think BIG for kids

Where Opportunity Leads

2026 Impact Report

Dear Friends,

The 2025-26 academic year marked an exciting milestone for Think Big for Kids: **we reached 10,000 kids served** since our founding in 2016. More importantly, we saw the power of our mission in action, helping young people discover who they are, what they can become, and how to get there.

Our students have talent, ambition and potential. What they need is access: to caring mentors, real-world experiences, education and employers that can change the trajectory of their lives. **That is where opportunity leads.**

We are building on what we know works. Think Big's three-pillar model – **Career Exploration, Mentorship, and Job Readiness & Placement** – gives students a continuum of support from middle school through high school and into their first career. This year, that model continued to produce meaningful results, while our growing network of volunteers, businesses, schools and community organizations helped us deepen our impact across the communities we serve.

Now, we are looking ahead with an even bigger vision, one shaped by the rapidly changing needs of the workforce and the evolving pathways to meaningful work. We will become the leading national ecosystem connecting students to mentorship, education and employment - bridging the divide between poverty and potential.

To our partners, mentors, volunteers, donors and supporters: **thank you.** Your time, belief and investment are helping young people think bigger, expect more and build futures without limits.

Where opportunity leads, lives can change.

With gratitude,

Amy Alley
Executive Director

Tony DiBenedetto
Founder and Board Chair

Who We Are

Think Big for Kids is a national non-profit with a mission to break the cycle of poverty by preparing kids to excel in today's workforce.

2 in 5
American Families

Are working yet struggle to meet the rising costs of basic living expenses. These are families who earn above the poverty line but fall short of what it takes to survive.*

(*source: United Way's United for ALICE framework)

Our Unique, Three-Pillar Program

We work with students beginning in middle school through high school and into young adulthood – as they transition to on-the-job training, technical programs or college.

Career Exploration

Mentorship

Job Readiness & Placement

How We Make It Happen

We partner with companies and volunteers to provide the awareness, guidance and support young people need to set and achieve their post-graduation goals.

Who We Serve

Teens and young adults who lack access to:

- Career awareness
- Post-high school planning
- Resources needed for secondary education
- Opportunity to achieve financial well-being

Our Target

To provide every student with the education and opportunities to achieve their career plan and earn a livable wage.

10,000
KIDS SERVED SINCE 2016

Where We Serve Kids

- **Tampa Bay, FL** (Headquarters)
- **Atlanta, GA**
- **Dallas, TX**
- **New Jersey**
- **Greater Washington, D.C.**

2025-26 Academic Year Highlights

150+
Corporate and Affiliate Partners

500+
Volunteers

59
Program Sites

350+
Career Showcases, Field Trips & Workshops

20%+
Growth in Mentor/Mentee Pairings

2,109
Students Actively Participated in Programming

130
Scholarship Recipients

$290K+
Scholarships Awarded

Thank You To Our Strategic Partners

A-LIGN

APPSPACE

Fairfax County Economic Development Authority

FIY USA

GROW FINANCIAL

NEXTPATH WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS

RELIAQUEST

ROGER WEST CREATIVE & CODE

Tony DiBenedetto, Think Big Founder & Chair, with Thomas Feindt, CEO of Grow Financial (2026 Partner Company of the Year)

Where Opportunity Leads to DISCOVERY

PILLAR ONE

Career Exploration

Designed to spark passion and build confidence, Think Big's Career Exploration pillar opens the door to discovery, introducing middle schoolers to a wide range of industries and career paths. Our programs help students discover their strengths, explore new possibilities and begin developing a plan for success. Through hands-on showcases, field trips and soft-skills workshops, our volunteers bring hope and possibility during these pivotal teen years.

How We Provide Career Exploration:

- Multiple industries
- Companies of all sizes
- Available jobs & roles
- Career paths
- Career & personality affinity
- Soft-skills development
- Workforce trends

2025-26 Academic Year Results

By the Numbers

1,750
student participants

353
career showcases, workshops & field trips

Student Surveys

89%
discovered at least one career they might want to pursue.

89%
would recommend Think Big to a friend.

Partner's Perspective

> "I think the best partnerships use each organization's strengths to multiply impact. Our work with Think Big for Kids is fun and fulfilling because it allows us to put our marketing expertise behind a mission we deeply believe in and step directly into classrooms to help the next generation discover career paths for their futures they may never have imagined."
>
> Misti Ferris, Chief Operating Officer, Roger West

Responding to the Needs of the Workforce

Think Big's Career Exploration pillar connects students to high-demand careers and pathways aligned with the evolving workforce. Guided by the National Career Clusters Framework®, we partner with companies across all 16 career clusters to expose students to emerging opportunities and related educational pathways through trades, apprenticeships, certifications, and two- and four-year degrees.

Exposure to the Trades

Through Career Showcases with partners like **Turner Construction** and **Rogers Electric**, students in Atlanta gained firsthand exposure to the skilled trades. By exploring construction and electrical careers, connecting with professionals and participating in interactive experiences, students had the opportunity to experience how the trades can lead to rewarding, in-demand careers.

