

**YELLOWSTONE ACADEMY**  
**2018-2019**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**



Dear Friends,

2018-19 was a year of highs and lows for Yellowstone.

At Yellowstone Academy, we continued to see impressive academic gains from Pre-K through 4th grade, and greater access to state-of-the-art assessment data showed us where we can continue to improve our program. Our alumni continued to do well—notably, 100% of our 8th grade class of 2015 successfully graduated high school this Spring, and many of them have already enrolled in a post-secondary program!

For the first time in Yellowstone history, we launched a new public charter school for students in grades 5-8. The energy and excitement around this new endeavor was incredible to witness! We worked hard to establish a positive student culture, provide effective instruction, and care for our student's social and emotional wellbeing. Despite truly heroic efforts on the part of our faculty and staff, and measured academic growth among our students, Yellowstone College Prep received an "Improvement Required" rating from the State of Texas. We anticipated this rating for our first year, and we are poised for greater success in 2019-20.

As President Kennedy reminded us in his famous moonshot speech, "We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard, because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because that challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one which we intend to win."

We remain unbowed in our determination to provide an high-quality education paired with the wrap-around support our students need to achieve success. The future of our students depends on us, and we will not let them down. We will rise to the challenge, not because this work is easy, but because we are unwilling to postpone it.

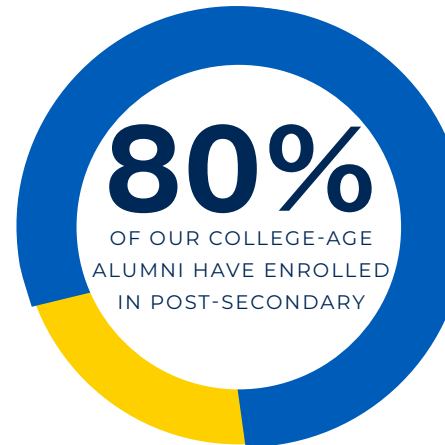
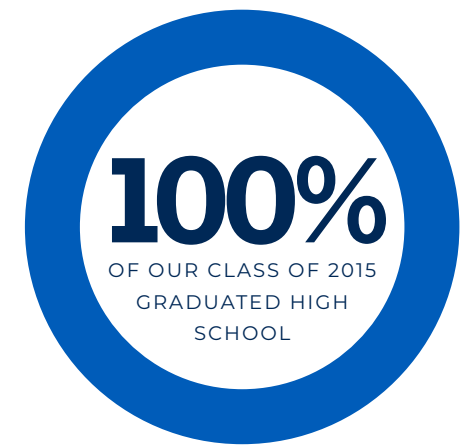
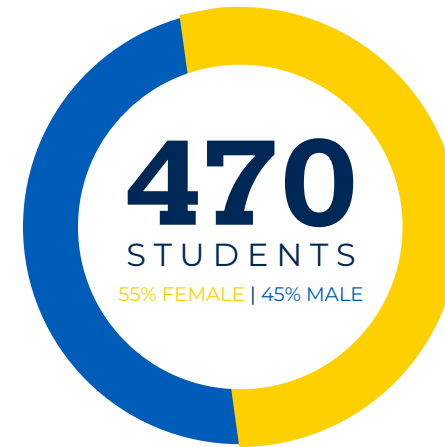


**Ryan Dolibois**

Executive Director, Yellowstone Academy  
Superintendent, Yellowstone College Prep



