



youth
odyssey

2024 Annual Report



Backpacking, Rock Climbing,
Hiking, Paddling Camps



School, Home School & Youth
Community On-Site Programs



Day Trips to our Ropes
Course & Paddling Trails

Table of Contents



02	Company Overview
03	Letter from the Executive Director
04	Experiential Learning
05	Board of Directors
06	Youth Success Feature
07	Programs Overview
08	Program Participants
09	Financial Highlights
10	Future Outlook
11	Contact & Get Involved

Company Overview

Vision

We strive to uncover the buried potential within youth who have not yet discovered it in themselves. In doing so, disadvantaged and underprivileged youth become productive and contributing members of society.

Mission

Our mission is to inspire, engage and empower disadvantaged and underprivileged youth ages 10-17 through leadership development, life skills, and outdoor activities.

Letter from Executive Director

2024 was a year of challenges, but also of remarkable growth and resilience. Just as we instill problem-solving and adaptability in the youth we serve, our team demonstrated these very qualities, overcoming obstacles and driving meaningful impact. I am proud to share that despite the challenges, we achieved a 19% increase in youth served, with equally impressive outcomes reported. This growth is a testament to our unwavering commitment to building a stronger, more empowered community.

Looking ahead to 2025, we anticipate an additional 10-15% growth as we expand our team to meet the rising demand for our programs. The need for life-changing experiential education has never been greater, and we are actively seeking community partnerships to help us rise to the occasion. With a team of highly trained professionals, we are ready to make an even greater impact—together.

The Need:

Our Community is experiencing averages, based on population, that are higher than the State and National averages.

- Child Poverty
- Violent Crime Arrests
- Property Crime Arrests
- Drug/Alcohol Abuse Arrests
- Curfew/Vandalism Arrests
- Disorderly Conduct Arrests
- Teen Pregnancies
- 25 yrs or younger with less than a HS diploma



Becky Meyer
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Our Impact:

Reports show that youth who participate in our program on average, demonstrate:

- Decreased disciplinary action
- Decreased dropout rate
- Increased grades
- Increased testing scores
- Increased attendance

Our Results:

Increased:

- Communication Skills
- Leadership Skills
- Problem Solving Skills
- Gained Self Confidence
- Teamwork Skills
- Trust

Experiential Learning: What makes us different



Youth Odyssey stands out from other youth organizations through its commitment to experiential learning and professional development. The organization offers a unique blend of outdoor adventure activities and life skills training, led by certified professionals who specialize in youth development.

This hands-on approach is designed to foster personal growth by allowing learners to engage with challenges and learn from the natural consequences of their actions, mistakes, and successes. The process involves structured experiences that require learners to take initiative, make decisions, and be accountable for the results.

Program Staff are Certified in:

- Level 1 ACCT Certified (Ropes Course Facilitation)
- Wilderness First Aid / CPR / AED
- Mental Health First Aid
- Texas Master Naturalists
- Texas Outdoor Educational Association (TOEA)
- Project Wild / Learning Tree
- Lifeguard

Experience

- Over 120 Combined Years in the Youth Development Field
- Over 35 Combined Years Leading of Backcountry Trips
- Paid Staff run our programs, volunteers offer support only



Board of Directors



Aaron Etienne
Board Chair

Interested in joining one
of our committees or
Board Membership?
Contact our office at
361-444-5420

2025 Board Officers and Chairs:

Lazrik Pettis, Chair-Elect / Governance & Recruitment Chair

Taylor Mayfield, Treasurer / Finance & Audit Chair

Alissa Meija, Secretary / Development Co-Chair

Crispin Mendez, Jr., Immediate Past Chair, 2024

Ben Soto, Development Co-Chair

Board Members:

Judge Inna Klein

Jennie Dibala

Shileen Lee

A "culture of generosity" refers to an environment where people are encouraged and motivated to freely give their time, resources, and compassion to others, fostering a spirit of kindness and mutual support for the greater good.

