



2020 - 2021

ANNUAL REPORT

NASHVILLE AFTER ZONE ALLIANCE
(NAZA)

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Nashville Public Library FOUNDATION



NAZA Annual Report: 2020-2021

Overview and Reflections From NAZA



Based at Nashville Public Library, the Nashville After Zone Alliance (NAZA) stands with youth, families, partner organizations, and the larger Nashville community as we close out the 2020-2021 school year. We have faced and continue to face unprecedented challenges, and we want to recognize the ongoing efforts our partner organizations made to support the evolving needs of youth and families. As a result, we collectively made a difference in the lives of 1360 youth throughout the 2020-2021 school year and summer.

Through the ups and downs, NAZA has remained committed to investing in our community by funding sustained learning opportunities; building organizational capacity in partnership with youth and youth development professionals; and leveraging citywide partnerships to streamline resources and ensure the best outcomes. As we continue to navigate the trauma and uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, we will be guided by the community-developed, citywide Vision for Holistic Youth Development. Launched publicly last fall, Nashville's Vision ultimately supports youth in developing the growth practices that youth need to thrive in education, work, and life. Together through the Vision, we can create a more equitable society. We hope you will join us!

We thank each of our partner organizations for making this work possible. We are grateful to Mayor Cooper and the City Council for their continuous support of NAZA. Whether you are new to NAZA or a longtime supporter or somewhere in between, we hope the highlights and successes in this report will provide moments of inspiration during an otherwise challenging year.

Anna Harutyunyan
NAZA Chief Executive



Investing in Nashville's Children & Youth

NAZA-Funded Afterschool Programs

This past year, 901 youth attended NAZA-funded programs, with 222 attending 60 days or more. NAZA partners provided 5th-9th grade youth with engaging activities that develop social, emotional and cognitive skills; co-created youth leadership opportunities; and aligned programming with growth practices identified in Nashville's Vision for Holistic Youth Development. Partners also collaborated across the NAZA system to develop new and creative techniques for recruitment, youth engagement, and curriculum development.

In addition to afterschool programs, NAZA partners provided support services to youth and families, such as:

- Helping caregivers navigate virtual school platforms.
- Offering daytime programs, tutoring, and food assistance.
- Providing supply kits.
- Connecting families to financial support services.



Investing in Nashville's Children & Youth

NAZA-Funded Summer Programs

NAZA funded summer programming for 459 youth in June and July. Unlike Metro-funded afterschool programs, summer programs are supported by both public and private NAZA funds. They were filled with experiences to support social and emotional learning and Nashville's Vision for Holistic Youth Development. Experiences included health & wellness activities, including cooking and nutrition classes, visits from the Nashville Hope Clinic and Metro Health Department, as well as outdoor recreation activities like canoeing and kayaking, baseball, swimming at Nashville Shores, rock climbing at Climb Nashville, and golf at Top Golf. Additional field trip destinations included the National Museum of African American Music, the Muhammad Ali Center, the National Civil Rights Museum; and other cultural institutions. Many also did virtual programming through community partners including the Frist Art Museum, the Adventure Science Center, and Mr. Bond & the Science Guys. Additional activities including STEM activities like 3D printing, environmental education, and learning about how water systems work through Metro Water Services; career exploration and development activities with guest speakers and on-site visits; and service projects to support people experiencing homelessness in Nashville. We hope to sustain and expand these opportunities in the future through city, state, and federal funds.



