During the school year, my Minds Matter mentors were a constant source of support, especially when I was overwhelmed and stressed about college applications. They let me know that I am good enough when I don’t feel like I am. To know that I have people outside of my family that support me and want to see me succeed has given me the motivation to keep pushing myself. I want to make them – and myself – proud.”

-Nancy
Minds Matter NYC Class of 2015
Wheaton College Class of 2019
Dear Friends,

The 2015-2016 year has been an exciting one for Minds Matter. We welcomed our 13th chapter in Detroit, which began serving students in fall 2016. We were named the US Beneficiary for the prestigious 100 Women in Hedge Funds organization. Internally, we created and began implementing a three-year strategic plan focused on refining our infrastructure and on spreading the word about the important work we do at Minds Matter.

This year, Minds Matter chapters nationwide served 667 students with an average GPA of 3.81 and an average family income of less than $25,000 – just below the federal poverty line. Our Washington, D.C. chapter welcomed its very first class of sophomores, and our Seattle chapter graduated its first class of Minds Matter alumni.

Minds Matter seniors across the country became Posse Scholars, Questbridge Scholars, and Gates Millennium Scholars. They accepted invitations to enroll at competitive universities, including seven of eight Ivy League schools. The class of 2016 was awarded nearly $5 million in scholarships, and will pay only 9% of their tuition out of pocket on average. In short, we could not be more proud of our students or of the more than 1,900 volunteers who are dedicated to helping them succeed.

As you know, the need for Minds Matter is great:

- Only 46% of low-income students enroll in college, versus 79% of their higher-income peers
- At the most competitive colleges, only 3% of the student body is comprised of low-income students
- Less than 60% of low-income students graduate college, compared with 77% of their higher-income peers

Minds Matter is dedicated to changing the trajectory of our students’ lives, and our outcomes reflect that dedication:

- 100% of Minds Matter graduates earn acceptance into a four-year university or college
- 73% of Minds Matter graduates attend schools ranked by Barron’s as Most, Highly, or Very Competitive
- 94% of Minds Matter alumni 28 and older hold a bachelor’s degree or higher, compared to only 41% of all high-achieving, low-income students.

Our students’ consistent success in college and beyond would not be possible without the support of our volunteers, board members, staff, and donors. The time, energy, and resources you give to Minds Matter make an incredible difference in the lives of these young people, and we are extremely grateful.

On behalf of our students, volunteers, and staff, thank for your support of Minds Matter.

Sincerely,

Connie Miller
Co-Chair of the Board

Ashish Shah
Co-Chair of the Board
Minds Matter San Francisco Student

LEYDI

In the fall of 2014, Leydi moved from her home country of Guatemala to San Francisco. A year after her move, she joined the Minds Matter community as a sophomore mentee. As Leydi describes it, “moving to a new country is like moving to a new planet where you don’t recognize anyone or anything. You just feel alone. When I moved to San Francisco, my goal was to have a good education. An education that would support me in my future.”

Over the past year, Leydi has grown immensely. Not only are her English and academics improving daily, she’s also become more confident, self-reliant, and independent as she prepares herself for college in the United States.

When researching summer programs to attend following her sophomore year, Leydi and her mentors wanted to find a program that would help her further adapt to life in the US and continue improving her English. Leydi fell in love with Andover’s program, which has an ESL offering, a history with international students, and a great deal of additional resources to take advantage of: it was a perfect fit for her first summer on the east coast.

Leydi returned to San Francisco this year having made friends from all over the world, which further increased her confidence in her English. “I never thought I would adapt to a place so far away. I felt like I had known my new friends for a long time, and the program really helped me prepare for my school year and the future,” Leydi shared.

Leydi is currently practicing for the SATs and feeling excited for her future as a college student. Her mentor, Sara, explains that she has no doubt about Leydi’s ability to excel in her future. “Minds Matter has made sure that she has the tools to get there and as her mentors, we learn from her development and success on a weekly basis - and have some fun together while doing so.”

“I felt like I had known my new friends for a long time, and the program really helped me prepare for my school year and the future.”

