Now is the time for us to act boldly for our young people. To help students find value and meaning in their education, we must transform the models and methods of teaching that failed them in the first place.
Embarc aspires to break down barriers in our education system to create a more just, equitable, and anti-racist society. We do this by delivering a transformative experiential learning model to students, teachers, and whole schools. Through Embarc’s systems-changing model, we are transforming public education by proliferating the power of learning through real world experiences for every student.
Letter from our CEO

Friends,

Over the last decade, Embarc has seen first-hand the power of experiences in our young people’s lives. We’ve seen how learning through experiences can help young people heal from trauma, find a sense of belonging, and build strong relationships in and beyond their school.

In the last year, the nation at large has figured out what’s important for students and schools—and it’s what we already knew. For schools to become places of equity for all young people, we need experiential learning to be part of their schools and their lives.

As you’ll see in our first-ever Impact Report, we spent this year listening even more deeply to our communities—students, educators, alumni, families, and more—to understand their needs and respond swiftly. We transformed our programming for remote learning, dramatically expanded our emergency grants, built new partnerships with Black and brown-led community organizations, and re-imagined what equitable experiential learning could look like.

Now is the time for us to act boldly. To help students find value and meaning in their education, we must transform the models and methods of teaching that failed them in the first place. We know that Embarc is essential for the young people of color who are often locked out of impactful experience, and that’s why we are scaling our model. In partnership with the CPS Equity Office, we’re tripling the number of whole schools we serve to ensure that the young people most affected by the pandemic receive the support they deserve. Beginning this fall, we’ll serve over 4,000 students across Chicago. By 2025, we will reach more than 10,000 students, creating more than 60,000 experiences and 240,000 human to human connections each year.

None of this would be possible without your support. Thank you for your unending belief in our young people, our educators, and our cities. You are part of a broader movement to transform our education system and support future generations of young people. We are so grateful that you continue to partner with Embarc.

With hope,

Imran Khan
CEO and Co-Founder
Financials

Total Revenue
$2,532,090

- Individual: $777,722
- Corporate: $868,131
- Foundation: $632,788
- Government: $220,800
- Other: $32,650

Total Expenses
$1,927,402

- Program Services: $1,394,799
- Administrative: $155,738
- Fundraising: $376,865
Amidst the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, Embarc expanded to serve nearly 2,400 students in 20 high schools in the 2020-21 school year, including two new fully experiential schools—all in a virtual landscape, and all while continuing to keep our young people at the forefront of our work.
Rethinking what’s possible for our students

Embarc students, schools, and communities persevered through a challenging and unexpected year. With the COVID-19 pandemic’s disproportionate harm on communities of color and increased isolation, our work to keep young people connected through experiences and strong relationships became even more important.

We quickly transformed Embarc’s learning model for the new remote landscape. When so much felt unknown and chaotic, our team provided virtually-implementable curriculum and experiences (including collaborative social-emotional learning projects, in-class workshops, and individual coaching) with the goal of maintaining consistency in our students’ lives.

Embarc’s Programming team built a new portfolio of partners and facilitated 125 unique Virtual Experiences like improv, zine-making, podcasting, and music production that gave our young people an outlet to process their lives in and beyond the classroom.

Remote learning significantly altered the way we design and think about experiences. We have new understandings of how virtual learning can support and supplement our scaling efforts. We faced challenges head on and are hopeful that our students will benefit from how we’ve adapted and the lessons we’ve learned along the way.

Supporting teachers’ well-being

Remote learning compelled Embarc to take a calculated pause and listen to what our teachers really needed and wanted. This led to a significant increase in the time Experiential Coaches spent connecting, coaching, and reflecting with our educators.

Embarc supported 139 teachers this year. Our Coaches worked closely with Embarc teachers to create virtual classroom toolkits and facilitate professional development (PD) workshops. Remote learning allowed us to facilitate more workshops than previous years, covering topics like developmental relationships, creating reflection moments, self-care, and non-college postsecondary options for students.

Our teachers received nearly 2,000 hours of support from Embarc, but our work didn’t end there. Schools and teachers outside of Embarc requested our resources to help them through this incredibly difficult year.