Metro Parks - Old Hickory



Why We Can't Wait



Strengthening Organizational Capacity

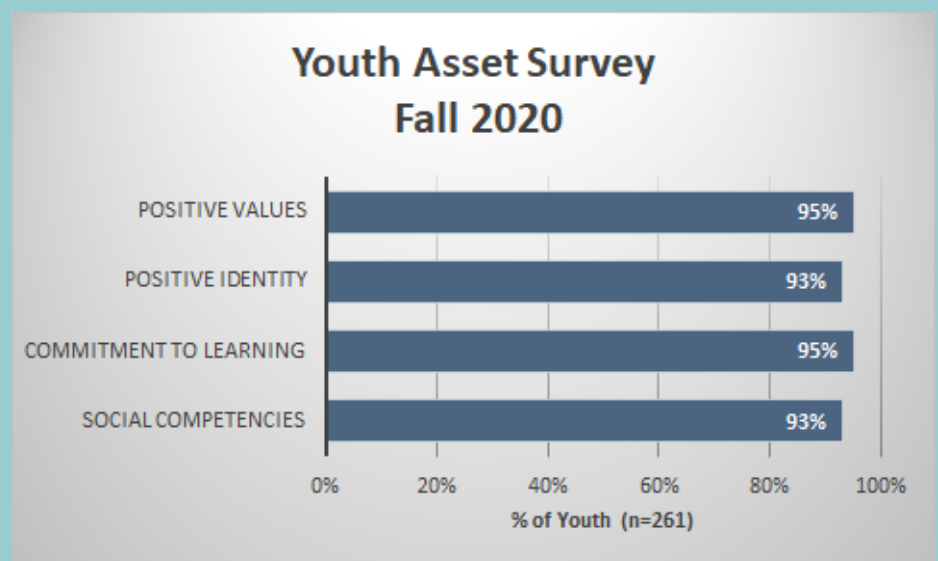
Professional Development

This past year, NAZA offered 23 virtual professional development opportunities (total 58 hours) to 370 youth development professionals that were designed to address their evolving needs during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, 7,262 youth benefitted indirectly from trained staff. In addition to its hallmark trainings (i.e., *Introduction to Positive Youth Development* and *Youth Program Quality Assessment Basics*), NAZA launched trainings in concert with Nashville's Vision for Holistic Youth Development, focused on the community practices of storytelling as well as equity, access, and justice. Participants of trainings such as *Implicit Bias*, *Telling Our Stories: Identity Narrative & Youth Parts 1 and 2*, and *Personal Narrative and Lived Experiences* identified and cultivated mindsets vital to youth development work. Finally, through a series of ACEs/trauma-informed trainings, youth development professionals explored the dynamics of adverse child experiences, as conditions eliciting trauma are exacerbated during times of isolation. Ninety-eight per cent (98%) indicated that their skills increased or were strengthened; and 71% indicated that their knowledge base increased.



Youth Asset Survey

To support continuous quality improvement, NAZA collects feedback annually from youth in NAZA-funded afterschool programs using the Youth Asset Survey. It asks youth how their program has influenced growth in their social-emotional skills and competencies. This chart shows the percentage of youth who agreed or strongly agreed that their program impacted their values, identity, commitment to learning, and social competencies.



Convening the Nashville Community

Celebrating NAZA's 10th Anniversary

On September 30th, the NAZA community came together to celebrate NAZA's 10th Anniversary -- a decade of investing in high-quality afterschool and summer learning experiences for Nashville's youth. With over 150 people in attendance, the event included many from the NAZA community, including 14 elected officials at the federal and local levels, NAZA Youth Community Leaders, and NAZA partners. Congressman Cooper and Mayor Cooper shared remarks about NAZA's decade-long path and emphasized the importance of continuing to invest in young people through out-of-school time programs. NAZA also recognized the YMCA of Middle Tennessee and the Martha O'Bryan Center as NAZA's longest-standing program partners.



