Dear Partners Community,

I am pleased to share that I became the new director of The Partners Program last spring, enthusiastically ready to lead this dynamic opportunity for Oakland youth and their teachers and mentors. Prior, I had the great pleasure of being the Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Academics at the Summerbridge Program at San Francisco University High School for six years. My commitment to this work went up another notch when I experienced my first Summer Academy, the 29th year of Partners’s excellence and impact. At a gathering of students and faculty, the energy was palpable: “Let me hear you say… Partners!!!” I heard the motto—loud and clear—and believed. Over the past months I have been listening and learning in order to gain a deeper sense of our shared belief in this robust program. My curiosity led me to the executive summary of a ten-year study by the Harvard Family Research Project, entitled, “Afterschool Programs in the 21st Century: Their Potential and What It Takes to Achieve It.” Their research confirmed that there are three critical levers that help a program reach its potential for desired student outcomes: sustained participation in a program; well-structured, well-implemented, and intentional programming and content; and consistent, dynamic partnerships with schools, communities, and in particular the students’ families.

Partners is hitting these marks and thriving. Our load-bearing programs—Summer Academy, Academic Year Mentoring, and High School Transition—are yielding positive outcomes. Summer Academy had over 90 percent student retention from 2014. Meeting an important goal for us, every middle school student that we tutored during the school year attended the 2015 Summer Academy. The heart and soul of Partners is our authentic engagement and active partnership with you, our community of Oakland students, high school mentors, college interns, faculty and staff, volunteers, and thoughtful funders.

I extend an open invitation to you to see Partners in action—at our local middle schools where we tutor during the school year and during the Summer Academy held at College Prep—to experience our students’ energy, joy, and hard work. Thank you for your support, our shared belief, and our partnership.

Let me hear you say… Partners!!!

Samuel F. Beltran
Director, The Partners Program
Our Programs

SUMMER ACADEMY

Thirty rising 9th graders graduated from our 29th Summer Academy in 2015, earning the cheers of their sixty-three fellow students, mentors, and teachers. Hailing from our three Oakland partner schools—Claremont, KIPP Bridge, and Westlake middle schools—our students filled the College Prep campus, energized and determined. The Academy’s theme was “Resilience,” which aligns with Stanford University psychologist Carol Dweck’s research-based growth mindset: basic skills and abilities can improve and develop through persistence and grit.

Yet again, our student retention rate was over 90 percent and faculty return rate was 80 percent. While attending Summer Academy, students received what is often not possible for them during the school year: small classes (14-16 students) in math, reading, and writing sections; a rich arts immersion with a focus on dance and the visual arts; individualized instruction and support in reading and writing; small groups to hone math skills; daily mentoring and tutoring from high-achieving high school mentors (1 mentor to 3 middle school students); hands-on projects across the curriculum; and extra-curricular activities in science and yearbook staff. New this past summer, we partnered with Food for Thought, a healthy and nutritious lunch program, to fuel our scholars and mentors for their action-packed days.

The heart of the Summer Academy is the student-mentor relationship. Our high school and college-aged mentors build meaningful relationships with our middle-schoolers. Mentors welcome rising 7th graders to the program with open arms and warm hugs; returning 8th graders seek out their mentors from the previous summer; and graduating 9th graders wax nostalgic and rely on their mentors for high school advice and guidance. These deep relationships continue to be about trust, and with trust, our students equip themselves and prepare themselves to soar and take risks. Summer Academy is a safe place for our students and mentors to share their unique selves and aspire to be their very best.

“I have been part of The Partners Program for seven years as both a student and a mentor and I could not be any prouder. The Partners Program has not only influenced the student I am today, but has also impacted the career that I want to pursue in the field of education.”

