



STUDENT FOCUSED.
COMMUNITY CONNECTED.
VISION ORIENTED.

**2024
 IMPACT REPORT**



GAEL, LEFT, AND MENTOR ANDY MUGHANNAM AT THE SVHS WELLNESS CENTER. GAEL HAS A NEW OUTLOOK ON LIFE THANKS TO EMPOWERMENT SESSIONS THAT DONORS LIKE YOU MADE POSSIBLE.

YOUR GENEROSITY HELPED A TEEN TACKLE LIFE'S CHALLENGES

Gael found determination and strength through a counseling group you made possible

Each time Gael steps onto the field to play football, he's already won.

The Sonoma Valley High School junior has earned his place in the lineup. Playing on the defensive line is tough. But to meet the minimum grade-point average requirement for SVHS athletes, Gael has had to do something even harder: retrain his mind.

Your support funded a life-changing boys empowerment group for Gael and his peers. Working with mentor Andy Mughannam of Awakening Wisdom, Gael and other young men tackled tough social-emotional challenges, from conflicts at home to struggles at school.

Gael joined the group after his grades slipped during freshman year, and as a result he wasn't allowed to play football. He acknowledges that at the time, he was struggling with conflict at home and began skipping classes. When he did show up, his temper would often get the better of him, and he'd end up talking back at teachers or even walking out.

"I was at one of the worst points in my life," he recalls.

That's when he heard about another student who had boosted his grades with Andy's help. Gael immediately

recognized Andy was different from the other adults in his life. Not only does Andy talk frankly during group sessions; he's available after hours and even answers text messages.

"He is a very kind guy, and he pays attention to our feelings," says Gael.

In his ongoing work in the group, Gael has learned to pause and reflect rather than reacting purely with emotions. He brought his grades up and joined the football team again last fall.

While Gael knows there is still more work for him to do, with Andy as an ally, Gael and young men like him can envision a positive future for themselves.

Gael plans to graduate in 2026 and either go to Santa Rosa Junior College to pursue football, or immediately start working toward his dream of owning a landscaping or construction business.

Thanks to your generosity, Gael has the support he needs to tackle life, one challenge at a time.

"By being in this group, I realized there can always be a next level," says Gael. "You can always try to become a better version of yourself than the version you are right now."

AT A GLANCE: BOYS EMPOWERMENT GROUPS 2024

55

STUDENTS COMPLETED PROGRAM

19%

GPA IMPROVEMENT AFTER PROGRAM

17%

BOOST IN CONFIDENCE IN SCHOOL SUCCESS AFTER PROGRAM

TAKING A STAND FOR STUDENTS, THANKS TO YOU

We're here for students—and we know you are too.

At a time when Sonoma Valley's future workers, leaders, and citizens need support more than ever, you strengthened your commitment to children.

In 2024, you enabled us to deepen our investment in critical programs to support student wellness, academic enrichment and teacher innovation.

Thanks to you, students have the academic support they need to thrive throughout their school years. From funding fully-subsidized preschool for our community's youngest learners, to covering the cost of college application fees for first-generation college students, you helped eliminate barriers and gave students of all ages the support they needed to soar.

Thanks to you, our network of partnerships with other youth-serving organizations is stronger than ever. **Through this collaboration, you provided students with a variety of opportunities for learning and community after school.** From music and dance to drivers' education and money management, Sonoma Valley students learned new skills that broadened their horizons.

Finally, **thanks to you, students were able to meet with a counselor or participate in a group support session when they needed help.** Research shows that when students have access to mental health resources and get the support they need, they are better able to focus in the classroom, build resilience, and stay on track toward their goals.

As we look ahead to spring and the rest of 2025, the challenges are steep, but our commitment is strong. **Thank you for taking a stand for students, and helping ensure a healthy future for our community.**

With gratitude,



Sarah Carroll, *Executive Director*





STUDENTS PLAY BOOMWHACKERS PURCHASED VIA A CLASSROOM GRANT MADE POSSIBLE BY DONORS LIKE YOU.



