



# 2019 - 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

**NASHVILLE AFTER ZONE ALLIANCE  
(NAZA)**

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# Celebrating 10 Years!



**NAZA**  
NASHVILLE AFTER ZONE ALLIANCE



## OVERVIEW



# 15,000+

Number of youth that have attended NAZA-funded programs in NAZA's first 10 years. Programs support social and emotional skills, life skills, academic learning, and exploration of interests through enrichment, field trips and experiential learning.

This year, NAZA is celebrating 10 years as Nashville's out-of-school time system, expanding equitable access to free, high-quality learning experiences for middle school youth in our city. As we close 2019-2020, an unprecedented school year, the NAZA team stands with youth, families, partner organizations, and the larger Nashville community. We remain committed to investing in our community by funding learning opportunities, whether in-person or virtual; building organizational capacity in partnership with youth and youth development professionals; and leveraging citywide partnerships to streamline resources and ensure the best outcomes.

This report details our 2019-2020 year, including how NAZA partners have creatively shifted their work to meet the needs of youth and families during the 4th quarter. Now more than ever, investments like NAZA are critical to closing the opportunity gap that is widening due to the pandemic and the shift to virtual learning. Given the recent trauma and uncertainty of the pandemic, it is critical that we continuously focus our efforts on the social and emotional well-being of youth by helping them explore their interests and create positive youth engagement with caring adults and peers.

The community-developed, citywide Vision for Holistic Youth Development is key to our community's future. Launching publicly this fall, Nashville's Vision was developed by youth, caregivers, non-profit and community-based organizations, business and political leaders, and other community stakeholders. The Vision will ultimately support youth in developing the skills and assets that they need to thrive in education, work, and life. Additionally, we look forward to expanding *Youth In Action!*, which was created and developed by youth as a leadership platform for them to take action on issues that they care about. Together, we will begin to create a more equitable society through our commitment to youth as leaders and catalysts for change. We hope you will join us!

**Anna Harutyunyan**  
NAZA Chief Executive

# ABOUT NAZA

The Nashville After Zone Alliance (NAZA) is a partnership between Nashville Public Library, Metro Nashville Public Schools, the Mayor's Office, and 20+ nonprofit and community-based organizations across Nashville. NAZA's mission is to increase equitable access to afterschool and summer learning experiences that help Nashville youth thrive and develop to their full potential. We do this by:

- ✓ **Investing** funds in afterschool and summer programs for middle school youth citywide.
- ✓ **Strengthening** the capacity of the youth development community through professional development, evaluation services, and technical assistance to impact the learning experiences of youth.
- ✓ **Convening** the larger Nashville community to strategically mobilize and leverage resources to collectively impact youth.
- ✓ **Advocating** for increased investment in holistic youth development.
- ✓ **Empowering** youth through initiatives that cultivate leadership and life skills, connect them to positive relationships, and inspire their love for learning.

NAZA funds programs that share the 5 Principles of Positive Youth Development and strengthen their capacity to implement them through NAZA.



## NASHVILLE'S 5 PRINCIPLES OF POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

### PROMOTE A SENSE OF PHYSICAL, SOCIAL, & EMOTIONAL SAFETY

Youth must feel as though the adults in this setting will protect them from any harm. They also must feel they are valued and accepted by the group.

### ENCOURAGE RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

Youth need many supportive long-term relationships to help them navigate their adolescence. They need guidance from caring adults as well as emotional and practical support from their peers.

### FOSTER MEANINGFUL YOUTH PARTICIPATION

Youth must have an active role, voice and choice in shaping their experiences. They must have opportunities to practice and develop leadership skills, and they must know their contributions are valuable.

### PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR BUILDING PURPOSE

Youth must live purposefully and contribute in meaningful ways. Creating opportunities for youth to become involved in the community and for community members to interact with youth is a powerful way to foster a sense of purpose and develop positive values.

### ENGAGE YOUTH IN LEARNING EXPERIENCES THAT BUILD VALUABLE AND HEALTHY LIFE SKILLS

Youth need opportunities for experiential learning that will help them build skills needed to succeed in every area of life.







