

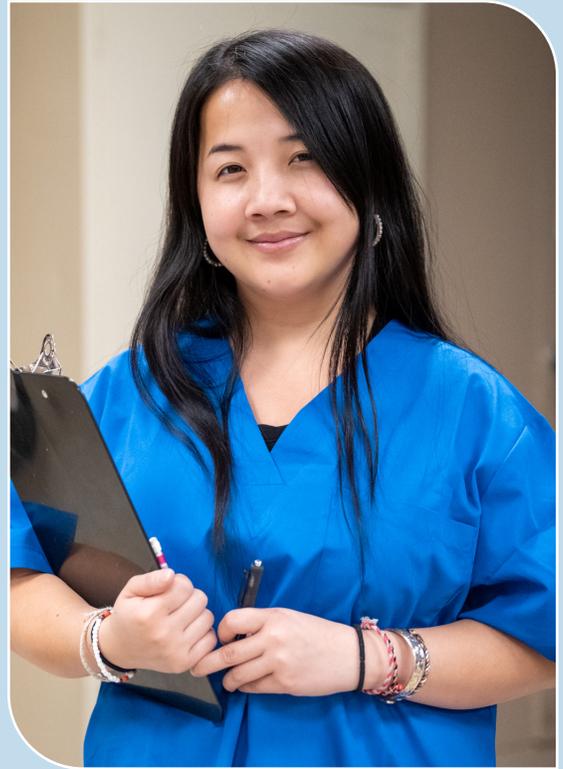


Building a Stronger Future, **Together**

2025 Annual Impact Report



The best **social service program** in the world is a **job.**





Dear **Friend,**

2025 marked an exciting new chapter for Summit Academy OIC. The completion of our campus expansion stands as a visible symbol of growth and progress, a reflection of what is possible when people are given access to the right resources, training, and support. It is more than a new space; it is a promise to our students and community that transformation starts here.

This year also brought innovation with the launch of our Unlicensed Dental Assistant training, a vital step into the healthcare sector that meets critical workforce needs while opening new pathways to family-sustaining careers. This expansion reflects Summit's ongoing commitment to bridging the gap between education, employers, and economic opportunity.

Summit continues to stand out as a regional leader in accelerated career training and workforce development. With record enrollment and deepening employer partnerships, the message is clear: opportunity is in demand, and Summit delivers.

As we look ahead, our vision is bold: to place 1,000 individuals into career advancing, family-sustaining roles within the next three years. Every student who walks through our doors represents untapped potential, talent ready to shape the future of our workforce and our community.

Together, we are not just changing lives, we are building an economy where everyone has the opportunity to succeed.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Leroy West". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue background.

Leroy West
President & Chief Executive Officer
Summit Academy OIC

Our **Mission**

We exist to assist individuals in developing their ability to earn and to become contributing citizens in their community. Summit Academy also fundamentally believes that the best social service program in the world is a job.

Our **Vision**

Summit Academy OIC will be recognized as a regional leader in accelerated training and workforce solutions that prepare individuals for career-advancing occupations leading to economic mobility and prosperity.

Training & Program Overviews



Carpentry

Summit's carpentry training builds hands-on skills, from blueprint reading to framing and finish work, preparing students for high-demand roles in construction.

Electrician

Students gain essential wiring skills, circuit theory, conduit bending, and blueprint interpretation through hands-on labs that prepare them for residential and commercial electrical work.



IT Specialist

Graduates develop core hardware, software, and troubleshooting competencies, strengthened by real-world projects or internships that prepare them for helpdesk, desktop support, or network roles.

Financial Services

Students build knowledge in mortgage servicing, insurance fundamentals, and securities essentials, preparing them for positions in community banking, mortgage processing, and client services.



Medical Administrative Assistant

Summit's Medical Administrative Assistant training covers medical billing and coding, HIPAA compliance, scheduling, and professional communication—skills needed for administrative roles in clinics, hospitals, and health systems.



Unlicensed Dental Assistant

Launched in September, this training provides hands-on learning in chairside assisting, infection control, scheduling, and dental record management for roles in dental clinics and health facilities.

GED Program

Summit's intensive 10-week GED program offers classroom instruction, academic advising, and career readiness support, with many graduates transitioning into Summit's 20-week career trainings.



