

# Global Village Project REPORT CARD

June 2024



## Celebrating 15 Years of GVP Impact



# From Our CEO

Dear Friends,

We've been busy this year...really busy. In celebration of our 15th year as a school we took on some ambitious projects and we are so pleased to share how well they've gone.

We started this year with 43 students, but the change in admission criteria for non-traditional students in DeKalb County forced us to lose some students who were about to age out of the system. We advocated on their behalf; our Director of Education, Hannah Edber, participated in an interview on WABE, our local NPR station, to speak about the impact of this decision.

Soon afterward we welcomed a film crew from UNHCR – the UN High Commission for Refugees – which sought to amplify the story and impact of our school and did, taking our message to new audiences and further positioning GVP as a thought leader in interrupted education.

We also hosted a visit from the Georgia Accreditation Commission, which re-accredited GVP for another 5 years. The commissioner gave us encouraging feedback: “I can't tell you how pleased I am with what I've seen. I want to thank you all. I'm excited about your program and the direction you are going. You are doing a great job! Keep up the good work.”

We are ending our current strategic plan this year. The plan, created three years ago had a bold set of goals for us to achieve. These included telling our story more broadly, building a stronger village, enhancing our model for replication and planning to move to a new home. We've made remarkable progress towards achieving these goals and continue to strive to expand the reach and impact of our mission every day.

The success of that effort is largely dependent on the strength of our village; the volunteers, donors, teachers, staff, board members and community that surrounds our students with love and support and fosters their growth. That community grew in so many wonderful ways this year. On the Board alone we welcomed eight new members this year. Our Board is made up of a hugely



dedicated group of people who steer the organization and ensure it's soundness at every turn.

In addition to the Board we strengthened the leadership group that manages daily functions. The recruitment of Lane Strickland as Director of Development was a welcome addition. Lane has spent the last few months meeting our donors and she welcomes invitations to meet for coffee and discuss future plans for the school.

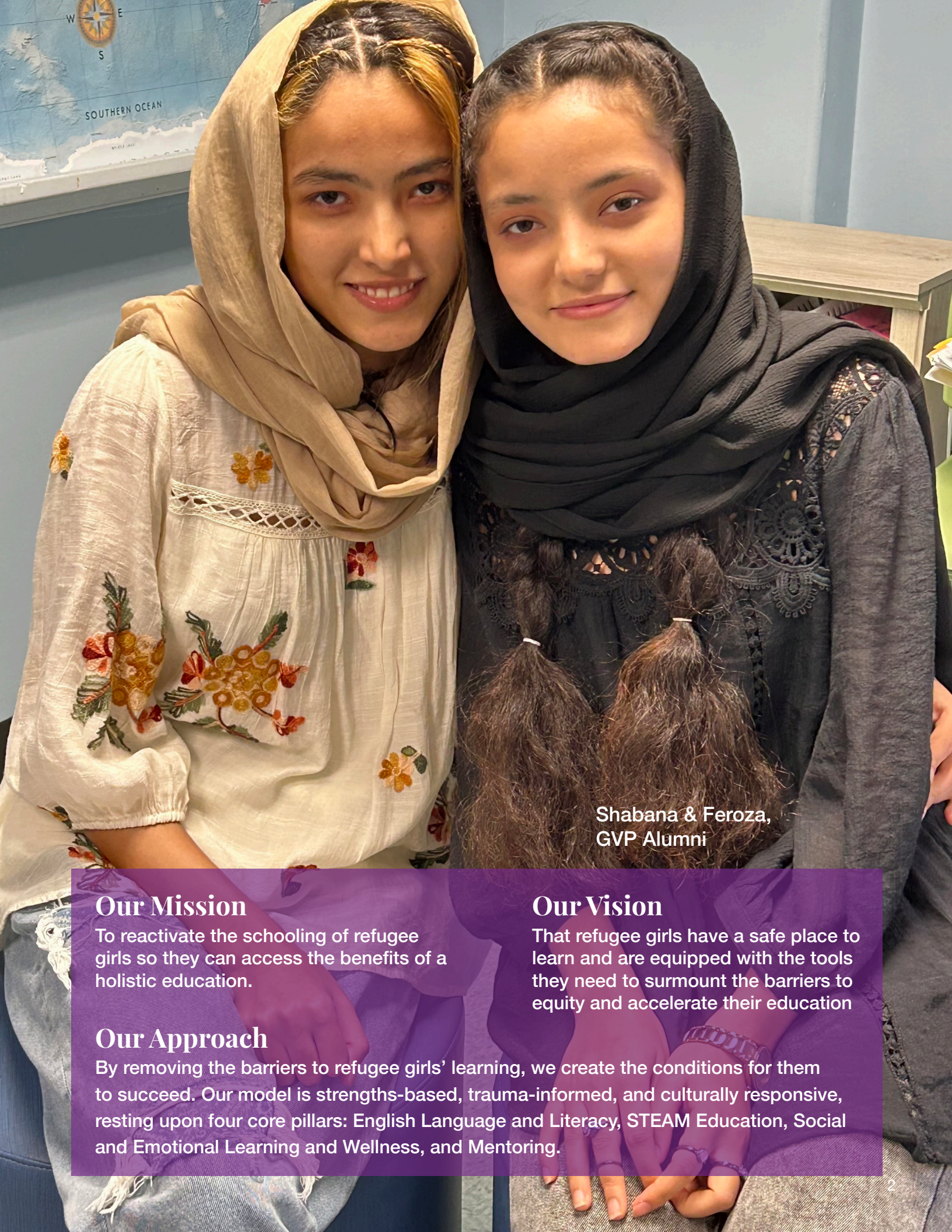
It is an exciting time for GVP. This year, we celebrated the ripples of our 15 years of impact by elevating the voices and successes of our alumni. We share that impact — by numbers — in this document. Behind every number is the story of a young woman who has gone on to be a change-maker in her part of the world. We are proud of them all and we are grateful to everyone who is part of our story and to the amazing community of people who surround us, who support us, who commit to our future, and who work beside us to ensure that the ripples keep multiplying in service of our students.