— Jocelyn Aguayo
Partners alumnae 2010, college intern 2014-15, and sophomore at San Jose State University

Cynthia Geddes Service Award Recipient: Jocelyn Aguayo

“Grounded, humble, and sharp, Jocelyn Aguayo embodies everything we admire in a Partners alum and College Intern. Jocelyn began her Partners journey as a middle school student and continued as a high school mentor and college intern. She is known as the “can-do/go-to mentor,” always working with a calm and steady hand. Jocelyn steers projects forward in an effective and resolute manner with a spirit of collaboration and teamwork. It has been an honor and joy to see Jocelyn grow into such a profoundly amazing young woman and she continues to inspire mentors and students alike to become their best selves. It was our pleasure to present Jocelyn with the Cynthia Geddes Service Award, named in honor of the founder of Partners, for being a model mentor in the 2015 Summer Academy. You have left a lasting impact, Jocelyn, and we can’t wait to see what your future holds!”

— Stefani Berger
Assistant Director for Leadership Development and Mentorship Programs

Jocelyn Aguayo, Cynthia Geddes Service Award winner, receives her award from Stefani Berger, Assistant Director for Leadership and Mentorship Programs.
ACADEMIC YEAR MENTORING

The Academic Year Mentoring program (formerly the Academic Year Middle School Partnership) continued at our academic year partner schools, KIPP Bridge and Westlake Middle School. AYM was the bridge between summers for our students. Each week, our goal was to see approximately thirty middle school students. On a per school basis, our weekly presence included high school tutors, a Site Leader, and a Program Manager to support the students. We maintained a 2:1 student-mentor ratio due to a record number of applications from College Prep high school students who sought to tutor middle school students. Our sessions consisted of tutoring and specialized homework support in all core academic classes—math, reading, science, and writing—with a concentrated focus on math and science.

Our relationship with KIPP Bridge remained consistent and collaborative. Our school liaison at KIPP, Ms. Tamayo, continued in her role as afterschool coordinator. KIPP Bridge school culture aligns well with Partners’s culture, ensuring that the collaboration improves with every year. KIPP Bridge engagement often required the maximum of nine mentors every week due to high demand. During the school year, we tutored and served approximately eighteen students, from fifth through eighth grades, per week on Wednesday afternoons. We also continued mentoring on Tuesdays and Thursdays at Westlake Middle School. Westlake students strived to make significant academic gains during 2014-2015. Partners tutored twelve Westlake students per week working to address foundational gaps in math, English, and science.

HIGH SCHOOL TRANSITION PROGRAM

At Partners we empower our students to dream big and to envision their graduation from college. Their first step, following participation in our tutoring and summer programs, is entrance into their high school of choice. The High School Transition Program helps our students and their families navigate the complex logistical web of the high school admissions process by providing advising, guidance, and support. HSTP completed the 2015 academic year with solid high school matriculation for our rising ninth graders. We offered a series of four workshops with a focus on the application process to the: Oakland Unified School District, independent schools, and parochial schools—plus a final workshop to address any last-minute concerns and details on applications. Workshop leaders created a portfolio of schools for each student that addressed his or her unique educational needs and strengths. The workshop utilized small groups and lectures with a 1:5 ratio of staff to families to ensure students were applying to schools that matched their interests and abilities. To ensure program reach and relevance, Partners also provided at least two staff members who spoke languages other than English. Upon completing the workshops, Partners staff successfully helped to enroll thirty eighth grade students in eleven different high schools.
This fall, Partners embarks on a 5-year Strategic Plan. We are grateful for our planning committee for their leadership, and the greater Partners community for their engagement.

The Partners 5-year Strategic Planning Committee
Jim Gilliland  
Chair of Strategic Planning Committee
Monique DeVane  
Head of School, College Prep
Samuel F. Beltran  
Director of The Partners Program
Kate Freeland
Larry Ricksen
Treva Reid
Shelby Margolin  
Program Manager of The Partners Program

WELCOME NEW STAFF MEMBER

Jessica Poole

Site Leader  
Academic Year Middle School Partnership

Jessica Poole serves as the academic liaison with Westlake Middle School and KIPP Bridge. She brings more than ten years of experience working with youth in the community, in classrooms and afterschool enrichment. Jessica believes that with targeted academic assessments, instruction, and learning support, we can bridge the educational gap for all students who are not currently achieving at their grade level. Jessica’s educational values align with The Partners Program because she believes that academic support tools must be meaningful and data-driven in order to be effective in creating educational equity and social access. She is looking forward to guiding both the College Prep mentors and the middle school mentees as they grow into confident and capable young adults. Jessica is a Program Coordinator for Student Support and Academic Services at St. Mary’s College as well. She received her Bachelor of Science from St. Mary’s College and her Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) from Duke University.

