

NKU

YOUNG SCHOLARS ACADEMY



EST. 2020



OUR MISSION

Young Scholars Academy is built upon the foundational belief that **equitable access** to and **support** through post-secondary education should be available to **all young people**. We do this by leading a **community-built, immersive, early-college experience** for academically motivated 11th and 12th grade students that focuses on **college transition, career preparation, and holistic development**.



OUR VISION

Empowering a community of learners to engage in authentic growth.

OUR PURPOSE

Northern Kentucky University delivers innovative, student-centered education and engages in impactful scholarly and creative endeavors, all of which empower our graduates to have fulfilling careers and meaningful lives, while contributing to the economic, civic, and social vitality of the region.

NKU is committed to serving our P-12 community and promoting post-secondary access for students throughout our region and across the state.

Young Scholars Academy is an exemplification of our purpose, and of work worth doing, as the program centers our belief in giving back to our community by providing access and opportunity to young learners that will empower their long-term growth throughout their lives.



OUR STORY



Founded as a partnership between Kenton County School District and NKU
Cohort 1 began YSA for pilot year

← 2020

2021 →

Successful pilot led to expansion efforts with regional districts
Cohort 2 began



Expansion MOU signed involving NKCES and 8 additional districts
Cohort 1 graduated
Cohort 3 began as first regional cohort