-Leydi
Minds Matter San Francisco Class of 2018
What We Do

Minds Matter is a comprehensive and highly-successful three-year program that empowers young people from low-income families to achieve college readiness and success. Founded in New York City in 1991 by six Wall Street professionals who understood that the gap in low-income student achievement is not one of intelligence, but resources, Minds Matter has developed a successful program incorporating academics, mentoring, and enrichment experiences that prepare students for bright futures.

Our Three-Year Program

Beginning in their sophomore year of high school, our students spend 4-6 hours per week during the school year in Minds Matter sessions with their volunteer mentors and instructors. Our sophomore program centers on cultivating the math and writing/critical thinking skills that are the foundation of our students’ academic success. In the junior program, students work with their mentors on test preparation for the SAT and ACT standardized exams. During the summers after their sophomore and junior year, students attend summer enrichment programs at prep schools, colleges, and universities across the country and around the world. In the senior program, students work closely with their mentors on college applications, financial aid forms, financial literacy, and navigating the college application process. Our volunteers guide seniors through the college selection process, helping our students determine what school and area of study might be best for them.

Throughout the program, students gain confidence and ambition, strengthen their skills in writing, critical thinking, test-taking, and mathematics, and flourish into young adults who are ready and excited to succeed in college. Minds Matter proudly boasts a 100% success rate for students’ acceptance into four-year colleges and universities.
Who We Are

Our Students
Each day, Minds Matter is inspired by the commitment and drive of the students we serve. Our students choose to spend 4-6 hours per week improving their academic abilities and preparing themselves for the future.

The average family income of our students is $24,048, just below the federal poverty line. They are often the first in their family to attend college. Minds Matter students are determined, focused, and fully aware of the value of higher education to their lifelong successes. It is impossible to not be impressed by these young people.

Our Volunteers
Minds Matter could not exist without the dedication and commitment of more than 1,900 volunteers nationwide. Many of our mentors are working professionals who devote their time to enriching the lives of our deserving students. It is not uncommon for mentor/mentee relationships between volunteers and their students to continue beyond the three-year program and into the students’ college and post-collegiate experiences. Our volunteers are a motivational powerhouse, always available to provide a listening ear and an encouraging word to the students they mentor.

We serve to empower our students, enable informed decision-making as they deliberate on what school best fits their needs, act as an invaluable support system when uncertainty creeps in, and get them thinking big. We are often the difference between settling for the familiar and pushing the boundaries of what they thought was possible.

- John
Minds Matter Twin Cities Volunteer
Minds Matter Los Angeles Alumnus

CHRISTIAN

A Minds Matter Los Angeles Class of 2016 alumnus, Christian currently attends the University of California Berkeley, where he plans to major in Computer Science. He has been awarded the Regents and Chancellors Scholarship, which is the most prestigious scholarship offered by UC Berkeley.

Christian’s mother is a single parent from El Salvador, who works seven days a week to provide Christian with the opportunities she never had. She went to high school in El Salvador, but never got to experience college.

Coming from a low-income immigrant background, Christian knew he wanted to go to college, but did not know how he was going to get there. During his freshman year of high school, Christian realized he needed to do everything he could to prepare himself for college, and looked for the resources that would help get him there.

Christian heard about Minds Matter from other students at his school. They told Christian about the rigorous academics and test preparation, which would give an advantage in scoring well in standardized tests. However, it was when they told him about having access to mentors, a strong peer support network and summer experiences, that Christian knew he found the program that was going to help him succeed in his dream of going to college.

During the summer of his sophomore year, Minds Matter gave Christian the opportunity to attend a two-week residential study experience at Idyllwild Academy of the Arts, where he studied animation. Between his junior and senior years, Minds Matter sent Christian to Syracuse University in New York, where he studied coding, animation design and computer science. While on his summer programs, Christian experienced what it will be like to live on a college campus, and to compete in college level classes. Christian realized he can succeed in college, and he has the potential to become a top scholar.
Minds Matter in Action

- 100% of students are admitted to 4-year colleges & universities
- 73% of students admitted to Barron’s Most, Highly, or Very Competitive schools
- 667 Students served in the 2015-2016 school year
- 3.81 Average incoming GPA of Minds Matter students
Minds Matter by the Numbers in FY16

