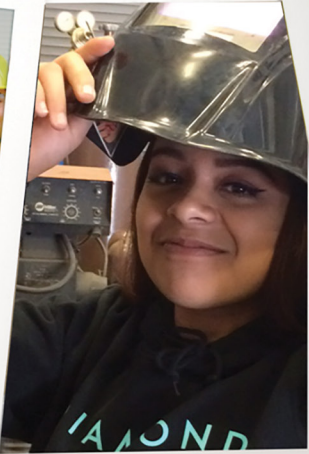




AVENUE SCHOLARS.
Your Foundation for Success



PICTURE SUCCESS

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Director of Community Engagement and
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Ana Lopez Shalla
Director of Business Outreach

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Sr. Director of Human Resources &
Administrative Services

HIGH SCHOOL TEAM

Taleya Broadway
Omaha Northwest Career Coach

Kayla Gillian
Millard South Career Coach

Terrence Gillian
Omaha Benson Career Coach

Allison Goff
Millard North Career Coach

Ashley Knott
Papillion La Vista Career Coach

Beth Leach
Ralston Career Coach

Kamina Lemons
Omaha Bryan Career Coach

Alejandra Soto-Suarez
Omaha South Career Coach

Fred Starks
Omaha North Career Coach

**POSTSECONDARY/
CAREER TEAM**

Dan Corral
Postsecondary Career Coach

Tonya Fairgood
Postsecondary Career Coach

Michael Johnson
Postsecondary Career Coach

Amanda Lonergan
Postsecondary Career Coach

Canei Rodriquez
Postsecondary Career Coach

Anthony Tate
Postsecondary Career Coach

STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM

Janae Donaldson
Student Support Coordinator

Stephanie Kellum
Student Support Coordinator

BUSINESS OUTREACH TEAM

Lindsay Decker
Business Outreach Coordinator

Kathy McGauvran
Business Outreach Coordinator

Jan Benitez
Internship Coordinator - Intern Omaha

Allie Thompson
Internship Coordinator - Intern Omaha

PROGRAM/ADMIN SUPPORT

Catie Dagle
Manager of Information Services

Penny Darnell
Accounting Manager

Beverly Hass
Executive Assistant to CEO
& Events Coordinator

Laurie Merten
Office & Staff Assistant

Doug Pierson
Special Projects Coordinator

Companion Initiatives Intern Omaha



Intern Omaha was launched through a partnership between Millard Public Schools and Avenue Scholars in the spring of 2019. The program draws together youth, schools, and employers from across the community in a collective effort to provide year-long, co-curricular, paid internships for high school seniors in high-demand industries, including information technology, building trades/manufacturing, auto/diesel technology, and business.

Intern Omaha has experienced remarkable growth in the short time since its inception. The program’s pilot year in 2019-2020 consisted of 16 participating local businesses and 28 student interns. The 2021-22 program year will include over 100 participating businesses, which are anticipated to provide over 225 internships to high school seniors in five Omaha-area school districts.

Career EdVantage Southwest Iowa

In 2019, Avenue Scholars collaborated with the Charles E. Lakin Foundation to expand the Avenue Scholars programming model into southwest Iowa through the creation of a new organization, Career EdVantage Southwest Iowa.

The organization launched in July of 2019, and in its inaugural year, served 20 high school juniors across four rural southwest Iowa school districts:

- AHSTW (Avoca, Hancock, Shelby, Tennant, and Walnut) Community School District;
- Riverside Community School District;
- Shenandoah Community School District; and
- Tri-Center Community School District.

