

Ladders for Leaders

2024 Impact Report

www.laddersforleaders.org



Table of Contents

1 Introduction

2 Executive Director Message

3 Programs

4-8 Impact

9 Ladders for Leaders in Action

10 Testimonials

11 Meet our Incoming President

12 Meet our Incoming Program Director

13-14 2024 Board of Directors

15-16 Acknowledgements



MAKE AN IMPACT

INTRODUCTION

Ladders for Leaders connects high school students to career opportunities through education, training, and paid internships. Our programs equip students with essential workforce readiness skills, providing hands-on experience in healthcare, technology, and business industries. Through **Ladders for Leaders University (LLU)**, students participate in a five-session training series covering business professionalism, financial literacy, and effective communication.

Our **Summer Internship Program** offers six-weeks paid internships that provide real-world exposure and career exploration. By bridging the gap between education and industry, Ladders for Leaders empowers students to make informed decisions about their futures while fostering a pipeline of diverse, skilled talent for local employers.

MISSION: Connect high school students to careers through education, training, and impactful internships.

VISION: A community of empowered students who are equipped to make successful decisions after high school.

MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As I reflect on 2024, I am incredibly proud of the progress we have made at Ladders for Leaders. This year, we deepened our commitment to ensuring that every student—regardless of background—has access to meaningful career exposure, job training, and mentorship. Our programs have continued to grow, impacting more students than ever before, thanks to the unwavering support of our partners, employers, and dedicated team.

One of the most rewarding aspects of our journey this year has been witnessing our programs' tangible impact on students' futures. From aspiring healthcare professionals securing internships at top hospitals to young innovators exploring careers in technology, we are seeing firsthand how opportunity transforms lives. Through our Ladders for Leaders University and Summer Internship Program, we have equipped students with the skills, confidence, and connections needed to take the next steps toward successful careers.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the generosity of our community. Whether you've served as a mentor, hosted an intern, made a financial contribution, or advocated for our mission, you have played a crucial role in shaping the future workforce.

As we look ahead, our vision remains clear: to build a sustainable, scalable model that connects even more students with high-quality career experiences. The need for workforce readiness programs like ours continues to grow, and with your support, we will continue to meet that demand.

Thank you for being apart of this journey. Together, we are bridging the gap between education and industry—one student at a time.



LaKissa Bright
Founder and Executive Director

"Opportunity is not given, it is created. When we invest in young minds, we ignite a future where potential turns into success."
– Unknown

Programs

LADDERS FOR LEADERS UNIVERSITY

A five-week program that provides the essential knowledge & expertise required to be successful in real-world professional environments. The skills learned from the program will be valuable throughout each participant's future career.

Topics:

1. Resumes & Digital Literacy
2. Finances & Avoiding Debt
3. Professionalism/Networking
4. Career Pathways: Expert Panels & Demos
5. Communication & Interview Practice

LADDERS FOR LEADERS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Students are matched with a company that aligns with their career interests and compensated for a six-week internship, during which they work a minimum of 20 hours per week. Special consideration is given to underserved students, those who attend Title 1 schools, or participate in foster care or AVID programs.

WHY?