## AT A GLANCE



**2020**  
YELLOWSTONE'S FIRST ALUMNI  
CLASS WILL BEGIN TO GRADUATE  
FROM COLLEGE

## INSIDE THIS REPORT

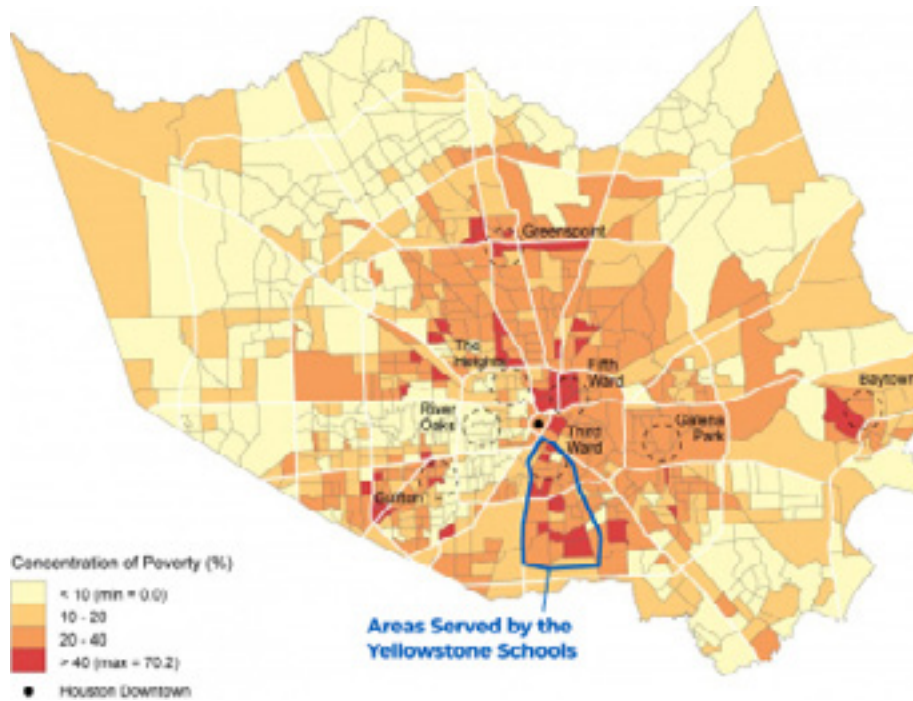
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# About the Yellowstone Scholars

**35% of children in Houston live below the federal poverty line.**

In Third Ward, the median household income lags behind the national average by **\$30,000**. Our education system is failing these children, contributing to a downward cycle of generational poverty which is difficult to break.

The students and families at Yellowstone want to end this cycle and build a brighter future.



## We Believe in Every Student

At Yellowstone, we believe that every child is born with a purpose and destined for success. Unfortunately, many of the children in our community lack the resources, support, and education they need to achieve success.

Students who complete a post-secondary degree or program can expect to enjoy higher wages, more employment opportunities, better health, and increased levels of civic engagement. However, in the communities served by Yellowstone, **only one in ten students is expected to achieve this level of success**. For the remaining nine students, the cycle of generational poverty will likely continue uninterrupted. **We believe this is a tragedy.**



## Who We Serve

- 470 students from Pre-K3 through 8th Grade
- 96% qualified for Federal Free/Reduced Lunch Program
- 99% Black
- 1% Latino/a

## The Yellowstone Way

At Yellowstone, we give our families and students a plan and support them on their path to success. Together, we are building a brighter future for our city.

We believe that if students **learn from fantastic teachers, participate in wholistic support services, and build on a foundation of faith and character**, then they will **achieve success**.

# LEARN FROM FANTASTIC TEACHERS

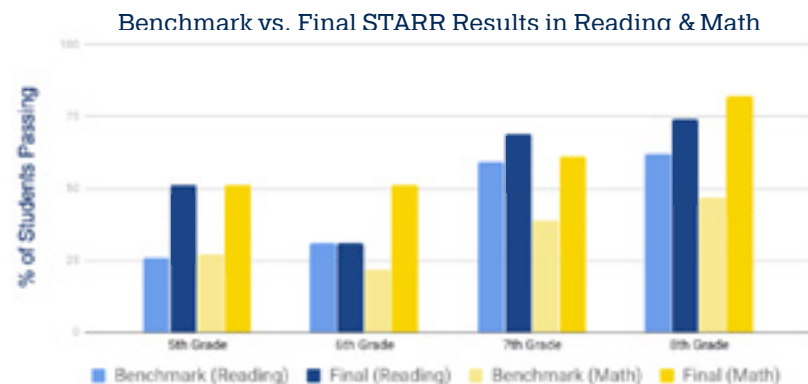
Yellowstone's academic program is designed to encourage students to make significant academic gains each year. Our teachers focus on each individual student's progress, providing instruction suited to their level. We continued to offer smaller class sizes that averaged 18 students.

