Presenters

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Executive Director
Samueli Academy

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Associate, Project Designer
LPA
Learning Objectives

1. Recognize how social-emotional learning can be influenced by physical space

2. Discover how an intense planning process including a large committee of stakeholders and local business leaders can result in a successful project

3. Learn how the spatial environment can be transparent and welcoming while also being extremely durable, cost-effective and long-lasting

4. Become familiar with educational psychology of at-risk students and how to best support a strong school community and social climate
The Need | stating the problem

• Among high school seniors in California, only 54% of foster youth graduate, versus 83% for all California high school seniors.

• Each year, approximately 150 youth, ages 18-21, are released from the foster care system.

• Within 18 months of release from the system, half of former foster youth will become homeless, experience unemployment, or have annual incomes below $6,000.

• While 84% of foster youth want to go to college, only 20% do, and just 2-9% attain a bachelor’s degree.
Orangewood Foundation

1981
• Orangewood Foundation is established to build emergency shelter for abused and neglected children in Orange County
• First public-private partnership of its kind in the county

1985
• Orangewood Children’s Home (now called the Orangewood Children & Family Center) opens its doors
• Deeded to the county to own and operate

1986+
• Orangewood turns its attention to the ongoing needs of teens in foster care as they make the transition to adulthood, focusing on four key areas
Orangewood Foundation

700
Last year we provided assistance to 700 youth in our resource center in a total of 6,300 visits.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

48
Last year 48 youth including eight single mothers called one of our transitional housing sites their home.

HOUSING

52
Last year we held 52 workshops about money management, job readiness, housing options and other life skill topics.

LIFE SKILLS & EMPLOYMENT

247
Last year we awarded $582,500 in scholarships to 247 students in college or graduate school.

EDUCATION
Orangewood Foundation

2011

• A vision for Samuels Academy is established, the site purchased, and the planning process begins

• First public-private partnership of its kind in the county
2013 Orangewood Foundation opens Samueli Academy Charter High School with its first freshman class of 120 students.
2015 The Academic Building opens
The mission of Samueli Academy is to ignite the passion within all students to reach their greatest potential through a nurturing and innovative learning environment.

• Envisioned almost 15 years ago by 2 local philanthropists, Susan Samueli and Sandi Jackson

• Open to all students with priority enrollment for those from foster care

• Students do best when coming from a diversity of backgrounds and socioeconomic status

• Target enrollment of 480 students originally
Samueli Academy  |  best practices

• A learning environment that maximizes individual student attention
• A staff that cares about the "whole" student
• Safety
• Work-Based learning
• College Readiness
• State-of-the-Art technology for all students
• Project-Based learning
• Engineering & Design Pathways
• Exciting and fulfilling after-school programs
The planning process included Orangewood Foundation board members, emancipated foster student mentors, educators, county officials, philanthropists, OCSTEM, and a design team of architects, landscape architects, engineers and interior designers.
Collaboration | overarching program themes

**GATHER**
- stability | permanence | continuity
- comfort | safety
- emotional support
- pride | value
- need for encouragement and high expectations

**EXPLORE**

**Provide visibility & transparency**
(Increased sense of comfort, decreased anxiety – seeing spaces before entering reduces unknown threats)

**At the same time, a degree of privacy in classrooms and other spaces so that students don’t feel they’re on display (self-conscious aspects)**

**Include clear boundaries and zones, through labeling and bold use of signage & way finding**

**Include signage, displays and quotes on walls focused on college and future goals (e.g., “Pulitzer Prize Winner 2028)**

**Areas for more public display of student work where there is higher level of public access – this is a way to have students strive to do better (b/c it’s going in a “gallery”**

**Provide a place for student-created quotes or inspiration to be shared with school community (or goals for their 4 years) – a GOAL wall – support each other**

**Pride/Value**

**Include students in decision-making; empower them, provide ownership of spaces, ownership over displays/murals**

**Owned areas can include murals, graffiti wall, something fun/light-hearted**

**Encouragement & High Expectations**

**Leaving some areas un-designed, a blank canvas/slate for the incoming students to make their own gives a sense of ownership**
Master Plan | the urban village