Thank you!

Elizabeth Elango  
CEO and Head of School

“

**We are grateful to everyone who is a part of our story and to the amazing community of people who surround us, who support us, who commit to our future and who work beside us in service to our students.**



Shabana & Feroza,  
GVP Alumni

### **Our Mission**

To reactivate the schooling of refugee girls so they can access the benefits of a holistic education.

### **Our Approach**

By removing the barriers to refugee girls' learning, we create the conditions for them to succeed. Our model is strengths-based, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive, resting upon four core pillars: English Language and Literacy, STEAM Education, Social and Emotional Learning and Wellness, and Mentoring.

### **Our Vision**

That refugee girls have a safe place to learn and are equipped with the tools they need to surmount the barriers to equity and accelerate their education

# Our 2023-2024 Village



8

Graduating  
Form 3 Students



37

Number of  
Students Enrolled



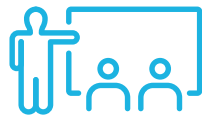
47

Number of  
New Student  
Applications



8

Countries  
of Origin



1:15

1 Teacher (plus 2-3 volunteers)  
to 15 students in our classrooms



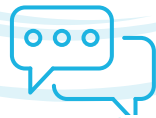
16

Number of  
New Students  
Accepted



100%

Of Our Students  
Qualify for Title 1



14

Languages Spoken



92%

Average Daily  
Attendance

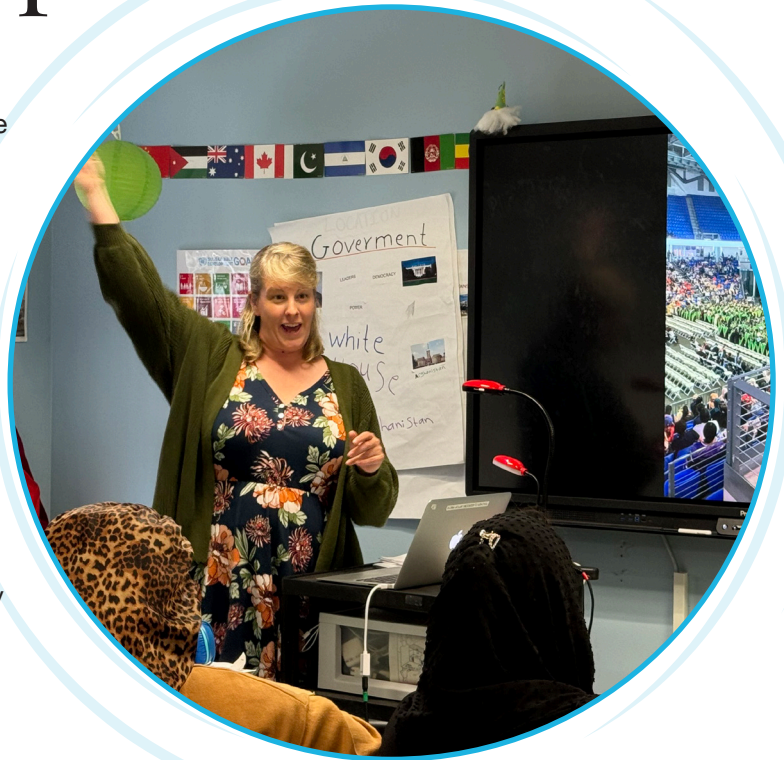
# Teaching at GVP

To teach at GVP means to be loved, to be heard, to have a voice, to build relationships and community. GVP is a truly magical village, a beloved community, of so many people coming together to support our youth; a community of resilient, bright young women who are striving for a better future.

As I write this reflection, I'm reminded of when I applied to teach at GVP. I had been working for Friends of Refugees in Clarkston, when I heard about a local conference sponsored by a program called Aspire. Aspire is a group of "educators, activists, and social entrepreneurs who are committed to improving the classroom experience of child survivors of war and forced migration." The conference focused on the idea of building a "beloved community," a term often used by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., to describe a community of compassion and love for everyone and where this love and compassion drives one's actions to work cooperatively and peacefully. As a teacher at GVP, I see this in action every day.

When I worked in public school education, I often felt and witnessed the education system as a "structure of compliance and not a place where one can freely explore what can be." My experiences with teaching in public education continually presented me with roadblocks such as the rigidity of curricula, lack of teacher autonomy, marginal support of colleagues and supervisors, and the ever increasing demands of classroom life. Teaching at GVP is the antithesis of my experience in public education.