Youth Success Feature



Izzy Award Winner : Cruz Martinez



"When I started with Youth Odyssey I was shy, I was pretty weak, I did not want to meet anyone or talk to anyone, I wasn't too interested until later on. I started going to the ropes course, started going outside to see how awesome it was. So I started doing more and more. Sooner or later I became a pro at it and then they wanted me to become a youth leader and teach others. And now that's what I do, help others set up a tent, tie a knot to go rock climbing, how to put boards together, how to put lifejackets on to go kayaking. And how to make fires to make s'mores which those are really good at night. But yeah, over the time I did get better at teaching other kids how to do this, do that. What to do, what not to do. And a lot of kids, they are a little nervous, so I help them out and encourage them. By the end of the day, they're already climbing up the towers, they're already kayaking three miles down the river, and they just see it as so fun. To be honest, I have matured a lot over the years. Especially like before this Youth Odyssey, I had speech problems where I did not like to communicate with people, talk to people at all. I started being in my comfort zone. And now my mom wants to sign me up to all these camps and she loves it. You get out, learn leadership skills, you get to go out and check out nature, You do all these sorts of activities. Who knows, maybe you're not like yet like how I ended up. I loved it and now I'm a youth leader and I love it here being with Youth Odyssey. Three weeks ago I started learning how to swim and now I feel more confident than ever jumping into the water without drowning. I really do thank the sponsors because without them we wouldn't be able to go out into state parks. Go out to San Antonio, learn how to have a good time in the river, or go to Austin, have a good time climbing the rocks, and I really do thank the sponsors for donating for us kids to go out and see the wonders of nature." - Cruz Martinez

2024 Programs

Youth Leader Service Projects

- Packery Flats - Winter
- Rotary Club @ Ropes Course
- Keepers of the Garden
- Earth Day Bay Day
- Adopt a Beach Clean-up: Spring, Fall
- Oyster Restoration
- Beach to Bay Finish Line Medals
- Rookerly Island Clean-up
- Wildflower Stomp

Community Ropes Courses

(expansion of elements in 2024)

- BUC Days Court
- Rotary Club
- Graduation Party - Private Family
- CSP Cheerleading Team
- Homeschool Cross Country Team
- EMS School

School Programs

- CCISD (20)
 - Baker MS: Spring, Fall
 - Browne MS: Spring
 - Cunningham at SP MS: Spring, Fall
 - Coles AVID: Spring, Fall
 - Driscoll MS: Spring, Fall
 - Driscoll AVID: Spring
 - Haas MS: Spring, Fall
 - Haas AVID: Spring, Fall
 - Hamlin MS: Spring
 - Hamlin AVID: Spring
 - Martin MS: Spring, Fall
 - Martin AVID: Spring, Fall
- GPISD (7)
 - Gregory-Portland MS: Spring, Fall
 - East Cliff Elem - Spring, Fall
 - W.C. Andrews Elem - Spring, Fall
 - Stephen F Austin Elem - Fall
- CC Montessorri: Spring
- West Oso Jr. High: Spring, Fall
- Homeschool: Spring, Fall

Leadership Camps

8

Community Programs

21

Community Ropes Courses

6

School Programs

32

Service Projects

10

Community Programs

- La Armada Apartments: Winter, Summer
- Leeward Apartments: Winter
- LULAC West Apartments: Winter
- Gregory Housing: Winter, Summer
- YMCA: Summer I and II
- YWCA: Summer I and II
- Portland Parks: Summer I and II
- Youth Leader Program: Spring I, II, III
- Nueces County Court Referral: Spring I, III, III
- Bayview In-Patient: year round
- Bayview Out Patient: year round
- Bayview Sub-Acute: year round

Leaderships Camps

- Winter Break Camp - Big Bend NP
- Spring Break: Spring
- Backpacking Camp: Summer
- Canoe Camp: Summer
- Rock Climbing Camp: Summer
- Outdoor Adventure Camp: Summer
- Living Local Camp: Summer
- Thanksgiving Camp: Austin Climbing

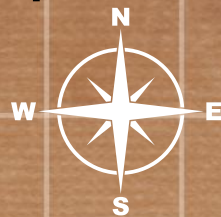
Interested in a tour or starting a new program?

