A COMMUNITY RISING

2016-2017 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY
ABOUT
SAY YES BUFFALO

Say Yes Buffalo is a landmark partnership that brings together the Buffalo Public School District, parents, the Buffalo Teachers Federation, the Buffalo Association of Administrators and Supervisors, higher education, the City of Buffalo, Erie County, Say Yes to Education, Inc., and a diverse group of Buffalo area corporate, non-profit, and philanthropic organizations to organize people, time, money and resources to provide holistic, year-round support to Buffalo Public School District students throughout their K-12 years and beyond. Say Yes Buffalo and its partners believe every student can graduate high school and college when given the proper supports, resources and opportunities.

Say Yes Buffalo partners facilitate comprehensive supports, including tuition scholarships to one of more than 170 colleges and universities for those who meet residency, graduation and admission requirements. These supports are aligned with what research indicates is needed to enable every child in the program to achieve his or her potential and include:

- Social services and family supports
- After school and summer programming
- Mentoring
- Health care
- Mental health care
- Legal services
- College preparation supports
- College scholarships
- Paid internships

When it was launched in December 2011, Say Yes Buffalo became the second Say Yes chapter to partner with an entire city school district. Other Say Yes chapters are located in Cambridge, MA; Hartford, CT; New York City, NY; Philadelphia, PA; Syracuse, NY; and Guilford County, NC.
# Table of Contents

Letter from the Chair of the Scholarship Board and Executive Director ........................................ 6  
Top Moments of 2016-2017 .............................................................................................................. 8  
Profiles  
Student: Keiara Wilson ................................................................................................................. 14  
Student: Maurice Brown ............................................................................................................... 20  
Donor: Rich Products ....................................................................................................................... 34  
Celebrating 30 Years of Say Yes to Education .............................................................................. 16  
Programs and Supports ................................................................................................................ 18  
  Kindergarten - Grade 12 .............................................................................................................. 18  
  College ........................................................................................................................................ 22  
Impact Dashboard .......................................................................................................................... 24  
Governance .................................................................................................................................... 26  
  Scholarship Board ...................................................................................................................... 26  
  Operating Committee ............................................................................................................... 27  
  Community Leadership Council ............................................................................................... 28  
  Community Task Forces .......................................................................................................... 36  
Staff ................................................................................................................................................ 30  
Ensuring the Future Sustainability of the Say Yes Buffalo Partnership ........................................ 38  
Donors to the Say Yes Buffalo Scholarship Fund ........................................................................... 40
The first Say Yes Buffalo Graduation Gala was held on Friday, May 12, 2017 at the Hyatt Regency Buffalo. The night was truly special, honoring our first four-year college graduating class of scholars and the first five years of Say Yes Buffalo. We celebrated with over 400 guests – including 20 students, their families and our partners (pictured).
LETTER FROM THE
CHAIR OF THE SCHOLARSHIP BOARD
& EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Welcome to Say Yes Buffalo’s 2016/17 Report to the Community!

This past year was a milestone year as we celebrated our first class of four-year college graduates and our five-year anniversary of Say Yes Buffalo. Five years ago, our community came together and decided that we are going to work collectively to improve the outcomes for the next generation of Buffalo’s leaders. Since then, we have helped send over 4,000 students to college; coordinated wraparound supports, at scale, for Buffalo Public School students, as well as programming for our college scholars; raised over $30.5 million to fund scholarships through the Class of 2022 (meeting our 10-year fundraising goal in 5 years) and will launch our campaign to fund a $100 million endowment in 2018. Thank you to our investors and partners who believe in our young people and the future of our community!

From our elected officials, our city’s public school district, businesses and organizations, to the philanthropic community, higher education partners and others, we all have come together to form what we call the “secret sauce” of Say Yes and, in a short time, have achieved something remarkable for our city’s youth. Since launching Say Yes Buffalo, the public school’s graduation rate has increased 15 percentage points. At launch, the rate was at 49%, and four years later the class of 2016 graduated 64%. There is still work to be done, but in over just four classes of graduates, the school district has seen an increase in completion unlike ever before. Also on the rise is the number of students graduating and enrolling into college. Since launch, college enrollment of Buffalo students has increased 8 percentage points to 65% for the class of 2015. More students are going to and completing college since we started this work, and even more significantly, Buffalo Public School students are outperforming their peers in similar districts.
Additional accomplishments of the Say Yes Buffalo Partnership over the past year include:

- Since the Say Yes Buffalo Partnership launched, the number of Schools deemed “In Good Standing” by New York State increased from 11 to 20.
- After School Programs available at every public school beginning in October 2016 with a consistent framework across locations.
- Selected to partner on two new Buffalo Public Schools efforts:
  - Implemented the Community Schools model at 13 schools, making school buildings accessible to the community after school hours and on the weekends with robust programming for students and families with Buffalo Public Schools - 20,000 families participated in Community Schools programming in the first year.
  - Established interactive Parent Centers within four Community Schools with Buffalo Public Schools - 256 Parent Center workshops had attendance of over 5,000 individuals.
- Family Support Specialists embedded in all Buffalo Public schools continued their work with students and families at risk for child welfare/juvenile justice; 2,700 participants’ attendance increased by an average of 5%.
- Expanded the number of school-based mental health clinics to 53 out of 55 school buildings.
- Launched two mobile health units to provide primary health care services at Buffalo Public Schools.