We know our work is only effective if educators say it is. In survey feedback, 100% of teachers agreed that Embarc PD provided them with skills and tools that enhance their practice as educators. As we scale our whole school model, even more educators can access the tools they need to teach, connect, and grow.

“It was great to see Giavanni engage in the virtual personal journey. He was eager to ask questions and learn more about how others overcame struggles in their lives.”

DR. BERGMAN
Computer Science teacher, Englewood STEM High School
Senior year already contains many uncertainties and difficult decisions. The pandemic heightened these challenges, making Embarc’s postsecondary support even more impactful.

Embarc Postsecondary Success Coaches worked one-on-one with students and teachers to help young people identify the best postsecondary path for them. Our alumni interns launched monthly Zoom events for students and Embarc alumni to connect about what life after high school is really like and understand their wide support network. By August, over 40% of Embarc seniors solidified their postsecondary plans - outpacing both CPS as a whole and the individual schools we serve.

We also expanded our work to support schools not yet in Embarc’s direct network. Our team facilitated networking sessions, and supported CPS and other peer organizations’ events. We hosted 5 on-site college acceptance days, where our students received over $60,000 in scholarships.

Most excitingly, the Postsecondary Success team launched a new model of postsecondary support. We partnered with the Academy for Urban School Leadership network to improve postsecondary success and outcomes for their senior classes. At Phillips, Collins, and Orr high schools, Embarc provided curriculum, hosted mock interview days, and provided individual coaching to set seniors up for success. This new consultancy model will inform the way we approach increasing our impact.

**94%**

of seniors agreed that Embarc helped them understand that their voice matters and should be heard.

---

**DONOR SPOTLIGHT**

IMC helped launch Embarc’s first fully experiential school model at Englewood STEM High School through their bold and future-facing philanthropy.

“As a corporate partner, we’re impressed with how Embarc prepares students for college or careers. Like a lot of companies, we strive to make our workplace more inclusive of people with a diversity of backgrounds and lived experiences. Embarc guides young people to apply their skills and determination successfully at work and in the community.”

ADAM ARENTS
Program Officer, IMC Foundation
Supporting justice leaders

What could justice and equity look like in our schools? This question became one of Embarc’s north stars this year. 58% of Embarc students are Black. 32% are Latinx. 9% are Asian or mixed race. We know our relationships with these young people are a privilege. This year we recommitted to providing racially affirmative experiences directly in our schools and equipping the next generation of justice leaders with the experiences they need to dismantle the issues of racism, systemic oppression, and social justice. As a result, we launched the Next Gen Justice Leaders initiative.

“As a new experience partner, Embarc encouraged us to explore possibilities in programming that we - and they - hadn’t previously thought of or considered, all while taking time to collectively look inward and ask ourselves the deep questions about why we do this work.”

YAZMIN MCCAMEY
BAAM Yoga

The first step in launching Next Gen Justice Leaders was re-imagining what our community partnerships could be. We partnered with over 40 Black and brown-led organizations, including Assata’s Daughters, Good Kids Mad City, and The Silver Room. A critical part of this initiative is ensuring that Next Gen partners receive compensation for creating and facilitating experiences. Many of our new partners are small businesses or nonprofits, and our partnership should not come at the expense of those doing the good work.

With our partners, we designed new experiences and celebrated our work at a new kick-off event. Embarc focused on laying a strong foundation that will allow these partnerships to flourish next school year and beyond. This is just the beginning.

“With Embarc, students are opening their eyes to the wider world and finding a new place for themselves beyond their imagination. They become more dedicated to schoolwork and performance. We see a disproportionately high percentage of kids who graduate high school and go on to achieve.”

JOHN + CHRISTINE BAKALAR
Embarc Donors
Expanding student emergency funds

Postsecondary pathways became a national story as the pandemic complicated many young people of color’s post-graduation plans. Despite these challenges, Embarc students made steady progress toward their goals.

Embarc’s Student Emergency Funds grew out of extensive research showing that small grants can mean the difference between maintaining a postsecondary goal or abandoning it. During the 2020–21 school year, we expanded our Student Emergency Funds program to help alumni, current students, and their families navigate the financial challenges of the pandemic.

