

A BIG YEAR FOR VERMONT'S YOUTH



Vermont
Afterschool

FY2022
ANNUAL REPORT



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Dear friends,

There is no better word to describe Vermont Afterschool's (VTA) past year than PROGRESS. Each of our milestones—from the organizational changes we experienced to the programs and professionals we supported, from the youth we engaged to the legislative bills we championed—happened because of or in service of progress.

Internally, VTA's Executive Director of 13 years, Holly Morehouse, felt comfortable leaving the organization in April because it had progressed to such a position of strength. As the new Executive Director, I look forward to building on the success of the last 13 years, and doing so with the help of a tremendous staff that includes the newly created Jr. Iron Chef VT Coordinator, Business & Finance Manager, Communications & Development Coordinator, and School-Age Child Care Capacity Coordinator positions.

Externally, our work to support our core goals—expanding access, strengthening programs, and empowering youth—was further reaching and more impactful than ever before.


The \$3.5 million 2021 Summer Matters for All grant program gave more children and youth access to affordable summer learning opportunities, serving as a blueprint for subsequent expanding access grant programs in 2022 and beyond. These grants, combined with the continued work of Governor Phil Scott's Interagency Afterschool Youth Task Force, have progressed us closer to our vision of universal afterschool and summer care for every Vermont youth.

The sheer breadth of our work to strengthen programs—from L.E.A.D. microcredentials and Linking Engineering to Life to Transformative SEL trainings and Afterschool Essentials—deserves an annual report all of its own.

Our work to empower youth progressed to a point when the youth were the ones doing the empowering: taking center stage (or stove) in the 14th annual and VTA's inaugural Jr Iron Chef VT competition; making their voices heard through the Youth Vision Board; and informing the writing of, testifying in support of, and celebrating the passing of a State Youth Council legislative bill.

None of our work from the last year would have been possible without the progress we made in the 13 years leading up to this point. And none of that progress would have happened without the support, dedication, and tireless work of Vermont's afterschool professionals, summer camp counselors, teen centers, and all other youth-serving workers and programs that continue to make a difference for Vermont's children, youth, and families each and every day. Vermont's children and youth are the reason we do this work. You are the reason we will achieve our vision.

With gratitude,



Nicole Miller
Executive Director

OUR MISSION

Vermont Afterschool is dedicated to strengthening programs, building partnerships, and transforming communities so that all Vermont youth are active, engaged, connected, and heard.

FY2022
IMPACT

\$2,860,225

in grant funds we managed and distributed to programs, organizations, and people in FY22.



85%

of VT towns with afterschool and youth-serving organizations supported or impacted by Vermont Afterschool in FY22.

23,968

children and youth in VT were supported and/or impacted by Vermont Afterschool in FY22.



1,024



afterschool and youth-serving program staff participated in Vermont Afterschool trainings in FY22.

242



afterschool and youth-serving programs in every county were involved with Vermont Afterschool in FY22.





A RIGHT TO BE HEARD



“

Youth experience our education systems, mental health crises, the whole climate situation. Young people are inclined to be involved these days, with the amount of issues that affect us in our everyday lives.

—Delilah Kramer, Mt. Mansfield Union High School

”

On Wednesday, May 11, Governor Phil Scott signed H.293 into law, establishing a State Youth Council on or before November 1, 2022, composed of a diverse group of 28 Vermont youth from each county who are responsible for advising the Governor and General Assembly on the issues affecting young persons, including education, equity and anti-racism, climate change, and mental health.

H.293 was sponsored by Representatives Diane Lanpher and Michael Mrowicki and informed by the work of VTA's 2020 State Youth Advisory Group, a group of 50 young people who met virtually throughout the pandemic to develop recommendations for the State Youth Council and who testified in support of it before the Vermont House and Senate Committees on Government Operations.

The State Youth Council was partly inspired by the 2019 visit from Vivian Ljungqvist, student head of the Helsinki Youth Council, and Johanna Laukkanen, a youth worker supporting Ruuti within Helsinki Youth Services. We look forward to seeing the positive impact Vermont's State Youth Council will have on generations to come.

“

Democracy is as strong as the diversity of people it empowers, and the Youth Council strengthens Vermont's democracy by expanding the experiences present in the political process. Climate change and the school system affect everyone, but for youth are often more urgent and direct. A Youth Council will bring this urgency to Montpelier.

—Una Fonte, Vergennes High School

”





SUMMER MATTERS ...

Vermont Afterschool was proud to work with Governor Phil Scott, Senator Bernie Sanders, and the Vermont Agency of Education to establish the Summer Matters for All Grant Program in 2021 to help create opportunities for Vermont's youth to safely reconnect with their peers and their communities and to begin to recover from the isolation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The nearly \$4 million grant program prioritized summer learning sites that reached underserved populations such as students of color and students with special needs; provided transportation; and offered low- or no-cost programs for eligible students.