STUDENTS READY TO MAKE MUSIC WITH THEIR BOOMWHACKERS.

INVENTIVE INSTRUMENTS UNLEASHED MUSICAL JOY

With your support, elementary students learned to make music together—no strings attached

The entire class of second- and third-graders was in harmony. With faces set in concentration, they followed melodies, kept time, and sang - experiencing the joy of making music together.

This feat was possible thanks to teacher Lynn McArthur and a set of instruments with a serious purpose and a silly name: C Major Boomwhackers.

With support from donors like you, Ms. McArthur requested a Classroom Grant to buy enough Boomwhackers for all her classes at Sonoma’s four public elementary schools.

Boomwhackers are hollow plastic tubes students can smack on the floor or against their palms. Each tube is a different color and a different length, and makes a different sound - from tall and low to short and high. A full set of eight makes an octave.

With your support, Ms. McArthur could experiment with instruments like the Boomwhackers without worrying about extra costs. There are no strings to squeak and no notes to read. Students know it’s their turn by following Ms. McArthur’s conducting and color-coded cues on a big-screen TV.

The energetic motion of whacking the tubes on the floor helped them embody the tunes. “I like it when a lot of

people play at the same time and we have to go fast,” said Sam, a third-grader at Prestwood Elementary School. “It’s really fun.”

In the process, they learned rhythms and heard how separate notes combine into chords. They experienced the satisfaction of transforming noise into song.

“I like doing songs that are kind of complicated,” said Prestwood third-grader Miranda. “You have to focus on the beat.”

Thanks to donors like you, Miranda, Sam, and their classmates have experienced music in a new way - laying the foundation for future music education and lifelong appreciation.

AT A GLANCE: CLASSROOM GRANTS 2024

89 CLASSROOM GRANTS AWARDED

10 SVUSD PUBLIC SCHOOLS + CHARTERS BENEFITED FROM CLASSROOM GRANT FUNDING

25 TEACHERS LED FIELD TRIPS FUNDED BY CLASSROOM GRANTS

HELP A STUDENT TODAY!



For many kids, showing up to school might not be enough to ensure success. A lack of resources and support can directly interfere with learning and succeeding.

But you can help!

Please make a donation today to ensure a student has the tools and resources they need to be ready to learn and thrive.

With your support, Miranda and students like her can keep trying new musical instruments, enjoy classroom shelves stocked with books and supplies, and go on field trips. These materials and experiences, which are made possible through Classroom Grants, help ignite a passion for learning.

Your donation will also help Evelyn and other students continue to find a quiet space to study after school at the Empowerment Academy. Evelyn can also take a life skills workshops that will help her prepare for a job and the future.

And your gift will help Gael and other young people to keep getting the counseling and mental health support they need. With your help, Gael and his classmates can find the inner calm to focus on their studies and achieve their personal and academic goals.

Please make a donation today, so every student has what they need to thrive this year.

Thank you for showing our local students that community members like you stand with them, no matter the obstacles.



MY GIFT TO HELP A LOCAL STUDENT

Yes! I will give a gift to ensure a student has the tools and resources they need to be ready to learn and thrive.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 buy 5 books for a classroom library | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 fund a boys empowerment group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 buy art supplies for a classroom | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 send 30 students on a field trip |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 fund after-school homework help | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: \$ _____ |

Donate online at www.svgreatschools.org

Sonoma Valley Education Foundation is a registered 501(c)3, tax ID number 68-0279152. Your gift will be used to support all our programs for Sonoma Valley public school students.

STUDY SPACE AT EMPOWERMENT ACADEMY HELPED TEENS SUCCEED

With your support, students were able to get their homework done and connect with tutors for extra help

Students need a quiet place to focus on homework—but for many, this space isn’t available in their homes. Noisy younger siblings want to play after school, not study. There might not be a quiet corner or a desk. Pets need care.

