



INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL OF
DENVER

Impact Report

2023-2024



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A Message from Our Head of School

I think this year was defined by improvement versus major undertakings. We followed the advice of our ACIS accreditation and focused on making sure that we are doing well, understanding where we can get better, and working towards focused goals. This year reinforced what is in the school's DNA: that every year needs to be better than the last, no matter how good it was. As we ask our IB students, we engage in an intentional and reflective process, question ourselves, and work together to move forward.

Our school year was bookended by two very special visitors that you'll read more about in these pages. Salva Dut, one of the Lost Boys of South Sudan, whose story is told in the *New York Times* Bestseller, *A Long Walk to Water* by Linda Sue Park, visited campus in September. Fashion designer, humanitarian, and entrepreneur, David Avido, who rose from the slums of Nairobi to international

fashion weeks, joined the International School of Denver as our Artist in Residence in April.

Both Dut and Avido left us uplifted and inspired with their compelling stories of courage, resilience, compassion, and action. These two use their platforms to galvanize the world around them into action with a powerful ripple effect. Dut and Avido model what it means to think globally and act locally. Their unique mission intertwines with our own, as we strive to create a more compassionate and curious world.

Dut and Avido have made it their life's work to empower and invest in their communities. This year we recognized two incredible parent volunteers who do the same within our own community and, simply put, whom ISDenver would not be the same without. On page 13, read about our first recognized Volunteers of the Year, Leah Pytel and June Dirstine. This

new recognition mirrors our strong held belief that community giving can take the shape of what is most meaningful to every individual, including the joyful contribution of time, and that it takes all of us working together as a community to make the ISDenver experience we know and love.

***Thank you so much
for all the ways you
invest in this very
special place.***

Sit close to your kids.

