

Access Youth Academy
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Access Youth Academy Southeastern San Diego Academic & Athletic Community Center Bringing Success to Scale

Mission, Program, and Impact

Access Youth Academy, founded in 2006, is a continuous life-skill and workforce preparedness program for underprivileged youth aged 12-24+ designed to foster equal access to higher education, healthy lifestyle habits, and post-college graduation employment. To fuel success, Access uses a combination of academic mentorship, health and wellness, community service, and leadership training, using the sport of squash as a catalyst. To date, Access youth have achieved a 100% high school graduation rate, a 100% college acceptance rate, and secured \$8.6M in scholarship awards.

Program Expansion

In order to bring this transformative program to more underserved San Diego youth, and with the help of a \$5.5MM grant from the City of San Diego, Access Youth Academy has begun constructing a new academic and athletic facility in southeastern San Diego. This new facility will act as a community center by transforming a vacant lot at 704 Euclid Avenue, which we purchased two years ago from the Jacobs Center for Community Innovation, into a vibrant, inspiring athletic and academic facility. Completion is scheduled for June 2021.

This new location will allow Access to reach hundreds if not thousands more at-risk youths, serve more first-generation college students, and provide community classrooms to be used for the provision of educational, workforce preparedness, and informational services for southeast San Diego adults and transition-age youth.

New Partnerships

Upon completion of our new southeast San Diego academic & athletic facility, Access school partnerships will expand to include several local southeast San Diego schools. During the next two years, Access will finalize new school partner relationships, begin recruiting students from those schools, and transition from a small office to a fully operational facility serving approximately 50 additional students in the first year. We plan to streamline partnerships with local schools and community organizations while gaining a clear understanding of specific community needs, which can be addressed through the shared use of the Access facility.

Vibrant and Open Multi-Use Facility

The new two-story structure blends sports, academics, and business activities around a glass-walled entry and open reception and lounge area. The northern wing is comprised of 20'-24' ceilings that shelter seven singles squash courts, one doubles court, locker rooms, showers, and restrooms. The southern portion of the building houses two classrooms, storage, support spaces, and a large space divided by operable partitions that contain a computer lab, college prep room, instructional space on the ground level, and a 1,000 SF open gallery and awards space, 12 open and 2 private offices, a large conference room, staff kitchen/break room, and restrooms on the second. A 140' catwalk extends from the stairwell landing through the building's center and squash wing, serving as a match observation deck and common area with bench seating throughout. The face of the catwalk, viewable from the first floor, bears the embossed names of AYA graduates. The entire space opens to a huge concrete courtyard with additional seating, viewing, and social areas alongside a 36-car parking lot.

**Open and airy, the new facility is designed to engage and inspire its users,
corresponding with Access Youth Academy's mission.**

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Access Youth Academy is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization and your donation is tax-deductible within the guidelines of U.S. law.