

# 2024 Annual Report

Empowering Millions  
of Students to Find  
Tomorrow, Today



American  
Student  
Assistance®





# 2024 Annual Report

**“ASA is proud to have contributed to the recent ascent of career-readiness learning in the minds of middle and high school students, families, educators, businesses, and policymakers. We look forward to the day when all young people in the U.S., particularly those from historically marginalized and excluded communities, have equal opportunity to explore, experiment with, and transition to their dream careers.”**

*Jean Eddy, President and CEO at American Student Assistance® (ASA)*

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## Part One

# Finding Tomorrow, Today

At American Student Assistance, we have long believed that **the future isn't something students have to wait for**—it's something they can start shaping today. In 2024, we created even more opportunities for young people to pursue whatever future they desire, by expanding access to career-readiness learning tools and experiences, while also working to unlock a broader set of diverse pathways available to them.

We continued to grow our digital ecosystem, providing valuable resources that help students discover their passions and purpose in real time. We invested in and gave to innovators offering new solutions in career-focused education, intentional postsecondary pathways, and workforce development. And, we laid the groundwork to tackle the next big challenge in the classroom-to-career journey: navigating quality education and career paths after high school.

All together, **we were able to reach over 15 million students** in 2024—with more of them in historically underserved communities than ever before. As we reflect on this year, we're filled with hope, knowing that every step we take brings millions of students closer to finding their own tomorrow, today.

**Explore our 2024 journey and discover how.**



# Moving the Needle

## A message from ASA's President and CEO, Jean Eddy

One of my favorite year-end activities is to reflect on ASA's achievements. It inspires me. It motivates me. And it leaves me with the immense satisfaction that our hard work is actually making progress toward providing access to career-readiness resources for all kids in the U.S. At ASA, our efforts are guided by a commitment to create meaningful change and support young people in their educational and career journeys.

This year, ASA and our partners made remarkable strides in providing much-needed resources for kids, in fueling investment in the sector, in influencing public policy, and in changing hearts and minds of communities across the country.

Our impact investing is fostering innovation in career education and supporting startups and organizations that are developing cutting-edge solutions to prepare young people for the workforce of the future. Our philanthropic grantmaking is making a significant difference for underserved communities. (Our grants have supported programs that provide critical resources and opportunities to young people who may not otherwise have access to them.) Our thought leadership and advocacy is influencing public opinion and policy on issues related to career readiness.

Also, our digital experiences reached over **13 million** young people and earned several accolades including Anthem Awards, EdTech Digest Cool Tool Awards, and Webby Awards.

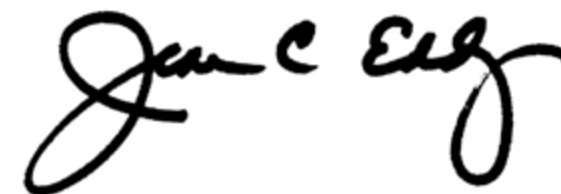
ASA was also named among the Top 100 Women-led Businesses in Massachusetts by The Women's Edge and The Boston Globe. Additionally, I was recognized as one of the top 10 EdTech influencers to watch in 2025 by NU Advisory Partners. I was also honored to win two Silver Anthem Awards for Nonprofit Leader and my book, *Crisis-Proofing Today's Learners: Reimagining Career Education to Prepare Kids for Tomorrow's World*. It's accolades like this that inspire us to continue pushing the boundaries of what is possible.

I'm so proud of the work we accomplished this year. As we look ahead to the future, we are excited about the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. Our focus will continue to be on providing innovative solutions and resources to support young people in their educational and career journeys—especially in the area of helping young people find, evaluate, fund, and access educational pathways that are right for them.

We remain committed to making a positive impact and helping the next generation of leaders to achieve their full potential.

So please keep reading. Everyone at ASA is immensely thankful for your efforts in guiding young people. Your work matters to me and my staff—and makes a difference for our future leaders. Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our mission.

Sincerely,



**Jean Eddy**

*President and CEO, ASA*



# ASA's Commitment to Collaboration

## A message from ASA's Board Chair, Larry Gennari



**C**ollaboration and partnerships are the foundation for our success at ASA. Our partners help us build and deliver exceptional digital experiences, provide crucial services to young people across the U.S.—especially in high-need areas and for underserved populations—and create an environment

where all young people can explore careers and develop their unique selves. They also help us extend our message to new audiences and provide a return on investment, enabling us to continue offering programs and services to young people for free.

This year, we embraced many new partners—from impact investment partners to grantees and media partners. Although the pages of our annual report provide more detailed insights, I wanted to highlight a few partnerships that will play a vital role in helping ASA grow and serve more young people in America.

We announced a \$25 million award to Jobs for the Future (JFF). This multiyear investment will underpin a strategic partnership to create the ASA Center for Career Navigation at JFF and support JFF's North Star goal. The new center will empower young people, ages 16-24, to better understand and navigate quality education and career pathways after high school by providing access to resources and opportunities that will lead them to meaningful, quality jobs. With a goal of helping 20 million young learners by 2030, the new center aims to lead the field in career navigation for high school students and young people who are neither in school nor employed.

In 2024, we also entered a multiyear partnership with Roadtrip Nation to create a Middle School Future Ready Roadtrip. This initiative will share stories appropriate for middle school students about individuals who have found career paths through non-traditional means. We will reach 50 million households via a public television special and 10 million students through Roadtrip Nation's education network annually. Additionally, ASA will support the development of a new virtual experience using generative A.I. that will make exploration and experimentation more accessible to middle and high school students. This will allow them to explore the world, meet the people living in it, and learn about the various paths those individuals have taken.

At the end of 2023, ASA entered into a 10-year, \$25 million agreement with the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE), the nation's leading entrepreneurship education organization. This partnership will expand access to high-quality entrepreneurship education for middle and high schoolers in communities from rural, marginalized, and economically disadvantaged communities. ASA continues to help NFTE move from a school-by-school approach to a more systemwide strategy to work with states and school districts to more effectively and efficiently expand the number of schools, teachers, and students that the organization works with each school year.

We are excited about the future and the endless possibilities that our partnerships will bring. Together, we can empower more young people to explore, discover, and achieve their dreams.

**Lawrence H. Gennari**  
*Chair, ASA Board of Directors*  
*Co-founder, Gennari Aronson, LLP*

**P.S.** I want to extend heartfelt gratitude to my friend Carol Fulp, Founder and CEO of Fulp Diversity Consultants, for her steadfast support and leadership throughout her 15 years on the ASA Board of Directors. As Carol's term concluded in November 2024, we are immensely grateful for her lasting contributions.