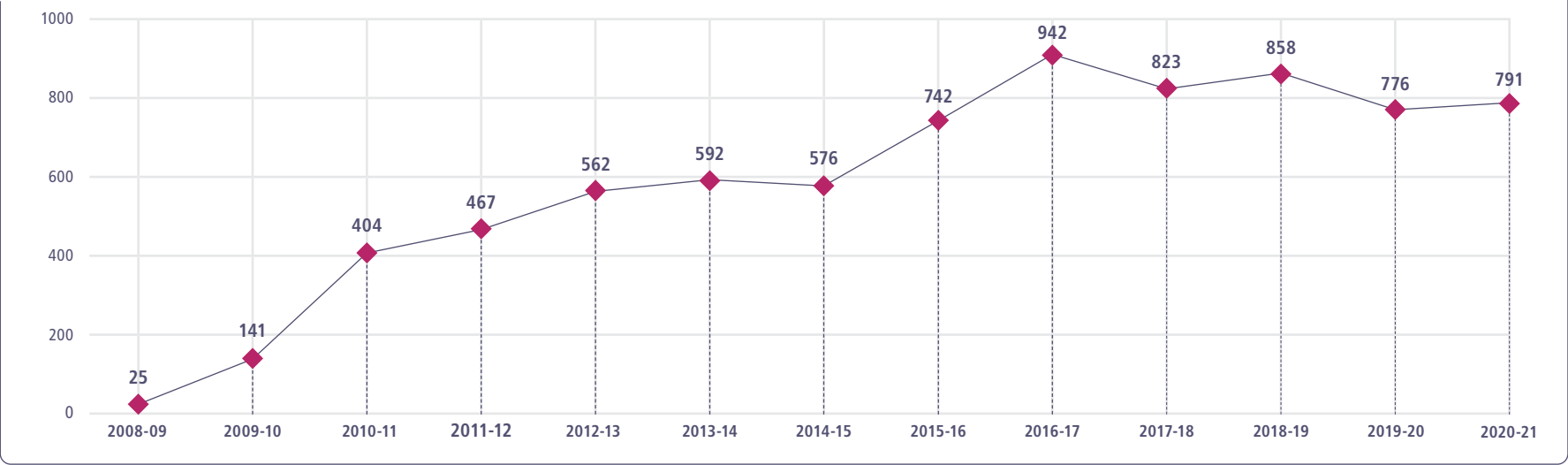
Despite the impact of COVID-19, 95% of Career EdVantage students were employed in the summer of 2020.

For the 2020-21 school year, in addition to continuing to serve the 20 students in last year’s cohort during their senior year, the program also added 44 students in its junior class – 19 from the four school districts previously mentioned, and 25 from its new school district partner, Lewis Central Community Schools. Expansion into additional school districts is anticipated, and upon full implementation, the program is expected to serve approximately 400 students (200 each at both the high school and postsecondary levels).