Building the Talent Pipeline

Angie Brown, leadership coach for A-LIGN, leads a career showcase focused on careers in cybersecurity. As a national leader in cybersecurity, **A-LIGN** generously provides time, talent and resources to developing future talent to fill a variety of high-demand roles.

Hands-On Field Trips

Thanks to a partnership with **NBA Cares**, Think Big students in New Jersey toured NBA headquarters in New York City, participated in a panel discussion with current NBA interns, and gained invaluable insight into the wide range of career paths that help power one of the world's most recognizable sports organizations.

Where Opportunity Leads to CONNECTION

2025-26 Academic Year Results

22%
year-over-year growth in formalized mentor/ mentee pairings

100%
of Think Big's high school senior mentees are taking action toward achieving their career goals.

PILLAR TWO

Mentorship

Think Big's Mentorship pillar builds connection through personalized educational and career guidance. Students are paired with a mentor in high school or throughout their post-graduation journey, creating a trusted relationship that can make all the difference. Mentors help students choose the right path, stay accountable and plan for life after high school. Think Big mentors provide consistent support and stability as students transition into adulthood and pursue their personal and professional goals.

How We Provide Mentorship

- Goal setting & accountability
- Development of educational & career paths
- Course & academic program selection
- Regular meetings & touch points
- Pairing based on career interest & personality

Mentorship Impact

Going the Distance

Mentor: Kamila Khasanova,
Founder & CEO, On Top Strategy

Mentee: Melina, Class of 2024,
Think Big scholarship recipient

Paired: 2022

When Melina was paired with Kamila, their connection quickly became more than a traditional mentorship. For Jan, Melina's mom, having a trusted guide was especially meaningful as her daughter prepared to pursue her dream of living and studying in New York City.

> **"If the definition of a mentor is a trusted guide, that was probably the most impactful part."**
>
> Jan, Melina's mom

Kamila helped Melina build practical skills, including creating a resume and cover letter and preparing for mock interviews. She supported Melina at her senior year fashion show and, after moving to New York herself, invited Melina to experience the city firsthand. Their relationship grew to include conversations about careers, life skills and navigating the challenges of living independently.

> **"Melina is one of the brightest and most interesting people I have ever met. I am so proud of her, being brave enough to pursue her big dream."**
>
> Kamila, Melina's mentor

After graduating from cosmetology school in Florida, Melina moved to New York, where she works at a Brooklyn salon. She attends the Fashion Institute of Technology, studying Fashion Business Management. Her dream is to eventually open her own boutique and start an artist co-op.

Melina shown with her mentor, Kamila, upper left, and her mother, Jan, on the right.

Mentorship Impact

Mentor Jake Halusic with his mentee, William.

Seeing Success Unfold

Mentor: Jake Halusic, Founder & CEO of Trofeo

Mentee: William, Class of 2026, Think Big scholarship recipient

Paired: 2023

When Jake first met William through Think Big, William was quiet and unsure about his future. He loved video games, collecting sneakers and building computers, but didn't yet know where those interests might lead. Jake committed to helping him explore what was possible.

> **" I really wanted to see a kid take it from his freshman year in high school all the way through and get to be a part of that success and see it unfold."**
> Jake, William's mentor

Together, they explored careers, narrowed college options and focused on improving William's GPA and test scores. William discovered an interest in technology and cybersecurity, while also growing as a student, athlete and leader.

> **"I have more capability to be successful than I really think. I thank Jake for supporting me through all of high school to get to where I am now."**
> William, Jake's mentee

Today, William is pursuing cybersecurity at Hillsborough College, with plans to transfer to a four-year university. He was the recipient of the 2026 Trofeo Ambition Scholarship.