Contact our office at 361-444-5420

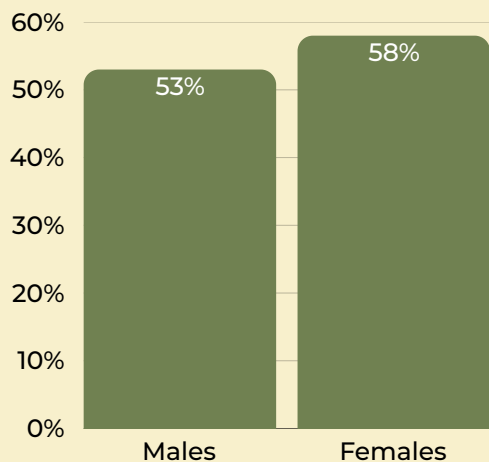




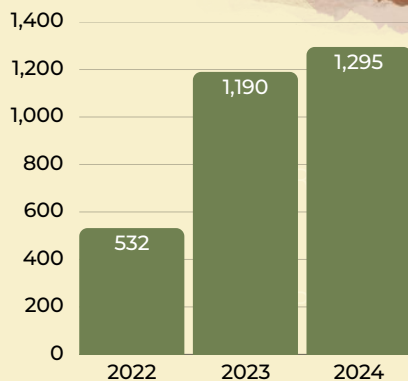
Program Participants



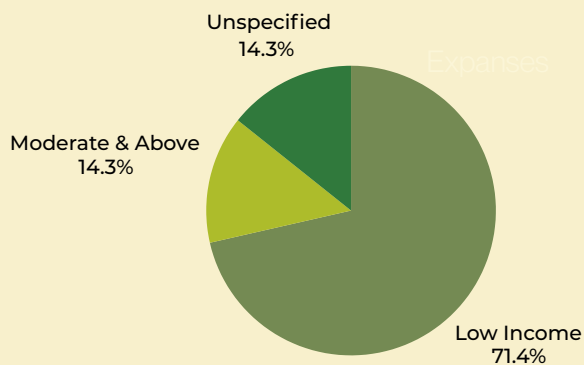
Demographics



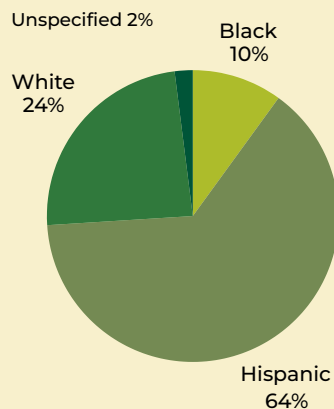
Gender



Unduplicated Youth Served

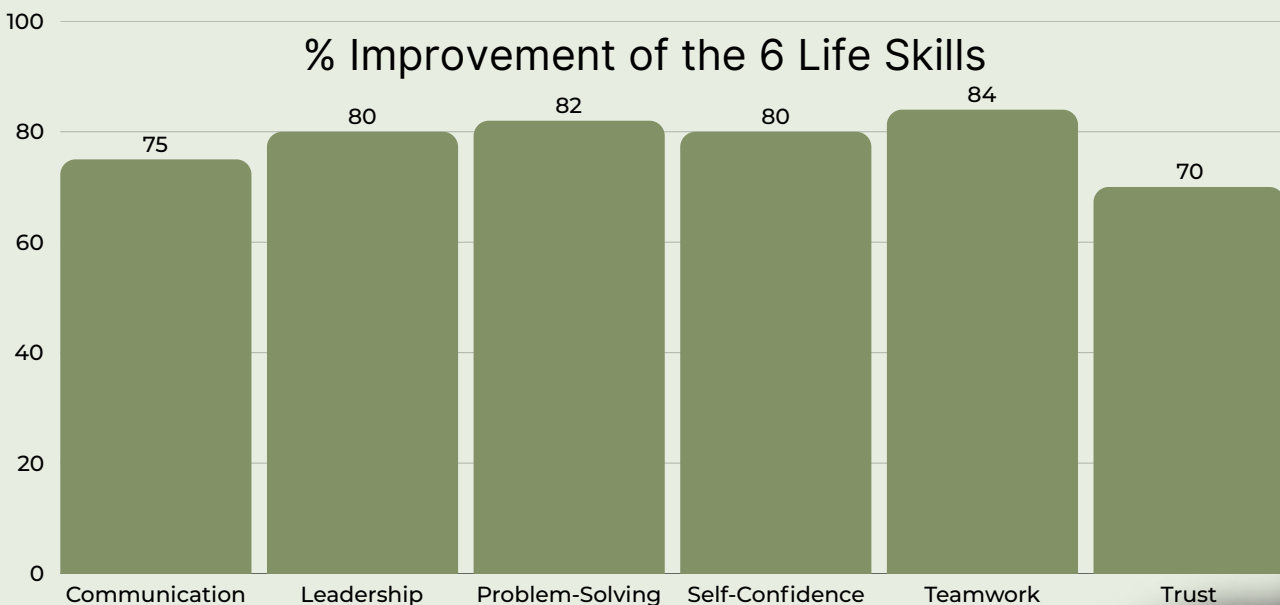


Income Level

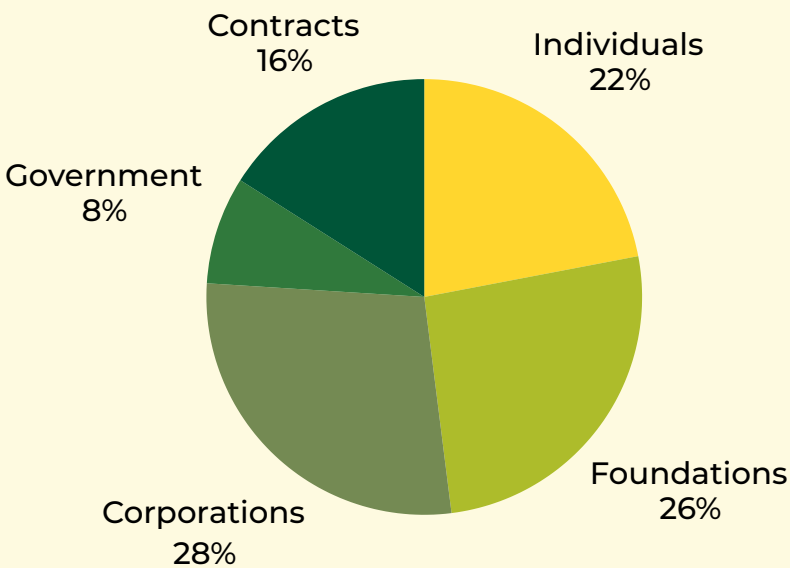


Race/Ethnicity

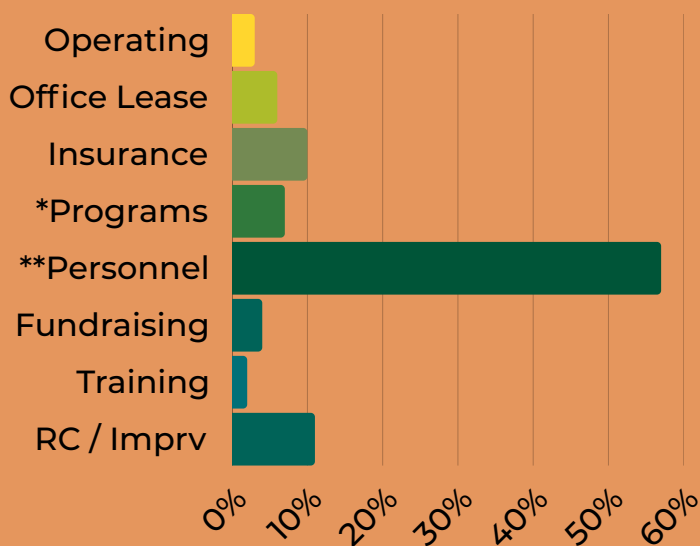
% Improvement of the 6 Life Skills



Financial Highlights

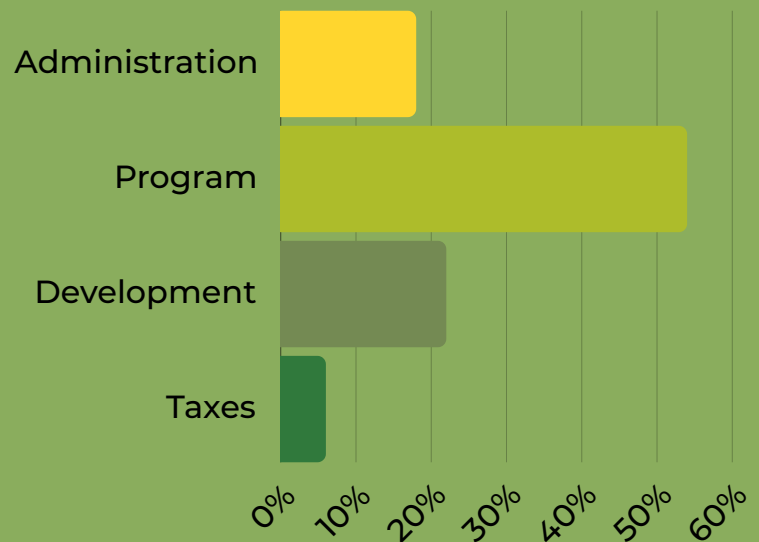


Income
Total: \$549,665.68



Expenses
Total: \$659,716.85

* Program expenses minus salaries



**Personnel Breakdown:
\$378,771.80





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Year in Review & Future Outlook

Year in Review:

- We completed our High Ropes Expansion with 6 new elements
- Brought on our first Full-Time Development Director
- Saw a 19% increase in total unique youth served