- **1,900+ volunteers across all chapters**
- **90% of students identified as minorities**
- **$24,048 average family income for students**
- **88% of students were eligible for free or reduced lunch**
- **1,456 alumni across the country**
- **17:1 Return on Investment**
- **93% of tracked alumni are enrolled in or have graduated from 4-year colleges and universities**
- **94% of tracked alumni 28 and older hold a bachelor’s degree or higher, compared to only 41% of all high-achieving, low-income students.**
Minds Matter NYC Alumna
GISELLE

What Minds Matter NYC Alumna Gisselle likes best about her long-term Minds Matter mentors is having a support system that has strengthened over the past three years and will continue into college. Gisselle graduated from Minds Matter in 2016, and now attends Wesleyan University, where she is considering majoring in Chemistry and minoring in Arabic. Of her Mentors, Giselle says, “I like to talk to them about my stresses, challenges, and accomplishments, since I know that they will listen and provide me with advice, as well as acknowledge my accomplishments.”

Gisselle encourages future Minds Matter students to remain open-minded throughout the next three years to maximize their experience with the program. “Do not let the workload discourage you,” she advises. “They chose you to be a part of the program because they know that you will be successful.”

Gisselle describes her experience with Minds Matter as life-changing and recognizes that many incoming sophomores are facing a great deal of stress and anxiety about the daunting college process. “Minds Matter will guide you. You just have to keep pushing because the results that you will see are worth it.”

Minds Matter Seattle Student
VANESSA

Minds Matter Seattle student Vanessa believes Minds Matter has been one of the greatest decisions in her life and, though she just completed her first year as a Minds Matter student, she already feels that the program has been “eye-opening.” Vanessa feels that Minds Matter gets students out of their comfort zone and allows them to experience new opportunities and meet new people—a little taste of what college will be like.

Vanessa promises students that applying to Minds Matter is worth the effort. She acknowledges that the college admissions process is intimidating, but she says that Minds Matter really guides students through the process. "Every mentor knows what they are doing because they have already gone through it. Just ask your mentor if you have questions; and if they do not know the answer, they will find someone who does," says Vanessa.

This past summer, Vanessa attended the University of Pennsylvania’s medicine program thanks to Minds Matter.
College Acceptances

We’re consistently impressed by and proud of our Minds Matter students. 100% of our students are accepted into four-year universities and colleges, and many are accepted into some of the most competitive schools in the country. Below is a list of some of the schools into which graduates of our class of 2016 were accepted:

Agnes Scott College  Emory University  Pepperdine University
Baldwin Wallace University  Fashion Institute of Technology  Princeton University
Barnard College  Fordham University  Providence College
Boston University  Franklin and Marshall College  Regis College
Brandeis University  Georgetown University  Saint John's University
Brown University  Gustavus Adolphus College  Saint Joseph's College
Bryn Mawr College  Hamilton College  Seattle Pacific University
Bucknell University  Harvard University  Seattle University
California Baptist University  Haverford College  Simmons College
California State University, Los Angeles  Howard University  Skidmore College
California State University, Northridge  John Carroll University  Smith College
Carleton College  Kalamazoo College  South Seattle College
Case Western Reserve University  Lehigh University  St. Catherine University
Chapman University  Lewis & Clark College  St. Francis College
Clark College  Loyola University Chicago  Stanford University
College of Saint Benedict  Macalester College  SUNY Albany
College of the Holy Cross  Massachusetts College of Art and Design  SUNY Alfred
Colorado State University  Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences  SUNY Binghamton
Columbia University  Miami University  SUNY Buffalo
Cornell University  Middlebury College  SUNY Stonybrook
CUNY City College  Mills College  Swarthmore College
CUNY Hunter College  New York University  Temple University
CUNY John Jay College of Criminal Justice  Northeastern University  The Ohio State University
CUNY Lehman College  Northwestern University  University of California Berkeley
Dartmouth College  Oberlin College  University of California Davis
DePauw University  Pace University  University of California Irvine
Dickinson College  Pacific Lutheran University  University of California Los Angeles
Drexel University  Pennsylvania State University  University of California Merced
Eastern Michigan University  Pepperdine University  University of California San Diego
My mentors have always gone the extra mile for me. They help me with my future like preparing for college, but also with what goes on with my family. When I was in a shelter last year, they came to visit, they even fundraised to help get me supplies. Now that I am moving on with my life, my mentors are taking steps with me in their lives. One of them is getting married next year, and the other is applying to graduate school. We’re all moving forward together. And even though we’re moving in different directions, I am truly grateful for my mentors and their help.