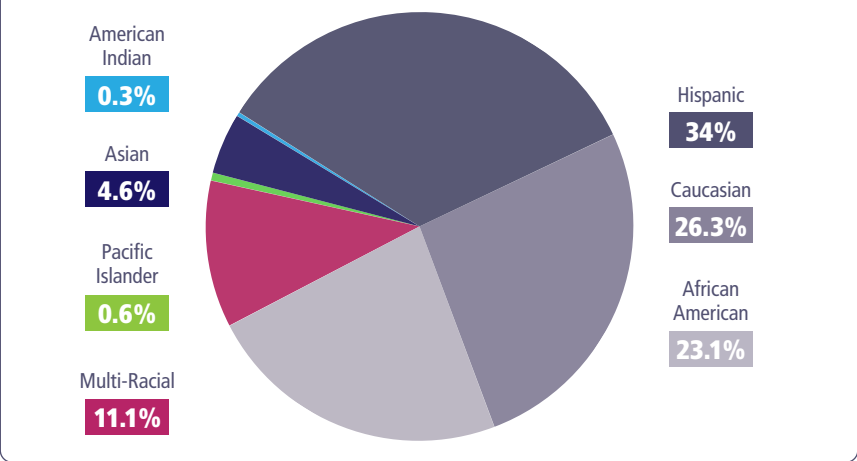


Our Enrollment

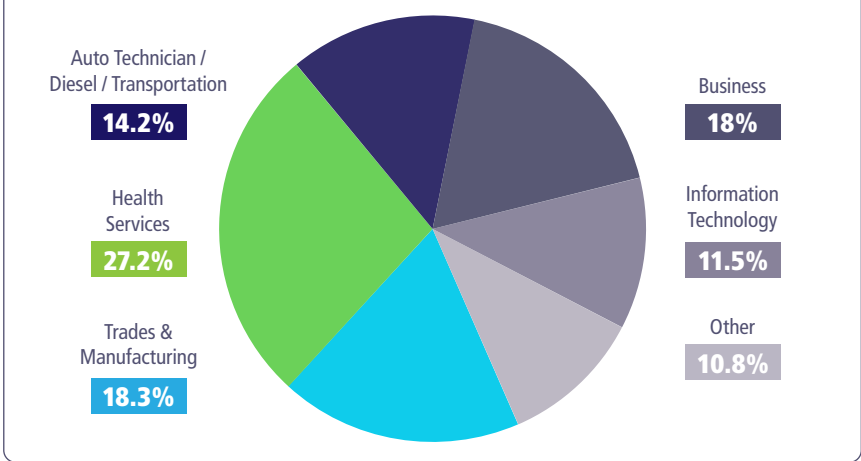
ENROLLMENT HISTORY



PARTICIPANTS BY RACE, FALL 2020-21



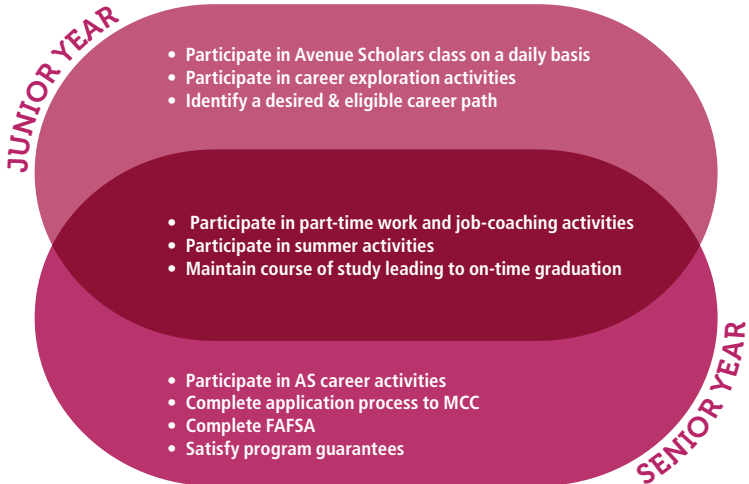
PARTICIPANTS BY INDUSTRY SECTOR, FALL 2020-21



Since 2008, Avenue Scholars (AS) has provided individualized support services to help students from low-income backgrounds identify, persist toward, and ultimately enter financially sustaining careers.

HIGH SCHOOL

- ELIGIBLE STUDENTS**
- Identified by Avenue Scholars & high school leaders during sophomore year
 - Eligible for free or reduced-price lunches or federal Pell Grant
 - Demonstrated interest in targeted career path
 - Agreed to participate in Avenue Scholars programming



HIGH SCHOOL CAREER COACHES
At the high school level, each Avenue Scholar is supported by a High School Career Coach, who guides students' personal and career-related development through intrusive personal support and teaches for-credit courses to Avenue Scholars in partner high schools.

BUSINESS OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT

AS Business Outreach Coordinators engage with area businesses to provide career-building opportunities, such as career exploration events, part-time and full-time employment, to students throughout the Avenue Scholars program.

STUDENT SUPPORT

In addition to the dedicated support provided by AS Career Coaches, Avenue Scholars also have access to specialized services of AS Student individual support, group programming, and referrals to community resources to help students meet basic life and social/emotional needs.

POSTSECONDARY

AVENUE HORATIO ALGER SCHOLARSHIP
Students who successfully complete the Avenue Scholars High School Program have the opportunity to continue their education through a scholarship of up to \$8,000 per student, funded jointly by The Suzanne and Walter Scott Foundation and Metropolitan Community College. Scholarships support training toward a market-relevant credential in a high-demand career field requiring an associate degree or less. Throughout their postsecondary training, Avenue Horatio Alger Scholarship recipients are jointly supported by AS Postsecondary Career Coaches and MCC College Success Navigators.



COLLEGE SUCCESS NAVIGATORS
MCC College Success Navigators provide expertise in designated career fields of study and managing MCC-related processes, such as course registration, financial aid, etc.

POSTSECONDARY CAREER COACHES
AS Postsecondary Career Coaches provide individualized support to help students develop the a career. Postsecondary Career Coaches continue to support students for six months following

job-ready skills and attributes needed for workplace success and ultimately enter career entry.

EMPLOYMENT

CAREER ENTRY
Focused on high-demand, financially sustaining careers requiring an associate degree or less

-  **Health Services / Charles E. Lakin Foundation's Healthcare Career Pathway**
Nursing · Phlebotomy · EMT
Medical Assisting · Dental Assisting
-  **Information Technology**
Programming · Website Development & Support · Network Tech · Security Specialist
-  **Auto Technology & Transportation**
Collision Tech · CDL Trucking · Auto Tech
Diesel Service · Mechanic
-  **Trades, Manufacturing & Builders**
Plumbing · Welding · HVAC · Electrical
Construction
-  **Business & Office Processes**
Bank Teller · Office Management
Customer Service · Hospitality · Sales

- ALUM STATUS**
Evaluated based on:
- Full-time employment;
 - Earning an hourly wage of \$13.50 or above;
 - Access to health insurance benefits;
 - Employment in field aligned with student's career area of focus;
 - Opportunity for upward mobility

PROGRAM GUARANTEES

The Avenue Scholars program is designed to help committed students and participants develop the following five essential job-ready attributes:

- 1) EDUCATION/TRAINING**
A committed AS participant graduates from high school, completes relevant career education or training, and is goal oriented toward an AS-approved pathway.
- 2) WORK EXPERIENCE**
A committed AS participant demonstrates a successful work history.
- 3) WORK-READY SKILLS**
A committed AS participant demonstrates work-ready habits and skills, including responsibility, work ethic, communication, positive attitude, professionalism, teamwork, and problem solving.
- 4) ATTENDANCE**
A committed AS participant demonstrates consistent attendance at school, work, and AS engagements.
- 5) FINANCIAL & PERSONAL WELL-BEING**
A committed AS participant demonstrates the ability to: Overcome barriers to employment, financial, physical, and mental well-being, and, Access community resources and services when necessary.