Add the lure of a video game and the ever-present buzz of a cell phone, and it’s easy to set aside schoolwork.

Your generosity helped make possible the Empowerment Academy, an after-school program on the Sonoma High campus where teens were able to find their focus.

Open two afternoons per week, Empowerment Academy offered a space with plenty of tables and chairs, making it an ideal place for group and solo study. It’s been a welcome oasis of calm for Evelyn, whose four-year-old sister and eight-year-old brother demanded attention as soon as she got home from school.

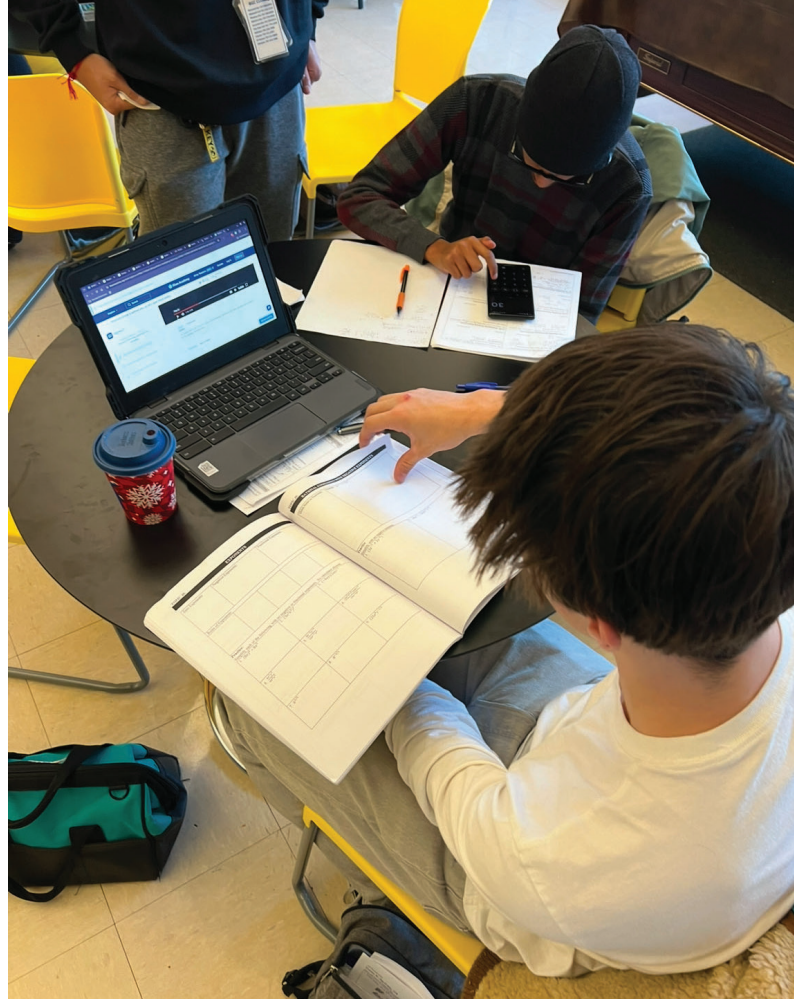
“It’s a quiet and peaceful environment, and I get my work done a lot faster,” said Evelyn, a junior.

Empowerment Academy is overseen by our partners from the Sonoma Valley Mentoring Alliance and Teen Services, a program of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Sonoma Valley. Staff are on hand to provide homework help if students are struggling with difficult concepts.

Students can also ask for help from Evelyn and schoolmates like her who’ve signed up as peer tutors. Concepts are relatable when teens talk them over together, and there’s no intimidation factor.

“Sometimes it can be scary to go talk with a teacher one-on-one,” says Evelyn. “When it’s a student helping another student, it’s easier, because you’re both in the same position.”