Where Opportunity Leads to PREPARATION

PILLAR THREE

Job Readiness & Placement

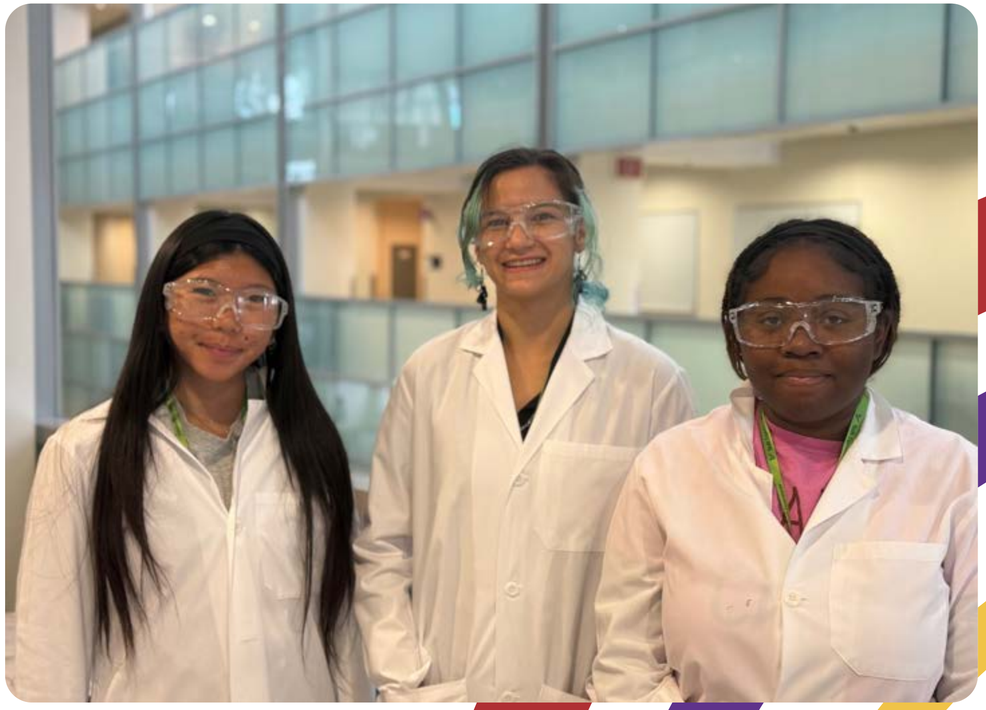
Think Big's Job Readiness & Placement pillar prepares kids to transition into young adulthood with the resources and support to pursue their career goals. We offer multiple opportunities for skills development, work experience and scholarships beginning in high school through the completion of on-the-job training, technical programs or college. Our target is for every student to enter the workforce earning a livable wage in a career of their choice.

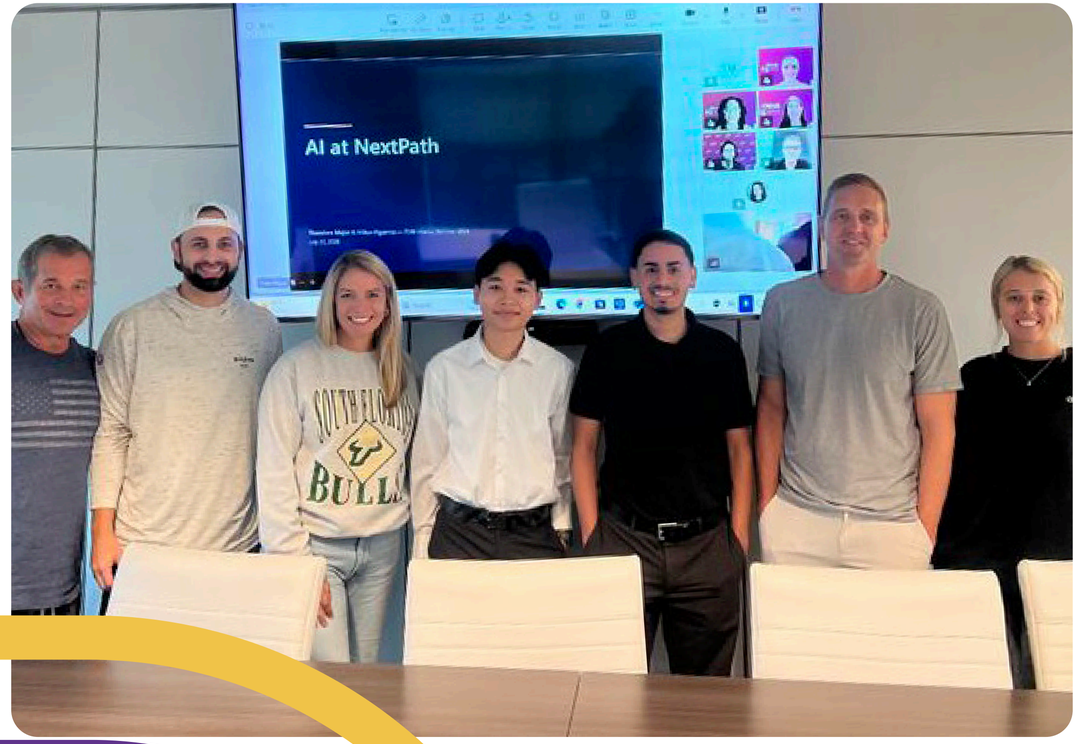
How We Prepare Tomorrow's Workforce

- Job shadowing
- Skills development workshops
- Internships
- Apprenticeships
- Scholarships for trade schools, community college, universities
- First-year college preparation
- Job placement assistance

Immersive Experiences

Think Big students gained firsthand exposure to college and career pathways through immersive experiences. From living on campus at the **Stevens Institute of Technology Pre-College Summer Residential Program in New Jersey** to exploring healthcare careers through **USF–Moffitt's Oncology Summer Program in Tampa**, students engaged in hands-on learning, simulations and real-world interactions with professionals. These experiences bring careers to life, building confidence, skills and a clearer path to workforce success.





Internships: Summers That Shape Futures

Employers welcomed students ages 15 to 22 into paid summer internships, giving them the opportunity to put their interests into practice. Students gained valuable workplace experience, developed professional skills and built relationships that can open doors to future opportunities.