Embarc distributed nearly $150,000 in emergency funds to support our young people and their families. Funds were typically requested for things like textbooks, housing, food, medical needs, application fees, and tuition gaps. Our deep relationships with students post-high school meant that our team could connect individually with students and alumni to provide the emotional and financial support that they may not otherwise receive.

“I’m so grateful for Embarc’s emergency funds, without them I would have probably gone without eating some days and I wouldn’t have been able to buy my textbooks.”

FAMA C.
Embarc alum
Meeting the demand for Embarc at scale

At the start of the 2020-21 school year, CPS, Embarc, and our partners knew that student attendance would be one of the biggest challenges of remote learning. By spring, CPS saw a steep dip in attendance rate for Black and brown boys. They immediately began working to get students back in the virtual classroom and strategizing how to encourage engagement with the return of in-person learning. The CPS Equity Office identified Embarc as a solution to this challenge, and we were asked to significantly expand our reach.

The entire team collaborated to lay the groundwork for launching five new Embarc whole schools in the 2021-22 school year. With CPS, we identified these new schools as those that would benefit most from Embarc’s support to become a wall-to-wall experiential school.

We’ve been designing, refining, and expanding a model that provides schools, teachers, and administrators with support tailored to their culture and community. As we’ve seen at current whole schools Englewood STEM High School and Michele Clark High School, Embarc helps students feel more connected to their classmates and teachers. Professional development gives teachers and administrators the tools to create powerful learning experiences. Above all, it transforms schools into places of equity for our young people. By expanding to five new whole schools, Embarc will double our impact and serve 4,000 students next year.

“Embarc has helped us realize that we don’t have to wait for the world to be different, we have to situate experiences in a way that elevates young people’s brilliance. This is how we will impact history.”

DR. MAURICE R. SWINNEY
Interim Chief Education Officer,
Chicago Public Schools
Board + Staff

Board of Directors
Jim Suprenant  Board Chair
Senior Managing Partner, Guggenheim Partners
Alan Anderson  Assistant Vice President, University Partnerships, Emory University
David Allocco  Managing Director, PierceGray
Marlene V. Coulis  Marketing Strategy Consultant
Lynn Jerath  President & Founder, Citrine Investment Group
Tellef Lundevall  CEO & Founder, Accelerated Digital Media
Nelly Pitocco  Chief Revenue Officer, ESO
Larry Sablosky  Co-Founder, Finish Line Inc.
Lindsey Mossman Shaw  Executive Director, Compliance, JPMorgan Chase & Co
Lonnie Thomas  Managing Partner, Throop Street Capital
Danny Wirtz  Chief Executive Officer, Chicago Blackhawks

Auxiliary Board
Joanna Curran  Chair
Edelman
Lily Merritt  Vice Chair
MSL
Lauren Boegen  Chicago Design Museum
Ashley Corotis  Volunteer
David Dorfman  Industrial Opportunity Partners LLC
Sarah Haque  SZH Consulting
Grace Kendra  JH Philanthropy
Jon Kobiljak  Northern Trust
Dan Lekan  Magneta
Kevin Morrow  Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP
Christina Noel  Christina Noel Photography
Eleanor Perrone-Toriski  Civic Consulting Alliance
Leah Richmond  Weber Shandwick
Sarah Spain  ESPN
Nick Thompson  McKinsey
Baomy Wehrle  CNN

Embarc Staff
Imran Khan  CEO & Co-Founder
January Miller  Director of Special Projects & Co-Founder
Amanda Long  Chief Programming Officer
Stephanie Truax  Chief Development Officer
Theo Coulis  Chief Financial Officer
Rob Pick  Chief Operating Officer
Anastacia Holden  Finance & HR Manager & Co-Founder
Alegra Gutierrez  Program Manager - Experience Architect
Amy Besida  Head of Experiential Coaching
Brittany Ward  Development Assistant
Cairá Conner-Ware  Alumni Coordinator
Corinne Durette  Experiential Coach
SarahSpain  Experiential Coach
Frank Miller  Lead Postsecondary Success Coach

