Our success ultimately lies in how we shape opportunity for each individual student—how keenly we can personalize education across the vast and diverse New York City school system.
Twenty-five years ago, we assembled a group of civic, philanthropic, corporate and educational partners to mobilize support for our public schools. Against long odds—but with students and families at the center of our efforts—we worked with teachers and principals to reimagine what schools could be. We have demonstrated that academic success is possible for all students. More students—78 percent—are graduating from our schools than ever before.

Now is not the time to let up. Our challenge is to build on this success and scale. In the past, we aimed to hit an 80 percent four-year graduation rate across our 77 schools, serving more than 46,000 students. Now we are pushing to ensure that every school graduates at least 80 percent of its students. Meeting this goal requires that we redouble our efforts to improve graduation outcomes for special education students, English language learners and students who enter high school furthest behind from academic standards.

With your help, we are up to the challenge. Ten years ago, too many of our city’s high schools could not even graduate half of their entering class. With students, parents, teachers and school leaders, we created small schools, which have been shown to improve graduation rates by 9.4 percentage points and college enrollment by more than 8 points compared to other schools in the city. At the same time, we saw similar increases in our larger schools. And we created a network of transfer schools for older students who had given up and risked dropping out.

The lessons are clear. By empowering teachers and principals with data to drive instruction, we can constantly judge our success and continue to improve. A focus on data informs our broader efforts to craft new interventions for struggling students, create effective curricula in different subjects, and continually learn as students and adults.

In the face of new and evolving needs, we better prepare teachers to enter our schools. To this end, New Visions continues to train the next generation of educators in a clinical residency program run in partnership with Hunter College School of Education. Our graduates are dedicated to the profession and stay in the system longer than other early-career teachers, according to findings of an external evaluation.

Schools are ultimately about students, not statistics. Our story is best told through the lived experiences of the tens of thousands of students who walk through the doors of New Visions schools every day. The six you will read about here come from all corners of the city and demonstrate the continuing promise of public education to create meaningful lives.

Thanks to your support, New Visions schools deliver on that promise. We have more work before us, but with your continuing help, we can change lives. By giving more students opportunities through public education, we become a more just and equitable society.

Richard I. Beattie
Founder and Chairman

Roger C. Altman
Co-Chairman

Robert L. Hughes
President
At New Visions, we continually seek better ways to understand and meet the educational needs of individual students so they can thrive in college, career and life.

We do this across district and charter schools, preparing teachers in direct classroom settings, developing rigorous curricula that challenge students to engage in deeper learning, and providing educators with robust data systems to evaluate learning, build on success, and act with intention and impact.

Supporting Our Schools

New Visions is strongly positioned to support the city’s major education initiatives and to continue to drive improvements among the 70 New York City district schools that we support as an “Affinity Group.” New Visions works closely with two superintendents who oversee our network; in close collaboration with them, we align our supports with the instructional expectations of the supervising district.

As an Affinity Group, we provide targeted data, curricula and other supports to our schools. Our innovations serve as a model for the system as a whole. At the center of this work are Strategic Data Check-ins (SDCs), regular planning conversations with school leaders that help track and guide student progress to graduation using the New Visions–designed Student Sorter tool, which aggregates multiple student data points in one place for educators. The check-ins address critical graduation milestones over the course of the year, so educators can schedule students for the right courses and credits, adjust any credit gaps as quickly as possible, prepare students for the appropriate Regents exams, and review marking period and term grades to uncover potential problems before it’s too late.

“We use everything New Visions develops,” says Adeleza Michelena, principal of Brooklyn’s High School for Innovation in Advertising and Media, which raised its graduation rate from 63 percent in 2012 to 80 percent in 2015. “The New Visions Student Sorter is really the most phenomenal and useful collection of student data that I and my cabinet can look at to identify students who are at risk, high performing, going for advanced Regents, or in need of certain credits.” She notes that the Sorter, which acts as a check on the school’s other systems, recently caught a student’s missing language requirement—and educators put him back on track for on-time graduation. “Every conversation is infused with the richness and insight of that data. These tools have helped make us more accountable to the kids and made the kids more accountable to themselves and to their learning.”