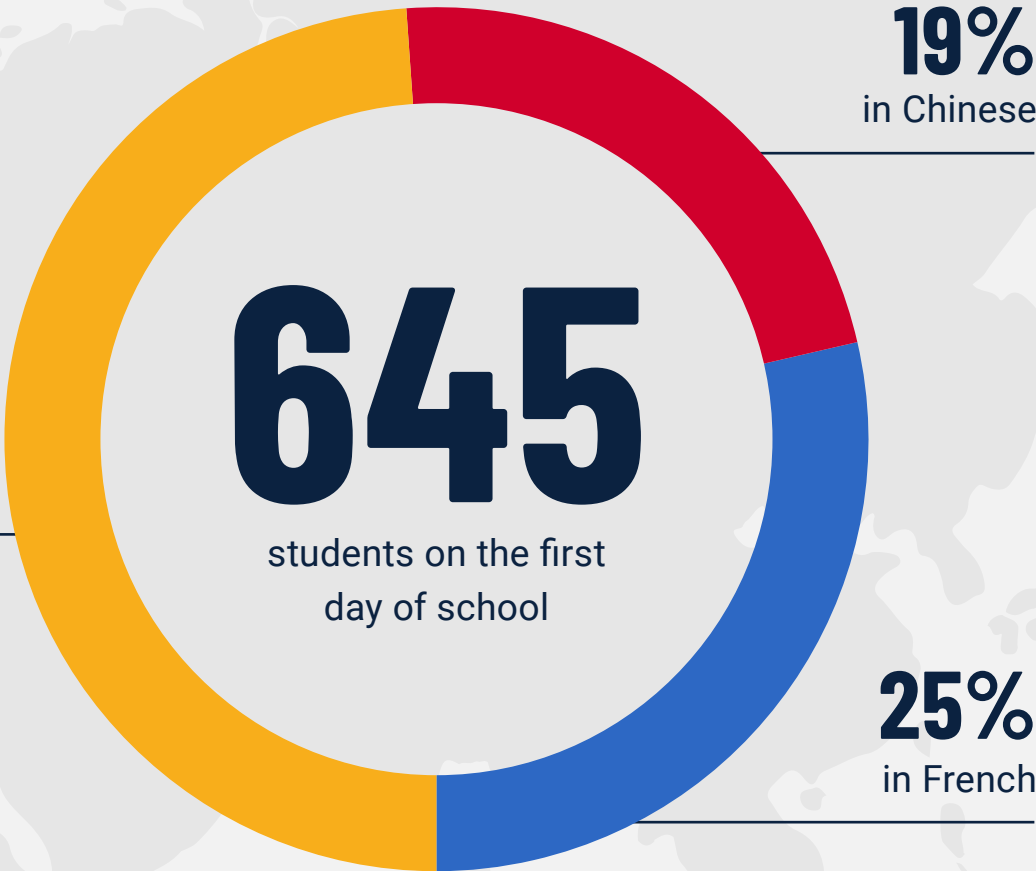
BOB CARIGNAN
Head of School

Admissions by the Numbers

521
returning students



56%
in Spanish



54%

of students are exposed to another language at home

30%

of students identify with a race other than Caucasian

14%

of students have at least one citizenship beyond the US

22

countries with citizenship represented among students

Our love for ISDenver started in 2010 when the first of three children began their school journey at age 3, and it continues today.

We believe in the mission of the school. We have always had trust in the teachers and staff to challenge, shape, love, respect, and inspire our children in two languages and in a multicultural environment that is real. Our children have had the opportunity to independently travel all over the world and the US. We have seen up close the hard work and decisions that have made the school better and better, always with the children in mind. Our children are gaining the tools to research, question, inquire, and be true problem-solvers in this complex, ever-changing world.

We know that all of this requires money and resources above and beyond our tuition dollars. We give to ISDenver as we believe we are part of the educational journey of children who will become the world leaders of tomorrow. We also want to mention that our money goes further because of the Colorado state tax credit afforded to us by giving to ISDenver.

BETH CAPRA AND JUNE DIRSTINE

ISDenver Parents

A Message from Our Board Chair

This is an incredible time to be part of ISDenver. I'm proud to say I've been a parent since 2013 - our eldest graduates this year - and chair of the ISDenver Board since 2017. Over the past 11 years, our school has taken dramatic leaps forward. We've always had bilingual, immersion- and culture-based education at our heart since our founding in 1977. About a decade ago, as part of our strategic plan, we slightly elevated our programs to more formally include a focus on developing global citizens who are prepared to impact the world around them. One of our most recent steps in support of our plan and mission has been to expand our IB education to our full programs from K1 through

G8. Now, we are one of only six schools in the state to have both a PYP and MYP. What's more, is that of those, we are the only one offering Chinese, the only PYP school with French, and one of two with Spanish. We are just a few years away from our 50th anniversary and are in the strongest position yet as we move toward our next fifty years.

Thank you for everything and for giving generously in a way that was meaningful to you and your family.



KURT PLETCHER
Board Chair

*"This year,
the word
"gratitude"
was at the
heart of our
community
giving.
**There is no
us without
you.**"*

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*Member, Advancement
Committee Co-Chair*

Bob Carignan
Head of School, Ex-Officio Member

Our Financial Health

REVENUE



Revenue Category	Amount (\$)
Tuition, net of Discounts and Financial Assistance	14,450,307
Daycare, After School Programs, and Summer Programs	1,410,920
Community Giving Contributions	703,346
Other Revenue	813,639
Total Revenue	17,378,212

EXPENSES



Expense Category	Amount (\$)
Educational	14,826,873
General & Administrative	3,481,412
Fundraising	379,602
Total Expenses*	18,687,887

*Total expenses include \$1.6M of non-cash depreciation expense.

IRON GIRAFFE CHALLENGE

Fourth Graders
Inspire Change

When given the chance,
nine-year-olds can
change the world.