A. academic building (phase 1)
B. stem labs (future)
C. student services/union building (future)
D. wellness center (future)
E. family style residences (future)
F. community building (phase 1)
G. visitor parking and drop off

7.1 acre site
115,000 SF academic
40,000 SF residential
Phase 1 | academic building

key
1. student gallery
2. classroom
3. flex lab
4. learning commons
5. workroom/prep
6. counselling office
7. small group huddle
8. faculty work area

Classrooms
flexible furniture, diverse grouping strategies, Project-Based learning approach

2nd [+ 3rd] floor
design + engineering

1st floor
virtual enterprise
walls closed

large group

walls open

small group
Phase 1 | academic building

**key**
1 student gallery
2 classroom
3 flex lab
4 learning commons
5 workroom/prep
6 counselling office
7 small group huddle
8 faculty work area

**2nd [+ 3rd] floor design + engineering**

**1st floor virtual enterprise**

- **Informal Pull-Out Spaces**
  - impromptu discussions, individual study & development

- **Flex Labs**
  - supports non-traditional ways of learning, writable walls, project display, storage and utilities

- **Learning Commons**
  - multi-functional, flexible furniture, technology-rich, increases social and cross-curriculum collaboration for small & large groups
Financed entirely by donations - donors are recognized throughout the building exterior and interior.
Students and teachers own the learning experience, which creates a culture of trust, respect and responsibility at Samuei Academy, the three words we live by!
Samueli Academy | today

525 students (grades 9-12)

Permanent Buildings
• 31,000sf academic building
• 4,500sf community building

Portables
• 1,920sf administration
• 1,920sf multipurpose room
• 960sf food service
• 10,560sf classrooms

50,860sf
2018-2019 Academic Scorecard

- **96%** average daily attendance
- **99%** juniors who completed a summer internship
- **99%** graduation rate (100% graduation of foster youth)
- **94%** college attendance rate

2017 California Gold Ribbon School

Top 4% of Schools in the Nation
2018–2019 Academic Scorecard

Student School Climate Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>SA (%)</th>
<th>OC (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There is a teacher or some other adult who really cares about me</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers give students a chance to take part in classroom discussions</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuelli Academy alumni persist in college after their freshman year</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni would recommend Samuelli Academy to current 8th graders</td>
<td>85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In an annual survey conducted by UC Irvine:

- **98%** of students expressed they feel cared for by teachers
- **96%** said their teachers go out of their way to provide much needed help
- **98%** feel encouraged by their teachers to do their best

In the first-ever alumni survey, UC Irvine found:

- **88%** continue to be enrolled in college (persistency rate)
- **88%** will return to the same college (retention rate)
- **48%** are pursuing STEM degrees
Lessons Learned from ‘living’ on the site:

• Open space is a great thing!

• Athletic teams are popular and provide opportunities for students to practice teamwork and resilience

• Project-Based Learning is engaging and exciting for students

• If at-risk students could be reached at an earlier age, they could realize their potential sooner
Master Plan | the urban village

7.1 acre site
115,000 SF academic
40,000 SF residential

A. academic building (phase 1)
B. stem labs (future)
C. student services/union building (future)
D. wellness center (future)
E. family style residences (future)
F. community building (phase 1)
G. visitor parking and drop off
Rethinking the Master Plan | adjusting for realities

- Combine the Labs and the Studios + Student Union into one building to free up space
- Shift the Gymnasium to the north
- Rethink the Residential Unit layouts considering the new regulations for group homes
- Find space for a middle school building
Rethinking the Master Plan | adjusting for realities

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Samueli Academy | future

250 students (grades 7-8)
525 students (grades 9-12)

**Permanent Buildings**
- 31,000sf academic building (built)
- 4,500sf community building (built)
- 49,200sf student innovation center (under construction)
- 23,790sf residential building (under construction)
- 18,300sf middle school building (under construction)
- 21,700sf gymnasium (schematic design)

148,490sf