



# 2021 - 2022 ANNUAL REPORT





# Preparing youth to become first-generation college graduates and agents of change in their community.

Dear Friends,

Recently, I asked one of our program graduates, Hanna ('16), about her career in social service. She told me, **"It's important to me to give back because the community has given so much to me. I come from a family that is low-income and without Reality Changers, I wouldn't be where I am today."** (*learn more about Hanna on page 13*)

To hear this sentiment from Hanna warms my heart. At Reality Changers, that's what we are all about: not just helping youth become the first in their families to graduate from college, but also building Agents of Change who will make a difference for others. We know that college degrees create new opportunities for individuals, families, neighborhoods, and communities. So, we're there with our youth every step of the way; getting them to, through, and beyond college.

This past year, we reached the half-way mark in the implementation of our **5-year Strategic Plan**. The overall objective of the plan is to expand and deepen the impact of Reality Changers' programming, creating more first-generation college graduates and agents of change, like Hanna. Despite the unforeseen challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, I am proud to share that we are on-track to meet our 2025 objectives.

Thank you for being a member of our Reality Changers community and for believing in the work we do. We are so fortunate to have people like you in our corner who give back and create change.

Sincerely,

Tamara Y. Craver  
President & CEO

Many milestones from our Strategic Plan are included in this report. Look for the 🎓!

## OUR BOARD

**Board Chair:** Pamela Gabriel  
**Vice Chair:** Steve Ortiz  
**Treasurer:** Veronica Villaseñor  
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**Honorary Board Chair:**  
Vicente Fox

**Honorary Board Chair:**  
Marta Sahagún de Fox





MELANY, REALITY CHANGERS CLASS OF 2025


“Donors are changing our lives. They are helping us so much. Students like me want to go to college but don’t have the money or resources. Reality Changers really pushes us to do what we want to do.”


Melany is a 10th grader at University City High School. She is the youngest of four siblings who have all participated in Reality Changers and attended colleges around the country.


ABOUT US


Just getting underrepresented students into college isn’t enough. Nationally, 90% of first-generation, low-income college students don’t graduate within six years. Reality Changers gets students across the finish line. Our students are 7x more likely to graduate than their similar peers.

THE REALITY CHANGERS MODEL:

- 

**8th Grade - 11th Grade**  
Create a strong foundation of academic, personal, and community-building skills. Grow student support systems in order to increase individual resiliency.  
*Services: tutoring, career & college experiences, parent/family programs, mentorship, community involvement*
- 

**12th Grade**  
Help youth get into the 2- and 4- year institutions that are the best fit for them. Assemble financial resources for college.  
*Services: school research, college application guidance, financial aid and scholarship application help, college preparation*
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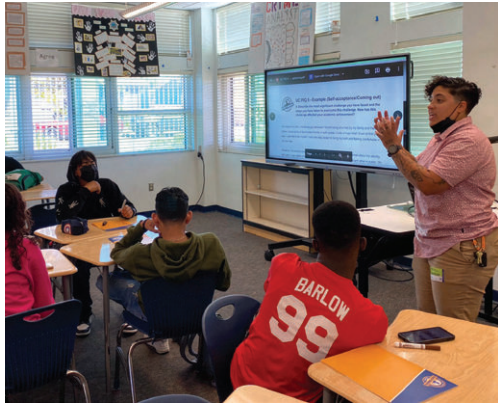
**College**  
Ensure that students have the resources, strategies, and support system they need to graduate from college.  
*Services: 1-on-1 coaching & advising, mentorship, scholarship opportunities, on-campus support, workshops*
- 

**Before & After Graduation**  
Beginning in college, prepare first-generation graduates for real-world success.  
*Services: mentorship, career advising, networking, professional development, grad school support (as needed)*





# PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS



## Junior Achievement of San Diego County

As part of Junior Achievement's in-classroom JA Fellows program, we taught college awareness, readiness, and application curricula to 35 third year students at Lincoln High School. Overall, the program builds student knowledge on the local economy, personal finances, career pathways, and work-readiness. We continue to grow this program to serve more students at more high schools.



## Logan Memorial Educational Campus

We served 104 seventh and eighth graders at Logan Memorial Education Campus in Logan Heights. Two different programs, Agentes de Cambio and College Days, were designed to serve two different youth populations, depending on students' past academic performance. Lessons and activities focused on building skills for high school success and generating college awareness.



