



ABUNDANT LIFE MINISTRIES

Background:

Abundant Life serves the Prospect Avenue community within the Fifeville neighborhood, on the southwest side of Charlottesville about 1/2 mile from UVA Hospital. Historically African-American, the area now includes many refugee families from the Middle East, Africa, and Asia as well as Latino families who have fled violence or economic despair in parts of Central or South America.

- Many of the students have experienced high levels of stress but also are resilient and creative.
- Many parents initially lack confidence when interacting with school officials and themselves have low educational attainment at this point in time.

Abundant Life's programs are designed to foster **mutually transformative relationships**, supporting students and their families over their entire K-12th grade career. We value long-term relationships and programmatic consistency, which we are convinced are crucial for long-term academic, social, and vocational success.

Most of our students are **2-3 grade levels behind in reading** and are from single-parented homes with low-incomes.

- We know that "Academic achievement in the third grade is a strong predictor of future academic success and attainment. Reading below grade level in third grade leads to a chain of events that create barriers to further academic success in the future" (source: [2019 MAPP2Health report of Charlottesville area](#))

Prior to the pandemic, just **49% of economically disadvantaged Charlottesville City students were passing reading Standards of Learning** tests vs. 70% of all students.

- The pandemic has only exacerbated this disparity: the city-wide rate for passing reading SOLs dropped to 40% among economically disadvantaged students.
- Among Elementary students at Johnson Elementary, where most of our students receive tutoring, that percentage has dropped to 32%.
- Our commitment to consistency and educational equity is why we hosted virtual learning centers throughout the pandemic that served 30 K-4th grade students each day, Monday through Thursday.

Tutoring Program Goals and Metrics

Elementary Tutoring Program (Johnson Elementary, *future Jackson Via*)

Our Elementary Tutoring programs are designed to directly address **reading fluency and comprehension**, and **doing so at or above grade level** so that they will enjoy learning and will be able to continue absorbing new information as they age. We seek to build upon children’s confidence in their academic abilities, provide constructive after-school time, increase children’s opportunities for physical activity, and deepen the school to home connection for their families. With the help of volunteers, we provide an environment for discussing multiple aspects of academic enrichment.

For all student participants, our program coordinator arranges group enrichment activities that provide a varied and interactive context for learning. For example,

- 1) science activities provide opportunities for student-led inquiry;
- 2) sports and games promote sportsmanship, self-regulation, and community building;
- 3) music and arts promote creative expression through writing, singing, and dance.

We also have a credentialed educational **lesson planner** who tailors individualized lesson plans to low-performing children to fit with exactly where he or she is on the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screenings (PALS) scale (or the Qualitative Reading Inventory scale). One-on-one adult tutors assist with these lesson plan activities. Lesson plans include leveled books, timed readings, and “reading games.”

High-quality literacy software (Lexia Core 5) is used for a fifteen-minute computer lab as well. Supporting and reinforcing these endeavors are two dozen educated, encouraging volunteer tutors as well as Abundant Life’s dedicated staff. In the long-run, our children must develop a strong foundation if they are to succeed in the higher-grade levels, perform well on their annual SOLs, and gain a high school diploma to open other doors of opportunity.

Note: The following are Abundant Life outcomes and metrics; data from Charlottesville city schools for 2020-2021 is unavailable. As a result, the tutoring coordinators did their own assessments to determine the children's academic levels (specifically reading). *We anticipate access to more information Spring 2022 (including SOLs), but AL will also re-assess children with the same tool used in the fall.*

Outcomes / Goals	Indicators of Success & Tools
1) Positive and deepening relationships between tutor/mentor and child	→ 75% of more participants agree with the statement “I feel like my tutor knows me well and cares about me.” <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Measured by: 1) Pre & Post survey responses, 2) observation from Program Coordinator & Room Monitors.