-Jadie, Minds Matter Philadelphia Class of 2016
Macalester College Class of 2020
As a Minds Matters volunteer, I made a three-year commitment to serve as a mentor to a student named Dunya. Dunya emigrated from Ethiopia just one year before joining Minds Matter; she had a thick accent and a big smile. Speaking English as a second language had no impact on Dunya’s math and science skills. She excelled in math and made it clear when she met me that she wanted to work with numbers. Math was her comfort zone. Each student is assigned two volunteer mentors who aim to stay with the same student for three years until that student graduates from high school. My co-mentor was an engineer and recommended that Dunya study engineering. I, of course, tried to convince her that accounting firms were much more fun and there were more opportunities as an entry level candidate.

Dunya was selected by her teachers to join the Minds Matter program beginning in her sophomore year. She was extremely bashful the first five or six sessions of the program. In my extroverted mind, I thought, “this is going to be a long three years.” But she quickly proved me wrong. She was very enthusiastic about learning and had an amazing outlook on life. Before long, she was a star player on the varsity soccer team, working part-time at the airport, and being asked to speak at our annual Casino Night fund raiser gala. I could not be more pleased with how the mentoring experience was shaping up and I felt honored to be part of this particular community.

During Dunya’s junior and senior year, we focused on ACT and SAT preparation, a second college summer program and, of course, college and scholarship applications. The volunteers spend countless hours with the students during the weekly allotted time, but also outside of the mentoring sessions. During this two-year window there are many applications submitted for college and university entrance, financial aid, and scholarships. Aside from the basic applications, we spend a great amount of time perfecting personal essays and other written sections of the applications.

Because English was a second language for Dunya, there were times I wanted to take her essays and rewrite them entirely, but held back on doing so because I wanted the reader to know the real Dunya. I knew that as soon as people met her, they would be drawn to her optimistic and charismatic personality. We just needed one acceptance letter and we’d be off to the races.”

- Julia
Minds Matter Denver Volunteer
“Last January, I received a call at work from Campus Recruiting indicating that my company had offered Dunya a summer internship in our Corporate Management group. Dunya had landed this position completely on her own! This was great news. With tears running down my face, I called Dunya to congratulate her. I was so proud and knew all our hard work was really starting to pay off. As part of her internship, she was able to work in marketing, recruiting, and even our audit practice. Her favorite part was working with an audit team on a governmental engagement for a community college where she felt fortunate to be part of something that directly impacted her and her community. She loved learning about how this particular school focused on “no student left behind” as part of its mission.

Recently, Dunya enrolled in Semester at Sea – just over three months studying abroad and exploring the Atlantic. She’ll visit England, Italy, Turkey, Spain, Morocco, Brazil and Central America. The thought of her making this trip would never have crossed my mind during the first couple of years I knew Dunya. She has far exceeded my expectations and wildest dreams, but above all, she has reminded me what my Dad also taught me as a young kid – hard work, ambition, strong work ethics, and a positive attitude will help you achieve whatever you put your mind to. Dunya will never give up on her dreams, big or small, and will have a smile on her face no matter what gets tossed her way. It has been such a pleasure getting to know her and sharing this journey with her. Bon voyage, dear friend!”

_Dunya is a graduate of Colorado State University in Fort Collins, where she studied Business Administration._
Minds Matter NYC Alumna

EMELY

In 2002, four-year-old Emely emigrated from the Dominican Republic to the Bushwick neighborhood of Brooklyn. It was a difficult transition as neither Emely nor her mother spoke English and her father worked a 12-hour shift at a corner bodega. Emely's first education was, in her own words, learning "how to tell between gang members, how to suppress my fear walking down certain streets, and what to do when shootout happened on my block."

Emely developed chronic bronchitis and endured multiple hospitalizations. But it was in the hospital, however, where she discovered her passion, embodied by the dedicated, competent nurses and doctors who helped her recover after each unfortunate flare-up. One day, lying in her hospital bed, Emely decided that medicine was her calling.

