



# Our Impact *February 2018*

## Breakthrough Silicon Valley

### Highlights:

**College Update:** Our seniors recently entered the culminating phase of their six-year Breakthrough journey, submitting applications to universities across the country.

**Measuring What, Why, and How:** Breakthrough Silicon Valley is one of a select group of ten nonprofits chosen by the Sobrato Family Foundation for its first-ever Impact Lab. We're gaining knowledge, tools, and techniques that will maximize the effectiveness and scalability of our college readiness program as we expand to serve nearly 600 students in 2018.

**Tutoring: More than Just Academics:** Long a programming cornerstone, tutoring services to our middle school students expanded this fall to include study skill building.

**Santa Clara University Partnership:** Launched in Spring 2016, our partnership continues to deepen, most recently in conjunction with the SCU Future Teachers Project, bringing SCU students into Breakthrough classrooms as teaching fellows.

volunteered their time to help our students polish their writing and prepare for the college application process.

Through the fall, one-on-one meetings with our college counselor focused on refining essays, preparing for interviews, researching financial aid, and a myriad of other details leading up to the all-important final edits before submission time.

Applying to college brings a complex and sometimes dizzying maze of tasks and deadlines. The majority of our students will be among the first in their family to attend college, and often lack resources and guidance through the process. Breakthrough fills the gaps, empowering our students at each crucial step. We help them reach their full potential and become strong candidates for top-notch college and universities across the nation. Says College Counselor Jenny Uribe, "My advice for Breakthrough students is this: Know that your story is *already*

### College Update

Our Class of 2018 seniors have been hard at work on their college applications over the last few months, and their energy has been palpable in the Breakthrough office. Before the school year even began, work ramped up with two intensive week-long "boot camps." The first focused on crafting solid personal statements and the second, on the application process. Guest experts from local universities offered useful tips while professional admission counselors

*"My advice for Breakthrough students is this: Know that your story is already compelling. You just need to tell it. And we're here to help you!" – Jenny Uribe, Breakthrough college counselor*

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Applications were submitted to colleges and universities large and small, public and private, in-state and beyond – Stanford, Harvey Mudd, Columbia, UCLA, UC Santa Cruz, UC Berkeley, San Jose State, Cal Poly SLO, and Santa Clara

University to name just a few. The Class of 2018 is ready for the challenges ahead, thanks to their hard work and determination, and six years of personalized guidance from

Breakthrough made possible by the generous support of our donor community. The acceptance letters have already begun to roll in! We invite you to stay tuned for exciting details coming later this spring.

### Measuring What, Why, and How

Breakthrough Silicon Valley is one of a select group of ten nonprofits chosen by the Sobrato Family Foundation for its first-ever Impact Lab. The intensive 18-month program offers customized, one-on-one coaching in a



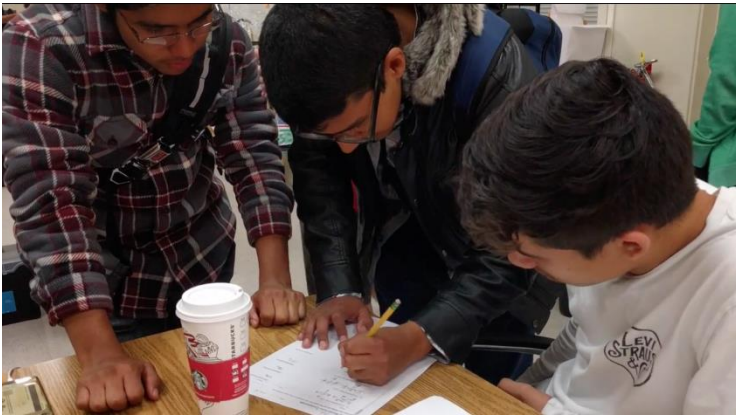
*Our Class of 2018 seniors celebrated submitting their college applications by breaking a piñata – a beloved Breakthrough Silicon Valley tradition.*

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*When organizations embrace a culture of insightful evaluation and continuous learning, they can harness the power of data to ensure their hard work will change people's lives for the better – and for good. – The Sobrato Family Foundation*

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collaborative, hands-on environment to improve our evaluation systems and foster a culture of learning for our organization. At Breakthrough Silicon Valley, continuous assessment has always been a core value. Through the Impact Lab, we're gaining knowledge, tools, and techniques that will maximize the effectiveness and scalability of our college readiness program as we expand to serve nearly 600 students in 2018.



### **Tutoring: More than Just Academics**

Long a programming cornerstone, our tutoring program offers individualized support to students needing extra help with math, language arts, and other subject areas. This fall, we expanded the middle school program to include study skill building in addition to academics. With guidance, students learn to reflect on their work, set personal goals for improvement, and monitor their progress. As their confidence builds and grades improve, they often choose to continue their tutoring time which further reinforces positive strides. Developing good study habits on top of academic skills sets the stage for success in

high school and lays the foundation for success in college and the increasingly complex workplace of the future.

### **Santa Clara University Partnership**

This past summer, Breakthrough Silicon Valley entered the second year of a multi-faceted partnership with Santa Clara University. Through the partnership, our students have the eye-opening opportunity to experience a college campus first-hand as SCU hosts our summer program for middle school students.

As our partnership deepens, we continue to find new opportunities to achieve our mutual goals of expanding educational equity. One joint initiative brings Santa Clara students in the Future Teachers Project into Breakthrough classrooms as summer teaching fellows. The SCU Future Teachers Project supports students interested in teaching in urban or under-resourced communities. The program is committed to mentoring future educators who are first-generation to college from under-resourced communities, a demographic traditionally under-represented in teaching, and one similar to our Breakthrough students.

The collaboration is a win-win. SCU students receive hands-on teaching experience and guidance from master teachers. Breakthrough students have the chance to learn from and be inspired by talented young people with life experiences much like their own. Through these near-peer role models our students see that academics are “cool” and hard work leads to future success. We look forward to more collaborative projects with SCU to come.

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**2018 marks an important milestone** as Breakthrough grows to serve nearly 600 students. **Thank you** for helping us empower these inspiring young people. Because of you, their successes pave the way to a bright future.