AVENUE SCHOLARS
Your Foundation for Success

Our Impact

GRADUATION & COLLEGE CONTINUATION RATES

High School	2018-19 4-yr Graduation Rate (Free/Reduced Lunch-Eligible Students)	2018-19 4-yr Graduation Rate (Avenue Scholars Students)	2018-19 College Continuation Rate (All Graduates)	2018-19 Postsecondary Continuation Rate# (Avenue Scholars Students)
Omaha Benson	66%	100%	52%	80%
Omaha Bryan	76%	100%	51%	83%
Omaha North	75%	100%	62%	78%
Omaha Northwest	73%	100%	53%	88%
Omaha South	73%	95%	56%	77%
Millard South	76%	96%	70%	88%
Ralston	86%	95%	62%	68%
Papillion-La Vista	90%	94%	75%	88%
Avenue Scholars		98%		81%

Sources: Graduation Rates – Nebraska Department of Education
College Continuation Rates – Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education
#Postsecondary Continuation Rate reflects the percentage of AS high school seniors who indicate that it is their intention to pursue postsecondary education following graduation, irrespective of continuation in the AS program.

	2018-19 4-yr Graduation Rate (Free/Reduced Lunch-Eligible Students)	2018-19 College Continuation Rate (All Graduates)
Omaha Public Schools	72%	58%
Millard Public Schools	80%	78%
Ralston Public Schools	86%	62%
Papillion La Vista Community Schools	91%	74%
Learning Community	77%	69%
Statewide	81%	71% (59% for low-income grads, 2017-18)
Avenue Scholars	98%	81% (Postsecondary Continuation Rate#)

Sources: Graduation Rates – Nebraska Department of Education
College Continuation Rates – Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education
#Postsecondary Continuation Rate reflects the percentage of AS high school seniors who indicated that it was their intention to pursue postsecondary education following graduation, irrespective of continuation in the AS program.

2019-20 High School Senior Outcomes

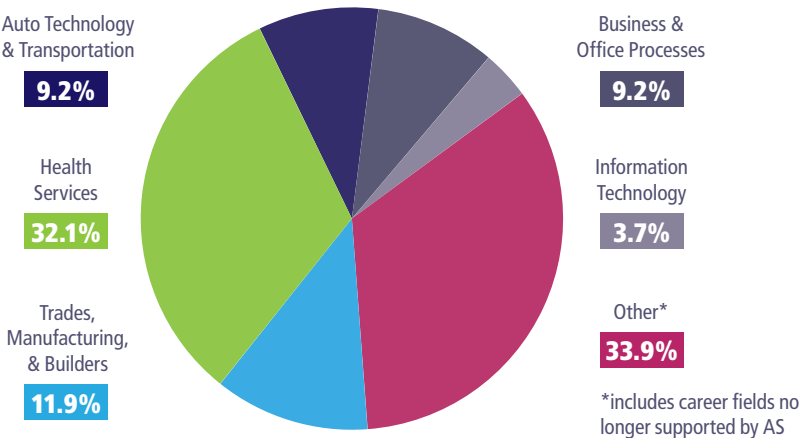
Of the 191 high school seniors enrolled in the Avenue Scholars (AS) program at the beginning of the 2019-20 program year:

- 178 students completed the year, with 175 of these students (98%) graduating on time.
- 148 students persisted to postsecondary education/training. Of these students:
 - 103 attended Metropolitan Community College or Methodist College of Nursing as continuing AS participants; and
 - 45 attended a two-year or four-year college outside of Avenue Scholars.
- 27 students entered the workforce.
- 13 students exited the program or moved during the year.



2019-20 Alum Outcomes

The primary metric by which AS evaluates its program is the number of students who enter full-time employment in a financially-sustaining career path. AS had 109 program alums during the 2019-20 program year.