**“We are all one; let
peace be at the
center of our lives.”**

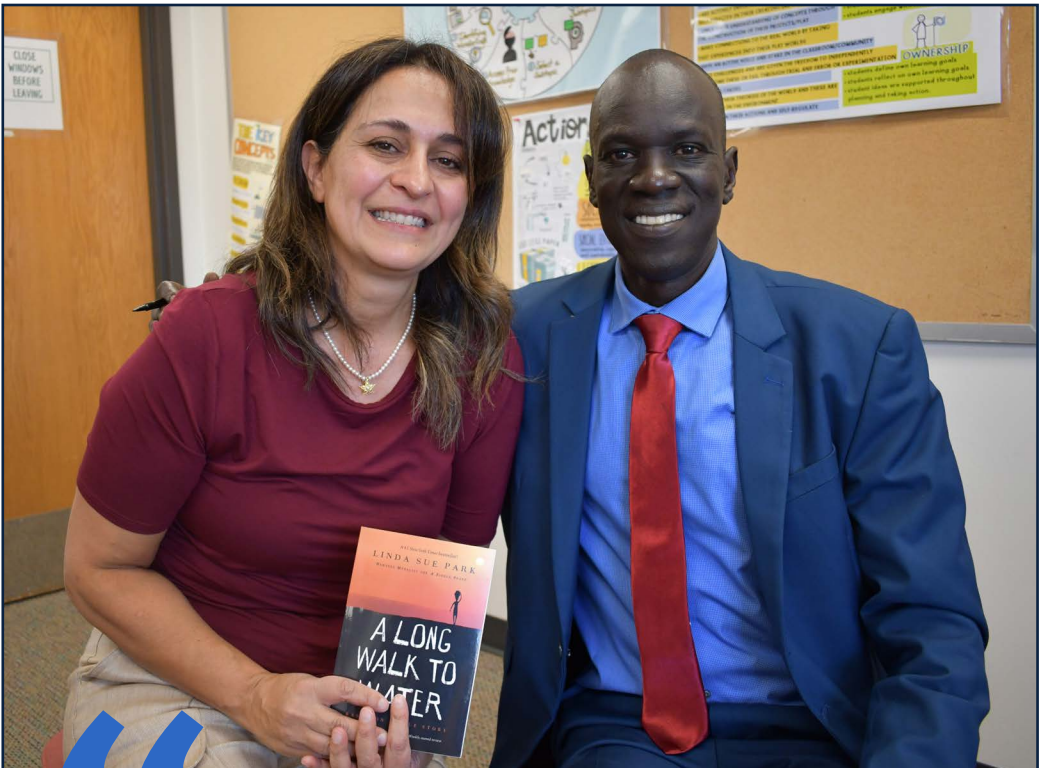
—Salva Dut

Last year, our 4th-grade classes read a pivotal book, *A Long Walk to Water*. This *New York Times* Bestseller by Linda Sue Park follows the true story of Salva Dut, one of the lost boys of South Sudan, from the moment he escaped his war-torn village, through his journey on foot to the refugee camps in Ethiopia, and eventually to Kenya. After several years of living with over 90,000 other refugees in Kenya, he was selected to move to the United States, where he learned English and went to business school. Dut founded the Water for South Sudan organization, which provides access to clean, safe water, and improves hygiene and sanitation practices for people in need in South Sudan.

Inspired by Dut’s story of courage and resilience, one of the 4th-grade Spanish classes joined the Iron Giraffe Challenge, a fundraising effort for the organization. As part of the challenge, the class entered the drawing to win one of several prizes—and among 194 schools, it won the grand prize of Salva visiting ISDenver in person!

In the Fall of 2023, Salva Dut and Water for South Sudan Executive Director Lynn Malooly made their long-anticipated trip. It was an incredible experience and will likely be a core memory for all our students as they work to make the world a more compassionate and curious place.

The teacher of the award-winning class that guided the students through the process, Nadia Sobhani, shared:



“Personally, Salva Dut’s visit to our school was a highlight of my teaching career. His humility and depth of knowledge for his work in South Sudan, his ability to overcome difficulties and give back to the villages in his country of origin, has left a lasting impact on my heart. My family is moved by his stories but is especially inspired to be of service to our neighbors and local community.”

The Rosenthal family and my company, Elevate Wealth Management, choose to donate financially to organizations that serve our local community. We are very lucky to be in a position to give, and we want to support those that need it most.

