

# Annual Report 2023



## Young Scholars OF BARTLESVILLE

LOWE FAMILY INSPIRED • COMMUNITY SUPPORTED

*Formerly known as  
Lowe Family Young Scholars Program*



### OUR MISSION

Mentoring and empowering students to earn a college degree.

### OUR VISION

To assist students to become self-supporting adults and contributors to their communities.

## FROM THE FOUNDER

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Dear YSB Supporters,

What an exciting 2023! We welcomed a new executive director in July, Briana Brzezinski. Briana has a dynamic personality and hit the ground running with recruiting more students than at any other time in the history of YSB, updating our website, refining the program curriculum to meet the needs of our students better, cutting costs, and organizing staff and office to serve our students better. Briana does an excellent job sharing the vision and purpose of the YSB through giving community presentations, so if you are a member of an organization that allows guest speakers, please let Briana know. We hope you take the opportunity to get to know Briana.

Also, long-range planning was a focus in 2023 to review where we have been and determine where we want to see the program go in the future. YSB also improved its mission statement in 2023. It is now succinct and a true reflection of our focus on “mentoring and empowering students to earn a college degree.” YSB continues to grow and serve Bartlesville students as we have managed the Wildcat scholarship funds for the past few years.

With various funds created by generous donors and continued donations from other supporters, our students are now supported at OSU, RSU, OKWU, and other Oklahoma universities. Thank you all for your generosity in assisting YSB in creating educated community members by helping students achieve their dream—a college degree.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen Lowe-Alton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Karen Lowe-Alton

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2023

Karen Lowe-Alton  
George Halkiades  
Jane Sears  
Megan Proctor  
Cindy Dronyk  
Terri Meyer  
Julie Pranger  
Richard Mitchell  
Stacey Foresman  
Stevie Williams  
John Donoghue



Stacey and  
Mentee Emma



George, Richard, and Briana

As we say goodbye to Stacey Foresman and Richard Mitchell in their time on our board, we want to thank them for their time spent volunteering in our mission and look forward to what they continue to do in our community!

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2024

George Halkiades  
Julie Pranger  
Jane Sears  
Megan Proctor  
Cindy Dronyk  
Shawn Fanning  
Terri Meyer  
Karen Lowe-Alton  
Stevie Williams  
John Donoghue



Shawn Fanning



John Donoghue

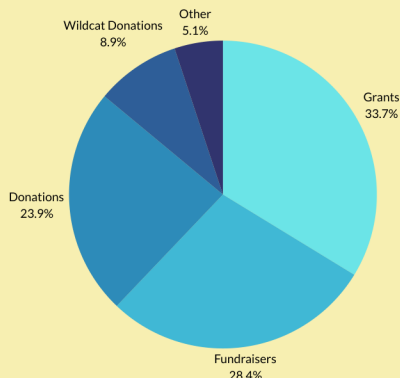
For 2024, George Halkiades steps into the role of Board President and Julie Pranger moves into the role of Vice President. We are also happy to add John Donoghue at the end of 2023 and Shawn Fanning at the beginning of 2024. Their experiences and passion for our mission will bring new ideas and discussions to the board. We are happy to continue to move forward to achieving our mission in 2024!

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

December 31, 2023

## We raised

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| Grants  | \$53,273.06  |
| Fundraisers   | \$35,601.49  |
| Donations   | \$26,572.26  |
| Wildcat Donations                                     | \$6,224.96   |
| Total Operating Expenses (without investment revenue) | \$121,671.77 |
| Earnings from Wildcat Savings (Dividends)             | \$1,873.83   |
| Earnings from YSB Savings                             | \$172.21     |
| Total Revenue   | \$123,717.81 |



## Our asset earnings

|                      |              |
|----------------------|--------------|
| Wildcat Assets       | \$49,914.01  |
| YSB Assets Gains     | \$45,486.02  |
| YSB Assets Losses    | (\$5,797.31) |
| Total Asset Increase | \$39,602.72  |

## We invested

|                                |              |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Wildcat Scholarships           | \$13,500     |
| YSB Scholarships (non-endowed) | \$9,200      |
| Management                     | \$85,119.83  |
| Program Expenses               | \$64,666.23  |
| Fundraiser Expenses            | \$7,626.68   |
| One-time Planned Expenses      | \$7,652.99   |
| Total Operating Expenses       | \$187,765.73 |

Dear Investors,

This year has been one of growth and impact for our organization. The introduction of the Wildcats Program has been a significant milestone, allowing us to extend scholarships to more deserving students. This initiative has enabled us to invest in our future leaders' education and facilitated hiring another part-time employee, enhancing our capacity to support our mission effectively.