# INVESTING *in Nashville's Future*

NAZA-funded programs provide youth with a variety of meaningful and engaging learning experiences that will last a lifetime. Through NAZA's ongoing collaboration with partner organizations, Nashville's youth are increasing critical thinking skills, adopting healthy eating habits, learning financial literacy skills, exploring their communities through service projects, and developing a love for learning through literacy and STEM.

This past year in NAZA-funded programs, youth learned mindfulness through art, participated in character development and leadership-building sessions, received homework help, were introduced to the field of robotics, and explored their city on field trips. They celebrated their skills and accomplishments by leading, designing and implementing several events, including Lights On Afterschool, Black History celebrations, program showcases, and activities that foster awareness about Nashville-area immigrant experiences. Overall, in 2019-2020:



**1832**

YOUTH FROM 29 MIDDLE SCHOOLS PARTICIPATED IN 43 NAZA-FUNDED AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS



**23**

NAZA-FUNDED PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDED AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMMING



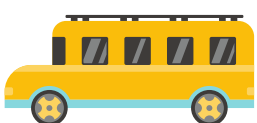
**151**

YOUTH PARTICIPATED IN 8 VIRTUAL NAZA-FUNDED SUMMER PROGRAMS



**8**

NAZA-FUNDED PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDED SUMMER PROGRAMMING



**17**

EVENING BUSES PROVIDED FOR YOUTH TRANSPORTATION



**\$2.6M**

OVERALL INVESTMENT BY NAZA FOR PROGRAMMING AND CAPACITY-BUILDING

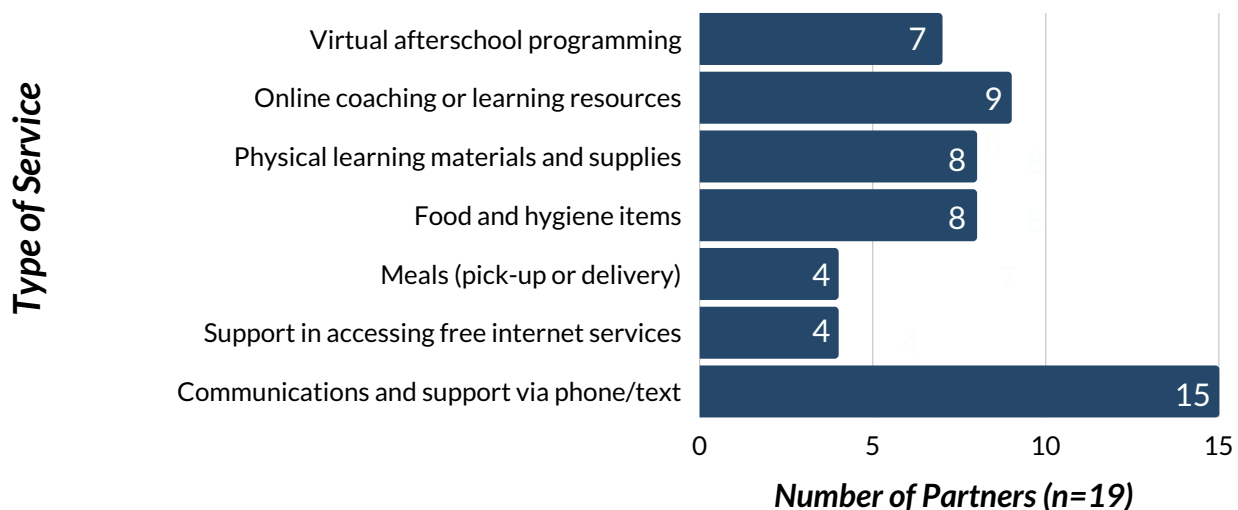


# INVESTING *in Nashville's Future*

In March 2020, Nashville experienced unprecedented devastation and challenge due to an EF-2 tornado followed by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. With the support of sustained funding from NAZA, many partner organizations shifted from in-person to virtual afterschool programs. They also offered essential services including food distribution, learning resources and supply delivery, and other ongoing support for youth and families.

