


# 2025

# Annual Report

## Impacting Greater Kansas City Youth Since 2010

youth
AMBASSADORS

CELEBRATING 15 YEARS OF EMPOWERING YOUTH




# empowering the next generation of leaders

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# About Our Organization

## Our Mission

Youth Ambassadors is an educational employment program designed to empower underserved teenage youth with important life skills, soft job skills, creative expression, and adult mentors, helping them become future community leaders willing and able to work for positive change.

## Our Vision

Youth Ambassadors' vision is to help youth reach their fullest potential through creative and innovative programming.

## Our History

Youth Ambassadors was founded in 2010 by Tiffany Poor Lynch and Paige O'Connor, two concerned citizens who saw a need to serve and support vulnerable youth. They initially served were 20 teens from the Argentine community in Kansas City, KS. Since that time, our organization has served more than 5,000 Greater Kansas City youth. We provide essential life & job skills training and vital mental health support for young people on the pathway to a successful adulthood.

# A Message from the Executive Director

### Youth Ambassadors Celebrates 15 Years of Service to the Community

2025 was a significant year of learning, growth, development and impact for Youth Ambassadors. Our youth, staff, board members, and stakeholders joined us in celebrating 15 years of empowering youth to become future community leaders, willing and able to work for positive change.

Our youth strengthened their career readiness skills, led major initiatives promoting peace in our neighborhoods, and supported our communities through service projects, all while creating plans for success after high school graduation. The resilience, strength, and energy of our youth is inspiring!

With the support of our community partners, stakeholders, board members and friends, we will continue this work of mentoring and uplifting our young people as we help them prepare for adulthood. We are grateful for this work of empowering our youth!

**Dr. Monique Johnston**
Executive Director
Youth Ambassadors, Inc.



# 2025 Board of Directors



**Peter Long**
MCH Strategic Data, Inc., CEO
Youth Ambassadors, Board President



**Monique Johnston, Ph.D.**
Youth Ambassadors, Executive Director



**Tiffany Poor Lynch**
Sherman Family Foundation, Program Officer
Youth Ambassadors, Co-Founder



**Ellie Carmody**
Midwest Family Office, Director
Youth Ambassadors, Treasurer



**Alicia Douglas**
Rockhurst University, Director of Community Relations & Outreach



**Brandon Haverty**
ReCor Properties, Principal



**Brett Cooper**
SLN/CR, Chief Sales Officer



**Clay Hartman**
CAPTRUST, Senior Vice President



**Dave Gardner**
Children's Mercy Hospital, Community Outreach Program Manager



**Margie Glenn**
Moneta, CPA, CFP®, Advisor



**Nikki Hutson**
Dentons Law Firm, Partner–Employment & Labor



**Preston Elder**
AssuredPartners, Sales Leader

# 2025 Team

**Monique Johnston, Ph.D. –** Executive Director
**Deanna Snider –** Youth Program Director
**Elizabeth Fernandez –** Community Projects Manager
**Lara Salgado –** Marketing & Communications Manager









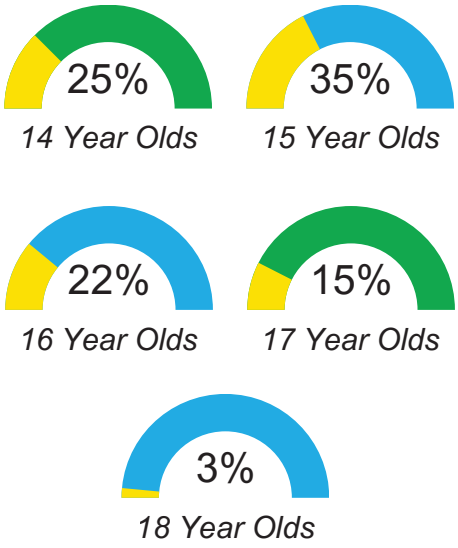




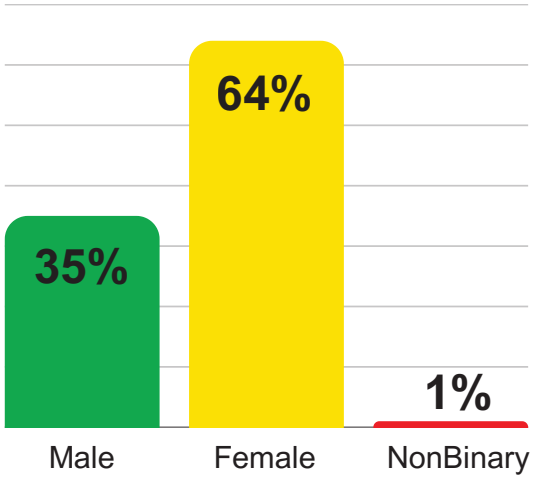

# Youth Demographics

In 2025, Youth Ambassadors impacted youth from more than 40 Greater Kansas City schools.