## Academic Highlights - Yellowstone Academy

- 85% of Early Childhood students are on track in reading
- 97% of Early Childhood students were on track in math
- 92% of 1st and 2nd grade students were proficient or advanced in reading, according to the Scholastic guided reading levels
- **100% of our 3rd and 4th grade students were proficient or advanced in reading, according to the Scholastic guided reading levels.**
  - Research has shown that students who are able to read proficiently in 3rd grade are far more likely to graduate high school on time.

## Academic Highlights - Yellowstone College Prep

In almost every grade, our middle school students made significant gains from their benchmark scores to their final state testing scores in both reading and math.



Despite these impressive gains, Yellowstone College Prep received an "improvement required" rating from the Texas Education Association. We anticipated this rating for our first year based on the way the rating formula works, and the way we launched our model and our mission. Read more about our state ranking at [yellowstoneschools.org/ratings](http://yellowstoneschools.org/ratings).

We are poised for greater success in the coming years.



## Excellence in Teaching

Marlena Smith, third grade teacher at Yellowstone Academy, was recognized with the inaugural Marie Fay Evnochides Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Organized by the Marie Fay Evnochides Fund, this award recognizes teachers who are dedicated to fostering optimism, creativity, critical thinking and lifelong learning. The award included a \$15,000 stipend provided by the Marie Fay Evnochides Fund.

“ I love seeing the smiles in the morning, I even love the challenging situations where I see the growth of students when they're problem-solving. It gives them a voice and allows them to know that how they feel matters, what they think matters, and helps them develop a skill for the long term. ”

—Marlena Smith  
Third Grade Teacher

# PARTICIPATE IN WHOLISTIC SUPPORT SERVICES

Students at Yellowstone often face multiple barriers which prevent them from achieving success. These barriers might include housing or food insecurity, lack of access to basic medical care, and an unstable home environment. Each student's story is unique, and the challenges they face vary greatly. At Yellowstone, we partner with our student families to ensure that each student's basic needs are being met.

Students received free healthy meals and snacks daily, uniform vouchers, school supplies, and transportation to and from school. Yellowstone provided social services that included group and individual counseling, family engagement, and parenting programs. Additionally, students benefited from access to basic medical, dental, and vision services through our community partnerships.

In every way possible, we set our students up for success.

## SUPPORT SERVICES AT A GLANCE

- With the greater number of students, Yellowstone was able to participate in the National School Lunch Program for the first time.
  - 96% of students qualified for free or reduced breakfast and lunch.
  - More than 143,000 meals were served.
- Each family received a voucher for a basic uniform set, and additional vouchers were distributed to those families in greatest need. Each student also received appropriate outerwear at no cost.
- Our social work department engaged approximately 75% of our student body through referrals, counseling, small groups, and community circles. The referrals included social and emotional needs, parents seeking resources and assistance with financial matters, housing, and consultation regarding developmental issues.
- Dozens of students received free eye exams, glasses, dental cleanings, and more as needed through our network of partnerships across Houston.



- 2018-19 marks the first year that Yellowstone was able to offer a special education program and 504 plans
  - 13% of Yellowstone College Prep students benefited from special education programming (6%) or a 504 plan (7%), putting us above both national and state averages.
- More than 300 volunteers provided more than 2,000 hours of service to Yellowstone.
  - Volunteers hailed from all over the Greater Houston area and enriched every aspect of our campus life. They served as mentors and lunch buddies each week.
  - Several corporate partners signed on to sponsor grade levels through monthly activities designed to improve students' confidence and leadership skills. Our corporate partners included Ascend Performance Materials, Riveron Consulting, Gow Media, Frost Bank, Cadence Bank, Women Empowering Nations, and Houston Association of Realtors.
- Many individuals have contributed to our on-going snack and hygiene drives, which provide healthy snacks and necessary hygiene items to our students who need them.
- Volunteers also provided each Yellowstone student with several books during our book drive in support of our literacy initiative, which includes building students' home libraries.