**77.7% of
High School
Students
graduate
with no
work
experience**



2024 IMPACT



421
Students
participated in LL
University

64
Students
participated in the
Internship Program

476
Total
Students
Served

7,800
Total Hours
Worked

18
Internship
Worksites

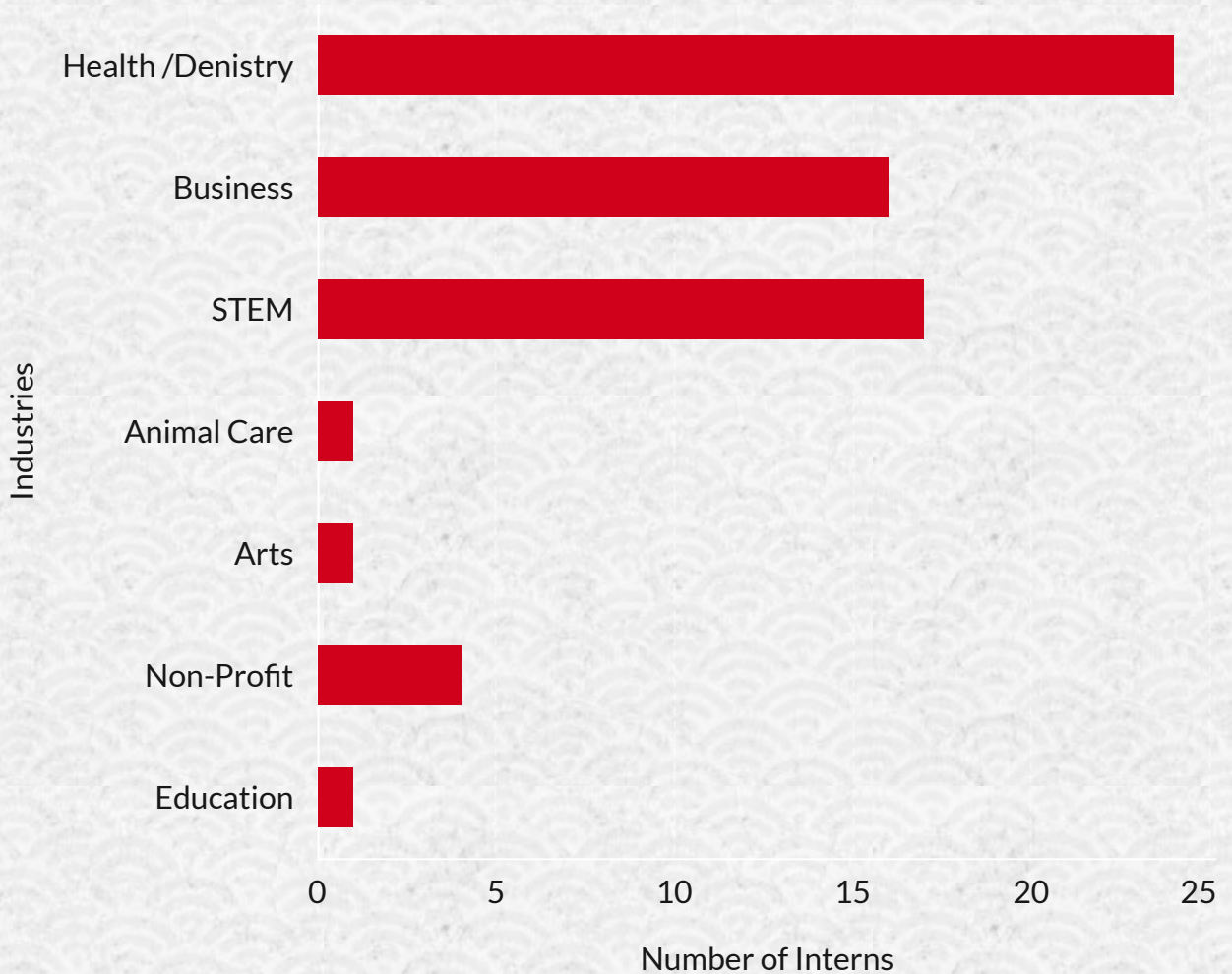


Aashritha N.
Marketing Intern, The Washtub

"Participating in the Ladders for Leaders program has been a game-changer for me. The program provided invaluable career readiness workshops and connected me with a fantastic internship that matched my interests. The support and mentorship I received helped me develop professional skills and gain confidence in the workplace. I'm grateful for this opportunity and the positive impact it has had on my future career."

2024 IMPACT

INTERNSHIP INDUSTRIES



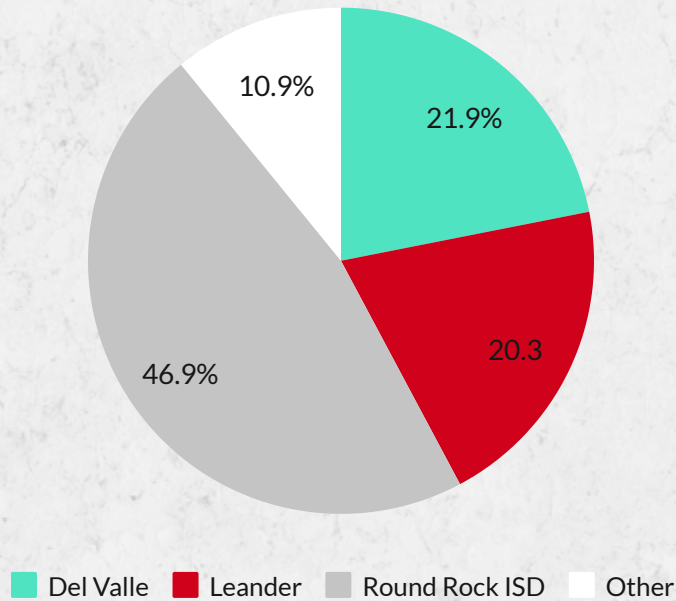
COMPANIES

- Ascension Seton
- Austin Urban Technology Movement
- Change The Mindset
- Chestnut Publishing
- Code Ninjas
- Confident Speaking
- St. David's Hospital
- Georgetown Palace Theatre
- Highway 71 Veterinary Hospital
- Kona Ice
- Ladders for Leaders
- Learnlee Tutoring Center
- Little Explorers Dentistry
- Resibrands
- Think Group Austin
- Tyrex
- The Washtub