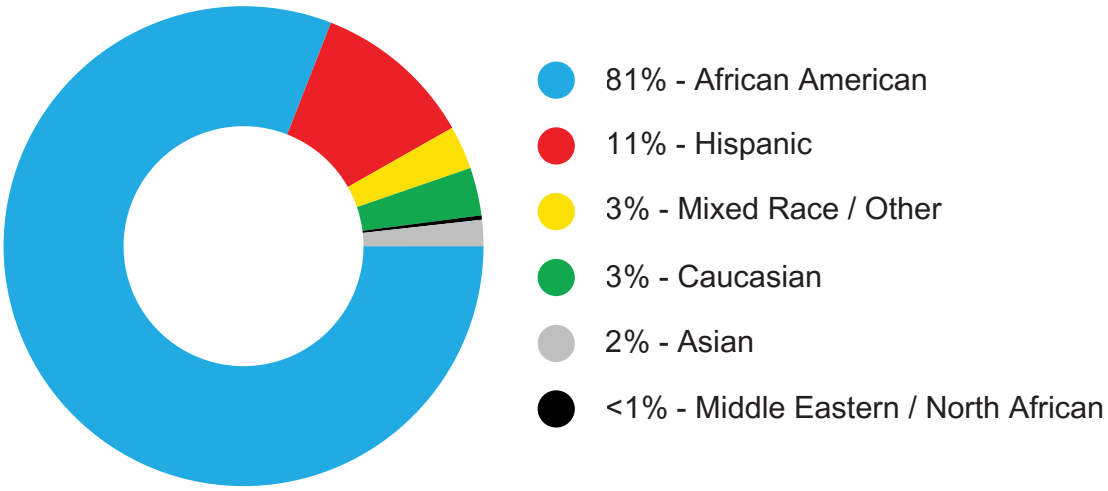
## Age




## Gender




## Race




## Youth Applicants



# Youth Impact

“I heard about Youth Ambassadors from my older brother, and I wanted to join because he talked about how he learned about real job skills. I've been a Youth Ambassador for almost a year now, since summer 2025.

Something I've done at Youth Ambassadors that really stood out to me was when we built a business. We got to actually research jobs and how to actually start that business. What also stood out to me was when I volunteered at the Troost 39 Thrift Store, where I got to help move stuff and also help work with customers.

Some of the teens here are really shy, but as someone who is an outgoing person who likes to talk a lot, I feel like when I talk to them, they loosen up a little bit and we get along very well. The mentors here are also very great because they help you, and they know who you are. I've grown and changed in my communication skills, like how I talk to people. I would say I've also grown in my job skills from working in the Life and Job Skills class.

