

LADDERS  
FOR  
LEADERS

# IMPACT REPORT

— 2025

[www.laddersforleaders.com](http://www.laddersforleaders.com)



# Our Vision

We envision a community of empowered students who are equipped to make successful decisions after high school.



# Our Mission

It is our mission to connect high school students to careers through education, training, and impactful internships.

# MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER/CEO



What an honor it has been to create and lead this fabulous organization! As I reflect on 2025, I am filled with deep gratitude and pride for what we have accomplished together at Ladders for Leaders. This year marked a powerful season of growth, innovation, and impact. We did not just expand our programs, we strengthened pathways that are changing the lives of students and families across our community.

In 2025, we served more students than ever before through Ladders for Leaders University and our paid internship programs, connecting young people to real career pathways in various industries.

These experiences are more than résumé builders. They provide income, confidence, mentorship, and a vision for what is possible after high school, especially for students who might not otherwise have access to professional networks or paid career opportunities. One of the most meaningful parts of this year has been seeing students step into their potential. We watched interns gain certifications, earn wages to support their families, and discover career paths they had never imagined. These moments remind us why this work matters, and why now is the time to build on our past success.

None of this would be possible without the collective commitment of our partners, employers, educators, donors, volunteers, and staff. Your belief in our mission allows us to continue removing barriers and opening doors for students who are ready to work, learn, and lead.

As we look ahead, our focus remains clear: to scale our impact, strengthen industry partnerships, and create sustainable pathways that prepare students for long-term economic mobility. The demand for career-connected learning continues to grow, and with your support, we are ready to meet that need.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Together, we are bridging the gap between education and industry, one student at a time.

With gratitude,  
LaKissa Bright

# PROGRAM DIRECTOR OVERVIEW



The 2024-2025 Internship season brought Ladders for Leaders new opportunities to broaden our outreach in the Austin, Texas area. Our Interns came from 29 different high schools in over 6 area-wide school districts.

This Summer we had the privilege of working with 25 different business partners, 13 of which were newly acquired for the 2025 Intern season. We increased our interns by 51% for a total of 97 interns compared to 64 interns in the previous year. The growth was not possible without the support of our grant partners, sponsors, board members, and staff.

Thank you all!

Tanisha Narine

# Board of Directors



**Genail  
Marthol**  
PRESIDENT



**Edward  
Hanna**  
VICE PRESIDENT



**Esmeralda  
Mattke-Longoria**  
SECRETARY



**April Guerra**  
TREASURER



**Chris  
Bowman**



**Janda  
Castillo**



**Lakshmi  
Sampath**



**Yolanda Owens**



**Laronica Moise**



**Helynn Nelson**



**Brian  
Hernandez**



**Shymika  
Stephenson**

# Our Staff



**LaKissa Bright**  
FOUNDER/CEO



**Tanisha Narine**  
PROGRAM DIRECTOR



**Shelly Hatch**  
PROGRAM MANAGER



**Ashley Marthol**  
INTERN



**Neha Reddy**  
INTERN



**Madelynn Dean**  
INTERN

# 2025 IMPACT



402

Students  
participated  
in the LLU  
Program

365

Students  
applied to the  
internship  
program

169

Students  
qualified for  
an internship  
interview

97

Students  
awarded an  
internship

Total Students Served: 402

Intern Total Hours Worked: 10,489

# PROGRAMS

## **LADDERS FOR LEADERS UNIVERSITY**

A 4-week program which provides the essential knowledge & expertise required to obtain and be successful in a real-world professional experience. The skills learned from the program will be valuable throughout each participant's entire professional career.

