

BOLD FUTURES ACADEMY · EIN 33-3751028

IMPACT REPORT · FOUNDED MARCH 2025

YEAR ONE. EVERY NUMBER. ONE AIM.

*A complete record of what Bold Futures Academy has built,
who we have served, and where we are going next.
Written for the board, funders, and partners who help us
move.*

PREPARED FOR

THE BOARD, FUNDERS, AND PARTNERS OF BFA

PREPARED BY

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SECTION 01 · START HERE

01

What Bold Futures Academy is.

Who we serve, what we run, and how to read the numbers in the rest of this report.

What Bold Futures Academy is.

Bold Futures Academy prepares young people for their futures, whatever path they choose. College, a trade, a job, or a business of their own. We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit based in Rockland, Massachusetts, established in March 2025 and built on mentorship work that started before the organization existed.

The word we use for what we teach is readiness, and we mean more by it than most people do. Not only work readiness. Readiness to go to college and know why you chose it. Readiness to go to vocational school. Readiness for whatever comes after high school when it is not college at all. And readiness after that too, because the hardest transition most young people face is the one out of college or a training program and into a working life nobody prepared them for. We teach it three ways: entrepreneurial education, personal development and readiness workshops, and one to one mentorship for college students heading into the workforce.

The work began with college students. Our founder was volunteering with UConn's Werth Institute and kept meeting the same two people. One was the twenty year old encountering entrepreneurship for the first time, years after the point where it would have changed what she chose to study. The other was the senior a few months from graduating who could not say in plain words what she was good at or why anyone should hire her. The gap was not talent and it was not ambition. Nobody had ever walked either of them through the work of figuring out what they wanted and how to go and get it. Bold Futures Academy does that work, and does it earlier.

WHO WE SERVE

High school students in grades 10 to 12, through LaunchLab. College students anywhere, through our college programming and the Ignite mentorship pipeline. And students of any age, through the Readiness Workshop Series delivered inside a partner's existing calendar. Programs are free to students. Partner organizations pay. Section 02 covers all three lines in detail.

HOW TO READ THE NUMBERS IN HERE

We are a small organization doing depth over scale work in a sector that mostly does the opposite. That shows up in the numbers, and we would rather explain it once than dress it up. Our first LaunchLab cohort had six students in it. Our two fielded surveys have seven and eight respondents. Those numbers are small, and we report them at their real size.

One number needs a note. More than sixty young people have been reached by this work, and roughly half of them were reached before Bold Futures Academy existed, through our founder's mentorship and workshops at UConn. Those students are the reason the organization was built and the reason the curriculum already worked when it launched. They are counted here, and they are labeled, because a reader deserves to know which work the organization did and which work came before it.

We also report the ones that do not flatter us. The Hartford workshop in Section 06 is the clearest example. Eight scholars completed reflection surveys, average confidence in describing themselves rose from 3.5 to 4.1 out of five, and four of the eight moved. Two were already at the ceiling and could not. Two did not move at all, and both of them wrote down why. That second pair is the reason the Hartford section ends with a design change rather than a victory lap.

WHAT IS IN THIS REPORT

Sections 02 and 03 cover what we run and the problem it answers. Sections 04 through 07 are the evidence: the record so far, the LaunchLab cohort in full including the students who did not finish, the Hartford data line by line, and what students say in their own words. Section 08 is the money, including the approved budget and who has been carrying the costs. Section 09 is the board and the team. Section 10 is the next twelve months and the four ways to move a piece of it forward.

We do not round these numbers up. Reporting honestly is how we earn the right to claim depth.

RUTH GAY · FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SECTION 02 · THREE PROGRAM LINES, ONE AIM

02

What we actually do.

LaunchLab, college programming, and the Readiness Workshop Series. Who each one serves, how a student gets in, and who pays for it.

Three program lines, one aim.

Three lines, three populations, three moments. All three teach the same underlying skill: how to look at your own life, find the thing you are actually good at, and put it to work. What changes is the path the student is walking toward and how much time we get with them.

01 · LAUNCHLAB

High school, grades 10 to 12 · Six weeks · BFA flagship

A six week virtual program in which every student builds a venture from scratch and pitches it at Demo Day. Students earn the title Venture Fellow and leave with a working business plan, a tested prototype, and a pitch they have delivered live to mentor panelists. Spring 2026 was the inaugural cohort. Fall 2026 runs September 12 through October 17 on the theme Entrepreneurship in the Age of AI: The Human Advantage.

02 · COLLEGE PROGRAMMING, INCLUDING IGNITE

College students anywhere · Mentorship and workshops

Ignite is our college line, built out of continuous mentorship at UConn's Werth Institute for Entrepreneurship that began before the organization did. It is open to college students anywhere, not only students at partner campuses. The work is one to one mentorship and workshop delivery, and it is the source of our earliest documented outcomes. Hartford Youth Scholars has agreed to refer eligible students into it.

03 · THE READINESS WORKSHOP SERIES

All ages · Single sessions or a series · Virtual or onsite

Standalone sessions delivered inside a partner's existing calendar, on the practical things young people are expected to already know and are rarely taught. Partners can take a single session or build a series, and we co-design the content with the partner where that serves their students better.

This is our newest line by name and our oldest by practice. Workshop delivery is where this work started, before LaunchLab and before the organization itself, and it now runs across two partners and three deliveries. Section 06 tells that story.

GROUP	WORKSHOPS
Know yourself	Personal Branding 101. Strengths and story, in which students uncover what they are actually good at and learn to name it.
College and career	College essay storytelling. Resume and portfolio. Interview preparation. Career counseling. Workplace readiness. The unwritten rules of a first job. Working with AI, judgment and ethics.

People skills	Navigating conflict at work and school. Self-advocacy and negotiation. Giving and receiving feedback. Navigating rejection. Social media and digital presence. How to find and be a mentor.
Money	Financial literacy, from a first paycheck forward.
Entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurial mindset. Finding a problem worth solving. Finding the right idea. Understanding your customer. Building the right team. Prototyping. Branding and marketing. Pitch practice.
Co-designed	Tell us the gap you are seeing in your young people and we will build the session around it rather than handing you a template.

How a student gets in, and who pays.

THE BOLD FUTURES NAVIGATOR

The Navigator is a short assessment that every applicant completes. It replaced the individual admissions interviews we ran in our first cohorts, and it is now required for both LaunchLab and Ignite. It does two things at once. It tells us what a student is bringing before the first session, which lets facilitators plan around real people rather than a roster. And it removes the scheduling barrier that was quietly filtering out the students with the least free time, which were often the students we most wanted to reach.

HOW TO READ A NAVIGATOR RESULT

The Navigator suggests problem areas a student might consider working on, drawn from the interests they describe. It is a prompt, not a diagnosis. What a student actually wants to build comes from their application answers and from the conversation, and it very often differs from the suggestion. That is not a discrepancy. It is the point.

THE FUNDING MODEL, STATED PLAINLY

Programs are free to students. That is a deliberate design choice and it is not going to change, because the young people we most want in the room are the ones for whom a fee is the end of the conversation.