In recognition of the Say Yes Buffalo Partnership’s accomplishments, Mayor Brown has committed an annual contribution of $500,000 to our work, which will be used to support the Preventive Services Program. We are grateful to Governor Andrew Cuomo and state lawmakers for their approval of a $10 million gift to the Say Yes Buffalo Scholarship Fund as part of the Buffalo Billion Phase II. This gift, the largest single gift committed to date, puts us that much closer to reaching our fundraising goals and we are honored by the State’s commitment to our region and its investment in Say Yes Buffalo.

We hope you enjoy reviewing a recap of our most recent activities in the enclosed report. We are proud of the accomplishments of the partnership and look forward to continued gains in the future. As always, none of this work could be done without the support of our investors and partners.

Gratefully,

David Rust
Alphonso O’Neil White
TOP MOMENTS OF 2016-2017

Say Yes Graduation Gala
Say Yes Buffalo celebrated its first class of four-year graduates in the spring of 2017 at its Graduation Gala. The event was attended by more than 400 people and it raised over $40,000 for the Say Yes Buffalo Scholarship Fund! The event was honorarily chaired by Say Yes partners Mayor Byron Brown, Dr. Catherine Collins, Clotilde Dedecker, Bill Joyce, Dr. Barbara Seals-Nevergold, Senator Tim Kennedy, Alphonso O’Neil-White, Assemblywoman Crystal Peoples-Stokes, Stephen Swift and Maria Whyte!

Child and Family Services Partnership
In July of 2016, Child & Family Services of Buffalo was selected for a $3.5 million contract to support the Say Yes School-Based Preventive Program in the Buffalo Public Schools. The contract also establishes Child & Family Services as the human resources, payroll and informational technology provider for all Say Yes Buffalo personnel.

High School Graduation Rates Increases
2016 saw the Buffalo Public Schools high school graduation rate increase for the 4th year in a row. The class of 2016 topped 64%, 15 percentage points higher than the graduation rate at launch of Say Yes Buffalo.
Buffalo Public Schools launch Community Schools and Parent Centers in partnership with Say Yes Buffalo

In the summer of 2016, Say Yes Buffalo was selected to manage the launch of two new efforts for the Buffalo Public Schools: Strong Community Schools and Parent Centers. A Community School is created when public and private partners come together to embed programs and other supports within a school, making it an easily accessible neighborhood hub of information and services. In Buffalo this includes all of the services Say Yes has been rolling out since our inception such as legal clinics, social services supports, mental health clinics and after school and summer programs; plus smaller class sizes for grades K-3; Saturday Academies that provide enrichment activities as well as academic support; Adult Education classes including High School Equivalency training and testing and English as a Second Language for members of the larger community interested in furthering their educations; and resources for parents helping them to better support their children in their pursuit of a quality education. The Strong Community Schools Initiative required Say Yes Buffalo to hire 12 new staff to implement Community Schools within 13 buildings around the district. The second effort, the Parent Centers, serve as “welcome centers” for parents and one-stop-shops for information about every aspect of their child’s education and the services available to them through the school district and new Community Schools Initiative. Further, the Parent Centers are a warm and inviting place for parents to come, meet with teachers and each other, use the computer lab, fax and copier and to participate in Adult Education and other programs.

City of Buffalo Increases Support of Say Yes Buffalo

At the 2017 State of the City, Mayor Byron Brown announced the city’s commitment of $500,000 to Say Yes Buffalo in support of the School-Based Preventive Program. Say Yes Buffalo school-based staff implement a preventive program for the students and families in their school building with the goal of getting the students on track for academic success. The city’s commitment pairs with Erie County’s funding of the program, allowing the program to exist in all 55 public school buildings.
Buffalo Public School’s College Career Institute students now eligible for Say Yes Buffalo scholarships

In 2016, the Say Yes Buffalo Scholarship Board updated its guidelines so that students who attend and complete the Buffalo Public Schools Adult Education Career Collegiate Institute (CCI) and the TASC™ (Test Assessing Secondary Completion, formerly the GED) are now eligible for Say Yes Buffalo scholarships. The Career Collegiate Institute managed by Buffalo Public Schools Adult Education Division is an intense learning program for students ages 17-21. CCI provides students with preparation classes for taking and passing the TASC™ exam and for entrance into community college.

