

2022-23

ANNUAL REPORT

NURTURING LEADERS
AND CHANGE-MAKERS

SINCE 1999



YES 
Nature to Neighborhoods

Dear Friends,

Since YES's journey began in 1999 as a summer camp scholarship provider, **we've centered the immense power of nature to foster connections, healing, and leadership.** Over the last 24 years, YES has grown to offer year-round opportunities for youth and adults to discover their strengths, build their confidence, and lift their voices, in the outdoors and beyond.

YES harnesses nature's power to catalyze a new depth of discovery, purpose, and opportunity to support community members as confident, capable leaders for themselves, their families, and their community.

In the past year, YES provided year-round engagement and mentorship to **more community members than ever before** through seven cohorts. We also set the stage for the launch of the Richmond Outdoors Coalition pilot project in 2023-24, which will allow YES and nine local organizations to bring outdoor access and learning to 2,000 additional students and their families in West Contra Costa Unified School District.

With all this program expansion, it's time that our physical space grows, too. Our sights are set on **the completion of an all-new facility at our 3029 Macdonald Ave. home in 2025**, and we're already preparing for all that the new space will enable us to accomplish.

As we approach YES's 25th year, our commitment to nature and community remains steadfast. The progress and accomplishments in this report are a testament to the strengths of the community we engage and the support we receive from you.

With Gratitude,



Eric Aaholm
Executive Director



526
COMMUNITY MEMBERS
ENGAGED

89
VOLUNTEERS

373
DONORS

16
STAFF
MEMBERS

SEPTEMBER 2022
TO AUGUST 2023

IMPACT



AT A GLANCE

143,220 Physical Activity Minutes



285 DAYS IN NATURE

94
Community
Partners

95% of youth increased their knowledge of activism, advocacy, and policy, systems, and environmental change (PSE) strategies



98% of YES teens graduated from high school

79% of Adult Leaders increased their understanding of the impacts of social systems; power, privilege, and oppression



94%



OF FAMILIES INTEND TO ENGAGE IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND CHOOSE HEALTHY OPTIONS

THEORY OF CHANGE

Parks and wild spaces are vital to mental, physical, and community well-being, **but access to and comfort in the outdoors faces a sharp disparity, often requiring BIPOC and low-income families to overcome significant barriers to recreate, learn, and heal in nature.**

YES helps residents of all ages and backgrounds find belonging and confidence in the outdoors because we recognize that **these spaces are better and more fulfilling for everyone when they include the full diversity of identities and lived experiences that make up our community.**

By working in partnership with nature to nurture leaders who champion the well-being of our community, YES envisions a future where Richmond youth, adults and families lead healthy, connected lives; motivate change in their neighborhoods; and inspire a safe, thriving community.

Our Approach

CULTIVATE LEADERSHIP through year-round training, strong mentorship, and profound experiences in nature.

CREATE BRAVE SPACES that foster cross-cultural relationships, build resilience in our community, and unite people in common cause.

RECLAIM OUR CONNECTION TO THE EARTH and embrace the power of nature to heal, inspire, and develop empowered and compassionate leaders.

INCREASE ACCESS for those historically excluded from the outdoors, and collaborate at the forefront of the movement to increase equity and inclusivity in the field.



88%
OF YOUTH PARTICIPANTS
REPORT INCREASED
COMFORT IN THE
OUTDOORS



I'm so thankful I get to experience [YES] with my younger siblings because it's moments in nature that bring us together and stay with us forever.



THE YEAR IN HIGHLIGHTS

YLP

The **YOUTH LEADERSHIP PATHWAY (YLP)** is a progressive series of programs that engages youth ages 8-18 in outdoor adventures and leadership development opportunities to facilitate connection with community and nature and social-emotional growth.

ALP

The **ADULT LEADERSHIP PATHWAY (ALP)** is a series of leadership development programs focused on nurturing adults' strengths to achieve their personal goals, support their families, and be leaders in their community.

WELLNESS

YES's wellness program provides accessible, relevant counseling at no cost to families. Through professional, in-house case management, integrated wellness curriculum for all cohorts, and trauma-informed and healing-centered engagement training for all staff and volunteers, participants and their families are supported in overcoming challenges and reaching their goals in a holistic and unified environment.

Ending the summer with a **SPLASH!**

25 community members joined us for **Class 3 rapids** and a two-night campout on the American River for a **first-of-its-kind YES experience**. Youth and caregivers alike loved the thrill they felt on the water and the slowness and connection they felt back at camp.



Budding SCIENTISTS

Explorers and Rangers (ages 8-13) have started their science education early, preparing them with 21st century skills and proficiencies that will help them succeed. Throughout camping trips, workshops, and field trips, youth learned about natural resources, environmental change, and biodiversity.



62 staff, volunteers, and partners trained in healing-centered engagement



95%

of working-age youth demonstrated the knowledge and skills to apply for, secure, and maintain a job.



BIO BLITZ!

Teens shared their knowledge and practiced community leadership by hosting a Bio Blitz to chart biodiversity and contribute to worldwide scientific databases. Bio Blitzers logged 280 observations and recorded 100 unique species of flora and fauna.





I've learned through this community the power in self-acceptance, non-judgment, and asking for help when I'm struggling. A vision I have for my community is one that fosters healing, and cultivates healthy relationships so we can live in our hope, joy, and power.

— ALP participant

CONFIDENCE Boost

Cohort participants of all ages completed a series of body positivity workshops this year, helping them recognize their own strength and uniqueness. The series helped affirm to leaders of all ages that **every body belongs outdoors.**



YOU!



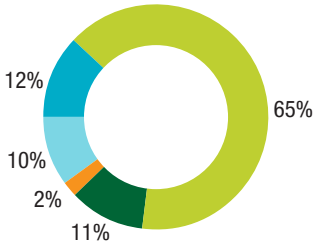
THANK

YES extends our sincere gratitude to the hundreds of individuals, institutions, and agencies whose generosity and vision make our work possible.

This past year, **89 volunteers donated nearly 1,400 hours** of their time to YES. Their generosity, compassion, and enthusiasm have guided the experiences of hundreds of youth, adults, and families in our community; our work wouldn't be possible without them.

FINANCIALS

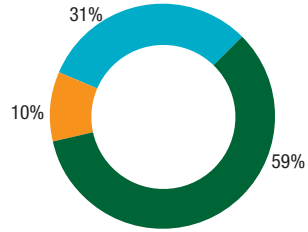
REVENUE



- GOVERNMENT GRANTS
- CORPORATE
- PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS AND TRUSTS
- INDIVIDUALS
- OTHER

TOTAL INCOME* \$2,072,214.24

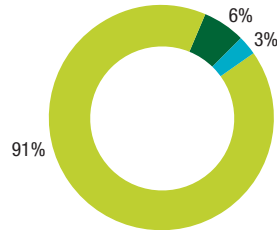
EXPENSES



- PERSONNEL AND OPERATIONS
- FUNDRAISING
- PROGRAMS

TOTAL EXPENSES \$1,874,527.44

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN REVENUE



- GOVERNMENT GRANTS
- PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS AND TRUSTS
- INDIVIDUALS

TOTAL \$1,280,744.79

TOTAL EXPENSES \$181,217.36

“YES is transformative. I truly believe that. You know that every day YES is doing programming that is reaching people and making a difference. You don't have to wait, or guess, that your money and time is well-invested.”

— YES Supporter