Partner organizations pay. Readiness Workshop sessions run at an average fee of \$500 to \$600 per session depending on length, format, and how much co-design is involved. Schools, youth serving nonprofits, and faith communities bring us into their existing calendar and cover the cost of delivery. Philanthropic support covers what partner fees do not, which right now is most of LaunchLab and all of the college mentorship.

WHY THIS MATTERS FOR FUNDERS

Two revenue lines instead of one. Earned income from workshop delivery is growing against a fee schedule we can quote, and philanthropy carries the deep, long form programs that no partner budget will ever fully cover. Neither line depends on the other surviving.

SECTION 03 · THE PROBLEM WE ARE ANSWERING

03

The gap, in other people's numbers.

Three findings we did not produce, from research we did not fund. They are the reason this organization exists.

What the national research says.

Our own data is small by design. These three findings are not ours, they are large and independent, and they describe the gap our students walk into.

01 · EMPLOYERS SAY SCHOOL IS NOT DOING THIS JOB

Three in four employers say colleges are not preparing graduates for the workforce. The complaint is rarely about technical skill. It is about judgment, communication, and knowing how work actually works, none of which anyone was assigned to teach.

02 · YOUNG PEOPLE WANT TO BUILD, AND ARE NOT SHOWN HOW

Three in five teenagers say they would rather build something of their own than take a traditional job. Most of them will graduate without a single course that shows them how. The interest is not the missing piece. The instruction is.

03 · GRADUATES SAY THE EDUCATION DID NOT FIT

Ninety-four percent of graduates say they would change something about their education, most often what they studied. That is a decision made years earlier, usually without anyone helping them work out what they were good at first.

WHAT WE TAKE FROM THIS

The failure is not happening in college. It is happening years earlier, in the absence of anyone helping a fifteen year old work out what they are good at and what they might do with it. That is the moment BFA works in, and it is why our programs are built around a student's own experience rather than around a curriculum they have to fit themselves into.

SOURCES

Employer preparation figure: Intelligent.com employer survey, 2024. Teen entrepreneurial intent: Junior Achievement teen entrepreneurship survey. Graduate regret figure: Cengage Graduate Employability Report. Every figure in this section is checked before each edition, and where we cannot point to a source the number does not go in the document.

SECTION 04 · WHAT THE WORK HAS PRODUCED

04

How we got here.

The headline numbers, the two institutional partnerships carrying the work, the timeline, and the research that shaped the curriculum.

At a glance.

Bold Futures Academy is a small organization doing depth over scale work. These are the numbers that tell that story honestly.

MAR 2025 ESTABLISHED Founded as a 501(c)(3), on the back of mentorship work that began in 2024.	60+ YOUNG PEOPLE REACHED Documented individually. Roughly half since the organization was founded, the rest through the founder's earlier UConn work.	3 PROGRAM LINES LaunchLab, college programming including Ignite, and the Readiness Workshop Series.
2 ACTIVE PARTNERSHIPS UConn Werth Institute, continuous and ongoing, and Hartford Youth Scholars, delivering and co-creating.	6 SPRING 2026 COHORT Enrolled. Four engaged meaningfully. Three completed Demo Day.	15 MENTORED ONE TO ONE Individual mentee matches, every one documented with a date. Eleven five-star ratings from four of them.

THE PACE, STATED PLAINLY

Bold Futures Academy is seventeen months old. In that time it has reached more than thirty young people, opened delivery in a second state, run a full six week program end to end, and built a workshop line that partners pay for. Ten more students enter LaunchLab this fall. We are not claiming a decade of outcomes, because we have not had a decade. We are claiming that a very small organization has moved quickly and documented all of it.

WHAT THE TRACTION STORY ACTUALLY IS

Our evidence base is wider than LaunchLab. It includes mentorship that predates both the program and the organization, an age span from eleventh grade through college, two rounds of primary research fielded and reported without editing, and named testimonials from students who have finished the work and are willing to put their name to it.

Where the sixty come from.

DELIVERY	REACHED	PERIOD
One to one mentorship, Feb 2024 to Jan 2025	6	Before founding
UConn summer speaker series, July 2024	8	Before founding
UConn cohort session, November 2024	~7	Before founding
One to one mentorship, Mar 2025 onward	9	Since founding
Werth Innovators summer internship, 2025	7	Since founding
UConn cohort workshop, November 2025	10	Since founding
Werth Innovators summer internship, 2026	8	Since founding
LaunchLab Spring 2026 cohort	6	Since founding
Hartford Youth Scholars workshop, July 2026	8	Since founding

HOW WE COUNT

That is sixty-nine on the page. Roughly six people appear on more than one line, since several who sat in a room later became mentees, and they are counted once, which brings the total to about sixty-three. The one to one matches and the cohort rosters are documented individually. Not counted at all: two class cohorts we were matched to in 2024 for which no roster survives, and the students we picked up in sessions when their own mentor could not attend. We would rather publish a defensible sixty than a flattering guess.

The active partnerships.

Two institutional relationships carry our college mentorship pipeline and our Connecticut delivery. Both are active and both are producing student outcomes.

ORGANIZATION	STATUS	WHAT IT CARRIES
UConn Werth Institute Storrs, CT	ONGOING	A continuous mentorship relationship that began before BFA existed and became the foundation of the Ignite pipeline. The relationship now runs through five distinct roles: one to one mentor on the Werth mentoring platform, invited guest speaker on campus, mentor inside the Werth Innovators summer internship, reviewer on student final pitches, and stand-in mentor for students whose own mentor cannot make a session. Joint focus groups are planned to inform both our high school and college programming.
Hartford Youth Scholars Hartford, CT	DELIVERING	First workshop delivered July 15, 2026 at Central Connecticut State University, co-facilitated with HYS program lead Natiel Cooper as Day 3 of the HYS College Bootcamp. Eight scholars completed reflection surveys. Co-creation continues on fall high school programming, and HYS has agreed to refer eligible students into Ignite.

WHY THIS MATTERS FOR PARTNERS AND FUNDERS

We do not run on a single partnership. UConn has carried continuous mentorship since before the organization was incorporated. Hartford Youth Scholars moved from signed to delivered inside one program year. Two relationships, both institutional, both producing documented student outcomes. Small, deliberate, and durable.

WHAT WE CLAIM AND WHAT WE DO NOT

Everything in this report is described as it was actually delivered. Work that is still in co-creation, including middle school sessions with Hartford Youth Scholars, is named as planned rather than counted as complete.

What the UConn relationship actually involves.

Most partnership pages say ongoing and leave it there. This one has five distinct roles behind it, and it is worth showing because it is the closest thing we have to a model of what a deep institutional relationship looks like.