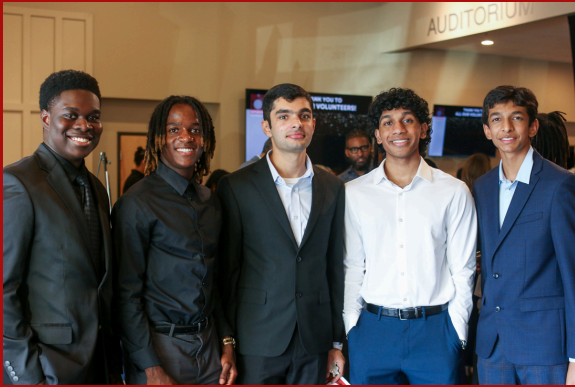
Topics:

1. Career Path and Transferrable Skills
2. Resume & LinkedIn Workshop
3. Interviewing 101
4. Business Etiquette
5. Personal Responsibility
6. Communications

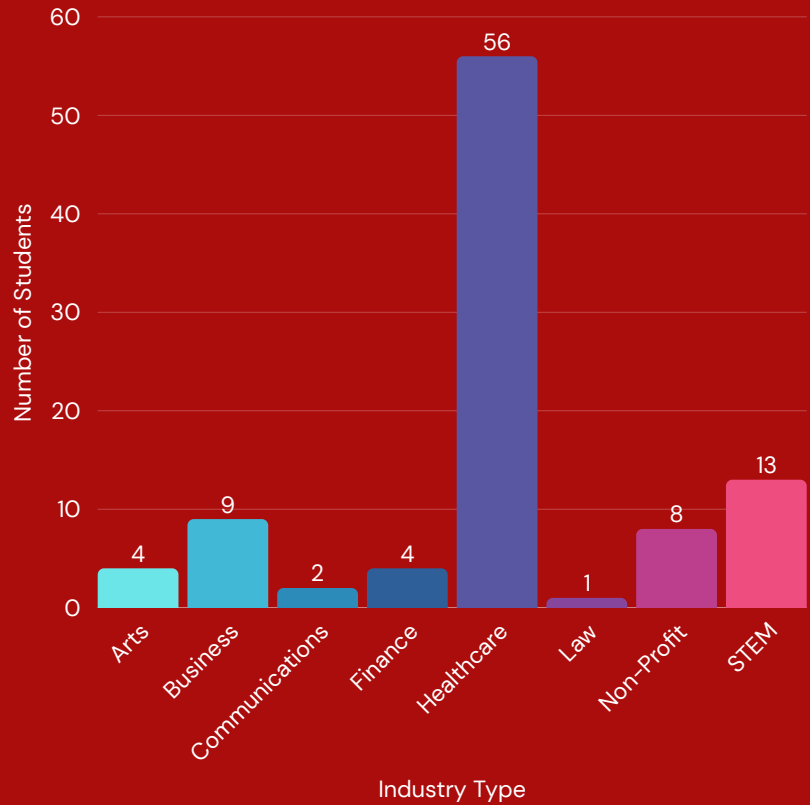
## **LADDERS FOR LEADERS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**

A program for students with a competitive GPA. Students are matched with a company which aligns with their career interests and compensated for a six-week internship where they work a minimum of 20 hours per week. Special consideration is given to students who attend Title I schools, alternative schools or participate in foster care or AVID programs.