<p>1) <i>continued</i> Positive and deepening relationships between tutor/mentor and child</p>	<p>→ 75% tutors/mentors working with same student throughout the year, students' eager to work with the tutor, 80% of the students enjoy participating in Elementary programming.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Measured by: Observation from AL Program Coordinator & Room Monitors on positive interactions between tutor/mentor and child.
<p>2) Increase academic progress by improving reading levels/scores</p>	<p>Grade K: → 60% of students demonstrate knowledge of all 26 letters by end of year. → 70% of students demonstrate knowledge of at least 20 of the 26 letter sounds.</p> <p>Grades 1-4: → 70% of students reach their appropriate grade level in reading or move one grade level closer, by the end of the year. → 70% of students pass the Standards of Learning (SOL) tests or increase scores by 5% over the prior year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Measured by (all): Phonological Awareness Literacy Screenings (PALS), Guided-Reading by Fountas & Pinnell, SOLs.
<p>3) Increase confidence in academic abilities</p>	<p>→ Students demonstrate greater interest and comfort in reading/math activities, with 70% or more students agreeing with the survey statement "I feel I got better at Reading and Math this year."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Measured by: End of year survey question to the child "I feel I got better at Reading and Math this year", child demonstrating that they enjoy math and reading more, putting forth more effort, and wanting to read more.
<p>4) Students have more opportunities to engage in constructive after-school activities</p>	<p>→ 75% of students attend programming at least 80% of the time throughout the year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Measured by: Documentation of weekly attendance. <p>→ 70% of children engage in 20 minutes of recreation at the start of each tutoring session.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Measured by: Documentation of weekly attendance.
<p>5) Increased involvement with school activities and communication</p>	<p>→ At least 75% of families attend their parent-teacher conferences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Measured by: Documentation parent-teacher conference involvement.

Middle School Tutoring (Walker Upper Elementary and Buford Middle)

The Abundant Life Middle School Tutoring programs provide **bi-weekly one-on-one tutoring** alongside adult mentors to demonstrate to at-risk, **5th through 8th grade students, living in the Prospect Avenue neighborhood**. The adult mentors demonstrate positive role models that focus on their **self-actualization** and **academic success**.

Major emphasis is on **reading for comprehension** (analysis, summary, discussion, application, critique) and on **homework completion**.

Outcomes / Goals	Indicators of Success & Tools
1) Increase reading SOL scores by the end of the academic year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → 50% of students will improved Reading SOL scores from the previous year by 5%. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Measured by: SOL test scores from school.
2) Increase quality of Parent relations with Abundant Life programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Weekly, Text or call 80% of parents during program duration. → Monthly, offer to do a home visit or extended phone call. → Through these methods and others, keep parents informed of community offerings and events seek feedback for program development and improvement. ○ Measured by (all): 1) Program Coordinator record-keeping to indicate dates of contact / visits and notes taken, and 2) pre & post survey to parents.
3) Strong relations with School Administration and Abundant Life Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Create signed "Memorandum of Understanding" at beginning of school year. → Foster quarterly meetings between AL Staff and school administrators. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Measured by: Engagement and regular attendance of school administrators in quarterly meetings, and feedback, collaborative problem-solving.
4) Increase the number of enrolled students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Increase overall enrollment by 25% over prior year, adding new students without decreasing number of active participants. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Measured by: Pre and post survey of students, enrollment record-keeping.
5) High Tutor Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Retain 50% or more of prior years' tutors who are still in Charlottesville area. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Measured by: Pre and post survey of tutors (feeling of effectiveness, satisfaction in tutoring, etc.), record-keeping.

Middle School non-tutoring programs

5/8 Club

5/8 is an Abundant Life program that serves young men from the Prospect neighborhood that are in grades 5th-8th. These young men receive emotional and spiritual support year-round in a healthy environment, that builds a brotherhood of trust and respect that equips them to have healthy and meaningful relationships with their peers. When they enter high school, they will continue and also build their relationship with Jesus, if desired.