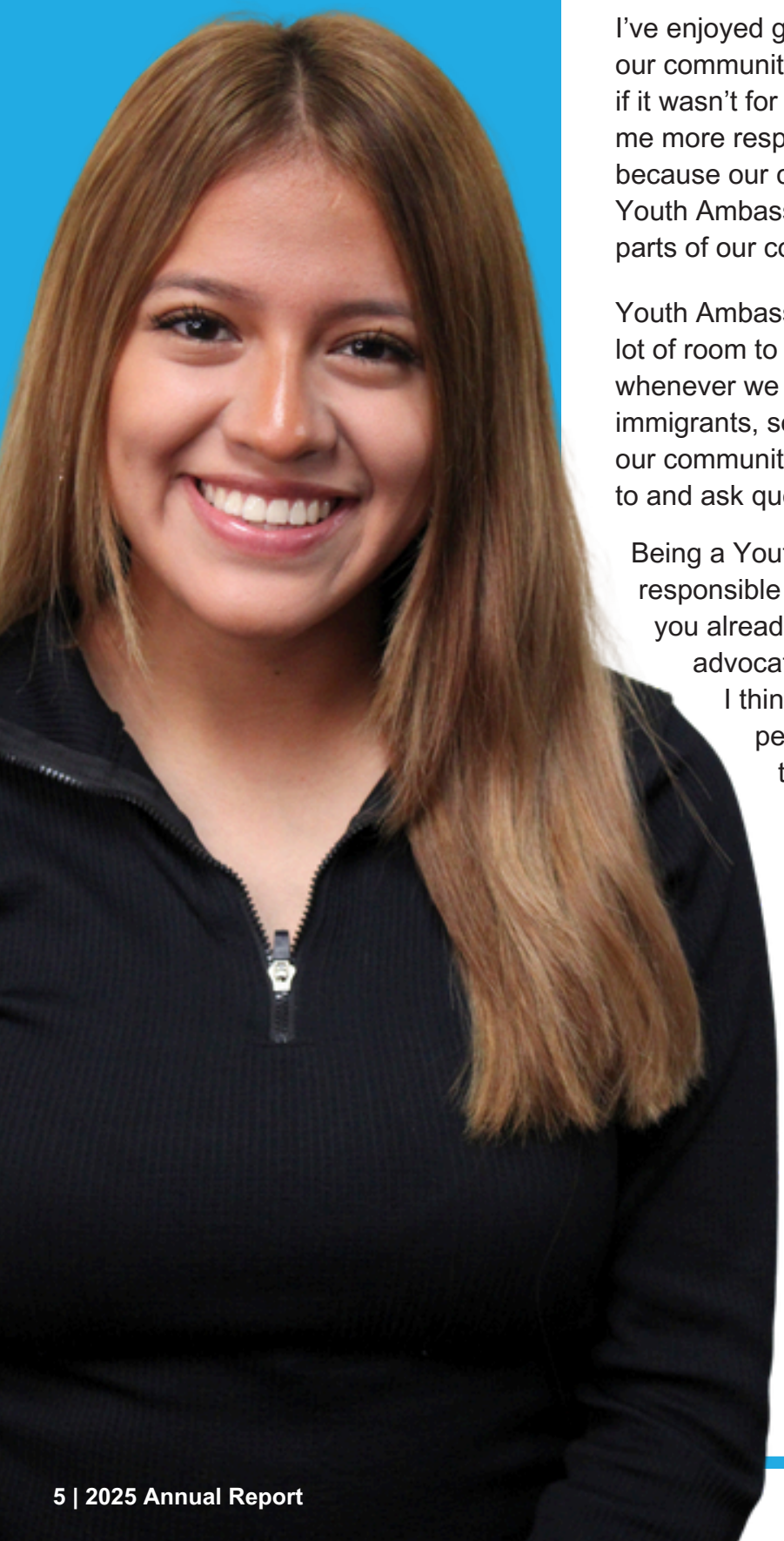
I can be in a community that's fun and professional, and also in a place where I can learn and build off of that type of environment. It's a fun environment and also where you can learn and build your life and job. It can also get you out of your comfort zone because by being a Youth Ambassador, I actually want to participate.”

**-Alijah Shabazz,**

*Youth Ambassador, 15 years old*
*Lincoln College Prep Student*



# Youth Impact



"I first found out about Youth Ambassadors through my mom, and I thought it was interesting, so I was like, "Okay, I wanna see what this has to provide." I joined the summer session of 2025.

I've enjoyed going out and reaching different parts of our community that I wouldn't have thought to look into if it wasn't for Youth Ambassadors. I think it has made me more responsible when it comes to our community, because our community is also our responsibility. Youth Ambassadors opens up your eyes to different parts of our community that we could be a part of.