A New Chapter of Growth at Summit



This fall marks a historic milestone for Summit Academy OIC. Thanks to the generosity of supporters like you, our long-awaited campus renovation and expansion is complete, and we've launched a new Unlicensed Dental Assistant training, opening doors to more opportunities than ever before.

In September, Summit celebrated our largest enrollment in history. More students are walking through Summit's doors, eager to learn, work hard, and build brighter futures for themselves and their families.

Your support is the driving force behind this growth. Because of you, more students are gaining the skills, confidence, and resources they need to move from poverty to prosperity.

Together, we are not just transforming individual lives—we are strengthening our community and shaping a brighter future for generations to come.



Bridging Lives to Prosperity in Construction



Building a Future: Edina's Journey from Uncertainty to Union Laborer

Before entering the construction industry, Edina felt stuck in jobs with limited growth. A conversation with a friend opened her eyes to the trades. **"I started thinking about how I could get a foot in the door,"** she recalls. Motivated by the promise of good wages and stable work, she enrolled in Summit Academy's Carpentry training.

At Summit, Edina gained the skills and confidence to pursue a career in construction. But after graduating, the job search wasn't easy. She considered giving up, but Summit continued supporting her as she looked for the right opportunity. Soon after, she was hired as a union laborer with Knutson Construction.

Nearly 12 years later, Edina is focused on giving back. She is especially passionate about encouraging young adults to explore construction careers. **"You should at least try,"** she says. **"If one trade doesn't work out, find another. If it's for you, don't give up."**

With a strong foundation and a clear vision for the future, Edina is now helping others build careers they can be proud of.

"Working with Summit has been a great partnership to be able to help our workforce. We desperately need new and upcoming candidates to be able to start in the construction industry. Summit students' work ethic is what sets them apart. Just being knowledgeable in what to do and coming in with a positive attitude has set the tone for Summit students. It's been awesome to build connections and relationships with them."

—Ana Lowery, D+I Coordinator at Knutson Construction

157 carpentry students

completed training, preparing them for **family-sustaining careers** in the construction industry

Carpentry students typically enrolled with no reported income. In the most recent program year, graduates saw a median annual

income increase of \$47,760

from program entry to **post-completion employment**

How Opportunity **Sparked Transformation**



For years, Gideon considered enrolling at Summit Academy OIC but hesitated to take the leap. When he finally joined the Electrician training, the experience proved to be both personally and professionally transformative.

“Summit has provided every resource necessary for you to succeed,” Gideon shared. **“The instructors are patient, positive, and supportive. They push you, but that pressure helps you become more confident in yourself and your ability to succeed.”**

That confidence, he says, has become one of the most valuable outcomes of his time at Summit. What began as a career shift from manual labor to a technical trade,

evolved into a renewed sense of purpose and possibility. **“I feel like it has changed my outlook on life and also helps me pursue the personal goals that I have,”** Gideon reflected.

Summit’s training did more than prepare Gideon for a new career; it empowered him to change his life. **“Summit opened my eyes to many of the different avenues and ways that you can succeed in this trade,”** he said. **“It’s given me a leg up on others who haven’t had this opportunity.”**

Shortly after graduating, Gideon launched his career as an electrician at Wolf River Electric.

Gideon’s story is a testament to what happens when opportunity meets determination, and of the community support that makes transformations like his possible.

“What sets Summit apart is the genuine care and commitment their students have for their respective career paths. Summit graduates arrive with a deep sense of purpose and a true passion for making a difference in their fields. Their enthusiasm, combined with the rigorous training and real-world experience Summit provides, makes them invaluable assets to our team. We know that when we hire a Summit graduate, we are bringing on someone who is skilled and deeply motivated to advance our mission.”—Aubree Kinney, Hiring Manager at Wolf River Electric

151 electrician students

completed training, preparing them for **family-sustaining careers** in the construction industry

In the most recent program year, graduates saw a median annual

income increase of \$13,000

from program entry to **post-completion employment**

Bridging Lives to Prosperity

in Medical Administrative Assistant Training



Dalana's Journey to a Career in Healthcare

Before coming to Summit Academy OIC, Dalana Thomas was ready for a change.

"I was tired of working fast-food jobs and getting nowhere," she shared. **"I needed the benefits. I needed a career change."**

Enrolling in Summit's Medical Administrative Assistant training gave Dalana the chance to start fresh and prove something to herself.