Holland Spencer  External Affairs Manager
Joseph Schupbach  Experiential Coach
Kaia Barnes  Program Manager - Experience Architect
Larissa Trociuk  Director of Philanthropy
Latvia Perkins  Program Manager - Experience Architect
Mónica Gutierrez  Senior Program Manager - Experience Architect
Rachael Gruen  Experiential Coach
Sandra Ortiz-Ortega  Program Manager - Experience Architect
Sarah Dufour  Program Manager - Experience Architect
Sarah Heemstra  Development Manager
Samantha Brenner  Postsecondary Success Coach
Thomas Goodwin  Data Specialist
Schools

What started at Harper High as a classroom program now serves 20 schools across Chicago and will engage 4,000 students during the upcoming school year.

Bogan Computer Technical High School
3939 W 79th St.
Chicago, IL 60652
boganhs.org

Bowen High School
2710 E 89th St.
Chicago, IL 60617
bowenhs.org

Chicago Academy High School
3400 N Austin Ave.
Chicago, IL 60634
cahs.auslchicago.org

Chicago Tech Academy
1301 W 14th St.
Chicago, IL 60608
chitech.org

Michele Clark Academic Prep Magnet High School
5101 W Harrison St.
Chicago, IL 60644
micheleclark.org

Roberto Clemente Community Academy
1147 N Western Ave.
Chicago, IL 60622
rccachicago.org

Fenger Academy High School
11220 S Wallace St.
Chicago, IL 60628
fengerhighschool.org

Intrinsic High School
4540 W Belmont Ave.
Chicago, IL 60641
intrinsicschools.org

Manley Career Academy High School
2935 W Polk St.
Chicago, IL 60612
manleyhighschool.org

Phillips Academy High School
244 E Pershing Rd.
Chicago, IL 60653
phillips.auslchicago.org

Senn High School
5900 N Glenwood Ave.
Chicago, IL 60660
sennhs.org

Simeon Career Academy
8147 South Vincennes Avenue
Chicago, IL 60620
simeonca.org

Simpson Academy for Young Women
1321 S. Paulina St.
Chicago, IL 60608
simpsonacademy.cps.edu

Sullivan High School
6631 N Bosworth Ave.
Chicago, IL 60626
sullivanhhs.org

Tilden High School
4747 S Union Ave.
Chicago, IL 60609
tilden.cps.edu

Uplift Community STEAM High School
900 W Wilson Ave.
Chicago, IL 60640
uplifths.org

Westinghouse College Prep High School
3223 W Franklin Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60624
newwestinghouse.org

Englewood STEM High School
6835 S Normal
Chicago, IL 60621
englestem.enschool.org

Collins Academy High School
1313 S Sacramento Dr.
Chicago, IL 60623
collinsacademyhs.org

Orr Academy High School
730 N. Pulaski Ave.,
Chicago, IL 60624
orracademy.org
Donors

Embarc gratefully recognizes our supporters, who provided critical funds to our organization, schools, teachers, and young people between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021.

$1M+
IMC Chicago Charitable Foundation

$500,000 – $999,999
Litowitz Family Foundation

$100,000 – $499,999
Christine & John Bakalar Charitable Fund
DRL Enterprises
Finnegan Family Foundation
Guggenheim Partners, LLC
Lyon Family Foundation
McDougal Family Foundation
Paul M Angell Family Foundation
Lisa + Larry Sablosky
Deanna Berman + Mark Stone
SVP Chicago
Anne + Danny Wirtz

$50,000 - $99,999
Hollister Confidence Project
The Osa Foundation
Robert R. McCormick Foundation
Strada Education Network

$25,000 – $49,999
Astellas Pharma US Inc
Leslie Bluhm + David Helfand
Crown Family Philanthropies
Greer Foundation
Lisa Gregg + Randy Mitchell
Vicki + Bruce Heyman
Jellyvision
Lefkofsky Family Foundation
Mayer and Morris Kaplan Family Foundation
Polk Bros. Foundation
Emily + Thad Wong

