



BUILDING BRIDGES TO BRIGHTER FUTURES

HIGHLIGHTS

- Our College Path Mentorship (CPM) Program achieves 100% college acceptance!
- Over 115 students engaged across our programs!
- CPM mentee Moutar Sampil is admitted to Rutgers' "Honors Living-Learning Community" program with full scholarship
- UPLIFT Academy is honored to receive a \$10,000 grant from the EISAI!

"There has been a lot of growth in our children, this program has brought a lot of opportunities to our children about coding, math help, the SAT classes. These are programs that a lot of inner-city children are not able to have opportunities to get. Thanks to Dr. Levent Koch and his team they were able to bring these programs for our children and I look forward to continue working with your team."

Zurfau Mohammed
Youth Coordinator, Alaaka Association, Newark



%100

COLLEGE ACCEPTANCE

120+

**HOURS OF INSTRUCTION IN
HIGHSCHOOL**

%83

**RATED PROGRAMS
EXCELLENT OR VERY GOOD**

115

STUDENTS BENEFITTED

%85

IMPROVED MATH SKILLS

5

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

E M P O W E R I N G F U T U R E S

From the Director

As we reflect on another transformative year at UPLIFT Academy, I am filled with gratitude for the dedication of our educators, the resilience of our students, and the support of our partners and parents. Together, we have continued to build a strong pipeline that guides students from foundational learning to college and beyond, empowering them to achieve their dreams.

This year, our programs have reached new heights. Through our **STEAM Academies**, we ignited curiosity in young minds, laying the groundwork for a lifelong love of learning. Our **Summer Math Camps** bridged critical gaps in math skills, preparing students for academic challenges ahead. Meanwhile, the **College Path Mentorship** program has not only strengthened academic foundations but also inspired our students to aim higher, with many achieving remarkable milestones in their educational journeys.

Looking ahead, we are excited to introduce a new mentorship program, "College, Career, and Beyond," which will support college students, especially graduates of our CPM program, as they navigate their academic and professional journeys. This initiative marks an important next step in our Pipeline Philosophy, extending our support beyond high school to ensure our students thrive in every phase of their education and careers.

Additionally, I am thrilled to announce that UPLIFT Academy will soon open a **Learning Center in Newark**. This center will enable us to serve our students more efficiently, offer a broader range of programs, and increase the number of students we can support. It represents a significant milestone in our commitment to creating equitable opportunities for underserved communities.

At UPLIFT Academy, we view education as a continuum—a series of steps that, when taken together, lead to brighter futures. By emphasizing mentorship, fostering community partnerships, and offering holistic support, we are not just preparing students for academic success; we are equipping them for life.

Thank you for being an integral part of our journey. Together, we will continue to expand horizons, close educational gaps, and create a world where every student has the chance to succeed.

Levent Koch, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Officer

Our Pipeline Philosophy

At UPLIFT Academy, we empower students through the Pipeline Philosophy, a structured and long-term approach. This philosophy is rooted in the idea that sustained, multi-year engagement is the key to creating meaningful educational outcomes for underserved communities. We view education as a continuum and create structured programs that engage students over the long term for academic and professional success. We emphasize mentorship, community partnerships, and a holistic approach to student development. By guiding students from early foundational learning to college and beyond, we aim to build a strong academic foundation and foster personal growth every step of the way. Our pipeline begins with STEAM Academies, where K-8 students are introduced to the wonders of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics. Through hands-on activities and creative lessons, we spark curiosity and instill a love for learning that sets the stage for future success.

As students progress to middle and high school, programs like the Summer Math Camps and College Path Mentorship (CPM) continue their development. These initiatives focus on closing knowledge gaps, preparing students for academic challenges, and building essential skills such as problem-solving and critical thinking. From SAT prep and college readiness seminars to volunteer opportunities and mentorship, these programs ensure students are equipped to navigate the path to higher education confidently.

The success of this approach is evident in stories like that of a CPM student who, after participating in several programs, significantly improved their SAT score—from 1140 to 1320—and gained acceptance to a competitive college. Remarkably, CPM boasts a 100% college acceptance rate, a testament to the program's effectiveness in preparing students for higher education. Additionally, approximately 60% of our students re-enroll in subsequent programs, reflecting their trust in the pipeline's impact.

The Pipeline Philosophy isn't just about academics; it's about creating a supportive community where students, parents, mentors, and partners work together toward shared goals. One parent shared, "The impact of this program is invaluable, especially in our community where many cannot afford expensive services. The progress and growth I've seen in my children have been remarkable." With the help of our dedicated educators, engaged parents, and generous partners, we continue to expand opportunities and transform lives.

College Path Mentorship



The College Path Mentorship (CPM) program remains at the heart of UPLIFT Academy's mission to provide *underserved students* with the tools, guidance, and opportunities they need to achieve academic success and prepare for college. The program aims to help its mentees gain **admission to colleges** while equipping them with the *necessary skills to be successful in college and beyond*.