"I was able to challenge myself and see that I could actually finish and accomplish something," she said.

The support she received extended far beyond the classroom. Through Summit's Student Support Fund, Dalana accessed essentials like professional clothing and shoes—small but meaningful resources that made a big difference.

"They helped me get what I needed to be prepared for interviews," she said.

With guidance from Summit's Workforce Readiness team, Dalana practiced mock interviews, built her confidence, and secured a position with University of Minnesota Physicians, before even graduating.

Looking back, Dalana credits Summit with helping her rediscover belief in herself.

"Summit helps people get their self-confidence back," she said. **"They help you know what it feels like to truly be supported."**

"We're able to speak directly to Summit about what our patients and teams need—and that feedback shapes the curriculum and skills students are taught. Because of that, the Summit graduates we hire come to us prepared and confident in what they need to do. They make an immediate impact on our teams and the care we provide, which is incredibly valuable to us."

—Matthew Harren, Sr., Talent Aquisition Specialist, University of Minnesota Physicians

92 students

completed training, preparing them for **family-sustaining careers** in the healthcare industry

In the most recent program year, graduates saw a median annual

income increase of \$19,760

from program entry to post-completion employment

Bridging Lives to Prosperity in Financial Services

Finding Direction and a Future: Mataly's Journey into Financial Services

A year ago, Mataly was working at the Mall of America, unsure of what came next. **"I was sitting there spinning my wheels, not really feeling like I had any opportunities in front of me,"** he recalled. The turning point came the night he didn't have enough gas to get home—and couldn't spare \$20 when his brother called asking for food. The next morning, he made a decision. **"I needed to go back to school... so I decided to take a chance on Summit Academy."**



After flunking out of community college twice, returning to school wasn't easy. But Summit's 20-week, no-cost training offered something different. At an open house event, Summit's Financial Services training caught his attention. **"I saw the overlap with the skills I was already using,"** he explains.

Mataly's time at Summit was transformative. He bonded with classmates of all ages, learned real-world skills, and built confidence he didn't know he had. **"I realized there was magic happening around me,"** he said. **"They were constantly telling me, 'You can do this.'"**

That encouragement carried him through the Securities Industry Essentials (SIE) exam, a milestone he once believed was impossible. **"I walked out with a paper that said 'pass.' I never thought that would have been possible,"** he shares.

Soon after, an internship with Ameriprise Financial turned into a full-time job offer. While receiving the call felt incredible, the bigger moment was sharing the news with his mother. **"Watching my mom break down in my arms—that really pales in comparison to anything else."**

Now six months into his new career, Mataly sees opportunities ahead that once felt out of reach. He returns to Summit often, grateful for what the experience unlocked. **"Lives are changed every day at Summit, and my time here was well invested."**

"Partnering with Summit is core to finding new, diverse talent. How are we going to serve our clients well who also have a very diverse background? There is an underserved part of our community that doesn't typically think of finance for a career. There is talent out there that isn't considering this field. I've heard a lot of the students say, 'I never could see myself in an environment like this before.' Knowing we provided that opportunity is really invigorating."—**Jonathan Doll, Senior Manager Customer Service, Ameriprise Financial**

32 students

completed training, preparing them for **family-sustaining careers** in the financial services industry

Financial Services students typically enrolled with no reported income. In the most recent program year, graduates saw a median annual

income increase of \$49,088

from program entry to **post-completion employment**

Bridging Lives to Prosperity in IT



With help from Summit Academy, Hristo turned his dream of working in IT into reality.

After nearly two decades in the hospitality industry, a sudden layoff became the turning point Hristo didn't know he needed. **"IT has always been my hobby. I've always wanted to do it full time, but I never went to school for it,"** he shares.

When faced with an uncertain future, Hristo decided to take a leap toward his longtime passion by enrolling in Summit Academy's IT training, where he found a community that helped him rebuild confidence and redefine what he believed was possible.

"Making this big change, it's scary," he says. **"Summit helped me get over my fear of 'I'm not good enough for this.' They empowered me to think different."**

Through Summit's partnership with Atomic Data, Hristo turned that empowerment into a thriving career. After graduating, he joined Atomic Data as a Level 1 Technician and, with their continued support, earned his Security+ certification, completed his degree in computer science, and advanced to Level 3 Technician.