## Services Provided to Youth & Families by NAZA-Funded Partners

March-April 2020 (During Pandemic Closures)



As Nashville continued to navigate the pandemic from spring to summer, NAZA awarded new summer funding opportunities to 8 partner organizations. Each organization offered 4-8 weeks of virtual summer programming, reaching 150 youth in June and 128 youth in July. Youth were provided with an opportunity of 15 hours/week of live virtual programming alongside their peers, plus additional individual learning/project time. To support equitable access to virtual programming, NAZA purchased 448 Chromebooks for youth: 246 were distributed for summer learning and the remainder for afterschool programs in the fall.



# STRENGTHENING

## *Organizational Capacity*

NAZA supports the youth development community in increasing their capacity to design, deliver, and evaluate quality learning experiences for youth. NAZA-funded organizations adhere to common standards for program quality, data tracking, and continuous quality improvement. Their staff participate in professional development, which is offered in partnership with Metro Nashville Public Schools. Trainings focus on the 5 Principles of Positive Youth Development, strategies for youth interaction and engagement, measuring program quality, social and emotional learning, and de-escalation strategies, among many other topics.



In 2019-2020, NAZA provided **23** training sessions and a total of **83** hours of training for youth development professionals.

### **BENEFICIARIES**

**441** youth development professionals benefited directly from NAZA training.

**4057** youth benefited indirectly through programs or services provided by adults trained by NAZA.

### **SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE**

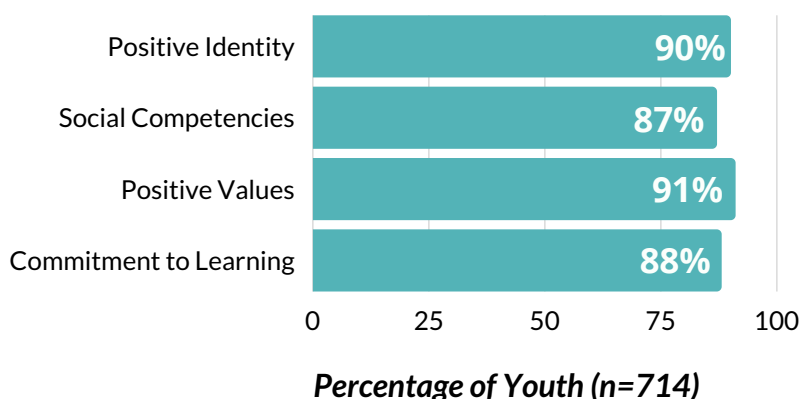
**93.4%** of attendees reported that they learned or strengthened skills as a result of the training.

**67.5%** of attendees indicated a knowledge increase as a result of the training.



## **Youth Asset Survey**

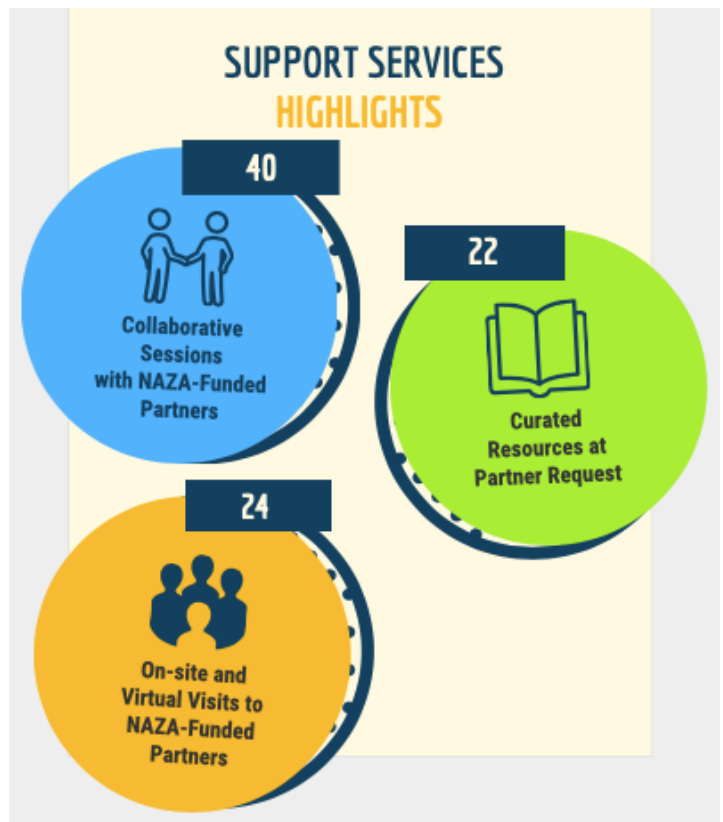
To support continuous quality improvement, NAZA collects feedback annually from youth in NAZA-funded afterschool programs using the Youth Asset Survey. The survey asks youth to consider how their afterschool program has influenced growth in their social-emotional skills and competencies. This chart summarizes youth responses in four key areas for 2019-2020.



