



HIGH SCHOOL  
[HS]<sup>2</sup>  
HIGH SCHOLAR

# 2023-24 ANNUAL REPORT

A Program of Colorado Rocky  
Mountain School

# FROM THE DIRECTOR



Dear Friends of (HS)<sup>2</sup>,

As I reflect on this past summer, I am profoundly grateful for the moments of growth, connection, and joy that unfolded at (HS)<sup>2</sup>. At a time when the world feels divided and tumultuous, our program became a sanctuary—a place where students could come together, learn, and find power within themselves.

This year, (HS)<sup>2</sup> brought together a diverse cohort of scholars, each with unique backgrounds and aspirations. But no matter where they came from, they shared a common drive to achieve more, to lead, and to find their place in the world. Our mission—empowering these students with STEM skills, a supportive community, and the confidence to use their voices—was more relevant than ever.

One of our students captured the magic of (HS)<sup>2</sup> perfectly: “There are a million different places in this world, but there has yet to be one that matches the environment of (HS)<sup>2</sup>.” These words speak to the intentionality behind what we create:

a family of driven peers where students not only gain academic skills but also form lasting connections and a sense of belonging that extends far beyond the classroom.

This summer, we saw students take bold steps in their learning journeys. They tackled complex scientific concepts in Biomedical Engineering, explored complex theories in Calculus Plus, and crafted personal statements in College Counseling. More importantly, they supported one another through challenges and celebrated every victory, big or small.

The community we’ve fostered at (HS)<sup>2</sup> is a bright light that beckons students as they strive toward another summer and brings alumni back long after they’ve graduated. Here, students find a space to see the light in one another, to listen, and to learn with open hearts and minds. This unity is what makes (HS)<sup>2</sup> a true salve for the soul.

None of this would be possible without your support. Your generosity, and the generosity of CRMS, helps us to continue to provide this transformative experience for students who deserve it most. Thank you for believing in this work and for being an essential part of the (HS)<sup>2</sup> family.

With warmth and gratitude,

*Annie O*

Annie Oppenheim  
(HS)<sup>2</sup> Program Director

## MISSION

(HS)<sup>2</sup> prepares a group of first-generation and/or low-income students to succeed in college by empowering them with **STEM-based skills, a family of driven peers, and a space to see the light and power in their own voices.**

## CLASS OF 2023 MATRICULATION

Boston University  
California Institute of Technology  
Connecticut College  
Dartmouth College  
Duke University  
Fairfield University  
Fashion Institute of Technology  
Georgia State University  
Rice University  
Stanford University  
Swarthmore College  
Texas A&M  
Tulane University  
University of Albany  
University of Houston  
University of Louisiana Monroe  
University of Miami  
University of Pennsylvania  
University of Virginia  
West Texas A&M

“ Looking back from where I am now as a freshman at Dartmouth College, I realize that (HS)<sup>2</sup> most impacted me by helping me decide where I wanted to go to college, teaching me how to navigate and thrive in dorm life, and how to build long-lasting connections with others.”  
- Harmony W., Class of 2023



# POWER OF THE PROGRAM

HOW DID WE MEASURE UP AGAINST OUR MISSION THIS YEAR?

## SUCCEED IN COLLEGE

98%

said “(HS)<sup>2</sup> is the main reason for how confident I feel applying to, being admitted to, and thriving at my dream college.”

## STEM-BASED SKILLS

96%

of scholars agree or strongly agree that STEM courses at (HS)<sup>2</sup> significantly impacted their academic journey.



## FAMILY OF DRIVEN PEERS

What was the most personally impactful part of (HS)<sup>2</sup> ?

#1

Deep friendship with peers with similar life experiences to mine.

"Before, my personality was very shy and quiet, but this program really helped me grow as a person and make more friends. It changed me into someone I didn't think I would be."

- Alexander P., Class of 2026

## LIGHT AND POWER IN MY OWN VOICE

"(HS)<sup>2</sup> is a place where you both learn who you are and you grow into who you want to become."

- Jade S.H.,  
Class of 2025

What personal skills did you build at (HS)<sup>2</sup> ?