To teach at GVP is to be at the forefront of using best practices such as restorative justice, DEI, and trauma-informed approaches to teach refugee children who have experienced limited or interrupted formal education. Teaching at GVP is to truly work to meet the needs of our students and to have the creative freedom to design and implement lessons that meet the students



where they are but to also create lessons that are culturally responsive and globally-minded.

To teach at GVP is to be among a community of learners and to grow and learn personally and professionally. Last year, I had the opportunity to participate in a Fulbright Global Exchange program which was made a reality through the lessons and experiences that I have had while being at GVP.

To teach at GVP is to be welcomed every day by wonderful students with a smile, hug, or a "Hi Ms., I've missed you." You can't enter the hallway of GVP without hearing the laughter and engagement of our students. GVP is a place where I have the time and support to build relationships with my students.

To teach at GVP is to put pedagogy of empowerment into action. During the migration integrated unit last year, one of my students from Syria asked, "Ms. Katie, I would like to share my migration story with the class." This year, one of my students from Afghanistan felt empowered to share about Islam with students from Columbia, South America after a classroom exchange via Zoom.

To teach at GVP is to be reminded that we are all more alike than we are different, that migration is a part of all of our human stories, that human rights are all of our rights, and that goodness lives in all of us. I end with "namaste," a greeting I give to my students at the beginning of class, meaning the light within me honors the light within you.

— Katie Fowler, Social Studies Teacher

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**GVP is a truly magical village, a beloved community, of so many people coming together to support our youth; a community of resilient, bright young women who are striving for a better future.**

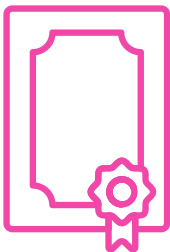
# English Language & Literacy

Our intensive curriculum meets the needs of English Language Learner (ELL) students with interrupted schooling and advances their reading levels at accelerated speeds. This year we brought an increased focus on phonics and phonemic awareness, blending with reading comprehension and text connections. This included all reading teachers enrolled in training in phonics instruction from Orton-Gillingham and Wilson Language Training.

