



Youth Development
Organization



IMPACT REPORT: 2024

our mission & programs

YDO is grounded in its mission **to grow a community of self-motivated students by offering high-quality educational activities, developing supportive long-term relationships, and providing personalized opportunities for success.**

At YDO, Lawrence youth do not come and go. They tend to come and stay. They find kind, talented peers and committed adults. And, they find opportunities—focused on STEM, arts, leadership, and education advising—designed to grow as they do. Since 2006, we have served 1,500+ “YDO Kids,” **from ages 8 to 18+**. As these youth grow up in our organization, they have unique pathways to transition from students to student

teachers to program leaders. We deliver free programming, provide transportation, and focus on partnership and persistence. As a result, we measure YDO Kids’ engagement with our organization in years, not weeks or months.



youth leadership
throughout ▼▼



stem



arts



advisory



ydo summer

from our president



Cathy Lopez
President
Board of Directors
Director of Human
Resources, Berkshire Grey

My YDO journey began 12 years ago, when I became a YDO parent and member of the board of directors. Today, as the chair of a dedicated team, I continue to see firsthand what makes this organization unique. YDO does so much more than teach. We empower young Lawrencians to lead.

As YDO Kids gain experience in our organization, we trust them to teach our classes, help design our programs, and mentor the students following in their footsteps. I have seen the influence and impact of this approach on my own children.

YDO's success is driven by the talents, enthusiasm, and commitment of our students. However, making it all possible are donors, school and community partners, YDO alumni, YDO families, and the tireless YDO staff. We are deeply grateful for their contributions.

With their support, over the past year, YDO continued growing into its 22,000 sq. ft. facility in the historic Everett Mill. We welcomed more staff, expanded long-standing programs, and added new ones. We **served 661 students**—the most in our nearly 20-year history and a 23% increase over the year prior. Other notable highlights include:

- **Establishing new STEM programs**, including robotics competition teams and an all-girls boat-building class.
 - **Deepening advising services** for YDO Kids in middle school as they plan for, apply to, and transition into high school.
 - **Expanding Postsecondary Pathways** and strengthening our work with Lawrence Public Schools.
- It has been a great privilege to watch YDO Kids rise to the challenge of leadership time and again and to witness the generosity that makes this possible. Thank you for your belief in the YDO mission and the young leaders we serve.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cathy Lopez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "C" and "L".

from our ~~kids~~ leaders



Nelly Davis
YDO Deputy Director
YDO Kid since 2007

From my first days at YDO, the founder told me, a 12-year-old Lawrence kid, that I could be great and achieve my dreams. I was seen, acknowledged, and trusted. YDO learned about and fostered my strengths, understood my weaknesses, and used all of that to help me figure out my path through education and into the working world. Over time, I transitioned from student to student teacher and leader. And, at every step, my individual uniqueness was nurtured.

Now, as deputy director, my top priority is ensuring that a larger organization and staff are providing YDO Kids with that same personal attention, encouragement, and access to opportunities that **literally changed my life**.



Yaznairy Cabrera
Treasurer, YDO Board of Directors
Private Wealth Senior Associate
AllianceBernstein | YDO Kid since 2010

From student to volunteer to program leader (co-director of YDO Summer) at just 16 years old, I grew up in this organization. Along the way, YDO taught me how to lead by giving me opportunities to take initiative, assess risk, and make decisions that had real impact and consequences.

YDO has relentlessly supported my academic and professional goals and remains an integral part of my life. As an alumna, I am part of a growing network of young professionals giving back. In YDO, you join a community for life, one that **offers limitless support** to ambitious young people. That is the “YDO Kid” experience.

the ydo approach

1 the hook
Initial engagement begins by clearly matching a student's recognized strength, talent, or passion to a YDO program.



2 exploration
YDO invites curious students to broaden and deepen their exposure to STEM and the arts, with offerings designed to meet their needs and interests.



3 buy-in
When students demonstrate a commitment to growth and long-term participation, YDO responds by investing in them—providing tailored support and opportunities for achievement.



YDO has served more than 1,500 students since its founding.

Today, our community of alumni is growing rapidly. These young people are making their mark in jobs as varied and unique as they are.

where they work ▶▶

4 leadership
Progress builds, skills develop, experience accumulates—YDO challenges students to step into teaching, mentoring, and managing roles to expand their capacities.



5 the world
Our kids go forth to engage with the world, equipped with a vision for their future and a resume and network that fuel success in school, work, and life.



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YDO

33% of ydo's full-time staff are alumni



stem

Students engage in STEM enrichment year-round, with foundational classes for younger students like Coding, Chemistry, and Tools & Building, followed by multidisciplinary courses like 3D Design & Printing, Botball Robotics, and Kinetic Sculpture Racing. We strive to help YDO Kids build skills and confidence while ensuring they feel a sense of belonging in STEM fields.

200 individual stem students

82% participated in multiple stem programs



Wilton Cordero Suarez (right)
Gr. 9, Phillips Academy in Andover
YDO Kid since 2019

Wilton joined YDO with a hunger for hands-on engineering experience. From his first Circuit Workshop course to virtual programs during the pandemic, he has remained deeply engaged and curious. Last year, Wilton joined a small cohort of students for independent robotics studies with YDO's director of STEM programs. He turned it around and became an instructor and mentor for younger YDO Kids following his path.