#1

Strengthened independence

#2

Improved ability to create opportunities for myself

## IN THE WORDS OF SCHOLARS

**(HS)<sup>2</sup> IS**

a home, a safe place.

a life-changing experience.

the highlight of my year.

a family.

the reason I made it so far today.

a treasure you'll never forget.

most importantly, family forever.

# 2024 SCHOLAR DEMOGRAPHICS



**NEW YORK**  
24 Scholars  
**34%**



**TEXAS**  
19 Scholars  
**28%**



**LOUISIANA**  
6 Scholars  
**8%**



**COLORADO**  
21 Scholars  
**30%**



**80%** First-Generation



**76%** Poverty-Structured Communities

## PARTNER SCHOOLS

### NEW YORK

- Achievement First University Prep High School
- Brooklyn Ascend High School
- Cristo Rey New York High School
- East Side Community High School
- John Dewey High School
- KIPP NYC College Prep High School
- The Academy Charter School - Hempstead
- The Academy Charter School - Uniondale

### COLORADO

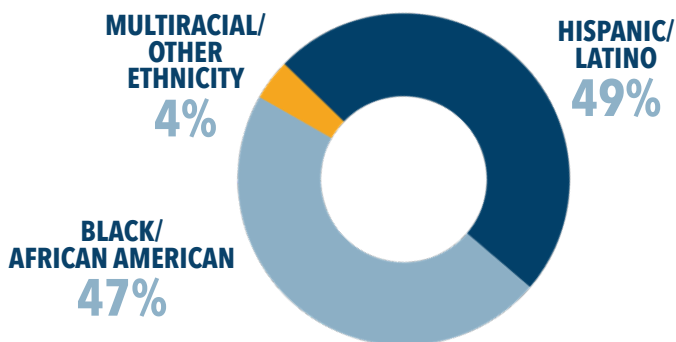
- Arrupe Jesuit High School
- Aurora Science and Tech High School
- DSST Conservatory Green High School
- DSST Green Valley Ranch High School
- DSST Northeast Elevate
- Roaring Fork High School



 **FEMALE**  
**59%**

 **MALE**  
**39%**

 **NON BINARY**  
**2%**



## LOUISIANA

Benjamin Franklin High School  
The Piney Woods Country Life School  
The Willow School (fmr. Lusher Charter School)

## TEXAS

Amon Carter Riverside High School  
Cristo Rey Fort Worth College Prep  
RL Paschal High School  
South Hills High School  
TCC South Collegiate  
Texas Academy of Biomedical Sciences  
Western Hills High School  
World Languages Institute  
Young Men's Leadership Academy  
Young Women's Leadership Academy

COURSE	FOCUS	MASTERY
BIOLOGY	Data analysis, organisms, ecosystems	89%
CODING	Python code, programming, software engineering, AI	77%
BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING	Mechanical properties, Young's modulus, biomedical imaging	85%
WRITING 1	Grammar and literary elements, expression, storytelling, formal essays, advocacy	93%
WRITING 2	Personal narratives, story arcs, imagery and sensory-based writing	92%
COLLEGE COUNSELING	College lists, common app prep, FAFSA, personal statement, supplements, recommendations, resumes	93%
GEOMETRY	Solving for missing angles, angle relationships, calculating midpoint, distance, fractional distance	96%
ALGEBRA 2	Equations, quadratic functions, projectile motion applications, application of algebra to ACT/SAT	73%
PRE-CALCULUS	Trigonometry problem solving, unit circle, limits and relational functions, increasing love of learning in math class	88%
CALCULUS	Polynomial and rational functions, derivatives, intervals, maximums and minimums of functions	95%
CALC+	Bridge gaps with calculus concepts and problems, deepen understanding of math-based engineering and modeling	90%

# ACADEMIC OVERVIEW

“ I never walked away from class without being informed or hearing something insightful that I knew would stick with me. Every. Single. Day. ”