By increasing program slots, increasing operating hours of programs, reducing the cost for families, and expanding services in areas where few or no services previously existed, Summer Matters for All ensured that summer opportunities were available to youth in every Vermont community.



I felt super comfortable at camp. Most of the time being a trans person, I worry about what I'm doing, what I sound like, or look like. But that wasn't something I worried about at all at camp.

IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

\$3.5 million

awarded to

93



projects*

1,545



programming
days added

12,877

youth served



*Distributed in FY21 and FY22.



... FOR ALL!



The Arts Bus—a mobile makerspace, art studio, pop-up theater, and library—made 48 stops in high-need communities to reach 794 youth, bridging the opportunity gap by offering programs, free of charge, to children who would otherwise have no quality art education outside of public schools.

Vermont Children's Theater introduced teens to theater through the rehearsal and performance of shows. Parent of performer: "It's a safe place for healthy risk taking. There aren't a lot of summer night options for NEK teens. I hate to think where my teen would be hanging out Friday nights if VCT wasn't here."



"I did a lot of 'Teen Tuesday' classes at the MINT this summer and I liked that we got to learn and socialize at the same time. I wasn't interested in STEM at all before I took classes at The MINT and now I want to learn a lot more about STEM! I really hope this program continues in the future so lots of other kids can learn that STEM is fun." — Youth, age 12

Raven's Wood Outdoor School for Renegades hired additional staff to expand its outdoor safety and survival skills programming offered. Director Cynthia Perry: "It has been a hard year for children. An engaging, active, educational outdoor setting is the best way to begin healing and help them grow. Our kids go home dirty, happy, and filled with new things to tell their parents."





JR IRON CHEF VT



“This competition is about more than food. It’s about **working together**, trusting and **having confidence in each other**, and **holding each other up during the rough parts**. You have to learn how to get your ideas across in a respectful way, so people are more willing to listen to them.

— 6th grader, Swanton Elementary School



Jr Iron Chef VT is a career exploration culinary program and competition that teaches youth foundational skills of communication, teamwork, and problem solving by empowering teams of Vermont middle and high school students to create locally sourced and seasonally inspired dishes that promote Vermont's Farm to School efforts.

APRIL 2, 2022

Jr Iron Chef VT launched in 2008 as a collaborative effort between two leaders in the Farm to School movement, the Burlington School Food Project and Vermont FEED. In 2022, Vermont Afterschool assumed management of the program and competition and, **on April 2, 2022, twenty-four teams, over one hundred students, their families, and the media gathered at the Champlain Valley Expo for the 14th Annual Jr Iron Chef VT competition.**



Special thanks to the judges and to the event supporters, VT FEED, Burlington School Food Project, BlueCross BlueShield, City Market, The Windjammer and Upper Deck Pub, Blodget Ovens, UniFirst, Middlebury Community Television, Dexter-Russell, Eating Well Magazine, High Mowing Seeds, Homeport, JK Adams, King Arthur Baking, Kiss The Cook, and Lake Champlain Chocolates.

More than 5,000 Vermont middle and high school students have participated in this ground-breaking culinary competition since its inception. With continued support, we hope to be able to change the lives of young Vermonters through this event for years to come.



STRENGTHENING

An investment in youth workers is an investment in young people. This is why we dedicate significant time and resources into strengthening out-of-school programs and professionals through trainings and workshops, quality coaching and technical assistance, leadership opportunities, helping programs start and sustain, promoting best practices, and coordinating statewide systems and connections.

YPQI (Youth Program Quality Intervention)

We continue to serve as the state lead for YPQI Self-Assessment and Program Improvement, holding the contract for the tool with the Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality. The certified coaches and trainers on staff support programs in the field. Several training opportunities were made available to staff across Vermont including sessions on how to use the PQA assessment tools, communities of practice to discuss overall program quality, and planning to use data, as well as workshops on Foundations and Self-Awareness of Social Development and Promoting Responsibility and Leadership.

L.E.A.D. (Leadership, Exploration and Development)

L.E.A.D. provides third space professionals with tools to hone their strengths and leadership skills, supporting a cohort of participants from around the state specific to running licensed afterschool programs. Participants who complete L.E.A.D. 1.0 and 2.0 (40 hours total and a yearlong project) earn a Leadership Micro-credential and a \$250 bonus. In the past year, 10 staff completed L.E.A.D. 1.0 and three staff completed L.E.A.D. 2.0 with presentation topics on Community Engagement in Afterschool, Strength Based Supervision, and Middle School Program Development.