← 2022

2023 →

Cohort 2 graduated
100th Associate degree awarded
Cohort 4 began



Cohort 3 graduated
Cohort 5 began
Surpassed 500 total scholars served

← 2024

2025 →

Cohort 4 graduated
Surpassed 350 graduates
Cohort 6 began

OUR PARTNERS



Building Tomorrow



OUR STRUCTURE

**COHORTS BEGIN DURING THEIR JUNIOR YEAR
AND CONTINUE THROUGH SENIOR YEAR**

SCHOLARS ON CAMPUS DAILY, 8AM-2PM

ENROLLED FULL TIME (12-16 CREDITS) EACH SEMESTER

**SCHOLARS CAN PURSUE AN INTERDISCIPLINARY ASSOCIATE DEGREE
AND/OR BEGIN BACHELOR'S DEGREE PROGRESS IN ANY DISCIPLINE**



OUR WRAPAROUND SUPPORT

**SUPPORTED BY FOUR PERSON TEAM ON
CAMPUS - 2 EMPLOYED BY DISTRICTS AND 2 BY NKU**

**TEAM SERVES AS ADVISORS FOR A
CASELOAD OF SCHOLARS BASED ON GOALS**

SCHOLARS INVOLVED AT HOME HIGH SCHOOLS + AT NKU

**WEEKLY COMMUNITY HOUR SESSIONS FOR ADVISING, NETWORKING,
CAREER EXPLORATION, PROFESSIONAL SKILLS, + MORE**

PREPARATION FOR COLLEGE AND/OR WORKFORCE AFTER YSA



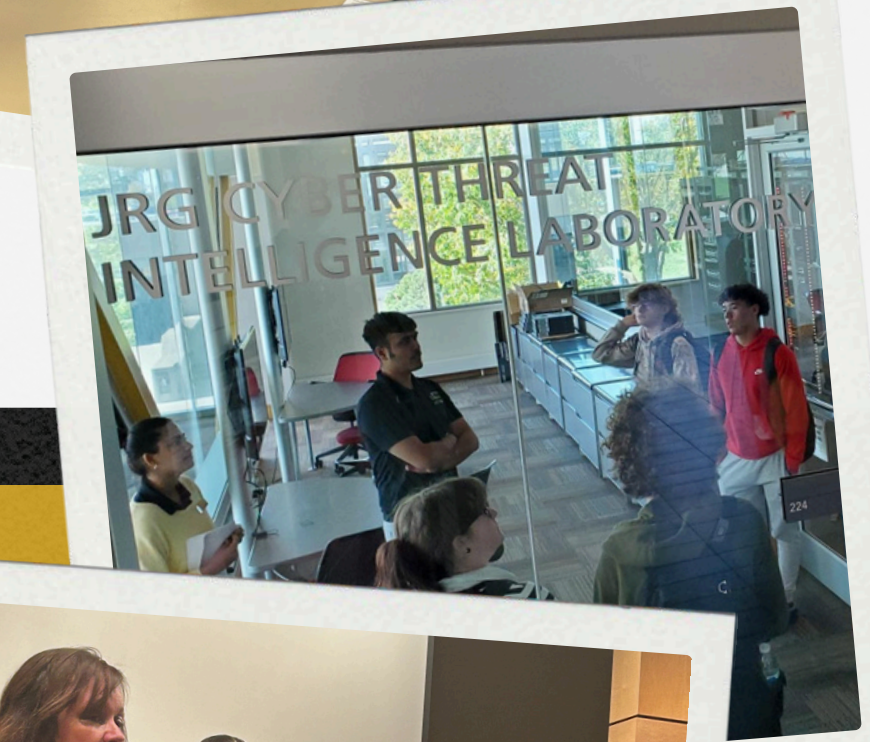
OUR WORKFORCE ALIGNMENT

INTENTIONAL COURSE PLANNING + SELECTION TOWARD GOALS

NKY CHAMBER COLLABORATIONS

SUPPORT WITH COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND EVENTS

ONGOING CAREER EXPLORATION + EXPOSURE

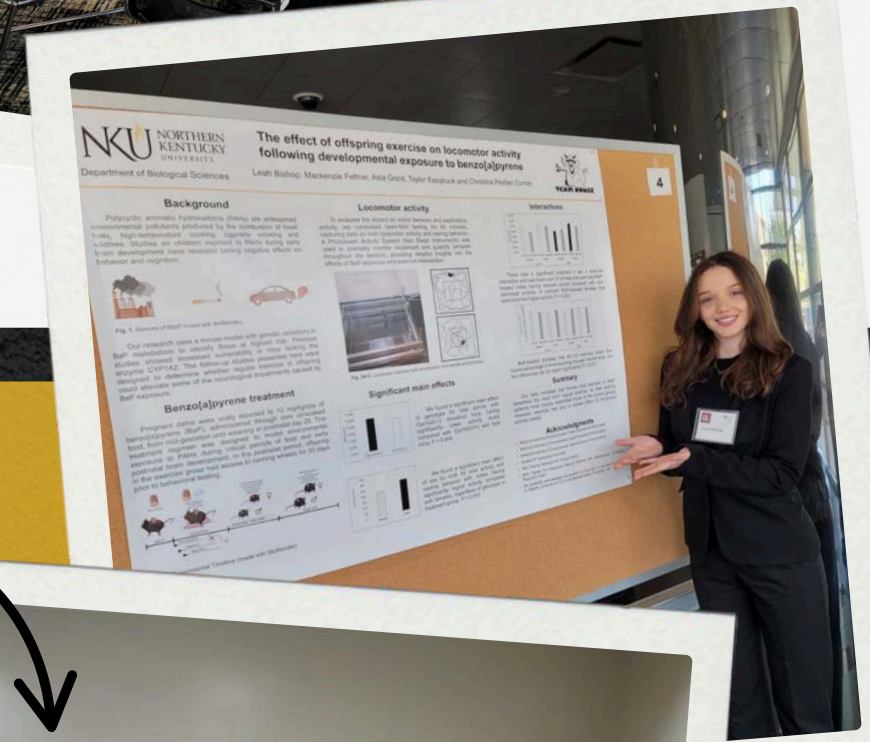


OUR WORKFORCE ALIGNMENT

HANDS-ON PROFESSIONAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT + NETWORKING

147 ASSOCIATE DEGREES AWARDED 40% OF PROGRAM GRADUATES

EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT FORM WITH FLEXIBLE WAYS FOR EMPLOYERS TO ENGAGE



OUR STORY

STUDENTS SERVED (6 COHORTS) → 700

AVERAGE GRAD GPA → 3.3

AVERAGE CREDIT HOURS EARNED → 58

% ENROLLED IN COLLEGE AFTER YSA* → 95%

% ENROLLED IN STATE AFTER YSA* → 80%

% ENROLLED AT NKU AFTER YSA → 54%

* based on student reported data at time of graduation



OUR FOCUS ON ACCESS

FIRST GENERATION ENROLLED → 263 (38%)