# 2025 IMPACT



## INDUSTRIES REPRESENTED



## 2025 DATA:



Interns



Total Intern  
Hours Worked



Completed  
sessions in  
Business Skill  
Trainings



\$2K

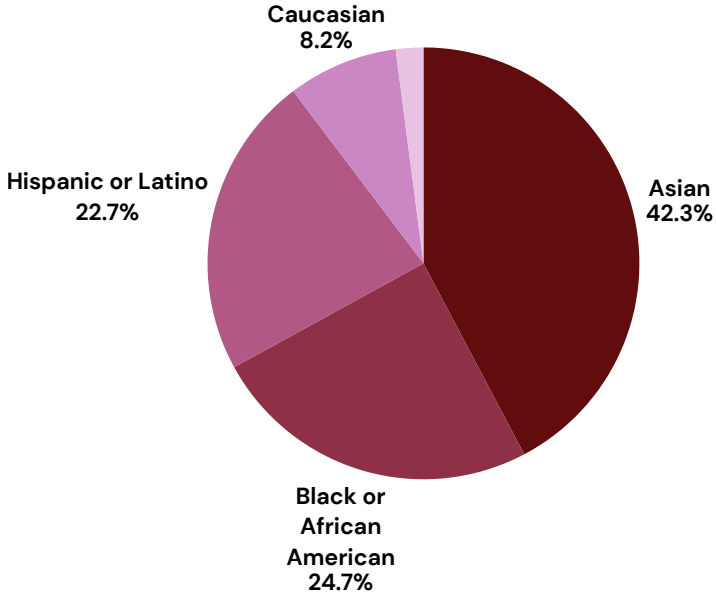
Scholarship  
Awards



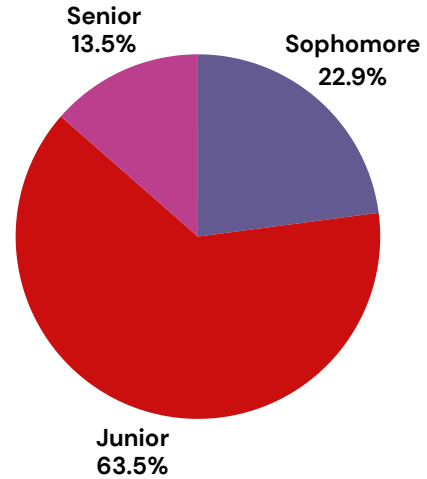
Companies  
Hosted Interns

# 2025 INTERN DEMOGRAPHICS

## Race



## School Class Status