INTERNSHIP HIGHLIGHT

NextPath Workforce Solutions

Think Big interns gained experience applying artificial intelligence in a real business environment. Working alongside NextPath's team, they explored AI-powered solutions, tested new ideas and contributed to projects supporting recruitment and client services before presenting their work at the conclusion of the internship. **Both students were offered jobs following their internships** — a powerful example of how immersive experiences can turn into real career opportunities.

> **"Having a supportive team available to guide me through challenges and provide constructive critique definitely had a positive impact on my progress this summer... AI's biggest strength is collaboration. It enhances what you're capable of, but the judgment call is always yours."**
>
> Milton, computer science major, University of South Florida (third from right)

INTERNSHIP HIGHLIGHT

Grow Financial™

Think Big interns explored how financial services can respond to real community needs. Through a walking tour and conversations with community stakeholders, they examined challenges including transportation, credit, income, job access and technology. Their experience culminated in a proposed “Grow Passport,” a loyalty program designed to encourage financial education, mobile banking and progress toward financial goals.

Top skills developed during their internships:

- Communications
- Professionalism
- Public Speaking
- Confidence
- Leadership
- Teamwork

2025-26 Academic Year Intern Survey

92%

rated their overall experience as excellent or good.

100%

said it helped them see opportunities they never considered.

Scholarship Highlights

$1.3 Million Awarded to Over 350 Students Since 2020

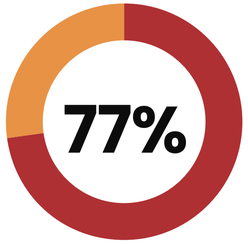
Think Big scholarships provide opportunities for deserving students to attend technical or trade school, community college, or a four-year university in pursuit of their chosen career path. From one scholarship recipient in 2020 to 130 students supported for the 2025-26 academic year, Think Big has now awarded more than $1.3 million in scholarships to over 350 students across Tampa Bay, Greater Washington, D.C. and New Jersey.

Top three areas of intended study:

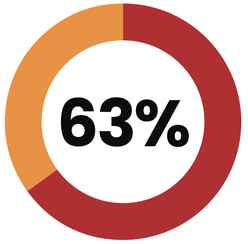
- Healthcare
- STEM
- Business

2025-26 Academic Year Results

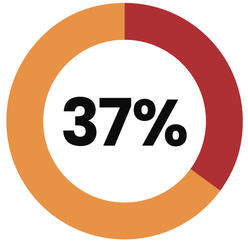
Think Big awarded over $290,000 to 130 students:



are first-generation college students



are attending a four-year university



are attending community college

are pursuing trades or technical certifications

How Students Use Scholarship Funds

- Tuition
- Technical / Trades Certifications
- Books
- Educational Materials

Continuum of Support

Think Big supports students throughout their educational journey as needed. Students may reapply for scholarships following their first year of education after high school. Eric is a three-time Think Big scholarship recipient and attends Central Connecticut State University, majoring in Business Management.

Beyond the Tassel

At Educate Fairfax's second annual Beyond the Tassel celebration, Think Big celebrated the Class of 2026 and their bright futures. Through our partnership with **Educate Fairfax** and the **Fairfax County Economic Development Authority**, Think Big expanded its scholarship impact in Greater Washington, D.C., awarding six "Think Big Expect More" scholarships to graduating seniors across Fairfax County Public Schools.

Celebrating Big Achievements

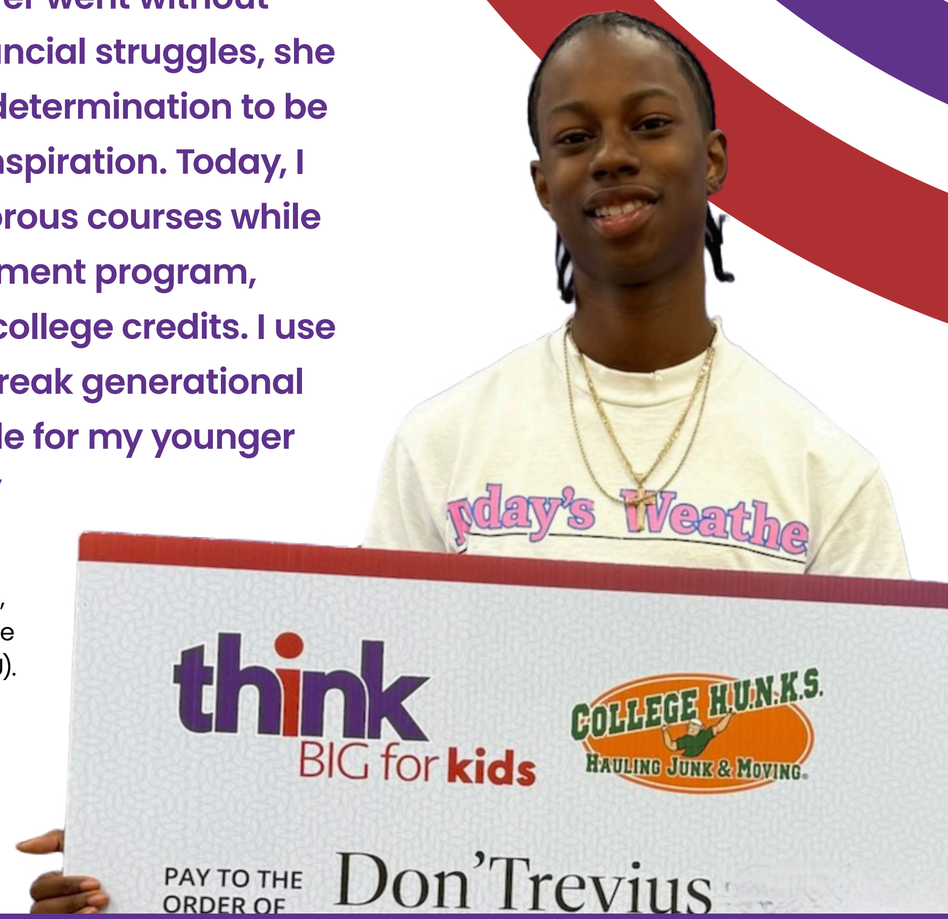
Think Big's annual scholarship event was held in May at Feeding Tampa Bay. Scholarship recipients, their families and friends of Think Big enjoyed an afternoon of celebration. Tampa Bay 28 morning news anchor Andrew Kinsey served as the event's emcee, and two former Think Big scholarship recipients shared their powerful stories, insights and advice for the graduating class:

