



# IMPACT REPORT

2021 - 2022



Photo by: Arturo Olmos

## MEET THE TEAM

# Dear Friends of PAIR,

What an incredible year has it been for our organization! As we continuously adapt to redefine what's possible under ever changing circumstances, be it the consequences of the COVID pandemic, the shifting demographics of the refugee population or any other obstacles we encounter, we pause and recognize the importance of celebrating small victories and major accomplishments and eagerly explore possibilities the new year brings.



Executive Director, Elena Korbut

I joined PAIR in April of 2022, and while familiar with the organization through my career in refugee resettlement, I was stunned by my team's talent, their above-and-beyond attitude, and commitment to empowering every single refugee student we work with reach their potential. These qualities help us establish trust with students and their families, and in turn understand them within the greater context of their experiences, which allows us to serve them better. The success of PAIR's programs and the growth of the organization are the result of our team's hard work and perseverance and our students could not be in better hands!

Houston continues to lead the nation in refugee resettlement numbers, welcoming thousands of Afghan nationals following the Afghan humanitarian crisis and readying to welcome Ukrainian families. As we wait for the administration to set the national refugee resettlement ceiling for the year ahead, it is clear that the need for PAIR's services is greater than ever. As we prepare to welcome newcomer students and respond to the changing needs of the population that we serve, we count on your support of PAIR's mission!

**With gratitude,**

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Elena Korbut".

Elena Korbut

# THIS YEAR AT A GLANCE

## GLOBAL LEARNERS PROGRAM

Middle School Program

Program Enrollments

**190**

**103**

Afterschool sessions  
and Field trips

Individual Home  
Visits

**143**

## GLOBAL LEADERS PROGRAM

Highschool Freshmen and Sophomore Program

**304**

Program Enrollments

Afterschool sessions  
and Field trips

**137**

**47**

New Student Home  
Visits

## GLOBAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Highschool Freshmen and Sophomore Program

**\$671,976**

Awarded in  
Scholarships

**30**

Total Scholars

Where do our students come from?

## COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

Top 5 countries of origin:

1. Afghanistan
2. Democratic Republic of Congo
3. Rwanda
4. Eritrea
5. Ethiopia

**14**  
Different Languages  
Spoken at home

- Amharic
- Arabic
- Dari
- English
- Farsii
- French
- Kinyarwanda
- Kunama
- Pashto
- Spanish
- Swahili
- Tigrinya
- Turkish
- Twi

By Region:



What schools do PAIR students attend?

## HISD PARTNERS

- Wisdom High School
- Sharpstown High School
- Westbury High School
- Liberty High School
- Paul Revere Middle School
- Jane Long Middle School
- Las Americas Middle School

# A YEAR OF PAIR INNOVATION

This year brought unprecedented changes that required innovation. Two special projects allowed PAIR to successfully adapt to the changing needs of the population that we serve.

Following the Afghan humanitarian crisis, Houston welcomed over 12,000 Afghan nationals. PAIR focused on fostering awareness and understanding of the newcomer population. The Afghan Welcome Guide is a warm gesture and a resource for our new friends navigating an unfamiliar environment.

PAIR's collaboration with the Battery Dance NYC on an artistic project, "Dancing to Connect", celebrated Houston's diversity and promoted inclusion on refugees.

## Afghan Welcome Guide

The Afghan Welcome Guide idea was a response to the challenges facing the newcomer population. Our students and staff came together to find creative solutions to support new arrivals following the Afghan humanitarian crisis.

PAIR staff engaged the refugee youth to share information they found most useful upon arriving in the U.S. The guide, translated to Pashto and Dari by our friends at MasterWord addresses a variety of topics

and our board members worked on addressing a variety of topics based on the feedback from our students, what they wish they had known when they first arrived in the U.S. and information they found most helpful within their first six months of living in Houston. Artwork featured in the Welcome Guide was done by our students, volunteers and community partners. Translation into Pashto and Dari, the two most common languages spoken by Afghan newcomers was generously provided by our friends at MasterWord. The guide continues to be shared with our schools and community partners to reach as many Afghan families as possible.

### IMPACT

89

Afghan Families reached

11

Community partners





# DANCING TO CONNECT

## The universal language of dance

PAIR partnered with Battery Dance NYC, to host Houston's premiere of the Dancing to Connect program in July 2022. The Dancing to Connect initiative engages participants in creativity and team building, using the art form of dance as a tool for building social cohesion and resolving conflict throughout the world. The program also featured spoken word, singing and dance performances at Stages theater.