% EARNING ASSOCIATE DEGREES → 40%

EMERGING SCHOLARS (BEGAN 2022) → 28

CONDITIONAL ADMISSION OPTION FOR SCHOLARS WHO MEET ALL REQUIREMENTS EXCEPT MATH READINESS (LIMITED SEATS AVAILABLE)

EMERGING SCHOLARS RETENTION → 93%



OUR GROWTH

2020-2021 → 80

2021-2022 → 146

2022-2023 → 213

2023-2024 → 260

2024-2025 → 230

2025-2026 → 253



1 DISTRICT

1 DISTRICT

9 DISTRICTS

9 DISTRICTS

8 DISTRICTS

7 DISTRICTS

OUR SHARED INVESTMENT

DISTRICTS PAY FOR:

- (2) full-time team members
- Program fees (to NKCES and NKU)
- Varying by district, transportation, tuition, books/course materials, meals

NKU PAYS FOR:

- (2) full-time team members
- Annual program operating budget
- Costs of instructional materials not covered by student fees
- Costs of instruction and direct and indirect student support services

Note: Cost per family varies by school district.

OUR SHARED INVESTMENT

DISTRICTS PAY:

- Staffing to NKCES - \$770
- Student Services to NKU - \$600
- Annual Tuition - \$2,910 (average)
- Transportation - \$650 (average)
- Meals - \$283 (average)
- Course Materials - \$500 (average)

**Average Annual
District Cost Per
Student:
\$5,713**

NKU RECEIVES:

- Dual Credit Tuition - \$2,910
- Student Services - \$600
- Meals - \$283

**Average Annual Amount Paid
to NKU Per Student:
\$3,793**

NKU COVERS GAP:

- Undergraduate Tuition (for in-state, non-dual credit students) - \$11,496

**Average Annual Unfunded
Gap Per Student:
\$7,703**

OUR SCHOLARS

As a high school student navigating the complex path to college, I can confidently say that the Young Scholars Academy (YSA) has been a game changer. The resources and support they provide for us students are invaluable.

Not only do they help me academically, but they also help me envision and pursue goals for my future. The commitment to creating a positive and engaging environment is what truly distinguishes YSA. YSA is not just about getting an early start to college; it is about building a strong foundation for future success and empowering students to become confident and well-rounded individuals. Thanks to YSA, I am now ready to start my journey towards college, equipped with the skills and mindset to thrive.

ASTRID VELASQUEZ, NEWPORT HIGH SCHOOL | COHORT 5



My time in YSA so far has been invaluable and has helped me grow in so many ways. Going from high school classes to college classes has taught me how to be responsible for my time management and classwork, and helped me be more confident and advocate for myself. YSA also allows me to be more engaged in learning because I can take classes that are more specific to my interests and future career. By being able to craft my class schedule based on my future career interests, I get a better understanding of why I'm learning the things being taught and how these skills will be useful in the real world. I look forward to learning new skills and gaining new experiences throughout the rest of my time in YSA.

ISAAC DERICO, PENDLETON COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL | COHORT 6

OUR ALUMNI

When I think back on my time at NKU's Young Scholars Academy, what stands out most is how much I grew, not just academically but personally. The interdisciplinary path gave me the chance to explore a wide mix of courses and perspectives, and that freedom is what ultimately led me to pursue a degree in International Affairs with a minor in Crisis Management and Mitigation. That journey has now shaped my path toward attending Georgetown Law. YSA was more than just early college; it was a community. I was surrounded by peers who were as determined as I was, and together we pushed each other to grow. Beyond the academics, I gained real skills, to name a few: networking, interviewing, time management, and presenting. These gave me confidence in myself and my future. YSA showed me that education is not just about credits or degrees, it is about discovering who you are and believing in what you can achieve.