- Jenelle S-K., Class of 2026

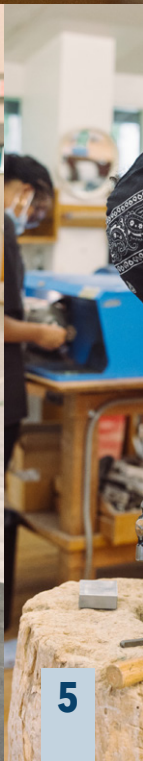




3



4



5

1



2



## ACTIVE PROGRAM

1. Ashley and Dai'Juan in Dance Active, a new course piloted this summer

2. Ximena and Zacnicte in Farming and Food Justice

3. Feker in Ceramics

4. Clemente, (HS)<sup>2</sup> '17, supporting Anthony in climbing

5. Jean in Silversmithing

6. Chibike in Music

Not pictured: Team Sports and Kayaking



6

# ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

(HS)<sup>2</sup> alumni continuously return to the program as faculty and are our greatest source of strength. This year, three faculty members attended the program, and each tapped their own networks to recruit other faculty and staff. Pictured below is the alumni group who returned to Carbondale to celebrate the (HS)<sup>2</sup> Class of 2024 graduation.

## (HS)<sup>2</sup> FACULTY ALUMNI

### CLEMENTE DE HOYOS JR. - (HS)<sup>2</sup> 2017

Emory University Class of 2022, BS Neuroscience

Currently: Lead ESOL Academic Support Specialist at CRMS

### SHARMELY LOPEZ - (HS)<sup>2</sup> 2017

Colorado College Class of 2023, BA in Romance Languages

Currently: College Success Advisor at KIPP Forward

### BRISA AGUILAR VELAZQUEZ - (HS)<sup>2</sup> 2017

Denver University Class of 2022, BS in Biology

Currently: Medical Assistant preparing for PA school



**Clemente De Hoyos Jr., (HS)<sup>2</sup> alum and seasoned faculty member, spoke to students at graduation. He shared:**

“

We live in a world that is sadly plagued by hardships, some of which you may have already encountered. But the easiest way you can help contribute to create a better world is by bringing your true self to every room you walk into, knowing that who you are is more than enough. This life is yours to live in the way you want to and the path you follow is your choice and yours alone. Regardless of the path you choose, you should always remember that everyone in this room, myself included, will support you on that journey.”



**(HS)<sup>2</sup> CLASS OF 2024**



**Flor Agüero**  
Fort Worth, TX



**Angie Aguilar**  
Carbondale, CO



**Spirit Bohlender**  
Carbondale, CO



**Nayanka Del Valle**  
Fort Worth, TX



**Nayanka Destinobles**  
Westbury, NY



**Naomi Hart**  
New Orleans, LA



**Danella Jean Gilles**  
Brooklyn, NY



**Eyosyas Kebede**  
Denver, CO



**Fortunate Madueke**  
Denver, CO



**Christopher Niehay**  
Fort Worth, TX



**Olamide Ogunribido**  
Brooklyn, NY



**Jean Paulino**  
Bronx, NY



**Ky Brown**  
New Orleans, LA



**Ginikachukwu Chukwumah**  
Denver, CO



**Tobi Hatam**  
Fort Worth, TX



**Yaron Jara**  
Hempstead, NY



**Giavana Maldonado**  
New York, NY



**Ashley Morales**  
Hempstead, NY



**Tyreik Rogers**  
New York, NY



**Emilio Sequeira**  
New Orleans, LA



**Feker Wolde**  
Denver, CO

“

The program didn't just expand my knowledge in math, science, and writing; it sparked a genuine passion for exploration and innovation that has and will shape my career, personal growth, and life.  $(HS)^2$  is not just a stepping stone, but a valuable and transformative life experience where I have grown beyond my zone of comfort.”

Ximena M., Class of 2026

# RECENT GRADUATE SPOTLIGHTS

## YARON JARA NEW YORK



1ST YEAR



2ND YEAR



3RD YEAR

### SCHOLAR HIGHLIGHT

#### FIRST-EVER FOUNDERS' AWARD RECIPIENT

Selected by staff as the graduate who best embodies (HS)<sup>2</sup> core values: care, curiosity, persistence, and academic excellence to receive a \$1K scholarship for college life expenses upon college entry.