The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation funds work on Early Childhood Development

The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation has committed funds to Say Yes Buffalo to support the early development of Buffalo children birth to 5 years of age. Working in partnership with the Help Me Grow WNY initiative, Say Yes Buffalo will use a proven model to strengthen families’ protective factors and connect them with resources that help children develop on track and meet key pre-kindergarten readiness milestones.

Two new efforts launch to improve outcomes

- The Greater Buffalo Racial Equity Roundtable, a Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo initiative, which includes more than 30 community leaders from private, nonprofit, and faith institutions, convened to advance racial equity, has identified Say Yes Buffalo as the organization to lead the narrative change for the City of Buffalo’s boys and young men of color.
- As a member of the Executives’ Alliance to Expand Opportunities for Boys and Men of Color, Say Yes Buffalo will elevate the issues surrounding equity for boys and young men of color in Buffalo and work in collaboration with the community to address and remove barriers.
Afterschool programming made available for all Buffalo Public School students

The 2016-17 school year saw afterschool programming made available at all Buffalo Public Schools. Students in Buffalo Public Schools grades K-12 were able to take part in afterschool activities Monday – Friday for two hours each day. As part of Superintendent Dr. Kriner Cash’s New Education Bargain, extended school day and year has been made a top priority in the district. Say Yes Buffalo has partnered with Buffalo Public Schools to implement afterschool and summer programming since 2015.

Nadia DelValle (Moore) joins Say Yes to Education National Team as Program Director

In her new role, Nadia is responsible for bringing lessons learned in creating the Say Yes Buffalo Partnership to other cities that want to create similar opportunities for their young people.
Senator Kennedy partnered with Say Yes to Launch “Dorm Room” drive to assist scholars heading to college

In 2016, Senator Tim Kennedy launched his first annual “Dorm Room Survival Kit” drive, aimed to help equip Say Yes Scholars with basic college essentials such as laundry, kitchen and personal care items and school supplies. As some of our students prepare to pursue a higher education, they face extreme poverty and even homelessness. Senator Kennedy’s decision to host this drive helped send scholars into their first semesters fully prepared, both inside and outside the classroom.

Thanks to the city-wide collection efforts of Senator Kennedy’s office, nearly 100 students headed to college in 2016 with necessary supplies to transition to dorm life.

Annual “Countdown to College” seminars prepare students for the transition to campus life

Say Yes Buffalo held the first annual “Countdown to College,” an event designed to help graduating seniors transition to college in June 2016 and again in June 2017. The two-day seminars were held at WNED studios and students participated in various workshops, including “understanding a syllabus,” “managing time and priorities,” “handling tough situations,” and more. In addition to workshops, students heard from a panel of current college students on their experiences and a panel of faculty from various area colleges and universities.

Right: Senator Tim Kennedy announces city-wide “Dorm Room” drive to provide scholars with college essentials
Keiara Wilson always knew her destiny included completing her college education. From a young age, Keiara’s mother nurtured her self-discovery and inquisitive nature as her aspirations varied widely through the years, from being an artist to a writer to even a WNBA basketball star.

Keiara credits her mother’s endless love, support and protection for her being the successful woman she is today. At the age of three, Keiara was put into foster care where she spent the early years of her life until being adopted by her mother at the age of eight.

With the support of her family and mentors along the way, Keiara did not let life’s circumstances stand in the way of her potential. In 2013, Keiara graduated valedictorian from the Buffalo Academy of Science Charter School and this past spring, she graduated from the University at Buffalo with a Bachelor’s Degree in Psychology, concentrating in child development, and a minor in Business Administration.

Keiara is a proud member of the first class to receive Say Yes Buffalo scholarships and has been a Say Yes Ambassador since the program’s inception.

In May 2016, Keiara began her first professional internship with BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York through the Say Yes Buffalo Internship Program. Keiara was a star in the position, and credits the experience as Community Relations Intern as inspiration to pursue her dreams. She participated in the Internship Program again in the summer of 2017 when she interned at Walsh Duffield.

One of Keiara’s favorite mottos is “What good is an option and opportunity if you do not have awareness? What good is awareness if you do not have access?” For Keiara, “Say Yes has bridged these gaps, aiding in the access and awareness of these opportunities and even providing options throughout our community.”

Keiara stated “Being a Say Yes Scholar means going above and beyond mediocre work and behavior. It means people are rooting for me to achieve my goals and greatness. Say Yes is so much more than a scholarship. It is the resource our community needs to strengthen and build ourselves.” Keiara is currently furthering her education at the University at Buffalo, where she is pursuing a Master’s Degree in Social Work and Business Administration.

Right: Keiara Wilson, University at Buffalo ’17, and proud member of the first class to receive Say Yes Buffalo scholarships
OFFERING OUR THANKS AND CELEBRATING
30 YEARS OF SAY YES TO EDUCATION

The Say Yes Buffalo Partnership would not be where it is today without the vision of George Weiss, founder of Say Yes to Education, and the leadership of Say Yes to Education Chief Executive Officer Mary Anne Schmitt-Carey and President Eugene Chasin.