- Added a Winter Break Leadership Camp for youth (10 total annually)
- Partnered with TAMUCC Workstudy Program

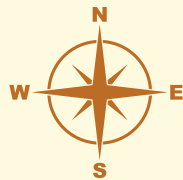
Future Outlook

- Plan to see another increase of 10-15% in youth served over 2024
- Expand our office space to make room for team growth (program and development)
- Run concurrent leadership camps over school breaks (winter, spring, fall)
- 1-2 Part Time teammates (program and development)
- Increase Community Partnerships (Amistad, MHID already in the books)
- We are creating a working group for our Strategic Planning Process



Contact Us

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-  Website www.YouthOdyssey.com
-  Address PO Box 331394
Corpus Christi, TX. 78463



Scan the QR



Get Involved

Fundraising Activities:

- Monthly Giving Donations
 - Join the Trailblazer Team
 - United Way
 - Employee Charitable Campaigns
- Attend an event
- Sponsorships:
 - Sponsor a Youth
 - Sponsor a Camp
 - Sponsor a Program
 - Sponsor an Event
 - I-37 Ropes Course Business Signage Sponsorship
- Become an Ambassador Member
- Host a For Benefit of Youth Odyssey Fundraising Tournament or Event
- Participate in Coastal Bend Day of Giving in November
- Corporate Partnerships
- Donate Equipment / In-Kind items
- Contribute through DAF, IRA QCDs and other Planned Giving options

Book a Team-Building Event

- Locations:
 - At our I-37 Rock Wall & Ropes Challenge Course
 - Your place of business or school

Program & Volunteer Activities:

- Volunteer in Programs
- Join the Board of Directors
- Mentor a Youth
- Join a Committee
- Volunteer at Events

Awareness Activities:

- Host a Porch Party
- Promote Awareness at your work
- Request a Speaking Engagement
- Connect us with Media Partners
- Social Media Influencer Team



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