Linking Engineering to Life

Linking Engineering to Life is an engineering course for middle school girls and non-binary youth to expose them to engineering and STEM opportunities that exist. They have access to hands-on curriculum, including a materials kit, activities in a guidebook, and female mentors from the UVM College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences to lead the program. With partners, the Northern Vermont Area Health Education Center, in the past year, we reached 100+ youth in 15 towns across urban, suburban, and rural areas.

21st Century Community Learning Centers

Vermont Afterschool provided a tiered support model encompassing all 21C projects, including full-day director meetings, support for the YPQI, and individual program-level customized coaching, training, and consultation. Topics included program quality; youth leadership, agency, and voice; STEM; college and career awareness; equity, SEL, and resilience for youth and staff; and assistance for new directors. Our work in the past year impacted 23 projects serving more than 10,400 youth.



PROGRAMS

“

This was a real eye opener for me. I can honestly say this was the best workshop I've ever attended! I gained a lot of knowledge about myself and my way of leading the program.

—*Using DiSC Styles to Understand Your Leadership & Build Teams* training participant

”

Our goal is to provide a broad array of quality learning opportunities for those who work with youth in the third space and out-of-school time. In FY22, we were excited to offer a brand new training.

Transformative SEL: Introduction

This two-hour workshop explores the core competencies of social and emotional learning (SEL) through an equity lens; demonstrates how an equity lens is essential to understanding the social-emotional development for all of us; examines the impact of systemic oppression and racial injustices in marginalized groups and its impact on social/emotional wellbeing; and introduces strategies to implement equity-centered SEL practices in programs.

FY22 BY THE NUMBERS

103

VTA trainings offered



1,024

youth-serving program staff participated in VTA trainings



21,715

times someone said "you're on mute."



To stay engaged with, support and celebrate the afterschool field, we held a virtual annual conference November 12, 2021, with 106 in attendance. The conference kicked off with a 45-minute discussion on what was needed to ensure afterschool programs are well-staffed, staff are well-trained, and Vermont can move toward universal afterschool and summer. Areas of discussion were Recognition and Compensation; Job Descriptions and Roles; and Training and Career Pathways. In addition, participants received three hours of professional development in six workshops tied to themes of social-emotional learning and trauma, equity, working with families, STEM, supervision, and supporting all youth.



EMPOWERING YOUTH

The **Vermont Youth Vision Board**, as designed by the State Youth Advisory Group, provided young people across Vermont an opportunity to be heard by sharing, through photos, artwork, poems, and videos, what life is like for youth in their communities right now.

With support from Northfield Savings Bank Foundation and Vermont Department of Health, and with an eye toward elevating the voices of as many youth as possible, we continued to support local **Youth Councils** in 7 communities with grant funding for 29 youth-driven projects including the Burlington High School mural project (shown below).

With generous funding from the Mott Foundation, and in support of our vision of universal afterschool and summer care for every Vermont youth, we continued our focus to ensure young Vermonters had access to work and career exploration opportunities and enriching experiences, establishing a **Jobs for Youth** webpage to connect youth with businesses, and an **Employer Resources** webpage to equip businesses with tools to hire and retain youth.

Vermont Youth **VISION** Board

“

Anyone can change the world at the end of the day if they mean well. They just need a good heart and a good group of people to support them.



Anonymous, age 17



“

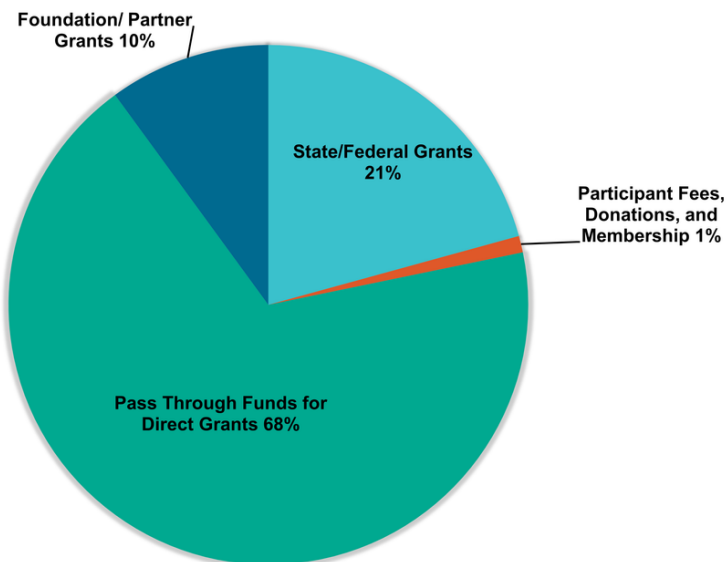
The thing I will most likely remember is being able to make a difference and have more of a say in my community.

