

IMPACT REPORT

2020-2021



EMERGE



The mission of EMERGE is to empower and prepare high-performing students from underserved communities to attend and graduate from selective colleges and universities across the nation.

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MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The 2020-2021 school year was a time of learning, introspection, and deep reflection for EMERGE.

We entered the school year serving our largest class to date—2,800 students across five public school district partners (Spring Branch, Spring, Klein, Aldine and Houston Independent School Districts) and over 150 colleges and universities. Despite the many challenges, EMERGE students persevered:

- 98% of our students applied to a selective college
- 96% were accepted to a selective college
- 92% enrolled in a four-year college
- 74% enrolled in a selective four-year college

While we achieved incredible outcomes, the last year has taken an emotional toll on our students and staff as well as our district and college partners. The pandemic disproportionately impacted the students and families that we serve, and we have witnessed the direct outcomes. Students have lost immediate family members to the virus; learning loss is rampant — large numbers of EMERGE students have struggled academically, with some facing failing grades for the first time in their academic careers; mental health issues are at an all-time high; and many of our students who typically opted to explore colleges outside of the Houston limits made the difficult decision to stay home.

EMERGE has spent 11 years building a best-in-class model that is laser-focused on selective college access and completion. The pandemic has forced us to reshape this model to meet our students' needs in this unprecedented time. Over the past year, we launched new initiatives to adapt our program to the current landscape:

- Virtually hosting after-school sessions, summer college tours, and fall college recruitment fairs.



- Launching the “College Champions Board” to learn from leading selective college admissions professionals about the major shifts and changes to admissions during the pandemic to ensure our advising strategies remain relevant and up-to-date.
- Conducting the first diversity, equity, and inclusion audit to identify areas of growth and opportunity for EMERGE.
- Formalizing eight new college partnerships to ensure our students gain exposure to and graduate from top institutions. They include: Brandeis University, Occidental College, Pitzer College, Rice University, Saint Mary's College (IN), University of Richmond, University of Virginia, and Wabash College.

Thank you to all of our supporters and partners who have stepped up for EMERGE during the most difficult period in our history—we could not have done it without you. The time is now to ignite our passion to drive equity and college access for Houston students. The world has changed. It will take all of us to address the adverse long-term educational impact of the pandemic on the next generation of leaders.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Trisha Cornwell".

Trisha Cornwell
Executive Director

A close-up portrait of a young Black woman with curly hair, wearing glasses and a necklace, resting her chin on her hand. The background is a bright blue sky with some foliage. A teal banner at the top contains a quote in white cursive script.

"All I needed was the chance to imagine a different story for myself."

MI'DESTINI VICTORIAN

Lamar High School '18
Rhodes College '22

EMERGE changed my life by teaching me about financial opportunities awaiting me as a low-income, first-generation college student. Before EMERGE, I thought going to college would just be another financial burden, but the tools I received from this organization have allowed me to live a great college life absent of financial worry. I have had several internships, conducted my own research through the Rhodes Institute for Regional Studies, served as President of the Black Student Association, became a member of a Black, Greek-lettered sorority, cultivated relationships with some wonderful people and more.

OUR MODEL

DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP MODEL

EMERGE partners with traditional public school districts to identify high-performing students from underserved communities to join the program. We work together to eliminate barriers and build systems to ensure more students have the information, tools, and support to apply to the nation's top colleges and universities.



BEST-IN-CLASS ADVISING

Our goal is for every EMERGE senior to be one of the most competitive college applicants in the country. To do this, we reduce the student-to-college counselor ratio from 500:1 to 60:1 and focus on elevating the student profile. Between 10th and 12th grade, our team provides course and extracurricular advising, bi-weekly after-school sessions, SAT preparation, and support to enroll in a high-impact summer opportunity.

SELECTIVE COLLEGE EXPOSURE

Every summer, sophomores and juniors in the EMERGE program tour colleges in regions across the country. These trips are critical to building a college-going and selective-college mindset among students.



COLLEGE PERSISTENCE AND PARTNERSHIPS

The “to-through-and-thrive” vision of the college success team is built on the belief that, for students from low-income communities, getting accepted into a selective college is not enough. Our goal is for students to graduate on-time and be prepared to thrive in the job market. The college success team is prioritizing formalizing partnerships with colleges and universities to increase financial aid packages and to enhance the on-campus support services available to first-generation students from low-income communities.