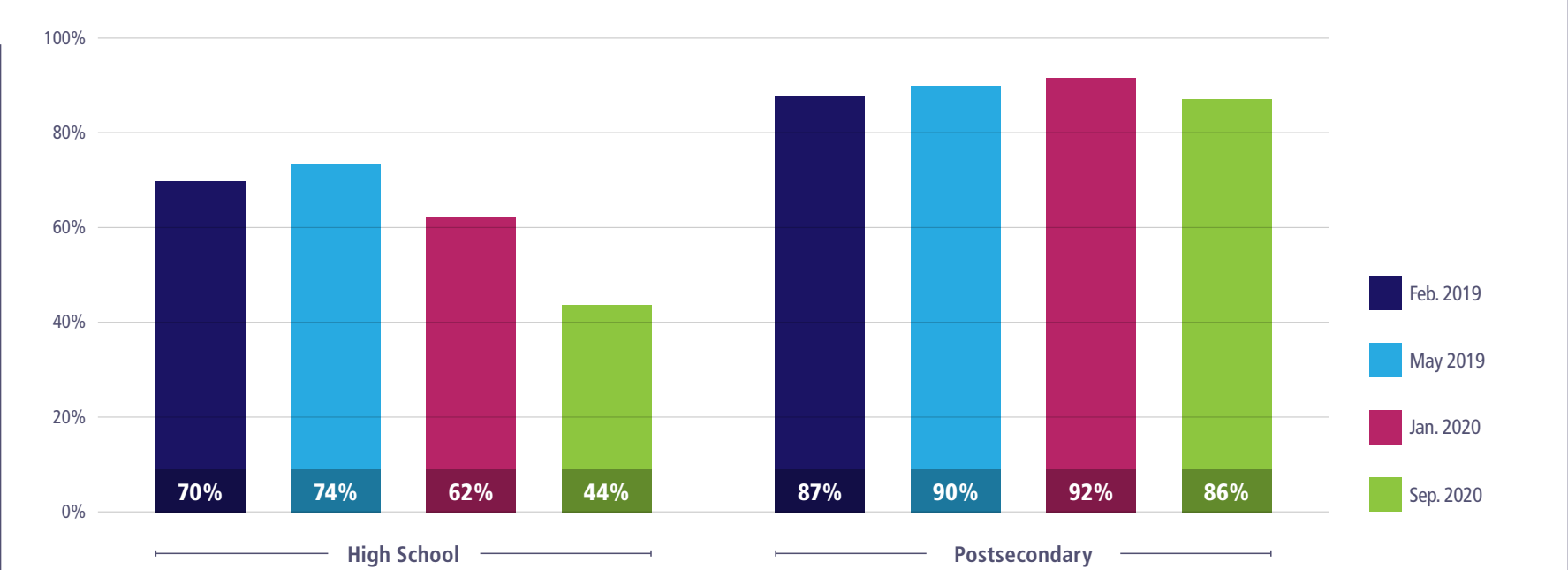


*includes career fields no longer supported by AS

Opening Doors to Great Work

Avenue Scholars (AS) emphasizes part-time employment as a critical developmental component of preparing students for career success. Despite the pandemic, 94% of AS high school seniors and 63% of its high school juniors were employed at some point during the 2019-20 program year. At the postsecondary level, 95% of students were employed during the program year, with 66% of students having a job that aligned with their chosen industry area. Industry-aligned employment was 77% for postsecondary students who completed 65% or more of their academic program. AS part-time employment rates for recent measurement periods are shown below.

PART-TIME EMPLOYED STUDENTS 2019–2020



AS students were employed in 354 businesses across the metro area in September 2020.

Regarding the impact of COVID-19 on AS student employment, the percentage of students reporting either job loss or a reduction in work hours during the spring of 2020 peaked at 36% for high school students and 29% for postsecondary students. The impact of the pandemic on youth employment was also evident in national data, as according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, just 35% of the population age 16-24 was employed in April of 2020, compared to 49.7% in April of 2019 (Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 to 24 years of age by sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, April-July 2019 and April-July 2020). By June 1, the employment rate for AS postsecondary students had rebounded to 93%.

Business Partners

Avenue Scholars partners with local businesses to provide career awareness, exploration, and employment opportunities for our students. These partnerships provide students with valuable career exposure while helping businesses identify and develop talent to satisfy their workforce needs.

DEDICATED POSTSECONDARY INTERNSHIP PARTNERS



CAREER AWARENESS/EXPLORATION PARTNERS



Scholar Profiles



BRYAN VASQUEZ

Despite being in the United States for only eight years, Bryan Vasquez has found success and employment in Omaha, thanks to Avenue Scholars and its Intern Program.

Vasquez is on track to obtain an Associate’s Degree in Data Programming Management from Metropolitan Community College and has been working full-time in Claims Processing at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska since May 2019. The Avenue Horatio Alger Career Scholarship has covered the costs of his college education, and the Intern Omaha program helped him get employed as an intern at BCBS.