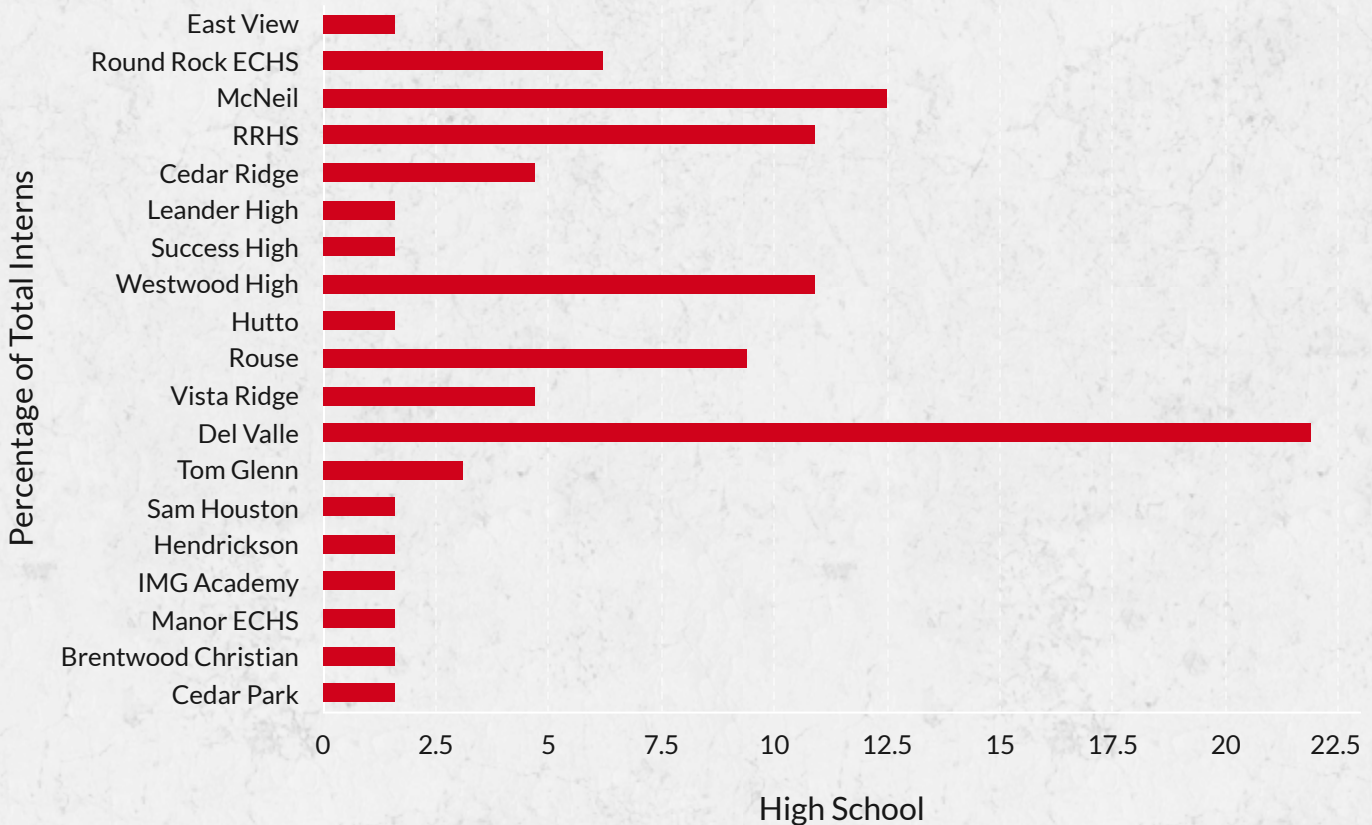
2024 IMPACT

INTERN DEMOGRAPHICS

ISD Representation

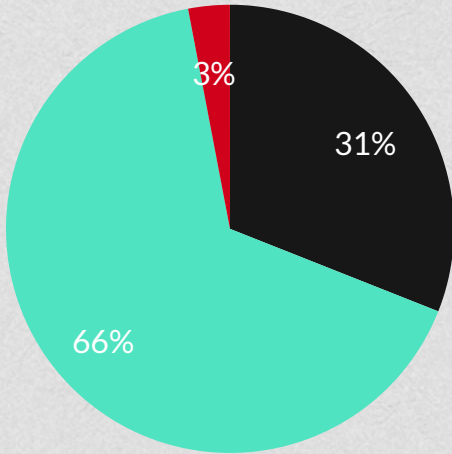


Percentage of Interns by High School

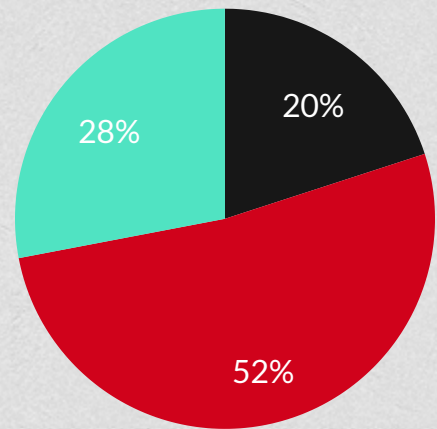


2024 IMPACT

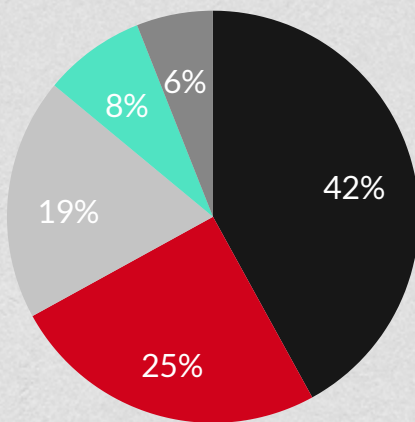
INTERN DEMOGRAPHICS



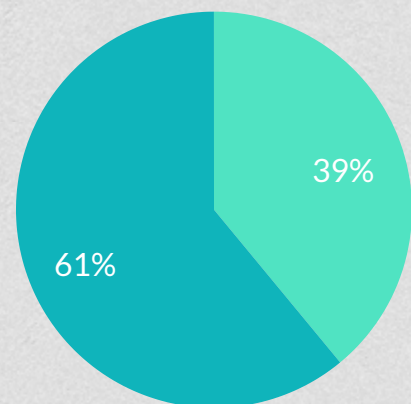
Male (31%) Female (66%) Other (3%)



Seniors (20%) Juniors (52%) Sophomores (28%)



Asian (42%) Black (25%) Latino (19%) White (8%) Other (6%)



Low Income (39%) Non-Low Income (61%)

2024 IMPACT

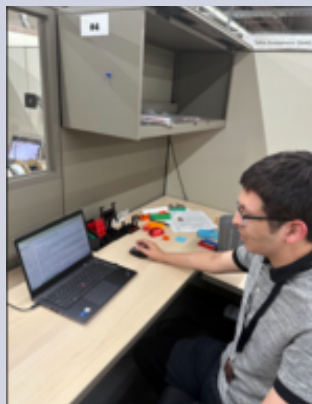
SCHOLARSHIPS



Two of our graduating Interns are awarded scholarships. They are selected based on videos sharing their internship experience.



LADDERS FOR LEADERS IN ACTION



TESTIMONIALS

COMPANY

We have enjoyed the interns this year. They were very professional and worked well with the team. They provided some great insight on some of the tech initiatives that we have been working on and were very flexible in the process. We appreciated all their work and them having a great attitude while doing it. - Austin Urban Technology Movement

Ladders for Leaders has an amazing program that partners with local businesses needing to expand their pipeline and invest in the future. - St. Davids Healthcare

I loved having a student in our hospital program. We have a lot of opportunities for entry level positions that can grow into substantial careers. - St. Davids TCT Clinic

Great program overall! Communication was great, students were prepared and professional - we are very satisfied! - TyRex Group

We absolutely loved our Intern! She was such a great addition to the team this summer and look forward to having her back next year! -ResiBrands

Loved the interns and operations of the students! - Little Explorers Pediatric Dentistry

INTERNS

This internship helped me get a better understanding of working in the healthcare field and helped me get an insight into what I want to do in the future.

This program has had such a awesome impact on my idea towards what future career I opt for. It really gives a good real life experience to the reality of your idea job. I loved this internship a lot!

Through this internship I gained, real-life experience, the ability to work more in a team, and the confidence to speak.

I enjoyed this program and being able to contribute and have an impact on young kids lives is what inspired me to continue to work and strive in the computer science pathway to use my knowledge to help others!