2020-2021 HIGHLIGHTS

We served our largest class ever, of 2,800+ students.



When COVID forced us to cancel summer college tours, we pivoted to offer virtual visits featuring 36 colleges and universities with 279 students participating.



We formalized 8 key college partnerships, including Washington University at St. Louis, Rice, and UVA.

We paired students with Houston-area companies for 8- to 10-week internship opportunities designed to improve their leadership and professional skills.



We hosted career roundtables to connect students and alumni with leading professionals across a variety of industries for intimate engagement and learning opportunities.



Our mentor program paired high school seniors with community and business leaders to offer career and cultural exposure opportunities and to build long-lasting connections.



We helped re-enroll students who were forced to stop out of college due to COVID-related emergencies.

We completed a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion audit and began drafting a three-year DEI plan.



They saw the potential I had before I could even realize my own capabilities.

JORGE P.M.

Spring Early

College Academy '22

Columbia University '26

My favorite memory with EMERGE is opening my Columbia University acceptance letter. I can vividly remember the shock that I felt when it said "congratulations" on my computer screen. Instantly my mom, aunt, friends, and EMERGE program manager screamed in excitement seeing that I had been accepted to my dream school. So many thoughts went through my head, but the most important one was how EMERGE was an essential aspect to getting here. EMERGE has provided me with a multitude of opportunities that I never knew were there for me. Thank you so much EMERGE!



HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

TOP 10%

Class Rank

4.0+

GPA

1,500+

EMERGE high school students

67

High Schools Served Across 5 School Districts

94%

Qualify for Free/Reduced-Lunch

The Challenge

Only

13%

of students from Houston's low-income communities are expected to receive any sort of postsecondary credential.

Only

60%

of high-achieving students from low-income communities across the nation successfully matriculate to the selective college or university they've committed to attend.

Our Impact

98%

EMERGE students applied to at least one selective college or university

96%

EMERGE students were accepted to at least one selective college or university

92%

EMERGE students matriculated to a four-year college or university

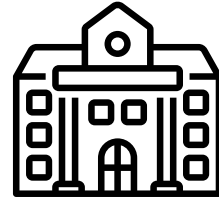
74%

EMERGE students matriculated to a selective four-year college or university

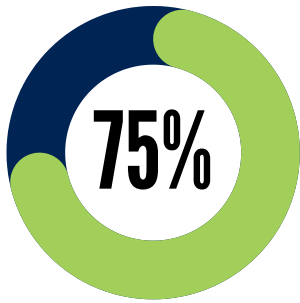
COLLEGE SUCCESS PROGRAM



1,300+
college students



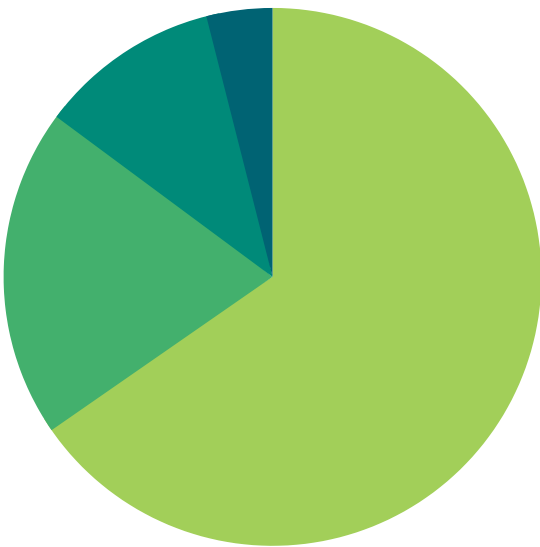
150+
colleges and universities attended



of the EMERGE college
Class of 2021 are on track
to graduate in six years.



16
formal partnerships with
universities including UT-Austin,
the University of Rochester, and
Notre Dame.