Launch of Nashville's Vision for Holistic Youth Development

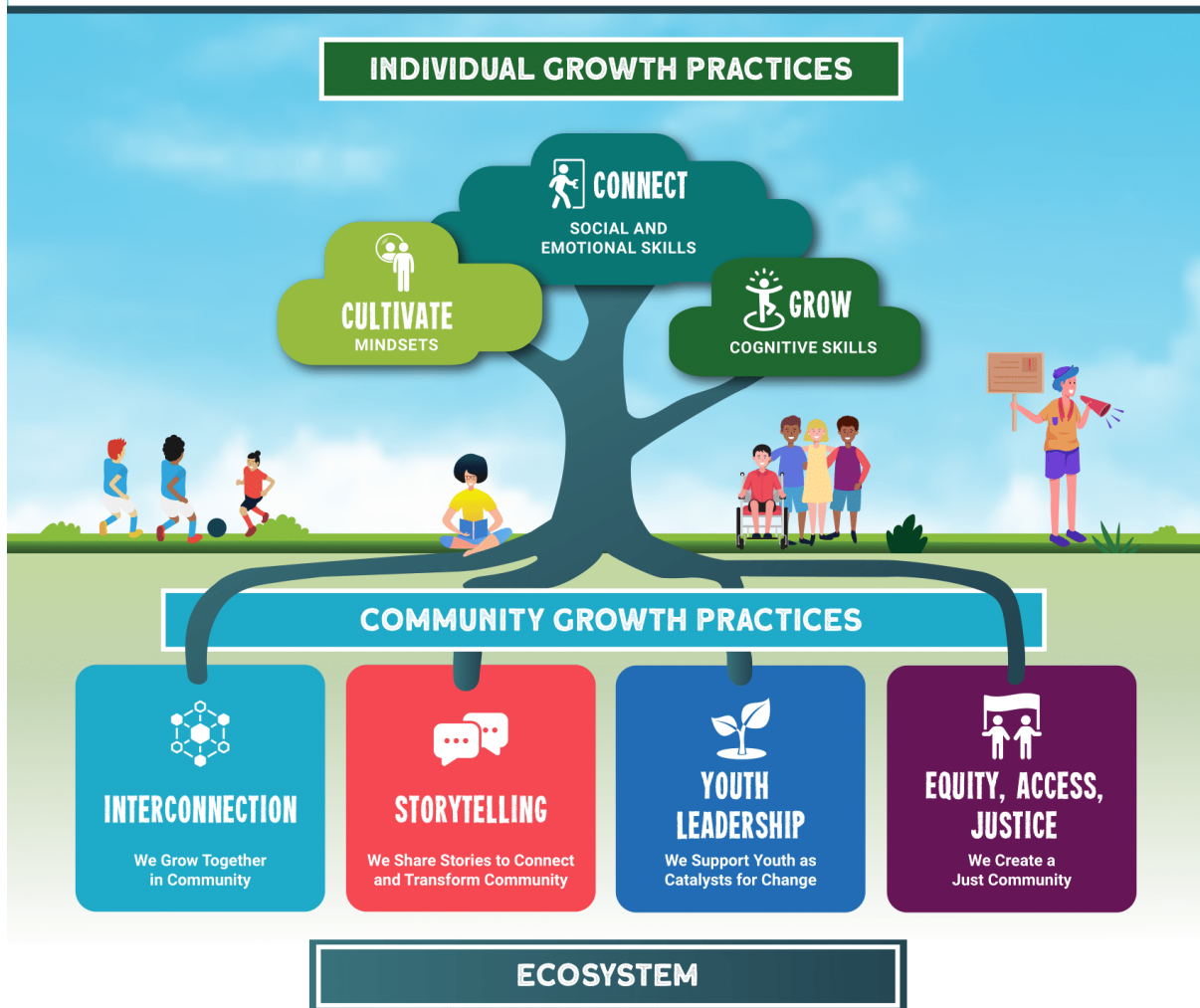
In October, NAZA publicly launched Nashville's Vision for Holistic Youth Development as part of a 2-day virtual series. *Transform Learning, Transform Community: Launching Nashville's Vision* was sponsored by America's Promise Alliance. Karen Pittman, CEO of the Forum for Youth Investment, joined Lily S., NAZA's *Youth In Action!* Youth Community Leader, for an engaging conversation about transformative learning, creating meaningful relationships through trust and acceptance; and encouraging youth to lead and explore who they are. Other presenters and attendees included youth, caregivers, youth development professionals, community advocates, and supporters. More than 120 people attended, and Nashville's Vision was reflected in our community's stories and commitment to a thriving future for children and youth.



Convening the Nashville Community

NASHVILLE'S -VISION- FOR HOLISTIC YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The Vision guides us towards the best possible future by prioritizing essential **Individual and Community Growth Practices** that children and youth need to thrive in their learning **Ecosystem**.



What do growth practices look like across a learning ecosystem? The Vision contextualizes holistic youth development through **interpersonal relationships, systems and societal beliefs**. We all play a role to ensure youth thrive.