ROLE	WHAT IT HAS MEANT IN PRACTICE
One to one mentor	Fifteen documented mentee matches since February 2024, across two successive mentoring platforms, running from a first introduction through a full venture arc. Four of those mentees have rated the mentorship through the university's own platform, eleven times between them. Every rating is five out of five.
Invited guest speaker	Eight students at the summer speaker series in July 2024, a Werth Innovators cohort on campus that November, and a second cohort in November 2025 for a session on pitching and sharpening a business idea. The last of those produced the survey data reported in this section.
Summer program mentor	Three consecutive summer programs, including the Werth Innovators internship for first-year women, mentoring students across the full length of their projects.
Pitch reviewer	Final project presentations reviewed in person on campus in May 2025 and virtually since, giving structured feedback on each student's final pitch.
Stand-in mentor	When a student's assigned mentor cannot make a session, our founder takes them. This is the least visible part of the relationship and probably the largest by headcount.

WHY WE ARE SHOWING YOU THIS

A funder looking at a young organization reasonably asks whether its partnerships are real or aspirational. This one has survived a platform migration, a change of staff contacts, and the founding of an entire nonprofit in the middle of it, and the invitations still come unprompted. That is the standard we are trying to reach with every partner named in this report.

A timeline of building.

2023

2024

Before the organization: the work at UConn begins

On September 9, 2023, UConn's Werth Institute for Entrepreneurship invites our founder to join NetWerx as an alumni mentor. She onboards on September 14. Bold Futures Academy does not exist yet. This is the work it was built out of, and the relationship has been continuous ever since.

2024

TO 2025

Workshops and mentorship, still before the organization

Three mentees are matched through the Werth Institute's mentoring platform between February and April 2024, followed by two more that autumn and another in January 2025. In July 2024 our founder speaks to eight students at UConn's summer speaker series, and on November 12 she makes her first campus visit to a cohort of Werth Innovators. Ongoing one to one mentorship produces the first documented student outcomes: increased confidence, less hesitation, a clearer sense of direction. Named testimonials emerge. Ruth mentors seven additional UConn students through other Werth connected pipelines and continues as a UConn summer program mentor through 2026, following one mentee through her full venture journey.

MAR

2025

Bold Futures Academy is established

The organization is incorporated and recognized as a 501(c)(3), EIN 33-3751028, based in Rockland, Massachusetts. Everything from this point forward is delivered by the organization rather than by one person volunteering.

NOV

2025

A second UConn workshop, and the research behind the curriculum

On Friday, November 14, BFA returns to campus to lead a session with the Werth Innovators and fields a feedback survey with all seven participants. All seven say high school did not prepare them to think like an entrepreneur. Six say they would have joined LaunchLab as high school students. All seven say BFA can bridge the gap. This is the data that anchored the LaunchLab curriculum.

SPRING

2026

The inaugural LaunchLab cohort runs

Six high school students enroll for April 18 to May 23. Four engage meaningfully. Three complete Demo Day. The Hartford Youth Scholars partnership is signed.

A timeline of building, continued.

**JULY
2026**

Connecticut delivery opens at CCSU

BFA co-facilitates a sixty minute personal branding workshop as Day 3 of the Hartford Youth Scholars College Bootcamp. Eight scholars from eight different schools complete reflection surveys. One yes and four maybes for LaunchLab Fall 2026 come out of a single hour.

**AUG
2026**

A third program line

The Hartford work becomes the Readiness Workshop Series, a catalogue of bookable sessions across six groups that any partner can bring into their own calendar.

**FALL
2026**

LaunchLab cohort two

September 12 through October 17, with asynchronous pitch recording, an explicit attendance policy reviewed at orientation, and a strengthened mid-program mentor touchpoint. The partnership pipeline continues to build alongside it.

2027

Two cohorts, and a corporate partner

The plan for next year is at least one high school cohort and one college cohort, the college one corporate sponsored with the company choosing the problem its students work on. Workshops expand toward organizations running summer internship programs, Ignite expands beyond UConn, and conversations are underway with UConn's college and career center.

What the November 2025 UConn research told us.

BFA student feedback survey · n=7 · UConn Werth Institute · Mixed sophomore and junior cohort · Self-reported, post-workshop.



SKILL GAPS THEY NAMED FOR HIGH SCHOOLERS HEADING INTO COLLEGE

SKILL	SHARE NAMING IT
Time management	86%
Identifying real problems	71%
Financial literacy	71%
Pitching	57%
Empathy mapping	43%
Business planning and team collaboration	43%

WHAT THEY SAID THEY STILL NEEDED

Asked what they most wanted to be taught, the group named empathy mapping, pitching practice, team collaboration, AI literacy, ethics, and financial literacy. Asked what was standing in their way, they named two things: money and confidence.

Five of the seven opted in for ongoing mentorship and have been re-engaged. Separately, our founder has continued one to one mentorship with seven additional UConn students through other Werth connected pipelines over the same period.

What they actually said.

Direct responses from all seven participants, grouped by theme. These are the sentences that shaped the LaunchLab curriculum.

ON THE GAP THEY FELT IN HIGH SCHOOL

- How to come up with ideas, how to be successful in entrepreneurship.
- Design thinking. Having a bright idea isn't always the same as having an execution plan.
- How to network and how to connect with other people.
- More about mindset and purpose.

ON THE SUPPORT THEY WISHED THEY HAD EARLIER

- I wish I had encouragement. Most adults look at me like I'm crazy and it would have been nice to have more support.
- People in similar fields, alumni from my program.
- Mentorship. Most important thing.

ON WHAT BFA CAN DO FOR YOUNGER STUDENTS

- Let them know that their big ideas are realistic.
- Give them the confidence to pursue their ideas.
- Understanding that their potential is limitless, and seeing what they are capable of.

IN ONE WORD, THE WORKSHOP WAS

Insightful. Amazing. Insightful. Perspective. Fun. Insightful. Great. Three of the seven independently reached for the same word.

SECTION 05 · THE HONEST FUNNEL

05

LaunchLab, Spring 2026.

Six students enrolled. Four engaged meaningfully. Three completed Demo Day. Here is what happened, and why depth over scale is the case for support.

The honest funnel.

A six week virtual high school program. April 18 to May 23, 2026. Saturdays, 11:30 AM to 3:00 PM ET. Theme: Entrepreneurship in the Age of AI, The Human Advantage.



WHY WE REPORT THIS WAY

We do not round these numbers up. The four students who engaged meaningfully built real ventures, made measurable shifts in how they think, and produced documented work. Reporting honestly is how we earn the right to claim depth, and it is how we work out what Fall 2026 needs to fix.

What the cohort produced.

One founder pitched *NeuroGuard*, an AI safety net for stroke triage. Another pitched *Bridge AI*, a tax documentation tool that helps farms turn surplus produce into deductible donations. Each delivered a seven minute slot: three minutes of pitch, two of peer feedback, two of mentor panelist feedback. Both were grounded in working prototypes, complete business plan notes, and customer hypotheses they had actually tested.

A third founder built *Asian Student Awareness* across the prior weeks and pitched at Demo Day before leaving the program early for legitimate reasons. Her venture exists and her arc is documented. That modified completion path is one Fall 2026 will explicitly design for, through asynchronous pitch recording and makeup options.