Today, Hristo works in network and security operations, analyzing cybersecurity threats and helping protect clients from malicious activity. He credits Summit with sparking the change that made it all possible. **"Summit definitely changed my life,"** he says. **"It was one of the better decisions I've made in my life."**

"We consider Summit a trusted partner and always prioritize interviewing their graduates, because we know their training produces professionals ready to learn, grow, and contribute immediately. Their growth has been remarkable; we currently employ 12 Summit alumni, and every one of them has advanced beyond their original position. Four now serve in leadership roles, a testament to their capability and skillset."—Chris Heim, CEO, Atomic Data

108 students

completed training, preparing them for **family-sustaining careers** in the technology industry

In the most recent program year, graduates saw a median annual

income increase of \$14,560

from program entry to **post-completion employment**

Opening Doors to Opportunities: Summit's GED Program



Before coming to Summit Academy OIC, Nicholas Winchell didn't see himself as a student. **“When I first thought of the GED program, I thought I couldn't do it,”** he shared. **“I thought I wasn't smart enough, or I would just fail.”**

Working long hours as a forklift operator, Nicholas knew he needed a change. That's when he enrolled in Summit's GED program. Earning his GED gave Nicholas the confidence to pursue his passion for technology. Within months, he returned to Summit to enroll in the IT training.

“Before starting the GED program, I wasn't outgoing. I kept to myself,” he reflected. **“But as I worked with my classmates, I started coming out of my shell. When I joined the IT training, I even became a tutor, helping others and learning more myself.”**

Last fall, Nicholas graduated Summit's IT training at the top of his class and is now thriving in his new role at Shutterfly. He plans to continue his education in computer science in the near future.

No matter where his path leads, Nicholas says he will always carry what Summit gave him. **“Summit taught me how to advocate for myself and have a voice. I feel more confident and more educated about what I'm doing.”**

From doubting his ability to discovering his potential, Nicholas's journey shows how access to opportunity builds lasting confidence and changes lives for good.



Summit's **Student Support Fund**

At Summit, we are committed to removing barriers so students can stay focused on training and confidently transition into the workforce. Through the Student Support Fund, all students and graduates can access financial assistance to stabilize housing, cover transportation needs, and address unexpected challenges that might otherwise interrupt their progress. Over the last program year, participants who received support funds graduated at a rate 19% higher than those who did not.

“One time, we helped a student who was so committed to being in the program that she was willing to decrease her work hours and risk eviction. Summit stepped in and said, ‘That's not going to happen. We're going to give you funds to pay your rent.’”—**Lee Garr, GED Program Manager at Summit Academy OIC**

62 students

earned their **GED** during the last program year

Your Impact in Action



4,826
Summit students hired
since 2008



608
Summit students obtained
their GED since the program's
inception in 2016



Student Demographics



41%
of students are
unemployed
at enrollment



25
years old is
the average age
of students



89%
of students identify as a
person of color



69%
of students are living
below 200% FPG



\$14 is the median annual
hourly wage at the time of
enrollment, corresponding to
an annualized salary of
\$29,120

Financial Highlights

Stewarding donor and community investment responsibly

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES JULY 1, 2024–JUNE 30, 2025*

Revenue & Support

Government Grants	\$ 3,185,656
Philanthropy	\$ 4,172,641
Student Financial Aid	\$ 2,604,191
Other Income	\$ 663,844
Total Revenue	\$ 10,626,332

Expenses

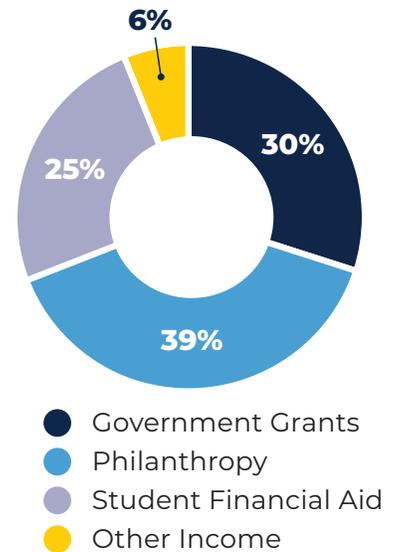
Trainings	\$ 9,937,138
General Administrative	\$ 2,049,408
Fundraising	\$ 1,139,441
Facilities & Rentals	\$ 267,906
Total Expenses	\$ 13,393,893