PAIR students and their peers participated in a fun week of movement workshops, building friendships and stepping out of their comfort zones.

The final performance was hosted at the Hobby Center for the Performing Arts and delighted parents, community members and staff!

## PRESS PLAY TO WATCH

A short film documenting PAIR students and their peers experiences



# GLOBAL LEARNERS PROGRAM

# 190

Middle school Students enrolled

## Life Skills

**100% of Students can**

- Resite their address and phone number
- Name important places and locations (Ex. nurse, bathroom)

## Social & Emotional Learning

**80% of Students can**

- Use "I am" sentences to describe aspects of their identity
- Name 1 or more ways to respond if someone were to violate their boundaries

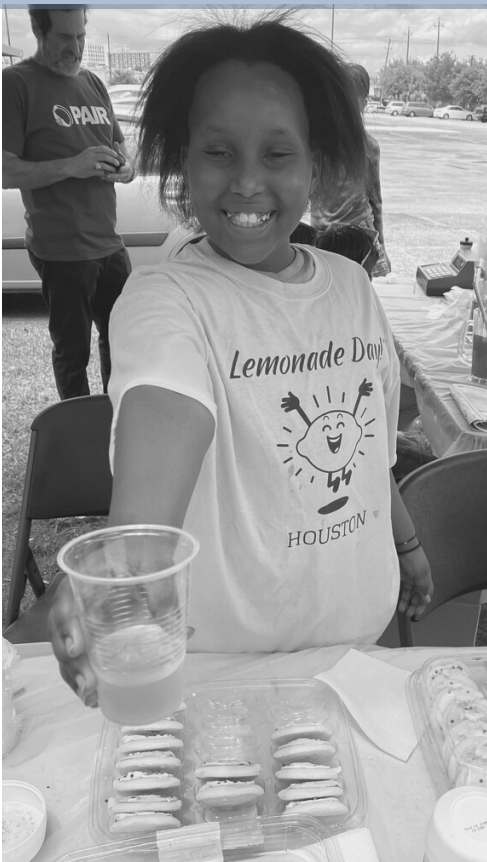
## MEET THE TEAM



"PAIR is the highlight of our students week because we provide a judgment free space just for them."

PROGRAM DIRECTOR,  
ABBIE DROZECK-FITZWATER

## NEW CURRICULUM STEM and Business



## LEMONADE DAY!

In partnership with Lemonade Day Houston, Global Learners offered a one-week entrepreneurship camp for students of Jane Long Academy and Las Americas Newcomer School. Over the course of a week, students worked in small teams to make and sell their own lemonade. Each team created a business plan and budget for their expenses, shopped for their supplies, created their own personalized lemonade recipes, and brainstormed marketing strategies to maximize their profit. Finally, on Lemonade Day, the teams set up their lemonade stands and utilized what they learned to sell their lemonade to customers. Students kept all of their profits, and were inspired to pursue new business ideas in the future!

**Students made \$233.01 in only 3 hours!**

MEET THE TEAM



We play the long game, helping students strive for success at every level.

PROGRAM DIRECTOR,  
MELANIE HERING

# GLOBAL LEADERS PROGRAM

# 304

Students Enrolled in After-School Programs

“We all are treated equal and we share ideas and help each other with work.”

**94%** Improved in English proficiency

**92%** Became more comfortable in school

**94%** Said PAIR helped them improve grades

**87%** Are now more likely to pursue college

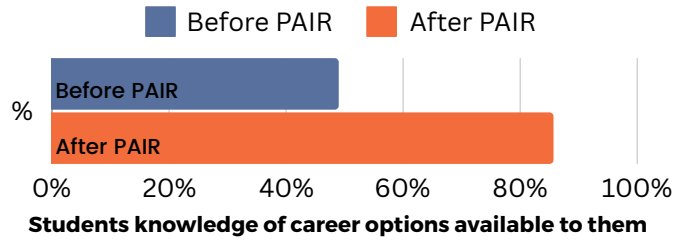
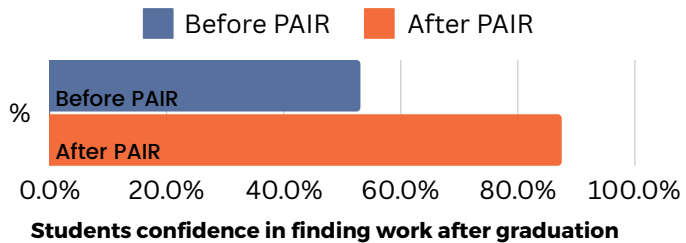
**16**  
Different Career Exploration Topics

“Since I started coming to PAIR, life has been easier.”