WHAT EVERY STUDENT WHO COMPLETED WALKED AWAY WITH

- A real venture, named and positioned against a real problem
- A working prototype tested with peers and mentors
- A six week business plan with weekly Looking Back and Looking Forward analysis
- A documented shift in thinking, captured in their own words across weekly forms
- A Demo Day pitch delivered to mentor panelists with live feedback
- A keepsake LaunchLab letter and completion certificate

Before LaunchLab, I thought entrepreneurship was strictly building a business. Now I think entrepreneurship is building an idea with purpose to help other people.

ANONYMOUS FOUNDER · SPRING 2026 · CLOSING REFLECTION

Student profile 01 of 04.

NeuroGuard · An AI safety net for stroke triage

ONE-WORD ANCHOR	FORMS SUBMITTED	ROLE IN TEAM SIM	OUTCOME
Discernment	Weeks 1 to 5, complete	CEO, Week 4	Full Demo Day pitch

THE VENTURE

NeuroGuard is an AI assisted tool that flags when emergency stroke triage AI may be underweighting a patient's symptoms because of biased or unrepresentative training data, so a clinician can review the case before a time-sensitive decision is made. By Week 5 the founder had repositioned it as a second layer of safety rather than a replacement for clinical judgment, a framing she arrived at through user feedback during the MVP panel.

WK 1 · MINDSET	WK 2 · PROBLEM	WK 3 · IDEATION	WK 4 · TEAM SIM	WK 5 · MVP
Discernment is not pure logic. Empathy, emotion, and integrity belong to it.	Moved from a vague AI bias observation to a grounded problem statement.	Sharpened into a focused stroke triage use case.	Served as CEO. Held the group's coordination.	HTML prototype. Repositioned as a safety net, not a diagnostic tool.

WHAT SHE DEMONSTRATED

- **Personal experience as method.** Drew on her own observations throughout, never treating the venture as an academic exercise.
- **Mentor feedback as input.** Took panel feedback seriously and visibly narrowed from broad AI bias to one clinical use case.
- **A documented shift.** Began with a profit-first framing of entrepreneurship. By Week 5 she was articulating human-centered design as the moat rather than the constraint.
- **Leadership under pressure.** Stepped into the CEO role during the team simulation and held it.

LaunchLab gave me the chance to turn an idea into something real.

ANONYMOUS FOUNDER · SPRING 2026 · WEEK 6 EXIT REFLECTION

Student profile 02 of 04.

Bridge AI · Tax documentation for surplus farm donations

ONE-WORD ANCHOR	FORMS SUBMITTED	ROLE IN TEAM SIM	OUTCOME
Pivot	Weeks 1 to 5, complete	CTO, Week 4	Full Demo Day pitch

THE VENTURE

Bridge AI moved through three distinct stages: a hardware environmental concept in Week 1, a machine learning platform for food waste reduction in Week 3, and finally a business to business tool that helps farms document surplus produce as tax deductible charitable donations. By Demo Day it had a working prototype and a real customer hypothesis. This founder was the only student present every single week.

WK 1 · HARDWARE	WK 2 · ASSUMPTION	WK 3 · PIVOT 1	WK 4 · CTO	WK 5 · PIVOT 2
Particulate-filtering environmental concept. Profit-first frame.	Caught their own assumptions and reframed the mission language.	Food waste platform. Recognized AI could not generate their SMS-for-farmers idea.	Served as CTO in the team simulation. Built infrastructure thinking.	Real-time pivot during the MVP panel. Landed on the tax documentation tool.

WHAT THIS FOUNDER DEMONSTRATED

- **Iteration as identity.** Three pivots in five weeks, each grounded in new feedback or evidence rather than in indecision.
- **An early shift.** Their Week 1 reflection captured a move from a profit-first frame to a learning-first one, credited to guest speaker Conor Twomey.
- **Founder thinking, not user thinking.** Their closing reflection positioned them as the agent using AI rather than the other way round, a distinction many adult founders never make.
- **Consistent attendance.** The only student in the cohort present every week.

Student profile 03 of 04.

Asian Student Awareness · Reducing bullying through cross-cultural learning

ONE-WORD ANCHOR	FORMS SUBMITTED	DEMO DAY	OUTCOME
Purpose	Facilitator observation	Pitched, modified path	Modified completion

THE VENTURE

Asian Student Awareness was built directly out of the founder’s own childhood experience of being bullied. The venture focused on reducing bullying through structured cross-cultural learning, with interventions designed to run in school settings where students from minority backgrounds are routinely targeted. By Demo Day she had carried it from a personal memory to a pitched concept.

WHY THIS PROFILE IS BUILT FROM OBSERVATION

This founder did not submit weekly live session forms. Her profile is drawn from facilitator observation across the weeks she was present and from the work she submitted directly. The signal she gave was strong enough that a full profile could be built from observation alone, which says something about how clearly she carried the venture.

WHAT SHE DEMONSTRATED

- **Personal pain as a starting point.** Built the venture out of the most honest source she had.
- **Mission-first framing.** By the end she was describing entrepreneurship as building an idea with purpose to help other people, which is close to a word for word statement of the LaunchLab thesis.
- **She came back to pitch.** Despite an early departure for legitimate reasons, she returned to deliver at Demo Day.
- **The modified completion case.** Her path is the reason Fall 2026 designs asynchronous pitch recording and makeup options into the structure.

Student profile 04 of 04.

Food insecurity venture · Reducing shame as a barrier to access

ONE-WORD ANCHOR	FORMS SUBMITTED	ATTENDANCE	OUTCOME
Depth	Week 2 only	3 absences, disqualified	Did not complete

THE VENTURE

This student's venture centered on food insecurity, with a focus on lower income households and students who could not reliably afford good food. The distinguishing insight was identifying shame, rather than cost or logistics, as the deeper barrier keeping people from using food resources that already existed. It was the most sophisticated root cause framing in the cohort.

IMPORTANT NOTE ON DATA SOURCES

This student submitted one live session form, from Week 2. The profile is built from that form combined with facilitator observation across the weeks they were present. The depth of that single form was unusually high and the patterns in it are real. The student missed three sessions including Demo Day, which closed their engagement and disqualified them from completion.

WHAT THIS STUDENT DEMONSTRATED

- **Empathy as a working tool.** Approached the process through the people they wanted to serve rather than through the product.
- **Root cause thinking.** Identified shame as the barrier rather than the surface symptom of cost.
- **Direct, thoughtful contribution.** Their in-session commentary was unusually grounded for a student at their stage.
- **The non-completion case.** Documented because the depth they showed when present was real.

We do not erase students from the record because they did not finish. Including this profile honors what they contributed and gives Fall 2026 a clearer signal on how to support students whose engagement is uneven.

SECTION 06 · ONE HOUR, AND A NEW PROGRAM LINE

06

One hour in Hartford.

On July 15, 2026 we co-facilitated a sixty minute workshop at Central Connecticut State University. Eight scholars filled out reflection surveys by hand. This is everything they told us, and what we built out of it.

What happened at CCSU.

Day 3 of the Hartford Youth Scholars College Bootcamp · July 15, 2026 · Central Connecticut State University · Co-facilitated with HYS program lead Natiel Cooper.