Empowering Futures Through Education

This rigorous program combines **120 hours study** with expert instruction in **SAT Math and English**, alongside **College Readiness Seminars** designed to equip students with vital skills for their educational journey. Beyond academics, CPM fosters a supportive learning environment where students build confidence, develop critical thinking skills, and form lasting mentor relationships.

I just want to say thank you to the program, because next year I will be going to college with a full ride. This program really helped me a lot with my SAT, because I knew that I was one of the people that struggled with my math. So coming here really helped me with my math skills and my reading skills, and my college applications and things like that.

Moutar Sampil, Mentee

I am incredibly thankful to UPLIFT Academy and Seminary Baptist Church for providing this wonderful opportunity for Elizabeth. Prior to Elizabeth starting Uplift Academy, she took her SATs and scored in the 1200s. Since starting the academy, her super score SAT is 1310. What's exciting is you're going to invite her back for summer math camp and for next year. I am incredibly thankful for everything you've done for her.

Laura Fram, Parent



- CPM Mentees achieves 100% college acceptance rate
- Students experienced an average 150-point increase in their SAT practice test scores.
- Several students achieved gains of over 200 points.
- More than 80% of participants stated that the program helped them improve their SAT scores and gain a better understanding of the college application process.



Key to CPM's success is its dedicated team of mentors, a skilled college counselor, and expert math teachers. Their commitment and expertise created an environment where students thrived.



In 2023-24, the program featured three engaging *guest speakers* who inspired students with motivational and informational talks, *a trip to NJIT and Rutgers Newark* to explore campus life, and a fun *outing to Funplex*, balancing hard work with memorable experiences. Additionally, our mentees participated in an intensive **Essay Writing BootCamp**, co-organized with SKY Academy, to strengthen their college application essays.



"I am thrilled to share my testimonial about the remarkable impact that CPM has had on my math and English skills, as well as my overall confidence in preparation for the SAT. Before discovering CPM, I often struggled with both subjects, which resulted in a lack of confidence when it came to standardized tests like the SAT. However, CPM has been a game-changer, providing me with the tools, knowledge, and support I needed to excel in math and English and approach the SAT with newfound assurance."

Our guest speaker, Yusuf Kocaman, a recent graduate, who studied Computer Science at Princeton University, visited the College Path Mentorship mentees at Seminary Baptist Church in Paterson and Union Baptist Church in Passaic City.

-Ayoola Samuel Ogunmakinwa, Mentee



Global Learning: Students Embark on Educational Humanitarian Trip to Tanzania

As part of our **College Path Mentorship (CPM) program**, two of our outstanding students were rewarded with a unique opportunity: a **humanitarian and educational trip to Tanzania**, organized in partnership with the SKY Academy and Embrace Relief. This transformative experience allowed them to engage in meaningful global outreach while broadening their perspectives on education and culture.



The trip taught me the importance of appreciation and gratitude because there are people around who are lacking the opportunities we have. During this humanitarian trip, I had the privilege of visiting orphanages where I met children, played with them, and provided them with gifts. I also had the honor of opening a water well and helping those in need."

-Aliaaa Abdallah, Mentee

"My biggest takeaway from this journey is the importance of gratitude. I've come to realize how blessed I truly am and how essential it is to always be in a state of appreciation for the things I have."

- Yasin Ibrahim, Mentee



Engaging Families for Success

We held classes across four **community partner locations** in 2023-24, ensuring accessibility for families. Recognizing the vital role parents play in students' success, we prioritized their involvement throughout the program.

The year began with orientation sessions for students and parents, followed by **mid-year parent meetings to strengthen collaboration**, and concluded with heartfelt **graduation ceremonies** celebrating student achievements.



Celebrating Student Success

During the graduation ceremonies, students were recognized with certificates and gift cards of up to \$200, awarded for accomplishments such as satisfactory attendance, high SAT/practice test scores, and community service contributions.



Watch the certificate Ceremony at Masjid Fallahee



Watch the certificate Ceremony at Seminary Baptist Church

Primary Motivations for Attendance:

- Improve math skills: 92%
- Prepare for SAT Math sessions: 67%

Overall Satisfaction:

- Students rated the camp 8 or higher over 10.

Confidence Boost:

- Most students (83%) experienced moderate to significant confidence boosts

30-hour intensive camp improved their SAT score by an impressive 180 points

"There's not much to say except thank you—for choosing to help us, even when there's no profit in it. Your dedication means the world, and because of you, we have a future to look forward to. Keep doing what you're doing; it truly makes a difference."

"The instructors teach well and provide thorough explanations. They go in-depth to ensure we fully understand the material that we are learning."

"The class was great, the teaching was great, and practically everything offered was exceptional."