## ASA Board Members



**Carol Fulp**  
Vice Chair, ASA Board of Directors  
Founder and CEO, Fulp  
Diversity Consultant



**Alex Rappaport**  
Entrepreneur; Founder and former  
CEO, Flocabulary



**Dr. Carla Thompson-Payton**  
VP for Program Strategy,  
W.K. Kellogg Foundation



**Chike Aguh**  
Senior Advisor at Harvard's Project  
on Workforce and Executive  
Advisor at Accenture



**Daniel Acheampong**  
Co-Founder and General Partner,  
Visible Hands VC



**J.D. LaRock**  
CEO, Network for Teaching  
Entrepreneurship (NFTE)



**Ken Jones**  
SVP and COO, John D. &  
Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation



**Margaret Ng**  
Head of Production, Riot Games



**Stephanie Crimmins**  
SVP, Managing Director,  
Fidelity Investments



**Thomas R. Graf**  
Executive Director, Massachusetts  
Educational Financing Authority

# Guiding Every Action We Take



## Our Vision

We envision a world in which all students have opportunity and access to career-readiness learning, starting in middle school, so they will be equipped to make informed, confident decisions about their future.

## Our Mission

ASA is changing the way kids learn about careers and prepare for their futures through equitable access to career-readiness information and experiences.

We help middle and high school students to know themselves—their strengths and their interests—and understand their education and career options so that they can make informed decisions. ASA is fostering a generation of confident, crisis-proof young people who are ready for whatever path comes next after high school.

## Our Strategy

ASA fulfills its mission through **free digital-first direct experiences, philanthropy, advocacy, thought leadership, groundbreaking research, and impact investing.**

## Our Commitment

*A message from ASA's Chief People Officer, Angie Castera*

As we move into 2025, ASA remains dedicated to creating opportunities that empower all young people in their career exploration journeys. We recognize the importance of understanding and addressing the unique challenges faced by students from various backgrounds and experiences, ensuring that our work reflects their needs and aspirations.

Over the past year, we have taken deliberate steps to expand our impact, particularly in historically underserved communities. This includes supporting students in rural areas and Indigenous communities, young people from immigrant families, students with disabilities, and English-language learners. These efforts are part of our five-year strategic plan to reach four million of these learners—an ambitious vision that continues to guide our work.

In 2024, we took a significant step in our organizational evolution by refreshing our values. Through months of collaboration with staff at all levels, we identified Belonging, Innovation, Growth, and Courage as the principles that shape our culture and guide our decisions. This collaborative process underscored the importance of centering our people—the very heart of ASA—in the work we do.

Our efforts have been recognized on a national stage, as ASA was honored with a Bronze Anthem Award for Employee Retention Initiatives in Attracting, Developing, and Retaining Best-in-Class Talent. This recognition reflects our people-first approach and celebrates the commitment and contributions of our employees.

As we look ahead, we are excited about the horizon before us—where intentional focus, shared understanding, and continuous learning propel us forward. Together, we are shaping a future where every young person has access to meaningful career exploration opportunities.



## Part Three

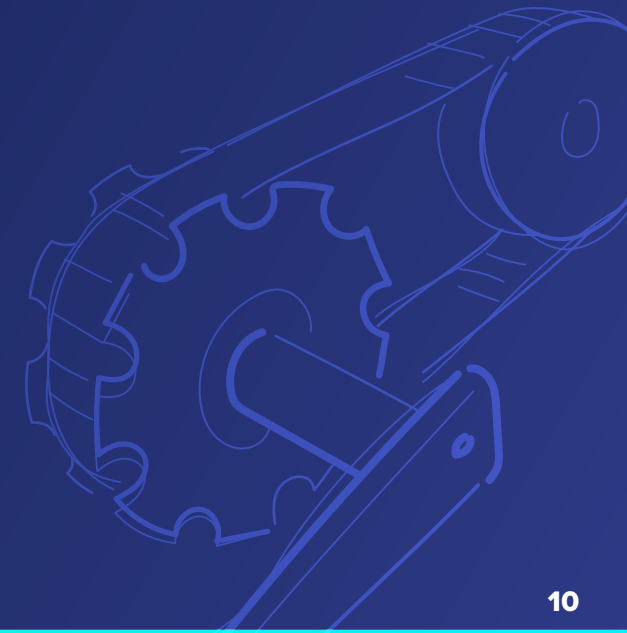
# Deepening Our Impact

## Helping Over 15 Million Kids Discover Their Tomorrows

For a young person, finding tomorrow requires having opportunity and access to career-readiness learning tools, resources, and opportunities—both in and out of the classroom. To increase access for as many students as possible, ASA continued its three-pronged approach of: (1) expanding our own ecosystem of free, **digital experiences**, (2) using the financial might of our **impact investing** initiative to fuel innovation in the space, and (3) awarding **philanthropic grants** to organizations scaling new approaches to career-readiness learning solutions.

Through this approach, we were able to deepen our impact, reaching **15 million** students with the resources they need to learn about careers and prepare for their futures.

**Now, let's explore the progress we've made in each category.**



# Digital Experiences

Through our digital ecosystem of free career exploration and experimentation experiences, ASA directly engages with kids and empowers them to see their futures more clearly. Starting in middle school, students can explore careers through experiences like the Future Network and Futurescape®. Then, as they continue on their journey through high school, they can build career-ready skills and experiment with fields of interest using Next Voice™ and EvolveMe®.

Last year (2024) marked the first full year where all of these experiences were available to students. To maximize our reach and impact, we leveraged new technologies like A.I., machine learning, and predictive analytics to improve the efficiency of our direct-to-kid marketing efforts, while also continuing to optimize the user experience within the platforms themselves. These improvements led to a highly engaged user base, resulting in outcomes like an 81% task completion rate and an average task rating of 4.7 out of 5 from EvolveMe users.

Altogether, over **13 million** learners engaged with our ecosystem in 2024. Beyond the scale of our reach, we were also encouraged to find that our platforms were serving a wide range of students. This included those from historically underserved communities—with 55% of Futurescape users identifying as persons of color and 22% of EvolveMe users identifying as residents of a rural community. These outcomes continued to affirm our belief that a direct-to-kid strategy is crucial to helping today's learners prepare for tomorrow's careers.

## Future Network

An original video series that spotlights Gen Z as they explore and learn about different careers directly from professionals.

## Futurescape

A personalized career exploration tool that helps kids find and learn about career paths matched to their personality and interests.