The session compressed LaunchLab's signature method into a single hour: an Experience Inventory, an Accomplishment Statement builder, and a Mini Pitch with a live feedback loop. Eight in-person scholars completed reflection surveys. Seven were rising seniors and one a rising junior, drawn from eight different Connecticut schools, a mix of competitive independent schools and Hartford area public and magnet schools.

WHAT WE CAME TO DO, AND WHETHER WE DID IT

The goal for the hour was narrow and we set it in advance: every scholar should be able to name their own value out loud, in specific words, and pitch it. Three of the eight went further and delivered their pitch in front of the whole room, in a session where nobody was required to. At the start of the hour, not one of those three could articulate what they were good at when we asked them directly. Hartford Youth Scholars staff told us afterwards that they had not seen their scholars engage in a workshop like that before.

3.5→4.1

CONFIDENCE DESCRIBING THEMSELVES

Average self-reported, before and after, out of five.

4 OF 8

REPORTED A CONFIDENCE INCREASE

Two more were already at five and could not rise.

4.1/5

LIKELIHOOD TO RECOMMEND

Five of eight rated four or five. One rated two.

5 OF 8

INTERESTED IN LAUNCHLAB

One yes and four maybes, out of one hour of programming.

4 OF 8

WANT TO BUILD SOMETHING ONE DAY

Rated themselves four or five on starting a business, project, or movement.

8

SCHOOLS REPRESENTED

Eight scholars, eight different schools, one shared gap.

HOW THESE FIGURES WERE CHECKED

Every number on this page was read off the handwritten surveys rather than taken from a summary. Eight scholars is a small sample and we treat it as directional, but the movement is reported scholar by scholar on the next page rather than hidden inside an average. One caution on reading the confidence numbers too literally: one of the scholars who recorded no change is one of the three who stood up and pitched, having been unable to describe her own strengths an hour earlier. Self-rating is not the only evidence in the room, and it is not always the best.

What the numbers actually say.

The headline average hides the more useful finding. Read the movement scholar by scholar and the hour explains itself.

MOST USEFUL PART OF THE SESSION	SCHOLARS	CONFIDENCE MOVEMENT
Mini Pitch and feedback	3	All three gained. Movements of +2, +1, and +1.
Experience Inventory	2	One gained by 1. One flat, and she wrote that her table did not talk.
Accomplishment Statement	1	Flat at five. Already at the ceiling before the session began.
Presentation and examples	1	Flat at five. Also at the ceiling.
No selection made	1	Flat at three. Named nothing as most useful.

THE SIGNAL

Every scholar who named the Mini Pitch as most useful gained confidence. Of the six scholars who had room to move at all, four moved, an average of 3.0 to 3.8. The two who started at five could not rise. The two who stayed flat with room to grow are the same two who reported that nobody at their table engaged.

Confidence movement tracked table engagement rather than exposure to the curriculum. The hands-on sprints carried the session, and the scholars who were left out of them are precisely the scholars who did not move. That is a finding about room design, not about whether the hour worked. The hour worked. Three scholars pitched publicly, the Mini Pitch was voted the most useful segment, and the average likelihood to recommend was 4.1 out of 5. What we learned is how to make sure the two quiet tables get the same hour the loud ones did.

What this changes for the next collaboration.

01

Add a co-facilitator

With a single facilitator, small group scaffolding was thin. Two scholars asked for individual attention in writing. Trained peer leads are the cheaper alternative.

02

Structure the turn-taking

A silent table is a design failure, not a student failure. Build named turns into the Mini Pitch sprint so no scholar can be skipped.

03

Lead with the Mini Pitch

It produced every confidence gain in the room. In a sixty minute session it should be the anchor, not the closer.

04

Sell the series, not the session

One hour opened the door and did not finish the job. The Readiness Workshop Series exists so a partner can book the follow-through.

What they want solved.

Every scholar was asked to name one problem in their school, community, or daily life that they wish someone would solve. Their answers are the mission-fit evidence.

Three of eight named some form of representation or equity: the absence of people of color at their school, the absence of diversity among teachers, and equality stated plainly as a one word answer. Others named pollution and litter in their streets, aging facilities, and campus access. Five of eight identified themselves as the kind of person who likes understanding people and their problems, which is the empathy-first disposition the human advantage thesis is built on.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Asked to name one thing they had learned that day but had never put into words before, one scholar answered simply that he had learned how to turn skills into words. Two others put it this way.

My experiences can be small, they don't have to be big.

12TH GRADER · HARTFORD YOUTH SCHOLARS WORKSHOP

Always say what makes you different.

12TH GRADER · HARTFORD YOUTH SCHOLARS WORKSHOP

THE ANSWER WE ARE NOT EDITING OUT

One scholar wrote that the problem she wants solved is her own school. That it does not try to help students with the future, that it would be nice if it showed even a little that it cared, and that it is annoying to have to figure everything out by yourself. She rated her confidence three before and three after, and marked not right now for LaunchLab. She is the student this organization exists for, and one hour did not reach her. That is the most useful sentence in the dataset.

Three workshops, two partners, two years.

The Readiness Workshop Series did not start in Hartford. It started at UConn, with pitching workshops run two years running, in 2024 and again in November 2025, both of them working sessions where students sharpened a real business idea and made the case for it out loud. The second of those produced the survey data in Section 04. Hartford was the third workshop, not the first.

What Hartford added was the shape. Hartford Youth Scholars came into the relationship wanting a series rather than a single visit, and the personal branding session in July was the first one delivered against that. Having a partner ask for a series is what turned a thing we kept being invited to do into a program line with a catalogue, a fee, and a name.

WHEN	PARTNER	WORKSHOP
2024	UConn Werth Institute	Pitching and strengthening a business idea. Delivered before BFA was incorporated.
November 2025	UConn Werth Institute	Pitching, second consecutive year. Feedback survey fielded with all seven participants.
July 2026	Hartford Youth Scholars	Personal branding, the first session of a planned series. Reflection surveys from all eight scholars.

Across the three, the pattern held: partners do not want a semester long curriculum or a motivational assembly. They want a real working session on one skill, delivered inside a calendar they already run. The catalogue in Section 02 is that pattern written down, and it is the first line where the partner pays a stated fee.

PIPELINE AND PARTNERSHIP VALUE FROM THE JULY SESSION

- **Recruitment.** One yes and four maybes for LaunchLab Fall 2026 out of a single hour, with no recruitment spend. Four of the five supplied student or guardian contact details. The fifth is reachable through HYS.
- **Partnership.** Hartford Youth Scholars has an ongoing pipeline of college-bound Hartford scholars. This session established BFA as a repeatable programming partner rather than a one-time guest, and HYS has agreed to refer eligible students into Ignite.
- **Product.** The session produced a fee-bearing program line we can now quote to any partner in the country.

WHAT WE ARE ASKING PARTNERS TO NOTICE

The two scholars who did not move are the reason we redesigned. We would rather show a partner the table that went silent than a room of averages, because the fix lives in the first version and not in the second.

SECTION 07 · STUDENT VOICES

07

Every voice.

Every quote we have, from college mentees, LaunchLab founders, Hartford scholars, and the mentors who watched them work. Gathered in one place.

Every voice, in one place.