80% Estimated percentage of 2015 Partners students who do not have a parent who went to college.

64% Percentage of 2015 Partners Summer Academy students who qualify for federal free or reduced lunch—$44,000 or less annual income for a family of four.

17 Number of Oakland zip codes represented at Partners.

50 Average number of students tutored weekly in Partners’s afterschool Academic Year Mentoring program at three Oakland middle schools.

95% Percentage of students who agreed strongly that Partners afterschool tutoring has improved homework completion rate and better prepared them for classwork.

$125 The cost for lunch, snack, and beverage for a Partners’s student during the 4-week Summer Academy.

$0 Cost per student to attend Partners.

“I love The Partners Program deeply because it is so difficult. Every day I force myself far out of my comfort zone. I remember to favor patience over judgment, to try things again and again and again, and to listen closely to what my mentees tell me. In exchange I am taught how to respectfully interact with different worlds, cultures, and styles of learning, and I am reminded constantly of how I can improve as a teacher, friend, and human being. Partners, by causing me to reevaluate my previous ideas and beliefs, has upturned my worldview, and I truly believe that I am a much better person for it.”

— Stuti Bansal  
Academic Year Mentor, College Prep student class of 2016
Last year we were proud to partner with two Oakland middle schools—KIPP Bridge and Westlake.
Summer Academy offers opportunities in arts and academics on The College Preparatory School campus.
2014-15 Generous Supporters of Partners
July 1, 2014- June 30, 2015

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Top Dog
Trader Joe’s
Westlake Middle School

Academic Year Middle School Program
KIPP Bridge
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Elizabeth Raji-Greig
Nydia Tamayo

Claremont Middle School
Edana Anderson
Jonathan Mayer

Westlake Middle School
Phyllis Hall
Misha Karigaca
Bryan Massengale
Morgan Schindler

Eagle Village at Westlake Middle School
Dr. Bailey
Lake Merritt Institute

College Prep Book Fair Co-Chairs
Lori Bungarz
Joan Jacobs
Cindy Pierson

NOTE: IS THIS SUPPOSED TO BE HERE??

Summer Academy Field Trip Destinations
Acroyoga
Alameda County Community Food Bank
AT&T Park
Cream Berkeley
Emeryville Martial Arts
GAP/Old Navy
Nieves Cinco de Mayo
Oakland Aviation Museum
Walking Tour Chinatown

Summer Academy Field Trip Drivers
Nida Dantes
Ryan Dooley
Jeremiah Jackson
Alexis LeCount
Godwin Odiye
Jeff Sensabaugh
Linh Tran
Mia Voight
Jonathan Zucker

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Jim Gilliland

Thank You!
We appreciate everyone who generously supported Partners during the 2014-15 year!
A Note from our Chair

Dear Friends,

We live in a rapidly changing world, and Partners continues to evolve and change with it. At Partners, evolution means a more streamlined recruitment and admissions process, better integration of our Academic Year Mentoring component into our middle school afterschool tutoring programs, as well as refinements to our summer schedule and curriculum. We strive constantly to improve the student and mentor experience at all programmatic levels. I am also pleased to announce that our Board of Trustees and staff are working on a Strategic Plan to envision the trajectory of The Partners Program over the next five years. Under the guidance of Board member, Jim Gilliland (former co-chair of the College Prep Board), our 5-year Strategic Planning Committee will be exploring ideas and actions to improve the experience of Partners for our students and their families, our mentors, and Partners faculty and staff while honoring our mission and history.

It is also my great pleasure to thank our foundation, corporate, and individual donors who help Partners impact the lives of deserving and talented young people.

With all of your continued support, our students will thrive on their path to college success and beyond.

Thank you for partnering with us!

Steven Berger
Chair, Board of Trustees

PS: We welcome ideas and suggestions from the Partners community to help make our program the best it can be. Please feel free to contact us at partners@college-prep.org.