## EvolveMe

A skill-building and career experimentation platform that incentivizes students to take the next step on their journey.

## Next Voice

A digital suite of resources that help kids develop an ability to self-advocate through the lens of social issues they care about.

**“What we’ve been seeing for years now is that these platforms really are helping kids find the answer to one of life’s most critical questions: what do I want to do after high school?”**

*Clay Colarusso,  
Chief Marketing Officer  
and Senior Vice President  
of Digital Strategy at ASA*



# Digital Experiences

## Elevating EvolveMe Through Partnerships

**Launched in 2023**, EvolveMe incentivizes students to learn career-ready skills and try on career paths by completing tasks in exchange for rewards from their favorite brands. To offer a wide range of experiences, ASA partners with other EdTech innovators to offer their solutions as free tasks on the platform. In 2024, we continued to expand the number of partnerships and tasks available—now reaching 57 partnerships and 185 tasks—while also working with our partners to optimize their offerings based on user engagement and feedback. [Explore some of our EvolveMe partnerships below:](#)

### DeBruce Foundation

The DeBruce Foundation (DBF) offers its free career assessment tool, the Agile Work Profiler (AWP), on EvolveMe, which gives students a ranked set of skills, along with interactive experiences that use DBF’s related digital career tools. Through these tools, students can better explore the careers that interest them and fit their skillset, see education requirements, learn about average pay, and discover other careers that fit their unique strengths. Learn more about our partnership with DBF in this [EvolveMe Case Study: How ASA and DeBruce Foundation are Helping Teens Build Career Confidence.](#)

### Skillsline & IBM SkillsBuild

In 2023, Skillsline brought its digital micro-lessons to EvolveMe, which teach kids the soft, human skills they’ll need to succeed in any career—from stress management to active listening.

**“Using EvolveMe had a significant impact on me! It expanded my knowledge, boosted my confidence, and inspired me to pursue my passions. I feel more motivated and empowered to achieve my goals.”**

*EvolveMe User, 15 years old*

In 2024, with the knowledge that a marriage of durable human skills and strong technical skills is what many employers seek now and in the future, ASA partnered with IBM SkillsBuild to bring their tech-based skill-building content to the Skillsline platform. This allowed for easy integration into EvolveMe through Skillsline’s existing infrastructure, providing both the technical and human-centered skills together in an experience that over 30,000 kids already love.

### Worktour

ASA partnered with Worktour to bring their immersive virtual experiences of real workplaces to EvolveMe. Accessible on mobile devices without the need for V.R. equipment, students can explore

360-degree virtual environments, discover in-demand jobs, and engage with career resources tailored for grades 5-14, making career education more engaging and effective. Learn more about our partnership with Worktour in this [EvolveMe Case Study: How ASA and Worktour are Empowering Teen Skill-Building and Career Experimentation.](#)



## Awards & Recognition

In 2024, ASA received multiple recognitions for its suite of digital experiences. ASA earned the distinction of Webby Honoree, with EvolveMe, Futurescape, and Next Voice being recognized for Best User Interface, Websites and Mobile Sites, in the 28th annual [Webby Awards](#)—the leading international awards organization honoring excellence on the Internet. Organized by the Webby Awards, the [Anthem Awards](#)—the largest and most comprehensive social impact award—also recognized ASA with the Gold medal in the “education platform” category for EvolveMe. Additionally, EvolveMe placed as a Finalist in the 2024 [EdTech Digest Cool Tool Awards](#)—the world’s largest awards program dedicated to recognizing outstanding contributions in transforming education through technology.

# Impact Investing

**I**mpact investing is another key way that ASA helps to fuel a vibrant ecosystem of solutions—in addition to our own—that can help millions of students plan and prepare for their futures starting today. In 2022, we announced the launch of this initiative with the creation of a **\$125 million Strategic Impact Fund**. Our goal was to use this capital, over the following four years, to invest in established, mission-aligned third-party funds and companies innovating in our key focus areas of **career-focused education, intentional postsecondary pathways, and workforce development**.

In 2024, we took this a step further and announced our intention to invest **an additional \$25 million in early-stage companies, first-time fund managers, and emerging entrepreneurs** (working in the same key focus areas). Using this new funding in addition to capital from the original Strategic Impact Fund, ASA was able to invest over \$24.75 million in four funds and seven direct investments throughout the year. **With every investment, our strategy revolves around these three core principles:**

- 1. Leverage ASA's financial resources to support funds and companies providing new or enhanced opportunities to change the way kids learn about careers and prepare for their futures.**
- 2. Make consistent investments towards our \$150 million goal that reaffirm our commitment to this work.**
- 3. Generate income that grows our assets while supporting mission-oriented activities with scalable impact.**

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**“Many students are choosing paths outside college, and many employers are prioritizing skills over degrees. So at ASA, we’re investing in solutions to prepare kids for that skills-based tomorrow, delivering both meaningful impact and strong returns.”**

*Rilwan Meeran, Vice President of Mission Impact Investing*

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To date, our total investment now reaches \$69.9 million—spread across 10 funds and nine portfolio companies. Over the last two years, this work propelled ASA into becoming a highly respected and sought-after investor in the education sector. We continue to be inspired by the reaction from the marketplace and remain actively engaged with its members—hosting panels and sessions at multiple industry events throughout 2024.



# Impact Investing

## Direct Investments

While investing in third-party funds enables us to drive innovation across the education space, we reserve direct investments for companies where we believe can make a deeper impact by providing strategic guidance. [Here is a closer look at some of our direct investments from 2024:](#)

### Skillful.ly

Skillful.ly has a clear and ambitious vision: to disrupt the traditional, resume-based hiring process that it saw as unfair, outdated, and deeply broken for a large swathe of the future workforce. Skillful.ly fills this gap by building tools that drive skills-based hiring and provide a platform for students and learners to explore career pathways and prepare for workplace challenges through skills-based learning and virtual reality simulations.