(HS)<sup>2</sup> made me feel confident that I will be able to get into a top college and be able to succeed later in life. It also made me into a person who can better give advice and help those close to me.



### HIGHLIGHT OF STEM AT (HS)<sup>2</sup>

The small class sizes and science projects

### LOOKING FORWARD

Intended College and Major:  
MIT, Biomedical Engineering

## FEKER WOLDE DENVER



1ST YEAR



2ND YEAR



3RD YEAR

“(HS)<sup>2</sup> has taught me the value of love. I didn’t think that I would grow to love and care for everyone as much as I did, which is really crazy. (HS)<sup>2</sup> is unlike anywhere I have ever been, and I am so grateful.”

### HIGHLIGHT OF STEM AT (HS)<sup>2</sup>

Hands-on courses like Biomedical Engineering and Calc+

### LOOKING FORWARD >>>

Intended College and Major:  
Stanford, Biomechanical  
Engineering

### SCHOLAR HIGHLIGHT

## QUESTBRIDGE SCHOLARSHIP FINALIST

Highly selective scholarship program for first-generation students that pays full-ride tuition to 50+ of the nations’ best universities for four years.

# ADVISORY COMMITTEE

(HS)<sup>2</sup> is governed by a hybrid standing committee of the CRMS Board of Trustees. This committee is comprised of CRMS board members, supporters of (HS)<sup>2</sup>, and content experts in the field. We are grateful for the standing committee’s ongoing support and their investment in the development, progression, and longevity of the (HS)<sup>2</sup> Program at CRMS.

RAVI VENKATESWARAN  
Committee Chair

ANNIE OPPENHEIM  
Program Director

GARLAND AND MOLLIE LASATER  
Program Founders

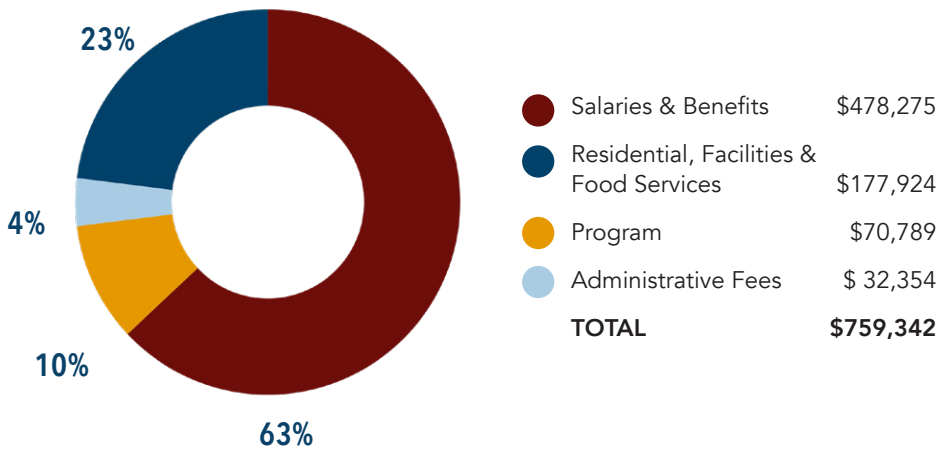
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Ex Officio

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DR. WHITNEE BOYD  
DR. ELLEN BROOKS  
CHELSEA CONGDON  
LILIANA DIAZ (HS)<sup>2</sup> '12  
NICK FAVALORO  
MAGGIE GOLDSTEIN  
MOLLY LYNCH  
ALEX MORENO (HS)<sup>2</sup> '12  
HELEN OBERMEYER  
JOHNATHAN PRICE (HS)<sup>2</sup> '11  
JOHNNY RICHARDSON  
LISANNE ROGERS