# STRENGTHENING

## Organizational Capacity

This year, NAZA developed a new coaching model, *Partnering in Youth Leadership*, that engages youth with partner organizations to strengthen programs and support continuous improvement. Together, using Weikart's Youth Program Quality Assessment Tool, youth and program staff identify areas for growth and development. Youth then have the opportunity to lead planning, reflection, and next steps. This model leverages individual and organizational strengths, increases engagement between youth and staff, and invites partners to share best practices with the larger NAZA community.



Additionally, NAZA provided coordination, support, and promotion of partner engagement in local and national initiatives. For Nashville Reads, NAZA purchased 100 copies (English & Spanish) of the book selection, *Dreamers*, by Yuyi Morales, and created a Youth Leaders' Facilitation Guide. For the 20th Anniversary of Lights on Afterschool, NAZA coordinated and promoted partner engagement to collectively raise awareness about the importance of afterschool. Youth from all 43 NAZA-funded programs hosted Lights On Afterschool events with a variety of themes, including health & wellness, literacy, STEM, visual arts, theater and dance, spoken word, college and career exploration, and more!



Conexion Americas hosts a Nashville Reads event.





NAZA is governed by a Leadership Council that is co-chaired by the Mayor and the Library Director. It includes other elected officials from Metro Council and the Vice-Mayor, as well as representatives from the Mayor's Office, Metro Nashville Public Schools, local foundations and business, academia, and nonprofit organizations. Together, they address challenges, develop solutions, and leverage citywide expertise and resources to support youth, families, and the larger Nashville community.

NAZA regularly hosts a professional learning community of its partners - nonprofit and community-based organizations - dedicated to promoting and raising awareness about holistic youth development, sharing collective experiences and expertise, and inspiring and mobilizing key stakeholders to impact the lives of youth. Partners gain strategies and best practices, new resources, and an expanded professional network.



NAZA Youth Development Working Group



Every Hour Counts Systems Buiding Institute



NAZA Leadership Council Meeting



NAZA Partner Meeting



# ADVOCATING

## *for Holistic Youth Development*

In 2019, inspired by Boston Afterschool & Beyond and a 2017 report from Vanderbilt's Peabody College, which was grounded in interviews with 100+ youth development professionals and caregivers, we sought out to define what youth need to thrive in education, work, and life. We wanted to develop a vision that could especially help those in informal education settings, including caregivers and youth development professionals, to leverage the power of this time, where youth spend 80% of their waking hours.

Over the course of 1.25 years, 200+ community members created the Vision for Holistic Youth Development through:

- 20 focus groups with youth, caregivers, youth development professionals, school and city stakeholders,
- 4 meetings with the Youth Development Working Group, comprised of 58 diverse stakeholders,
- 5 meetings with the Youth Outcomes Team, a 19-member group, to guide and deepen the work; and
- Special advisory sessions with the Mayor's Youth Council and *Youth In Action!*, NAZA's youth-led initiative.