GVP views students' home languages and cultures as resources and English as another tool to add to the knowledge and resources they already have.



## Results



Average of **1.5** grade levels of reading growth per year, with some students achieving **3** levels of growth this academic year.

### WIDA Assessment Data



Graduating Form 3 students showed an increase of **29%** on nationally standardized assessment for English language acquisition from their first year at GVP.

WIDA is a nationally administered standardized assessment of English language development (ELD) for English-Language learners.

# I Am From



I am from the names Pablo and Bizimana.  
I am from the mango tree, orange tree, and papaya tree.  
I am from Dodoma, the capital and from Alabama, a funny place.  
I am from fufu, small fish, and cassava cooked with red oil and yummy spices.  
I am from ludo and cards (makadi).  
I am from zuchu (naringa), marioo (soup), yammi (tunapendezana).  
The songs make me happy and proud to be African.  
I am from the stories My Baby Sister, Malala, and Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters.  
I am from the words nakupenda (I love you), shukrani (grateful), and upendo (kind).  
I am from the flower, a red rose and many animals.  
I am from Christianity, and the nguo defu (a long dress).  
I am from New Year's and Christmas.  
I am from the childhood memory of going to school everyday and from the challenge of coming to America.  
I am from Swahili and Kibembe.  
I am from the dreams of becoming a police officer and having love and beauty in the world.  
– Regina, from Tanzania



I am from the names Samiullah and Firoza.  
I am from the tall nut trees that we eat from.  
I am from the foods Manto, Kubly, Dolma, and Green Tea and Coffee.  
I am from the game Ludo King, I play with my father and with my brothers.  
I am from the guitar, the singer Aryana Sayeed. The music makes me feel good and happy.  
I am from poetry and my life stories.  
I am from the words "Mashallah", "Inshallah", "Alahmdulillah".  
I am from the photo of my childhood, lost but I still remember.  
I am from the symbol of Eid and Ramadan, and the celebration of my birthday.  
I am from the Hijab and an Islamic country.  
I am from the memory of being a quiet child, and the challenge of having freedom.  
I am from the languages Pashto, Farsi, Turkish, and English.  
I am from the dreams of being a doctor, smart, and kind.  
– Nazrana, from Afghanistan

# STEAM at GVP

The STEAM education at GVP takes an innovative, integrated approach to creating more inclusive spaces for students to explore STEM fields and the arts. Through STEAM learning, we create a fun, safe environment, and students can use social interaction and collaborative dialogue to learn academic and social skills.

## What does STEAM look like at GVP?

- Small-group math classes
- STEAM classes
- GVP choir classes
- Drama & performance classes
- Technology classes
- Elective classes: Art, musical instruments, and running

In Math, students registered an average of **1.5** years of growth per year, with some students demonstrating over **3** years of growth this academic year.



**1** iPad and **1** laptop per student.



**40** student and family members attended our first "Family Math Day" event.





# 23 Field Trips

## Experiential Learning

- High Museum of Art
- Georgia Conflict Center
- Synchronicity: Where the Mountain Meets the Moon
- Georgia State Capitol: New American Celebration
- Museum of Design Atlanta: Designing Schools of the Future
- Michael C. Carlos Museum
- Atlanta Young Singers Concert
- 7 Stages Theatre
- National Center for Civil and Human Rights
- Meet the USWNT
- USWNT She Believes Cup Semifinal
- Clarkston, Tucker and Stone Mountain High School
- Stone Mountain Native American Festival
- Woodruff Arts Center: Singing for Little Amal
- Decatur Square March with Little Amal
- Tybee Island
- Fernbank Museum
- Southern Belle Farms for Strawberry Picking
- Downtown Atlanta
- Hike Inn
- Sojourn Adventures (ropes course)
- Decatur Fire Station
- Georgia Aquarium



# Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

Social Emotional Learning is a prerequisite for students to be able to access the academic school day. We recognize the impact that trauma and emotional difficulties have on learning and well being, as well as the ways in which they disproportionately impact students who are already marginalized in our society.

Supporting the social, emotional, and wellness needs of our students not only includes actively creating space for students to learn how to navigate their emotions, but also providing a range of wraparound services designed to support the holistic wellbeing of students.