Thirty years ago, Say Yes to Education was founded by money manager George Weiss, who promised to prepare 112 Philadelphia sixth graders for college, and to pay their college tuition if they graduated high school. Since that time, through the ongoing support and generosity of George, and the leadership of Mary Anne and Gene, the Say Yes movement has grown to help communities across the United States make a similar commitment to every public high school student. Currently there are Say Yes chapters in Harlem, NY; Syracuse, NY; Buffalo, NY; Philadelphia, PA; and Guilford County, NC. More than 140,000 students and their families are receiving services, supports and scholarships to ensure they are able to earn a postsecondary degree.

In recognition of Say Yes to Education’s milestone 30th Anniversary, on behalf of Say Yes Buffalo’s staff, partners, students and families, we would like to offer our sincere thanks for the efforts of George, Mary Anne and Gene. Their support has helped us build a community partnership that can support all 44,000 public and charter school students here in Buffalo so that they can graduate high school and earn a postsecondary degree, and in turn strengthen the overall Western New York economy. We could not be more grateful for their time, dedication, passion and support.

George, Mary Anne and Gene: Buffalo thanks you!
PROGRAMS AND SUPPORTS:

K-12

Summer Camp
Free community-based summer camps are offered to Buffalo Public School students grades kindergarten through sixth through a joint partnership with Buffalo Public Schools, Say Yes Buffalo and the City of Buffalo. In 2016 the program expanded from four to six weeks with 55 sites serving 2,116 students. A typical camp day consists of an academic component that reinforces school-year lessons plus an enrichment component to expand students’ exposure to leadership, arts, culture and other activities.

NYGEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs)
Say Yes Buffalo is proud to be a part of a local partnership funded through this federal initiative designed to increase the number of students who are prepared to succeed in college. Led by the University at Buffalo Graduate School of Education, NYGEAR UP staff work at ten Buffalo Public Schools to help 570 eighth graders envision and plan their paths to college. Activities include parent workshops, college tours, counseling support, mentoring, tutoring, planning for high school and college, and an academic summer program.

FAFSA Completion Project
Led by the University at Buffalo, the FAFSA Completion Project provides one-on-one support to students and families as they navigate the college financial aid process. The program continues to see increases in the number of students and families helped year after year. The program places volunteer financial aid experts at every Buffalo public and charter high school to help families complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), New York State Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) application, and the Say Yes Buffalo Scholarship application.

Say Yes to College Workshop Series
Free workshops are held monthly to help demystify the college and financial aid application processes for high school students by exploring topics such as The College Application Process, Essay Writing, Standardized Tests, Scholarships, Financial Aid, Self-Advocacy Skills, College 101 and Making the Transition from High School to College. Workshops are led by Say Yes staff and representatives from many of our higher education partners and attract an average of 40 students per workshop.
Mental Health Clinics
By January 2018 mental health clinics will be available in all Buffalo public school buildings. Services are provided by licensed clinical mental health professionals, and are billed to the student’s health insurance (for example, private insurance or Medicaid) to help students address any social-emotional issues that may be preventing them from being successful at home or in the classroom. Common symptoms include depression, anger and anxiety. During the 2016-2017 school year more than 4,000 students received services through these clinics.

Family Support and Social Services
Say Yes Buffalo school-based staff – Family Support Specialists (FSS) – are located at all 55 Buffalo Public Schools. In partnership with Erie County’s Department of Social Services, they are responsible for working with students who demonstrate poor attendance or behavior problems to help them get back on track. This can include connecting students and their families to health, mental health, after school and basic needs programs, providing individual and group mentoring for the student and/or family, and assisting families with navigating school processes including registration, enrollment and parent-teacher conferences. One of the primary goals of this program is to increase student attendance, and to date there has been a five-percentage-point increase in attendance for those students engaged in the program. In addition, it is estimated that the program successfully diverted 400 students from entering the juvenile justice or child welfare systems.

Legal Clinics
Free legal advice is available to all Buffalo Public School students and families on non-criminal matters year-round at any one of our six school-based legal clinic locations. Clinics are open four days per week during the school year and two days per week during the summer at a year-round Adult Education site and at a sixth summer-only location housed within the Buffalo Public School District’s Central Registration Office. Advice is provided by attorneys from local law firms and coordinated by our partners at the Erie County Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Project. During the past year more than 1,100 family members have received help through this service and more than 100 attorneys volunteered their time and expertise.
MEET
MAURICE BROWN

To better support high school students with at-risk behavior demonstrated in school by disrupting classes and low attendance, Say Yes worked with Erie County to expand its School-Based Preventive Program. The new extension, called the Youth Engagement and Supports (YES) program, was piloted at Burgard and Riverside High Schools as well as at the Academy Alternative School.