As a result of these efforts, **Nashville's Vision for Holistic Youth Development** was created. It defines the 12 skills/practices and assets that are essential for youth to thrive in education, work, and life. The Vision engages every adult supporting children and youth, whether they are educators, youth development professionals, juvenile law enforcement, or caregivers. Through the Vision, individuals and communities can find opportunities for more positive, holistic child and youth development. Next steps include a Vision toolkit with definitions, resources on how to cultivate the practices and assets in different settings, and considerations for how the assets can be linked to the practices.



*Youth Development Working Group Celebrates Adoption of Shared Youth Outcomes*

# NASHVILLE'S VISION FOR HOLISTIC YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



## Assets

Interconnection

Power of  
Storytelling

Equity, Access,  
and Justice

Children and  
Youth as  
Catalysts for  
Change

## Skills/Practices

**Cultivate**

- ▶ Identity and Self-Awareness
- ▶ Curiosity, Learning, and Growth Mindset

**Connect**

- ▶ Love, Self-Worth & Confidence
- ▶ Emotional Intelligence & Self-Management
- ▶ Empathy & Compassion
- ▶ Communication

**Grow**

- ▶ Literacy
- ▶ Critical Thinking
- ▶ Problem Solving & Resourcefulness
- ▶ Visioning, Goal-Setting & Planning
- ▶ Initiative & Action
- ▶ Life Skills



# EMPOWERING

## *Youth to Lead and Learn*

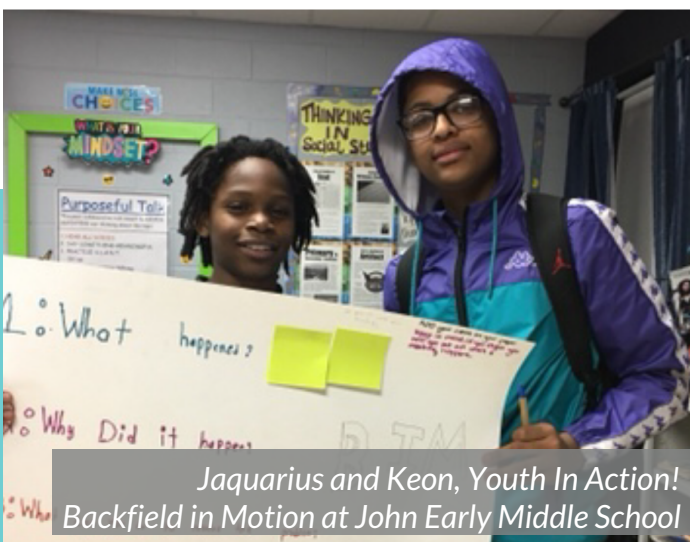
NAZA elevates youth voice by engaging them meaningfully in initiatives that impact them, including the Vision for Holistic Youth Development, summer learning, and positive youth development. NAZA also invests in *Youth In Action!* Created and led by youth, this initiative is a platform for youth to engage with their community, voice their opinions, and advocate for ideas and change that they are passionate about. High school youth are paired with middle school youth and support them in taking action on issues in their community that are important to them. In its inaugural year, *Youth In Action!* included 8 Youth Community Leaders (high schoolers) as paired mentors for 20 Youth Program Leaders (middle schoolers) at 8 NAZA-funded program sites:



Echasa and Anisa, Youth In Action!  
NICE at McMurray Middle School

- Backfield in Motion at John Early Middle
- Bethlehem Centers
- D.Y.M.O.N. In the Rough at H.G. Hill and Brick Church Middle
- Martha O'Bryan Center at Cameron Middle
- Nashville International Center for Empowerment at Margaret Allen Middle
- Nations Ministry Center at LEAD Southeast
- YMCA Program at the Northwest YMCA

*Youth in Action!* celebrated many successes, including developing new afterschool activities at Bethlehem Centers of Nashville; incorporating mindfulness practices at Backfield in Motion at John Early Middle; and coding sessions, new physical activities, and communication-building at D.Y.M.O.N. in the Rough.