This year we introduced a **“Take What You Need Pantry”** at GVP for students to easily access food as nearly 100% of students reported experiencing food insecurity at home. We know that nourishment is critical for students’ readiness to learn and grow at school. We were able to honor requests for fresh fruits and vegetables, flour, beans, and cooking oil.



**11,600**  
Pounds of Food Delivery

**159**  
Family Phone  
Check-Ins

**2,075**  
Hours of Language  
Interpretation

**10**  
Home Visits

**4**  
Parent Council  
Meetings

**15,038**  
School Bus Miles

**“** In order to teach what accountability is, we need to first build school-wide relationships. We cannot “restore justice” if there is nothing there to restore!  
— Hannah Edber,  
Director of Education

# Class of 2024



**Shabina Ahmadi**  
*Pursuing her GED*



**Basima Farooq**  
*DeKalb School of the Arts*



**Shukria Fetrat**  
*Clarkston High School*



**Sumaiya Haidari**  
*Clarkston High School*



**Pervina Nagin**  
*Clarkston High School*



**Zainaba Nagin**  
*Clarkston High School*



**Nazrana Naqib**  
*Georgia Fugees Academy Charter School*



**Mwangaza Pablo**  
*Clarkston High School*



**Regina Pablo**  
*Clarkston High School*

Close your eyes and imagine yourself as a girl who has no money for education, who cannot have education due to constraints of war.

How do you feel?

Do you feel helpless and powerless?

Yes! This is exactly how millions of girls feel in this world.

Now look at yourself how lucky you are.

You are in the United States of America.

You can have an education without worries.

You can learn new things.

You can do any job you want.

So, I would like to say that do not waste your time.

Work hard and make your dreams come true.

You have the opportunities that millions of girls do not have.

Appreciate what you have, and pray for all of your sisters who are helpless.

— Words by Basima Farooq

“

I loved every day, every hour, every minute, and every second I spent here at GVP. The thing that I will remember the most are the homerooms where we told each other stories and laughed together.

— Basima Farooq

# Mentorship & Volunteering

## Volunteers

Volunteers are critical to the success of our school program, providing essential support to teachers and students in the classroom, assisting with everything from tutoring, study hall, guided reading and substitute teaching. Simply put, we couldn't serve as many students as we do without the unwavering commitment of our volunteers. Their contributions allow us to extend our reach, offering quality education and support to every girl in our program.

73

Weekly Volunteers

5,334

Volunteer Hours

## Mentors

Mentors are a key ingredient in GVP's success stories. Mentors make a commitment to support a graduating student as she transitions to high school and beyond, becoming an important anchor and advocate to help her navigate the school system and life in the U.S. This year, our students and our mentors participated in dozens of activities aimed at bridging the gap for GVP alumni as they acculturate to American society. The activities included a hike at Cascade Springs with the Refugee Women's Network, a visit to the theatre to see "The Sound of Music," a trip to the Botanical Gardens to see the light show, a bowling outing, a college preparation workshop, swim lessons, a visit to Berry College and multiple trips to the Fox Theatre to see performances such as "Aladdin." We want to thank all the amazing women who have been mentors to GVP alumni this past year and shine a spotlight on the women who stepped up to mentor graduating Form 3 students last year and this year:



Maggie Anderson  
Mila Akkouris  
Martha Alexander  
Allison Ezell  
Lorene Flewellen  
Annie Godfrey  
Ann Hazzard  
Nancy Hostetter  
Angie Howell

Rhonda Klein  
Mariana McCready  
Sylvia Moneti  
Judy Monsaas  
Karen Montgomery  
Valerie Ogden  
Dena Stockton  
Emily Vorder Bruegge

116

Mentor Program  
Hours

48

Active Mentors

16

Extracurricular Activities in  
2023-2024 School Year

191 Mentees attended  
events

102

Mentors attended events

# Moving Toward the Sunlight

I really have a soft spot for teenagers. I like their passion. I like that they're just learning how to speak out and find their voices. I know sometimes it comes across as disrespect, but it's also communication of another kind so I don't look at it through the lens of disrespect.

Professionally, I was first a potter. I moved to Atlanta from Ohio to work at Callenwolde Arts Center. I'd gone to a little liberal arts college in Iowa called Grinnell.