Net Assets

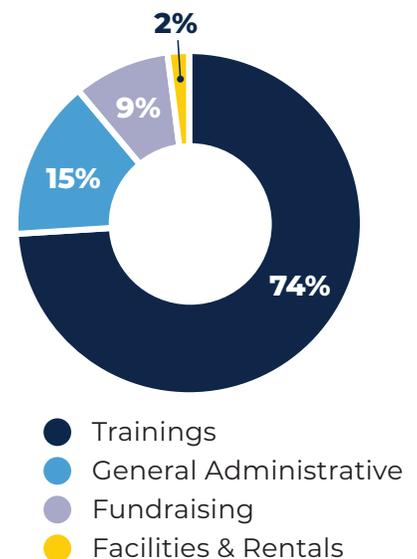
Without Donor Restrictions	\$ 13,031,819
With Donor Restrictions	\$ 3,250,932
Total Net Assets	\$ 16,282,751

*Summarized from the audited financial statements prepared by Clifton Larson Allen. Complete audited financial statements are available on our website at www.saoic.org/reports-finances.

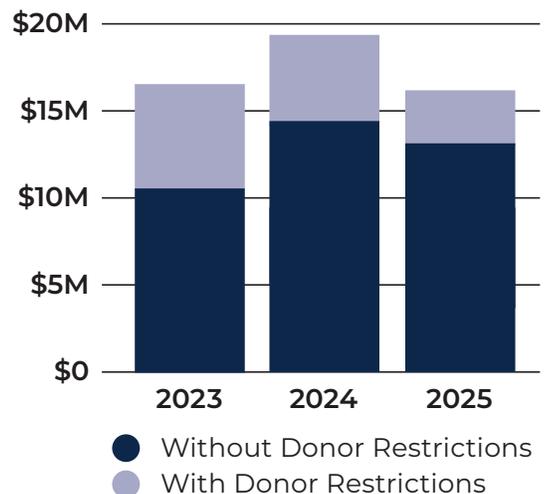
REVENUE SOURCES



EXPENSES BY CATEGORY



NET ASSETS THREE-YEAR TREND



1,119
students trained
last year through
community investment

Every \$1 invested
generates **\$8.92**
in community
economic return

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Deep gratitude to those whose generosity creates lasting pathways to success.

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PLEASE NOTE: The list of donors includes those who contributed between July 1, 2024 and June 30, 2025. We make every effort to ensure the accuracy of these lists. If there is an error, kindly contact Sarah Armstrong at sarmstrong@saoic.org or 612-278-7363 so we may correct our records.

Donor Spotlight: Gary and Helen Bergren



For Gary and Helen Bergren, supporting Summit Academy OIC started with a simple, powerful idea. **“I went to a Minneapolis Foundation lunch one year, and the speaker was from Summit Academy,”** Gary recalled. **“He shared the line, ‘the best social service program in the world is a job,’ and it resonated with me.”**

After meeting with Summit leadership to learn more, Gary saw Summit’s approach as part of the solution to a challenge he’d observed throughout his career. **“We need to figure out ways to train people for jobs,”** he said. **“To me, this looked like one of the solutions.”**

As a former business leader, Gary saw firsthand how technical training creates opportunities. **“The best employees we found were people that did not graduate from a four-year college,”** he shared. **“They were good with their hands, and they understood how machinery worked, because they’d worked on a farm or done something like that.”**

Gary continues to be inspired by Summit’s growth. **“When I first got involved, Summit was basically just in construction,”** he said. **“I like seeing that you’re expanding. You’re trying different things. You’ve been successful.”**

“It looked like what Summit was doing made a lot of sense to us,” Gary said. **“People get a chance here, and to me, that’s right. That’s why we support Summit.”**

Partner Spotlight: Mortenson



This year, Summit’s partnership with Mortenson created a powerful pathway for graduates to enter the construction industry through an 8-week paid pre-apprenticeship program, which combined advanced classroom training with on-the-job experience building a data center in Rosemount. The competitive, multi-step interview process required commitment and professionalism—qualities Summit helps to instill in our graduates. As a result, several students secured long-term roles with Hunt Electric, Gunner Electric, and Wunderlich-Malec.