## Underserved Population

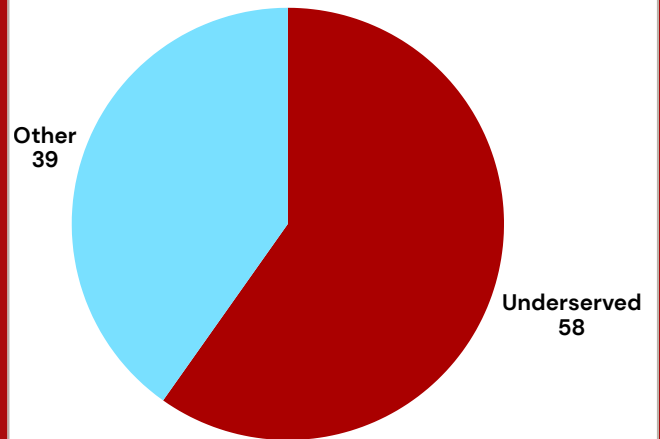
Minorities: 48

Low Income: 34

Total Minorities who are low income: 58

## Underserved Students

\*Minorities and Low-Income



## Gender (%)

38.1%

Male

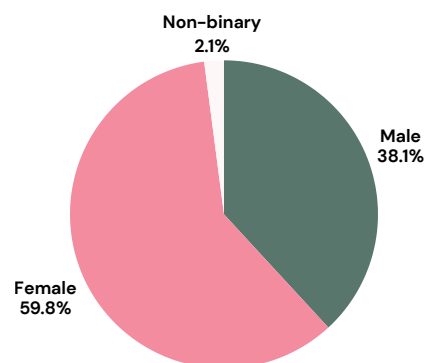


59.8%

Female



## Gender



# Where are our Interns from?

★ ROUND ROCK ISD

35%

