20 years of nurturing change-makers and outdoor leaders
Dear Friends,

Just as it has been for 20 years, when you join YES today, you become part of a family. For participants, time spent in nature alongside trusted peers and staff lets them be their genuine, best selves, and opens their hearts to discovery and possibility. Our partners, funders, staff, and long-time volunteers nourish our family tree by helping to ensure access to high-quality programs that provide these positive experiences for youth and families.

YES’s unique, holistic approach – supporting the whole child, engaging the whole family – is central to the success we’ve had over the course of two decades, and creates multi-generational impact. The young people who joined our family over a decade ago are the leaders of today. Fourteen YES youth successfully graduated from high school in 2019, and then spent their summer in advanced leadership positions and jobs that took them across the state and to new countries. Adults in our new Adult Leadership Pathway completed a six-month leadership program, and are now training a new group of leaders to become empowered agents for change.

We are dedicated to supporting and nurturing the members of this YES family on their journeys as resilient, earth-connected leaders. I’m grateful to the community that makes our work thrive, and honored to share the impact of our work with you in these pages.

Sincerely,

Eric Aaholm
Executive Director

“The trips I went on were fun-filled, with opportunities to learn... [they] helped me discover myself, and how I feel for the environment wouldn’t be the same without YES. I even made my family stop using plastic straws because I told them how bad those hurt the ocean and the sea turtles. Even though it was just my family, we are already making a difference.”

—Jocelyn
NEW COASTAL CONSERVATION CORPS FUNDED

New, pivotal funding from the California Coastal Commission WHALE TAIL Grants Program and California State Coastal Conservancy deepened our emphasis on conservation and environmental justice. Through YES’s new “Coastal Conservation Corps,” teens convene regularly to learn about coastal conservation issues and prepare for trips to Monterey Bay, Limantour Beach, Bolinas Lagoon, and more! Grant-supported partnerships with conservation agencies will provide opportunities for teens to explore new habitats, conduct hands-on conservation science, and train to educate peers and families.

OUR ENGAGED COMMUNITY

This year, YES engaged 573 underrepresented youth and adults from Richmond and surrounding West Contra Costa County through over 100 days of programming. Our holistic, whole-family approach and strong relationship-building practices served as the foundation for activities ranging from public speaking workshops to wilderness backpacking trips, all empowering Richmond youth, adults, and families to lead healthy, connected lives; motivate change in their neighborhoods; and inspire a safe, thriving community.

WINTER CAMP: TEEN LEADERS IN ACTION

YES’s three-day Winter Camp was a deeply impactful, mid-year gathering for 40 youth of all ages. They hiked the blustery Marin coast, laughed through team-building activities, gained knowledge during health and wellness activities led by YES teens, and joined together in music-making. Youngsters were riveted by both the content and their teen role models. Camper favorites included “getting to see the Golden Gate Bridge”, “the night hike”, “memories made in the dorm” and, simply put, “the Nature.”

ADULT LEADERSHIP PATHWAY LAUNCH

YES launched our new Adult Leadership Pathway to empower underrepresented Richmond residents to improve community conditions. During the six-month Adult Leaders cohort, participants of diverse backgrounds and ages examined social injustices, built meaningful relationships and support systems, learned organizing principles, identified their strengths as leaders, and developed the skills to make change for themselves and their community. Graduates progressed into the Fellows cohort to deepen their skills, and will help teach this year’s incoming Leaders.

TEACHING SPANISH, STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY

YES nurtured the strengths of Richmond residents, who realized long-held dreams as a result. Four Adult Leadership Program participants met a community need for connection across language barriers between Latinx and African-American families by planning and teaching a series of interactive Spanish classes for Richmond parents. The Leaders facilitated laughter and learning over food, music, and board games like ¡Lotería! The project will continue in 2020.

TRAIBLIZERS FOR EQUITY & INCLUSION IN THE OUTDOORS

Who belongs in nature? We all do! YES is at the forefront of the movement for equity and inclusion for underrepresented youth and families in the outdoors. This year we took our efforts and expertise to the 2019 Children & Nature Network International Conference. Alongside conference founder Richard Louv and other environmental leaders, YES Executive Director Eric Aaholm and Program Director Blanca Hernández led workshops and served as panelists, sharing our program models, values, relationship-building approach, and cultural relevancy practices, as well as a call-to-action to nurture and empower the next generation of environmental leaders and decision-makers.

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IN PARTNERSHIP WITH NATURE

Immersing Youth in Nature

YES forged connections to nature for over 250 underrepresented youth ages 8 to 18 through our Youth Leadership Pathway. During residential, nature-based Summer Camps, connection to nature began amidst supportive peers and adults. Through a partnership with the East Bay Regional Park District, adolescent Richmond Rangers participants engaged in a ten-month program of hikes, canoe adventures, and hands-on nature education.