Outcomes / Goals	Indicators of Success & Tools
<p>1) Boys/young men learn about a relationship with Jesus</p> <p><i>(All local young men are welcomed, including those who are non-religious and of other faiths. All are respected and heard.)</i></p>	<p>→ 50% of those engaged/interested in Bible study each week will be able to recite an understanding of the Gospel.</p> <p>→ 70% of those engaged/interested in the Bible and Jesus will both 1) attend church at least 70% of the year and 2) serve in the church through various ministries.</p>
<p>2) Boys/young men learn the importance of serving the community</p>	<p>→ 70% of 5/8 students will serve the community by volunteering through Abundant Life 5/8 service opportunities.</p>
<p>3) Boys/young men have a healthy and meaningful relationship with peers</p>	<p>→ Progress in conflict resolution skills, forgiveness, and restorative practices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Measured by: Pre and post survey, both self-assessment and questions on what they've learned; 2) observation from Program Coordinator and volunteers.

Royal Girls

Royal Girls is a faith-based year-long girls' group that focuses on spiritual formation and social development of 5th-8th grade girls in the Prospect neighborhood through weekly group meetings, community service projects, bible study and devotionals, to increase self-esteem and confidence into participants.

Outcomes / Goals	Indicators of Success & Tools
<p>1) Increased connection between girls/young ladies and group leaders, build relationships of trust</p>	<p>→ 80% of group participants will attend consistently. → 60% will show signs of personal growth in self-esteem through verbal and written expression with group leaders and volunteers. → Build relationships of trust between girls/peers and with group leaders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Measured by: 1) Group leader and volunteer observations and record-keeping, 2) increased desire to share openly about past and present experiences to create systems of support, 3) participants reaching out to each other and group leaders for support or general relationship.
<p>2) Girls gain transferrable skills in leadership to propel them in college/career trajectories</p>	<p>→ 90% of girls take advantage of leadership opportunities through events and field trips catered to teen centered leadership development and college readiness.</p>
<p>3) Girls will have space and opportunity to express themselves through platforms not offered through the school division</p>	<p>→ 90% of girls will take advantage of creative expression opportunities through the artistic mediums.</p>
<p>4) Increased connection between girls and their immediate community</p>	<p>→ Attendance will show 80 % of group participants will attend monthly community service projects and volunteer opportunities consistently.</p>

High School mentoring programs

Both **Crown Academy** and **STRIVE** are mentoring programs designed to foster leadership skills and prepare young men and women in 9-12th grades who live in the Prospect Avenue neighborhood with 1on1 mentors to help develop positive relationships and build Christian values. With support from their parents and mentors, the young men and women gain the resources, support system, know-how and drive to reach their goals of improving themselves academically, spiritually and socially.

Crown Academy

(high school ladies, throughout high school)

Outcomes / Goals	Indicators of Success & Tools
1) Develop positive 1:1 relationship between participant and mentor	→ Young ladies meet with their mentors at least twice per month to engage in leadership development activities, positive relationship building, goal setting, and college/career exploration.
2) Young ladies meet to fellowship and discuss life and relationship skills	→ 80% young ladies attend bi-weekly group meeting with Crown Academy coordinator to discuss life skills, personal growth and self-care.

STRIVE

(high school men, 5-year program throughout high school into first year of college)