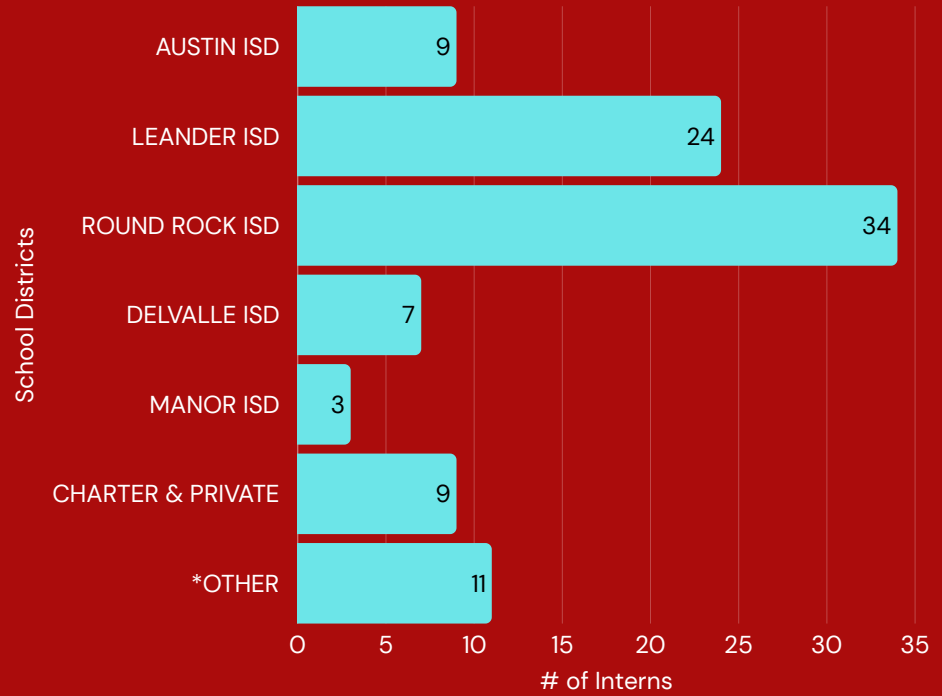
★ LEANDER ISD

25%

★ OTHER

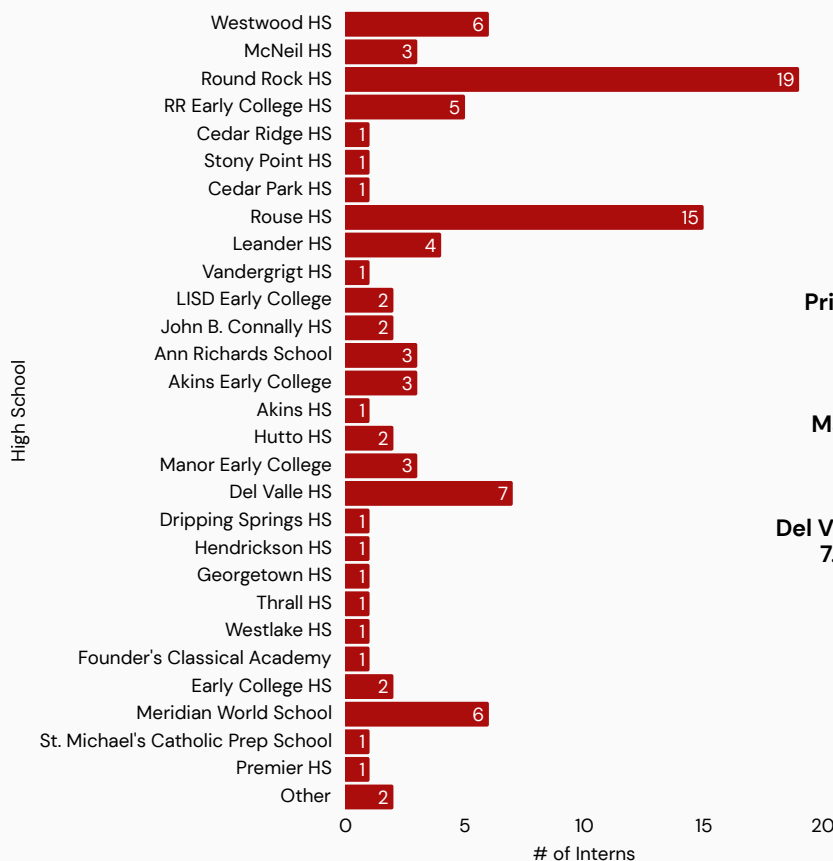
40%

Number of Interns by School District

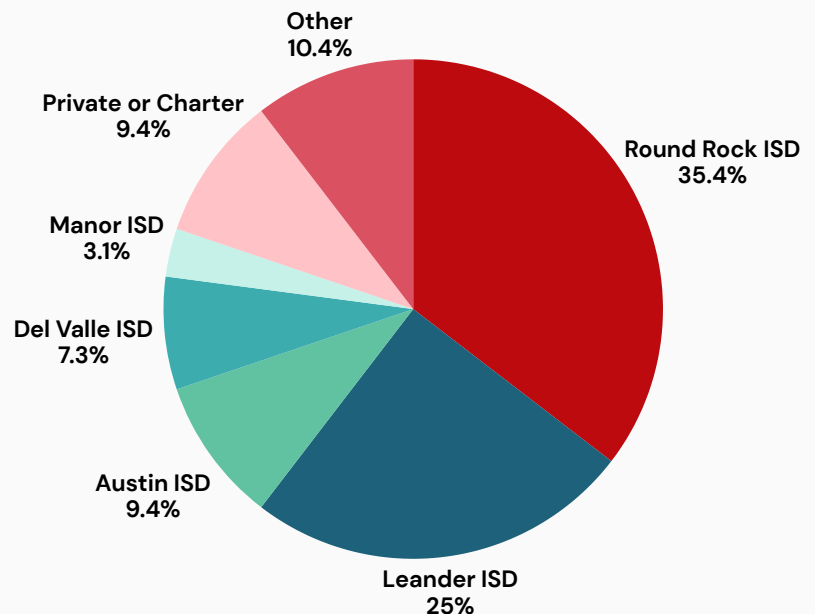


\*Other Combined ISD's (Hutto, Dripping Springs, Pflugerville, Georgetown, Thrall, Westlake)

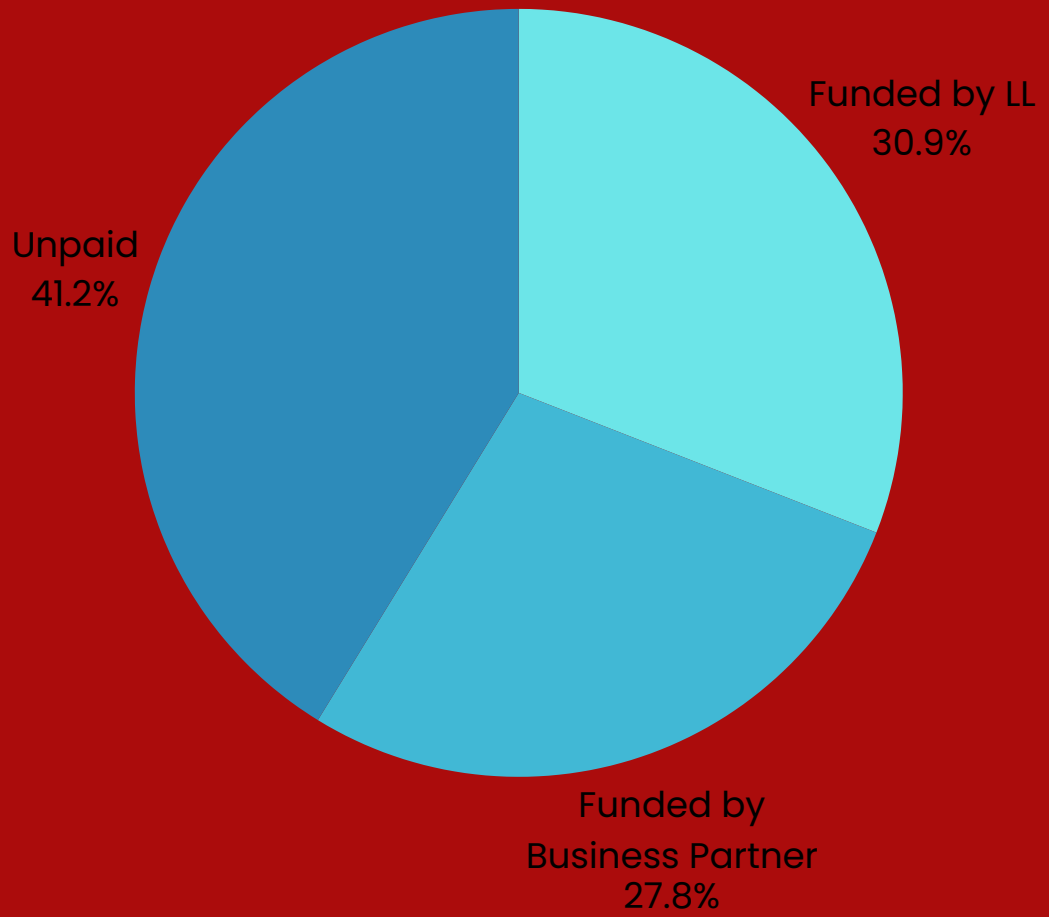
## Austin Area High Schools Interns Attended