- **Matthew Major** (Class of 2024, USF class of 2026, bachelor's degree in business management)
- **Da'Nae Turner** (Class of 2022, senior at FAMU majoring in nursing)

In His Words

> **"My mother, a single parent, has carried the weight of our family. Making sure I never went without despite the emotional and financial struggles, she has remained strong and her determination to be a great mother has been my inspiration. Today, I am proud to be enrolled in rigorous courses while participating in the dual enrollment program, earning both high school and college credits. I use my setback as motivation to break generational barriers and setting an example for my younger sister, family, and community."**

Don'Trevius is the 2026 recipient of the Think Big Building Tomorrow's Leaders Scholarship, sponsored by College Hunks Hauling Junk. He is a freshman at Florida A&M University (FAMU).



Where Opportunity Leads to CAREERS

The Journey Continues

At Think Big for Kids, our goal is to help students discover their potential, prepare for careers they love and build futures filled with opportunity. Luis Rosario and Cailynne Cornelius are two inspiring examples of that journey - young adults who turned exploration, mentorship and educational support with Think Big into careers with purpose and promise.

Luis Rosario: From Scholarship Recipient to ER Nurse

- High School Class of 2021
- Florida Gulf Coast University Class of 2025
- Employed full-time as an ER nurse

Luis Rosario's journey with Think Big began as a scholarship recipient in 2021. A first-generation college student, Luis received the financial support he needed to focus on earning his bachelor's degree at Florida Gulf Coast University, where he graduated in 2025.

During college, Luis was paired with a Think Big mentor, Bruce, who helped guide him through important decisions, including his decision to change his major and pursue nursing. Although healthcare had always interested him, Luis says nursing ultimately felt like the path he was meant to follow.

> "I always knew I wanted to help people and be in healthcare," Luis says. "The path to nursing was constantly calling my name, and it is the best choice I could have made."

Today, Luis is an ER nurse in Fort Myers, Florida, where he thrives in the fast-paced environment and finds purpose in caring for patients during some of their most vulnerable moments.

For Luis, the impact of Think Big goes beyond a scholarship.

> "To be able to invest into the youth of the future and give them this opportunity to chase a dream...is a blessing."

Cailynne Cornelius: From Career Exploration to a Future in Psychology

- High School Class of 2022 (dual enrollment)
- Florida Atlantic University Class of 2024
- Employed full-time at Psychological Assessment Resources
- Pursuing a master's degree

Cailynne Cornelius discovered her passion for psychology while still in high school. After taking psychology during her junior year and AP psychology as a senior, she began envisioning a future in the field.

After graduating from high school in 2022, Cailynne earned her bachelor's degree in psychology from Florida Atlantic University in 2024. Today, she works full-time at Psychological Assessment Resources (PAR) while pursuing a master's degree in industrial-organizational psychology. Her interests include employee well-being, workplace culture, diversity and helping people find greater happiness at work.

Think Big supported Cailynne with a $5,000 scholarship, collegiate counseling and a mentor, Maia, who provided guidance throughout her journey.

> "Having Maia has been such a blessing," Cailynne says. "She's been great to have as someone to get advice from."

Cailynne hopes to help create workplaces where people can thrive. Her message to other students pursuing their dreams is simple: **"It can be done."**

Where Opportunity Leads to ENGAGEMENT

Volunteer Impact

From career showcase hosts and mentors to committee members and community advocates, the Think Big network turns engagement into impact. This year, more than 500 volunteers shared their time, expertise and encouragement, creating a powerful community of support that helps kids envision and achieve a future without limits.