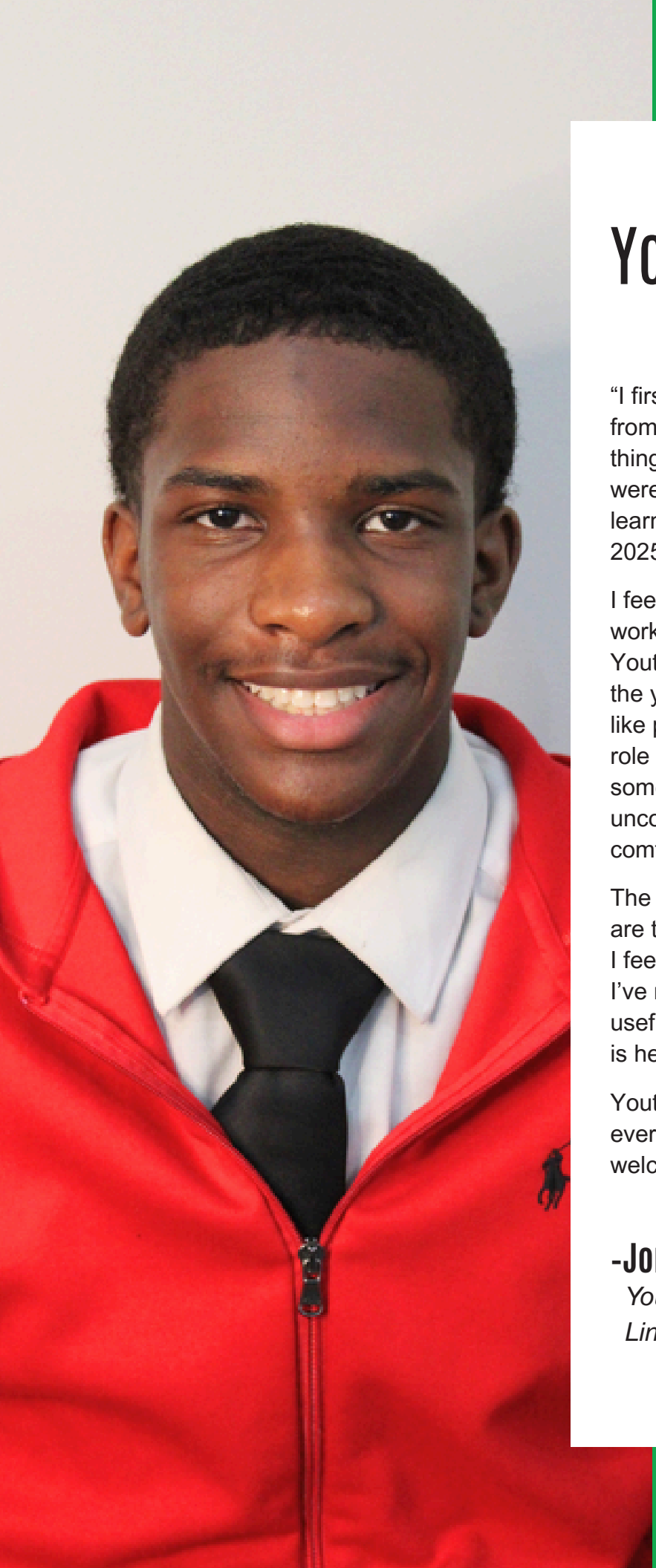
Youth Ambassadors is very welcoming. They give you a lot of room to ask questions and come to them whenever we feel like it. It's comforting. My parents are immigrants, so they don't know everything about how our community works, so having people I can reach out to and ask questions is very comforting.

Being a Youth Ambassador to me means being a responsible young adult. It helps amplify the skills you already have and makes you more confident in advocating for yourself and reaching out for help. I think asking for help can be hard for some people, but Youth Ambassadors gives you that space. They give you the information, and they're there whenever we want or need to come to them.

I think I've grown in communication because you're working with different ages, different people, different ethnicities, so you have to learn how to communicate with everyone. Youth Ambassadors helped create my resume, and being part of it is something I could add to my resume– and then I got a job."

**-Ashley Perez,**

*Youth Ambassador, 17 years old*
*Sumner Academy Student*



# Youth Impact

“I first heard about YA on TikTok, then also from fellow peers. I usually like to try new things, but it looked fun. I knew people that were going to be here, and I felt like I could learn a lot, so I signed up! I started summer 2025.

I feel like I've grown as a young adult from work ethic and just being confident in myself. Youth Ambassadors, to me, means leaders of the youth. I feel like a leader because I feel like people look up to me and I'm just a great role model for others. It's okay to try something new and also to feel uncomfortable, but after a while, you will get comfortable and be better.

The community at YA, I just feel like we all are the same, and we all want the same thing. I feel like it’s expanded my community and I’ve made friends. The instructors are very useful and they hear me out. It's like my voice is heard and they help me.

Youth Ambassadors has so much love for everyone here and makes everybody feel welcomed.”

**-Jonathan Jenkins,**

*Youth Ambassador, 15 years old*
*Lincoln College Prep Student*

# Our Program

## Life & Job Skills

Life & Job Skills provides comprehensive training in essential life and career-building competencies. Sessions include financial literacy, goal setting, and identifying career strengths, with an emphasis on entrepreneurship.