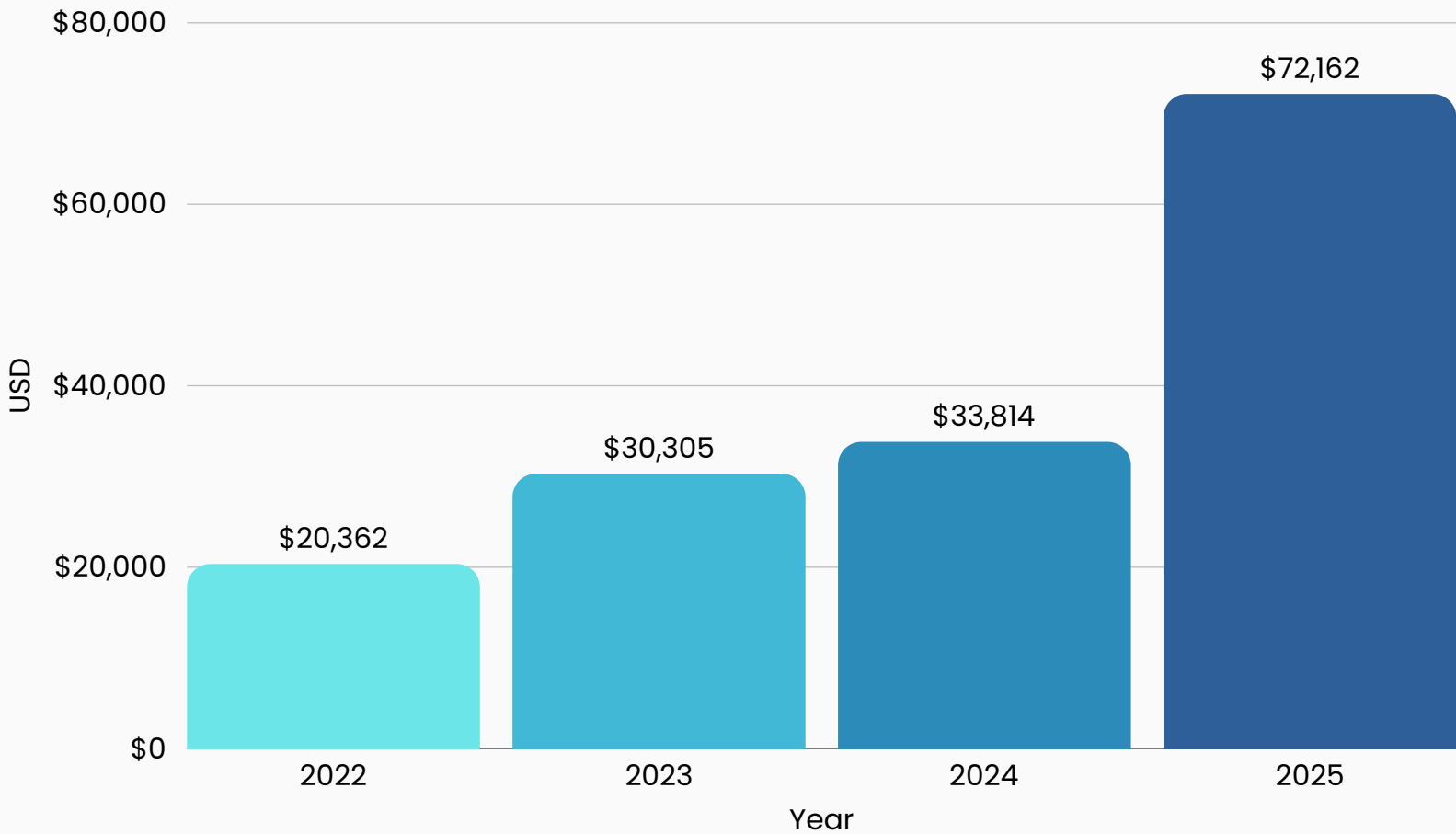
Percentage of Interns by School District