## SDSU School of Social Work

Thanks to a partnership with San Diego State University's School of Social Work and Price Philanthropies, Reality Changers hosted an intern from SDSU's Master's of Social Work program. The intern provided on-site mental health services for students & families, including in-person counseling, referrals to outside services, research, and more. This support was essential because our youth were dealing with the lingering mental health effects of the COVID- 19 pandemic.



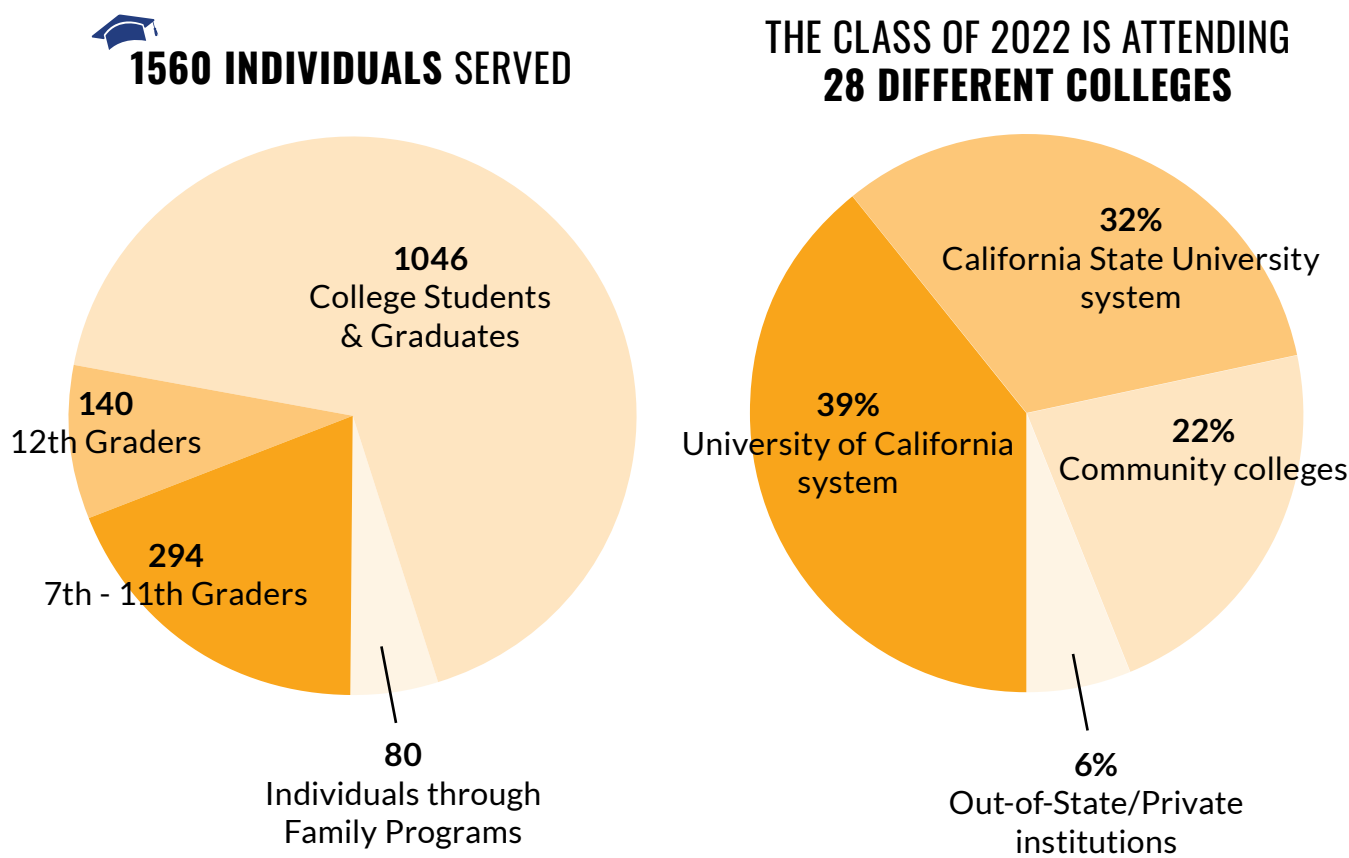
## JEREMY, REALITY CHANGERS CLASS OF 2022

**"Reality Changers is extremely vital for students from my community. It helps you feel like you have a safety line."**

Jeremy joined Reality Changers before his senior year at High Tech High Media Arts. He is currently a first year at UC San Diego, where he is studying Aerospace Engineering.

# HIGHLIGHTS

JULY 1, 2021 - JUNE 30, 2022



PLUS, we hosted college-knowledge assemblies for an additional **258 middle and high school students**.