Think Big for Kids National Board of Directors

Tony DiBenedetto
Founder and Board Chair

Amy Alley
Executive Director

Holly Grogan
Vice Chair

Jennifer Williams
Secretary

Jack Rybicki
Treasurer

Michael Batt

Saxon Baum

Melinda Perez

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- Gerald Barclay
- Dana Barrett
- David Brown
- Dom Cristelli, Chair
- Kina Franklin
- Caitlin Kennedy
- Jackie Parker
- Leslie Roberts
- Brett Ward
- Phil Watson
- Donte Wilder
- Georgia Williams

Dallas Advisory Board

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- Mandi Crume
- Rosa Manges
- Izzy Ramirez
- Duke Skarda

New Jersey Advisory Board

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- Jaime Bowman
- Tyler Bowman
- Jacqueline Breslauer
- Mike Corridon
- Laura Crowley
- Sally Glick
- Mike Goor
- Mark Kuehn
- Kirthi Mani
- Elizabeth Matlaga
- Richard Shorten

Greater Washington, D.C. Advisory Board

- Amir Capriles, Co-Chair
- Stacey Dessecker
- Andrea Evans
- Julie Holmes
- Layla Mailoudi
- Nathan Mart
- Marc Matthie
- Caryn McGarry
- Jocelyn Murray
- Michael O'Shaughnessy
- Peter Pilawa
- Catie Ramos
- Kelly Robucci, Co-Chair
- Sarah Sava
- Chris Tacinelli
- Jennifer Taylor

Tampa Bay Advisory Board

- Missy Hurley
- Irina Khasin
- Stephanie Markese, Chair
- Bob Riddell
- Shirley Anne Smith
- Jennifer Sparano

2025-26 Volunteers of the Year

Ava Berzinsky
New Jersey

Omari Frazier
New Jersey

Irina Khasin
Tampa Bay

Randy Norris
Tampa Bay

Tyler Pusey
New Jersey

Jennifer Williams
Tampa Bay

Where Opportunity Leads to Leadership

Think Big Advisory Board members from every region came together in March for our annual retreat. Held in Dallas, the retreat is designed to align on priorities, share ideas and strengthen strategies for expanding Think Big's impact. Their leadership and collective commitment help create more opportunities for kids by building partnerships, expanding programming and raising funds on a local level.

Front row: Layla Mailoudi (Greater Washington); Stephanie Markese (Tampa Bay); and Kelly Robucci (Greater Washington).

Back row: Georgia Williams (Atlanta); John Carradine (Dallas); Jenna Teschel (Think Big Director of Regional Programs); Cindi Jacobsen (Think Big Director of Programs); Elizabeth Matlaga (New Jersey); Rosa Manges (Dallas); Phil Watson (Atlanta); and Jim Bowman (New Jersey).

Tampa Bay Appreciation Event

The Think Big for Kids 2026 Appreciation Event brought together over 250 volunteers, mentors, donors, board members and partners for a special celebration of those who support Think Big's mission. Held February at the Tampa River Center, the annual event was once again sponsored by Strategic Partner, ReliaQuest. In addition to the presentation of 2025 Partner Companies and Volunteers of the Year, the evening featured a musical performance by Dr. Alex Harris, singer, producer and co-founder of Arts Conservatory for Teens.

TRUE NORTH SOCIETY think BIG for kids

The True North Society is our group of Tampa Bay–based young professionals supporting Think Big's mission. In addition to volunteering across all three program pillars, True North hosts networking events and the signature Chips for Charity fundraiser, which supports True North Passion Scholarships for deserving high school seniors.

340
Members

58
Think Big Mentors

50+
True North Passion Scholarship Recipients

$100,000+
Raised in Scholarship Funds

The True North Society Board

- Saxon Baum, Chair
- Patrick Bonanno
- Marla Carangi
- Peter Cecora
- Jacey Hanley
- Samantha Jacobsen
- Meghan O'Keefe
- Guilherme Sesterheim
- Omar Soliman
- Sam Stein
- CJ Steadman
- Kathryn Terry
- Kendall Walker

Alexandra is a 2026 recipient of the True North Passion Scholarship.

Third Annual "Chips for Charity"

With a "Vintage Vegas Glam" theme, True North's third annual Chips for Charity event on April 17 brought together over 150 supporters for an evening of fun and impact at the Hyde House Public Studio in Tampa. Proceeds from the fundraiser provided True North Passion Scholarships to 16 deserving students for the 2025–26 academic year.

Where Opportunity Leads to COLLABORATION

Partner Impact

This year, more than 150 partners, from businesses and schools to nonprofit organizations, collaborated with Think Big to extend our reach and impact. Through volunteering, critical resources and programming support, their collaboration is helping to build pathways of opportunity and strengthen the communities Think Big students will one day lead.

Think Big's strategic partners receive the highest recognition for their participation in our programming, generous financial contributions, and tireless support of our mission.

