



ACE is a Birmingham-based nonprofit organization dedicated to making Social and Emotional learning (SEL) an integral part of education in Alabama.

Opportunities to Become Involved:

VOLUNTEER

Life Skills Education, a monthly in-class SEL program for K-8th grade students

Heritage Panel, a two-day social justice training for 6th-12th grade students

PEACE Birmingham, a monthly social justice dialogue group for 9th-12th grade students

ACEalabama.org/volunteer

DONATE

Financially support our work in Alabama!

ACEalabama.org/give



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2021 | 2022 YEAR IN REVIEW

This past year, ACE Alabama continued to create lasting change across the state. Through engaging programming, we were able to serve over 3,100 K-12 students, educators, and adults in 7 counties.



In the midst of unimaginable loss following the death of our founder and executive director Matthew Smith, ACE provided life-changing life skills education programming, school culture coach services, and diversity, equity and inclusion training for teenagers, educators, and organizations.

This past year emphasized urgent challenges regarding mental health, violence, and education. Social and Emotional Learning is our path to progress in these areas. With the leadership of our Board of Directors and ACE employees, we will continue to address these challenges head-on and expand our services across the state of Alabama.



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A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This past year was the most difficult and metamorphic year for ACE. Our team led three legacy social justice programs and we lost our Co-Founder and Executive Director, Matthew Smith. Matthew was the heart and driving force of ACE.

Matthew and I had been working side by side for the past 5 years so fortunately that same passion, wisdom, and knowledge was, in some ways, imparted to me.

As the first ACE volunteer I have been privileged enough to see ACE flourish over the years. My passion and dedication for this work has only grown since then, and especially now in the wake of our immense loss.

ACE will continue to advance and expand our mission and programs through collaboration. Our team, friends, family, volunteers, donors, partners, and supporters are the pivotal piece of creating lasting change in Alabama so thank you for being a part of this important work.

Thank You. Thank You. Thank You.

With Gratitude,



Andrea Miller
Executive Director



REMEMBERING & HONORING MATTHEW SMITH

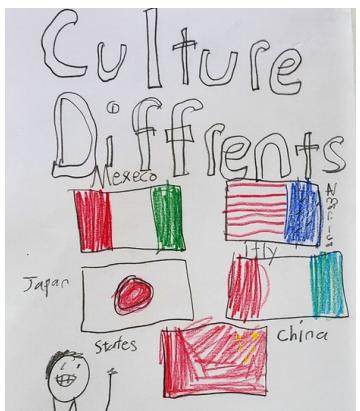
Matthew Smith — ACE Co-founder, Executive Director, visionary leader, and beloved friend — passed away December 13, 2021, following a tragic car accident.

Matthew was incredibly compassionate and possessed a contagious enthusiasm that connected deeply with everyone he met. In the first six years of ACE, Matthew's unique ability to inspire and bring out the best in others brought together a beautifully diverse and committed village of friends and family to effect significant change in the communities in which ACE serves.

Fueled by his passion for working with youth, his deep desire to help others, and dedication to honoring his brother Joshua's memory, Matthew created and fostered social and emotional learning initiatives to countless communities and built up awareness surrounding the important impacts of SEL in Alabama.

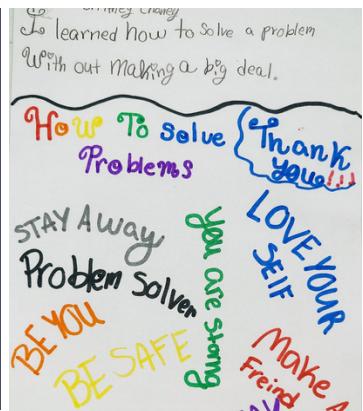
While we, our whole ACE community, grieve his loss, Matthew's bright spirit continues to burn among us as we continue to carry out the wisdom and passion he infused into his life's work and his vision for ACE.

As Matthew once wrote, "Grief doesn't get any smaller, so we have to grow ourselves to fit around it." May we all let Matthew's memory inspire us in this great work that drives us forward.