### Making Space

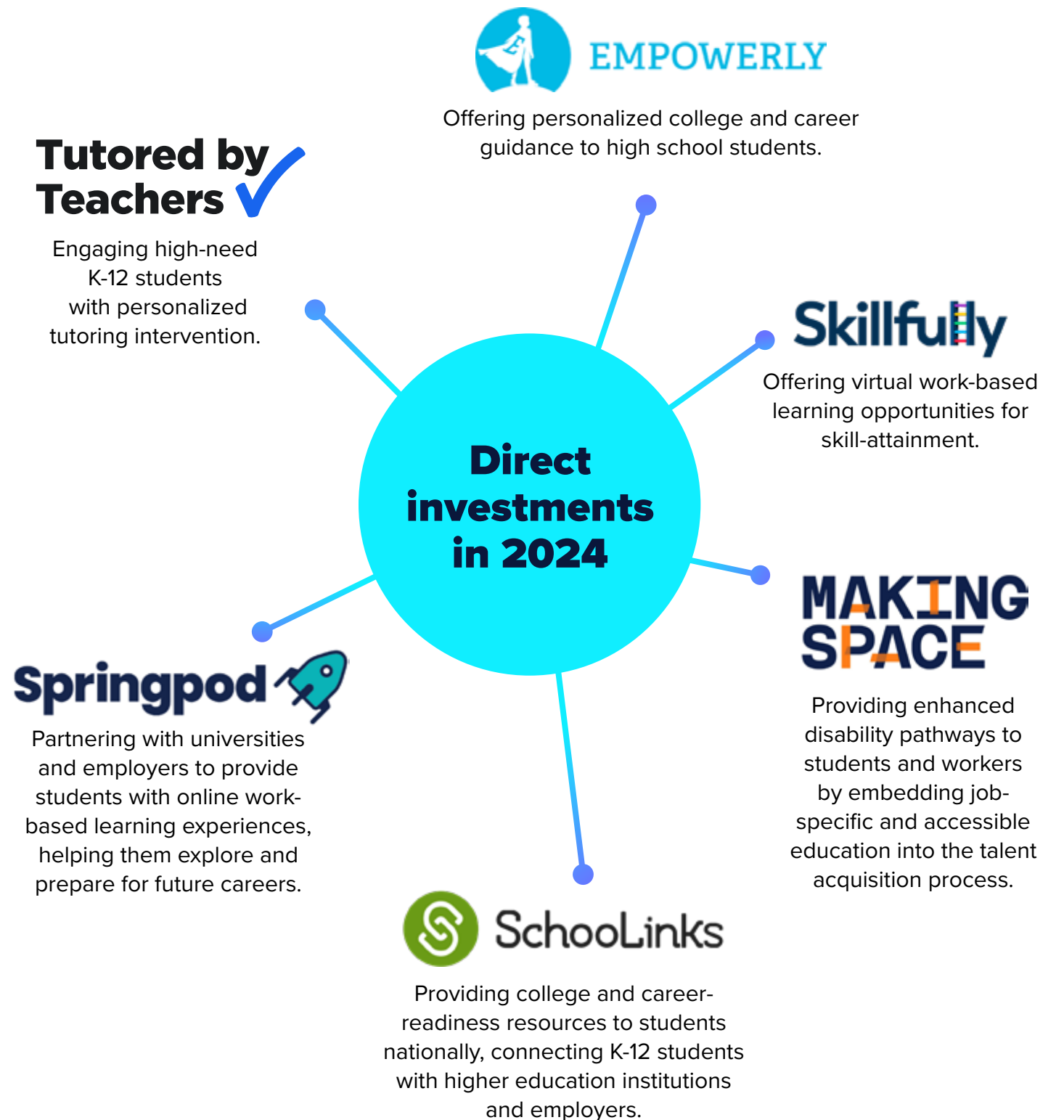
Making Space was established from its founders' lived experiences as disabled workers struggling to find accessible pathways to education and employment. Making Space bridges this gap by embedding job-specific and accessible education into the talent acquisition process. This approach unlocks productivity and offers fast payback and clear ROI for enterprise clients, while providing increased access to higher-quality jobs and a competitive advantage for disabled workers.

**“This investment is a pivotal moment for us. The demand for our virtual work experiences has grown significantly, and ASA's expertise will enable us to deliver our programs to U.S. students on a much larger scale. We look forward to leveraging their leadership in K-12 career readiness as we continue to grow.”**

*Sam Hyams, CEO at Springpod*

### Springpod

Springpod, originally a U.K. company, partners with universities and employers to provide students with free access to online work-based learning experiences, helping them explore and prepare for future careers. ASA's strategic investment will fuel Springpod's U.S. expansion, positioning it to support American students and young people through its innovative digital offerings. As part of this growth, Springpod has officially changed its legal domicile, establishing itself as a U.S. company.

