

AYDC Youth Matter Grants

AYDC is excited to support these projects in our community! All applicants impressed us with their proposals, and we are proud to announce the awards totaling \$30,500 to the following organizations. Thank you to all the programs that applied!

The Youth Matter Grants are designed to support youth in Anchorage through community-based projects *through promoting* health, wellness, and other protective factors to support youth to know they matter to their communities. The awards will support projects that achieve our goals to provide:

- **Safety.** Youth want to live in a safer community, not just for physical safety but also to be empowered to be themselves.
- **Support, Respect, and Fairness.** Youth want to be treated fairly and with respect by adults. Having friendly, supportive, and positive relationships with adults provides the right role models to empower youth.
- **Make a Difference.** Youth want to be engaged and make a difference. This may be through providing meaningful opportunities and service-based activities. Meaningful engagement also includes youth involved in decision-making, leadership, and implementing a project.

To see more about what these individual programs are doing, tag or follow the hashtag #youthmatterAK.

Anchorage Youth Court “Law and Leadership Program”

Anchorage Youth Court is a juvenile justice program where students serve as defense attorneys, prosecution attorneys, and judges in cases involving their peers. Students who are entering the 9th grade in Fall 2017 are eligible to participate in a summer leadership course and design a multimedia resource project. Participants will be taking the Alaska Youth Law Guide and making it easier to digest, before putting it into an app that will be available for all students throughout the state! Participants in the program will learn more about their rights and responsibilities, along with helping their community by making materials accessible to all youth! This project will also an opportunity for youth to grow a sense of belonging by giving them something tangible to share with their peers.

Story Works Alaska “Our Advice for You”

Story Works Alaska is a program that supports youth by providing them opportunities and training to tell their personal stories in their schools and communities. Story Works youth will create video interviews offering advice for future audiences to share their own stories. Current participants will create positive and encouraging videos with words of wisdom for future participants, boosting their abilities to accomplish their goals. Story Works believes that

youth voices are important and deserve to be told and heard. Current participants want to support more youth to have the confidence to tell their own stories in our community.

Hope Community Resources “Hope Mentorship Program”

Hope Community Resources is a program that supports individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and mental health challenges. This program will pair teen mentors with other teens and youth to support them through participating in skill-building experiences, from building motor skills, to increasing communication and problem solving skills. The Hope Mentorship Program will build positive relationships between youth in different age groups, and also help with future job training for the mentors in the human service field!

First CME Church “Steps 2 Success: Cooking with GMA”

Steps 2 Success is a program run by The First Christian Methodist Episcopal Church (CME) providing educational and community opportunities to the diverse Anchorage youth. The First CME Church will partner its Steps 2 Success youth program with GMA’s Services to run a cooking course for youth. Through earning their food handling card and practicing kitchen skills, participants will shop, plan, budget, and cook meals. Participants will also cook meals for community members throughout the course. At the end of the 4-week program, participants will celebrate by preparing a 5-course meal for their families and neighbors!

Congregation Beth Sholom “L’Dor Va’Dor ~ Generation to Generation”

Congregation Beth Sholom is a Jewish Synagogue in Anchorage, Alaska with a focus on community involvement and service. They are preparing to build a facility on their campus for Alzheimer's and Dementia patients, where youth will actively be involved in the day-to-day lives of the patients. In preparation, their youth group will begin an intergenerational project to pair youth aged 12-18 with seniors experiencing Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementias. Following the “Alive Inside” resource, these youth will find music and personalize a playlist each elders after spending time getting to know their partners. By unlocking memories through music, the playlists will be designed to provide calm during medical procedures and to help improve mood. The curricula, based around the concept of empathy, allows for the teens involved to learn firsthand that determining the value and worth of a person should never be based on a diagnosis or stereotype. It exemplifies that, no matter your age or circumstance, everyone benefits from finding a place to belong in their communities.

Chugach Children’s Forest “Outdoor Club and Youth Leadership Team”

The Chugach Children's Forest, run by National Geographic and Chugach National Forest, is a program that focuses on giving opportunities for youth to get outside in Alaska, and encourages healthy choices, scientific experiences, and education on good stewardship. Youth participating in this program are often new to outdoor recreation, and in the end learn not only outdoor skills but also gain leadership skills through building relationships with their peers. The Outdoor Club will expand its leadership training and roles for youth with the support of this

grant, giving its youth leaders the opportunity to belong. Participants will learn about environmental issues, and will get guidance on how to be good stewards, outdoor ethics, recreation, healthy lifestyles, and even future workforce ideas. The course will cap with expeditions in the Chugach National Forest to put these skills to the test.

Catholic Social Services “Once Uprooted, Now Home”

Catholic Social Services’ Refugee Assistance and Immigration Services (RAIS) is the only existing refugee resettlement program in the state of Alaska. Currently, they serve many families who have had to leave their home countries due to dangerous circumstances by helping with job training, community and family integration, support for school-aged children, and economic self-sufficiency. RAIS has created the “Once Uprooted, Now Home” program for refugee youth. Participants will complete art in workshops (mosaics, signs, benches, decorations) and garden in the new Mountain View Community Garden, providing a safer and more active community, and will help students see a tangible way that they can help their community, integrating efforts from students, RAIS, their community, and their families. Participants will also experience a leadership training course to build skills.

Woodland Park Boys and Girls Club – Alaska “Youth For Unity”

Boys and Girls Club is a nationwide program that provides academic and social learning opportunities, along with community support and athletic experiences for youth all around the United States. Youth for Unity will be a program implemented at the Woodland Park Boys and Girls club in Anchorage for students aged 12-16, where students will be led through discussions of diversity in their own community, bias, and how to take personal leadership and confront bullying, unfairness, and negative bias when they see it. Then, the teens will teach younger elementary-aged students through similar lessons and units, but with guidance from staff on making it more age appropriate. The teens and younger students will gain examples on positive peer relationships, how to have effective mentor relationships, and how to maintain positive norms in relation to diversity and inclusion.