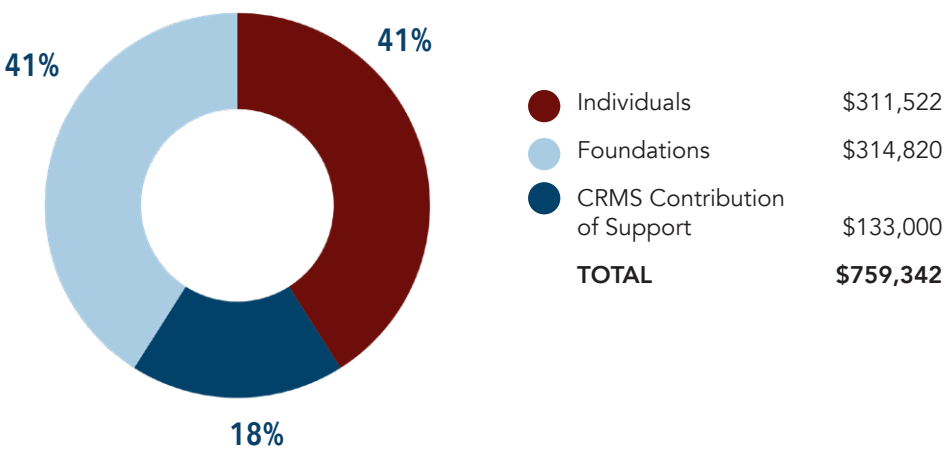
(HS)<sup>2</sup> Summer 2024 Faculty and Staff



# EXPENSES



# CONTRIBUTIONS



“ I would never think that a STEM camp would be the highlight of my year, but then I come to (HS)<sup>2</sup>, and I’m excited to go to a math class. ”  
- Dai’Juan W., Class of 2025

# DONORS

## \$50,000 +

Samuel Freeman Charitable Trust  
John & Jessica Fullerton  
Mary Ann & James Harris  
Gary & Judy Havener  
Mollie & Garland Lasater Charitable  
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Virginia Touhey CRMS '74  
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Samuel & Linda Winn

## \$1 - \$999

Amanuel Abel (HS)<sup>2</sup> '21  
Matt Aboussie  
Libby Alvin  
Nedaa Alwawi  
Laura Armstrong  
Esther Assenso (HS)<sup>2</sup> '17  
Chris & Nancy Babbs  
Jeremy Baudy (HS)<sup>2</sup> '15  
Jeffrey Colt  
Rick Colt

Peggy Corcillo & David Pietsch  
Stefano Cruz (HS)<sup>2</sup> '19  
Angela Cruz (HS)<sup>2</sup> '18  
Saul DeLabra (HS)<sup>2</sup> '16  
Hadja Diallo (HS)<sup>2</sup> '21  
Liliana Diaz (HS)<sup>2</sup> '12  
Citlalli Diaz (HS)<sup>2</sup> '18  
Meghan Duff  
Malaika Eban (HS)<sup>2</sup> '10  
Anne Eldridge CRMS '80  
Raynesha Ellington (HS)<sup>2</sup> '12  
Christian Ervin  
Anna Feiss  
Shawn Gerum  
Morgan Hardy  
Lititia Harrington  
Joel Harris  
A'Kayla Harrison (HS)<sup>2</sup> '22  
Richard & Carolyn Herb  
Samuel Huestis  
Tayla Hunter (HS)<sup>2</sup> '20  
Jenna Iofreddo  
Micki Kibler  
Molly Laptook  
Hannah Lyons  
Eliana Mallory  
Kayla Shelton Manzanares CRMS '96  
Jake Marston  
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Katherine & Clyde McKee  
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Mags Miller CRMS '90  
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Annie Oppenheim  
Rosey Oppenheim

Willy Oppenheim  
Lindsey Parker  
Nick Pavlis  
Megan Perna  
Keren Quinteros (HS)<sup>2</sup> '16  
Mayra Rico (HS)<sup>2</sup> '09  
Tyana Riley (HS)<sup>2</sup> '09  
Markie Ruggeri  
Joel Sanchez (HS)<sup>2</sup> '21  
Zoe Shea  
Amy Shoemaker  
Alexandra Tarika  
Amanda Toledo Barrios (HS)<sup>2</sup> '15  
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Kersten Vasey  
Ravi Venkateswaran CRMS '69  
Christine & Alex Ward  
Tad Whitaker CRMS '94  
Joe & Casey White  
Jane & Brian Williams  
John Wyman  
Aimee & Luis Yllanes  
Anonymous (2)



Saying bye to dear friends at graduation.

# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHTS

## SABRINA JONES (HS)<sup>2</sup> '18

I am a first-generation high school and college graduate. I have always dreamed of becoming a physician. Whether I was 5 and on the playground or 18 and graduating, I knew becoming a doctor was my passion and calling.

I was born and raised in Fort Worth, TX in a single-parent household with my mom and 4 siblings. We survived off of government assistance, such as Section 8, EBT food stamps, SNAP, and WIC. This was sufficient until the summer of 8th grade, when we were evicted from my beloved childhood home. While transitioning between homeless shelters, I attended Southwest High School where I vowed to chase my dreams.

I say all this not to rehash dark moments in my life, but rather to reflect and remain gracious for all the blessings gifted to me through my hard work and dedication.

I participated in marching band, show choir, cheerleading, student council, and book club, and graduated 3rd in my class, with a full academic STEM scholarship to Texas Christian University. I majored in Biology and minored in Cultural Awareness in Healthcare. I graduated in May of 2023, Magna Cum Laude and then took a gap year as I applied for medical school.

I worked as a medical scribe at Fort Worth Heart Cardiology Clinic and was accepted into medical school at Tilman J. Fertittia Family College of Medicine at the University of Houston. I started medical school in 2024 and I am loving every second of it.

One outlet in particular that I owe the utmost thanks to is the (HS)<sup>2</sup> program. Without (HS)<sup>2</sup>, I would have never prepared myself for higher education. I was equipped with the tools and mindset to reach my goals no matter my background, and the people and environment at (HS)<sup>2</sup> made me believe this. At (HS)<sup>2</sup> I developed lifelong connections to the amazing staff, friends, and experiences I enjoyed while in Carbondale. I am eternally grateful for the moments I had while being part of (HS)<sup>2</sup>. I hope one day to repay the good that was done for me.



## YOEL SANCHEZ (HS)<sup>2</sup> '21

I am a junior at Northwestern University studying Latin Studies and Biology on the pre-dental track. Currently, I work as a dental assistant at a free clinic in Chicago and am a hands-on research assistant in a Chemistry lab. My goal is to open a free dental clinic in Honduras and in Texas where patients can obtain care without worrying about the price associated.

My background: I was born in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, before moving to the US in 2009. Being one of the only members of my family able to obtain legal status, there was always a need to succeed both for myself and for them. Pursuing higher education always seemed out of reach because of my lack of confidence in myself and the high price tag associated with college.

I heard about (HS)<sup>2</sup> from a friend and my high school counselor. The welcoming and open environment I felt was like nothing I had experienced before. I was surrounded by people from around the country who looked like me, came from similar backgrounds, and had the same goal of going to college. (HS)<sup>2</sup> feels like a mentorship system in which all administrators and students want you to succeed.

One of my biggest takeaways from (HS)<sup>2</sup> was the deep understanding of the college process I gained. This information made me confident that college was an option for me. In the end, I obtained several full-ride scholarships and was able to pick my school of choice. Having spent my summers in Colorado and away from family, I had the confidence to leave Fort Worth and go to school in Chicago. Years after I completed the program, I still feel connected to the people I met and continue to connect with them today.

Knowing how crucial an understanding of the college process was for me, I made it a goal to support others in this space. When I have time off, I return to my high school to work with seniors on their college plans. Accessing college seems to keep getting pushed further and further away from low-income communities of color; now more than ever it is important that we unite as a community to give young people the confidence and guidance they need to apply to and succeed in academic spaces.



"It's just my first year, and I can already tell that this place is going to change my life."

- Anthony L., First Year



HIGH SCHOOL  
[HS]<sup>2</sup>  
HIGH SCHOLAR

For more information, please contact  
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[www.hs2.crms.org](http://www.hs2.crms.org)



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