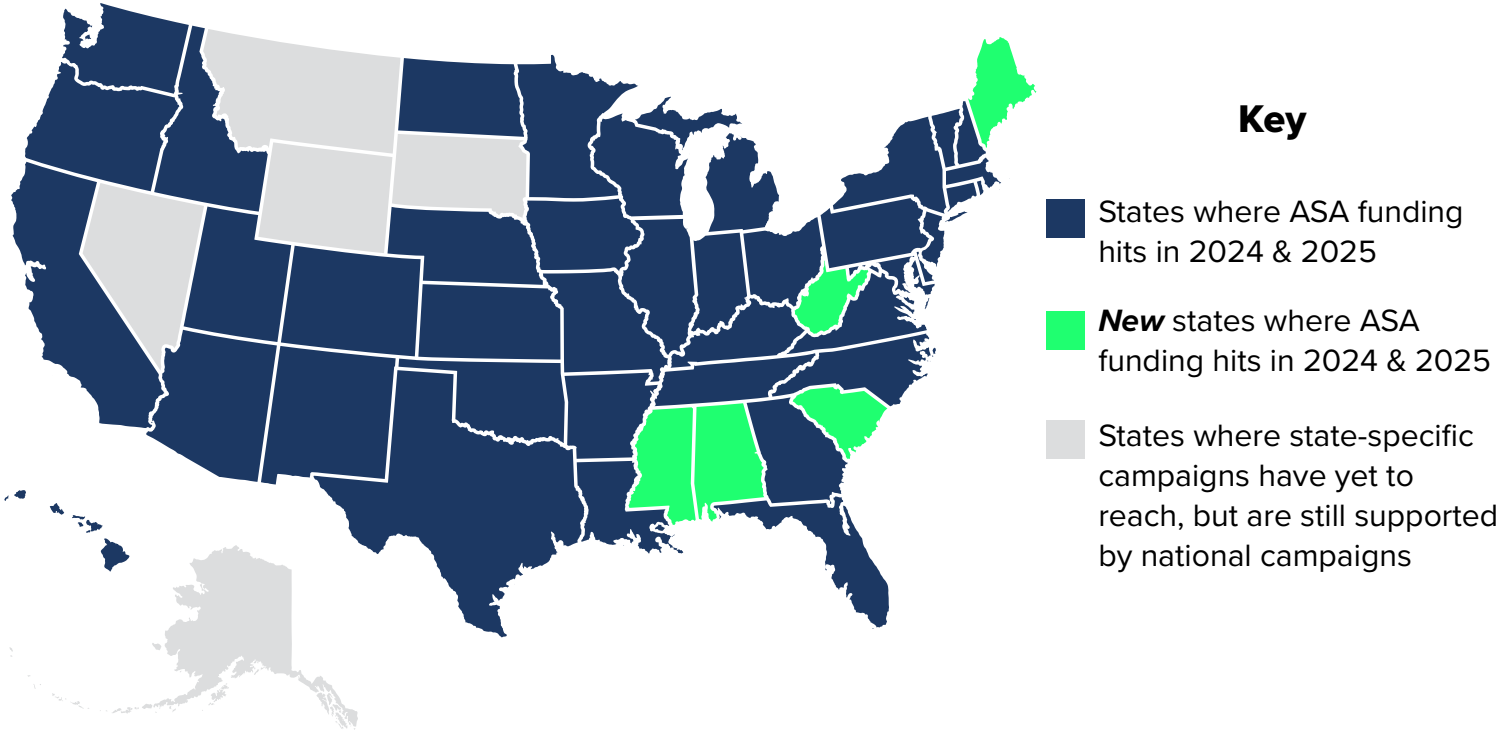


# Corporate Social Responsibility

**W**e use our philanthropy work as a critical testing ground to explore and scale promising new ideas and programs. Through it, we are able to gain valuable insight on what works best for students, which in turn, allows us to fuel innovation, expand opportunity, elevate voices, and inform needed policy change. In 2024, **ASA awarded \$10.46 million in grants to 25 organizations, and grew ASA’s philanthropic reach to 45 states.** ASA also leveraged this funding to create greater opportunity for underserved youth, including students with disabilities and those in rural communities.

These efforts allowed approximately **250,000 learners** to participate in career exploration and experimentation—and navigate a diversity of postsecondary education pathways. Additionally, we were able to use our funding to affect systems change and expand career-connected learning experiences to industries ASA has not historically reached, including: Advanced Manufacturing, Fisheries, Healthcare, and Social Impact. Together, the efforts we funded are driving improved career outcomes and broader economic opportunities for young people nationwide.

## States Impacted By ASA Funding in 2024



**“Support from ASA allowed the CAPS Network to accelerate our mission in profound ways. Through the launch of the Experience.Work website, we’ve been able to showcase the transformative power of profession-based learning on a national stage. Together, we are creating opportunities that inspire and empower the next generation.”**

*Corey Mohn, President and Executive Director at CAPS Network*

## Philanthropic Highlights

Over the past year, we have been inspired to see many of our grantees realize positive outcomes as a direct result of our support. **Here are some highlights:**

### ConnectED

ConnectED: The National Center for College and Career established the New Mexico Four Corners College and Career Pathways Partnership. The initiative’s goal is to build a system of regional college and career pathways that will prepare young people for the economic transition in the region as it shifts from decades of dependence on fossil fuels to a greener economy. ConnectED received funding in 2023 to continue these efforts, and in 2024, over 12,000 students in the district had access to business and entrepreneurship programs—with an engineering program for middle school students being rolled out in early 2025. While it is still early in the program’s development, they are already seeing an impressive impact on student engagement, with positive growth in graduation rates and

one school seeing a 15% drop in chronic absenteeism. Additionally, students from all eight high schools in the district can now enroll in dual credit programs—with one school seeing a 36% increase in enrollment in dual credit programs.

### CAPS Network

The CAPS Network, an international organization serving 15,000 students annually, focuses on profession-based learning to bridge the gap from education to employment. In 2023, ASA supported a storytelling campaign highlighting why and how industry leaders should be engaging directly with high school students. Through this partnership, ASA was able to expand industry awareness, understanding, and implementation of profession-based learning experiences for young people. In 2024, ASA continued support for the CAPS Network, helping to fund the development of the CAPS Middle School initiative over the next three years, which will foster profession-based experiences for young learners.

# Corporate Social Responsibility

## New Milestones With Catalyze

Since 2021, ASA has worked in partnership with a number of national philanthropic organizations to fund Catalyze and its Catalyze Challenge. Over the last three years Catalyze has been jumpstarting innovations in career-connected learning, working to ensure learners ages 11-22 have access to transformative solutions that allow them to discover their aptitudes and purpose, leading them to rewarding careers.

To-date, Catalyze has awarded more than \$14 million to over 60 organizations through national and regional challenges. The organizations have created a positive impact on more than 65,000 learners—with over 70% of them saying they feel these experiences enabled them to pursue their career goals. Moreover, for the \$6.5 million ASA contributed to the challenge, Catalyze grantees have been able to leverage \$62.7 million in additional funding from other organizations—achieving one of our key goals for our philanthropic work: driving others to invest in innovative career-connected learning solutions. The next round of winners for round four of the Catalyze Challenge will be announced in early 2025.

## America Succeeds

America Succeeds' mission is to engage business leaders in modernizing education systems to drive opportunity for all. They believe durable skills are a foundational component of creating new pathways that prepare every student for productive citizenship, high-wage employment, economic mobility, and a purpose-driven life. They received ASA funding to support the development of a framework for embedding durable skills into curriculum and career-readiness programs. This framework has fundamentally shifted the narrative around equipping young people with in-demand, employability skills. It has been downloaded over 1,300 times by educators, state leaders, curriculum providers, and colleges and universities—the vast majority of whom want to integrate it into their classrooms or create products for upskilling and training.

## GPS Education Partners

GPS Education Partners (GPS Ed) is a technical expert in building high quality-work based learning across the Midwest and in other high demand areas. GPS Ed received a 3-year grant beginning in 2023 from ASA to identify, secure, and launch a regional career-readiness and work-based learning ecosystem that engages a collection of high schools, colleges, and communities to expand existing programs. In 2024, ASA supported the continued expansion of work within DuPage County, IL and Hennepin County, MN.