Schools, Nonprofits & Community Programs



Parents & Caregivers



Youth Development Professionals



Community Advocates



Policy Makers



Elected Officials

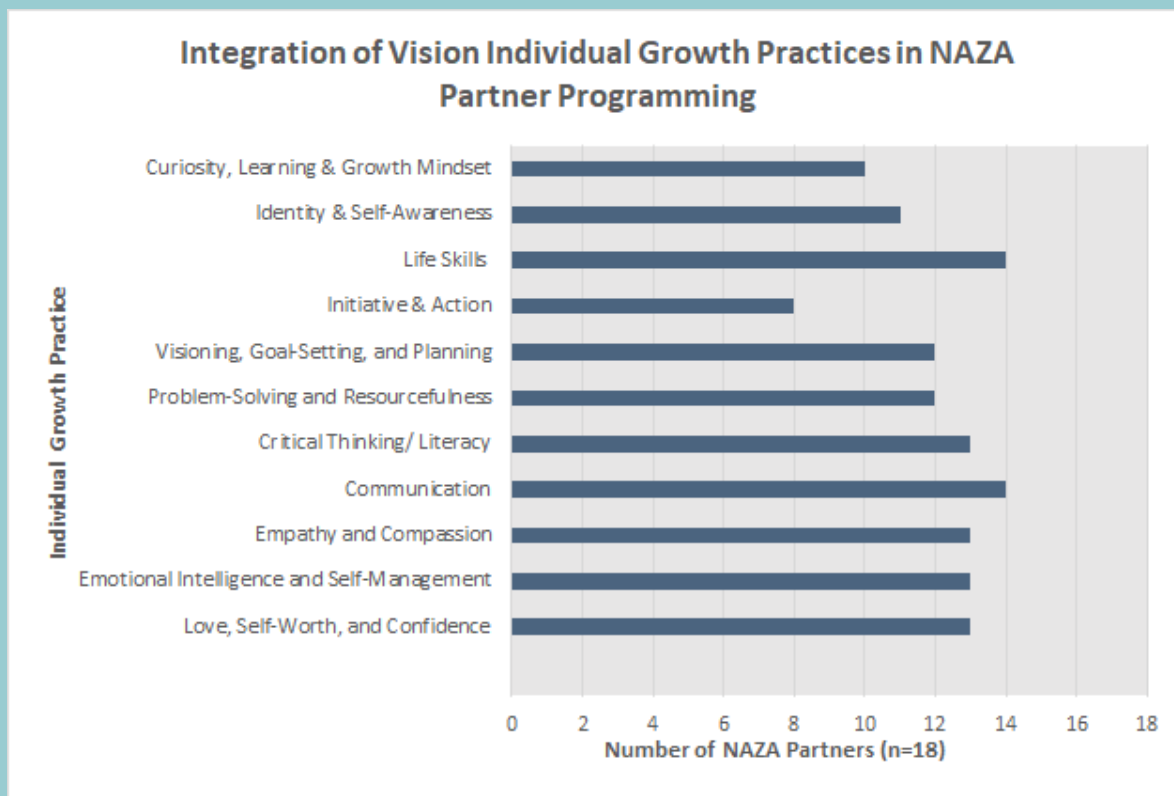
Funding for the Vision was provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services' Community Catalyst Initiative Grant and the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant through the Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration.

Advocating for Holistic Youth Development

About Nashville's Vision

Nashville's Vision for Holistic Youth Development guides us towards the best possible future by prioritizing essential individual and community growth practices that children and youth need to thrive in their learning ecosystem. The Vision was developed over the course of two years in partnership with over 200 stakeholders in a process that was co-led by NAZA and Vanderbilt University's Peabody College. Collaborating partners included Nashville Public Library, the Mayor's Youth Council, *Youth In Action!*, and community stakeholders from 25+ organizations. Stakeholder groups included youth, caregivers, youth development professionals, Metro Nashville Public Schools, Alignment Nashville, and business and government leaders. To date, the Vision has been presented to the Nashville Public Library and Library Foundation boards, Alignment Nashville's board and operating board, the Tennessee Afterschool Network, NAZA partners, Opportunity NOW, The Museum Advocates, and NAZA's youth development trainers.

