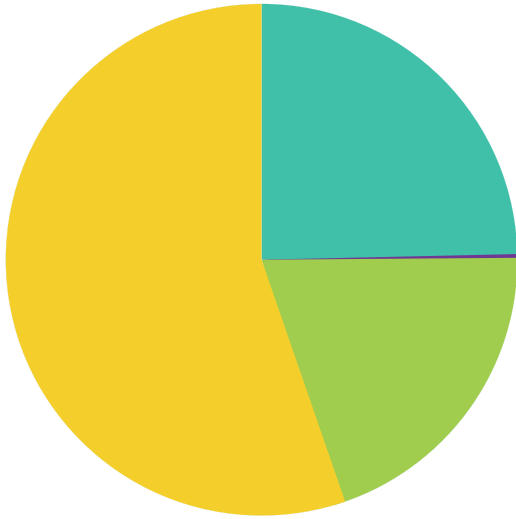
Volunteer of the Year: *Grant Story*

Provider of the Year: *Jarell Roach*



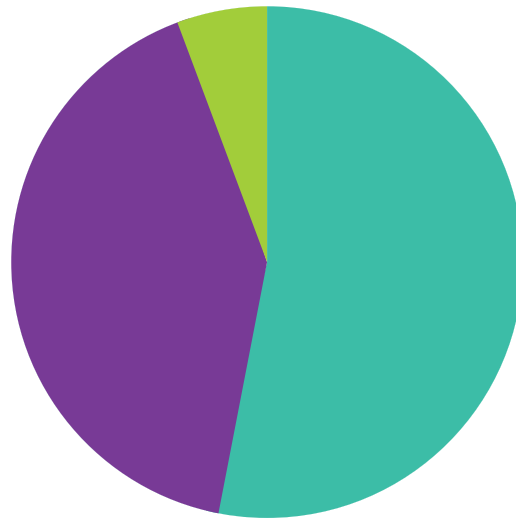
**In 2022, we distributed a total of 7,350 products, providing 1,470 worry-free days for those in need.**

## 2022/23 Financials

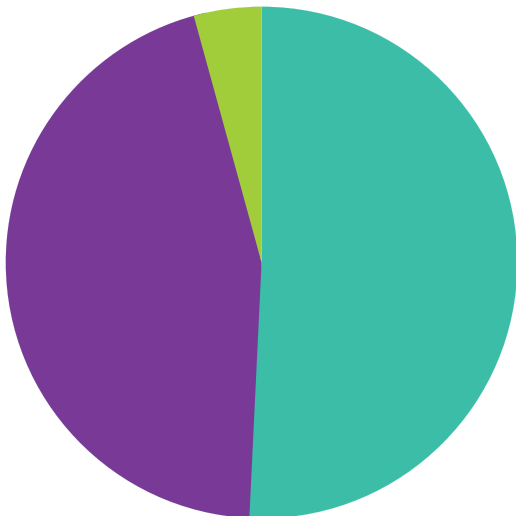


Private Donations \$107,127  
Operating Income \$1,017  
Fundraiser Dinner \$86,156  
Grants \$240,330  
Total Revenue: \$434,630

Burke High School: \$90,000\*  
Nebraska Methodist College \$70,000\*  
Food Bank of the Heartland \$9,673\*  
\*In-kind support



Management & General \$238,527  
Programming \$211,310  
Fundraising Dinner \$20,072  
Total Expenses: \$469,639





## Did You Know?

#7



**85%** of all students have a sense of hope and believe they will have a good life.



**70%** of our students are considered low income.



**20%** of our students receive special educational services through an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP).



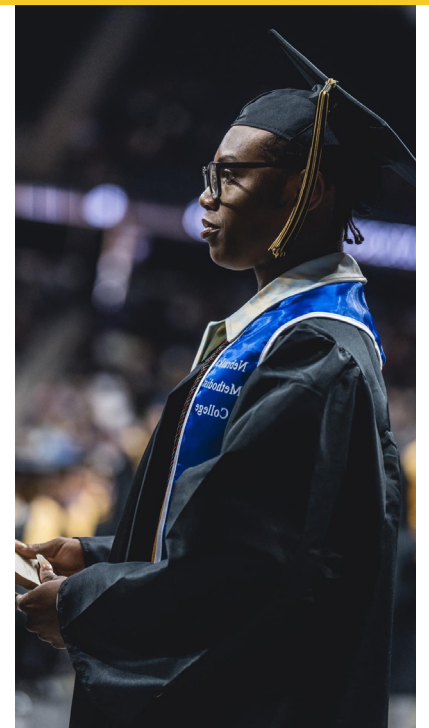
Our 2023 senior class had a **98% high school graduation rate**. In 2023, 84% of our graduating seniors were headed to college and 16% seeking employment.

**95%** of seniors said the Teen Center provided them with the appropriate resources to assist with goals after high school.

**75%** of seniors said they have 3 or more adults at the Teen Center they could go to in a crisis; 23% have 5 or more.

**45%** of seniors have been members all four years of high school.

**40%** of seniors considered themselves one or more – English Language Learners, Immigrants, and Refugees.



Number of **meals served** with partnership through the Food Bank.