# 2025 Interns Funded



## Intern Wages Paid Over the Years



# 25 BUSINESS PARTNERS

## 13 NEW COMPANIES SIGNED ON AS BUSINESS PARTNERS!

- Smokey Mo's BBQ Headquarters
- Brad Morgan State Farm
- Wheelhouse Learning Solutions
- Asterisk Dot Asterisk Technologies
- KUT News
- Northshore Media Productions
- First Texas Bank
- I Live Here, I Give Here
- The Important Work
- My Community Catalyst
- Opportunities Williamson
- Hill Country Community Ministries
- Austin Sister Cities International

## RETURNING PARTNERS

- Ascension Seton
- St. David's Healthcare
- Teravista Wellness
- Georgetown Palace Theatre
- Ladders for Leaders
- Austin Area Technology Movement HQ
- Code Ninjas
- TYREX Manufacturing
- Kona Ice
- The Think Group
- Wilcox Farmer's Insurance
- Andrews-Booker Law Firm

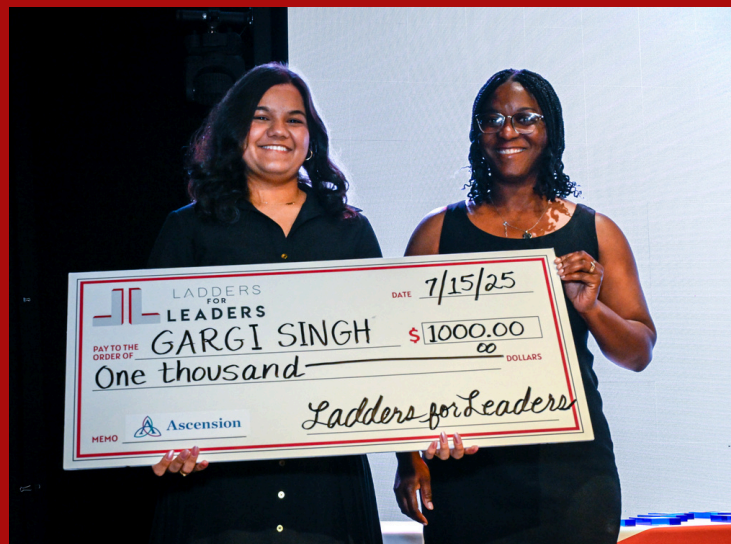
# SCHOLARSHIPS SPONSORED BY ASCENSION SETON



Two of our  
graduating  
Interns are  
awarded  
scholarships

## Total Awarded: \$2,000

The winners  
are selected  
based on  
videos sharing  
their  
internship  
experience



# 2025 TESTIMONIALS

**THANK YOU LADDERS FOR LEADERS FOR  
EMPOWERING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH LIFE-  
CHANGING OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP  
PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL SKILLS - MS.  
HABIBI, PARENT**

**ANIKA IS A DREAM INTERN AND I'M READY TO  
HIRE HER AS MY CEO! SHE'S BRILLIANT, HAS A  
GREAT ATTITUDE, AMAZING ENTHUSIASM,  
EXCEPTIONAL WORK ETHIC, INCREDIBLY  
ACCOUNTABLE AND AN ABSOLUTE ROCK STAR  
WORKER! - DR. MORRISON**