## Health & Wellness

Youth gain essential coping mechanisms, while learning self-regulation, constructive conflict resolution and stress management, equipping youth with practical techniques to navigate life's challenges with resilience.

## Creative Expression

Creative Expression engages youth in writing and visual arts to build imagination, critical thinking, and self-expression. Ambassadors develop healthy outlets for processing emotions and experiences while gaining exposure to diverse artistic mediums and techniques.

## Financial Literacy

Through financial literacy education, youth learn essential skills in budgeting, saving, and money management. These experiences promote financial confidence, independence, and the ability to plan for their future.

## Youth Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship teaches youth foundational business skills through hands-on training in market research, branding, concept design, and business planning. Ambassadors also strengthen creative thinking, problem solving, and teamwork while learning how to navigate the entrepreneurial process.

"I think every teen should experience Youth Ambassadors. I've learned so much, such as life and job skills."

**–Donovan Jones,** *15 y.o.*

"It's a good program to learn about finance and life skills."

**–Sui Si,** *15 y.o.*

"I would tell my friends that this program will help you in the long run, and help navigate your future."

**–Jadyn James,** *16 y.o.*

"YA is amazing! You have fun, can feel positive about yourself, and learn new things about life!"

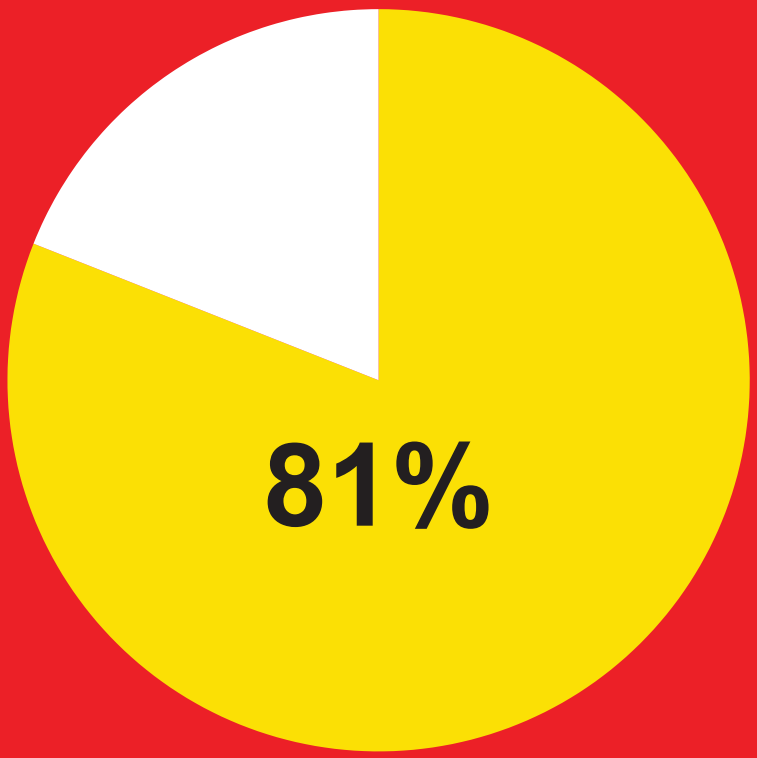
**–Elias Salinas,** *15 y.o.*

"This program is really useful if you want to manage your money, learn how to do your resume and more."

**–Ada Naabwe,** *16 y.o.*

# Group Chat

Group Chat is a youth group therapy program where Ambassadors connect with one another and a licensed therapist. Designed to support teens facing some of the greatest mental health challenges and barriers to care, our participants learn coping mechanisms, self-regulation, and other tools to reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression. Group Chat creates a safe, supportive space where teens can connect and feel seen—because supporting teen mental health early helps build confidence, resilience, and a stronger future.




of Youth **demonstrated growth in one or more areas: empathy, self-regulation, social competence, and responsibility**, on the SEARS-A Assessment (Social-Emotional Assets & Resilience Scale for Adolescents)




In 2025, the Group Chat Therapy program served 106 youth.