**9**  
Guest Speakers from various professional backgrounds



“(PAIR) has been great. I got to meet new people from different countries and learn how to communicate better.”





# GLOBAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM

**30**

**Junior and Senior Students enrolled**

## Program Highlights

**28** Individual mentor pairs

**500** Hours of one on one mentoring

**424** Hours of case management by PAIR Staff

## College and Career Access

**93%** Completed College Applications

**100%** Received support applying for scholarships and financial aid

### MEET THE TEAM



It's personal for us—we care about our kids and want to make sure they have everything they need to succeed.

PROGRAM COORDINATOR  
LAUREN DE-JESUS GLASGOW

Since the launch of Global Scholars in 2016,  
**\$1,264,000**  
 in Scholarships have been awarded.

### MEET THE TEAM



"PAIR stands in the gap between resettlement agencies and school to serve students who would otherwise fall through those cracks"

PROGRAM COORDINATOR  
MADDY LOEB

### NEW PROGRAM: Global Ambassadors

An exciting addition to PAIR programs this year was the creation of the **Global Ambassadors Program**, designed to support first-year refugee youth pursuing post-secondary education.

For years, alumni of PAIR programs have come back to staff, seeking help as their colleges and universities were not able to support them in their very specific challenges. Through focus groups and survey data, we found that students felt abandoned after graduation and struggled to find their footing on college campuses. This need led to the establishment of **Global Ambassadors**.

This program specializes in supporting refugee students in their first year of college by connecting with campus resources, providing individualized support, build a supportive community, and **encouraging scholars to persist through college to earn a university degree.**

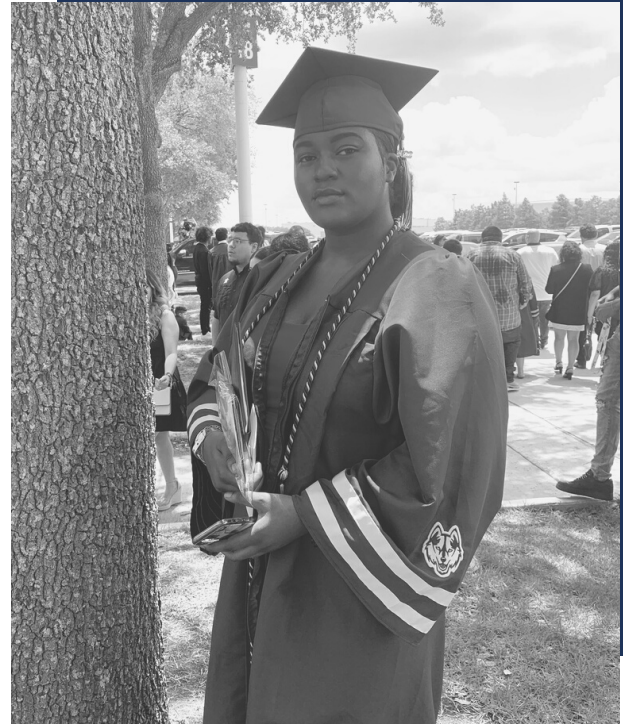
# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

**Born in:** Zambia

**Parent's Country of Origin:** Rwanda

“Coming to PAIR was really helpful during my 12th grade year. I didn't really know what I wanted to do, I didn't have anything planned out but when I went to PAIR they got me. We took fieldtrips and visited universities to see if we would like to attend there. They helped me with my fafsa, with my school applications. They really helped me out alot. And it's really fun!

PAIR made it easier for me to attend college because I was afraid and nervous at first. They told me there was nothing to be scared of, that there would always be someone to help me. They told me about guidance counselors, teachers, tutors, financial aid advisors. So now I have nothing to worry about because I already got into a college. I feel better. I feel at ease.”



Sharon, Scholars Student

During her time at PAIR, Sharon has been a summer intern, participated in Dancing to Connect, and successfully began her college career.