Sharing Our Data Tools

Recognized for our expertise in designing frameworks for collecting, organizing and taking action on key student-level data, New Visions has been invited to disseminate these data and analytic frameworks to a larger group of New York City schools—the 130 schools participating in the Chancellor’s Community and Renewal Schools initiatives.

The initiatives, designed to strengthen the relationship between schools and the communities they serve, bring integrated social services directly into schools to address the social and emotional needs of the most at-risk students. New Visions provides the leadership teams of these schools with tools to successfully organize and track their integrated services. And we build the capacity of school teams to work together to review real-time data so that...
they can more effectively support students on the path to high school graduation and beyond.

Preparing Teachers

New Visions is deepening its ongoing partnership with the NYC Department of Education by aligning our successful teacher preparation program, implemented with Hunter School of Education, with the DOE’s Learning Partners Program, a signature initiative of the Chancellor. Via this initiative, New Visions and Hunter College will build the capacity of schools outside of New Visions’ traditional network to train teachers using our evidence-based residency model. Each year, New Visions host schools, with demonstrated capacity as teacher residency sites, will partner with two schools that are new to this approach. Over the next five years, we expect to reach 48 schools and prepare 157 new teachers to be hired to fill critical NYC vacancies. This adds to the 160 teachers we have trained since 2009.

By increasing the number of well-prepared, certified teachers entering our city’s classrooms, improving the retention of teachers in high-need subject areas and accelerating the effectiveness of beginning teachers, we aim to improve student achievement and, through sharing of best practices, promote system-wide change across the city.

Increasing Opportunities through Charter Schools

Four years ago, with a goal of consolidating our organizational knowledge and innovating more deeply, New Visions opened its first round of charter high schools as part of a multiyear endeavor. In 2015, we graduated the first classes from New Visions Charter High School for the Humanities and New Visions Charter High School for Advanced Math & Science (AMS). AMS had an impressive graduation rate of 91 percent, and Humanities, where more than half the Class of 2015 entered high school in the city’s lowest third of academic performance, had a four-year graduation rate of 72 percent, an indication of how far students can go with a rigorous curriculum and high expectations. We continue to work with the schools to reach a 95 percent five-year graduation rate, a target outlined in our state charter. Across both graduating classes, 72 percent of students have committed to two- or four-year colleges.

We currently have seven charter schools, all committed to serving high-need students—including students from low-income families, English language learners and students with disabilities—in proportions equal to or greater than neighborhood district schools. As a hybrid entity, New Visions is able to advance conversations between charter and district schools, identifying good ideas in both arenas and scaling them across the public schools.

Community partnerships stand at the heart of our charter school initiative. Deep partnerships with Lincoln Center Education, American Museum of Natural History, Parsons School of Design, and many others, offer our teachers and students a rich array of support and opportunities for growth. Through an exciting partnership with the Parent Leadership Training Institute, we are engaging parents from both our district and charter schools in a 20-week leadership development course, to help them act on their aspirations to become civic and community leaders.

Looking Ahead

As an innovation lab for New York City public schools, we aim to disseminate our findings and best practices to the wider district, the nation’s largest with nearly 1.1 million schoolchildren and more than 70,000 teachers. Recently, we created a professional development program for teachers looking to invest in themselves by earning credit that can be applied toward salary differentials in the New York City teachers’ contract. Called “MicroCert,” the program offers for-credit courses that are directly relevant to the day-to-day practice of teachers across a range of career experience levels and content areas. The main object of study is the teacher’s own students and their learning progressions. Through these hands-on professional development courses, we are equipping teachers with new strategies and skills for making an immediate impact on student learning the next time they walk into their classrooms.