Everything students, alumni, and mentors have said about this work, gathered from four years and four different settings. Shared with permission. Nothing has been tidied up.

COLLEGE MENTORSHIP · IGNITE AND THE UCONN PIPELINE

Ruth's entrepreneurial spirit was inspiring. Learning about her startup journey encouraged me to embrace my own entrepreneurial ideas, sparking newfound confidence. Her encouragement empowered me to overcome my hesitations and pursue new ventures.

KETSIA · IGNITE ALUM · UCONN WERTH INSTITUTE

Working with Ruth honestly felt so natural. I loved how our values aligned and how easy it was to brainstorm with her. I always left our chats feeling inspired and encouraged and I'm so grateful for everything she shared with me.

MAL · IGNITE ALUM · UCONN WERTH INSTITUTE

From our very first meeting, she was intentional, kind, and genuinely cared about helping me grow. She supported me through every stage of my project, starting with ideation.

ANONYMOUS MENTEE · IGNITE · UCONN WERTH INSTITUTE

Her guidance set me on the right path for my final two years of undergraduate studies and played a key role in helping me secure internships during that time and build meaningful relationships.

KY · IGNITE ALUM · UCONN WERTH INSTITUTE

Every voice, continued.

LAUNCHLAB · SPRING 2026 COHORT

Before LaunchLab, I thought entrepreneurship was strictly building a business. Now I think entrepreneurship is building an idea with purpose to help other people.

ANONYMOUS FOUNDER · LAUNCHLAB SPRING 2026

It gives students real hands-on experience building a venture, not just learning about entrepreneurship in a classroom. You meet amazing people, gain confidence, and leave with skills you can use in any future career.

ANONYMOUS FOUNDER · LAUNCHLAB SPRING 2026

LaunchLab gave me the chance to turn an idea into something real.

ANONYMOUS FOUNDER · LAUNCHLAB SPRING 2026

THE UCONN WORKSHOP · NOVEMBER 2025

I wish I had encouragement. Most adults look at me like I'm crazy and it would have been nice to have more support.

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT · ON WHAT HE NEEDED IN HIGH SCHOOL

Mentorship. Most important thing.

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT · ON THE SUPPORT HE WISHED HE HAD EARLIER

Let them know that their big ideas are realistic.

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT · ON WHAT BFA CAN DO FOR YOUNGER STUDENTS

Every voice, continued.

HARTFORD YOUTH SCHOLARS WORKSHOP · JULY 2026

My experiences can be small, they don't have to be big.

12TH GRADER · HARTFORD YOUTH SCHOLARS WORKSHOP

Always say what makes you different.

12TH GRADER · HARTFORD YOUTH SCHOLARS WORKSHOP

Asked to name one thing he had learned that day but had never put into words before, a third scholar answered that he had learned how to turn skills into words. And one scholar wrote that the problem she most wants solved is her own school, that it does not try to help students with the future, that it would be nice if it showed even a little that it cared, and that it is annoying to have to figure everything out by yourself. We keep that one in every document we publish, because she is the reason this organization exists.

MENTORS AND FACILITATORS

From a lack-of-scope, data-less, un-researched idea with an ambiguous solution, to a professional-grade deck and pitch presentable to board members.

VOLUNTEER MENTOR · LAUNCHLAB SPRING 2026 · DEMO DAY OBSERVATION

IN ONE WORD, THE NOVEMBER 2025 WORKSHOP WAS

Insightful. Amazing. Insightful. Perspective. Fun. Insightful. Great. Three of the seven participants independently reached for the same word.

Every LaunchLab student is credited as Anonymous Founder. Ventures are named, founders are not, and students who did not give permission for direct quotation are represented through facilitator observation rather than their own words. Hartford scholars are identified by grade only. That rule holds in every document we publish.

What happens after.

The honest limit of this report is that we are too young to show ten year outcomes. What we can show is what has already happened to students who came through the mentorship line first, because some of them have kept going.

FROM MENTEE TO COLLEAGUE

Two of the college students first met through the UConn mentorship pipeline went on to intern with Bold Futures Academy this summer. One of them has asked to come back as a co-facilitator for the Fall 2026 LaunchLab cohort, which means a student who was being mentored two years ago will be standing at the front of the room teaching high schoolers this September. That is the pipeline working in the direction we always hoped it would.

FROM MENTORSHIP TO VENTURES OF THEIR OWN

Both of them are building. One launched her own podcast, out of the venture work she and our founder had been doing together, and has since invited her on as a guest. She also presented at the Werth Innovators final summer showcase in July.

The other, the one returning as a co-facilitator, started her own YouTube channel, with the content direction worked out across mentorship sessions, and went on to build a wellness platform and publish a wellness journal aimed at helping people track and improve their mental health. It is a real product, on sale, and our founder is a customer.

WHAT THE MENTEES THEMSELVES SCORED IT

The Werth Institute's mentoring platform asks students to rate their mentor after a session. Four of our mentees have done so, eleven times between them, and every single rating is five out of five. It is a small sample and we will say so, but it is the one piece of evidence in this report that we neither collected nor control.

11 RATINGS RECEIVED Submitted through UConn's platform between October 2024 and November 2025.	5/5 EVERY ONE OF THEM No rating below five has ever been given.	4 MENTEES RATING Four distinct students, one of whom rated the mentorship seven separate times.
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WHAT WE ARE BUILDING TOWARD MEASURING

These are two students, named here in outline rather than as a statistic, because two is what we honestly have. The Navigator now gives us a baseline on every incoming student, and we are building the follow-up habit we did not have in our first year. In two years this section should be a table. Right now it is a promising start and we are going to describe it as one.

SECTION 08 · HOW THE WORK IS PAID FOR

08

Where the money comes from.

The approved FY2026 operating budget, what it is spent on, what is not secured yet, and who has been carrying the costs so far.

The FY2026 operating budget.

Approved by the board for the current year. It is a small budget and a deliberately flat one, and we would rather show it than describe it.

PROJECTED REVENUE

SOURCE	FY2026
Individual donations	\$18,000
Grants and foundations	\$25,000
Corporate sponsorships	\$10,000
Gifts in kind	\$10,000
Total	\$63,000

WHERE IT GOES

ALLOCATION	FY2026	SHARE
Program	\$32,660	51.7%
General and administrative	\$17,714	28.1%
Marketing and fundraising	\$11,760	18.6%
Total expenses	\$63,134	100%

The largest single line is the founder and executive director stipend at \$18,000, most of which is allocated to program delivery. After that come facilitator stipends, program space, student workbooks and materials, food for in-person sessions, liability insurance, compliance filings, and the software the organization runs on. A \$1,000 contingency reserve sits at the bottom.

TWO THINGS TO READ CAREFULLY

The budget balances to within \$134, which means there is no cushion. And \$25,000 of the \$63,000 is grants and foundations, which is projected rather than secured. A reader should treat that line as the gap we are working to close this year, not as income already in hand.

How this actually gets funded.

Three things, and only one of them is cash.