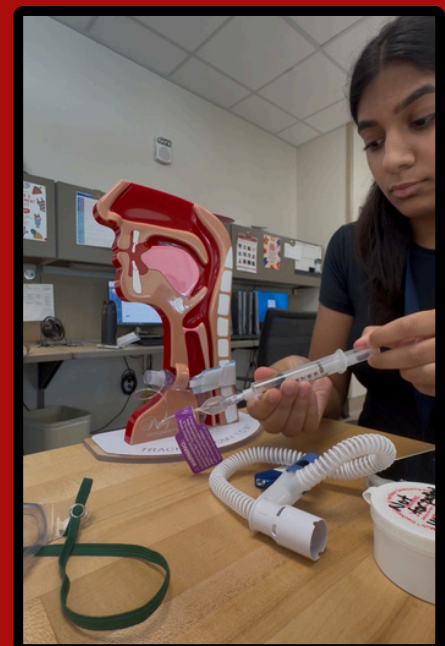
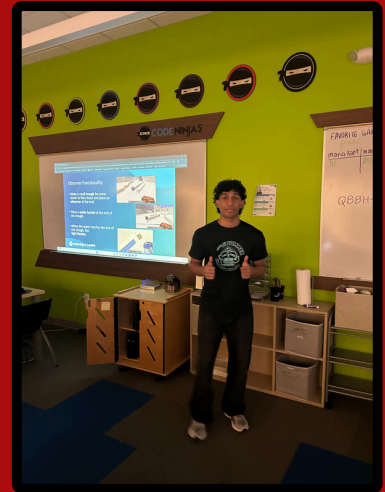
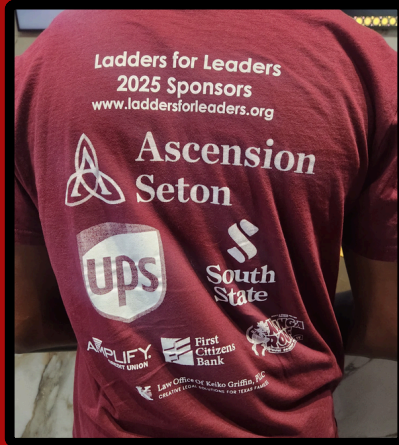
**IT WAS REALLY GREAT FOR JORDYN'S SELF ESTEEM TO  
HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED AND "TAKEN UNDER THE WING"  
OF SUCCESSFUL PROFESSIONALS. ADDITIONALLY, THE  
EXPERIENCE OF OBSERVING SURGICAL PROCEDURES OF  
BIOPSIES AND BONE MARROW EXTRACTIONS WAS A  
RARE AND SPECIAL PRIVILEGE -MS. MEGANS**

**THANKS SO MUCH AGAIN! WE ARE SO HAPPY  
TO BE PARTICIPATING IN THIS PROGRAM AND  
KATIE IS ALREADY OUTSTANDING EVEN EARLY  
IN HER TIME HERE. - C. MOORE, RN**

# LADDERS FOR LEADERS IN ACTION



# LADDERS FOR LEADERS IN ACTION



# LOOKING FORWARD TO 2026

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



Serving as President of the Ladders for Leaders Board of Directors in 2025 has been an incredibly rewarding journey. This year, we reached a major milestone by placing 97 interns – an achievement made possible by the generosity of our donors and the strong partnerships we have built and deepened over time.

While we are proud of this progress, there is still important work ahead within Travis and Williamson County ISDs and the surrounding

communities. To meet this moment, we are reimagining our resources to ensure more equitable access and opportunity for all students -and we have some exciting changes in store for 2026.

Thank you to our valued donors, volunteers, and partners. We are deeply grateful for your continued support. I also extend my sincere appreciation to my fellow board members for their passion and dedication, and to our staff and leadership for their outstanding work in building an organization that plays a pivotal role in students' future success.

Let's keep the momentum going -hold on tight, because 2026 is going to be EVEN bigger!

Genail Marthol  
Ladders for Leaders, Board President

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## 2025 SPONSORS

Our mission of *Bridging the Gap Between Education and Industry* continues to be possible with the support of our Sponsors and Grant Partners. Their monetary contributions enable our underserved populations to receive payment during their internships

### DIAMOND SPONSOR:



Ascension  
Seton

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## 2025 SPONSORS

### SILVER SPONSORS:



### BRONZE SPONSORS:



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## 2025 GRANT PARTNERS

Our Grant Partners keep our mission and vision possible



United Way for Greater Austin



W.D. KELLEY  
FOUNDATION



Georgetown  
Health  
Foundation



ROUND ROCK TEXAS

*charles*  
SCHWAB



Ascension