



# Pathway Newsletter

## February 2026 Edition

*Dear Friends of Avenue Scholars,*

As I return from maternity leave with a new addition to my family, I find myself taking note of the small moments that change our lives.

For my daughter, the world is brand new, and I've begun to see each new first – her first car ride, her first glimpse of the sky, her first smile – for what it is: a turning point, shaping her understanding of the world and who she can be in it.

In many ways, this is what we hope to provide to the Scholars in our program. A spark. A lightbulb. A fork in the road. A moment in time that they will point to, years later, as the day they started to become the person they were meant to be.

I'm proud to share many of these moments with you in our first Pathway Newsletter of 2026. Below, you can read about our annual Internship Fair where more than 200 Scholars met with local business partners about paid internship opportunities that, for many, will serve as their first position in a career of their choice.

You'll also read about Alan Ramirez, a program alum and current owner of a successful home exterior company, who had his own lightbulb moment, courtesy of Avenue Scholars, while sitting in a classroom back in high school.

As you read, think about the moments from your own life that helped shape who you are today. If you're so inclined, share them with us! I look forward to sharing many more with you in the year ahead.

With Gratitude,

**Lindsay Decker**  
CEO

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# 2026 Internship Fair Connects Scholars to Careers of their Choosing

Scholars Met with Local Businesses on January 29



On January 29, more than 200 Scholars had the opportunity to take their first step into a career of their choice at Avenue Scholars' annual Internship Fair. Held at the Salvation Army Kroc Center, the Internship Fair brought Scholars in the program together with more than 20 local employers offering paid internship positions.

Scholars met with representatives from local businesses who shared information about their organizations and the opportunities available there. Many of the representatives said they were impressed by the Scholars' professionalism and enthusiasm.

"I would say internships are important because they teach you responsibility and structure, and once you get on that schedule and understand, 'This is going to be my life,' I would say you're going to have a better understanding for when you're older," said one Scholar.

[Read More on Our Blog](#)

# MISSION MOMENT

## From Scholar to Business Owner: Meet Alan Ramirez

Full Circle Moment for Avenue Scholars Alum

### Alan Ramirez

Scholar Turned  
Entrepreneur and  
Mentor



When Alan Ramirez thinks about the life he's built — business owner, mentor, employer — he doesn't hesitate.

"I give all the praise to Avenue Scholars," he said.

Ramirez graduated from Benson High School in 2016 and Metropolitan Community College in 2018. Today, he runs **All-Star Exteriors**, a successful home exterior business, which he started seven years ago.

But long before the crews, the contracts, and the daily demands of leadership, there was a moment in class with Avenue Scholars that changed everything.

[Learn More about Alan's Lightbulb Moment](#)

# Scholar Spotlight

Nathaniel H.

## Scholar Spotlight: Nathaniel H.



AVENUE SCHOLARS™

Help us congratulate Nathaniel! He recently graduated from Metropolitan Community College with an associate degree in Cybersecurity (and earned a 4.0 GPA while doing it). Now working at T-Mobile, his supervisor has praised the quality of his work and contributions to the team. His drive, skills, and professionalism make him a standout Scholar and great reminder of why we do this work.



AVENUE SCHOLARS

# STAY CONNECTED

Every experience, from strengths assessments to elevator speeches to Mock Interviews, is designed to help Scholars build the transferable skills they need to open doors.



✓ Confidence

- ✔ Communication
- ✔ Professionalism
- ✔ Problem-solving

These are the skills that follow Scholars into every job, every opportunity, and every future they choose. We couldn't do this important work without community support.

# Building Transferable Skills

*For Wherever Their Journey Takes Them*



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