
YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN PARKS

2017 Annual Program Report





Youth Employment in Parks is a unique employment opportunity for teens. It is made possible by cooperation between the Anchorage Park Foundation, a non-profit which advocates for urban parks and trails in Anchorage, the Municipality of Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department, and the support of generous funders.



WHAT IS YEP?

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN PARKS IS A SUMMER EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM FOR ANCHORAGE YOUTH THAT ENGAGES A NEW GENERATION OF DIVERSE YOUNG LEADERS AS CONSERVATION STEWARDS OF PUBLIC LANDS AND THE ANCHORAGE COMMUNITY THROUGH MEANINGFUL JOB TRAINING, EMPLOYMENT, AND EDUCATION.

Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) is a joint program of the Anchorage Park Foundation and the Municipality of Anchorage's Parks and Recreation Department.

Since 2007, YEP has hired over 300 Anchorage youth to complete park improvement projects during the summer. The teens learn valuable natural resource management job skills by building trails, restoring stream banks, and a variety of other park improvement projects. Additionally, as part of the YEP program, teens engage in relevant educational opportunities to increase their civic engagement, environmental awareness, recreational activity, and leadership skills. At the end of the program, Mentorship Week links their new skills to future careers.

Each year, about 25 teens are selected from more than 150 applicants to be enrolled in the award-winning YEP program. The YEP summer program lasts for ten weeks and coincides with the Anchorage School District schedule to ensure opportunities

are available to area youth without interfering with school calendars. For the duration of the summer, these teens work full-time on park and trail improvement projects.

Funding for the teens' wages and project overhead comes from a variety of grants and contributions, both public and private.

YEP IN ACTION

- **YEP creates** employment opportunities and highlights career paths for youth to work in natural resources fields.
- **YEP inspires** youth to embrace nature while encouraging healthy lifestyles.
- **YEP prepares** youth to become effective, contributing citizens and employees through character development and community action skills training.
- **YEP contributes** to the community by improving parks and recreation spaces.



THE YEP CREW

The YEP program provides Anchorage youth an opportunity for employment that allows them to build social and leadership skills to use in their community and their careers.



YEP ACCREDITATION

THE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN PARKS PROGRAM IS EXCITED
AND HONORED TO BE ACCREDITED BY THE CORPS NETWORK.



Anchorage's Youth Employment in Parks was accredited in 2014 by The Corps Center of Excellence. This esteemed honor is granted to highly rated youth development programs that provide participants with opportunities

for leadership skills, job training, community improvement, and the development of environmental stewardship.

The Corps Center of Excellence is a leader of the corps movement. They provide an example for corps programs nationwide to harness the power of young adults to solve some of the nation's greatest challenges-- often while transforming their own lives in the process.

Youth Employment in Parks is proud to have been granted accreditation by this leading organization. This accreditation assures partnering agencies and donors of the quality of the YEP program; further, the YEP program joins a group of nationwide youth development and service programs that have been evaluated to the highest degree.

SKILL-BUILDING

YEP crew members participate in park improvement projects like stream bank restoration and trail building.



PROGRAM STRUCTURE

PROGRAM DESIGN

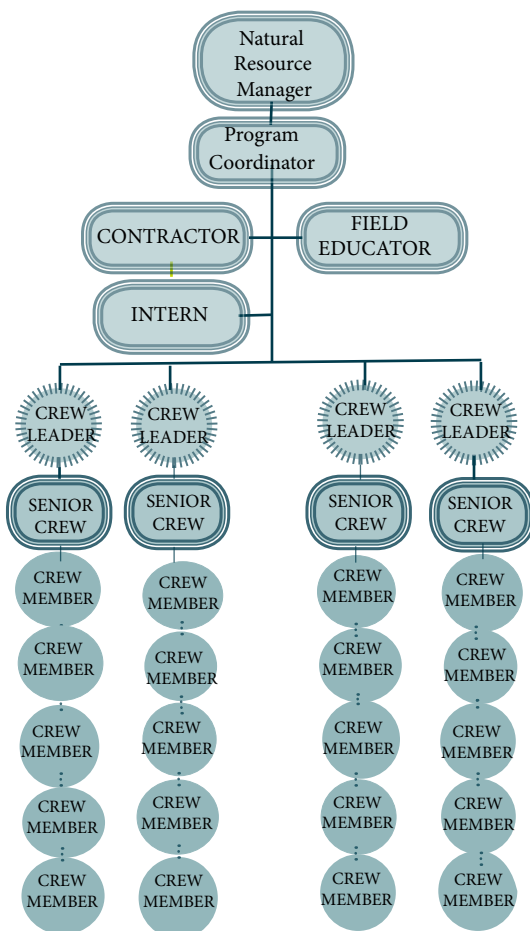
Youth Employment in Parks is modeled after the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) program of the 1930s. The YEP program is designed as a service learning program which balances the work product with job skills training, recreational activities, civic engagement, and environmental education.

The YEP program employs staff to design and implement relevant service learning activities that will help their youth realize the meaningfulness of the work and become engaged citizens.