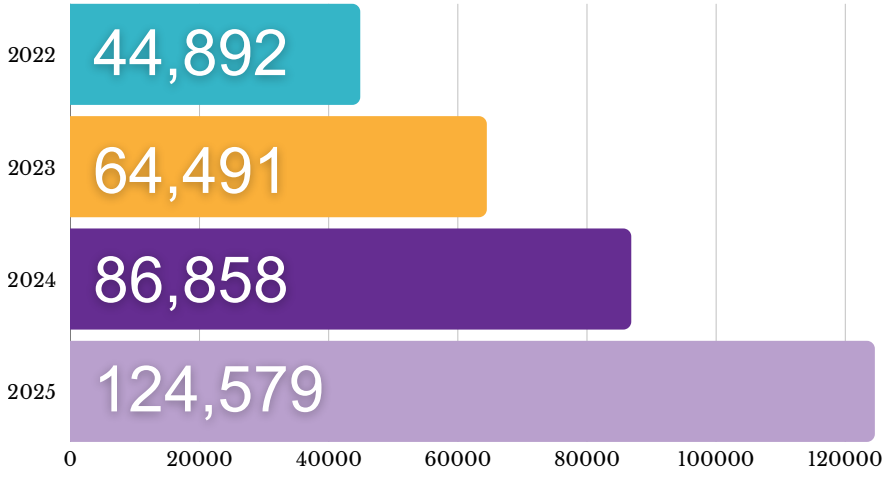
"This place is such a comforting place to be in."

**-McKenzie Gibson,**
*Youth Ambassador, 15 years old*

# S.A.V.E. Program

This year, Youth Ambassadors' Suicide Awareness & Anti-Violence Education (S.A.V.E.) program continued to equip teens with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate real-life challenges and support one another. Through interactive sessions and honest conversations, participants explored topics such as building community, self-confidence development, healthy relationships, mental health, conflict resolution, and youth violence awareness. Teens also engaged in critical discussions around suicide prevention, substance use and vaping, eating disorders, and the importance of self-care.

S.A.V.E. expanded its online advocacy to create a safe, accessible space for teens to find accurate information and engage with youth-led content. By sharing resources and amplifying peer voices, participants helped foster a positive online community grounded in awareness, support, and informed conversation.




In 2025 the S.A.V.E. Program impacted a total of

**124,579**

people on social media.

**96%**

*of Ambassadors in the S.A.V.E. Program feel like they are a leader in their community after participating in the program.*

**96%**

*of Ambassadors understand the importance of mental health and have developed skills to help a prevent suicide crisis.*

# Mock Interview Day

Mock Interview Day provided 62 Ambassadors with a hands-on opportunity to build career readiness skills and professional confidence. With support from 15 volunteers representing diverse career paths and a guest speaker from Central Bank, teens participated in one-on-one mock interviews, receiving valuable feedback on their resumes, communication, and overall presentation. This experience helped strengthen their confidence, refine their interview skills, and gain real-world insight into workplace expectations.

**92%**

of Ambassadors feel better prepared for future employment opportunities after the interviews.

**86%**

of Ambassadors determined their strengths and weaknesses during the interview.



"I feel like [Mock Interview Day] helped me by showing me what I need to improve on and what I can do better. It will prepare me for an actual interview when that time comes."

**-Ka'Mya Manning**
*Youth Ambassador, 15 years old*

# Teen Peace Summit

Our 5th Annual Teen Peace Summit brought together 119 teens from across Kansas City for a day of connection, youth voice, and violence prevention. In partnership with community organizations, the summit featured engaging performances, a violence prevention panel, and meaningful discussions that allowed teens to explore solutions to challenges impacting their communities. Through collaborative activities and shared experiences, the summit created space for young people to be heard, build relationships, and strengthen their role in creating safer, more unified communities.


















**98%**

*of Ambassadors understand the importance of asking for help and learned about new resources in the community*

**97%**

*of Ambassadors say the Teen Peace Summit has helped them learn new ways to prevent violence*

"It feels good to see teens come together. They made us come together as a community to help with gun violence and help us tolerate our emotions so that we can all be peaceful together. I really appreciated that–I've never seen that done before. We can be pretty separated, so it feels good to see us come together and work for the same thing."

**-Grace Freeman**
*Youth Ambassador, 15 years old*



# College & Career Day

College & Career Day engaged 100 Youth Ambassadors in exploring their future paths through hands-on learning, expert guidance, and real-world connections. Teens heard from a diverse panel of young professionals and participated in breakout sessions on scholarships and college applications, gaining practical tools and insight into their next steps. This experience helped build their confidence and prepare them for success beyond high school.