# BUILD A FOUNDATION OF FAITH & CHARACTER

## Christian Education

As a hallmark of Yellowstone Academy, we continuously instill in our students Christian values to guide their lives. Students attended Bible class each school day, and once a week the campus gathered for a school-wide chapel service. The school also provided opportunities for our students to put their beliefs into practice through our annual community day of service, and by helping to pack and distribute food boxes during the holidays to other Houstonians in need.

## Moral Foundation

At Yellowstone College Prep, students are divided into houses based on our PRIDE values. Each week they participate in friendly inter-house competitions, team building activities, and character development programming. We help students build a strong moral foundation which prepares them for success.

## STATISTICS



**150+**

hours of Bible instruction provided to each student (YA)



**2,000+**

hours of volunteer service provided by our students and their families (YA/YCP)



**144+**

praise and worship songs sung together in chapel (YA)



**57**

number of times we prayed the Lord's Prayer together as a school (YA)



**70+**

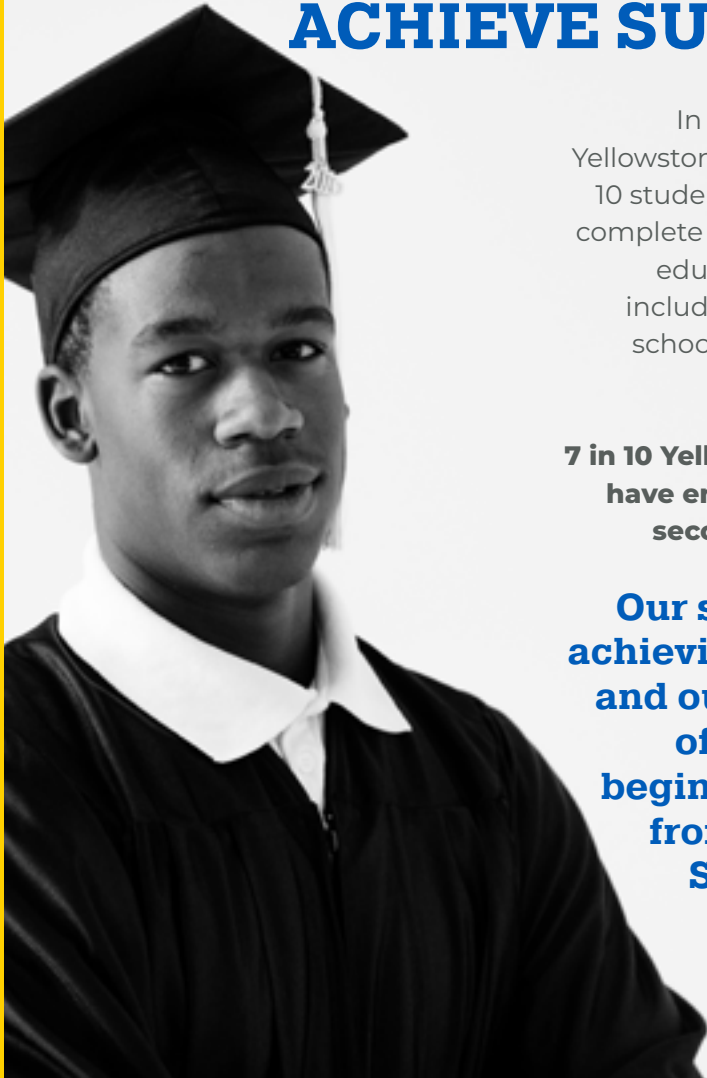
students and family members volunteered at Boxes of Blessings (YA/YCP)



**100**

students, family, and staff participated in our annual community day of service (YA/YCP)

# ACHIEVE SUCCESS



In the communities Yellowstone serves, only 1 in 10 students is expected to complete a post-secondary educational program including college, trade schools, or professional certifications.