YEP PROGRAM GOALS

1. Create a meaningful first employment experience and career pathway for diverse youth to work in outdoors and natural resources fields.
2. Expose youth employees to the outdoors and connect them with nature to support a healthy lifestyle.
3. Provide youth employees with community action skills and character development so they may become effective citizens.
4. Build community through enhanced recreation opportunities, parks, and public spaces.

2017 STAFF STRUCTURE



Youth Employment in Parks requires a variety of skills and a high degree of organization in order to accomplish its goals. Administrative duties are assigned to a handful of staff members, while project supervision and execution are carried out by the structured crews.

In 2017 the YEP staff divided into four field crews consisting of five youth crew members, a youth senior crew member, and an adult crew leader. The field educator planned and implemented the service learning and educational components for the program, while the on-site professional trail building contractor managed the projects and ensured professional quality work. Both the natural resource manager and the program coordinator work year round coordinating projects for the upcoming YEP program.

WE REFLECT ANCHORAGE

ANCHORAGE FEATURES A DIVERSE ETHNIC AND SOCIOECONOMIC POPULATION. THE TEENS EMPLOYED THROUGH THE YEP PROGRAM REFLECT THAT DIVERSITY.

In 2017, the YEP program hired 25 diverse Anchorage youth as crew members, senior crew members, and an intern. In addition, YEP hired four crew leaders, and a field educator. To qualify as YEP crew members, applicants must be a resident of the Municipality of Anchorage, be between 16 and 19 years old, and be enrolled in high school, a GED program, or possess a diploma.

The YEP program coordinates with local recreation centers, hiring centers, and the Anchorage School District to attract applicants. Because Anchorage features such a diverse ethnic and socioeconomic population, YEP participants have a wide range of backgrounds.

Interviewers select applicants for the YEP crew that will benefit the most and make the best use of the opportunity. This means that all of the money that goes into YEP supports not only our parks and trails, but family needs and educational pursuits of YEP employees.

Nearly all YEP teens report a very positive, and sometimes life-changing, experience as a YEP crew member. Youth Employment in Parks aims to set teens on a path toward success in future careers, which many of our past crew members have accomplished. In addition to work and social skills, friendships are formed among YEP crew mates that last for years to come.

2017 YEP PROGRAM NUMBERS:

24/4

**CREW MEMBERS/
CREW LEADERS**

9

**HIGH SCHOOLS
REPRESENTED**

8

LANGUAGES SPOKEN

45

**% SPEAK A LANGUAGE
OTHER THAN ENGLISH
AT HOME**

13

FIRST JOB EXPERIENCES

59/41

% MALE/FEMALE

10

**AVERAGE HOURS/
MONTH YEP MEMBERS
SPENT VOLUNTEERING**

ETHNICITY:

- ☐ 62% - White/Caucasian
- ☐ 13% - Hispanic/Latino
- ☐ 25% - Black/African American
- ☐ 8% - American Indian/Alaska Native
- ☐ 8% - Asian
- ☐ 2% - Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

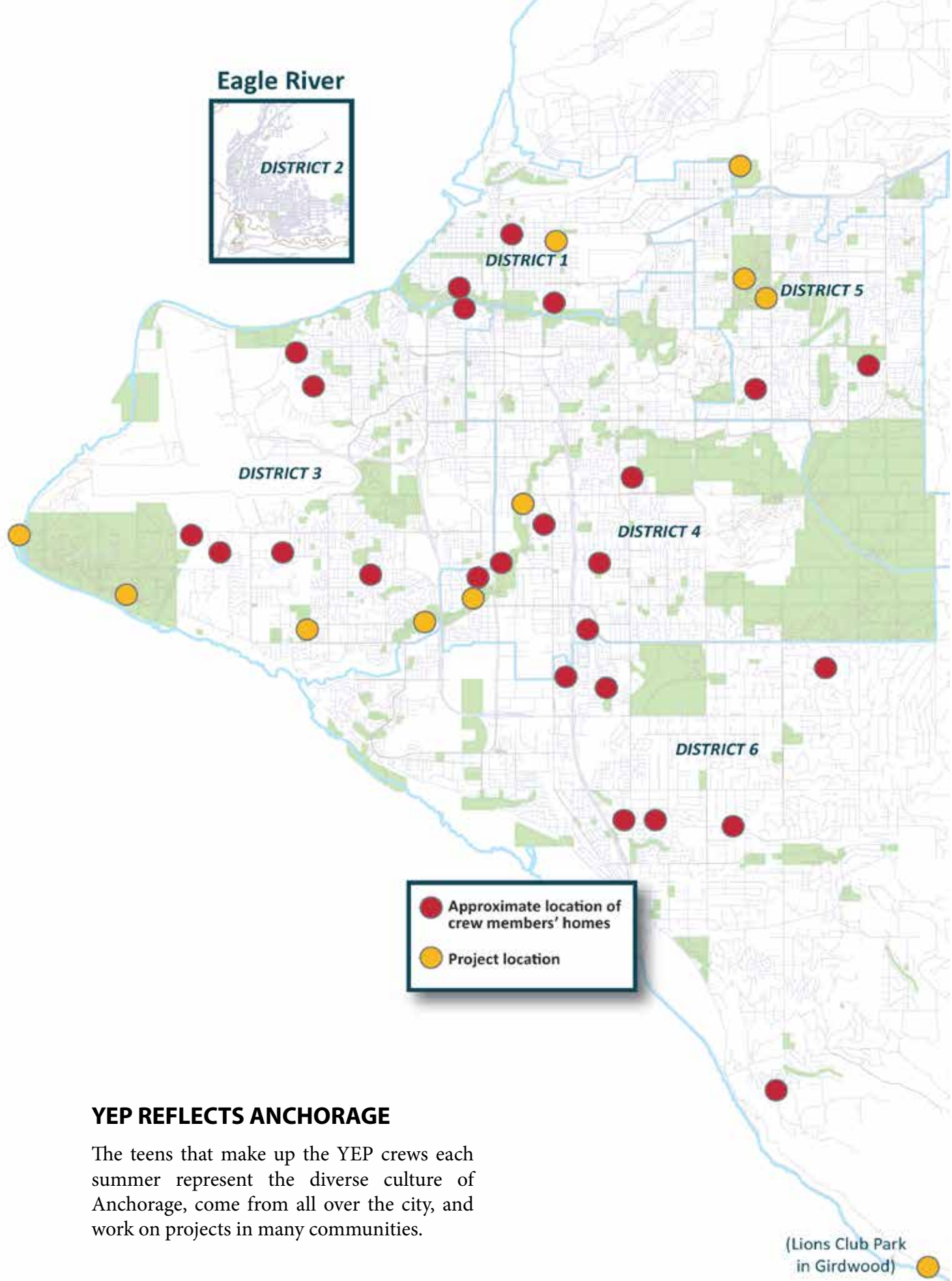
Some participants identify with more than one background