ALFONSO TORRES, DIXIE HEIGHTS HIGH SCHOOL | COHORT 2



YSA was one of the most impactful experiences of my life. I discovered a welcoming community, built lasting friendships, and gained confidence in both academics and leadership. As a YSA Ambassador and student, I had the privilege of representing the program while being supported by a community of students from all across Northern Kentucky. This network of peers and mentors constantly encouraged me to grow and inspired me to take on new challenges. While in YSA, I remained deeply involved in my high school as FBLA president and regional secretary, while also participating in five other organizations. At the same time, I began neuroscience research at NKU and presented my work more than seven times before graduation. YSA also gave me the chance to step into university-level leadership early, serving as secretary of a neuroscience honors society while still a high school senior.

LEAH BISHOP, SIMON KENTON HIGH SCHOOL | COHORT 4

OUR FAMILIES

My children have thrived in the YSA program. The academic and financial benefit to my children and family have been incredible! Both of my children have been challenged, excelled academically and been supported all the way through the program. The YSA leadership wants students to succeed, and I believe my children are products of their hard work and dedication. Opportunities abound at NKU. I can't extol this program enough – it's been a game-changer for our family!

TANYA GIVENS, DIXIE HEIGHTS HIGH SCHOOL | YSA PARENT, COHORTS 1 AND 5



The YSA program has been very beneficial for my son. The staff are organized and keep the students and their families well-informed. My son has thrived in the environment offered, earning a perfect 4.0 GPA, not in just any courses, but in very challenging courses including programming and calculus. The faculty provide ample instruction which allow him to understand the needed concepts while also providing opportunities to explore related topics of interest. He enjoys sharing what he is learning in various courses, thus demonstrating an excitement that most students do not express. The YSA program is a wonderful opportunity for students to attend NKU while in high school.

CARL MILLER, SCOTT HIGH SCHOOL | YSA PARENT, COHORT 5

OUR SCHOOLS

NKU's Young Scholars Academy has allowed some of our students to get a jumpstart on their future education at a cost free to them as CIPS has covered all expenses for the students enrolled in the program. An opportunity of this nature has ensured potential college futures for some students who otherwise would have doubted their success post-graduation and may have not chosen to attend college. The network of support from NKU in collaboration with HHS staff has been remarkable for the students. The internships, connections, and activities students participated in due to their enrollment in the YSA program has allowed students to support their families in a difficult time and build strong resumes. It has been rewarding to work with the students directly from Holmes High School enrolled in the program and see them continue to shine. Interest in the YSA program has only continued to grow and drive all students at Holmes as they strive to become members of this unique cohort of students.

ASHLEY LORENZ, COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS COACH | COVINGTON INDEPENDENT PUBLIC SCHOOLS



The Northern Kentucky University Young Scholars Academy is a testament to the collaborative spirit of the Northern Kentucky region. By bringing together dedicated educators, engaged community leaders, and supportive families, we've created a vibrant learning environment that nurtures the potential of some of our brightest young students. This collective effort ensures our future leaders are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive and contribute to our community's continued success.

DR. HENRY WEBB, SUPERINTENDENT | KENTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

OUR COMMUNITY

At Duke Energy, we know that building a strong workforce begins with early exposure to career pathways. The Young Scholars Academy equips students with the skills and credentials they need to succeed, strengthening our talent pipeline and supporting the economic vitality of the region and the entire Commonwealth.

KEN MUTH, GOVERNMENT & COMMUNITY RELATIONS MANAGER | DUKE ENERGY KENTUCKY

NKU's YSA program is a wonderful community resource, particularly for the many students who struggle to navigate barriers transitioning from high school to college. The NKY Chamber of Commerce commends our region's participating high schools and Northern Kentucky University for opening their doors and providing related supports and encouragement to this much needed future workforce pool.

NANCY SPIVEY, VICE PRESIDENT OF TALENT STRATEGIES | NORTHERN KENTUCKY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