Maurice Brown was one of the first students to participate in the program. At the time he was a 15-year-old student at Burgard High School. The school’s Student Support Team referred him to the Family Support Specialist Tereka Baltimore and the YES program after his fifth write up, because of the severity of those offenses and because of his regular presence on the school’s chronically absent list.

In meeting with Maurice and his father Mr. Brown, who, she learned was raising him alone, Ms. Baltimore began by first helping to uncover the underlying causes for why Maurice was acting out both at home and in school. Mr. Brown welcomed the supports offered by Ms. Baltimore and Say Yes, sharing his concerns that “Maurice was hanging with the wrong crowd” and that “if he doesn’t change his behavior I fear he will soon end up in jail or dead.”

One month later, despite the relationship that Ms. Baltimore was able to build with him and his active engagement in the YES program, Maurice was arrested for involvement in an armed robbery. Despite this set-back and facing a five year prison sentence, during the two-month period until Maurice’s first scheduled court appearance, Ms. Baltimore and Mr. Brown worked with him to build on the positive behavior and actions he had begun demonstrating. During this time Maurice attended school every day and began to make significant improvements with his academics. He also started to think about what he wanted for his future and the paths to get there.

At his first court appearance the Judge was impressed with the progress he had made over the previous two months and put off sentencing in favor of a second court appearance in another two months to review his progress. On Maurice’s second court date, after he shared the continued progress and growth he had made, the judge granted Maurice three years’ probation instead of jail time.

Today, instead of serving a five-year prison term Maurice is passing all his classes, has an excellent attendance record and is completing the necessary steps to enlist into the Marines.
PROGRAMS AND SUPPORTS: COLLEGE

Summer Success Academies
To support students as they transition to college, Say Yes Buffalo partners with three local colleges to provide our Summer Success Academies. Open to students matriculating to Erie Community College, Buffalo State College and Medaille College, each program is tailored to address potential barriers to student success prior to the students beginning their first semester of college. As an added incentive, students who participate in the programs have the opportunity to be paid for their work through a partnership with the Mayor’s Summer Youth Employment Program. To date more than 300 students have participated in these programs and early data shows they are persisting better than their peers.

Scholar Mentoring Program
In partnership with Compeer of Greater Buffalo, the Say Yes Scholar Mentoring Program matches high school seniors and current Say Yes Scholars with volunteer mentors. The program provides guidance and support to our scholars, many of whom are the first in their families to go to college, as they make the sometimes difficult transition to college. Matches are made based on similar interests, career aspirations and preferences of both participants. To date more than 100 students have been matched with a mentor and those students who participate in the program are persisting at a higher rate (80%) than those without a mentor (74%).

Left: Potential mentors and mentees “speed matching” while current participants of the program took part in a painting activity
Right: Mentees in the Scholar Mentoring Program after taking part in a college simulation, experiencing what it’s like to be a college student
Internship Program
In partnership with the Buffalo Niagara Partnership and the Western New York Association of College Career Centers (WNYACCC), the Say Yes Buffalo Internship Program launched in Summer 2016 to provide paid summer employment opportunities for Say Yes Scholars. Local employers provide opportunities that are a minimum of 10 weeks, 20 hours per week and $10 per hour. In the pilot year 13 interns were placed at 8 different employers (BlueCross BlueShield, Wegmans, Roswell Park Cancer Institute, Darwin Martin House, Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, Buffalo Niagara Partnership, Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo, and Say Yes Buffalo). Placed interns attended a one-day professional skills workshop at Hillside to help prepare them for their internships, and a wrap up session was held just prior to the summer program conclusion to collect feedback from interns and their employers. Sixteen interns were placed in the Summer 2017 program; new employers to hire interns include Walsh Duffield Insurance and Rich Products. A resume and interview skills workshop was provided by Select One for students interested in the Internship Program.

Ambassador Program
A leadership program for our current Say Yes Scholars, the Ambassador Program provides opportunities for our college students to network, participate in workshops on topics like public speaking and professional skills, and speak and represent Say Yes at community events and in our communication vehicles. A new class of Ambassadors is accepted each year – this year’s cohort totals 24 - and scholars must submit an application to be accepted into the program. Our Ambassadors mentor their peers on their college campuses and help to inform and educate the community on the efforts of the Say Yes Partnership.

Scholars who participated in the Say Yes Internship Program at the end of summer recap lunch

Say Yes Ambassadors with Say Yes staff Allison Newman and Emily Wyckoff celebrating the conclusion of the 2016 program year
IMPACT DASHBOARD

The Say Yes Buffalo Impact Dashboard is a collection of data points that the Say Yes Buffalo Partnership identified collaboratively to measure the impact of their work. Individual data points are updated annually as data becomes available at SayYesBuffalo.org.