Demographics

High school and college

65% Latino/Hispanic
20% African American
11% Asian American
4% White

COLLEGE PARTNERSHIPS

At EMERGE, our core value of equity grounds our work. We believe that by building strategic partnerships with colleges and universities, we will, together, increase access and opportunity for high-performing students from underserved communities across the country. Every partnership we develop aims not only to improve access and affordability for our students, but also to ensure that we are working collectively to create inclusive policies, advising strategies, and persistence practices that ensure all students feel like they belong on campus and thrive post-graduation.

Schools that enter into a formal agreement with EMERGE commit to:



Collaborate with EMERGE on exposure opportunities, recruitment, admissions, and transition support.



Meet 100% of the demonstrated financial need of EMERGE students all the way through graduation.



Provide comprehensive student persistence support through graduation.



Offer specialized support to students who are the first in their families to attend college.

Our Partners

Brandeis University
Colby College
Colgate University
HCC Honors College
Occidental College
Pitzer College
Rice University

St. Mary's College
Trinity College
University of Notre Dame
University of Richmond
University of Texas at Austin
University of Virginia
Wabash College

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

as of July 31, 2021

ASSETS

Cash and cash equivalents	\$4,076,297
Government contributions receivable	\$289,267
Other contributions receivable	\$710,500
Prepaid expenses and other assets	\$39,498
Total assets	\$5,115,562

LIABILITIES

Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$22,855
Deferred Revenue	\$29,026
Refundable advance - special events	\$2,500
Total liabilities	\$54,381

NET ASSETS

Without donor restrictions	\$3,779,880
With donor restrictions	\$1,281,301
Total net assets	\$5,061,181
Total liabilities and net assets	\$5,115,562