Teens in our Camp-to-Community (C2C) program spent over 25 days immersed in nature. C2C teens also engaged in year-round mentorship, job and academic goal-setting, and peer education addressing community health and environmental justice. At our Winter Camp and Family Camps, activities led by YES participants, staff, and dedicated volunteers provided opportunities to deepen connections – to each other and to the earth.

“I gained a lot of knowledge about forests and animals and leg muscles.”
— Richmond Rangers participant, age 11

“When you’re outdoors, it’s usually quiet. When you’re in the nature, at ease, you feel like you’ve let off a big burden.”
— YES youth, age 12

95% Percentage of Camp-to-Community teens spending more time outdoors independently because of their engagement with YES.

91% Increase in comfort with the outdoors as a result of Summer Camp, Winter Camp, and Camp Days programming.
Empowering Resilient, Earth-Connected Leaders

YES’s Youth and Adult Leadership Pathways train participants as leaders in the outdoors, and empower them to help shape their environments into healthy, thriving communities.

In 2016, a friend invited Tajzhane to a meeting of YES’s Youth Engagement Team, where she found supportive, accepting peers and adults. Now, Tajzhane is first on every sign-up list, from Winter Camp to rock climbing, to the Mountain Bike Club and beyond. This year, Tajzhane reached a milestone on her leadership journey, gaining leadership and environmental education experience, by working all summer as a Camp Counselor.

Cindy joined YES’s Adult Leaders Program to address the disparities she saw in access to healthy food and educational opportunities. When parents in a local school identified a communication gap between Spanish-speaking and English-speaking families, she and three fellow Adult Leaders created and led weekly Spanish classes in a fun, welcoming environment, bringing neighbors together and building community.

“Through this program, I definitely gained more public speaking skills, communication skills, and doing it effectively. I implemented my public speaking skills by teaching Spanish to adults – it pushed me to talk and work with a big audience.”

— Cindy, Adult Leaders Graduate and Fellows Participant

“Leadership means to me that there’s always someone watching me who’s younger than me, that wants to do what I’m doing. So I have to do what’s right, to lead by example for them.”

— Tajzhane, YES Teen Leader and Camp Counselor

97% Increase in clarity of purpose by Adult Leadership Program participants.

85% Percentage of YES teens who gained leadership skills that they can apply in their daily lives as a result of the Camp-to-Community program.

65% Increase in confidence leading projects and working with peers by Adult Leadership Program graduates.
Diane Mintz provides YES receives Outstanding Nonprofit of the Year award
We hire an executive evening more than 20 agencies to improve school and Richmond youth to family engagement and health at Verde Elementary.

S

ince 1999, YES has brought the wonder and power of nature into the lives of thousands of youth and families, and supported hundreds of teens and adults to step forward as leaders.

As we celebrate these 20 years, we are grateful to the many partners, donors, volunteers, staff, and participants who make our work possible, guide and support us, and make up the “YES family tree.”

Reminisce with us at www.yesfamilies.org/20.

YES sends 2,000 youth to summer camp between 1999 and 2005!
YES hosts our first weekend-long Family Camp in the redwoods.
YES goes year-round with new, local outings, partners with East Bay Regional Park District, and the Camp-to-Community Teen program is born!
A new focus on health fuels the launch of YES’s adult Wellness Program; participants help organize the Walk to Nature community-wide health event.

YES extends our great gratitude to the hundreds of individual donors and the volunteers and partners that make our work possible.

YES turns 20 while providing 100 days of programming for Richmond youth and families.

[Two Decades of Memories and Milestones]

Celebrating 20 Years of YES

1999-2005
YES founder Diane Mintz provides scholarship for 81 Richmond youth to go to sleep-away summer camps.

2004
YES receives Outstanding Nonprofit of the Year award.

2007-08
YES hires an executive director and opens our first Richmond office.

2010
YES organizes the North Richmond Network, convening more than 20 agencies to improve school and family engagement and health at Verde Elementary.

2017
YES receives Outstanding Nonprofit of the Year award from the Association of Fundraising Professionals.

2019
Three youth alumni are hired to work with YES as Weekend Trip Leaders. The Adult Leadership Pathway is re-designed and re-launched.