To ensure that New Visions’ engine of innovation remains strong, we have created the Richard I. Beattie Fund, overseen by our organization’s founder and chairman. The Fund, which thanks to generous donors currently stands at $9.7 million, will provide seed funding over the next five years to emerging projects—allowing New Visions to nimbly develop programs in response to urgent and evolving needs in our schools.
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

2014

New Visions for Public Schools Statement of Activities

Year ended June 30, 2014

Revenue

- Government: $8,048,573
- Corporations: 486,716
- Foundations: 3,982,382
- Individuals: 3,754,651
- Other (including investment returns): 7,329,982
- Special Event: 1,292,125

Total Revenue: $24,894,429

Expenses

Program Services
- School Creation: $5,324,438
- School Support: 7,285,857
- Teacher & Leadership Development: 6,604,882
- Policy Research & Innovation: 1,122,692

Subtotal: $20,337,869

Supporting Services
- Management and General: $2,125,207
- Fundraising: 779,347
- Special Event Expenses: 347,935

Subtotal: $3,252,489

Total Expenses: $23,590,358

Net Assets

Beginning of Year: $30,577,764
Change in Net Assets: 1,304,071
End of Year: $31,881,835

In accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, New Visions records contributions as revenue in the year in which they are committed even if the funds are not received. Expenditures are recorded in the year in which they are incurred.
Two 2015

New Visions for Public Schools Statement of Activities

Year ended June 30, 2015

Revenue

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Total Revenue $28,957,553

Expenses

Program Services

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Subtotal $20,034,182

Supporting Services

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Subtotal $3,262,379

Total Expenses $23,296,561

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<tr>
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</table>
Richard I. Beattie  
Founder and Chairman  
Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP

Roger C. Altman  
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Sherrie Westin  
Young & Rubicam, Inc.  
Mortimer B. Zuckerman
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Queens

1. Academy for Careers in Television and Film
2. Bayside High School
3. Cambria Heights Academy
4. Civic Leadership Academy
5. East-West School of International Studies
6. High School for Community Leadership
7. Hillcrest High School
8. New Visions Charter High School for Advanced Math and Science IV
9. North Queens Community High School
10. Queens High School for Information, Research and Technology
11. Robert F. Wagner, Jr. Secondary School for Arts and Technology
12. Voyages Preparatory
13. Young Women’s Leadership School of Queens
On Track for SUCCESS

TANDY JAMES
NEW VISIONS CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL FOR THE HUMANITIES
As captain of her high school track team, Tandy James often wore a number. But she never felt like one. A member of the first entering—and, in 2015, the first graduating—class at New Visions Charter High School for the Humanities in the Bronx, Tandy was part of a small, close-knit community where educators keenly understand each student’s educational needs and strengths.

“Caring really helps,” says Tandy, who emigrated from Guyana as a young child. “When the teachers and principal put in more than their half, you want to put in more than your half. And you get better results.” Through a project-based curriculum, taught across content areas, New Visions charter schools engage students in deep and sustained learning to better prepare them for college and career.

“I’m a questions kind of person,” says Tandy, who aspires to combine two passions into a career in food science. “I’d raise my hand 25 times every class. Teachers would bring in more information for me the next day or show me an article to read. They made me love science even more.”

Amid her rigorous academic schedule, Tandy excelled at track, leading the team and posting first-place finishes in the 200-meter dash, high hurdles, relay and triple jump. “I appreciate how hard I can push myself,” she says. “Being a student-athlete really helps you balance things, improve your time management skills, decide what’s important.” While she loved running track and embracing a challenge, her focus in college, at SUNY Albany, will be on academics. “I want to see how far I can go as a student,” she says.
Strength in NUMB3RS

ELVIS MANZANARES
BRONX CENTER FOR SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS

Photograph by John Sherman
In tucked-in, button-down shirts and ties, students from Bronx Center for Science and Math make an impression. “We really stand out in the South Bronx, which is a super-poor district,” says graduate Elvis Manzanares. “You can point us out anywhere.”

The school, whose student population is overwhelmingly kids of color, immigrants and first-generation Americans, consistently ranks among the highest in the city academically. “To be ranked that high where we live—that’s just amazing,” says Elvis, who is now a freshman at Dartmouth College. “My principal, teachers, guidance counselors, they made sure we held ourselves to a high standard of excellence, and they put a lot in place to make sure everyone succeeds.”

Elvis himself is a standard-bearer for that excellence and was part of that support team that helped others achieve. A math whiz who was president of the Math Club and a founding member of the Robotics Club, Elvis tutored his peers in math and thrived on their success. “These kids are smart and just need some extra support,” he says. “Tutoring was a great way to help kids apply what they know in order to find the answer.”