$10,000 – $24,999
Nina + David Allocco
Benevity Community Impact Fund
All Chicago Making Homelessness History
Cleveland-Cliffs Steel LLC

Marlene V. + Theo Coulis
Edward S Sprague Foundation
Golden Apple Foundation
Ronika + Sunit Goyal
Groupon
Illinois Children’s Healthcare Foundation
The Jerath Family Foundation
Kadens Family Foundation
Lindsey Mossman Shaw
Ewelina + Rob Pick
Nelly Pitocco
Jennifer + Jeremy Schaffer
Seabury Foundation
Tor Solberg
The Wings Scholarship
Xfinity

$5,000 – $9,999
Ariel Investments
Byline Bank
Collins Academy High School
ComEd
JPMorgan Chase
Leo Burnett
Emily + David Merjan
Orr Academy High School
Phillips Academy High School
Janet + Alan Sear
Mike Simons
Kelly Touss
W. Clement & Jessie V. Stone Foundation

$1,000 – $4,999
Accelerated Digital Media
Aetna Inc.
Heather Alderman
Shannon Alexander
Baird
Jonathan Barnett
Jennifer + David Dorfman
Shawn Dorgan
Edelman
Eric Enloe
Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP
Danielle + Cary Goldman
Ikram Goldman
Jordan Goodman
Rick Grasso
Honey Butter Fried Chicken
Kelly + John Hoogenakker
Industrial Opportunity Partners LLC
Marian + Jeff Jacobson
Jeffrey and Liza Crane Foundation
Kathleen + Dennis Klaeser
Peter Klimek
J. David Korman
Dan Lekan
Jessica + Torjus Lundeval
Ryan McInerney
Caitlin + O'Brien McMahon
McMaster-Carr
Danae + Richard Melnick

Embarc gratefully recognizes our supporters, who provided critical funds to our organization, schools, teachers, and young people between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021.
Donors, continued

Kevin Morrow
NetGood
Olswanger Family Fund
Peak6
Eleanor Perrone-Toriski +
Mark Toriski
Jeanne Rogers
Rachel + Luke Saunders
Alex + Brian Singer
Chad Solberg
Sarah Spain + Brad Zibung
Julia M Stasch
Michael Taylor
Virginia + Chad Thomas
TMobile
Baomy + Drew Wehrle

$500 - $999
Sid Bala
Brian Black
Lauren Boegen
Boston Consulting Group
Ann Cresce + Martin Dickman
Jack Cress
Caren Croland
Jennifer Edgcomb
Energy City Brewing
Carol Gruen
Lawrence Hayes Jr
Greta Huizenga Charitable
Foundation
Joseph B Glossberg Foundation
Alvin Katz
Jonathan Kobiljak

Robert Laragh
Cindy Long
Michael Madden
Faheem Majeed
Kevin Mak
Mike Melendrez
Ellen Morgan + Sheldon Zenner
Ebrahim Patel
Kristen Prinz
Robert Romanoff
Laura Sage
Mona Shah
Jeffrey Sheldon
Denise Stefan
Thomas Stephens
Alan Tinsmon
John Wehrle
Ryan Whitacre

Linda Fisher
Katherine Glaudel
Heitman, LLC
Andrew Heymann
Jewish Community Foundation
of Illinois
Carolyn Kerr Armstrong
Foundation
Fritz Kessler
Craig Korte
Chris LaChance
Diane + John Lekan
Timothy Martins
Samuel Matthew
Lily Merritt
Christina Noel +
Andrew Rostad
Kathryn Otter
Annie Plotkin-Madrigal
Michael Prensky
Johanna Raimond
Leah Richmond
Rockefeller Family Fund
Lauren Ryan
Dana Sabillon-Riddle
Nancy Spain
Jenny Tank
Nicolas Wieczorek

$250 - $499
Mark Achler
Gulzar Ahmed
Jannis Bachmann
David Bachmann
William Bershad
Lawrence Christensen
Lindsay Corby
Neha Dakwala-Shah
Katherine Donaldson
Ryan Elliott

Impact Report photos are courtesy of Christina Noel and Anjali Pinto.
The statistics represented in this report are reflective of data available on
June 30, 2021.