A guidance counselor at Emely's school saw her potential and introduced her to Minds Matter. After beating more than 250 other applicants for a slot in the program, Minds Matter, Emely threw herself into the work. It wasn't an easy journey and Emely's friends, in her own words, "thought I was crazy." But the people Emely met at Minds Matter—her mentors, tutors, and peers from all over the city—supported her, encouraged her, and challenged her to dream bigger and achieve better. Because of Minds Matter, Emely's grades leapt up; she attended an exclusive summer program at Phillips Academy Andover; received a biomedical research internship at Columbia Medical Center; and did a study-abroad summer program in Costa Rica.

Emely's own words speak directly to Minds Matter's impact: "Although I am from a low-income background, an immigrant, and a first-generation college student, Minds Matter has given me the confidence to strive."

In 2016, Emely—who arrived in America without knowing a single word of English—was named a Posse STEM Scholar and is studying pre-med at Smith College.
Minds Matter Boston Alumnus Spotlight

BILAL

“Every student at Minds Matter holds a special story that has motivated them to pursue educational opportunities. However, as urban minority students, we lack some resources in our high schools. We lacked guidance in our path to college as most of us are first-generation students. It is Minds Matter, my mentors Dan and Andy, and others that I thank for my accomplishments, because they have been my guides for the many obstacles I encountered. They have been, and will always remain, my role models.

From ACT prep classes to summer courses at Harvard and Brown, Minds Matter offered me every educational opportunity. In fact, my summer at Brown is the reason why I applied to Brown and the reason why I chose to attend Brown University! My experience at Brown would have not been possible without my relationship with my mentors and my association with Minds Matter.

As an immigrant and first-generation student, my biggest concern was paying for college, but Minds Matter made finance the least of my worries. With the help of my mentors, I began applying to as many scholarships as possible. Just like any other goal my mentors and I set, financial aid became a reality. I became a Questbridge Scholar, Dell Scholar, Janey scholar, and Norma K. Clarke Scholar. With a full-ride to Brown University and a handful of scholarship money in my pockets, financial struggle will never be a problem for me in college.

I believe I speak on behalf of all the mentees when proclaiming that Minds Matter isn’t just a mentoring program we can check off on our resumes; Minds Matter holds a special place in my heart and in the hearts of all the mentees and everyone who generously supports it.

-Milal
Minds Matter Boston Class of 2016
Brown University Class of 2020
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**Minds Matter has taught me so much. Not only have I developed important academic skills, but I feel like I’ve grown as a person. I have developed skills like teamwork, collaboration, and communication. Minds Matter helped me find myself and become a leader in my community. It has set me up for success and given me confidence that I can overcome any challenge and use my degree to make a positive change in the world.**

-Lisette
Minds Matter Chicago
Class of 2016
Agnes Scott College
Class of 2020

---

**Consolidated FY16 Financials**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUPPORT AND REVENUES</th>
<th>Consolidated</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUPPORT</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual donations</td>
<td>$ 953,269</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corporate donations</td>
<td>$ 883,725</td>
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<td>Foundation donations</td>
<td>$ 586,426</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contributed services and facilities</td>
<td>$ 34,579</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>REVENUES</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Special events</td>
<td>$ 659,422</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other income</td>
<td>$ 9,217</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NET ASSETS RELEASED FROM RESTRICTIONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Support and Revenue</td>
<td>$ 3,126,638</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPERATING EXPENSES</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program services</td>
<td>$ 1,778,836</td>
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<tr>
<td>Support services</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Management and general</td>
<td>$ 532,999</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>$ 405,368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Operating Expenses</td>
<td>$ 2,717,203</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| CHANGE IN NET ASSETS | $ 441,467 |

| NET ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR | $ 3,370,232 |
| NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR       | $ 3,811,699 |
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Jade Keena, Director of Operations
Shelly Zhou, Program & Development Associate

*Leadership is current as of December 2016*
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Being in the Minds Matter program is like having a second family. I’ve met some of my best friends through the program. My mentors, Vivian, Leala and Rachel, have also been a vital part of my life. They have not only guided me throughout the college application and financial aid process, but they helped me grow as a person as well. Knowing that my mentors believe in me and my ability to succeed definitely gives me more confidence and reassurance. Minds Matter has been a huge support for me throughout high school and even during college.”

- Ericka, Minds Matter Los Angeles
Class of 2015
UC Berkeley Class of 2019