**95%**

*of Ambassadors were able to identify what type of career and educational options they want to pursue after high school graduation.*

**95%**

*of Ambassadors felt better prepared for future academic or employment opportunities.*

## Colleges & Organizations

- Aslan Contracting
- Bloch Scholars
- Catalyst Barber Co.
- Donnelly College
- Great Jobs KC
- Kansas City Kansas Community College
- Metropolitan Community College
- Park University
- Rockhurst University
- Triple Clean KC
- United States Recruiting Air Force
- University of Central Missouri
- University of Missouri-Kansas City
- Uzazi Village

# Community Ambassador Projects



Our Community Ambassador Projects give teens the opportunity to turn ideas into action. Throughout the year, Youth Ambassadors identify real needs in their community and design projects that create meaningful impact—from donation drives to outreach efforts. Through this process, they build confidence, strengthen leadership and collaboration skills, and gain a deeper understanding of the world around them. By working alongside local organizations and engaging directly with community members, teens develop a strong sense of ownership and purpose. These experiences not only shape their personal growth, but also highlight the power of youth-led change in building a stronger Kansas City.

**100%**

*of Ambassadors have been positively impacted by the community projects.*

**98%**

*of Ambassadors realized the importance of being a leader in the community.*

**486** Ambassadors contributed **1,704** total community impact hours



# Our Partners











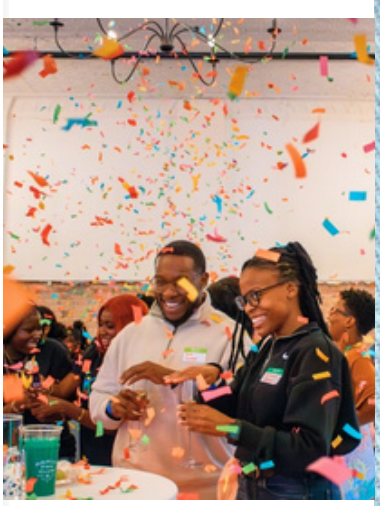


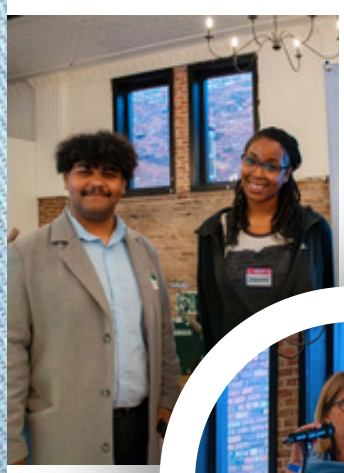
# 15 years

## YOUTH AMBASSADORS BLUEJEAN Bash 2025

**EMPOWERING YOUTH SINCE 2010**

















The 8th Annual Blue Jean Bash was an unforgettable celebration of 15 years of Youth Ambassadors uplifting and empowering Kansas City youth. More than 114 supporters, alumni, partners, and community members joined us for live music, youth art displays, hands-on art experiences, and inspiring stories shared by current Ambassadors and alumni. The night highlighted the growth and resilience of our young people, showcased their creativity, and honored the collective efforts that have shaped Youth Ambassadors over the past decade and a half.




We are grateful to everyone who joined us to uplift our mission — and we look forward to the next 15 years of empowering Kansas City youth to lead, create, and thrive.

**Event Highlights:**

- 2025 Paige O'Connor Hope, Heart, and Healing Award presented to Ambassador Tylan Cornley
- 2025 Tiffany Poor Lynch Founder's Scholarship Award presented to Ambassador Yarenis Aguirre
- YA alumni took the stage to share personal stories, celebrating 15 years of growth, leadership, and community impact.
- Guests joined Art Experience KC in creating a collaborative mosaic piece, adding their own tiles and creativity to a lasting artwork that celebrates unity and youth empowerment.
- Kansas City artists filled the night with incredible live music, creating an energetic and joyful atmosphere throughout the celebration.



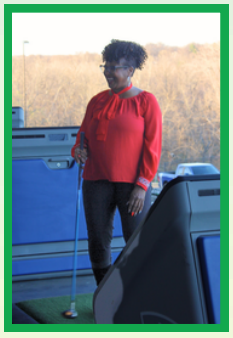
**Our original Youth Ambassadors in 2010—the young leaders who helped build the foundation for the impact and legacy that continues today.**

# GOING ABOVE PAR

Going Above Par 2025 was a standout success, bringing our community together at Topgolf for a fun and meaningful event in support of our mission. With 60 participants across 12 golf bays, the energy and engagement made for an unforgettable experience. Together, we raised nearly $15,000 in sponsorships—thanks to the incredible support of our partners and participants both on and off the green.