**“Our philanthropic work is one area where you can really see our mission in action. You can see the impact in schools and communities, where programs we fund are finding creative ways to provide hands-on experiences critical to long-term success.”**

*Julie Lammers, SVP of Advocacy and Corporate Social Responsibility*



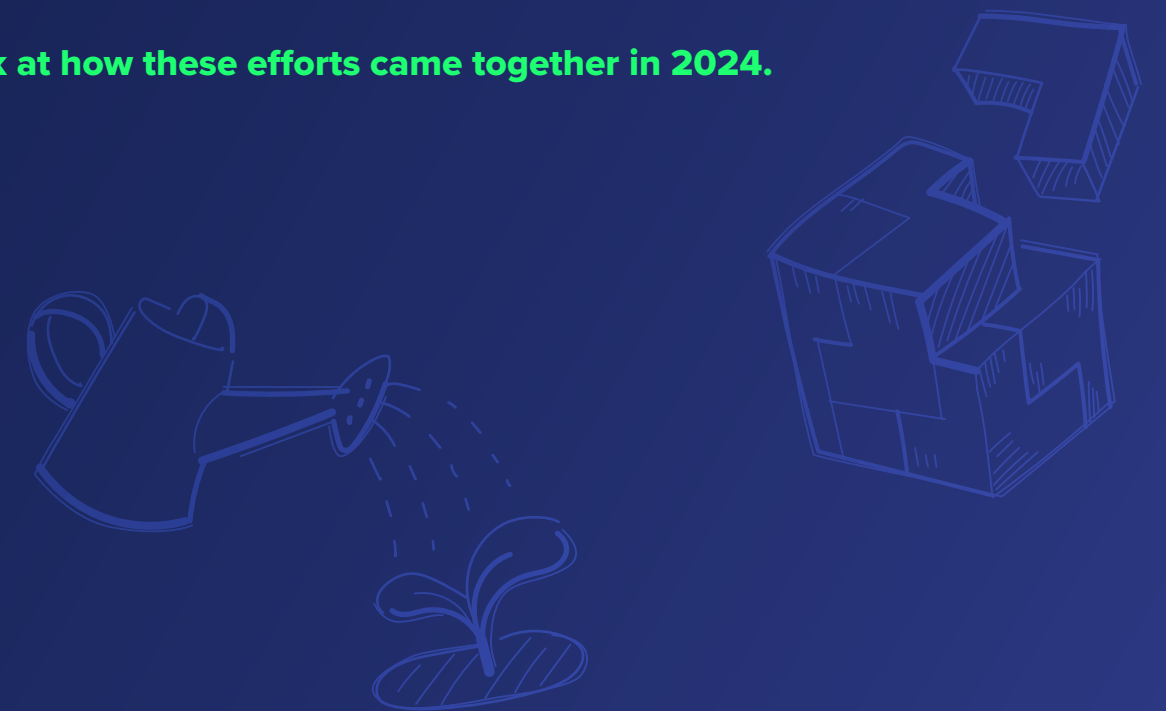


## Part Four

# Building Relationships for Change

To shape a better education-to-workforce system, ASA is constantly working to deeply understand the issues young people face. In 2024, we continued our commitment to rigorous research, exploring both large-scale quantitative projects and qualitative studies. This approach allows us to identify gaps and promising practices within the education-to-workforce pipeline, ensuring our efforts are aligned with what students truly need. What we learn guides the conversations, content, ideas, and resources we put forward as a thought leader and advocate to **change public opinion, build coalitions of support, and influence public policy and legislation.**

**Here is a look at how these efforts came together in 2024.**



# Research, Thought Leadership, and Advocacy

## Spreading Our Message

To influence the national discussion about how to best prepare students for successful futures, we shared research-backed learnings, solutions, and viewpoints online, in national publications and media, and at career education events across the country throughout 2024. This resulted in earned media coverage from The New York Times, ESSENCE, Fortune, Forbes, The Wall Street Journal, Medium/Authority Magazine, Newsweek, MSN, and more. Take a closer look at some of the ways we engaged throughout the year, below:

**Garnered**

**5.6B**

earned and paid  
media impressions

**Earned**

**28M**

social media  
impressions

**Created**

**12**

national campaigns  
with over 200 pieces  
of original content

**Engaged**

**>10,000**

participants at  
multiple industry  
events

## A New Study on Middle School Career Exploration

In March 2024, ASA and Education Strategy Group released [Extending the Runway: A 50-State Analysis of Middle School Career Exploration](#), a report examining state efforts to support middle school career exploration. This analysis, backed by student and expert interviews, highlights the progress made and the need for deeper commitments from states to collect data, ensure accountability, and provide hands-on career experiences that engage students. While 73% of states recognize the value of early career exploration, few have formalized these practices in accountability systems or developed the infrastructure to make them impactful. This report encourages states to adopt a more unified, data-driven approach, creating stronger pathways for students to explore careers early and build confidence in their choices for the future. Noteworthy media placements include [Forbes](#) and the [Education Commission of the States Blog](#).

## Exploring How and Why Employers Should Support Career Experimentation

In 2024, ASA released two reports to guide employers in offering meaningful work-based learning experiences that build essential skills for middle and high school students. [Reimagining Work-Based Learning to Equip Youth with Durable Social-Emotional Skills](#) showcases organizations integrating social-emotional skill-building and offers valuable insights for employers eager to create or enhance work-based learning programs. [Building Bridges Between Education and Industry: Youth Work-Based Learning as Talent Development Strategy](#) shares findings from a national survey of businesses, underscoring the benefits of youth talent development and presenting actionable solutions to common challenges. Together, these reports emphasize the power of career experimentation and preparing young people with skills for life after high school. Media placements include [ESSENCE](#) and [HR Dive](#).

**“The more we have these conversations about the paths available to students and things they’ll need to find and prepare for them, the more people become aware, want to be involved, and want to take action. Together, the work we’re doing is opening up, and showing a world of possibilities to every kid in America who may not be able to see them on their own.”**

*Judy Goldstein, SVP of Marketing and Communications*

## Advocating for Stronger Accountability Systems in K-12

For too long, K-12 systems have relied on college acceptance rates as the measure of accountability. In 2024, ASA partnered with Education Strategy Group to release [Measurement for Mobility: How U.S. States Can Use Data to Incentivize Postsecondary and Workforce Success in Public Education](#), a report that urges states to rethink how they measure student outcomes to prioritize long-term success. The research highlights significant gaps in tracking how well K-12 and higher education systems prepare students for careers, with few states incorporating workforce outcomes into accountability or funding. Using the report’s findings and recommendations, ASA called on policymakers to adopt metrics that reflect economic mobility and career readiness, ensuring all students, especially those from underserved communities, can achieve meaningful postsecondary and workforce success. Media placements include [Forbes](#) and [The 74](#).