I was a potter for about 15 years and then I took a break from my pottery studio. I got a Masters in Social Work degree at the University of Georgia and then my social work license. I worked in group homes and residential treatment programs for teenage girls who were in foster care and/or had mental health problems. I was a Development Director at some point and a Multicultural Arts programmer at another with youth nonprofit agencies. I had a business called Youthworks, where I trained youth care staff who worked in group homes on therapeutic issues. I eventually taught at Georgia State for about 20 years in the social work program and then retired five years ago. I tried lots of different kinds of things to volunteer. Finally, I found GVP.

I heard about GVP from two people:; one was Elise Witt (GVP's Music Director). I looked into it and it was a great fit so I began volunteering in 2021. I started out four hours a week. It's just so rewarding. All the learning content is woven throughout the curriculum. To have music where students are writing songs about prefixes and suffixes, the environment and geography and math and the way Elise works with them to creatively and collectively come up with the songs reinforces the learning and really empowers them. The social studies, language arts, math and science learning themes are all connected in a planned and awesome way by the teachers. The girls are just so giving with their desire to be helped. They don't mind being helped and they ask questions. I've been here long enough that I noticed that some of the girls who were not as open to me the first year now give me a hug. One thing about being here a lot is you have more opportunities to build trust.

I volunteer for 15 hours a week now. GVP is a special community. It fuels a need for me to be a part of a



community and to feel like I'm giving something. It's also an interesting step or shift for me because I'm in a helper role now in my life and it's not a career. It took me a while to figure this out because I used to say, "I just volunteer" and someone said why do you say "just"? I had to really think about that.

I'm in this regenerative position of being able to support what other people do and need and it feels really good. It's satisfying to be there for somebody else. Service creates meaning for me.

The moments the girls share their true feelings feel like an honor. When they all share out of the blue something that is about their life, they just want to be heard and listened to. I don't pry, but I do listen to what they say and give a comment about their strengths. GVP feels like a good fit because when I was supervising other therapists as a program director, we instilled a strengths-based approach. There were times when we had some serious, hard, challenging discussions that eventually promoted growth. You get what you go looking for. If you're focusing on something positive, people move toward sunlight. I love that about this place. I love seeing all the teachers use restorative justice and I see how it makes a difference. They stop the class, they take a pause and either deal with it, ignore it or redirect it. I was delighted to join Hope Covington's (the GVP Counselor) class. She let me create some curriculum. I'm amazed at what she does with the girls. I feel that way about every class I'm in as a volunteer. There's a kind of communication that happens when you're kidding around with the students; you're not just asking them questions or helping with their classwork – you're laughing together about something that you both understand. That's a different kind of understanding and it builds trust too.

“

**You get what you go looking for. If you're focusing on something positive, people move toward sunlight.**

**– Debra Klausner**

# Alumni

Since our founding in 2009, our alumni come from 25 countries and speak 35 languages. Where our students come from each year is dependent on resettlement trends, which is determined by geopolitical factors. Country of origin is also a strong predictive factor as to their access to formal education. According to data released by a 2023 UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) report, only 35% of refugee girls are enrolled in secondary education prior to resettlement. That figure speaks to the widespread gaps, interruptions, and absences in formal education our students experience before they arrive in the U.S.

Our high school students have a 79% graduation rate. This can be loosely compared to the graduation rate at Clarkston High School, which, for 2023 had a 65% graduation rate for all students and a 62% graduation rate for all English Language Learners (ELL).\*

79%

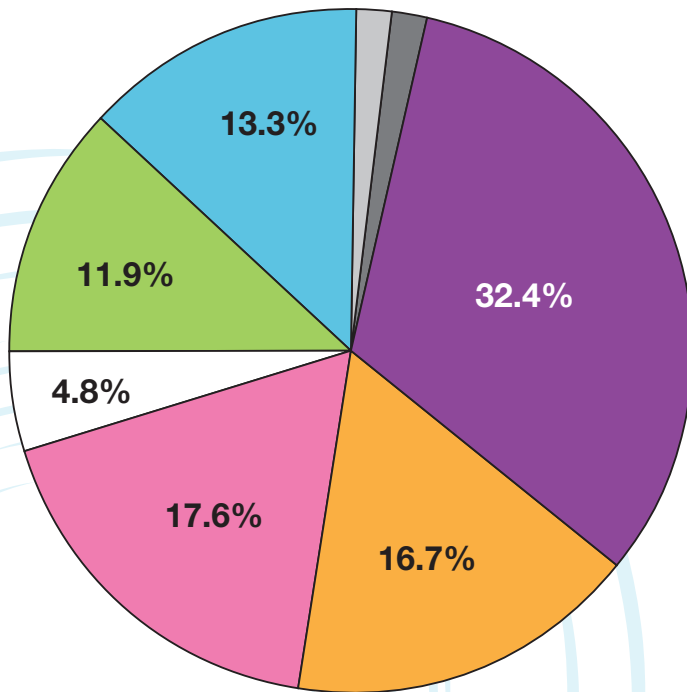
High School  
Graduation Rate  
for GVP Alumni

