



Volunteer with Breakthrough

BTGB is looking for group volunteers to support our Academic Mentor Program. Do you have colleagues, neighbors, or peers that are interested in building strong relationships with motivated students? Groups of all types are welcome, consider your alumni association, neighborhood group, book club, church groups, or more! Come together to volunteer one hour each week to help students gain confidence and still to propel them to academic success. To learn more, contact Emma Samler at esamler@btgbbmail.org.



Save the Date

The Breakthrough Gala
April 30, 2020 at the Cyclorama



Alumni Committee Kicks Off

Were you a student or teacher at Breakthrough Greater Boston (or when we were Breakthrough Cambridge or Summerbridge Cambridge)? If so, help us to build our Alumni Association! We've recently launched a new Alumni Committee and are looking to grow the connections among our amazing 2,500+ alumni. You can kick off your involvement by making sure that we have your most recent contact information! Contact us at alumni@btgbbmail.org.

A special thanks to all that have stepped up to lead this initiative as part of the Alumni Committee, and to the stellar work of BTGB's FAO Schwarz Fellow, Lauren Hurley.

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News for Breakthrough Supporters December 2019



BREAKTHROUGH BULLETIN

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REACHING MILESTONES



This spring, Breakthrough celebrated a major milestone with the graduation of our founding Boston class. The students who first joined Breakthrough's Boston Campus back in 2013 as 7th graders are now in college and exploring other exciting post-secondary opportunities. As the featured speakers at our annual gala on May 1, 2019, two of these seniors shared the milestones they are most proud of from their six-year Breakthrough journey.

"I discovered a love of literature and creative writing. In my Breakthrough classes, I saw how many perspectives and many kinds of stories can be incorporated into literature. English was not my first language, so when I gained confidence to start telling my own stories, that was a major achievement."

- Adjany, Breakthrough Boston Campus Class of 2019

"I truly believe I would not be in the position I am today if it had not been for Breakthrough. The profound impact they have had on my life has inspired me to one day create my own nonprofit organization for immigrant students."

- Nayeli, Breakthrough Boston Campus Class of 2019

"My Breakthrough community has shown me how important and powerful it can be to have a group of supportive people around you long-term. I am so lucky that this is the group of people that I get to graduate with. This is one milestone of the journey achieved, but we can celebrate the beginning of something new and I am ready to take that next step, together."

- Thens, Breakthrough Boston Campus Class of 2019

You can read and watch reflections from Nayleni and Thens at breakthroughgreaterboston.org/our-stories-3.



INTRODUCING MINDFULNESS IN OUR SUMMER PROGRAM

Research shows that the practice of mindfulness helps children improve attention and emotional regulation, gain a sense of calm in the face of stressors, and develop more compassion for themselves and others.

This summer, Breakthrough introduced a daily mindfulness practice across all three campuses using Inner Explorer, a program that offers a series of daily guided mindfulness sessions.

Every morning before academic classes, students engaged in guided exercises focusing on breathing, awareness, emotional regulation, and compassion. Teachers were trained on mindfulness practice and gained valuable skills and tools to meet the social emotional needs of their students. Mindfulness practice is just one of the many ways that Breakthrough educates the whole child.



NEW PROGRAMMING: STEM VACATION CAMP

Breakthrough's newest STEM program, launched last spring, is our Vacation Week Camp. During the April vacation week, 7th and 8th-grade students engaged in day-long, hands-on experiments and career discussions with scientists at local STEM companies. Somerville students explored molecular structures in 3-D at Celgene, Boston students looked at real tumor cells using a five-headed microscope at Jounce Therapeutics, and Cambridge students experimented using a bench top centrifuge at Moderna. Our students were very excited to don lab coats and use leading edge lab equipment.

STEM partners were impressed by the quality of our students' engagement and their many great questions. STEM Vacation Week Camp was offered as part of Full STEAM Ahead, a year-round Breakthrough program for students in grades 7-8 that offers rigorous academic STEM courses in summer, after school STEAM workshops during the school year, and diverse opportunities for STEM career exposure. The launch of this program is part of Breakthrough's participation in the Biogen Foundation's STAR Initiative. We are grateful to them for their vital support.

EXPANDING BREAKTHROUGH'S REACH

Breakthrough's footprint in Boston continues to grow with the addition of new partner schools. Since originally partnering in 2013 with TechBoston Academy, we have extended our Boston impact to serve five additional schools in Dorchester and Hyde Park: Boston Preparatory

Charter School; Academy of the Pacific Rim; Codman Academy; Neighborhood House Charter School; and New Mission Collegiate Academy. Breakthrough's Boston participants are all highly motivated, high-need students who share the goal of attending college.