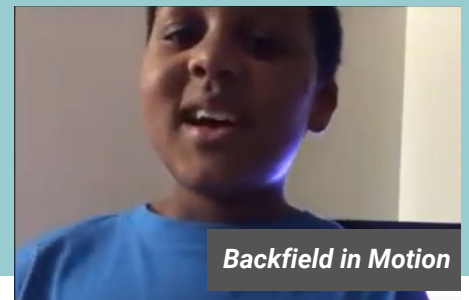
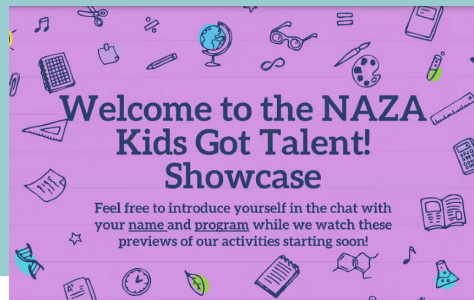
In the fall of 2020, NAZA-funded partners began integrating individual growth practices from Nashville's Vision in their programs. This chart shows the number of NAZA-funded partners that have integrated each of the 12 individual growth practices.



Empowering Youth to Lead and Learn

***Youth In Action!* Update by Youth Community Leaders**

Youth In Action! is a youth-led initiative providing youth from NAZA-funded programs new opportunities and leadership skills. This year they reached out to a multitude of new programs and helped them foster new connections between staff and youth. By working with Youth Community Leaders, middle school youth have the chance to expand on their interests, explore new ideas, and grow personally and professionally. NAZA Kids Got Talent!, a space where youth from different programs can interact freely outside of their original programming, had its first showcase this fall. On the city level, they have facilitated Nashville-wide conferences and meetings focusing on promoting youth advocacy and student voice. *Youth In Action!* introduced Nashville's Vision for Holistic Youth Development at the *Transform Learning, Transform Community* event, as well as led conversations regarding how to approach youth voice within MNPS and NAZA. NAZA's Youth Advisor planned and led a national conversation with America's Promise Alliance + Grantmakers for Thriving Youth focused on anti-racism and empowering youth across the nation.



NAZA Kids Got Talent! by Lily S., Youth Community Leader

On October 28th, *Youth In Action!* Youth Community Leaders joined middle school youth from different afterschool programs to host NAZA Kids Got Talent! As part of Lights on Afterschool, a national month of advocacy for afterschool programs hosted by the Afterschool Alliance, this event was entirely youth-planned and youth-led. Each youth showcased a talent that they wanted to teach and share with others. Activities ranged from game sketching to sewing, stretching, hairstyling, and cooking. They designed everything, including the run of show for the event and promotional materials. Over 50 people attended and witnessed the perseverance, brilliance, and liveliness of the youth. It was an inspiring reminder of the reasons we are committed to this work!