750
K-6th students
received monthly
SEL lessons

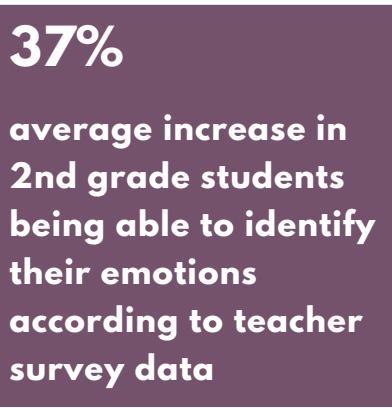
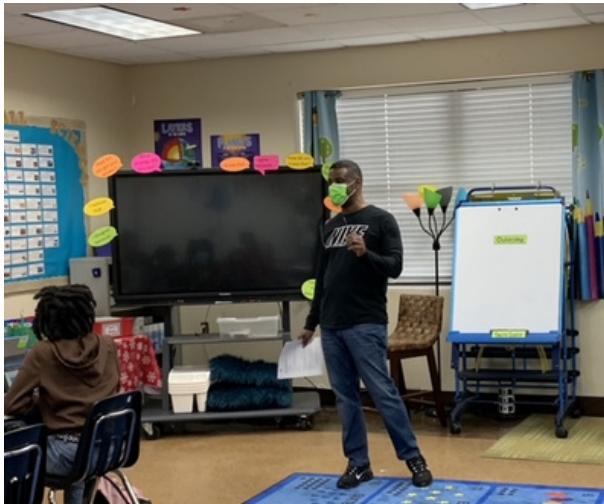
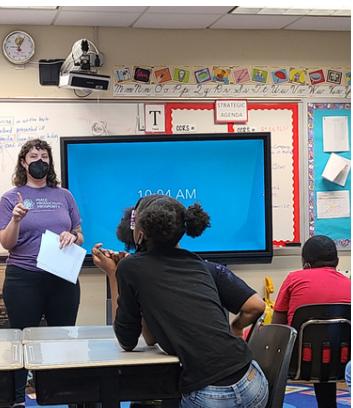
41 Educators
received monthly
resources



LSE PROGRAM

The 2021-2022 Life Skills Education program impacted 750 K-6th grade students and 41 educators in the Fairfield City Elementary schools. The Life Skills Education program is a once a month in-class program that runs from September to May with 7 sessions focused on Social-Emotional skills and 2 sessions focused on relationship-building and gathering data. ACE facilitators and volunteers facilitate the evidence-based Social-Emotional Learning curriculum. The program had 8 trained volunteers who volunteered over 145 hours this year.

The Life Skills curriculum focuses on identifying and managing emotions, identifying strengths and personal qualities, friendship, empathy, healthy decision-making skills, conflict resolution, and cultural differences. Teachers also receive a monthly resource supplement packet with relevant, low-cost SEL resources.



Thanks to Miss Rosa and her crew for taking time out of their to teach us how to handle our emotions and how to be polite to others. ACE really taught me how to never to judge. Some one before getting to know them that's how I made friends. Now ACE taught me when I was sad how to control it thanks ACE!





1,329 Students
impacted by SEL
interventions

95 Educators
impacted by professional
development workshops



CULTURE COACH PROGRAM

The Culture Coach Program impacted 1,329 students and 95 educators this year at Lee High School in Montgomery.

ACE's Culture Coach, Dr. Cynthia Gage, worked with a culture team at the school to deliver surveys, professional development opportunities, and SEL coaching.

Each school or school system that works with the Culture Coach program adopts the adaptive change process model which empowers the faculty and staff to be leaders of changing the culture within their school.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ACE impacted 248 educators this year through professional development workshops ranging from Social-Emotional Learning foundations to Trauma-Informed Education. Our workshops are tailored specifically for the school with which we work.

