For 30 years now, The UCAP School has worked with the students at highest risk of dropping out - middle school students who are at risk of failing in traditional public schools.

These annual reports that we share each year have described a school that has transformed itself and education in general. We grew from a small experiment to a school that has been an educational lifeline to over 1,000 students. We moved from renting a small space to buying and then expanding our own facility during a time when capital needs did not receive state funding. Now our students have a gleaming school building and effective curriculum that demonstrates that they deserve our best efforts. In accomplishing all this, UCAP has proven that public schools can change the way they do business.

Teachers at UCAP developed a way for students to complete more than one grade in a year, and thereby make up for past mistakes. And even as enrollment doubled, we’ve kept the student:staff ratio low. For years The UCAP School relied on each school district carving out tuition from their own budgets for the students they send us. Today we receive dedicated tuition from the state. In 2007 a separate non-profit entity, The Fund for UCAP, was created to raise money for the benefit of our students. The Fund’s efforts enable us to provide Beyond U programs for students afterschool, on weekends, during school vacations, and in the summers. The Fund for UCAP also led two successful capital campaigns to build our Annex and to replace our old windows.

As I retire in June, The UCAP School is preparing for a transition in leadership. Undoubtedly, even more change lies ahead, and there is always plenty more that we can do to make sure that under-served students are well-prepared for success in high school. With continued support from you and all our friends, The UCAP School will continue to grow stronger so that more students are provided with a real second chance to succeed.

Over the years, I have asked for your help many times, and you have responded more generously than I could have imagined. I thank you for all that you have done to benefit our students – and, even as I make way for a new school leader, I ask you to continue your commitment to our students, and to continue to invest in our mission.

Sincerely,

Robert DeBlois
Director, The UCAP School
A Letter from Our **Fund for UCAP Board Chair**

I am proud to serve as Chair of the **Fund for UCAP** Board of Directors. The Fund for UCAP was established to support the enhancement of The UCAP School’s intensive and personalized learning environment with **Beyond U** programs and to provide for capital needs. **Beyond U** programs are an essential part of UCAP’s mission to have a positive impact on the lives of young urban students who are having serious difficulties in school and are at risk of dropping out.

Like me, many of you have had the benefit of preparation for a successful life with experiences that supplemented and reinforced classroom activities and the school day. UCAP’s students have not had opportunities like this prior to enrolling in this unique school. The dozens of diverse programs offered through Beyond U provide our students with enriching experiences after school, on the weekends and throughout the summer. Students discover new ideas and opportunities, develop social skills, and build self-confidence. Having these opportunities tips the scale toward success by expanding their horizons and connecting their learning to life.

These programs are not funded by our public school district partners. We depend on the generosity of our donors and partners – and you respond year after year. Please know that you are changing young lives and ultimately building a better future for all of us in Rhode Island.

**Beyond U** is just one component of the extraordinary and comprehensive approach that The UCAP School takes to educating urban students who face tremendous socio-economic challenges. Our approach also includes: early and intensive intervention; the opportunity for accelerated learning based on developing skills and meeting standards; personal attention to each student’s individualized needs; family engagement; highly trained and committed faculty and staff; well-equipped and maintained facilities that provide a learning environment students need and deserve; and an emphasis on building self-esteem, character, confidence and a sense of personal potential. All of these elements have created a place defined by possibilities rather than limitations.

This special place was shaped by the vision, commitment, tenacity and tireless efforts of one person – **Rob DeBlois**. From its inception, and throughout its 30 year history, Rob has been UCAP’s heart and soul. He has touched the lives of hundreds of students over the years and probably remembers them all, because that is how much he cares. And there is little doubt they remember him – alumni are always dropping by, happy to have a chance to acknowledge the role Rob and UCAP played in their success.

Rob will retire at the end of the current school year. He certainly will be missed. Yet he will leave us with the great gifts of a solid foundation: a proven approach to student success, and committed board members, educational and community leaders, funders, and faculty who embrace his vision. All will ensure that UCAP is there for students in need for many years to come.

To Rob we say thank you, job well done, and we will carry on in your spirit.

With deep appreciation,

**Gib Conover**
Board Chair, The Fund for UCAP
An Interview with Elisa Almonte, Director of Beyond U

Elisa Almonte has served UCAP students since 2007 as the Director for Beyond School Programs (Now Beyond U). She develops partnerships with community resources to provide UCAP students with enriched experiences.

Q. You have been at UCAP for over a decade, a significant commitment. Why is it important to you?
Our students are resilient and determined to become successful students. But they have faced barriers – not of their own making – to developing the skills they need for success in high school and in life. Most are at risk of dropping out of school. If they drop out, they face futures with limited potential and few opportunities.

I know from experience that we can help them rediscover their strengths. And so to me there is an element of basic fairness, of balancing the scale, and giving urban students what they need and deserve.

UCAP gives kids a second chance and a better chance. I can be a part of that and make a difference, and to me that is worthwhile. Who knows what gifts these young people will bring to our communities just given the opportunity?