Strategic partners commit to three-year investments in Think Big, with annual contributions ranging from: **$25K–$125K**

National Partner Companies

- 3 Cloud Solutions
- 360 Advanced
- A Plus Group Solutions
- A-LIGN
- Accenture
- Access Self Storage
- AGE-SE
- Amazon Web Service
- American Wear
- AOE Creative
- Appspace
- Archway Partners
- Bank of America
- Baycare Health Systems
- Bloom Catch
- Bohler Engineering
- Chick-fil-A
- Citi
- Citrin Cooperman
- CLA
- Clark Construction
- College Hunks Hauling Junk
- Columbia Bank
- Contract Leasing
- Crestron
- Crisis Center of Tampa Bay
- Daines Financial
- DCE Productions
- Design Noon
- DPR Construction
- Fairfax County Economic Development Authority
- Fairfax County Government
- Felician University
- Ferring Pharmaceuticals
- Florida Funders
- FlyUSA
- General Dynamics Information Technology
- Goodwin Living
- GOROVE SLADE
- Gourmet Kitchen
- Granicus
- Greenberg Traurig
- Grow Financial
- Hays
- HDR
- Hilton
- Humane Society of Tampa Bay
- ICF
- Inova
- JDP Electric
- Johnson & Johnson
- JP Morgan Chase
- Life Science Cares
- Lincoln Tech
- Lingo
- Mack Boring & Parts
- Mettler Toledo
- Microsoft
- NanTech
- NBA
- New Jersey Land Improvement Contractors of America
- NextPath Workforce Solutions
- Northern Virginia Technology Council (NVTC)
- Open Wallet Initiative
- Oracle
- Orlando Health
- Passaic County Sheriff's Office
- Phillip Jeffries
- Port Jersey Logistics
- Pro Housing
- Publix
- Raymond James
- ReliaQuest
- Rivero, Gordimer & Co
- Roger West
- Rogers Electric
- Seacoast Bank
- Sewing Lab
- Situation Project
- Souper Jenny
- Stevens Institute of Technology
- Suncoast Credit Union
- Sunrun
- Systems Planning & Analysis, Inc
- Tampa Bay Buccaneers
- Tampa General Hospital
- Tampa Electric Company
- Trilogy Sound Studio
- Trofeo
- Truist
- Turner Construction
- University of South Florida
- Valley Health
- Verizon
- Virginia Tire & Auto
- WestCMR

2024-25 Partner Companies of the Year

Stephanie Markese, Chief Strategy Officer of NextPath Workforce Solutions, receives the 2026 Partner Company of the Year award on behalf of the NextPath team. Tony DiBenedetto, Think Big's Founder & Chair, and Amy Alley Think Big's Executive Director, presented the award during the Tampa Bay Volunteer Appreciation event in February.

Strategic Partner Perspective

"The future of work is changing faster than ever and preparing young people for what lies ahead requires more than traditional education. Think Big is connecting students to career discovery, real-world experiences and the skills they need to navigate an evolving workforce. **By helping students understand where their talents can take them, and what employers will need from them, Think Big is building a stronger talent pipeline while opening doors to opportunity for the next generation.**"

Holly Grogan
President of strategic partner Appspace and Vice Chair of the Think Big National Board of Directors

Vanessa Mericle, Director of Learning & Development at ReliaQuest, is shown here with her mentee, Brooklyn, a 2026 Think Big scholarship recipient. Vanessa has been a mentor to Brooklyn since 2024. **Think Big strategic partner ReliaQuest** has been an avid supporter of Think Big since our founding, providing critical funding, event sponsorship, programming and volunteers like Vanessa who generously give of their time and talents.

Affiliate Partners

Think Big's Affiliate Partners are non-profit organizations, schools and other community groups that enable us to reach and serve more kids without requiring a brick-and-mortar location. Through formal collaborations and a shared purpose, these partners generously provide the programming sites, resources and support necessary to scale growth and impact.

- After School All-Stars
- Boys & Girls Club of Clifton
- Boys & Girls Club of Garfield
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Dallas
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Atlanta
- Boys & Girls Club of Monmouth County
- Boys & Girls Club of Paterson and Passaic
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Tampa Bay
- City of Pinellas Park
- City of St. Petersburg
- Educate Fairfax
- Elevate Tampa Bay
- Fairfax County Public Schools
- Frameworks of Tampa Bay
- Friendship Christian Academy
- Hillsborough County Public Schools
- Hillsborough Education Foundation
- Metropolitan YMCA of the Oranges
- Pinellas Education Foundation
- Tampa Bay Tech
- Triad Foundation
- United Way Suncoas7

Think Big Atlanta Receives Game Changer Award

Think Big's Atlanta region was recognized with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Atlanta's Game Changer Award during the April 24 Atlanta Cluster Awards, which honors individuals and organizations going above and beyond to create meaningful, lasting impact. Think Big's programming and partnerships in Atlanta are quickly expanding, thanks to the dedication of our Advisory Board Members.

Think Big Atlanta Advisory Board members Georgia Williams, Dom Cristelli (chair) and Kina Franklin (right) accept the Atlanta Cluster Game Changer Award.