BUFFALO PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

- Black or African American: 48%
- Hispanic or Latino: 19%
- White: 9%
- Multiracial: 3%
- American Indian or Alaska Native: 1%
- Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander: 20%

Of students are English Language Learner/Limited English Proficient. (2015-2016)

82% Of students receive free or reduced lunch. (2015-2016)

15% Of students are English Language Learner/Limited English Proficient. (2015-2016)

DISTRICT ENROLLMENT

Nationally, since 2012, postsecondary enrollments have decreased overall by 4.4% and in New York State they have dropped by 2.1%. But in Buffalo, the overall number of students who enrolled in postsecondary has increased.

PUBLIC SCHOOL GRADUATION AND MATRICULATION RATES

FROM 49% TO 64%

15 percentage point increase in high school graduation rate since the launch of Say Yes Buffalo (2012-2016)

FROM 57% TO 65%

8 percentage point increase in postsecondary enrollment rate since the launch of Say Yes Buffalo (2012-2016)

Sources include: New York State Department of Education, Federal Student Aid, Buffalo City School District Report Cards, Buffalo Public School district and The National Student Clearinghouse.
In addition to monitoring the outcomes stated in the Impact Dashboard, Say Yes is also committed to regular evaluation of the programs it supports. Below are sample outcomes from the 2016-2017 year.

**Preventive Services Program**

+ 5% **INCREASE IN ATTENDANCE**

for students who received services

- **108 scholar participants**
- **95% matriculated to college**
- **80% persisted from Year 1 to Year 2 of college**
  (Compared to 65% and 74% for all Say Yes Buffalo Scholars)

- **2,400 students** had the opportunity to participate in free 6 week camps

- **500 family members** received help
- **73 local attorneys** volunteered services

**Mental Health Clinics**

Served **4,535 individuals** in 2016

**Legal Clinics**

**SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

Goes toward student scholarships

*an additional 16 million committed to the scholarship (after 2022)

**Operational Budget (2016-2017)**

82% Program Personnel and Associated Costs

18% Administrative Office Operations, Personnel and Associated Costs

**Fafsa completions**

FAFSA completions

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**Financial Data**

Say Yes Buffalo Scholarships are funded by donations from private individuals, families, businesses and foundations.

Say Yes Buffalo programs and operations are funded through a grant from Say Yes to Education, Inc. and matching dollars from public and private partners including the City of Buffalo, Erie County, Buffalo Public School District, The Buffalo Niagara Partnership and the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo.
GOVERNANCE

2016 SCHOLARSHIP BOARD MEMBERS

The Say Yes Buffalo Scholarship Board focuses on fundraising and policy related to the program’s scholarships. This board is comprised of private individuals who are volunteering their time to raise the funds needed to provide the Say Yes Buffalo Scholarship in perpetuity. Scholarship Board members also determine eligibility and administrative guidelines and advocate on behalf of the program.
2016 OPERATING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Say Yes Buffalo Operating Committee meets every three weeks to monitor progress and ensure stability of programs. This body is comprised of city officials, County Commissioner of Social Services, parent leaders, the Board of Education, Superintendent, teachers’ and administrators’ union presidents, higher education officials and leaders from the region’s two largest private foundations.

CRYSTAL BOLING-BARTON
President, Buffalo Council of School Supervisors & Administrators

OTIS T. BARKER, SR.
Deputy Commissioner, City of Buffalo

DR. KRINER CASH
Superintendent, Buffalo Public Schools

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2016 COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP COUNCIL CO-CHAIRS

The Say Yes Buffalo Partnership gets much of its strength from the collaborative governance bodies that govern and guide its work. At the top of the structure is the Say Yes Buffalo Community Leadership Council, which is chaired by the Mayor, Deputy Erie County Executive, President of the Board of Education, the New York State Department of Education Regent, New York State Senator and New York State Assemblyperson for our region and the Say Yes Buffalo Scholarship Board Chair. This body meets six times per year (three times privately, three times publicly) to tackle barriers to the work of Say Yes Buffalo, share updates on the partnership’s overall progress and provide opportunities for public input and dialogue. Membership in the Council itself is comprised of more than 60 local, state and federal elected officials, business and community leaders, parents, teachers and administrators (including union leaders).