The funds allocated to us through the Wildcats Program have been instrumental in driving these positive changes. We've diligently managed these resources, ensuring that every dollar contributes to the sustainability of our scholarship programs. We're incredibly grateful to our Wildcat donors whose generosity continues to fuel our ability to invest wisely, ensuring the longevity of these scholarships for years to come.

While we focus on prudent financial management, we've also had some planned one-time expenses this year. These expenditures were drawn from our savings to support strategic initiatives to further our organizational goals. Consequently, our operating expenses have surpassed our revenue for the year.

As stewards of your investment, we remain committed to transparency and accountability in our financial practices. We believe these investments are essential for YBS's continued growth and success, and we're excited about the opportunities ahead.

Thank you for your continued trust and support.

Sincerely,  
Briana Brzezinski

# Contributors & Community Partners

*We are so thankful to all of our contributors who continue to support us in our mission of mentoring and empowering students to earn a college degree.*

## Sustainer

BWL & KSL Foundation for Education

## Doctorate level

Arvest Foundation  
DSR  
Sneed, George Lovell  
Phillips 66

## Master level

BOK Financial  
Boles, Byron & Tracy  
BTC Broadband  
ConocoPhillips  
Dronyk, Cindy  
Knights of Columbus  
Martin, Joel & Shirley  
Meyer, Steve & Terri  
Moxie On Second  
Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence  
Pranger, Nic & Julie  
Russell Real Estate Group  
Safari Smiles, LLC  
Shultes, Dan & Pam  
Spears, Terri & Cheri  
Truity Credit Union  
Wal-Mart Corporation  
Anonymous Donors

## Bachelor level

Archambo, Mark & Cathy  
Arvest Bank  
Arvest Wealth Management  
Bartlesville Rotary  
Carrington, Joel & Cherie  
Dausses, Bill & Charlotte  
Droege, Dan & Melinda  
Gorman Management Company  
Gorman, Thomas  
Hilton Garden Inn  
Hughes, Melody  
Jane Phillips Society  
Joyce, Malcolm & Barbara  
Kailasam, Varadharajan &  
Mollie Collins  
Kiwanis Club of Bartlesville  
Legatski, Lester Karl  
Matthews, Joan  
Morrison, Eric & Cindy  
Potts, Terry & Lynn  
Proctor, Andrew & Megan  
Sears, Earl & Jane  
Stride Bank  
Talmage, Martha

## Associate level

Abbott, Mark & Terri  
Benzin, Michael & Vickie  
Brady, DeLila M.  
Casselberry, Caroline  
Coppedge, Jared  
Crowder, Michael & Peggy  
Daniels, Charlie & Julie  
Ewert, Warren & Joleen  
Farr, Lesley  
Image First Linen  
Lakey, Christi  
Nelson, David & Emily  
Peterson, David Bruce  
Regent Bank  
RSU Foundation  
The Eatery by 3 Kids and a  
Cake  
Tresher, Jana  
Troutwine, Phil  
Williams, Joe  
Williams, John & Stevie  
Anonymous Donor

We have 100% Board Participation!

*A very special thanks to those who went to the extra effort to match their donations with their corporations and to our loyal Wildcats!*

## A UNIQUE PARTNERSHIP



At the beginning of our organization we knew that rather than duplicating efforts, it made more sense to team up with BBBSOK to work with them to manage the matching and mentor relationships of our organization. We are happy that this relationship has been going for over 16 years with more to come!

Contact BBBSOK through the below methods:

918-213-4524

[bigoklahoma.org](http://bigoklahoma.org)

# A NEW FACE

My name is Briana Brzezinski, and I am the newly appointed leader of the Young Scholars of Bartlesville. With a rich background in education spanning over 14 years, I bring a deep passion for empowering students and fostering their academic growth.



My journey in education began with a Bachelor's in Elementary Education followed by a Master's in Instructional Leadership and Curriculum, both earned from the esteemed University of Oklahoma. Additionally, my commitment to enhancing educational outcomes led me to pursue a certification in administration from Oklahoma State University.

In July 2023, I had the privilege of assuming the leadership reins from Michael Secora, who has transitioned to teaching 7th-grade science at Central. Building upon the foundation laid by Michael and the dedicated team at YSB, I am wholeheartedly dedicated to advancing our mission and taking our programs to new heights.