Education has always been a north star for Elvis and his four siblings. His mother, a single mom who emigrated from Honduras so her children could have greater opportunity, made sure of it. “My mom put such an emphasis on education,” he says. “She said, ‘I want you to live the best life.’ Even if we didn’t have enough, she always makes sure we have our supplies, ink in the printer, small stuff like that.”

Elvis received a New Visions scholarship to attend Dartmouth, where his older sister is a junior. “Getting into college was great, but the problem that comes up for kids like me is paying for college,” he says. “The scholarship allows me to graduate debt-free. It puts one less burden on my family, which just means a lot.”

Steven has $1000, and he is playing a gambling game. He gets to pick a value $y$ between 0 and 1 (inclusive). A fair coin is then flipped. If the coin comes up heads, Steven is given 5000$y$ additional dollars. Otherwise, Steven loses 1000$y$ dollars. Steven’s happiness is equal to the log of the amount of money that he has after this gambling game.

**Find the value of $y$ that Steven should select to maximize his expected happiness.**

— A Math Club Challenge

Answer: $\frac{1}{5}$, based on the equation $H(y) = \frac{1}{2} \log(1000(5y + 1)) + \frac{1}{2} \log(1000(1 - y))$, then maximizing $H$ (or, Happiness).
Focus on the FUTURE
“Opportunities don’t just fall into your lap. You have to go out and pursue them. At ACTvF, you have to take the next step for yourself—determination and hard work will get you there.”

Gabriel Alvarez, a freshman at the School of Visual Arts (SVA), is committed to taking full advantage of his college experience—and not just for himself. His father, as an aspiring graphic designer and still a teen himself, had his own time at SVA cut short when Gabriel was born. “I’m very intentional about not becoming a statistic,” says Gabriel. “I’m destined to complete college, to break the cycle.”

His commitment to success was evident in high school, as he embraced everything that the Academy for Careers in Television and Film (ACTvF)—one of the city’s first film high schools—had to offer. Through the school’s hands-on curriculum, extended learning time and professional connections, he learned about editing, lighting, cinematography, direction and production design inside and outside the classroom. “You get to see what film is like on a grand scale,” he says, emphasizing the long-term film projects and independent work that come in the last two years of high school.

Gabriel, whose main interest is editing (at least right now), also values the real-world experience he received at Next Step Pictures, an independent, full-service video production company operated by ACTvF. Through jobs with the company, Gabriel has been behind the camera at Chinese New Year celebrations in Chinatown and at Socrates Sculpture Park, among other city events and locations.

Inspired by his father’s talent and dedication and equipped already with a solid grounding in all aspects of film and television production, Gabriel is buoyed by a New Visions college scholarship and is looking forward to his four years at SVA. “My dad had to work double hard at SVA, work a graveyard shift, go to school on two hours of sleep,” says Gabriel. “He didn’t get to enjoy the full college experience. I intend to take advantage of every opportunity here.”

2015 New Visions Scholarship Winner

Producer,
Next Step Pictures
Capitalizing on OPPORTUNITY

LIN LIN
NEW DORP HIGH SCHOOL
Lin Lin, a high-achieving student who moved from Japan to Staten Island four years ago, feels like she has a lot to learn. And fast. “I heard a statement: the first quarter of your life determines the rest of your life,” she says, in a bright, enthusiastic voice. “That’s 20 years. I think, ‘Oh my God, I’m 18, I only have two years left.’ I feel like I don’t know that many things—I need to learn all these things now.”

She packed a lot of opportunity into her four years at New Dorp High School, a school with robust data systems to help guide and track student performance. Lin studied business and won a Virtual Enterprise competition for her team’s entry, Polyglot translation services. She took several AP classes along with ESL classes, and participated in so many College Now college-prep courses that the program ran out of classes for her to take.

New Dorp also helped her secure an internship with the angel investment company Golden Seeds, where she felt like she was living her dream of becoming a financial analyst. “I didn’t feel like a high school student, getting on a train with professional people, going to work in a professional office,” she says. “I said to myself, ‘This is what I want to do, and I’m doing it right now!’ I used everything I learned from school, and the school gave me all the skills I needed. I couldn’t imagine anyone would ever give high school students this kind of opportunity.”