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

as of July 31, 2021

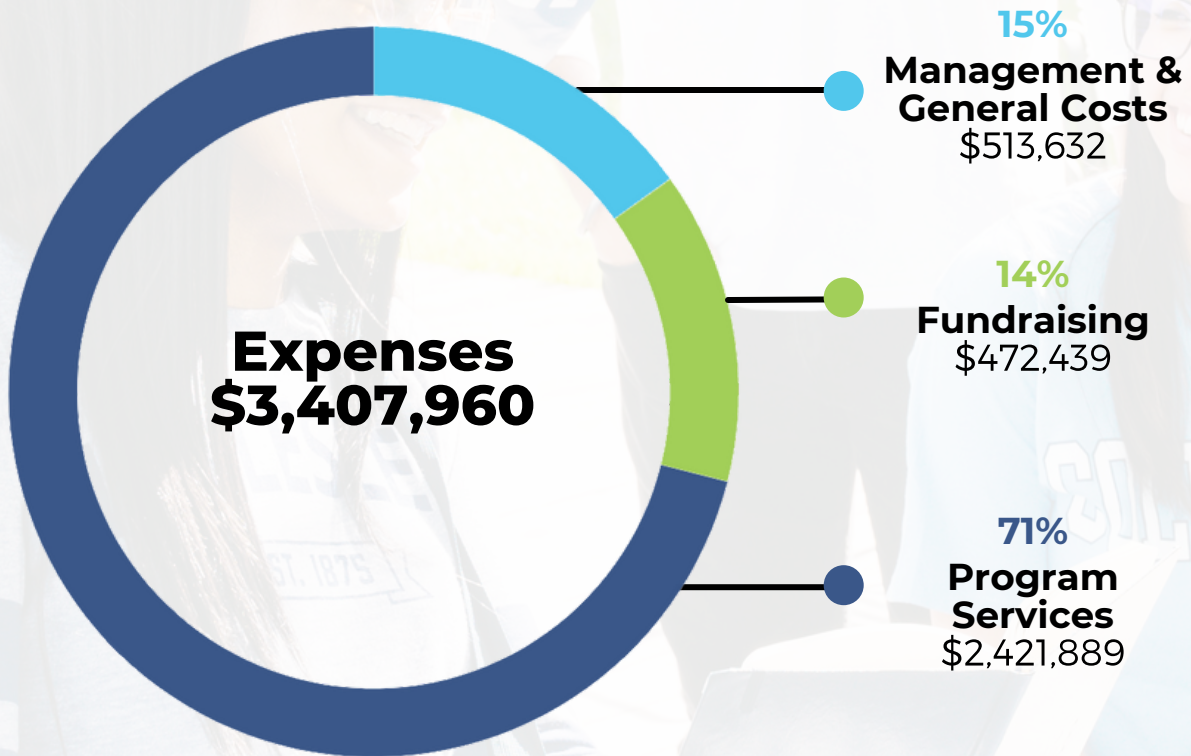
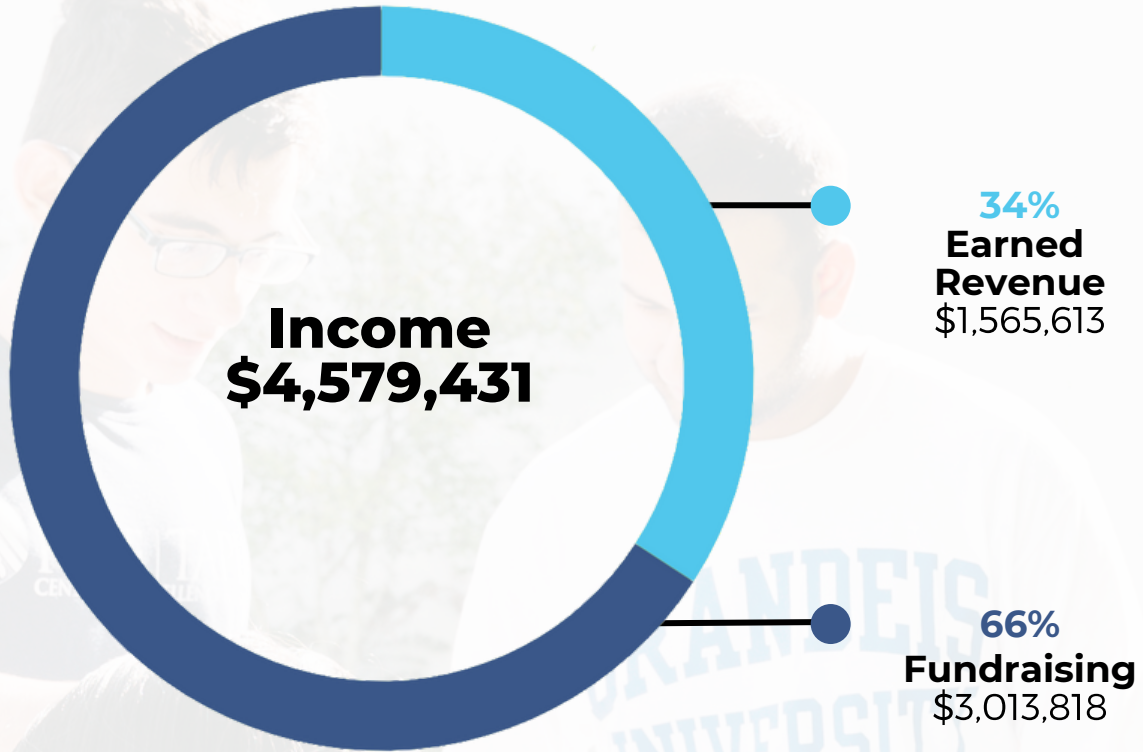
REVENUE

Contributions: Government grants	\$609,259
Contributions: Other	\$2,045,226
Program services fees	\$1,565,613
Special events	\$359,333
Total revenue	\$4,579,431

EXPENSES

Program services	\$2,421,889
Management and general	\$513,632
Fundraising	\$472,439
Total expenses	\$3,407,960

Changes in net assets	\$1,171,471
Net assets, beginning of year	\$3,889,710
Net assets, end of year	\$5,061,181



In FY21 our program services budget accounted for a smaller than usual portion of our total expenses because many major program expenses, such as costs related to annual college tours which were cancelled, were not incurred. Also, these figures do not include an additional \$1.9 million in program costs that were incurred as part of our contract to operate the EMERGE program in the Houston Independent School District. Combined program costs would be approximately \$4,332,000 or 81% of total costs for fiscal year 2021.

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

\$100,000+

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The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Huffington Foundation
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The Samuels Family Foundation

\$50,000 - \$99,999

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\$5,000 - \$14,999

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\$1,000 - \$4,999

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