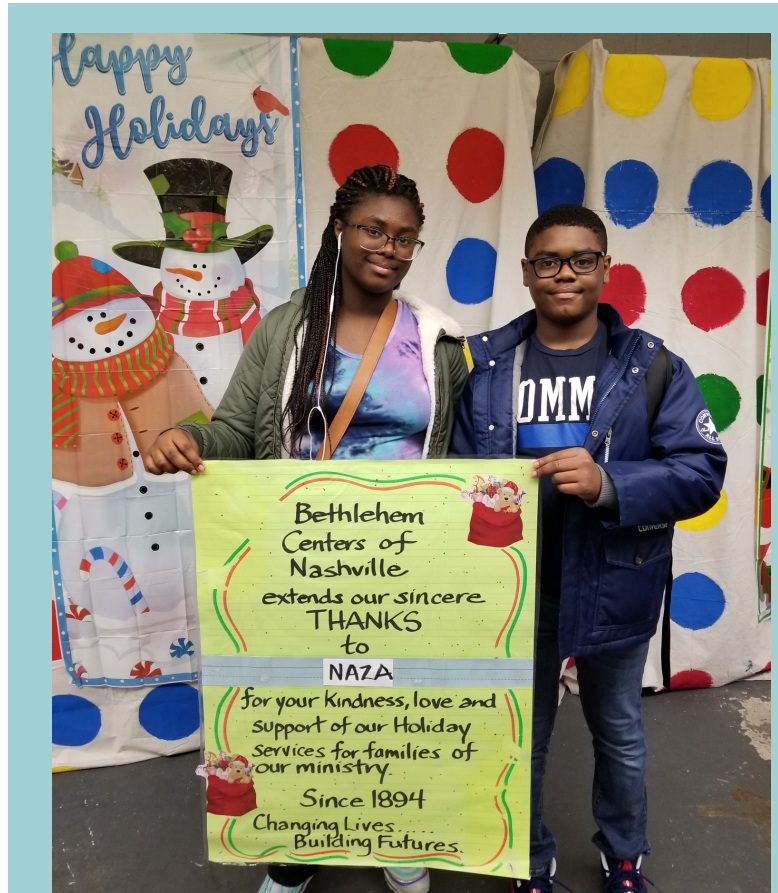
Looking Ahead

Fundraising

In FY 2021 NAZA raised a total of \$749,926 from local funders and Federal grants.

NAZA went through a two-step application process over 6-month period and was granted a new 3-year award from Federal government through the Institute of Library and Museum Service (IMLS). This \$601,926 grant will support the implementation of Nashville's Vision for Holistic Youth Development. The focus is to create opportunities and conditions for youth to cultivate 12 individual growth practices and 4 community growth practices so they can grow to their full potential and thrive in education, work, and life. *(See page 8 for additional information and resources related to Nashville's Vision growth practices.)*

NAZA's role is to build the capacity of youth development professionals to support these growth practices and create opportunities for practicing these. This grant will support youth projects and community leadership opportunities. We will also create tools to support continuous improvement and share our experience nationally on how to support youth's social and emotional development in a meaningful and participatory way with a focus on equity.



Additionally, NAZA raised \$87,500 from local funders (Turner Family foundation and First Horizon) to co-fund summer 2021 programs as well as a two year \$50,000 grant from Maddox Charitable fund to support NAZA's capacity building and continuous improvement. Other smaller funds raised from Joe C. Davis foundation and ECON support cultural field trips and continuous quality improvement related initiatives.



Looking Ahead

Strategic Planning

In December of 2020, NAZA began developing its strategic plan for 2021-2026. The purpose of this project was to retool the mission and vision, update strategic priorities, and align strategies and internal structures with Nashville's Vision for Holistic Youth Development. Many voices helped to shape this plan and strategic priorities for NAZA, including youth, partners, NAZA Leadership Council members, and NAZA team members. This process also included in-depth asset mapping of both internal and external assets and conversations with a subset of NAZA's most important stakeholders —youth. Most importantly, the theory of change in the document reflects the paradigm shift for NAZA-funded afterschool program where the focus meaningfully expands to supporting youth holistically and equally instead of only supporting school-related outcomes. This approach is in line with number of national studies proving that academic success is more feasible when a whole child approach to learning and development is applied.

Over the next five years, NAZA will continue to collaborate with its funded and affiliated partners, youth, and other stakeholders to support the integration of the Vision's 12 individual growth practices and 4 community growth practices into afterschool and summer program design, delivery, and evaluation. The organization is making a vested commitment to support youth holistically by focusing on equity; centering their voices, needs and interests to ensure they have opportunities for healthy growth and can thrive. The updated strategic plan will be heavily informed by the Community Youth Needs Assessment and will evolve over time to adapt to collaboratively determine emergent needs. The plan will also be responsive to the growth practices and internal structure necessary to support youth and partners. NAZA will continue to prioritize building the capacity of youth development professionals and youth-centered organizations.

NAZA Resources

More information about Nashville's Vision, including a 3-page info sheet, slide deck, and recording of the launch is available here:

<https://bit.ly/nashville-vision-resources>



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Acknowledgements

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 Metro Council**; and other administration members for their continuous 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 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, the Joe C. Davis Foundation, and the Caterpillar 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.

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



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