Donated professional work

This is the largest and least visible line, and it is the reason a budget this small has produced this much. One board member handles all of our accounting and bookkeeping pro bono through her own firm. Our board chair covered the incorporation and startup filings out of pocket. Board members sit on the admissions committee, serve as program managers, come in as guest speakers and recruit other speakers, mentor students inside the cohort, and carry outreach and partnership development. Volunteer designers make our flyers. Eight interns spent the summer rebuilding operations, program delivery, and our college partnerships. None of that is on an invoice. All of it is real.

Giving, which is early but moving

Our Givebutter campaign has raised over \$1,000, and across our wider network we have raised over \$1,500 since it launched. The goal for the year is \$12,000, and the board is running a give or get effort to reach it. Eight of our eleven board members have given personally. That is a small dollar figure and we are not going to dress it up, but the participation rate is the number a funder should look at, because it is the one that says the people closest to this organization are backing it with their own money. It is also the first year anyone has been asked at all.

The founder

The rest has come from our founder. Our books record roughly \$18,700 of spending since 2024, of which over \$10,300 is money she put in personally, carried as a loan to the organization. It covers the website, the design work, the software the organization runs on, program printing, recruitment advertising, insurance, and, from September 2025 through April 2026, a virtual assistant so the administrative work would not swallow program time.

What the donated work is actually worth

The in-kind lines are not small. Pro bono accounting and bookkeeping alone is budgeted at \$6,000 a year, and our board chair covered roughly \$1,250 in incorporation and annual filing costs out of his own pocket. Add the hours the board and volunteers put into outreach, admissions, mentoring, guest speaking, and design, and the value of donated work is comfortably the largest line in this organization.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR A FUNDER

A gift here does not top up an endowment. It replaces money currently coming out of one person's pocket, and it buys the second facilitator, the printed workbooks, and the program space that let us serve more than ten students at a time.

It also solves a problem that goodwill cannot. Volunteers rotate. Every time one moves on, we recruit and train a replacement, and the institutional knowledge leaves with them. What we are raising for is the ability to hold a small team in place long enough to stop starting over.

ON THE PROGRAM SHARE

Program spending is 51.7 percent of the budget as booked, which is below the level most funders like to see. Two lines explain most of the gap. Donated bookkeeping and contractor costs sit in general and administrative, and both are the kind of expense that scales down as a share of budget the moment programming grows. We would rather name that than reallocate the numbers to look better.

HOW THE BOOKS ARE KEPT

Bookkeeping is handled by an outside firm and reconciled on a regular cycle, with a board treasurer who works in nonprofit finance. Financial statements are available to funders and partners on request, and we are glad to walk through them line by line.

SECTION 09 · GOVERNANCE AND THE PEOPLE WHO DELIVER

09

Who runs this.

A working board with four standing committees, a facilitation team that has grown with every cohort, and an intern program that carries real deliverables.

The board and the team.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Eleven directors and advisors covering education, finance, law, marketing, community development, and entrepreneurship. Donald Dea chairs the board. Arlene Powers serves as secretary and Jessica Haberer, who works in nonprofit finance, serves as treasurer. Mohammad Sarhan advises on curriculum, Raj Shankaran on corporate partnerships, Kevin Lederer on venture and strategy, Sade Reese on marketing, and Brianna Thomas on fundraising. Ruth Gay serves as board president and executive director.

COMMUNITY ADVOCACY, SPLIT TWO WAYS

Two directors carry community advocacy, and they work different segments of it. Mercy Yalartai builds relationships with other nonprofits and looks for places where organizations doing similar work can do it together instead of separately. Christopher Hendricks builds relationships with partners and with foundations, and contributes directly to our grant work. Both of them also carry school outreach and school partnerships, which is how most of our students find us.

This matters more than a governance chart usually does. Neither of those roles is advisory. They are the outreach function of a small organization, and they are being done by directors rather than by staff we cannot yet afford.

FOUR STANDING COMMITTEES

COMMITTEE	REMIT
Executive	Governance, leadership direction, and organizational strategy.
Development	Fundraising, grants, donor engagement, and financial sustainability.
Marketing and outreach	Brand, partnerships, and recruitment.
Program	Curriculum quality, student experience, and program evaluation.

Who delivers the programs.

The Spring 2026 pilot was co-facilitated, and our program manager helped design that first curriculum. For Fall 2026 the facilitation team has grown to five co-facilitators, each leading their own segment of a Saturday session, supported by volunteer mentors and Demo Day panelists drawn from working founders and professionals. Marketing and design are handled in house.

THE INTERN PROGRAM

Eight interns worked across operations, communications, partnerships, and program development in summer 2026. Their work was not fling. They took the feedback from the Spring cohort and turned it into specific, measurable changes to the program, and they rebuilt the curriculum materials around what the data actually said. Several of the design changes described earlier in this report came out of that work.

WHY THIS SECTION IS HERE

A young organization built around one founder is a real risk, and funders are right to ask about it. Our answer is that the delivery team, the board committees, and the intern pipeline have all grown faster than the student count has, which is the order we wanted them to grow in.

SECTION 10 · FALL 2026 AND BEYOND

10

Where we go next.

LaunchLab Fall 2026, the Hartford expansion, the fundraising structure, and the four ways to move a real piece of this forward.

What the next twelve months hold.

FALL 2026 · LAUNCHLAB COHORT TWO

September 12 to October 17, 2026 · The Human Advantage

Changes from Spring 2026 include asynchronous pitch recording, an explicit attendance policy reviewed at orientation, and a strengthened mid-program mentor touchpoint. Every applicant completes the Navigator, and the five Hartford leads from July are in this cycle.

Recruitment has gone considerably better than it did for the pilot. As of early August, about fifty young people had expressed interest through our LinkedIn posting and seventeen had completed the full long-form application, for ten seats.



Compared with the pilot, which enrolled six, that is close to three applications per seat. It is the clearest signal we have that demand is not the constraint.

WHO IS WALKING IN THE DOOR

Every applicant completes the Bold Futures Navigator before the program begins. It is an intake measure and not an outcome, and that is exactly what makes it useful. It tells us where a cohort is starting from, it lets us design around the people actually in the room rather than around a roster, and it gives us something honest to measure against at the end.

Fourteen of the seventeen Fall 2026 applicants had completed it as of early August. Here is how they rated themselves across the six entrepreneurial muscles, before anyone had taught them anything.

MUSCLE	AVERAGE	RATED THEMSELVES STRONG
Ideation	42.6%	1 of 14
Empathy	45.9%	2 of 14
Prototyping	47.4%	3 of 14
Pitching	49.5%	4 of 14
Teamwork	51.4%	7 of 14
Mindset	54.7%	9 of 14

THE SIGNAL

They arrive with the will and not the method. Mindset is the highest muscle in the group and ideation is the lowest, and only one of the fourteen rates idea generation as a strength. Nine of the fourteen name either ideation or prototyping as their single weakest muscle. These are young people who believe they can build something and do not yet know how to find an idea or make one real. That is the gap, in their own words, before we have said anything to them.