Working with YSB allows me to continue my lifelong dedication to education, ensuring that the youth of Bartlesville have access to the resources and support they need to thrive academically and beyond. I am honored to be entrusted with this responsibility and am deeply committed to making a meaningful impact on the lives of our students.

As we embark on this journey together, I am excited about the possibilities. With your continued support, we can create positive change and empower our community's next generation of leaders.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to education and for joining us on this transformative journey.

Warm regards,

*Briana Brzezinski*

Briana Brzezinski  
Executive Director  
Young Scholars of Bartlesville

## Major Sponsors



# A LOOK AT US

## 2023 Statistics

### Students

Current Middle School Students: 11

Current High School Students: 11

Current College Students: 12

### Retention

Total Program College grads: 18

College Retention: 73%

College Graduation Rate: 74%

National College Grad. Rate (Cohort Group): 10-20%

### Grades

Average Young Scholars of Bartlesville Fall 2023: 3.71

Average College Student GPA Spring 2023: 3.42

Average of All GPA in 2023: 3.60

Average BPS GPA Fall 2022-Spring 2023: 3.61

Historical Program GPA: 3.52

Historical College GPA: 3.12

Historical Total GPA: 3.42

## 2023 Success Highlights

17

New Students

3x

Higher  
College

Graduation Rate

4

College  
Graduates



# A LIFETIME OF IMPACT

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## HOPE BRAYFIELD BACHELOR CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES FROM OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY, 2023

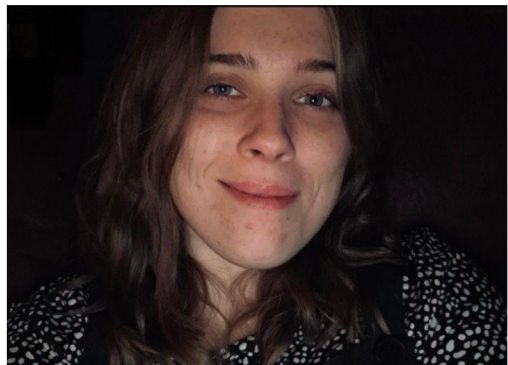
Currently works for GRAND Mental Health  
Matched with Cheryl Fregin

From Hope: This program “gives kids a chance to have the life they want. I graduated debt free and that is because of this program. I took (the classes), going to quarterly meetings, and volunteering just overall made me a well-rounded person, having a mentor being able to network with lots of individuals in the community.” On her future plans she states, “I will probably get a masters (potentially in social work) and then if I have a masters, might as well go for a PhD ;).”

From Cheryl: “Hope and I were matched in her sophomore year of high school, and I feel like we connected immediately. I am blessed to call Hope my friend! Being a mentor is very rewarding, especially seeing the growth and successes along the way.”

What does our program mean to you?

*"I see this program as the reason that I was able to do as well as I did in school. It gave me a purpose, and I knew just how impactful all these experiences in the program would help me in the long run, so I made sure to pay attention and retain as much information as I could."*



Pictured Above: Hope Brayfield, Current Photo



Dear Wildcats,

In 2022, the Young Scholars of Bartlesville took over responsibility for the Wildcat Scholarship Program. We continue to have financial responsibility for the funds entrusted to us.

The decision to integrate the College High Wildcat Memorial Scholarship Fund with our organization was made by Jim Hess, and it reflects our commitment to expanding educational opportunities within our community. Through collaborative discussions between representatives of both organizations, it was unanimously agreed that the College High Wildcat Memorial Scholarship Fund would be best served under the umbrella of the Young Scholars of Bartlesville.



I want to reassure you that all existing Wildcat and Denny Zoot Scholarships awarded before the integration will continue to be honored without interruption. Additionally, moving forward, new scholarships will be awarded annually based on both available funds and the qualifications of deserving students.

We recognize and value the longstanding tradition and generosity of the College High Wildcats community. Your support has been integral to the success of these scholarship programs, and we sincerely hope that you will continue to partner with us in this endeavor. Your contributions ensure that the Wildcats' legacy lives on through the educational opportunities we provide, and we are immensely grateful for your ongoing support.

Together, we can impact the lives of students in Bartlesville, empowering them to achieve their academic and career aspirations. Thank you for your dedication and generosity.