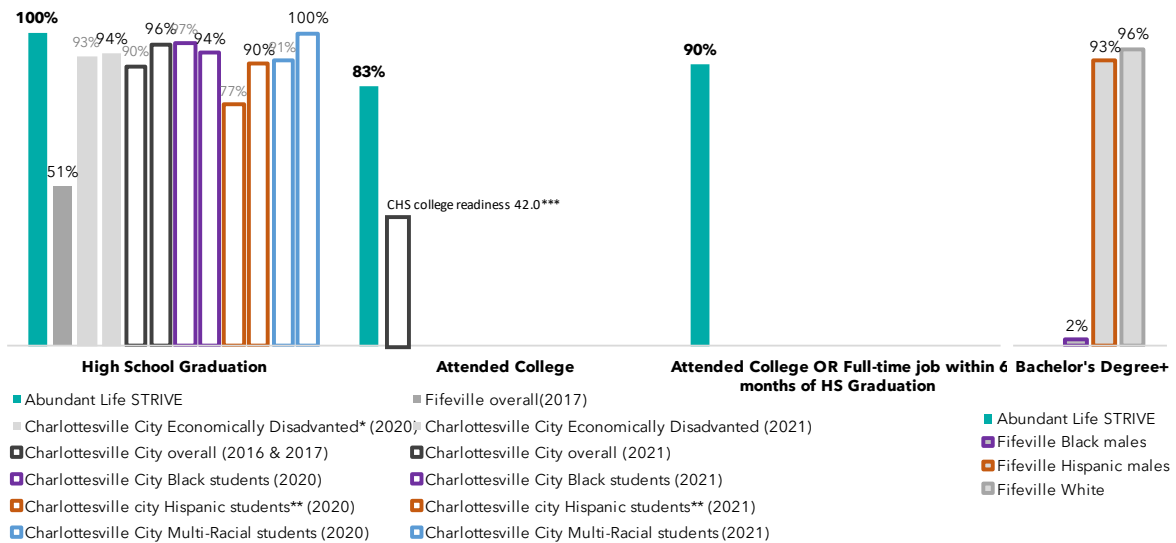
Outcomes / Goals	Indicators of Success & Tools
1) Develop positive 1:1 relationship between young men and mentors	→ Young men meet with their mentors weekly to engage in leadership development activities, positive relationship building, goal setting
2) Young men meet to fellowship and strengthen life and relationship skills	→ 70% of young men attend program meetings monthly and attend career and college exploration opportunities
3) High school graduation and college acceptance, or other post-high school plan	→ At least 80% of participants will graduate from high school. → At least 75% of participants will attend college, or obtain a full-time job, or enter a vocational/training program within six months of high school. → At least 60% of participants will obtain summer employment during high school.

STRIVE Young Men's Mentoring – Results

Since STRIVE's founding in 2012, the 30 participants (all economically disadvantaged, potential first-generation college students of color) have been **beating the odds and closing the achievement gap by graduating high school and attending college at even greater rates** than their White and/or wealthy peers.

- All 30 STRIVE seniors since the program's founding in 2012 (first graduates in ~2016) have **graduated on time (100%**, vs. goal of 80% and external benchmarks of 51% for Fifeville neighborhood residents, 93-94% for CHS economically disadvantaged students in 2020 and 2021),
 - *Despite its close proximity to the University of Virginia, the 2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates for Fifeville (Census Tract 5.01) show that only 51% of residents over age 25 have attained a high school diploma or less.*
 - *Since STRIVE's first graduating class in 2013, the 4-year-Federal-Graduation-Indicator at CHS has averaged 84% for economically disadvantaged students, with actual CHS graduation for these students at 89% for 2016-2017 and 93-94% for 2020-2021.*
- **83%** of STRIVE participants have **attended college**,
- **90%** of STRIVE participants **attended college** or been employed full-time within six months of graduation.
 - **STRIVE celebrated its first three alumni to graduate college in 2019-20** (2012-2016 = high school, 2016 – 2019/2020 = college).
 - *Only 2% of Fifeville Black males and 8% of Latinos over age 25 have earned a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 63% of Whites/not Hispanic. (2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates for Fifeville)*