In the case of ISDenver, the specific intent of our giving is to support scholarships and teachers. We want all children in our community to have access to ISDenver and the same education our children are receiving. Being a part of the ISDenver program has instilled in our children an open-minded worldview and a curiosity and celebration of different life experiences. Our kids have learned not just how to read, write, and multiply, but, more importantly, how to interact with the world and their peers in a positive way. All credit is due to the amazing teachers at ISDenver. We appreciate them so much, and we hope our contributions support ISDenver's efforts to continue to recruit and retain talented educators from around the world.

MIKE AND STEPHANIE ROSENTHAL

ISDenver Parents

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

David Avido

From the slums of Nairobi to international fashion weeks, fashion designer, humanitarian, and entrepreneur, David Avido, joined the International School of Denver as an Artist in Residence April 2-5, 2024.

“People used to say that if you want to make it in life you have to get out of the ghetto. But I wanted to prove to people out there that good things can come from the ghetto.”

—David Avido

At only 25, Avido’s accomplishments and accolades defy age.

While most know Kibera, his home, as the largest slum in Africa, Avido goes beyond this declaration and challenges the views about his community. Through the vehicle

of fashion, Avido creates a social impact in Kibera and beyond.

David is inspired by his roots in Kibera and is helping to make a difference there by mentoring other designers and providing jobs to people through his business. In addition, 20% of sales from his clothing line go back to Kibera, and his team puts in extra time to make school uniforms for kids in their hometown. David has created a sustainable, eco-friendly business with fabric scraps being repurposed into masks and shopping bags, and his designs are gender-neutral and inclusive.

Beyonce highlighted Avido in her ‘Black is King’ campaign as one of the African artists changing the world. His work has been featured in *Vogue USA* and *Vogue Italia*, and his journey has been filmed and shared across the world by Al Jazeera, BBC, CNN, and *National Geographic*.

He has also designed and made clothes for other famous artists, including Bruno Mars, Ty Dolla Sign, Chronixx, and Da’Ville. In 2021, Avido founded the Avido Foundation, an NGO that focuses on training and developing sewing skills for deaf women, young mothers, and youth who are passionate about a career in fashion.

With David Avido, there are no strangers, only friends.

David Avido has a way of making everyone around him feel like an old friend. His genuine warmth, gentle demeanor, and playfulness endeared our entire community. His time with our community was too short but will not soon be forgotten.

Avido danced with our ECE children, helped Primary students create patterns for their own unique clothing designs, and patiently worked with Middle Schoolers over sewing machines. He even played goalie on the soccer field and chatted the night away with parents and faculty at our Global Gala.

Avido’s art extends beyond the beautiful and vibrant clothing design that is his signature brand. It permeates into his ability to thread genuine connections and make community wherever he is. He will forever be a part of our community!



Global Gala Went West & Above and Beyond

Recognizing that the ISDenver Experience can't happen with tuition alone, and without the investment and involvement of our community, we asked you to join us. We asked you to participate. We asked you to give. And you did. You gave generously!

We had a record number of sponsors and families underwrite the Global Gala this year, ensuring that everything donated the night of the party went directly toward supporting our mission. ***That's \$340,000 to go toward investing in our faculty, their salary scale and benefits, and supporting their often visionary teachings, while also helping the school to offer \$2M in financial assistance.***

We had a room full of generous paddle raisers, including three lead donors who each made a gift equivalent to one full year of tuition.

We had a number of new donors and first-time gala-goers. We had groups of our faculty and staff, investing all amounts.

We also had help from some of our new and long-time, loyal families in providing amazing access to some of the best excursions and vacation getaways for our live and silent auctions. So many families donated to our grade-level baskets and wine and spirits pull!

Our creative community also offered up some of the most exclusive, one-of-a-kind experiences that you can't buy anywhere else, to engage and hang out with folks you can't find anywhere else. From steaks and cigars to wine and sushi, to croquet tournaments and distillery tours, let's admit it: we have the most interesting, talented, and fun parent community in Denver!