65%

Clarkston High  
School Graduation  
Rate

62%

Clarkston High  
School Graduation  
Rate for ELL\*



- Currently enrolled in high school
- HS Graduates, no college
- HS Graduates, currently enrolled in college
- HS Graduates, some college, no longer enrolled
- HS Graduates, College Graduates
- Did not complete high school
- Currently enrolled in GED program
- Have a GED

Our students who did not complete high school cited many reasons for their incompleteness. Reasons included being too old to enroll, moving states, family responsibilities, and other barriers to access. Some mentioned an interest in getting a GED.

After high school, our alumni pursue many different avenues. College education is a great option for some: 65 alumni have accessed college education, with 38 students currently enrolled. The majority of GVP alums attend Georgia Perimeter Technical College and Georgia State University. Other colleges attended include Agnes Scott College, Berry College, Georgia Gwinnett College, and more. Our 22 college graduates have degrees in health sciences, STEM, business, and the humanities. One of our alumni has a Master's degree, and one is expected to graduate with her Master's degree this May.

In future years, we expect our alumni to continue their education beyond GVP through high school graduation and, for some, college enrollment. As we increase our alumni engagement and support through tutoring, regular check-ins, and individualized opportunities, we hope to see graduation rates for high school increase even further.

298

Total number of alumni served



25

Countries of origin



35

Languages spoken



**“GVP helped me...”**

*...first learn to speak English. They teach us to be kind and help others.*  
— Asma Ibrahim

*...become a leader, a friend and an advisor.* — Khateera Barati

*...be more brave and confident.*  
— Nazrana Naqib

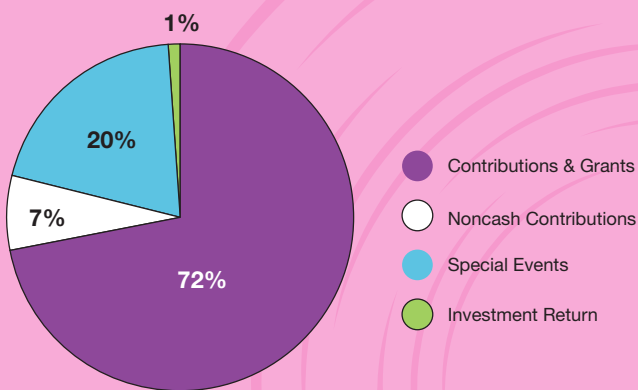
# GVP Finances

August 1, 2022 – July 31, 2023

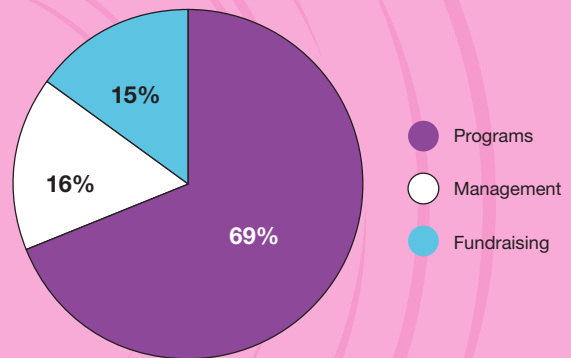
Global Village Project is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. As a private, tuition-free middle school, we depend almost entirely on funds and donations from individuals, foundations, partners, and corporations to sustain our programs. We are the only school in the U.S. dedicated to addressing the unique educational needs of recently resettled refugee girls and preparing them for high school and beyond. Thanks to the continued support of our growing village, our revenue remains robust, with unrestricted revenue increasing by 13% over the previous fiscal year. These funds allow us to continue investing in the transformative power of our unique educational model.