At UPLIFT Academy, we remain committed to closing educational gaps and ensuring every student has the tools to succeed. The Summer Math Camps exemplify our mission to deliver impactful, community-supported educational programs that make a lasting difference in the lives of our students.

The success of the Summer Math Camp was further highlighted by individual achievements. For instance, one **College Path Mentorship (CPM)** participant who attended the 30-hour camp improved their SAT score by an impressive 180 points, demonstrating the program's tangible results. Parents and students alike expressed their appreciation, noting the camp's role in boosting students' academic readiness and confidence.



Community partnerships were vital to the camp's success. Our partners provided accessible venues and actively engaged in outreach to ensure families were informed and encouraged to participate.

Each camp concluded with a recognition ceremony, during which students were celebrated for their dedication and progress with certificates of completion and gift cards.



Summer Math Camp Certificate Ceremony at Masjid Fallahee

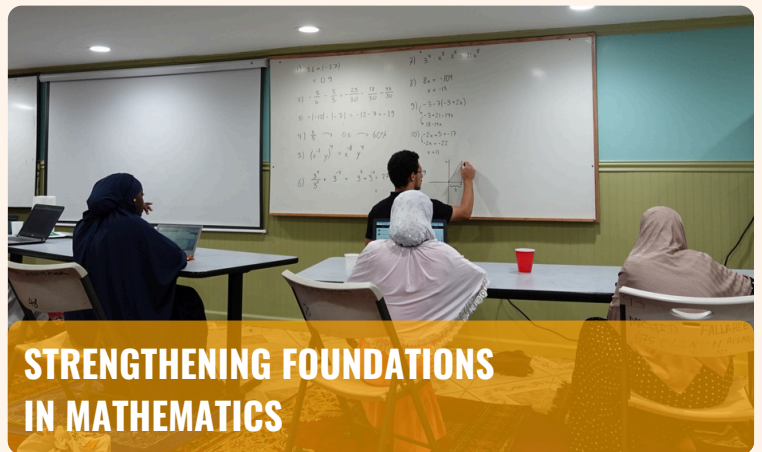
Summer Math Camps



In July 2024, UPLIFT Academy welcomed 36 students from grades 8 through 11 for an enriching two-week Summer Math Camp. Offered in partnership with Alaaka Association, Masjid Fallahee, and Seminary Baptist Church, the camp provided a rigorous and supportive environment to help students build strong mathematical foundations and prepare for future academic challenges. The camp's curriculum focuses on strengthening fundamental math skills and addressing knowledge gaps.



Like the CPM, Summer Math Camps too start with a Parent Orientation Meeting as we emphasize the importance of parental involvement, which is integral to student success



STRENGTHENING FOUNDATIONS IN MATHEMATICS

Primary Motivations for Attendance:

- Improve math skills: 77%
- Prepare for upcoming school year: 69%

Success Factors: Mentees rated *engaging lessons and activities* and *clear explanations from the teacher* as key factors contributing to their success.

Overall Satisfaction: Mentees rated *overall satisfaction 8 or higher*, showcasing strong satisfaction overall.

Through interactive lessons and targeted practice, participants enhanced their problem-solving abilities, improved their understanding of key math concepts, and gained valuable preparation for standardized tests like the SAT.

By the end of the program, **85% of participants** reported an **increase in confidence in their math skills**, a clear testament to the program's impact on boosting academic self-assurance.

STEAM Academies



At UPLIFT Academy, we are proud to provide free STEAM Academies programs designed to spark curiosity and equip K-8 students with critical skills in Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math. This year, we served 53 elementary and middle school students through a 24-week curriculum that featured engaging courses in Robotics, Scratch Coding, and Mathematics.

To ensure equitable access to high-quality STEAM education, we partnered with three community locations, hosting activities that reached underserved communities. Our mission is to heighten students' interest in STEM disciplines and establish a lifelong love for learning through expertly crafted, creative, and fun lessons.



Inspiring the Innovators of Tomorrow

What makes our STEAM Academies unique is the focus on building essential **21st-century skills** such as problem-solving, critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration. Through **hands-on, practical, and engaging activities**, students are encouraged to explore and innovate while developing skills that will serve them well in school and beyond.

As we continue to expand our programs, we remain dedicated to inspiring young minds and paving the way for a brighter future. STEAM Academies are more than just educational programs; they are transformative experiences that empower students to **imagine, create, and achieve**.



I highly recommend Steam Academies' STEM course for kids, especially if you're looking for a program that includes robotics. It's a fantastic way to introduce children to the exciting world of STEM and set them up for success in the future.

-Sal Brookstone, Parent

Small classes. My kids really like the instructor. The instructor is very interactive with the kids. She is great with kids can't ask for a better instructor.