42% of engaged stem are

arts

In YDO arts courses, students develop creative interests year-round, such as Painting, Dance, Acting, Piano, Choir, Ceramics, and Creative Writing. Thanks to our YDO@Phillips Academy partnership, which is 18 years strong, YDO Kids can also take string instrument lessons in Andover.

234 individual arts students

79% participated in multiple arts programs



YDO kids in both and arts

Raychel has been deeply involved with YDO for a decade. As a younger student, she explored everything from Coding to Musical Theater. As a youth staff member, she taught classes ranging from Band to Filmmaking. In high school, Raychel studied Design and Visual Communications at Whittier Tech, and she became the first in her family to go to college. Raychel now attends MassArt, an institution that will provide incredible opportunities to develop her talents and creativity.



Raychel Pennisi
1st Year, MassArt
YDO Kid since 2014

advisory

YDO provides the tools, connections, and advice that drive educational access and success. For middle schoolers, we offer mentorship and programming as they plan for, apply to, and matriculate into high school.

With Postsecondary Pathways, YDO engages high schoolers with viable strategies for college or workforce training after graduation. Beyond admissions, our support encourages persistence and career planning.



Matthew Palencia-Acevedo

1st Year, Merrimack College
Pioneer Scholar | YDO Kid since 2023

324 postsecondary
pathways students

class of '24 attending



Matthew came to Pathways with a passion for math and an interest in volunteering. While he worked with our team on his college application process, he mentored a group of YDO middle schoolers applying to high schools. After graduation in June, Matthew joined the YDO Summer student teaching staff and led Physics and Algebra I courses. In just a short time, his contributions to YDO and our students have been invaluable.

“ Seriously, I don’t know how anyone applies to college without this program ... the advisors truly care about each individual and want everyone to succeed. ”
- YDO Graduate, Class of 2024



ydo summer

This five-week enrichment program is planned, led, and delivered by youth, for youth. YDO Summer is our proof of concept—that YDO Kids, on their path to success, gain the knowledge, skills, and experience to create new opportunities for the next generation of Lawrencians. The result is a virtuous cycle of empowerment, education, and community.

167 ydo kids served
57 youth staff hired
43 classes taught



Myah Salazar Salvador (left)
1st Year, Yale University
YDO Kid since 2022

Chasity Foreshaw (right)
Gr. 12, Abbott Lawrence Academy
YDO Kid since 2015

Myah & Chasity, our 2024 Summer Co-Directors, held a level of responsibility unimaginable to most teens (and many adults). They hired the youth staff, conducted student registration, created the course schedule, planned field trips, and organized a showcase for an audience of 350+ people, among other things. Importantly, they brought individual perspectives to problem solving, and they led the program with teamwork and kindness. The experience they carry forward is remarkable.

ydo summer
2024 video



our operations

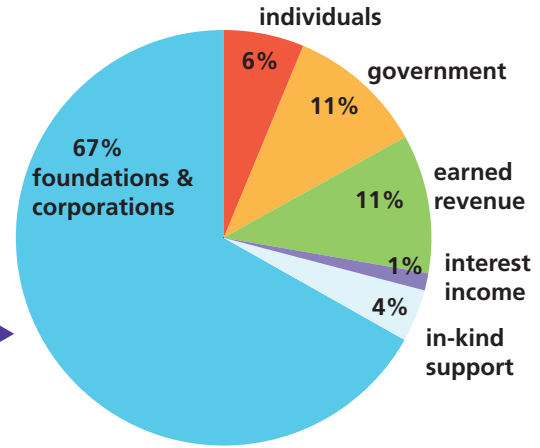
Partnership is at the heart of YDO's mission, including with institutional funders and individual donors. Philanthropic support makes our work possible; it represents 77% of our revenue. Over the last year, our cash position remained strong, and our program delivery continued to be efficient. As a result, we made investments that improved our space, supported our staff, and empowered our students.

Platinum
Transparency
2024

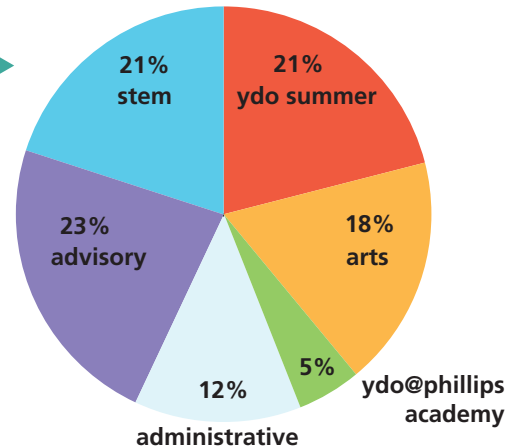
Candid.

**\$1.8M
budget**

**funding
sources**



**operating
expenses**



These figures reflect unaudited financial statements for YDO's fiscal year ending August 31, 2024.

our supporters

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our recent individual donors



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helping our students discover
who they are and
who they can become



invest in *ydo* today!

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