REVENUE & SUPPORT

- Foundations ......... 56%
- Individuals .......... 26%
- Government Grants .... 9%
- Corporate Donations ... 8%
- Earned Income ........ 1%

Financial Statement

TOTAL ....... $1,030,363

EXPENSES

- Programs ............ 75%
- Fundraising .......... 16%
- Management & Administration .... 9%

TOTAL ....... $1,073,797

CORPORATE & AGENCY FUNDERS

AmazonSmile
Anasy Catering & Events
Big Chief Tree Service
Blue Heron Builders
BNPS Railway Company
Bridge Association of REALTORS
Ceram Builders
Chevron Richmond Refinery
Contra Costa Association of REALTORS
District Homes

CORPORATE \& GOVERNMENT FUNDERS

Bernard E. & Alba Wilkin Charitable Foundation
Bill Graham Supporting Foundation
California Coastal Commission
Chamberlin Family Foundation
City of Richmond
Crenare E. Heller Charitable Foundation
Cliff Bar Family Foundation
Contra Costa Kids, Inc.
Contra Costa Health Services
Creston Porter Hale Foundation
East Bay Community Foundation
Environmental Volunteers
Dean & Margaret Lesher Foundation
Five Arts Fund
Friends of George Miller
Hellman Foundation
Irene S. Scully Fund
Miranda Lux Foundation
Guest Foundation
Satterberg Foundation
Save the Redwoods League
The California Endowment
The Lampert Byrd Foundation
The Morrison & Foerster Foundation
The San Francisco Foundation
The Sturt Foundation
The Wolfgang Fund, East Bay Community Foundation
Youth Outside

* Multi-year grants

Our Donors

YES extends our great gratitude to the hundreds of individual donors and the volunteers and partners that make our work possible.

Youth Outside
The Wolfgang Fund, East Bay Community Foundation
The Stuart Foundation
The San Francisco Foundation
The Morrison & Foerster Foundation
The Lampert Byrd Foundation
The California Endowment
Save the Redwoods League
Satterberg Foundation
Quest Foundation
Miranda Lux Foundation
Irene S. Scully Fund
Hellman Foundation
Five Arts Fund
Friends of George Miller

Our Donors

- East Bay Audiology
- Evergreen Painting
- Farmers Insurance: Ruth Stroup Agency
- Garden Architecture
- Glass Concepts
- GT Inspects
- Gustave Carlson Design
- Hardwood Floors by Milton
- Navioque
- HD Drywall
- Ian Iwane, DDS
- Inspector Ian
- Kaiser Permanente
- Law Offices of Bonnie K Bishop
- M.A. Rays, Inc.
- Marvin Gardens Real Estate
- Mechanics Bank
- Millwork Management
- Morum Engineering
- MPF Financial
- North Berkeley Investment Partners
- Pinnacle Home Loans
- Planned Parenthood Northern California
- Property ID
- Realty Advocates
- Red Oak Realty
- Reliable Electric
- Roemer Painting
- Rudolph Widmann Architects
- Shrem Law
- Studio KDA
- Synergy Enterprises
- Tencue Productions
- The Bull Valley Roadhouse
- The Energy Coalition
- The Grubb Co.
- Thornwall Properties
- Todd Jersey Architecture
- Truitt & White
- Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley
- University of California, Berkeley
- Vesper Society
- West Summit Cabinetry
- Winkler Real Estate Group
- Youve-Young

* YES received this funding in December 2018. Based on our values and strong partnership with East Bay Regional Park District, we will no longer accept funds from this agency.
MISSION

In partnership with nature, YES Nature to Neighborhoods nurtures leaders who champion the wellbeing of our community.

VISION

Our vision is for Richmond youth, adults, and families to lead healthy, connected lives; motivate change in their neighborhoods; and inspire a safe, thriving community.

YES TEAM

STAFF
Eric Aaholm, Executive Director
Blanca Hernández, Program Director
Clare McMurtry, Development & Communications Manager
Maria Chan, Operations & HR Manager
Vencel Alfred, C2C Fellows Coordinator
Peter Walker-Flom, C2C Youth Leaders Coordinator
Angelica Delgado, Adult Leaders Coordinator
Joanna Pulido, Youth Engagement Specialist
Yuliana Solis, Bilingual Program Associate
Pearl Penumaka, Development & Communications Associate
Aswun James, Peer Advocate

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Mike McLively, Board Chair
Jean Hyams, Vice Chair
Lisa Hammon, Secretary
Matthew Gatt, Treasurer
Zak Klein
Ann Higgins
AnnaLise Hoopes
Sonya Watson
Peter Roopnarine
Francis Tompkins
Tana Monteiro
Diego Cepeda
Jabeen Yusuf

FOUNDER
Diane Mintz

“Today especially, YES has a staff of such heart and such passion that it allows people, it encourages people to follow their dreams.”
— Diane Mintz, YES Founder

“YES is a seed planted in Richmond. It sprouts and grows into a towering tree, drops its acorns and leaves, young trees sprout – the cycle continues – a forest is born.”
— Ann Higgins, YES Board Member

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