\$340k

donated



SPOTLIGHT

Our Outstanding **Faculty Philanthropist**

Meet Aaron Siegel, Outstanding Faculty Philanthropist award winner

One of the most important ways we live our mission is to model compassion and curiosity every day. And that's what the Outstanding Faculty Philanthropist award is all about.

Presented at Global Gala 2024, we honored a colleague who is not only an outstanding teacher - respected by kids and peers alike - and a loyal donor, but also almost an extension of our fundraising and marketing team. You've seen his work in E-news, in hallways, in the yearbook, and all over campus. It is our honor to recognize Middle School teacher and Science Subject Lead Aaron Siegel as our 2023-2024 Faculty Philanthropist Award Winner.

Mr. Siegel is a dynamo, a true force of nature, which considering he teaches our students Geology, seems an appropriate description. From teacher to coach to colleague to videographer to frisbee player to axolotl guardian to Scholarship by Staff contributor, Mr. Siegel wears many hats and does it all with hard work, humor, wisdom, thoughtfulness, and kindness.

Mr. Siegel is the embodiment of ISDenver school spirit and community giving. If you don't know him already, he is someone you should get to know.



Aaron is 100% student-focused. He connects with students in so many ways all day each and every day. Our students love him and look up to him. This makes him so effective as a teacher, coach, and mentor. Aaron also supports so many school happenings through his computer graphics skills and other efforts.

—Colleague

SPOTLIGHT

Our *Volunteers of the Year*

Meet June Dirstine & Leah Pytel, *Volunteers of the Year* award winners

Beginning with the 2023-24 year—a year focused on gratitude—we awarded the inaugural Outstanding Volunteer Award. This is an important opportunity for us to recognize and thank parents who pitch in to partner with us, always supporting our mission and helping to bring ideas to life for community building, school spirit, and moving our school forward.

For our first-ever award, it was unanimous that we honor not one, but two parents: Leah Pytel and June Dirstine. With a collective 27 years at ISDenver, two graduates, and three kids still on campus, they’ve done it all: room parents, library volunteers, lunch servers, RISE campaign, and the Global

Gala Committee. Particularly with the gala, they’ve helped our school to throw an incredible party celebrating our faculty and staff, while also inspiring our community to invest in the ISDenver experience that we know and love.

Service learning is an integral part of the IB curriculum framework and, wow, June and Leah are such great examples of the impact of service for our community. We are eager to honor our parents each year moving forward with the Outstanding Volunteer Award. June and Leah are the models, and we appreciate deeply that we have many who are following in their footsteps. Congrats, and thank you, to June and Leah.



I personally give to ISDenver and I encourage all families to give in whatever ways that are meaningful to them. For me, making an automatic monthly contribution is the easiest way for me to make an impactful gift each year that helps continue the traditions at our school and improve the ISDenver experience.

ALBERTA UTECH
ISDenver Parent

Thank You to Our Community Volunteers

**DRAGON PARENT
ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE
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CJ Porterfield
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Eli Anderson
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Naazneen Barma
Cultural Inclusion Chair
Lauren Deaton
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Dragon Buddies Co-Chair
Carol Kleiner
Dragon Buddies Co-Chair
Pat Douthat
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Ex-Officio Member

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Leah Berg
Alyce Blum

Chelsey Bova
Megan Brockel
Michelle Cahill
Alison Conley
Betsy Duffy
Steffani Edwards
Sophie Ferber
Kerry Fleischer
Mara Gras
Carol Kleiner
Lucinda Kohn
Meaghan Kremer
Kourtney Lagunes
Jessica Lansing
Ashley Mains Espinosa
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Liza Olson
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Diana Zamfirescu

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June Dirstine
Paige Goodson Reberry
Kourtney Lagunes
Leah Pytel
Kaitlyn Ward

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Eli Anderson
Kelly Atkins
Alison Conley