Ge Lor, a 2025 graduate of Summit’s electrician training who was selected to participate in Mortenson’s program, reflected on his experience, sharing, **“After going to Summit, I’m now known and selected as someone who’s committed.”**

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Summit Volunteer Leadership Spotlight: Dr. Eric Grutzner



For more than 30 years, Dr. Eric Grutzner has dedicated his career to endodontics at Metropolitan Endodontics and has remained deeply involved in the dental community. His connection to Summit began after meeting former Board Chair Steve Kairies and President & CEO, Leroy West. After hearing more about Summit, he was invested. **“It seemed like the perfect combination of philanthropy and training people to get involved in dentistry,”** he said.

Shortly after, Eric joined Summit’s Board of Directors and has played an active role in shaping and launching Summit’s new Unlicensed Dental Assistant training. He continues to support Summit because he believes deeply in our

mission. **“The scope of Summit’s work keeps anyone engaged. It’s such a positive place. Every time I go down there I love seeing all the happy faces.”**

He sees Summit’s impact throughout the Twin Cities. **“Everyone you talk to in the construction, medical, or electrical community knows Summit,”** he shares. Visiting campus reinforces why the work matters; he loves seeing students in action, hearing from instructors, and witnessing the supportive environment that helps people transform their lives.

Eric believes training for technical careers is more critical than ever. **“It’s super important to be in the training space for technical jobs right now so people can provide for their families,”** he says. That urgency is part of why he’s excited for the Dental Training to begin placing graduates. **“I’m very excited to now have the dental community involved in Summit’s work.”**

For Eric, joining the board has been a meaningful way to give back. **“The time you invest in Summit is spent making a huge impact,”** he says. **“I’m surrounded by confident and empowered individuals.”**

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Cayleigh Falink, Southdale Pediatrics
Naomi Beckering, Fairview
Megan O'Byrne, MNGI Digestive Health
Samantha Yang, MHRM, Health Partners



Unlicensed Dental Assistant

Eric Grutzner, DDS, MS, Metropolitan Endontics
Carey Laqua, LDA, Park Dental Partners
Bridgett Anderson, LDA, MBA, MN Board of Dentistry
John Mittelsteadt, Mosaic Dentistry
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Summit Volunteer Spotlight: Rebecca Judge



When Rebecca Judge retired after more than 30 years as an economics professor at St. Olaf College, she wasn't sure what would come next until she unexpectedly ran into a close friend. **"She asked me very directly, 'So what are you going to do, Beckie?' and I popped out with, 'I want to teach math to people who need it,'"** she recalled. **"That night, I found Summit online, saw they needed math tutors, and called them the next day. It was that fast, and I've loved it."**

Rebecca began volunteering at Summit in 2023 and now tutors in the GED program. Her experience as an economist and longtime educator gives her a unique perspective. **"Having a PhD in economics and having had to develop my own courage as a mathematician because it didn't come naturally to me—I think that gives me the ability to empathize with people who also have had their trouble with math,"** she said. **"Math is often the Heartbreak Hill of the exam. I can understand being afraid of it."**

The courage she sees in students every week is what inspires her to continue coming back. **"There's so much hope, courage, hard work, and bravery in that room—it's addicting,"** she shared. **"Their courage helps me be more courageous. I think this is a great second act for me."**

Save the Date: Golf Classic & Summer Party June 8, 2026



Scan the QR code to for more details about our annual fundraising event.
bit.ly/saolic26

Your Support is Vital!

Together, we're changing lives through education, training, and career opportunities. Every act of support ensures we can continue to provide no-cost, quality training to help build a community where everyone has the chance to succeed.



Volunteer

Share your experience through mentorship, mock interviews, or classroom visits. Contact Melanie Wallwork, Volunteer Engagement Specialist, at mwallwork@saaic.org to learn about available opportunities for yourself or your work group.

Hire

Partner with Summit to hire skilled graduates ready to contribute on day one. Together, we can build stronger teams and stronger communities. To learn more about hiring Summit graduates, contact our Workforce Solutions Department at workforcesolutions@saaic.org.

Ways to Give

Your generosity fuels transformation and makes our no-cost training model possible.

Make a secure online gift by scanning the QR code, and consider joining the Summit Legacy Society by including Summit Academy in your estate plans. To learn more about the many ways you can support our mission, contact our Development team at advancement@saaic.org.





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