## AWARDS RECIEVED



Reality Changers was recognized by the Association of Fundraising Professionals San Diego Chapter as the 2021 **Outstanding Organization for Diversity and Inclusion**

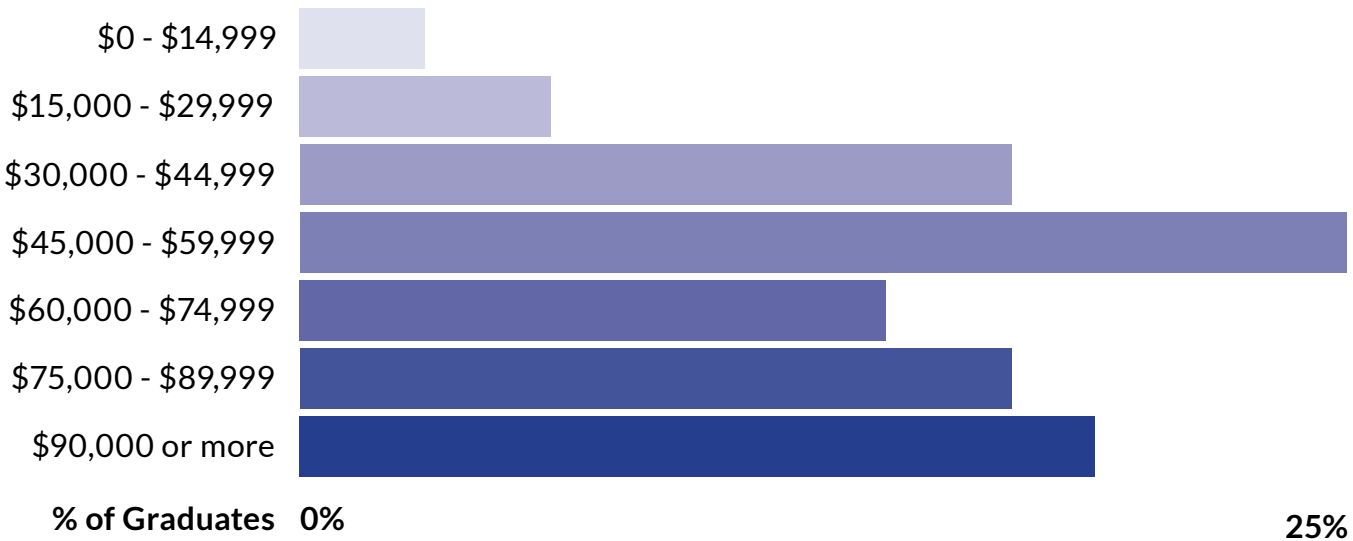


Tamara Craver, Reality Changers President & CEO, was selected as a **San Diego Business Journal CEO of the Year**.



## ALUMNI SALARIES

Reported annual salaries for graduates who are 3-5 years out of college. *Includes part time workers who are continuing their education.*