Lauren Deaton
Christine DeVore
June Dirstine
Sophia Ferber
Anne Helfrich
Kassy Khandelwal
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Paloma Korich
Stephanie Koussaya
Isabel Lansberry
Kourtney Lagunes
Liza Olson
Meg Parker
Celeste Stragand
Carrie Wernecke
Kimberly Wyatt

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Chelsey Bova
Dana Forsberg
Jennifer Goethals
Kevin Lander
Ashley Mains Espinosa

Sherrie Miller
John Miquel
Katharine Modisett
Kara Pollack
Stephanie Tulp Reddy
Brian Roy-Garland
Cara Sterling
Scott Sterling
Kaitlyn Ward

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Rachelle Bodnar
Chelsey Bova
Niah Hyatt
Shirly Koren
Christine Lu
Susie Martin
Katherine Modisett
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Kara Pollack
Michelle St. Martin
Melissa Williams
Mei Jessica Zou

Thank You to Our Donors

The following list of individuals and organizations represents the donors who have made gifts from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024.

- + Rise Campaign Donor
- * Faculty/Staff
- ^International Scholars Society

COMMUNITY GIVING

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Kara and Josh Pollack⁺[^]

Christopher and CJ Porterfield

Gabi Prasse and Nathaniel Brethold

Anna and Frederic Prisse

Carolyn and Steve Purtle⁺

Leah and Michael Pytel⁺[^]

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JoJo Zheng and Tom Kuhn
Jessica Zhou and Richard Xiong

CORPORATE GIVING

8Z Real Estate
AdCellerant LLC
Ares Management
Bank of America
Benevity Community Impact Fund
Birch Psychology
Bridge and Tunnel Restaurant Group
Carrie Sells Denver
Cinch Apparel
Colorado Gives
Denver Wedding Rental Company
Dinner Elf
Elevate Wealth Management
Endowment Fund
Fierce45
Florescue Family Foundation
Friend Assembly
Greeley Hatworks
Greeley Stampede
Independent Financial

Inside the Orchestra
Janus Henderson Investors
Kiewit
Koelbel Communities
Konjo
Kroger
Kuhn Advisors, Inc.
Leopold Bros
Lincoln Financial Group
Little Oak Hill Foundation
Lou’s Italian Deli
Macy’s Corp.
Occasions Catering
Premier Roofing Company
Professional Bull Riders
Radical Love Movement
Reelworks
Robert Half
Rosenberg’s Bagels
The Gates Corporation
The Related Group
United Way of Bergen County
UWorld
Water Valley Company
Xcel Energy Foundation



A Message from Community Giving

You make it happen. Thank you so very much.

Here is the truth. The ISDenver Experience only exists because we are a global community, committed to making the world a more compassionate and curious place. It takes more than just a small handful, it takes the entire community, giving in a way that is meaningful to each individual or group.

Every school needs an active and invested community to help fulfill its mission, vision, and values. At ISDenver, we rely on a combination of tuition, program revenue, and annual donor support to bring the ISDenver Experience to life. Tuition only does so much. It's a significant investment in each child,

and our school does not take that for granted. Our philanthropic support, however, makes an impact greater than ourselves – greater than our child, our family, one teacher, or one classroom. Our collective support is an investment in our community.

You matter. Your participation matters. Your support of Community Giving matters. Your gifts are the reason we have the Dragon's Den, the reason we have an Education Technology Specialist, the reason we continually expand financial assistance, and the reason our littlest learners have a brand-new outdoor learning and play space this summer.

When you give to ISDenver, you inspire others to do the same. And if you haven't yet, please join us in making a gift to ISDenver. You can make an impact, and it can

be extraordinary. Our advancement team is committed to listening, learning, and capturing your stories and experiences at ISDenver, as well as informing and inspiring our community to get further engaged in advancing our mission. Let's connect. Let's talk about what is most important to you and your family at ISDenver, and why. We can't wait to get to know you better!

With gratitude,

NATASHA TIFF

Assistant Director, Community Giving



**INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL OF
DENVER**

*It's always the right time to invest
in our learners and community.*

SUPPORT TODAY →