Affiliate Partner Perspective

> "My students are full of talent and ambition, but for most, there is a fundamental lack of direct access to working professionals. They have the drive, but without connections, industry exposure, or someone to show them the ropes, entire career paths may remain completely invisible. The guests who stepped into our classroom brought invaluable insight and expertise... **Think Big is a lighted path, helping our students find their way to destinations they never even knew existed.**"

Sonja Lutz
AVID Coordinator, Leto High School

Where Opportunity Leads to CHANGE

Community Impact

Think Big is advancing education, engagement and thought leadership in support of our mission, and we couldn't do it without the community that shows up, participates and believes in what's possible for our kids. This year, our strategic initiatives brought people and organizations together in unity around a shared commitment to opportunity.

Mentorship with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers

Think Big was proud to begin a partnership with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers through a Player-Student Mentoring Program that helps teens build leadership, teamwork and life skills. Across four sessions, Think Big volunteers and students worked alongside Bucs players, cheerleaders and staff, connecting lessons from the field to success in school, careers and life. Through hands-on activities, personal stories and meaningful conversations, students explored communication, leadership, goal setting and career pathways. They also gained a behind-the-scenes look at careers within and beyond professional sports, expanding their vision for what's possible.

ReliaQuest Bowl: Community Investment, Lasting Impact

Think Big students, volunteers and team members took the field during the ReliaQuest Bowl game on December 31 to accept the 2025 Make It Possible Award.

For the fourth consecutive year, the ReliaQuest Bowl made a generous investment in Think Big, helping provide students with meaningful career exploration, mentorship and job-readiness experiences. On December 31 during the ReliaQuest Bowl game, Think Big, alongside Junior Achievement of Tampa Bay, received the 2025 Make It Possible Award, recognizing organizations making a meaningful difference in developing the next generation of talent. We are grateful for the ReliaQuest Bowl's continued investment in helping Tampa Bay students see what's possible - and make it possible.

Cindi Jacobsen, Think Big's Director of Programs, and Amy Alley, Think Big's Executive Director, accepted a $10,000 donation in June from Abby Hope (right) on behalf of the ReliaQuest Bowl.

American Enterprise Summit in the Nation's Capital

Through Think Big's partnership with the **Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans**, Think Big students from Williams Middle Magnet School in Tampa had the opportunity to participate in the organization's third annual American Enterprise Summit in Washington, D.C. The five-day, all expense paid experience brought together 144 rising eighth-grade students and teachers from across the country to explore the principles of free enterprise, the American Dream and the opportunities that education can provide.

> "I had never been to Washington, D.C., so experiencing the American Enterprise Summit alongside 10 amazing rising 8th graders made the trip even more meaningful. **Watching students connect the principles of the American Dream and free enterprise to the stories and history preserved in our nation's archives and monuments was inspiring, and the memories we made together will last a lifetime.** THANK YOU for this wonderful opportunity!"
>
> **Kellie Norton**
> IB MYP Coordinator, Williams Middle Magnet School

Community Conversations: Think Bigger Voices Podcast

Think Bigger Voices launched its second season, featuring more than 15 changemakers, experts and advocates from Atlanta, Greater Washington, D.C., and Tampa Bay. The podcast brings important conversations about systemic poverty to a broader audience, spotlighting success stories, sharing proven solutions and inspiring action to create more pathways of opportunity for kids across America. Guests weighed in on topics ranging from youth sports development and healthcare to economic development and post-secondary education.

Where Opportunity Leads to PROGRESS

Donor Impact

Every opportunity we create begins with a donor who believes in what's possible. The generosity of individuals, corporations and foundations provides the resources that enable Think Big for Kids to prepare students for success - from their first career exploration experience through mentorship, internships, scholarships and their first professional opportunity. Together, our donors help turn potential into progress.

Investment in Opportunity

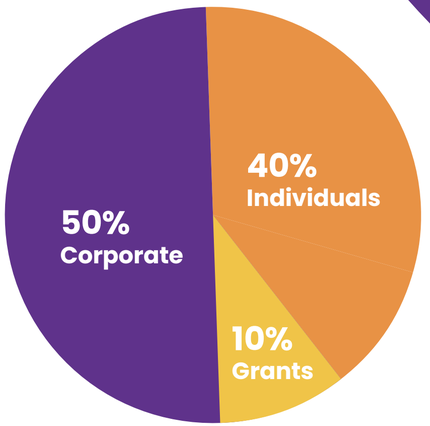
Financial and in-kind support allows Think Big to expand access to the critical resources and experiences students need to build a future without limits, including:

- ✔ **Scholarships and paid internships**
- ✔ **Career exploration and pathway development**
- ✔ **Resources and support for students and graduates**
- ✔ **Technology, transportation and program needs**

Think Big for Kids is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Tax ID: 83-3979138

Think Big's Funding at a Glance

$1.4M Annual operating budget



Corporate Generosity in Action

DCE PRODUCTIONS

Think Big is proud to partner with DCE Productions, whose generous $10,000 grant supported our Journey Without Limits video and audiovisual needs for the Tampa Bay Volunteer Appreciation Event. We're grateful for DCE's partnership, support and commitment to helping students discover career pathways in event production.

think BIG for kids

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EIN # 83-3978138