HON. MAYOR BROWN
City of Buffalo

DR. CATHERINE COLLINS
New York State Board of Regents

HON. TIM KENNEDY
New York State Senate

ALPHONSO O’NEIL-WHITE
Say Yes Buffalo Scholarship

HON. CRYSTAL D. PEOPLES-STOKES
New York State Assembly

DR. BARBARA SEALS-NEVERGOLD
Buffalo Board of Education

MARIA WHYTE
Erie County
THANK YOU TO OUR FORMER GOVERNANCE AND TASK FORCE MEMBERS

THE SAY YES BUFFALO PARTNERSHIP IS GRATEFUL TO THOSE INDIVIDUALS WHO SERVED WITH OUR LEADERSHIP BODIES AND COMMUNITY TASK FORCES AND STEPPED DOWN IN 2016:

JIM SAMPSON
Former President of the Buffalo Board of Education and Say Yes Buffalo Operating Committee

JACK QUINN
Former President of Erie Community College and Say Yes Buffalo Operating Committee

REV. DENNIS LEE
Pastor of Hopewell Baptist Church and Former co-chair of Religious Leaders Task Force
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Abdi-Kani Aden
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Amanda Brown
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Magnet School

Amedria Byrd
McKinley High School

Johanna Caplan
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Lovejoy Discovery School

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Early Childhood Center #82

Aungalique Wallace
North Park Academy

Ashley Watson
Riverside Institute of Technology
31
SAY YES BUFFALO
•
2016-2017 Report to the Community

Community School Navigators David Cobb and Edreys Wajed
with Family Support Specialists Aaron Jackson, Dereka Newsome,
Tabatha Lumley, Kissena Frazier and LaShawn Brown
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David Cobb
Marva J. Daniels Futures Preparatory School

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Herman Badillo Bilingual Academy

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Bennett Campus

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Lafayette Community Campus

Prenessia Sadler Lambert
East High School

Ruqayyah Simmons
North Park Academy

Edreys Wajed
Lovejoy Discovery School

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Director of Development and Strategic Partnerships

Community School Navigators Zéna Ntiranyibagira and Sandra McAdory
Family Support Specialist Supervisors LeRondra Byrd and Sylvia Lloyd with Family Support Specialist Danielle Maurice
MEET
RICH PRODUCTS

One of Rich Products’ core values is cultivating the next generation of leaders in Buffalo, and one way that Rich’s demonstrates this commitment is through its continued support of Say Yes Buffalo. In the past few years, the partnership between Rich Products and Say Yes has grown to take on many forms. In addition to being major donors to the Say Yes Buffalo Scholarship Fund, Rich’s has also served as a key partner in the mentorship program, provided summer internship opportunities for college scholars, and shared their atrium with Say Yes for special events.

Rich’s associate, Kara Burke, has taken an especially active role in fostering Rich’s support for Say Yes mentoring. After learning about Say Yes a couple years ago, Burke was amazed by their holistic approach to youth development. In fact, upon the launching of the Say Yes mentorship program two years ago, she decided to join and encouraged many other Rich’s associates to make the same commitment.

Since then, Rich’s associates have been able to provide unique benefits to their Say Yes mentees and interns. In reflecting on her experiences, Burke said, “We’ve really been able to leverage some of the tools that we use in the workplace to help with our mentees. For example, a couple times of year we organize a broader mentor/mentee event. Last year we did a corporate exercise called StrengthsFinder, which ended being very applicable to college students as they try to figure out their major or what classes to take.” Burke has found the Say Yes program very rewarding and has developed a strong bond with her mentee, Kayla Ward. “We used the program guidelines to help shape the first few interactions,” said Burke. “Now, we’re just a part of each other’s lives.”

Shelby Connors is a Say Yes scholar at the University of Buffalo and one of Rich’s summer 2017 interns. She described her experience as “phenomenal,” and shared that her time at Rich’s has given her tools that she will carry with her for many years to come. “It’s just such a great opportunity to take what you learn in the classroom and actually put it to use,” said Connors. “It’s one thing to learn it in a lecture hall, but it’s another thing to be able to turn it into a project and actually experience what you’re learning.”

For members of both Say Yes and Rich Products, the incredible partnership comes down to shared values of family, education, and leadership. Connors explained that through her internship at Rich’s she has truly felt “like family.” She reflected, “Every day I feel like I can handle whatever’s given to me because I know I have the support from everyone that I’m working with.” And, Burke knows that Rich’s associates will continue to support Say Yes since it mirrors the collaborative approach long valued by the corporation. “Say Yes is about providing a comprehensive approach to education, and that takes the support of the entire community.”
COMMUNITY TASK FORCES

To directly engage local stakeholders in the different areas where the Say Yes Buffalo Partnership is focused on strengthening outcomes, a group of community Task Forces was created. Today there are eight Task Forces working on behalf of Buffalo students focused on a range of issues including early childhood education, leveraging relationships in the religious community to reach Buffalo families, and racial equity for boys and young men of color. Each Task Force is led by volunteers from the community and staffed by a member of the Say Yes Buffalo administrative team.