# Research, Thought Leadership, and Advocacy

## Uncovering Paths to Success Without a Degree

ASA partnered with the Burning Glass Institute in 2024 to explore how millions of workers without college degrees build successful careers, uncovering critical insights about the entry-level jobs that set them on paths to economic mobility. The resulting report, [Launchpad Jobs: Achieving Career and Economic Success Without a Degree](#), reveals that while almost one in five nondegree workers out-earn the median college graduate, students often lack guidance on which roles—or "launchpad jobs"—offer long-term opportunities. These jobs provide good pay, benefits, and advancement potential, yet fewer than 10% of 18-year-olds are employed in them. The report provides key recommendations for students who seek to enter the workforce after high school and are in need of different career planning support from those who are degree bound—and was covered by [The New York Times](#), [Newsweek](#), [Forbes](#), and [MSN.com](#) and other publications, reaching a potential global audience of over 700 million readers. Additionally, On the House Floor, Education and the Workforce Committee Chairwoman Virginia Foxx (R-NC) [highlighted](#) "launchpad jobs," which are setting students up for career success without requiring a baccalaureate degree.



## Youth Career Readiness: The One Question Podcast

Launched in the fall of 2024, Youth Career Readiness: The One-Question Podcast is a new series hosted by ASA President and CEO, Jean Eddy, along with author and educator Michael B. Horn. Every month, the two sit down with celebrities and notable luminaries—from backgrounds in entertainment, arts, sports, and education—to discuss how they navigated a path to career success, things they wish they had known, and advice they would offer to middle and high schoolers about careers.

The series is designed for all caring adults interested in learning how they can help the kids and teens in their lives learn about careers based on their strengths and interests. Since launch, the first three episodes have received over 100,000 views along with 8.6 million impressions on social media. [Check out the first few episodes here](#), with guests including Academy and Grammy Award winning artist, Common; actress, author, Tanya Wright; and author, and CEO of ParentData, Emily Oster.





# Partnerships for Impact

**I**n 2024, ASA made or expanded several notable strategic partnerships to support its research, thought leadership, and advocacy work. In building these collaborations, we look for strategically aligned, respected partners who can help us broaden our impact—by expanding our research efforts, extending our content offerings, and reaching new audiences. **Here are some of the key partnerships we made in 2024:**

## Tackling Career Navigation With JFF

Over the past three years, ASA and Jobs for the Future (JFF) have worked together to expand awareness and understanding of nondegree pathways, publishing multiple studies including our latest, [Beyond Degrees](#)—which earned ASA a Silver medal from the Anthem Awards in the “education campaign nonprofit” category. In 2024, we expanded this partnership with the launch of the ASA Center for Career Navigation. This collaborative effort with JFF will help young people, ages 16-24, confidently find, evaluate, fund, and pursue pathways to fulfilling careers without a degree requirement. With a \$25 million investment, it will also fuel the creation of a **new free digital platform**—more than a point solution, this first-of-its-kind, comprehensive experience will be dedicated to helping students navigate non-degree pathways. By 2030, ASA and JFF aim to empower 20 million young people with this guidance, creating meaningful postsecondary educational paths to employment and career success.

## Exploring Careers With Roadtrip Nation

For more than 20 years, Roadtrip Nation (RTN) has empowered individuals to define their own roads, sending groups on cross-country “road trips” to capture the stories of those who have followed their interests to rewarding careers. In 2024, ASA partnered with RTN to create new content tailored for middle schoolers, where young adults will meet with leaders who found success through nontraditional paths, showing students there is more than one road to success. Through the partnership, RTN will produce 40 video segments and a one-hour documentary in 2025—with the potential to reach 50 million households on public television. Additionally, ASA is providing funding to help RTN develop a new virtual experience. Using generative A.I. and RTN’s Interview Archive of over 12,000 videos, the experience will give students the ability to set out on their own virtual “road trip,” and explore and experiment with thousands of careers.

## Inspiring Underserved Youth With FREE TO DREAM

ASA joined forces in 2024 with the nonprofit organization FREE TO DREAM and its “I AM FREE TO DREAM” initiative—led by acclaimed artist and activist Common—to open doors to career exploration and skill-building for systems-involved and opportunity youth. With millions of young people facing barriers to education and employment, this partnership is dedicated to creating accessible career-readiness resources that empower youth to explore their aspirations, foster their talents, and build confidence to pursue meaningful futures.

Announced at the ASU+GSV Summit, this collaboration underscores ASA’s commitment to equipping underrepresented young people with the tools to dream big and shape their own paths forward. Through this initiative, ASA and FREE TO DREAM are hosting regional events, sharing creative content, and providing digital resources for schools, teachers, and community partners to engage youth across the country in envisioning and achieving their goals. The campaign’s first student-centered event took place at Art in Motion (AIM) School in Chicago, where young people from the city’s South Side gathered to share and celebrate their ambitions.



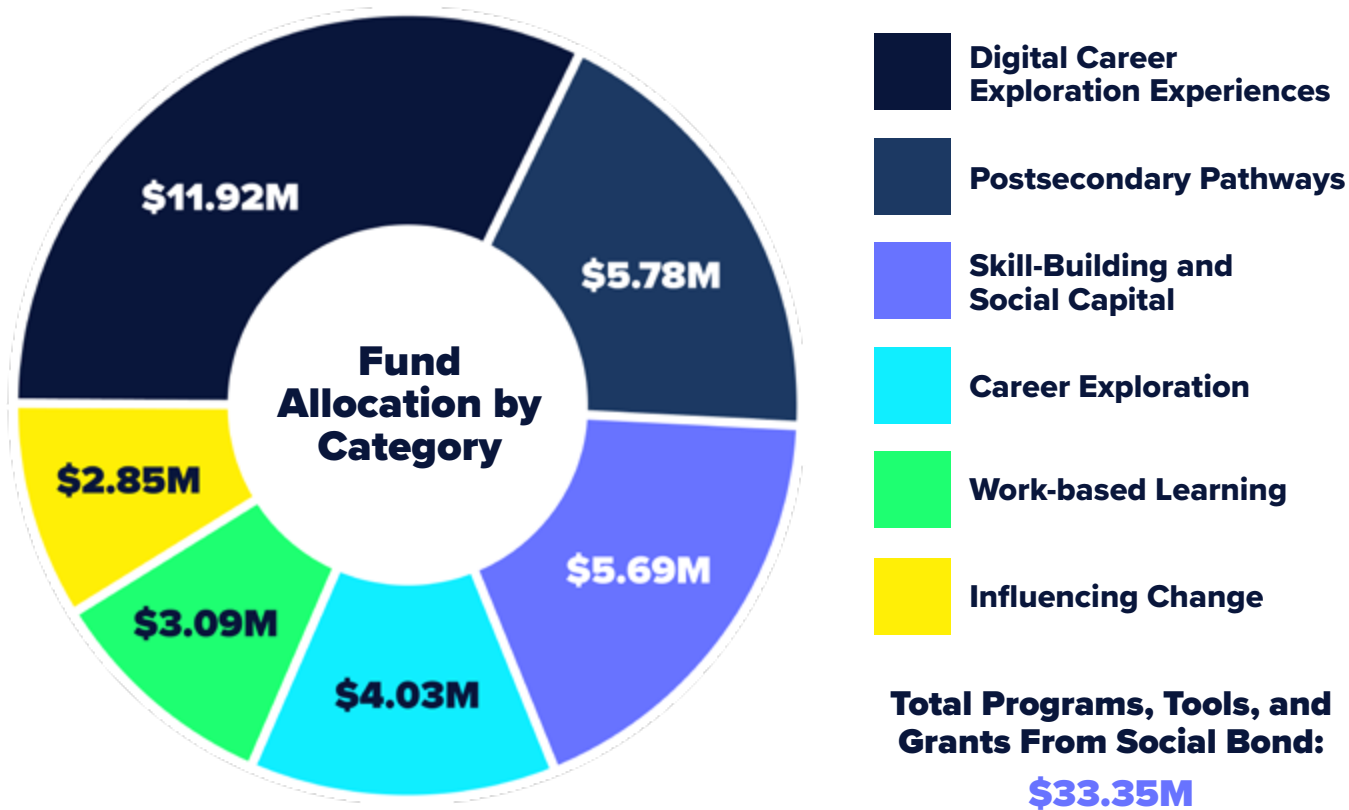
**“We are very proud to partner with American Student Assistance, a leader in the youth career-readiness space, because we share a mission—we want to let young people know that they have permission to dream. Together with ASA, we will amplify the dreams of this next generation.”**