## STANDOUT NUMBERS

**\$26,765** Average amount of aid (financial aid and scholarships) awarded for the first year of college.

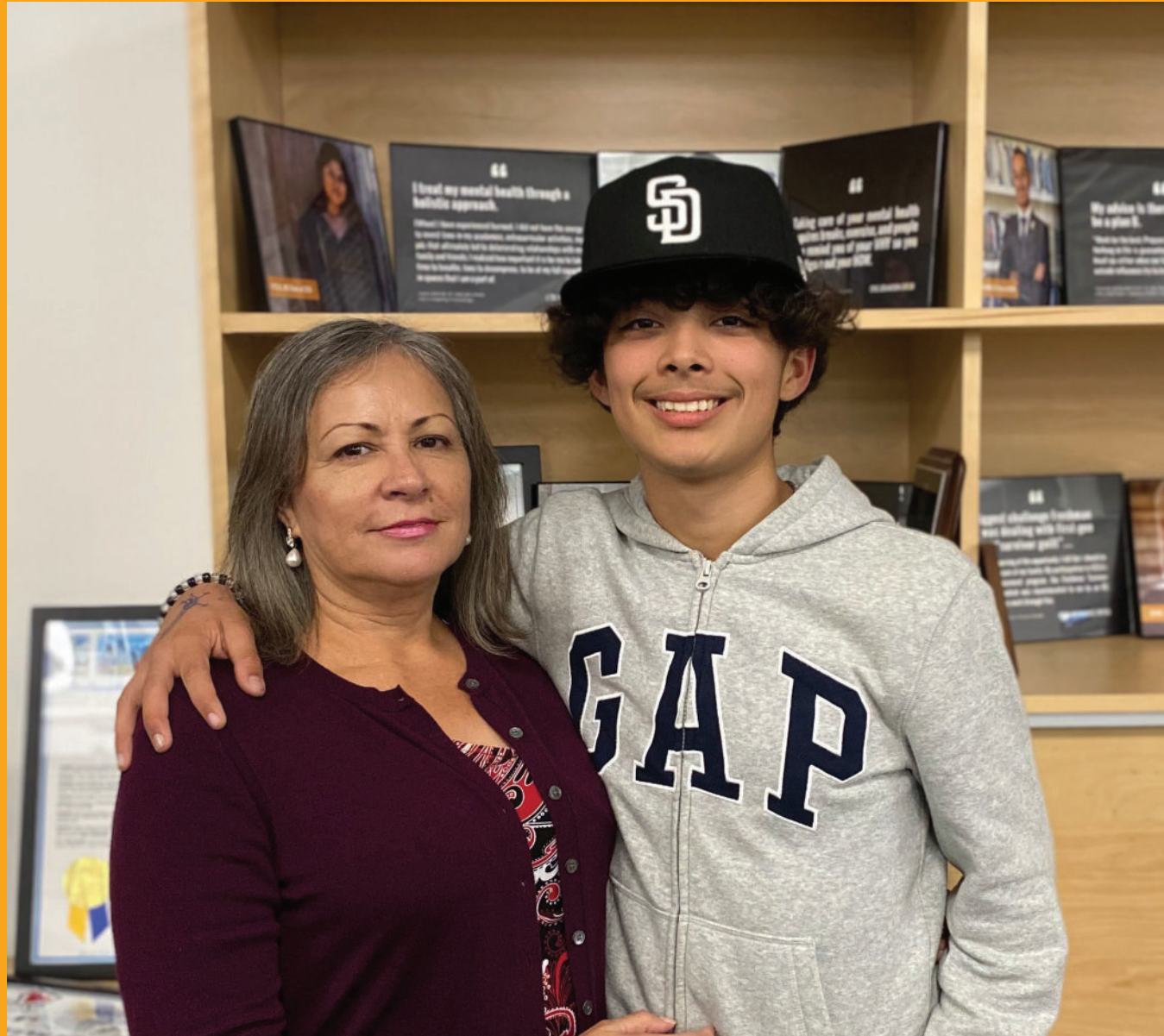
**1030 HOURS** 113 volunteers donated 1030 hours last school year.

## OVER THE EDGE



Reality Changers hosted our first-ever Over The Edge event. 51 supporters each rappelled 30 stories down the side of a building to raise money for first-generation college students.





**ANA, GRANDPARENT & RICKY, REALITY CHANGERS CLASS OF 2025**

**“Reality Changers is not only about helping kids get a good education. It also prepares them for their career. I think it’s important for them to have a great career for a better future.” - Ana**

Ana Cardenas is the Parent Representative on the Reality Changers Board of Directors. She has two grandchildren in the program: Ariana, a third year at Arizona State University, and Ricky, a 10th grader at Patrick Henry High School.



# STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

In 2020, Reality Changers created a 5-year strategic plan to guide decision-making for expanding and deepening our programming. We are currently halfway through the five-year timeline outlined by the plan.

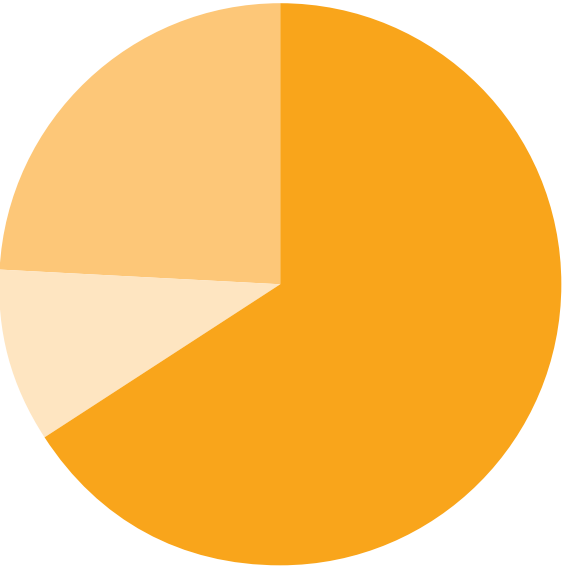
Learn more about our Strategic Plan by visiting [realitychangers.org/about](https://realitychangers.org/about).