WHAT ELSE THE INTAKE DATA SAYS

- **They are driven by impact, not applause.** Eleven of fourteen named impact as a top driver and nine named mastery. Recognition came up three times.
- **They describe themselves as starters.** The strengths they claim most are initiative, ten of them, courage, eight, and organization, seven.
- **They are not trying to skip school.** Twelve of the fourteen ordered their own path as study first, then venture. This is readiness work, not a pitch to drop out.
- **Two arrive with nothing rated strong.** We know who they are before week one, which is the whole point of measuring at intake.

HOW THIS BECOMES IMPACT MEASUREMENT

The Navigator is the before. The weekly forms, facilitator observation, and the exit reflections collected across the six weeks are the after, and the same six muscles are re-rated at the end. That gives us a genuine pre and post on the same instrument, with the same students, months apart, which is a stronger design than anything in the earlier sections of this report and the one we intend to report against from here.

HOW TO READ THESE NUMBERS

Self-assessed, fourteen respondents, all applicants to an entrepreneurship program and therefore not a random sample of teenagers, all measured before instruction. We report the group and never an individual. We also do not report the Navigator's suggested problem areas, because those are prompts the assessment generates from a student's stated interests rather than statements of what that student wants to solve.

ONGOING · THE READINESS WORKSHOP SERIES

From three deliveries to a standing line

The Hartford series continues, with the next collaboration adding a co-facilitator or trained peer leads and building structured turn-taking into the sprints. Co-creation continues on fall high school programming. The full catalogue goes out this year to partners beyond Connecticut, and a third year of pitching workshops at UConn is on the table.

IN DESIGN · AN INTERGENERATIONAL ROUNDTABLE SERIES

Our first brand awareness campaign

We are designing a monthly roundtable: about ten seats, ninety minutes, with employers, educators, parents, and young people at the same table and students in the conversation rather than in the audience. Nothing has run yet, so we are describing it as an intention rather than a result. The purpose is civic engagement and brand awareness, putting the case for readiness in front of the people who can act on it, and building the informed partnerships that the programs depend on.

ONGOING · FUNDRAISING INFRASTRUCTURE

A donor pipeline instead of a scramble

Our fundraising strategist, who also co-facilitates LaunchLab and knows the program from the inside, is building out our first formal donor pipeline and partnership database, anchored by the BFA Master Fundraising Playbook. The board is running a give or get effort alongside it toward a \$12,000 goal for the year.

THE FOUR THINGS WE ARE ACTUALLY FOCUSED ON

Relationship building. Fundraising through individual giving and grants. Finding a corporate sponsor. And building our first brand awareness campaign, around an intergenerational roundtable series that puts the case for readiness in front of the people who can act on it. Everything else in this section serves one of those four.

2027 · WHAT WE ARE BUILDING TOWARD

A corporate sponsored college cohort

This is the piece we are most serious about. A company sponsors a cohort of college students and chooses the problem they work on, drawn from its own industry. The students get a real problem and a real relationship with an employer they may one day work for, which is the workforce readiness gap answered directly rather than described. The company gets a talent pipeline it has watched work. And it gets the thing corporate social responsibility teams most struggle to produce, which is documented evidence that the program did something, because we measure students at intake and again at the end.

Two cohorts, one umbrella theme

The goal is at least one high school cohort and one college cohort, possibly two high school cohorts depending on when the college one runs. The umbrella theme stays Entrepreneurship in the Age of AI. The college cohort works the corporate partner's problem. The high school cohort takes a different subtheme under The Human Advantage.

Workshops inside other people's summer programs

Organizations running internship programs already have the young people and are already looking for something better to give them than a desk. We are building toward delivering the Readiness Workshop Series into those programs over the summer.

Ignite beyond UConn

Expanding the college mentorship line to other campuses, with conversations already underway with UConn's college and career center as the first step.

ON THE PACE OF GROWTH

LaunchLab is built to serve about twenty students a year. We are deliberately running smaller than that while the foundation is still being laid, because a program that works for ten is worth more than one that half works for forty.

DEEPEN THE UCONN ENGINE

Convert the ongoing Werth Institute relationship into joint focus groups that inform both the high school and college programming, and continue the mentorship pipeline that has now reached more than sixty young people.

Come build with us.

There are four ways to partner with Bold Futures Academy in the year ahead. Each one moves a real piece of the work forward.

01

Give

Fund a student or a cohort. Tiers run from \$100 for program supplies, \$250 for a full workshop session, \$500 for a month of mentoring and a guest speaker, \$1,000 for outreach to schools that would not otherwise hear of us, \$2,500 to sponsor five students through a full LaunchLab, and \$10,000 or more for Core Partner recognition. Monthly giving starts at \$10.

02

Partner

Bring BFA to your students. Schools, youth-serving nonprofits, and faith communities book workshops or a series into their existing calendar. Co-design is available and fees are quoted per session.

03

Mentor

Show up for a cohort. Volunteer mentors and Demo Day panelists are the highest leverage gift outside of capital. A few hours across six weeks.

04

Refer

Send us a student, a board candidate, or a funder you know would care. Our growth depends on warm referrals from people who already understand the work, and most of what we have was built that way.

THE NEXT MOVE IS YOURS

Bold Futures Academy is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and all gifts are tax deductible. Every dollar moves a specific piece of the programming forward, and we will tell you which piece.

HOW TO REACH US, AND HOW TO GIVE

TO DO THIS	GO HERE
Give online	givebutter.com/boldfuturesacademy , one time or monthly
Give by check	Bold Futures Academy Foundation, 153 Turner Road, Rockland, MA 02370
Talk it through	Book thirty minutes at calendly.com/ruth-tryfairy/30min
Anything else	admin@boldfuturesacademy.org · boldfuturesacademy.org

Bold Futures Academy Foundation · EIN 33-3751028 · A 501(c)(3) nonprofit. All contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law, and donors giving \$250 or more receive a receipt automatically.

A note from our founder.

Bold Futures Academy began as an act of faith. I kept watching young people be handed a future that was changing faster than anything they had been taught to meet it with, and I recognized the pattern. Every time technology leaps, the people without the new skills get left behind. I was not willing to watch that happen to a generation I believe in.

This is also me giving something back. I would not have had the confidence to build a corporate career, or to start ventures of my own, without people who spoke into my life at every stage of it, from childhood right through my career. They gave me room to try, to get it wrong, and to keep going. That is why mentorship sits inside everything we run, and why I want students in the habit of seeking wisdom from people who have already walked the road.

What I want for these students is simple. Know what you are worth and say it out loud. See the root of a hard problem instead of the symptom. Speak for yourself and for your generation in any room you walk into. Be led by your ethics and not only by what pays. And know that whatever you build, somebody is behind you.

If any of that sounds like work you want a hand in, the pages before this one show you exactly where we are and what it would move. I would be glad to hear from you.

Vanessa Ruth Gay

FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR · BOLD FUTURES ACADEMY

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BOLD FUTURES ACADEMY

Preparing young people for their futures, whatever path they choose.

MASTER IMPACT REPORT · AUGUST 2026 EDITION

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STUDENT ATTRIBUTIONS FOLLOW EACH FOUNDER'S DOCUMENTED SHARING PERMISSIONS.