I absolutely loved working with Dr. V. She has taught me so many important skills related to medicine, I am blessed to have met her! On top of that, through Ladders for Leaders I have met Dr. Gibson, and I am proud to say I work/volunteer for her outside of LL! Ladders for Leaders have given me multiple opportunities to succeed as an aspiring medical health professional.

MEET OUR INCOMING PRESIDENT



Genail Marthol joined our Board in January 2024 and has quickly engaged her network and resources to help further our mission and vision to empower students to make successful decisions after high school. Genail brings with her over 20 years of accounting and finance experience and currently serves as a Sr. Technical Project Manager at Loram Technologies, Inc. in Georgetown, TX.

Loram Technologies helps railroads run better, safer and longer through the use of data-driven technology, products, and services to global rail partners.

Genail's passion for developing the youth doesn't stop at Ladders for Leaders as she has served as a Girl Scout Troop Leader for the past 11 years and is also serving as the Crystal Falls Service Unit Treasurer for Girl Scouts which currently supports 196 girls within 23 active troops.

In her spare time, Genail enjoys cooking, traveling, planning events that create lasting memories with her family and friends. She also enjoys being the BIGGEST cheerleader at all of her children's various sporting and extracurricular events.

MEET OUR INCOMING PROGRAM DIRECTOR



Tanisha Narine's devotion to seeing students succeed led her to Ladders for Leaders. She has a love of working with students to realize their full potential. With over 20 years of experience in education-focused entrepreneurship, Tanisha has successfully owned and operated several businesses dedicated to providing learning opportunities for children, teens, and adults.

In addition to planning and implementing youth programs, she has extensive expertise in curriculum development, marketing, vendor negotiations, and business partner recruitment.

Throughout her career, Tanisha has fostered strong relationships with both business partners and students alike, with her most recent experience in the International Business Training Association (IBTA) and Mindworx STEM Enrichment. Her leadership background makes her skilled at identifying needs while working closely with a diverse clientele of students, connecting with them in pursuit of their academic and career growth. Tanisha's university certifications in Early Childhood Education and Administration deeply influenced her approach to educational program design and management.

Originally born in the lovely tropical country of Panama, Tanisha moved to the U.S. at the age of 15 and has made Cedar Park, Texas her home, where she and her husband raised their three children. Her son pursued a career in Computer Technology, her eldest daughter pursued a career in Marketing, and her youngest daughter is an eighth grader who was recently inducted into the National Junior Honor Society. In her free time, Tanisha enjoys recreational sports like tennis, pickleball, biking, and hiking, as well as gardening and cooking homemade meals with family.

2024 BOARD MEMBERS



LaKissa Bright
Founder/President
Ladders for Leaders



Edward Hanna
Vice-President
First Citizens Bank



Shay Tower
Treasurer
General Motors



Esme Matcke-Longoria
Secretary
Dell



Alex Cherian
IBM



Chris Bowman
General Motors



Danielle Waliyaya
Google



Genail Marthol
Loram Technologies



Janda Castillo
Round Rock ISD

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Salesforce

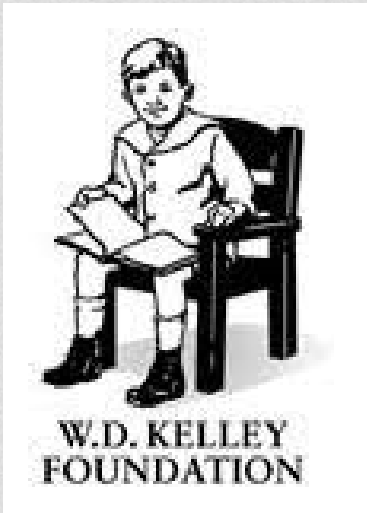


Yusef Waliyaya
Microsoft Technologies



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our mission to bridge the gap between education and industry would not be possible without the generous support of our business partners and donors. Your contributions make a lasting impact on the students we serve, helping to create pathways to success through education, training, and career opportunities. We are especially thankful for our partners who awarded us grants and sponsorships to support our programming.



A proud partner of the AmericanJobCenter® network

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This year, we were honored to participate in the **Philanthropitch** competition and were truly humbled by the incredible outpouring of support. Thank you to everyone who attended, donated, and championed our mission during this event—your encouragement and generosity mean the world to us.



Individual Donors

- Ashley Sykora
- Amanda Lopez
- Scott Del Rossi
- Alexa Singer
- Casey Bush
- April Milan
- Katy Fangman
- Elizabeth Lundquist
- Nancy Pink
- Gissell Perez
- Lisa Barden
- Johana Wibisono
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- Dillon Graham
- Jeremy
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