-Suh Pan, Parent

This is a wonderful robotics course providing great opportunities for little minds to be scientific explorers. My first grade son loves it. The teacher is fantastic. I would highly recommend this program.

-Onur Stevens, Parent

“College, Career and Beyond” A Mentorship Program for College Students

Building on the success of the CPM, we are excited to announce the launch of a new mentorship initiative, “College, Career and Beyond,” designed specifically for college students, including graduates of our CPM program.

This project aims to provide ongoing support as students transition from college to their careers, ensuring they continue to thrive academically and professionally.



UPLIFT Academy Learning Center in the Works

We are excited to share our plans to establish a **Learning Center** in Newark! This envisioned facility will enable us to expand our reach, offer a wider variety of educational programs, and better serve our students and families.

By creating a dedicated space for learning, we aim to further our mission of providing equitable opportunities for underserved communities. While the timeline is still being finalized, we are committed to making this vision a reality and will keep you updated on our progress.

First Chess Tournament Crowns Champions in Strategic Showdown

UPLIFT Academy proudly hosted its first-ever Chess Tournament on April 21, 2024, bringing together students for an afternoon of strategic gameplay and intellectual challenge.

Each champion received a certificate of achievement, personally presented by Dr. Levent Koch, CEO of UPLIFT Academy, along with Amazon gift cards (\$100 for 1st place, \$75 for 2nd, and \$50 for 3rd).

Tanzania Trip & Barbecue Party

UPLIFT Academy hosted a **BBQ party at Alaaka Association** for the students who participated in our programs at Masjid Fallahee and Alaaka. Around 25 students joined us for a day filled with reunion, joy, appreciation, and learning. Following the BBQ, two of our students delivered heartfelt presentations about their recent **educational humanitarian trip to Tanzania**.



Together, We Succeed: A Heartfelt Thanks to Our Partners

At UPLIFT Academy, we recognize that the success of our programs is made possible through the unwavering support of our community partners and generous donors. These partnerships form the backbone of our mission, enabling us to provide transformative educational opportunities to underserved students.

Program Partners

Our **community partners** play an essential role in making our programs accessible to students and families. They provide welcoming spaces for our activities, assist in spreading the word about our initiatives, and help us connect with the communities we serve. This year, we were privileged to collaborate with:

- [Seminary Baptist Church \(Paterson\)](#)
- [Masjid Fallahee \(Newark\)](#)
- [Alaaka Association \(Newark\)](#)
- [YMCA Paterson](#)
- [Union Baptist Church & United Passaic Organization, Passaic City](#)

Our partners not only provide facilities but also strengthen our outreach efforts, allowing us to serve more students effectively.

The Power of Collaboration

Together, these partnerships represent a powerful community network committed to uplifting students and creating lasting change. Whether it's providing a space for learning, financial support, or spreading awareness, every partner and donor plays a critical role in our students' success.

As we look to the future, we remain committed to strengthening these relationships and forming new collaborations to expand our impact. Because when a community works together, there's no limit to what we can achieve.

Donors

We are deeply grateful for the generosity of our donors, whose contributions fund the development and expansion of our programs. Special thanks to:

- [Community Foundation of New Jersey](#)
- [EISAI](#)
- [Novo Nordisk](#)
- [Presbyterian Church, Rutherford](#)
- [Community Foundation of New Jersey](#)

Many generous individuals who believe in our mission and contribute to shaping the futures of our students.

Parents as Partners

At UPLIFT Academy, we recognize that parental involvement is a key factor in student success. Parents play a crucial role by encouraging their children, reinforcing learning at home, and ensuring consistent participation in our programs. Their engagement strengthens the bridge between home and education, fostering a supportive environment where students can thrive. From attending orientation sessions to participating in mid-year meetings, parents are active partners in their children's academic journey.

"I must extend my gratitude to UPLIFT Academy and Seminary Baptist Church. This is not just my first year, but my second year with the program. Last year, our eldest was part of it, so I'm not new. I could speak endlessly about the progress and improvements I've seen. I just want to thank you for your mentorship and everything you've invested in my children. They are not only mine but yours as well because we entrust them to you. I work in Paterson as a public school teacher, and I will be spreading the word. The impact of this program is invaluable, especially in our community, where many cannot afford expensive services. I just want to say thank you again. God bless you—I will definitely be sharing this with others!"

-Kareen Ogunmakinwa, A Parent of Two Students

UPLIFT ACADEMY

“Every Student Deserves a Better Education and a Better Future”

Mission

UPLIFT provides and promotes high-quality educational services to students of New Jersey to close the achievement gap resulting from socioeconomic inequities, and to help students of all backgrounds reach their greatest academic and intellectual potential.

UPLIFT's 10 Values

- Love of learning
- Mentorship
- Social Justice
- Critical Thinking
- Gratitude
- Accountability
- Professionalism
- Partnerships
- Community Service and Volunteerism
- Measurable Achievement



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