### Grade

**43%** Senior  
**19%** Junior  
**16%** Sophomore  
**22%** Freshman

### Ethnicity

**60%** Black/African American  
**17%** Hispanic/Latinx  
**15%** White  
**5%** Multi Race  
**3%** Asian



**1,607,194**  
Minutes attended during the school year.

## Parent Highlight

# Becky Hand

Mom

I grew up in a Mexican family where social justice and education were top priority. As a grandchild of immigrants and a daughter of a fierce advocate and pioneer in the Head Start world, my foundation for life was solid - but with a single parent in college and working full time, I found freedom and fell through the cracks. My life quickly filled with gang life and drugs. Life broke me many times but people continued to see the potential, give me chances and invest in me. Fast forward 20 years, I moved myself to Omaha with three kids and was working in child care at St. Luke. I had heard there was a Teen Center downstairs and desperately worked to get my first born into Burke. In 2014, he enrolled and our family continued to seek stability in our new home.

At one point, I couldn't afford the calculator my son needed for his advanced math class. I requested to meet with Abbey and she led me to the back room and handed me one. While that may have been a simple act, that moment changed everything for me and my relationship with the program.

The Teen Center allowed a space for tears, conversations, laughter and dreams. Not just about my kids, but my goals, failures and dreams. As a parent, they have always allowed me the time, grace and love to be me.

At the end of the day, I see myself in many of the Teen Center students. There is so much power in making students feel safe, seen and loved.

This year, I completed my term on the Teen Center Board of Directors, Kyla began working at the Teen Center and my youngest became the fourth and last to enroll in the Teen Center.



Becky shows up time and time again. She has become a staple in the Teen Center community. She has served as a staff member, volunteer, speaker, award winner, board member, advocate and supportive adult to many.

**Abbey Jackson, Executive Director  
at the Teen Center**





## Kyla Channita

### Daughter

I am the third of four from my family to come through the Teen Center. I rode the wave of my two overachieving brothers - connecting with their friends and following in their footsteps. I felt like I was connected to the Teen Center because they were connected, but I never really established my own bond to the program. By my senior year, I had experienced some high-level traumas and adapted to the 'nothing really matters' mentality. I had seen others reach out to the Teen Center for help but I felt I couldn't.

I went to college because it was the natural next step. Again, going through the motions, not much had changed. My mental health remained in distress, but I moved forward. I rotated between study hard and party hard. By the end of my third year, I came to realize something had to give. Lincoln and college weren't my jam at this moment and I needed to do some damage control.

As I started to contemplate this transition, my mom sent me a job opening at the Teen Center. My instant thoughts were, "No way, they wouldn't want me, I failed in their program, they don't remember me," etc. Nervous as ever, I showed up to my interview in a newly purchased, hopefully professional-enough outfit. Shoot - I got the job and imposter syndrome immediately set in.

What I learned was there was no keeping track. They loved me for exactly who I was and where I was at and despite my internal thoughts, I had something to offer. I joined a team that was transparent, loving and inclusive. This job changed my life. I belong and have a purpose. I strive to share my wins and losses and help students connect to the program in a deep way. I just finished my first year as a Program Assistant and I couldn't imagine being anywhere else.



## Omaha Award grant empowers students and families with vital support through Basic Needs Initiative

Through our Basic Needs Initiative, we were able to open a food and toiletry pantry, provide winter gear and assist with housing deposits and rental assistance to our students and families. This project was funded by the Omaha Award, a grant program offered collectively by the Suzanne & Walter Scott Foundation, Dixon Family Foundation, Parker Family Foundation, Amy L. Scott Family Foundation, Lori & David Scott Foundation, and the Singer Foundation.



# Scholarship Winners:

**Makayla Acouetey**

Lasting Legacy Scholarship

**Malcolm Lyons**

**Tambal Thang**

**TJ Omadevuae**

Ann & Oliver DeGray Scholarship

**Makayla Acouetey**

**Malcolm Lyons**

Jeter Scholarship

**Hamdi Mohamud**

**Makayla Acouetey**

**Amari Plater**

**Darci Sherrod**

Dean Hughes Memorial Scholarship

**Maalyar Ahmadzai**

**Susan Rivera-Perez**

Justin Estrada Memorial Scholarship



## Ann DeGray Spirit Award:

This award is presented to underclass students who promote authentic relationships and interactions within the Teen Center community – individuals who uplift others, treat them with respect, and exhibit a humble and compassionate spirit.

**Lisa D'Souza**

**Naomi Garrido**

**Ayomide Olaniyan**

**Kevwe Omadevuae**

**Keyonu Robbins**



**\$17,400 awarded this year!**

Largest senior class ever - 45 seniors!





Our partnership with the Teen Center has achieved student success through the enrichment and academic support the after-school program offers. The Teen Center program has been well attended, and positive feedback from parents and families further demonstrates the impact the Teen Center has had on the Burke community. By offering a high-quality after-school program, I feel that we truly support our families and focus on the growth and success of their children.

Darren Rasmussen  
Burke High School Principal

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