KANSAS CITY AMBASSADORS

DENTONS

BANK OF PRAIRIE VILLAGE
MEMBER FDIC

# 2025 Operational Financials




*These figures depict cash withdrawals.

**Program Expenses – 60%**

- Youth Instructors
- Ambassador Training Pay
- Program Supplies
- Mental Health Contractors
- Other Program Expenses

**Management Expenses – 37%**

- Administration
- Office Expenses
- Professional Services
- Insurance

**Fundraising Expenses – 3%**

**Since its founding in 2010, Youth Ambassadors has provided more than $1,000,000 in direct support & pay to youth in the community**

**Program Contracts – 33%**

**Foundation / Grants – 56%**

**Individual & Corporate Donations – 5%**

**Fundraising – 5%**

**Other Income – 1%**




*These figures depict cash deposits.














# Stakeholders, Donors, & Friends

## $10,000+

- Ann F. Barhoum & The Francis Family Foundation
- Alma and Phil Morelock Fund
- CAPTRUST Foundation
- Chiefs Ambassadors Charitable Foundation
- Children's Services Fund of Jackson County
- Curry Family Foundation
- Hunt Family Foundation
- Jackson County COMBAT
- Jackson County Mental Health Fund
- Kansas City, Missouri - City Manager's Office
- Kauffman Foundation
- KC Common Good
- KC People's Fund
- Menorah Heritage Foundation
- Oppenstein Brothers Foundation
- Roger A. and Corinne R. Durkee Fund
- Sherman Family Foundation

## $5,000–$9,999

- American Heart Association
- BlueScope Foundation
- Brandon Haverty
- Clay Hartman
- Hallmark
- Henry E. Wurst Foundation
- Tiffany and Gregory Lynch

## $4,999 & Below

- Alayna Smith
- Alicia Douglas
- Amy Cosgrove-Klein
- Angela Edwards
- Anna Muenchen
- Armando Hernandez
- Ashley Wenzel
- Avery Toliver
- Bank of Prairie Village
- Bill and Maureen Berkley Fund
- Blaise Heckman
- Brad Conner
- Brett Cooper
- Cafe Foods Inc
- Casual Animal Brewery
- Catherine Hanson
- Central Bank of the Midwest
- Chicken N Pickle
- Children's Mercy Hospital
- Community Capital Fund
- Courtney Canady
- Dalana Johnson
- Darien Stokes
- Dave Gardner
- David Caffrey
- David Von Drehle
- Deandra Kilpatrick
- Dentons US LLP
- DJ YearWood
- Ellie Carmody
- Fidelity Investment
- Flor Cruz
- Greg Lynch
- Greg Maupins
- Hallmark
- Hank King
- Hunter Henry
- Jaegar Schlumpberger
- James & Christine Glenski Fund
- James McGraw
- Jessie and Jackson DeLay
- Jessica Stone
- Jillian Carroll
- Joe Skates
- Johnny Waller JR.
- Jonathan Jackson
- Julia Kesarwani
- Kathleen Lee
- Kelsey Brown
- Kendra Scott LLC
- KPMG LLP
- Lara Salgado
- Laura Long-Aractingi
- Leigh Reynolds
- Lewis Chapman
- Macfee Family Fund
- Missouri After School Network and the C.S. Mott Foundation
- Molly Garretson
- Moneta Charitable Foundation
- Nancy Miller
- Nathaniel Rodgers
- Nicholas Wood
- Nick Johnson
- Nikki Hutson
- Paragon Star
- Patrick Bolen
- Peter Long
- Phyllis Stevens
- Richard Fritz
- Sara Hostetler
- Sarita Boyette
- Shannon Price
- ShaKeela Baker
- Sharon Cornio
- Shyla Lewis
- Skycap Roofing & Remodeling
- Steven Seals
- Stolzer Family Foundation
- Susanne Mitko
- Tanner Stephens
- Temple Made Fitness
- Terry Smitka
- Tony Temple
- Tracy Rainge
- Travanna Alexander-Toney
- Troy Kerr
- United Way of Greater Kansas City
- U.S. BANK
- Valor Amusement
- Venue Smart LLC
- Whitney Reed

youth
AMBASSADORS

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