## WHERE IS SHARON NOW?

Since graduating, Sharon has been giving back through a paid Junior Counselor internship with middle school PAIR students. Internships for former refugee students allow young adults to gain employment experience and skills while using their unique language and cultural skills to mentor newly arrived refugees.

Sharon is now participating in the pilot year of the Global Ambassadors program while attending Houston Community College. Global Ambassadors supports college freshmen as they overcome obstacles to their new environments. Monthly meetings with PAIR staff and campus-based cohort groups provide support maintaining financial aid, encourage use of campus academic and social amenities, and balance the competing demands of course work and employment.

# VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Volunteers are integral to our mission and students' accomplishments. Our Board of Directors, mentors, and community members enable our programs to be individualized and deeply impactful for each student.

## MEET THE TEAM



"PAIR is about building a safe space for students to adjust to their new life in Houston"

PROGRAM COORDINATOR  
ALLISON HALL

## MENTORS

**38** Non-Mentor Volunteers

**124** Total Mentors

**1,616**  
Mentor Hours

Mentors meet with students daily on 6 HISD school campuses, providing fun, guidance and academic support. The volunteer program was founded by Rice University volunteers. Our volunteer program is mostly made up of students from the Rice Volunteer chapter and our colleagues at the University of Houston. Their support has made a huge impact this year!

[Find out more on our website!](#)



"You might think of (refugees) being victimized and struggling for survival. But working with PAIR, I realized that these kids are also just kids."

-Deborah, Mentor



# MENTOR SPOTLIGHT

**Q: What is a memory working with a PAIR student that stands out to you?**

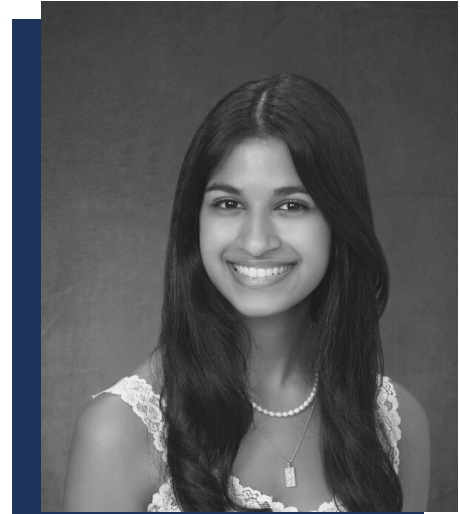
“One day, a student was doing a coloring page with a picture of a zebra. We talked about the English word for the animal and said “zebra.” Eventually, the whole table started giggling just because of the word “zebra.” It was a nice bonding moment when, despite a language barrier, we could all find the sound of a word silly.”

**Q: When was a time that you saw a student have an 'aha' moment or similarly were very excited about something?**

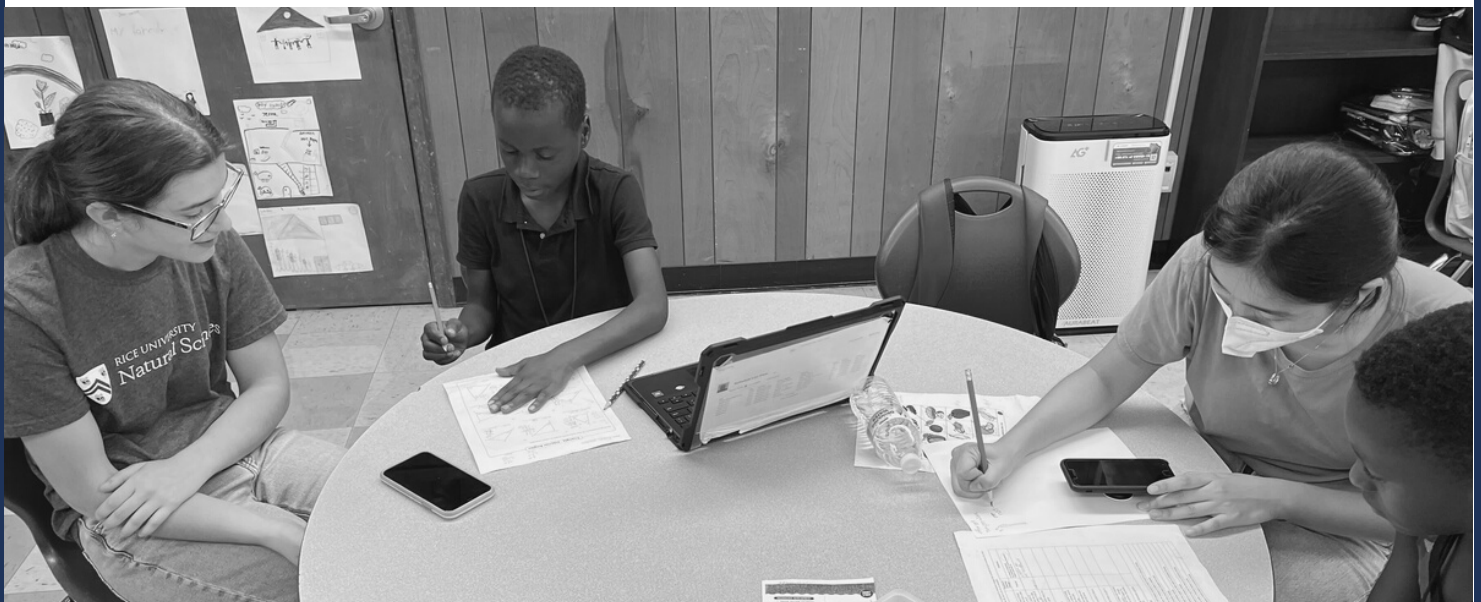
“ Many of my days as a volunteer were spent doing math homework with a PAIR student. I remember when I helped her to learn to calculate the slope of a line. As soon as she understood the pattern, she was able to answer every question infinitely more quickly. It was amazing to see herself and her knowledge grow.”