Lin, now a freshman at Baruch College, has already learned to see opportunity everywhere and capitalize on it. “Many people don’t realize that there are opportunities right next to you,” she says. “You don’t have to go to job fair or know someone at Citibank. I found out in high school that our teachers, our classes, could provide you with all the opportunity—you just have to take it.”

“Where I came from, people think that to be successful you follow what is given to you. But in the United States, they teach you to think, to be curious, to think of something that no one’s ever thought of.”
Envisioning

NEXT STEPS

...
“Everybody in my family started college, but they never graduated. I feel like if I go to college, I can set a higher bar for the up-and-coming generation.”

Eric White knew he had to do something different. The friends he’d started high school with—and had cut classes with—were about to graduate, but he was still many credits short.

So he transferred to East Brooklyn Community High School, a small, supportive transfer school that gives students like Eric a second chance. “It’s a smaller environment, and they’re constantly making sure you’re good,” he says. “It’s like a little family. Once you set the bar, you have to live up to it. They’re on you 24/7.” By contrast, his previous high school was large and felt impersonal; he was uninterested in classes and rarely went.

Run in partnership with SCO Family of Services, East Brooklyn is one of 10 New Visions transfer schools, which provide vital interventions for students severely behind in credits. Services include adult counseling and advocacy combined with attentive social, emotional and academic support. “We do better when we know there’s somebody there who’s going to understand what we need, who’s going to know us, and who’s going to advocate for us,” says Principal Patrick McGillicuddy.

A highlight of Eric’s high school experience was participating in Dream Big Speak Out, an enrichment program run by the Garden of Dreams Foundation, New York Knicks and Urban Word NYC that begins with a trip to Washington, D.C., with members of the Knicks and culminates in a poetry performance at the Nuyorican Poets Cafe. While Eric, a Knicks fan, was first interested in the connection with the team and the players, he came to love writing and performing poetry.

Eric, who is 19, is on track to graduate in June 2016 and has his eye on college—in particular, becoming the first in his family to finish college. “I feel like this next step will be very important for me,” he says. “It’s not as distant as it was.”

Racism

What it’s like being black?

It’s having stereotypes thrown at you by the same culture that will take your culture, But won’t accept your present.

It’s growing up in a poverty-stricken neighborhood, [Wondering if] you’ll make it out alive because they throwing drugs in the community, ‘Cause they throwing guns in the community. But they ain’t throwing schools in the community.

It’s being public enemy number one...

—Excerpt of a poem written and performed by Eric and several peers at a monthly all-school Community Meeting
The Power of SUPPORT

ANA QUIROZ
NEW DESIGN HIGH SCHOOL
When Ana Quiroz underwent brain surgery during the spring of her senior year in high school, she had a lot of people supporting her. In addition to her close-knit family, she had a second family at New Design High School in Lower Manhattan. “We’re such a small school that everyone was my friend, including the teachers,” she says. “Everyone wanted to know if I needed anything. The time passed very easily because everyone was so supportive.”

Senior spring is a time of final projects at New Design, which uses the concept of design to help meet the academic, intellectual, social, emotional and artistic needs of its 400 students. Thanks to her four years of rigorous training, high expectations and one-on-one faculty support, Ana didn’t let her time away derail her school work.

Senior year was also a culmination of four years of opportunity inside and outside the classroom. Over the years, she designed an outfit entirely out of old blue umbrellas for the school’s annual recycled-materials fashion show. She designed T-shirts and other products for the school’s annual pop-up shop and had the opportunity to receive real-world feedback from companies like J Crew. She participated in a year-long weekend painting program at the Cooper Union that included a professional shooting of her portfolio. And she interned with Raison Pure NYC, a furniture-design company.

“All the projects, all the classes, all the places we went, all the work we did—it all really prepared me for college and the professional world,” says Ana, who is now a freshman at SUNY Purchase. “There is a lot of work in college. It’s very challenging, but I don’t find it difficult because I am able to apply all the skills I’ve learned.”

There is one person, though, who is finding Ana’s transition to college difficult. “My dad says he gets sad every time he walks by my room and I’m not there,” she says. “At the same time, he and my mother are very proud that I’m getting this opportunity.”

“My entire life has consisted of art. I’ve always been the art child in my family.”