“It [the intern program and Avenue Scholars] means everything to me,” Vasquez says. “They have helped a lot.”

A 2015 graduate of Omaha Bryan, Vasquez became a U.S. citizen at a Naturalization Ceremony here in Omaha. Vasquez has a wife in El Salvador, who is scheduled to join him in Omaha next November.

In the meantime, he is interviewing for a job promotion at BCBS, and he hopes to achieve a higher professional level, either at BCBS or another company.

Amanda Lonergan, Vasquez’s Industry Career Coach says Vasquez is “doing well in school and doing well in his job.”



KANDRA HARTSHORN

When Kandra Hartshorn, a senior at Omaha Benson High School, heard at an assembly during her sophomore year that she could qualify for an \$8,000 scholarship through the Avenue Scholars program, she was “all in.”

That’s what really pulled me toward it,” Hartshorn said. “I wanted to be in the program, maintain my credits, and get the \$8,000 to go to school. It’s steered me in the right direction. I got my CNA (Certified Nursing Assistant) certificate last year. With them (Metropolitan Community College) offering a RN degree, it’s steering me on a straight path. There are no curves along the way.”

To pay the other bills, such as her own car insurance, Hartshorn is employed as a paid intern at Werner Trucking. As the “youngest one there,” she works the “road breakdowns” desk, communicating with drivers to direct them to the nearest shop for repairs. During the summer, she works 30 to 40 hours. During the school year, she has been working 12 to 15 hours.

Hartshorn is focused on a career in nursing, but with much to unfold over the next few years, she is also considering “going into criminal justice.”



JOHN MURILLO

When the proverbial light came on for John Murillo, a 2015 Omaha South graduate, he was ready to go straight to work.

Avenue Scholars staff were there to help Murillo find the light switch during his junior and senior years of high school, and they continue to support his career advancement.

“They helped me come up with a plan after high school,” Murillo says. “A, B, and C, in case this plan didn’t work out.”

The plan included utilizing the Avenue-Horatio Alger Career Scholarship to obtain an Associate’s Degree in Auto Collision from Metropolitan Community College and getting a job working body repair at CarStar the summer after graduation from high school.

“The scholarship helped me get tools; it helped me start my career,” Murillo said. “Everything (college) is paid for. Starting my career debt free is a huge advantage.”

Murillo completed his certification in auto collision and is working at CarStar full-time as a body technician, focusing on panels, frames, and structural replacements.

“I’m happy I’m doing something I like,” Murillo says.



EDUARDO FLORES-JUAN

Through work experiences with the Heartland Work Force and Hawkins Construction this fall Eduardo Flores-Juan, a 2019 Omaha Bryan graduate, is building confidence that he will achieve his goal of becoming a construction manager one day.

Coordinating with the Heartland Work Force, Avenue Scholars enrolled Flores-Juan and other scholars in a garage renovation project at the Latino Center of the Midlands on South 24th street.

Toward the end of a six-week trial period of doing drywall, electricity, decking, and framing on the garage project, a Hawkins Construction manager inspected the work of Flores-Juan, along with other interns, to determine who the company wanted to hire for a big project at Omaha Eppley Airfield. Flores-Juan was one of those selected to work for Hawkins for another six weeks.

Flores-Juan admits he was nervous the first week on the new job.

“Hawkins was a whole new work environment,” he said. “Big tools, new machinery. I was nervous that first week. I had to teach myself manual [transmission]. There were lots of new things. Once I learned, it just became an everyday thing.”

At Metropolitan Community College, Flores-Juan is enrolled in the Construction Management program. After two years, he plans to finish his degree at the University of Nebraska-Omaha or the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

“That’s for the paper/office side of the business,” he said. “When I become a construction manager, I still want to do the physical part so I can show I know what I am talking about.”



KYRRA JOHNSON

“I did not know much about Avenue Scholars. I was just wanting to get out of class at the time.”

Despite that inauspicious beginning, 2018 Omaha Northwest graduate Kyrra Johnson soon learned she was involved in a program that would enable her to realize career goals of which she had not

even dreamed.

“Avenue Scholars has helped me a lot because of all the resources they have,” Johnson said. “Terrence Gillian [Johnson’s Career Coach] is always sending me applications for job openings.”

One year into pursuit of an associate’s degree in business at Metropolitan Community College, Johnson is balancing her classroom schedule with a full-time paid internship position at Mutual of Omaha.

“I love it,” Johnson says of her job at Mutual of Omaha. “I have been really surprised how much I love it there. I work with really good people.”