**Q:What is an experience with a PAIR student that expanded/ grew your own thought processes/ perception of their world?**

“A PAIR student once made a string bracelet for me. When she finished and showed it to me, I was beyond touched. As she tied it on my wrist, I said what I knew she would understand: “Thank you.” We shared a smile— our most common form of communication. I remember feeling a deep appreciation and connection despite not speaking the same language. I still wear it to this day. ”



Athena Haq, Mentor





# PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS



## PARTNERS

Asia Society  
Battery Dance Company, N.Y.  
United Way of Greater Houston  
Houston Jewish Community Foundation  
ExxonMobil Foundation  
Hobby Center, The  
Houston Coalition Against Hate  
City of Houston Mayor's Office  
LemonadeDay  
Masterword Inc.  
YMCA International Services  
HISD  
Korwater  
Stages Theater  
Rice University Center for Civic Leadership  
PaperCity Philanthropy Circle  
Rice University, PAIR Volunteer Chapter  
St. Agnes Academy  
University of Houston, PAIR Volunteer Chapter  
UNHCR

## BOARD MEMBERS

**Chair** Melany Vargas  
**Co-Chair** Meredith Kottler  
**Treasurer** Brittany Hopkins  
**Secretary** Daniel Davies  
Gibu Philip  
Stephanie Willinger  
Ahmed Abdulmajeed  
Sophia Dimarhos  
Leslie Huang  
Jody Miller  
Lynda Ngo  
Mary Kate Raffetto  
Nia Rayani

## DONORS

Asian American Youth Giving Circle  
Alice Kleberg Reynolds Foundation  
Arab American Cultural Center  
Arab American Educational Foundation  
AmazonSmile  
Battery Dance Company, N.Y.  
Benevity Giving Fund  
Brown Foundation  
Caring Friends  
Craft Pita  
Children's Fund, The  
Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art, The  
Dan L Duncan Foundation  
ExxonMobil Community Summer Jobs Program  
Electra and Douglas Elliott Family Fund  
Herzstein Foundation  
Fadi's Mediterranean Restaurant  
Greater Houston Community Foundation  
Harris County C.A.S.E. for Kids  
Harris County CYD Grant  
H-E-B  
Houston Arts Alliance  
Houston Endowment Inc.  
Individual Donors  
Nalex Energy  
The Levant Foundation  
Office of Refugee Resettlement  
Powell Foundation, The  
Rice University CCL Class Grant  
Samuels Family Foundation  
Select Center for Economic Opportunity  
United Way of Greater Houston, The  
Welcome Fund US  
YMCA of Greater Houston, International Service