## Revenue without restrictions: \$2.01M



## Expenses: \$1.93M



Being at GVP changed me a lot because I didn't know how to write or read, but GVP changed my life.

- Mwangaza P.



# 15 Years of Impact



# Invest in GVP

Donate now to educate refugee girls. An investment in refugee girls' education pays a lifetime's worth of returns through GVP's holistic educational model. Our alumni grow into adults who have healthier lives and research shows that educated women are more likely to educate their families and children. Our alumni also become active participants and leaders in their communities. For questions or to donate, please contact Director of Development, Lane Strickland, at [lstrickland@globalvillageproject.org](mailto:lstrickland@globalvillageproject.org).

1

## Through Our Website

Visit [www.globalvillageproject.org/give](http://www.globalvillageproject.org/give) or use this QR code:



2

## Through the Georgia Tax Credit Program

As a taxpayer in Georgia, you have the opportunity to contribute to Apogee and receive a dollar-for-dollar tax credit in the state. By participating in this program, you can choose to direct your contribution to GVP, enabling our students to receive tuition scholarships.

3

## Through Our Events

You and your company can support GVP's Welcome Walk in the fall or the Tribute to Education Gala in the spring as sponsors or donors.

4

## Write a Check, Make a Gift of Stock, or Give through a Donor Advisor Fund

Write checks out to Global Village Project and mail to P.O. Box 1548, Decatur, GA 30031

# Stay Connected!

1

## Sign Up for Our Newsletter

Scan this QR code to Sign Up:



2

## Follow Us On Social Media

 @globalvillageproject

 [facebook.com/GVPGA](https://facebook.com/GVPGA)

# Donors at GVP

**To Our Donors:** Thank you for your commitment to the mission of Global Village Project.

The mission of our school is to reactivate the schooling of refugee girls so that they can access all the benefits an education offers. The girls who attend GVP come from all over the world; from Afghanistan to Syria, Guatemala to Myanmar, and everywhere in between. When they come to us they've missed an average of six years of school as their families have moved from place to place seeking refuge. Our mission is to fill in the gaps of their education, to provide a safe space for them to learn, to support their academic journeys, and to set them back on a path to success in high school and beyond.

As a member of the Board, I came to this mission from a personal place. My maternal grandmother was born in a rural village in British India in the 1930s. There was a school for boys. There was no school for girls. But somebody invested in her and taught her how to read and write and instilled in her a love of learning. While she never went to formal school, she was always thirsting for knowledge and information from books. She grew up knowing that knowledge was powerful and a way to access opportunity. She got married at 16, moved to Bombay, and had 6 kids. As my mother tells me, she was militant about school and education. They were not allowed to dabble in extracurriculars and have too many friends; studying always came first. All of her 6 kids finished high school, have college degrees, and are very successful.

Fast forward to my generation, there are 12 of us grandkids. We never even questioned going to college. In fact, we have probably hit the marginal diminishing return of degrees with an average of 1.8 degrees per person. Investing in our education at this point probably isn't going to yield much more,



but if someone had not invested in my grandmother, I don't know where we would all be. This is the ripple effect of her life on my life.

Fifteen years ago the founders of this school...of this organization, began a journey to meet a need they had observed in the community. Among refugee families newly arriving in the community, our founders noticed that the girls were disproportionately disadvantaged to their brothers. Faced with limited family resources, the education of boys was often prioritized over the girls'. Now, 15 years later, that initial effort, that vision, that small drop in the bucket that our founders began, has had many ripples of impact in the lives of our students and alumni. Our alumni have gone on to change not just their own lives, but to make an impact on the lives of their families and communities.

On behalf of the members of the Board of Directors, I want to thank all of our donors whose contributions makes this work possible. Special thanks to GVP volunteers and mentors, who give so generously of their time to promote the mission of GVP.

Thank you all again,

**Morli Desai**  
Board Member

“

**Our mission is to fill in the gaps of their education, to provide a safe space for them to learn, to support their academic journeys, and to set them back on a path to success in high school and beyond.**



Global Village Project  
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