Teens can take a break from the grind to play a board game or a round of pool and make new social connections outside of their usual friend groups.



THANKS TO YOU, STUDENTS WHO ATTENDED EMPOWERMENT ACADEMY HAD A QUIET PLACE TO WORK ON HOMEWORK AFTER SCHOOL. (PHOTO COURTESY OF TEEN SERVICES)

When soccer practices started for the season, Evelyn recognized someone she’d met at the Empowerment Academy, and that connection helped break the ice.

“It was easier to get along with her and talk with her,” Evelyn says.

Thanks to donors like you, after-school hours are now more productive for Evelyn and teens like her. Thank you for giving her the time and space to connect, focus, and learn.

AT A GLANCE: EMPOWERMENT ACADEMY 2024

275 STUDENTS ATTENDED EMPOWERMENT ACADEMY

8 TYPES OF LIFE SKILLS AND LEADERSHIP COURSES OFFERED

46% PARTICIPANTS USED STUDY HALL AND HOMEWORK HELP

2024 ANNUAL FINANCIALS

HOW WE INVESTED \$1 MILLION IN STUDENTS IN 2024

In 2024, your generosity fueled learning and growth for Sonoma Valley youth through these programs:

Preschool for All: You helped provide high-quality, fully-subsidized preschool for over 100 local children. The state of California began funding this program fully in the fall of 2024.

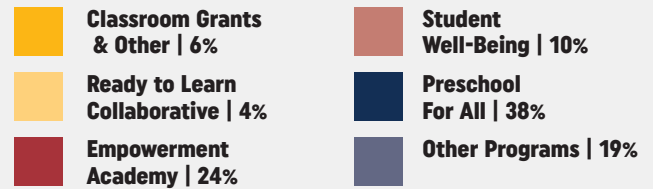
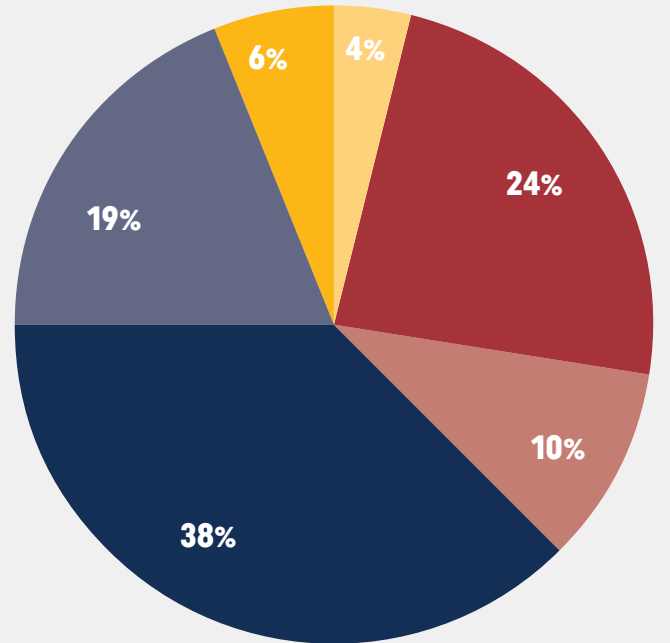
Student Wellness: You provided free therapy and social-emotional learning groups for 511 students.

Classroom Grants & Academic Support: You funded grants for more than 80 Sonoma Valley teachers, providing educational materials, funding field trips, covering the cost of college application fees for first-generation students, and more.

After-School Enrichment: Your support helped launch the Empowerment Academy, an after-school program for teens. More than 200 teens benefited from life skills workshops, homework help, and peer tutoring.

Ready to Learn Coalition: Your generosity helped provide training in participant-led program design for SVEF and seven youth-serving nonprofit partners. As a result, for the August Red & White Ball, student ambassadors helped SVEF design and market the event.

PROGRAM INVESTMENTS



REVENUE