—Youth Council Grant participant

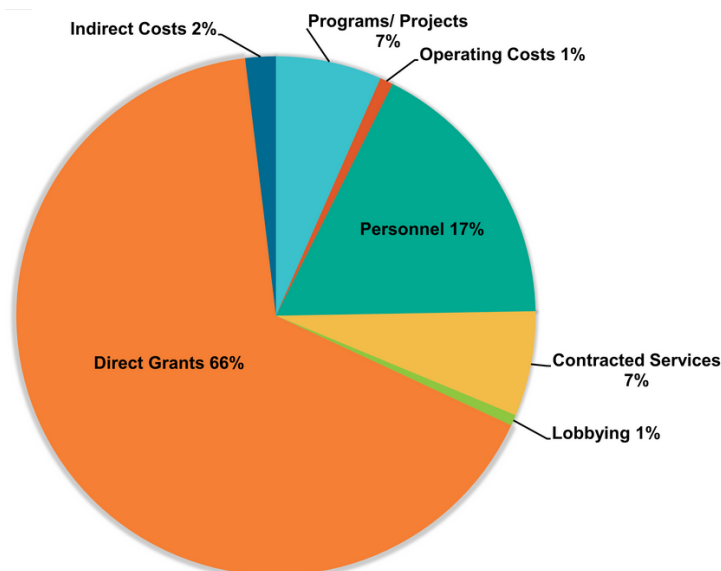
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IN TOTAL

FY2022 Total Income: \$4,031,249



FY2022 Total Expenses: \$4,034,363



WHO WE ARE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Raquel Aronhime

Virginia Burley, *Secretary*

Jim Fitzpatrick

Vicki Graf

Katie Flanagan Mobley, *Chair*

Barbara Russ, *Former Chair*

Falko Schilling

Rich Tulikangas

STAFF

Umesh Acharya
Youth Resilience Coordinator

Ben Ardel
Program Specialist

Rebecca Hatin
Business & Finance Manager

Seth F. Hibbert
Communications & Development Coordinator

Kerrie Mathes
Jr. Iron Chef VT Coordinator

Nicole Miller
Executive Director

Katie O'Shea
STEM & Career Awareness Coordinator

Tricia Pawlik
Senior Associate for Program Quality

Brianne Smith
Youth Engagement Coordinator

Mary Steussy
Bookkeeper

Becky Wilcke
Project Assistant

Matt Wolf
Youth Voice Coordinator

FUNDERS

Afterschool Alliance • Charles Stewart Mott Foundation • Family Services Division (DCF/AHS) • National Conference of State Legislatures • Northfield Savings Bank Foundation • Northern Vermont Area Health Education Center • Overdeck Family Foundation • STEM Next Opportunity Fund • Vermont Agency of Education • Vermont Child Development Division (CDD), Department for Children and Families, Agency of Human Services • Vermont Community Foundation • Vermont Department of Health • Vermont Department of Mental Health • Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC)

COACHES & TRAINERS

Umesh Acharya
Ben Ardel
Beth Martell
Nicole Miller
Katie O'Shea
Tricia Pawlik
Brianne Smith
Matt Wolf

MEMBERS*

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*As of June 30, 2022

Special thanks to the following donors:

Josie Dershowitz
Joseph & Ellen Fallon
Jim & Susan Fitzpatrick
Barbara Russ & Dean Williams
Vicky Smith & David Porteous
Jorie Spaulding
Iona Tea
Town Fair Tire Foundation, Inc.
Rich Tulikangas





Special thanks to King Street Center, Mary Johnson Children's Center, One Planet Chelsea, and Mountain View Child Care for photos throughout.





WAIT 'TIL NEXT YEAR!

As great as the past year has been, we've already begun to build on progress made, and we're looking forward to the future steps we'll take to ensure the children and youth in every Vermont community are able to benefit from the power of afterschool, summer learning, and third space programs during out-of-school time hours.

For every Vermont youth in an afterschool program, there's another youth waiting to get in.
There isn't room for every kid. We want to change that.

The Room For Me Grant



The Expanding Access Grants and the new Room For Me Grant will continue to reduce gaps in Vermont's current summer and afterschool system by addressing affordability, increasing availability, building long-lasting partnerships to promote sustainability, and piloting innovative approaches.

For the first time since 2019, our Annual Conference will be IN-PERSON, bringing together Vermont's out-of-school time directors, staff, educators, and partners for a full day of learning, networking, and celebration of the important work they do for Vermont's children, youth, and families.

It's time to hit **REFRESH**

Vermont Afterschool Annual Conference

10.28.22 Stowe/Flake Mountain Resort



We cannot wait to create the change we've planned. With your support, we know Vermont Afterschool will continue to strengthen programs, build partnerships, and transform communities so that all Vermont youth are active, engaged, connected, and heard. Here are two ways you can help:

Scan QR codes with your camera app to

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Afterschool

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