*Common, Academy and Grammy Award winning artist, actor, and activist*

# Funding Our Mission: 2024 Financial Highlights

## Social Impact Bond

In 2021, ASA secured a \$100 million social bond to deepen our impact in helping students make informed education and career decisions. In 2024, ASA continued to use the bond to greatly expand our digital, direct-to-kid career exploration experiences and expand availability of and access to high-quality, career-connected learning services. These efforts were centered on 6th-12th graders — with an emphasis on marginalized or economically disadvantaged communities, and students who have faced barriers to education success. ASA funds were allocated to programs that sought **wide-reaching change in six key areas**.



## 2024 Summary Financial Statement (In thousands)

	2024 (Unaudited)	2023 (Audited)
<b>Assets</b>		
Investments	\$1,045,121	\$969,679
Cash & Cash Equivalents	32,095	21,873
Receivables & Other	36,606	53,634
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$1,113,822</b>	<b>\$1,045,186</b>
<b>Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>		
Accounts Payable & Other Liabilities	\$28,253	\$31,923
Social Bond Payable	99,361	99,259
Net Assets	986,208	914,004
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	<b>\$1,113,822</b>	<b>\$1,045,186</b>
<b>Revenues</b>		
Revenues	\$52,841	\$58,669
Grants & Other	448	411
Net Investment Return	102,918	100,353
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>156,207</b>	<b>\$159,433</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Grants & Programs	\$25,078	11,651
Operating Expenses	58,083	52,387
Non-Recurring	842	992
<b>Total Grants &amp; Expenses</b>	<b>\$84,003</b>	<b>\$65,030</b>
Change in Net Assets	72,204	94,403
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	914,004	819,601
Net Assets, End of Year	\$986,208	\$914,004

*These financial statements represent unaudited data.*

# Tomorrow: Looking Ahead



**I**n her 2023 book, *Crisis-Proofing Today's Learners*, our President and CEO, Jean Eddy, wrote the following:

*By the time every American kid leaves school, their confidence should sound less like, "I have no path," or "I will stay on this path come hell or high water," and more like, "I am prepared to go after what I want out of life, and I have the skills to handle whatever happens next."*

These words distill how we at ASA think about the impact our work has on young people's lives. Our goal is not merely to get a kid to say "this is what I want to be when I grow up." It is, instead, to prepare them for their future, by helping them explore and experiment with multiple paths (with or without degree requirements) that fit their interests and strengths—while also giving them the flexible, durable skills they'll need to succeed in a rapidly changing world. This is what it truly means to help kids "find tomorrow, today."

The widespread, systemic progress we've seen in 2024 gives us hope that, despite lingering challenges and an often divided political landscape, a broad coalition of American educators, employers, policymakers, and parents are united in their pursuit to build a better system for America's students. For our part, we will continue to lead the charge—offering the deep research, bold ideas,

innovative solutions, and strong support needed to revolutionize the way all kids learn about careers and prepare for their futures. **Over the coming year, we will:**

### 1. Intentionally focus on learners in historically underserved communities.

We will work to engage young people who have historically lacked access to career-readiness resources and career-connected learning—including justice-involved youth, those of color, those living in rural areas and indigenous communities, those from immigrant families, and those who are English-language learners or have disabilities.

### 2. Drive deeper impact with learners.

Through our digital experiences, impact investing, philanthropic giving, and advocacy, we will seek out innovators and thought leaders offering best-in-class solutions—and partner with them to expand access across the U.S. to the services, resources, and experiences that can help students progress along their career-planning journeys and take meaningful action toward their future.

### 3. Build out our digital career navigation solution.

In partnership with Jobs for the Future, we will create a solution that empowers young people to confidently navigate

what comes after they graduate from high school; one that covers the full journey from awareness to attainment, prioritizes balanced outcomes and aligned incentives across stakeholders, and provides reliable, proprietary data.

### 4. Expand research to inform the field.

We will grow our efforts to understand which solutions and practices are most effective and needed to help middle and high school students explore and experiment with careers, acquire career-connected skills, and navigate diverse pathways after high school—through thought leadership and advocacy, we will use our findings to push the system forward and make lasting change.

### 5. Increase financial support for solutions-providers.

Our impact investing initiative will continue to fuel innovation by investing in more mission-aligned funds and companies developing career-readiness solutions—and we will continue to use grantmaking to test new ideas and concepts, while increasing support for the initiatives already making a tangible difference in kids' lives.

With the progress we've made in 2024 and our clear vision for the future, there's only one question that remains: **Why wait till tomorrow? Join us in our mission today.**





For more information, visit [www.asa.org/about](http://www.asa.org/about) or contact Judy Goldstein at [jgoldstein@asa.org](mailto:jgoldstein@asa.org)