BIRTH TO THIRD GRADE

Mission
Strengthen Pre-K programs so that students are ready to succeed in Kindergarten

Chaired by
Anne Ryan, Read to Succeed Buffalo; Jessica Sipes, Buffalo Public School District

BUSINESS COUNCIL

Mission
Create a talent pipeline that connects Say Yes Buffalo Scholars to meaningful internship and career opportunities with Western New York employers

Chaired by
Bob Orrange, Western New York Association of College Career Centers

LEGAL TASK FORCE

Mission
Link Buffalo Public School families to free and affordable legal services for non-criminal matters

Chaired by
Robert Elardo, Esq, Erie County Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Project; Hon. Judge Hugh Scott, U.S. Magistrate Court Judge
Mental Health Task Force

Mission
Improve access to mental health services for Buffalo Public School students

Chaired by
John Greico and Lynn Karczmarowski, Erie County Department of Mental Health

Postsecondary Pathways

Mission
Improve access to postsecondary options for Buffalo’s students

Chaired by
Dr. Nathan Daun-Barnett, University at Buffalo

Primary Health

Mission
Increase access to primary healthcare services for Buffalo Public School students and families

Chaired by
Dr. Gale Burstein, Erie County Health Commissioner; Paul Hogan, The John R. Oishei Foundation

Religious Leaders

Mission
Increase information sharing of Say Yes Buffalo programs and services to Buffalo students and families through congregational outreach

Chaired by
Rev. Tommie Babbs, Thankful Baptist Church; Rev. Chan-Tell King-Beckwith, Saint Luke AME Zion Church

Leaders of Color

Mission
Support Say Yes and Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo’s racial equity work for boys and young men of color

Chaired by
Rev. George Nicholas, Lincoln Memorial United Methodist Church; Rev. Rachelle Robinson, Deep Wells Ministries
ENSURING THE FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE SAY YES BUFFALO PARTNERSHIP

In December 2011, when our city was announced as the second “Say Yes City,” we received a funding and technical support grant from Say Yes to Education, Inc. in the amount of $15 million. These dollars, separate from our Scholarship Fund, were meant to support the creation and implementation of the Say Yes Partnership and its programs in Buffalo during its first five years. The expectation being that after five years the Partnership would be well-established and its programmatic and operating costs fully absorbed by local funders.

With this in mind, from day one, Say Yes Buffalo’s leadership has been focused on building the funding relationships necessary to sustain the long-term work of our Partnership. As we begin our sixth year of work we are pleased to share that due to this planning, Say Yes Buffalo partners have absorbed almost 90% of the Partnership’s operations and programs.

Critical to reaching this goal has been the engagement and commitment of Erie County, the City of Buffalo, Buffalo Public Schools and local foundations like the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo, the John R. Oishei Foundation and the Tower Foundation. Collectively over the past five years, these entities have re-allocated more than $16 million to support our Partnership’s collaborative efforts.

Looking ahead to the coming fiscal year, the number one priority of our organization is to secure the final dollars of a “local match” necessary to fully sustain our school-based preventive program. Historically Say Yes to Education has provided the matching funds required to access a line of funding from New York State that funds a staff person in every school building dedicated to 1:1 case work and support for our district’s students in families with the most needs. Over the past couple of years the City of Buffalo has begun to assume these costs and has committed to doing more.

In addition, because of the progress and achievements of our chapter thus far, the board of Say Yes to Education, Inc. has approved an annual grant moving forward to cover the basic operational and administrative functions of the Partnership in the amount of $1.4 million.
Say Yes Buffalo Programs that are 100% funded & sustainable:

OPERATIONS/ADMINISTRATION:
- Development/fundraising for scholarship fund
- Partnership governance
- Administrative staff

Sustainable Funding Sources:
- Anonymous Donor
- Say Yes to Education, Inc.

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL/PHYSICAL SUPPORTS:
- Mental Health Clinics
- Mobile Health Unit
- Boys and Men of Color Initiative
- Early Childhood Program

Erie County
- Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo
- Buffalo Public Schools
- The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation

Early Childhood Program:
- School-based preventive program (Family Support Specialists)
- Buffalo Public Schools
- Buffalo Public Schools
- Say Yes to Education, Inc.

SCHOOL DAY:
- Summer Camp
- After School
- Community Schools & Parent Centers
- College Access

Buffalo Public Schools
- Buffalo Public Schools
- Buffalo Public Schools
- Say Yes to Education, Inc.

Programs that still require sustainable funding:

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL/PHYSICAL SUPPORTS:
- School-based Preventive Program (Family Support Specialists)

New York State
- Erie County
- City of Buffalo
- Say Yes to Education, Inc.

Legal Clinics
- Say Yes to Education, Inc.

Top to bottom: Partners and families come together at announcement of Early Childhood Program. Outreach for Boys and Men of Color Initiative youth participants. Community Leadership Council Meeting.
OUR DONORS

Thank you to the individuals, families, foundations, businesses and organizations that have made gifts to fund annual Say Yes college scholarships for public and charter school students in Buffalo.

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New Hope Community Center,
New Life World Harvest Restoration Center
New Mt. Ararat Temple of Prayer
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The support of our partners is critical to the success of the Say Yes Buffalo model - we thank you!