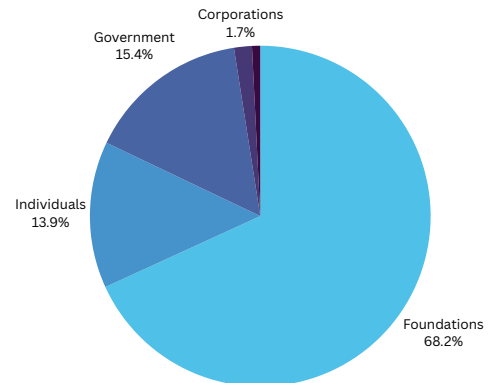
**And our generous  
community supporters!**

PAIR brands itself as an academic mentoring program,  
but that is truly the tip of the iceberg -PAIR Staff

# FINANCIAL REPORT

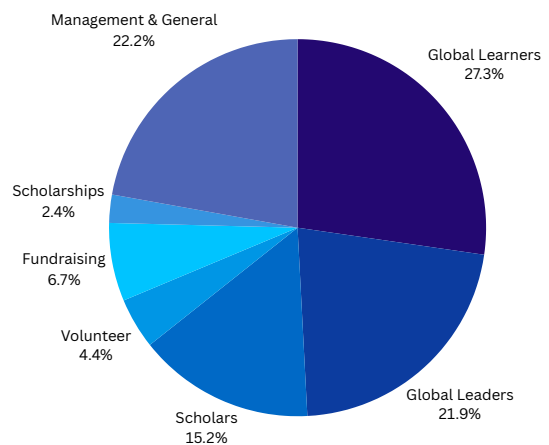
## REVENUE

Government	<b>\$132,509.02</b>
Corporate Donations	<b>\$14,558.78</b>
Individual Donations	<b>\$119,360.74</b>
Other Funding	<b>\$6,665.26</b>
Foundations	<b>\$584,837.26</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$857,930.95</b>
<b>Grants Rolled Over</b>	<b>\$279,183.33</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$1,137,114.28</b>



## EXPENSES

Global Learners Program	<b>\$143,389.69</b>
Global Leaders Program	<b>\$114,961.16</b>
Global Scholars Program	<b>\$79,607.11</b>
Volunteer Program	<b>\$22,970.37</b>
Fundraising Program	<b>\$35,261.32</b>
Scholarships Awarded	<b>\$12,682.26</b>
Management & General	<b>\$116,537.47</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$512,727.12</b>



# MEET THE TEAM

## STAFF

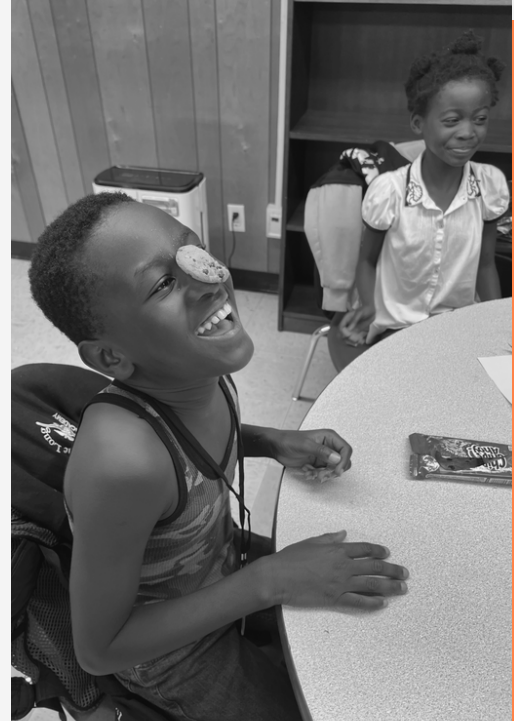


**A heartfelt thank you to our volunteers and supporters, we couldn't do it without you!**

# GLIMPSE INTO THE FUTURE

## Things to expect in the coming year:

- PAIR's program expansion to two additional HISD sites - Louie Welch Middle School and Liberty High School
- The launch of the Ambassadors Program designed to support refugee youth pursuing post-secondary education
- New community partnerships



Middle school students playing a game



Student snapping a photo at NASA fieldtrip

- Optimized referral process to PAIR's programs
- Welcome Guides for our newcomer students translated into Pashto, Dari and Spanish
- Community Outreach program
- New volunteer opportunities

and much more!



# GET INVOLVED



**VOLUNTEER AS A MENTOR**

**DONATE ON OUR WEBSITE**

**VISIT OUR AMAZON WISHLIST**

**FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA**



## FOLLOW US ONLINE