Johnson works in the Customer Care department, taking payments for insurance policies and updating customer information.

Once Johnson obtains her associate’s degree, she plans to take some time off from school to “figure out” her long-term plans.

Looking back, Johnson feels lucky to be immersed in the Avenue Scholars program.

“I’m so glad I did sign up,” she says. “They have done so much for me. They helped me move into my first apartment and helped me get a new car.”

Johnson is proud of her postsecondary accomplishments. So is her family.

“I’m an only child,” Johnson said. “My mom is beyond proud. I’m the first to go to college. My family is very supportive. Avenue Scholars makes it a lot easier.”



DAVID GONZALEZ-LOPEZ

Driven by the Avenue-Horatio Alger Career Scholarship and support from the Avenue Scholars program and the Metropolitan Community College Navigators, David Gonzalez-Lopez will be the first in his family to earn a college degree. “I would not be here without the scholarship,” he said. “It got me this job; it motivated me to get here.”

In May, Gonzalez-Lopez plans to receive an Associate’s Degree in Auto Collision from MCC.

Gonzalez-Lopez, a 2017 Omaha Bryan graduate, started work at CarStar in May 2019. “I am excited to work here,” he said. “I started in detail; then I got into assemble and disassemble. Recently, I started doing my own projects.”

After graduation from MCC, he plans to continue working full-time at CarStar, doing “mostly body work as a technician.”

Gonzalez-Lopez is also excited about what his career success might mean for his family. “It’s our tradition, or culture, to stay in the family until we’re older,” he said. “I hope to be moving out soon with my family, my parents, to a nicer house.”



AYLIN ARROYA

Aylin Arroya is not wasting any time pursuing a college degree and joining the workforce. In fact, she graduated in December from Omaha Bryan High School, and is employed at Security National Bank at South 29th Street through the Intern Omaha program.

Arroya will be seeking a different career path in college, but for now she enjoys working at the bank. “I really like it,” Arroya says. “All my co-workers and I really get along. It makes my day go by faster, and I’m five minutes from my house.”

Although born in Omaha, Arroya’s first language is Spanish. She uses her bilingual skills often while working at Security National Bank. “Half our customers are Hispanics,” she said. “On Friday we always get a big rush from Greater Omaha Packing right across the street.”

Madeline Moyer, Market Manager, is grateful the Intern Omaha program found a place for Arroya at Security National Bank.

“She is a gem, just a joy to be around,” Moyer said. “She is like family. Everyone has adopted her.”

COVID-19 Response

Like all organizations in the community, Avenue Scholars (AS) and its students have been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. For AS students and staff, the pandemic created a need for contingency plans to help navigate rapidly changing circumstances.

In light of campus closures in March and the additional state and local restrictions placed on group meetings, AS developed a COVID-19 response plan to ensure that all AS students were afforded continued support and services. The plan required AS High School and Postsecondary Career Coaches to contact each student on at least a weekly basis to help ensure personal wellbeing, academic progress, and continued employment. In light of the circumstances, most contacts were made remotely (virtual meetings, phone calls, texts, and e-mail), though in-person meetings were also permitted, subject to social distancing, health screening, and other safety protocols.

When contacting students, High School and Postsecondary Career Coaches recorded information regarding academic progress and needs, status of a homework plan, technology needs, jobs (layoffs, reduced hours, unemployment), food concerns, and personal and family needs. Weekly reports on student responses were compiled in April and May, with key findings summarized below.

- At peak points during the weekly reporting periods:
 - 36% of high school and 29% of postsecondary students reported either a job loss or reduction in work hours;
 - 29% of high school students and 7% of postsecondary students reported a technology concern;
 - 31% of high school students and 23% of postsecondary students reported an academic concern;
 - 3% of high school students and 3% of postsecondary students reported a food concern.
- The aggregate percentage of students who reported concerns diminished over the course of the reporting period. Between April 12 and May 31:
 - Academic concerns decreased from 28% to 18%;
 - Technology concerns decreased from 20% to 10%;
 - Job layoffs decreased from 21% to 12%;
 - Food concerns decreased from 3% to 2%;
 - The percentage of students identified by Student Support Coordinators as having high or moderate needs declined from 21% to 16%.

