



Annual Report

September 2019–August 2020

Our Mission: We engage youth in opportunities that encourage them to be their best selves.

Our story this year has been one of resilience. We started the 2019–2020 school year with record high enrollment. In the spring, our programs abruptly closed due to the new coronavirus. As we transitioned to working from home, staff continued to worry and think about all the children and families we weren't seeing. As summer approached, we worked with partners, local and national, to research, learn and plan how to safely operate programs in the midst of a pandemic. We planned so many different scenarios to be ready for all the unknowns. But we never gave up.

In all of our staff and board conversations, caring for the children, families and staff in the Wisconsin Youth Company community remained our top priority. Our board encouraged creativity and out-of-the box thinking to make smart financial choices and fulfill our mission. Our staff worked together sharing information, resources and kind words to support each other as we designed and implemented COVID-safe programs. Our families demonstrated gratitude and reminded us of the importance of our mission.

WYC has many accomplishments to be proud of this year. We have safely operated programs during the pandemic giving children and families much needed support. We have made prudent, yet challenging, financial decisions and took advantage of the resources available to survive the pandemic. We retained a committed and engaged staff team even through furloughs because of our positive, strong work culture.

The accomplishment that I am most proud of this year is that our team never gave up. We demonstrated resilience in the face of adversity. The need for children to thrive outside of the school day has not and will not disappear. And, as long as the need is there, WYC will strive to be the community of dedicated caregivers, supportive families, engaged partners, and passionate staff and board members who are there to meet the need.

Rebecca Carlin, executive director

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads 'Rebecca Carlin'.

Fundraising Growth

For 47 years, Wisconsin Youth Company had served children and families primarily through fee-based programming. Growth, for us, meant increased opportunities for children through scholarships for school year and summer camp programming, and access to free resources through Elver Park and Theresa Terrace Neighborhood Centers.

March of 2020 put an end to public gatherings — including schools and neighborhood centers. It was heartbreaking to look toward the future and watch as school year programs and summer camps were canceled one after another.

It was clear that if we were going to survive this pandemic, we would need help. We reached out to our community — the families whose children have experience with our programs, local leaders, and philanthropic corporations.

Our community answered with words of encouragement, stories of the positive impact Wisconsin Youth Company programs had on their children and families, and with their gifts. Our community gave to support beloved staff, ensure children had school supplies for virtual learning, and because they believed in the importance of providing children with safe spaces to learn, grow, and thrive.

Now that we are approaching the end to 2020, the view of the future is tinged with hope.

With help from the families, children, parents, and staff who make up Wisconsin Youth Company, we are envisioning a brighter future for the children we serve, the staff who make it all possible, and the generosity of our community.

Thank you.



Transforming our Centers

The 2019-2020 academic year proved to be our most transformative yet. We shifted our leadership internally to serve the community better and we were able to do just that. "Give the chance to give" was the neighborhood center's first major fundraising campaign. We were able to collect more than 250 toys and offer a chance for children to experience the joy of giving around the holidays.

We strengthened our relationship with local community partners including school districts. Middleton Cross Plains School District wrote a grant on our behalf to increase reading materials for the families that use our neighborhood centers. More than 80 books, magazines, and short stories were given to families as they attended our annual Black Excellence Celebration.

We were ready to do more in the spring for our communities when the pandemic struck. Our buildings were shutdown, we couldn't provide 125 (25 meals a day, 5 days a week) weekly meals to our teens, and there was not the safe space for our elementary students to go after school. We did not know what was ahead of us, but we needed to pivot and transform ourselves to be better for our community.

Food insecurities were at the top of our list. Our team worked with community partners to receive donations, allowing us to distribute food to our community beginning on March 19. Every day we delivered meals to our community totaling more than 8,360 meals for their families. This small idea turned into what is now our Elver Park Neighborhood Center Food Pantry where we serve 110 families twice a week with groceries. We had to transform and we did just that.



Adapting our Programs

The 2019-2020 year was filled with adaptability, change, teamwork, and creative solutions. In mid-March, after school programs needed to close due to the COVID-19 pandemic reaching Wisconsin. Offices were closed — McKenna, Helgesen, and Waukesha — schools were closed and staff were sent home. We wouldn't know it at the time, but March 13 was the last day of after school programming for the 2019-2020 school year.

Many of our program staff were sad they didn't get to say goodbye to children in their programs, and wish those who were aging out of programs good luck as they moved to their next stage of education. To ease the abrupt transition to virtual school, the after school team developed newsletters with activities and support for working parents. Though we couldn't be in person to provide care to working parents, the WYC team did a great job of reaching out to our families to provide support in other ways.

As staff turned to planning summer programs, it was clear COVID-19 was going to affect how programs looked and operated. Working with staff, community leaders and families, we were able to offer summer programs in both Dane and Waukesha Counties, however differently. Program sizes were cut to accommodate smaller groups of children, pods were created so that children interacted with the same people every day, program activities were changed so that children didn't share supplies, and field trips were eliminated. The most vital part of camp, positive relationships and good memories, remained.



Financial Breakdown

1,602

Children attended Wisconsin Youth Company programs this year

23 After School Programs

Before School Programs **7**

3 4K Wrap Programs

Neighborhood Centers **2**

4 Summer Day Camps

Support & Revenue*

Program Fees \$2,899,941

Registration Fees \$35,500

Grants & Contributions \$429,649

Subsidies \$9,664

Investment Return \$26,441

Other \$12,947

Total \$3,414,142

*Not included above are additional funds received from PPP \$611,100 and EIDL \$149,106

Expenses

Personnel \$2,916,287

Direct Program Costs \$371,610

Office Expenses \$291,814

Space Costs \$250,150

Insurance \$140,783

Marketing \$29,651

Professional Services \$5,496

Bad Debt \$9,816

Interest \$14,854

Depreciation \$85,489

Other \$1,301

Total \$4,117,251