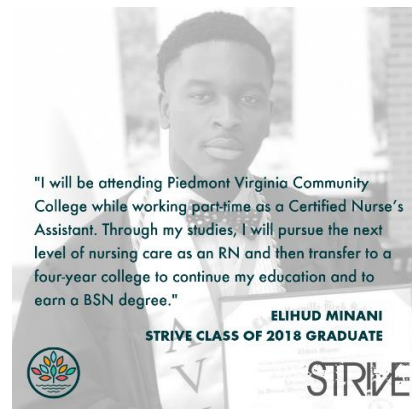
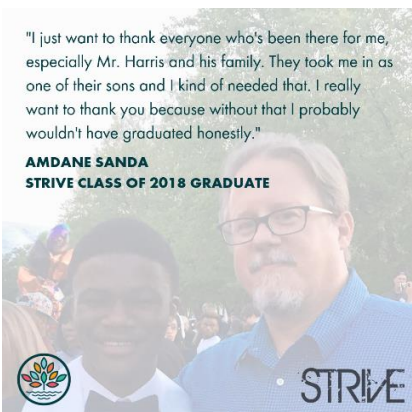
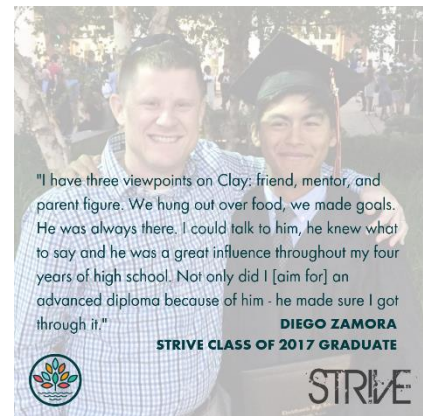
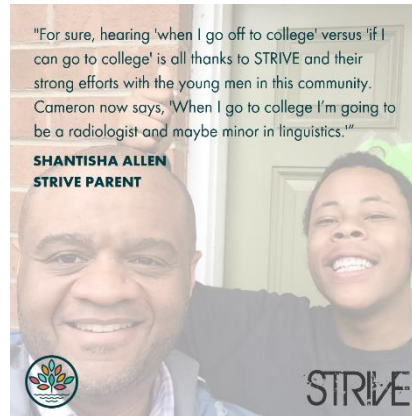
Abundant Life STRIVE Metrics vs. external comparisons



*approximately 44% of Charlottesville High School (CHS) students are considered "economically disadvantaged", and total minority enrollment is 55%.
 **CHS notes that Hispanic CHS population is low and yearly data is subject to swings.
 ***The proportions of 12th graders who took and passed at least one AP or IB exam. Passing is worth three times more than just taking.

Additional external data:

- *Educational attainment drastically affects median income (past 12 months, 25 and over), from \$16,979 for a HS diploma, \$26,076 for some college/Associate's, to \$43,600 for a bachelor's degree. (2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates for Fifeville)*
- *Those with some college or more are half as likely to be in poverty (25%) as those with a high school diploma or less (49.1%).*



Jed Metge, two-time STRIVE mentor:

"STRIVE is an incredible program that changes lives. Not only the lives of the young men who are mentees, but the lives of we who mentor them. No attempt at witness or passing of resources can happen effectively without relationship. But as soon as a relationship develops, mentors very quickly realize that we have so little to teach and to give. We can only walk alongside our mentee; only celebrate with them, cry with them, trip and fall on our faces with them as they hit obstacles and are knocked down by the forces that come against them again and again.

We are forced to become the kind of person who can do all this with our mentee. And as that happens we change. We are brought to a deep desperation for God. We realize we can't make it without Him; are as

useless as an outdated text book without His living Spirit working through us. And we begin to use God's own energy and vision to do what at first had seemed impossible: to enter fully into the daunting circumstances of our student's life without reservation, but to believe unwaveringly and without doubt that God has a better, more full kind of life for them. And to speak to them about that life until they believe it for themselves.

At our best, we mentors are a kind of guide along the way towards life with God. And the more that we see our mentee find this life, the more we find it for ourselves. STRIVE and my relationships with mentees have given me the kind of gifts that I can never repay. And would not trade for all the riches of kingdoms."



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