2025 GOALS	2022 MILESTONES ACHIEVED
Grow programs to serve the San Diego community and beyond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Initiated 5 new community partnerships to reach new student populations</li><li>• Increased the number of 8-12th grade students served by more than 65%</li><li>• Increased alumni engagement by more than 200%</li></ul>
Strengthen internal capacity and cultivate resources to sustain impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Annual staff and volunteer satisfaction rates are above 85%</li><li>• Redesigned College Town and Alumni Network program delivery models</li><li>• Established an endowment to support Reality Changers</li><li>• Launched peer-to-peer fundraising campaigns to attract new supporters</li></ul>
Leverage experience to advocate for education equity. Amplify diverse stakeholder voices and leverage feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Established Family Advisory Committee and Alumni Advisory Committee</li><li>• Launched annual Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion action plan</li><li>• Staff are actively participating in 10+ local and national workgroups, advisory committees, and leadership boards</li></ul>



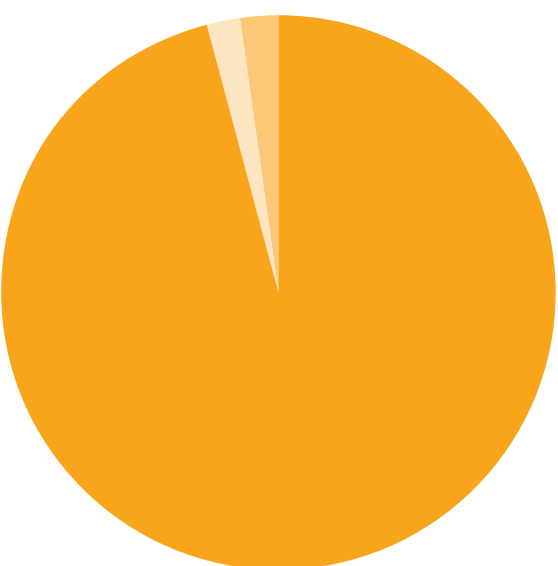
# FINANCIALS

2022 FISCAL YEAR



Expenses = \$2,214,413

- 66% - Program services
- 10% - Management & General
- 24% - Fundraising & Communications\*



Revenue = \$3,039,216

- 96% - Contributions & grants
- 2% - Program service revenue
- 2% - Investment income

*\*Note - Communication expenses, which are included in the fundraising category, support all organization operations; including website and outreach to students, volunteers, and alumni.*



HANNA, REALITY CHANGERS CLASS OF 2016

“Reality Changers helped me, and thousands of individuals like me, to find our way. I am just so grateful that a place like this existed for me and continues to exist for others.”

Hanna graduated from San Diego State University in 2021 and is currently a case worker for PATH, finding permanent housing for people experiencing homelessness. She is concurrently working on her Master’s degree in Child & Family Development at SDSU.



# THANK YOU



Thank you to our 536 donors & peer fundraisers in the '21-'22 fiscal year. The individuals, corporations, and foundations that support Reality Changers make a real difference in the lives of first-generation students whether they are just starting to consider college or they've already graduated and are launching their careers.



Thank you to the 113 volunteers who joined us this past school year. Your donation of time, energy, and expertise models community involvement for our students. Thank you to our Board of Directors, weekly tutors & College Apps Academy volunteers, monthly mentors, parent volunteers, corporate groups, alumni volunteers, and special event volunteers!



# GET INVOLVED



**Volunteer**  
Join us for a one time special event, mentor an early career professional, or help students with their homework.  
**More info:** [realitychangers.org/volunteer](https://realitychangers.org/volunteer)



**Donate**  
Help build another year of success for Reality Changers. Your gift supports all of our programs and help makes college dreams come true.  
**Give online:** [realitychangers.org/donate](https://realitychangers.org/donate)



**Raise Funds Online**  
Fundraise in honor of a loved one, celebrate a special occasion, set up an office team building activity or something else. Whatever your reason, we're ready to help you raise money with resources, tools, and coaching.  
**More info:** [realitychangers.org/peer-fundraising](https://realitychangers.org/peer-fundraising)






**Go Over The Edge**  
Challenge yourself to rappel down the side of the Grand Hyatt San Diego and make a difference for future first-generation college graduates!  
**Learn more:** [realitychangers.org/over-the-edge](https://realitychangers.org/over-the-edge)

## CONTACT

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