Thank You to our partnering schools:

CL Salter Elementary School
I3 Academy
Lee High School



"I sincerely thank you for such an amazing training you and the others did. There has been such positive feedback with one teacher stating, "That was the best training I've ever had as a teacher!" -Lee High School Educator



270
Students &
Educators
trained



HERITAGE PANEL PROGRAM

Heritage Panel is a two-day training for a group of high school students and educators who want to stop bullying and discrimination and become leaders of change within their school. Over the course of the training, teachers and students will discuss important, but often ignored, issues that affect their school experience, such as cliques, race, gender, cultural backgrounds, and exclusion. Following the training, Heritage Panelists share what they have learned through presentations given to their classmates. Heritage Panelists share their personal experiences, and a teacher-moderated discussions with the audience follows. During the 2021-2022 program year ACE led the program in 9 high schools in Jefferson and Shelby county impacting 270 students and educators.

Thank You to our partnering schools:

ASFA
The Altamont School
Holy Family Cristo Rey Catholic High School
John Carroll Catholic High School
Leeds High School

GW Carver High School
Pinson Valley High School
Montevallo High School
Ramsay IB High School

"I learned to listen to others, to see others for who they truly are and how to be confident that I can defend myself and others."
-Heritage Panel Student



23 Teens
attended monthly meetings
7 Volunteers
served as advisors

PEACE BIRMINGHAM

PEACE Birmingham is a monthly social justice dialogue group for teens from different cultures and faiths to discuss the issues that communities face including racism, heterosexism, xenophobia, religious discrimination, mental health, and homelessness. In March the group of teens participated in a service project. 9 teens built a Hope Garden in Matthew's front yard and discussed how to destigmatize mental health in their schools. Every year in April the program culminates in a weekend trip to a historical and culturally relevant site. This year 5 teens traveled to Selma and Montgomery to learn more about the civil rights history in Alabama.

Thank You to our collaborating partners and funders:

One Roof
Levite Jewish Community Center
PEACE Birmingham Advisory Committee

Magic City Acceptance Center
JoAnne Bland, Journeys for the Soul
Independent Presbyterian Church

"I love that we get to talk to different kinds of people and get exposure to the good and bad things about our city, and have conversations we normally wouldn't have at school."

-PEACE Birmingham
Student





521
Youth & Adults
impacted through
community
workshops and
SEL resources



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

ACE offers various community partnerships for in-school and community organization Social-Emotional workshops. During the 2021-2022 year we were able to collaborate and partner with 8 schools and organizations to positively impact 521 youth and adults.

Thank You to our partners:

The Altamont School
Girlspring
GW Carver High School
Indian Springs School
Independent Presbyterian Church
Greater Birmingham Arts Education Collaborative & Midfield Elementary

NewGen Peacebuilders
One Roof Youth Action Council
Pickens County "Just Be Well"
Youth Leadership Forum



ANYTOWN ALABAMA

Anytown Alabama 2022 impacted 43 delegates and 19 adult staff members. Delegates, incoming 10th-12th grade students, experienced 5 days of interactive workshops and discussions in which they listened to each other's stories, learned how discrimination affects people, and discussed how they want to create change in their community. They left Anytown as Anytown Ambassadors, leaders of change within their 16 different communities and schools. Staff interns spent over 40 hours in training to then volunteer more than 70 hours during the week of Anytown facilitating workshops, leading small group discussions, and supervising delegates. The identities of the delegates and staff represented our community at large including, but not limited to, different genders, sexual orientations, race and ethnicities, religions and philosophies of life, ability, cultures, and disabilities.

Thank You to our sponsors and funders:

NCCJ of Alabama
Levite Jewish Community Center
Hero Doughnuts
Anytown Advisory Committee

Coca-Cola
Jack's
Maple Street Biscuit Company

Walker County Area Community Foundation
Birmingham Jewish Foundation
Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham
LGBTQ Fund



43 Delegates

attended the
weeklong program

19 Staff

volunteered over 110
hours and facilitated
the workshops

"Anytown has been a transformative experience and has given me hope for the future of Alabama and the country. The workshops we did gave me a new perspective on privilege, race, and gender. I formed lifelong relationships at Anytown."

-Anytown Ambassador