**7 in 10 Yellowstone alumni have enrolled in a post-secondary program!**

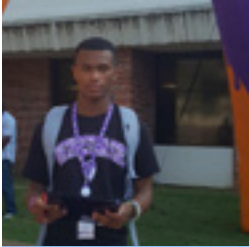
**Our students are achieving success, and our first class of alumni will begin graduating from college in Spring 2020!**

- 100% of Yellowstone's 2015 class graduated from high school on time.
- 100% of Yellowstone's high school age alumni are still enrolled in high school.
- Nearly 80% of Yellowstone's college age alumni have enrolled in a post-secondary educational program.



## **ADRIAN STARKS**

Yellowstone 8th Grade Class of 2015  
Graduated high school in 2019  
**Northwestern State University of Louisiana**



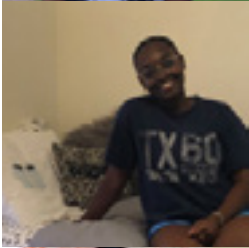
## **AMAYAH HUDSON**

Yellowstone 8th Grade Class of 2013  
Graduated high school in 2017  
Entering her junior year at  
**Texas Southern University**



## **EMERANCE MURAKATATE**

Yellowstone 8th Grade Class of 2012  
Graduated high school in 2016  
Entering senior year at  
**Houston Baptist University**



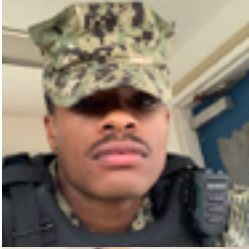
## **HOPE BIZURU**

Yellowstone 8th Grade Class of 2015  
Graduated high school in 2010  
Attending  
**Lamar University**



## **HFTN RAYSHAUN GAMBLE**

Yellowstone 8th Grade Class of 2012  
Graduated high school in 2016  
Serving in the Navy, participating in the  
**Navy College Program**



## **KERRI JOHNSON**

Yellowstone 8th Grade Class of 2015  
Graduated high school in 2019  
Attending the  
**Air Force Academy**



## **RAKIA LEWIS**

Yellowstone 8th Grade Class of 2015  
Graduated high school in 2019  
Attending  
**Grambling State University**



# FUNDRAISING



**Event Chairs:** Katy Boatman, Janice Character, Lori Fisher, Julia Humphreys, and Stephanie Tsuru

Our inaugural Friendsgiving Brunch was a smashing success! Nearly 150 attendees enjoyed a delicious brunch and a program featuring a deeply impactful speech by one of Yellowstone's 8th grade students (and a super cute rendition of You've Got a Friend in Me by Yellowstone's 1st grade class). Altogether, the attendees raised more than \$270,000 to support Yellowstone students.



**Honorees:** Elizabeth and Peter Wareing

**Event Chairs:** Devin & Ryan McCord, Laura & William Wheless  
The second annual Party in the Park was a huge hit! Despite a rainy forecast, nearly 400 attendees danced the night away and helped raise more than \$1 million to benefit the children at Yellowstone.



**Event Chair:** Natalie Pappas

**Auction Chairs:** Taren Adams, Ashley Landry  
Hosted by the Young Friends of Yellowstone, professionals of all ages came out to celebrate our tenth and final Stomping of the Divots event, raising more than \$40,000 for student scholarships at the Yellowstone Schools!



# THANK YOU!

These individuals, families, organizations, and corporations joined with us during the 2018-19 fiscal year. With their support, we will continue to provide a high quality education to scholars from Houston's Third Ward community.

April & Carlos Abello	Beverly Barrett	Carolyn & Patrick Breslin	Laura & Brett Chiles	Waters & Karen Davis	Courtney & Jason Fertitta	Bert Graham	Lou & Mark Houser
Morgan Abels	Rick & Patricia Barrett	Anne & Will Britt	Angeline Chiu	Neva & John Dawson	Carrie & Tom Field	Franny & Jim Gray	Beth & Richard Houston
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