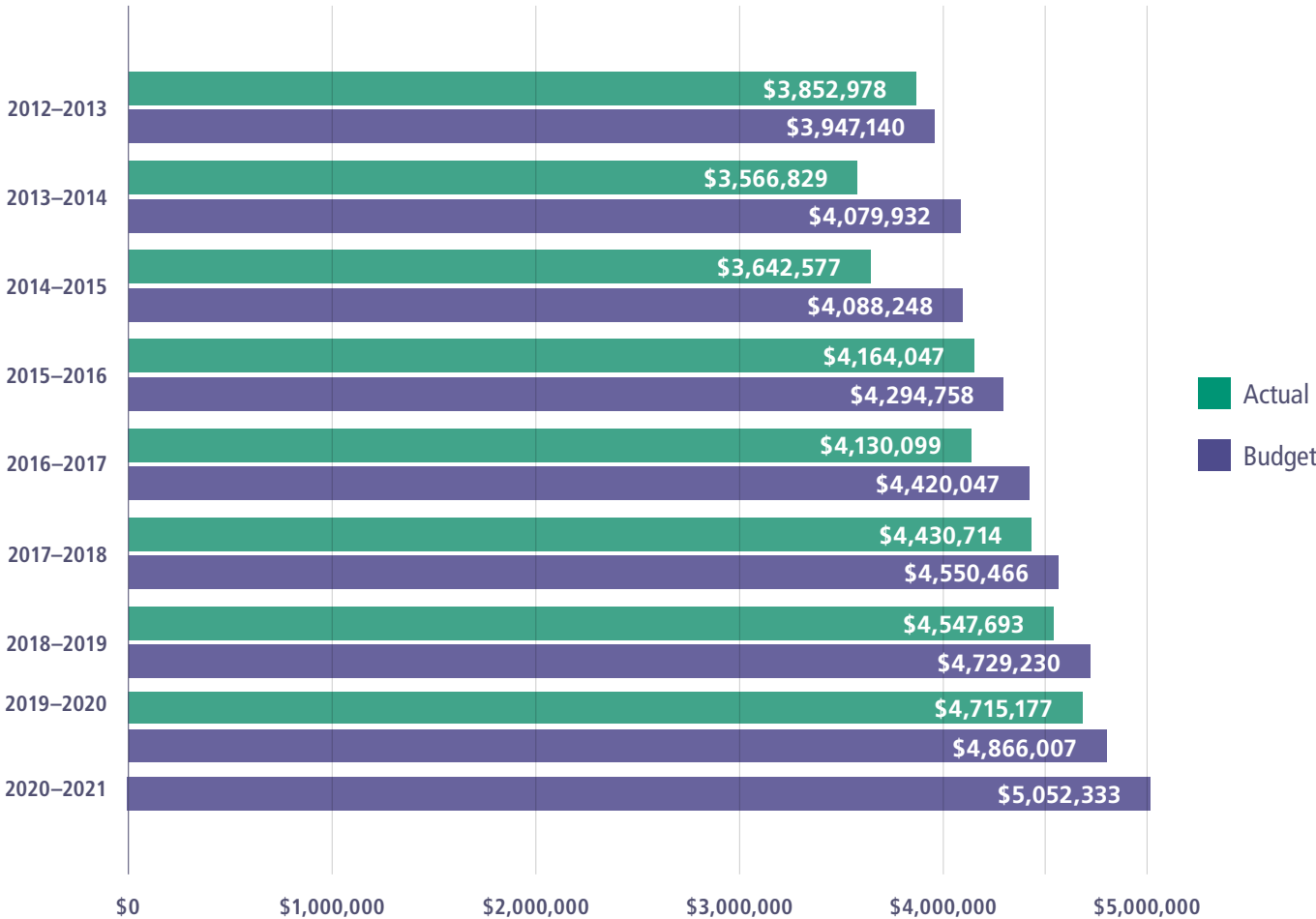


To assist students with technology and support virtual learning and instructional delivery, AS made available approximately 55 laptops and 75 Wi-Fi hotspots to loan to students. AS also redeveloped its high school curriculum to make it deployable in a virtual format, partnering with MCC to utilize its online learning system, Canvas, to deliver the curriculum. To address the increased volume of online activity and virtual meetings, AS has acted to overhaul its office internet network, purchased virtual meeting equipment and annual Zoom subscriptions, and leased an additional office suite to provide individual spaces for teaching courses and holding virtual meetings.

The return to classroom-based activities this fall has afforded some much-welcome structure to program delivery. However, circumstances continue to be fluid, and student needs – whether related to the pandemic or otherwise – continue to persist. As always, AS will continue to assist students to overcome their personal challenges and persist toward gainful employment.

Our Budget

ACTUAL & BUDGETED EXPENDITURES, FY 2012-13 TO FY 2020-21





AVENUE SCHOLARS.

Your Foundation for Success



OUR MISSION IS TO ENSURE CAREERS FOR COMMITTED STUDENTS OF HOPE AND NEED
THROUGH EDUCATION/TRAINING AND SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS.

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