Jaquarius and Keon, Youth In Action!  
Backfield in Motion at John Early Middle School



Avery S., Youth Community Leader &  
NAZA Support Services Director

# EMPOWERING

## *Youth to Lead and Learn*

### *Youth In Action!*



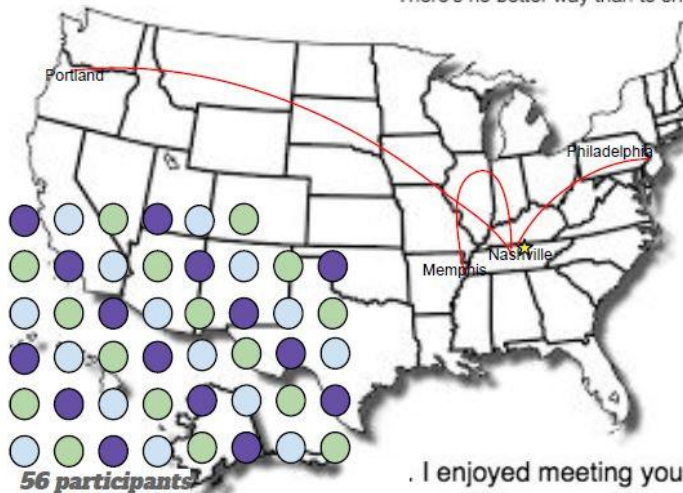
We are a network of youth in Nashville taking action on issues that we care about.

“Youth have the power to do anything. They have the power to be leaders, activists, role models, change-makers, and numerous other things. But to many youth, there are barriers and limits in their cities that hinder them from continuing their goals and striving for more. NAZA seeks to change that. The Youth Community Leaders seek to change that.”

~ Anisa, Youth Community Leader

In May, *Youth In Action!* led an end-of-year showcase of their inaugural year's work and facilitated a dynamic discussion on youth voice. NAZA's Youth Advisor, Allie, Youth Community Leaders, and our community celebrated many accomplishments, including *Youth In Action!*'s engagement of 256 middle school youth in NAZA funded-programs in 2019-2020. Youth Community Leaders also led our community to discuss and name the ways we can remove barriers to elevating youth voice in Nashville.

There's no better way than to show the value of youth leadership than youth in action! Thanks to ALL of you.



. I enjoyed meeting your teens and wish them the best of luck in the future.

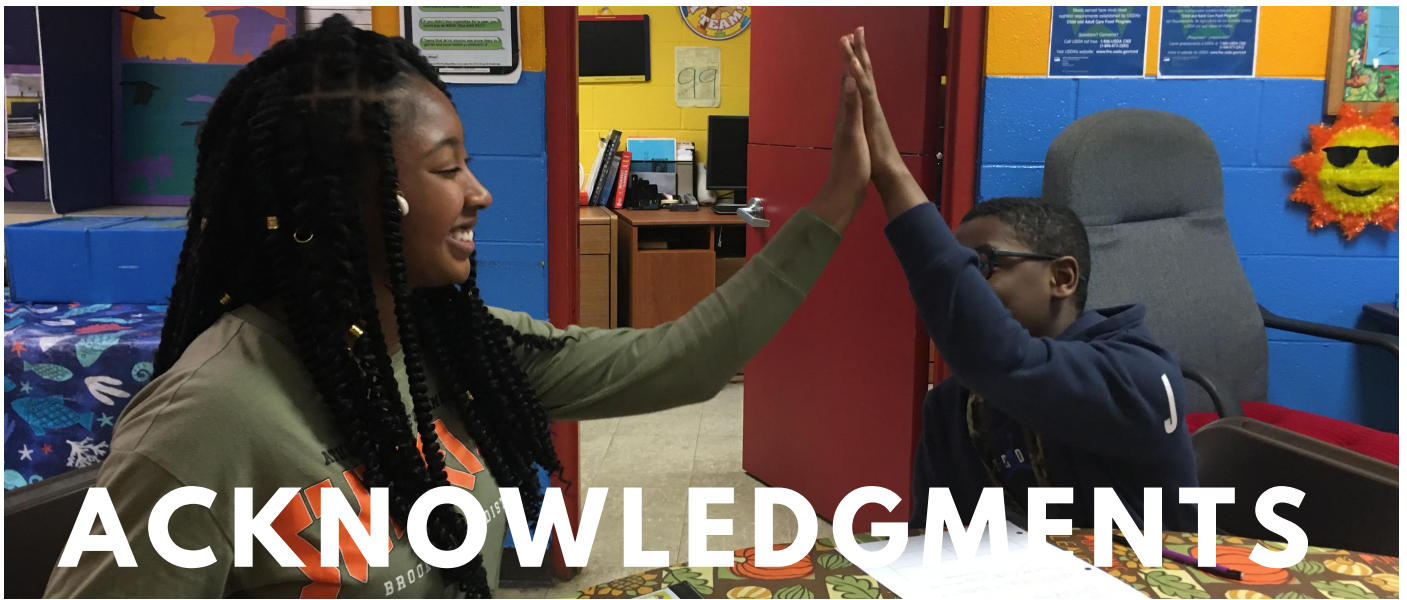
Thank you for sharing this excellent program!