Q. Where did the name, “Beyond U,” come from?
That’s a great question. Actually the students did some brainstorming and came up with the name themselves. It reflects the academic learning that takes place at UCAP, but then the enrichment of real-life activities – to go beyond text books, classrooms and the school day and boost the learning experience. It also speaks to extending their learning and experiences beyond what they may have expected of themselves, “Beyond YOU.”

Q. Why is Beyond U programming important?
The research is definitive – students who participate in after- and “beyond-” school programs show greater improvement in attendance and academic growth than those who do not. They form better relationships with teachers, improve their test scores and gain social and emotional growth.

Our students have had limited exposure to activities outside their own neighborhoods. We provide a chance to visit new places in Rhode Island and throughout New England and to learn new hobbies and skills.

Q. Are students gaining career exposure?
We have placed special emphasis on career development, to create an understanding of pathways to possibilities for the future. Our students often come from families with no experience with higher education and little awareness of 21st century knowledge-based careers. Beyond U exposes them to these careers and personal goal - setting.

Q. How many UCAP students participate in Beyond U?
About 120 of our 140 students will participate in one or more programs annually, and we strive to make that 100%.

Q. Why do you think Beyond U makes so much of a difference in the individual successes?
I value UCAP’s belief in the promise of each student and recognition that each has their own story. Each student is unique and has their own way of engaging. We get to know each of them and respond with individualized attention and support that works.

Our students come from seven different elementary schools, so for many, it can be a daily struggle to adjust from the culture of their neighborhood schools to the culture we strive to create for them with our small size and individual focus. I grew up in the south side of Providence and I am a Latina, so they seem to be able to relate to me. I ease their way.

I have the opportunity to see them explore their interests, use their imaginations and creativity, and discover and experience things they often did not know even existed. I see their excitement. I see their growth.

Q. What are some examples of Beyond U programs and activities?
Through strong relationships with our community partners we provide our students with the highest quality of enrichment, STEM and athletic programs.

A few of our enrichment partnerships include hiking and bird watching with the Audubon Society, exploring artistic abilities and creativity at AS220, and partnering with Salve Regina University to write and produce plays.
Building a strong STEM educational foundation is essential to prepare our students for the 21st Century workplace. STEM skills ensure that our students are well-versed in math, science and technology. We collaborate with the Community Boating Center and Down City Design to include STEM education in our programs. Throughout the summer we offer camps in partnership with the Spirit Program and Save the Bay. Through Beyond U, they see how the scientific method can be applied to everyday life and real-world problem solving.

Our students are full of energy so we offer a variety of athletic activities for healthy lifestyles and building social skills and confidence, like climbing at Rock Spot, swimming at the Jewish Community Center, and improving their basketball game with One on One Basketball.

Q. Is there a reason for such a wide array of programs and activities?

Our personalized, student-focused approach involves engaging the students in determining their areas of interest and arranging for those experiences.

Then, we are determined to find programming areas that can expand on and enrich academic learning, build skills, and offer exposure to future career opportunities and related pathways. Thanks to community partnerships and generous donors, we are able to sustain these programs and develop the right avenues for our students.

Q. Are there new initiatives planned?

Our goal is to make UCAP a welcoming center for parents where they have learning opportunities for themselves, can develop skills to advocate for their children, and have many other opportunities for involvement in their children’s school community. Many of our parents work multiple jobs just to keep a roof over their heads and food on the table. Their former experience in their children’s school, especially the lack of school staff with whom they can communicate, make them less likely to think they have any place in their children’s school.

Parent engagement has always been a challenge and to address that challenge, we survey parents annually to determine their needs. Based on the results, we are now offering parent Citizenship classes to help them with the application process. We provide paperwork assistance, help with getting on-line and filling out forms, and accompany them to swearing-in ceremonies. This assistance has extended to helping some of our students as well, if and when their visas expire.

Q. Is there a particular moment that comes to mind when you said “YES, THIS IS WHAT IT’S ALL ABOUT!”

There have been so many moments. And they are all different depending on the student. A small step for one, that might not otherwise invite major attention, could be huge for that student. They are all different. It’s all relative. I can gather energy from all of them and that is what keeps me engaged as I gather energy from all of them and that is what keeps me engaged as they teach me about technology and new cultural phenomenon.

The overarching theme here is how we enable them to discover – uncover, really – their own potential. More than they ever thought possible is less than we have in mind for them!
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Two donors chose to remain anonymous

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In Memory of John Bell
Alfred & Maryanne Killilea

In Memory of Christopher Corkery
Neil & Maureen Corkery

“The overarching theme here is how we enable our students to discover – uncover, really – their own potential.”
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In Memory of James Phelan
Kathy Phelan

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$250,000+
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Haffnenreffer Family Fund & David & Susan Haffnenreffer

$100,000
Pacific Foundation

$50,000
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The UCAP School
Revenues $2,681,156
Expenses $2,593,071
Net $88,085

The Fund for UCAP
Revenues $301,872
Expenses $289,610
Net $12,262

The Fund for UCAP Realty
Revenues $579,517
Expenses $493,177
Net $86,340

FY 18 unaudited year end finances

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“UCAP gives kids a second chance and a better chance... Who knows what gifts these young people will bring to our communities just given the opportunity?”

– Elisa Almonte, Director of Beyond U