Warm Regards,  
Briana Brzezinski  
Executive Director  
Young Scholars of Bartlesville

## University Partners



|  |
|--|
| <b>Balance</b><br><b>\$578,863</b>   |
| <b>Scholarships Used</b><br><b>\$1,305*</b>  |
| <b>Investment Earnings</b><br><b>\$184,975 (lifetime earnings)</b>                   |
| <b>*Only one student attended RSU; she had a full ride and only needed a laptop.</b> |

|  |
|--|
| <b>Balance</b><br><b>\$1,232,152</b>                     |
| <b>Scholarships Used</b><br><b>\$37,148</b>              |
| <b>Investment Earnings</b><br><b>\$83,461 (for 2023)</b> |

|  |
|--|
| <b>Balance</b><br><b>\$473,560</b>                       |
| <b>Scholarships Used</b><br><b>\$37,148</b>              |
| <b>Investment Earnings</b><br><b>\$31,820 (for 2023)</b> |

In addition to our University Partners, Young Scholars can make use of one or more of our 7 scholarship sources to attend any Oklahoma University.

# STUDENTS & MENTORS OF 2023



Jacqueline - Class of 2024 and Diana  
Bethany - Class of 2025 and Lesley  
Yazmin - Class of 2025 and Kendra  
Yadeni - Class of 2026 Unmatched



Colt - Class of 2026 and Craig  
Jackson - Class of 2026 and Jane & Earl  
Leonardo - Class of 2026 Unmatched  
**Keyli - Class of 2027 and Alma**



Nathaniel - Class of 2027 Unmatched  
Gabriella - Class of 2027 and Pam  
Aaliyah - Class of 2027 and Emily  
Michelle - Class of 2028 and Hadley



Lennon - Class of 2028 and Isaiah  
Melissa - Class of 2028 Unmatched  
Rebekah - Class of 2029 and Tiffany  
Amiyah - Class of 2029 and Maria



Jordyn - Class of 2029 Unmatched  
Drake - Class of 2029 and Russell  
Sa'Phire - Class of 2030 Unmatched  
Miya - Class of 2030 Unmatched



Katalaya - Class of 2030 and Jennifer

Any students who are outlined in yellow above are waiting on a mentor, if you would like to know more, contact us at 918-766-6675 or [office.youngscholars@gmail.com](mailto:office.youngscholars@gmail.com) or go to our website and see our news section for updated waiting profiles. We would love to sit down and have coffee with you.

## MENTOR OF THE YEAR

### From Alma:

"Besides an amazing friendship, I have learned that the lessons I teach are good reminders to myself to follow my own advice. Going to my mentee's quinceanera was so special. We had so much fun celebrating such a huge milestone in our culture."

### From Keyli:

She is very special. I think it was unique how easily we were able to talk with each other and feel comfortable. He has also influenced me to look at other careers to keep in mind.



# THE WHOLE STUDENT METHOD

## A volunteer spirit is just one piece of our whole student method.

To remain in the program, students must volunteer at least four times yearly. These volunteer activities alternate between regular annual and new activities to expose youth to various nonprofits and experiences in our community. Our students should give back as part of the benefits they receive as Young Scholars.

In addition to volunteering, students can partake in over 30 college prep programs before receiving their college scholarship. As recent program college graduate Felix Aranda Jr. states, what differentiates Young Scholars of Bartlesville from

other scholarship programs is “They don’t just deposit the money into your bursar and say ok, go to college, buy your textbooks...They actually care about their students. They do so much and are so helpful to pour into their students to ensure that they succeed. That is something that has really inspired me.”



Below is a selection of the over 30 college prep programs available to Young Scholars of Bartlesville students.

- Mentor
- Career Exploration through Summer Camps and Internships
- College Tours
- Orthodontics
- Scholarship list and application support
- Job Application/Interview Assistance Class
- Classes on Balancing Checkbooks/Loans/ and College Expenses
- ACT/SAT Prep Materials and Class
- Robotics Program
- Supply Closet for School Supplies
- Life Coaching and Strengths Finder Results
- FAFSA/OK’s Promise application support
- Tutoring in-person and online
- Opportunity to Page at the Capitol
- College Dorm Supply Budget
- Interview Attire Funds
- College Laptop Funds
- College Application and Housing Fee Support
- And Many More!



**Be a Mentor.  
Be a Volunteer.  
Be a Donor.**

“

**EDUCATION IS THE  
ONE THING NO  
ONE CAN TAKE  
AWAY FROM YOU.**

**-Elin Nordegren**

”

**Keep in Contact**

**Briana Brzezinski - Executive Director**

[www.bartlesvillescholars.org](http://www.bartlesvillescholars.org)

[office.youngscholars@gmail.com](mailto:office.youngscholars@gmail.com)

<https://www.facebook.com/YoungScholarsofBartlesville/>

918-766-6675