that was inspirational youth leadership in action.

Please tell everyone involved how much I appreciated them including me and how impressed I was with the whole event. It was an excellent presentation because it got me so excited about the program. Also, everyone involved is obviously genuinely engaged and enthusiastic about their work. The young people that spoke were self-assured and clear in their messaging and the main speakers blew me out of the water with the clarity of their answers and mission.

This is so sweet! I loved how you led and how you answered questions. You all rock! Keep up your good work and have a great summer! I appreciate you!





Special thanks to city leaders, including **Nashville Mayor John Cooper** as the current co-chair of NAZA's Leadership Council, as well as **Deputy Mayor Haywood**, **Vice-Mayor Shulman**, and other administration members for their participation. We thank the **Metro Council's Special Committee on Afterschool** for exploring ways to expand access to out-of-school time and developing expansion recommendations with NAZA leadership. Special thanks to **Councilmember Jennifer Gamble**, the Chair of the Committee, **Councilmember Burkley Allen**, and **Councilmember Thom Druffel** for joining NAZA's Leadership Council and for their continued support.

We are grateful to **Nashville Public Library** and the **Nashville Public Library Foundation** for supporting our mission as part of the library and to Library Director Kent Oliver for his leadership. We appreciate the role of the **YMCA of Middle Tennessee** as an implementing partner.

We appreciate the Board of Education, Dr. Adrienne Battle, her executive team, principals, administrators, support staff, and educators at **Metro Nashville Public Schools** for their partnership with NAZA; as well as **community partners**, for meaningful dialogue on supporting youth and for their representation at NAZA Leadership Council.

We are grateful for our local donors: the **Turner Foundation**, **First Horizon Foundation**, **Dan and Margaret Maddox Charitable Fund**, the **Economic Club of Nashville**, and the **Joe C. Davis Foundation**, for believing in the importance of our mission and continuously supporting programming and capacity-building. We thank the **Institute of Museum and Library Services** and the **Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration** for making multi-year investments in the collective impact work that yielded Nashville's Vision for Holistic Youth Development. We would also like to thank America's Promise Alliance for investing in NAZA as one of five community conveners for How Learning Happens.

Many thanks to **Vanderbilt Peabody College's** leadership and research team for their tremendous work on the Vision for Holistic Youth Development and for their continued partnership as NAZA's research partner. We would especially like to thank the **Youth Development Working Group** and the **Youth Outcomes Team** for their significant involvement in the creation of the Vision.

**To the youth, families, youth development professionals, and greater community of Nashville: Your ideas, passion, empathy, and leadership inspire us every day! Thank you.**

### ***Want to get involved?***

Follow us on Facebook @nashvilleZ or Twitter @nashville\_Z

Or make a donation: <https://nashvillez.org/donate/>