FAMILY:

- ☐ 21% - have families that are considered low income
- ☐ 21% - are from military families
- ☐ 21% - live in a single parent home
- ☐ 16% - are members of Alaska Native tribes
- ☐ 16% - experience a disability
- ☐ 8% - have parents who are unemployed

EARNINGS:

- ☐ 66% - will spend earnings on tuition
- ☐ 46% - will save part of their earnings
- ☐ 30% - will spend earnings on clothing and food
- ☐ 21% - will spend earnings on basic household expenses



YEP REFLECTS ANCHORAGE

The teens that make up the YEP crews each summer represent the diverse culture of Anchorage, come from all over the city, and work on projects in many communities.

EDUCATION

THE YEP PROGRAM IS NOT JUST ABOUT BUILDING TRAILS AND PLANTING TREES. YEP TEENS HAVE A WEEKLY EDUCATION AND RECREATION DAY THAT TEACH A VARIETY OF SKILLS TO HELP THEM HAVE SUCCESSFUL CAREERS, BECOME COMMUNITY LEADERS, AND HAVE FUN!



While park improvement work is a major aspect of the YEP program, the program also incorporates a strong education and recreation element.

Youth Employment in Parks gives crew members the tools and stamina to stand out amongst their peers as skilled and reliable employees, stewards of their community, and leaders of their future.

On weekly education and recreation days, and sometimes during daily breaks, YEP crew members engage in group activities and discussions that are tied directly to the projects on which they are working. These sessions cover a variety of topics which emphasize civic engagement, job skills, environmental awareness, and healthy recreation. Crew members have hands-on opportunities to serve the community, apply new skills, and learn about a variety of different occupations, all while having fun! Youth Employment in Parks encourages teens to become leaders and create positive impacts wherever they go.



Top: Campbell Creek Science Center team building
Above: Kids Don't Float at West High School
Right: Eagle River Nature Center



VALUABLE SKILLS

The YEP program not only teaches the value of hard work, but equips teens with the skills to stand out from the crowd as dependable employees and contributing community members.



EDUCATION AND RECREATION

The teens took a Streambank Rehabilitation and Habitat Protection Workshop with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Alaska Plant Materials Center. The teens learned techniques for restoring degraded streambanks and fish habitat and put those new skills to use during two weeks of restoration projects along the Campbell Creek corridor.



Friends of the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge (FAR) joined us on site to talk with the YEP teens about the coastal wildlife refuge and the importance of protecting this unique ecosystem.

"YEP helped me appreciate nature more. I have an increased passion to preserve it."
- Hannah Elam



"I learned that there is only so much I can do by myself, and that I can learn a lot from talking and working with others." - Liam Lolly

"I've grown a deeper appreciation for nature and its fragility." - Holly Hoback



"I care even more about stewardship of the environment and really want to continue improving our community and the natural world."
- Quyanna Whittaker



"My favorite education/recreation day was when we went to the Alaska Native Heritage Center. I learned about the history, tools, and environments of different regions of Alaska."
- Benjamin Hunter-Francis



The Anchorage Teddy Bear Picnic

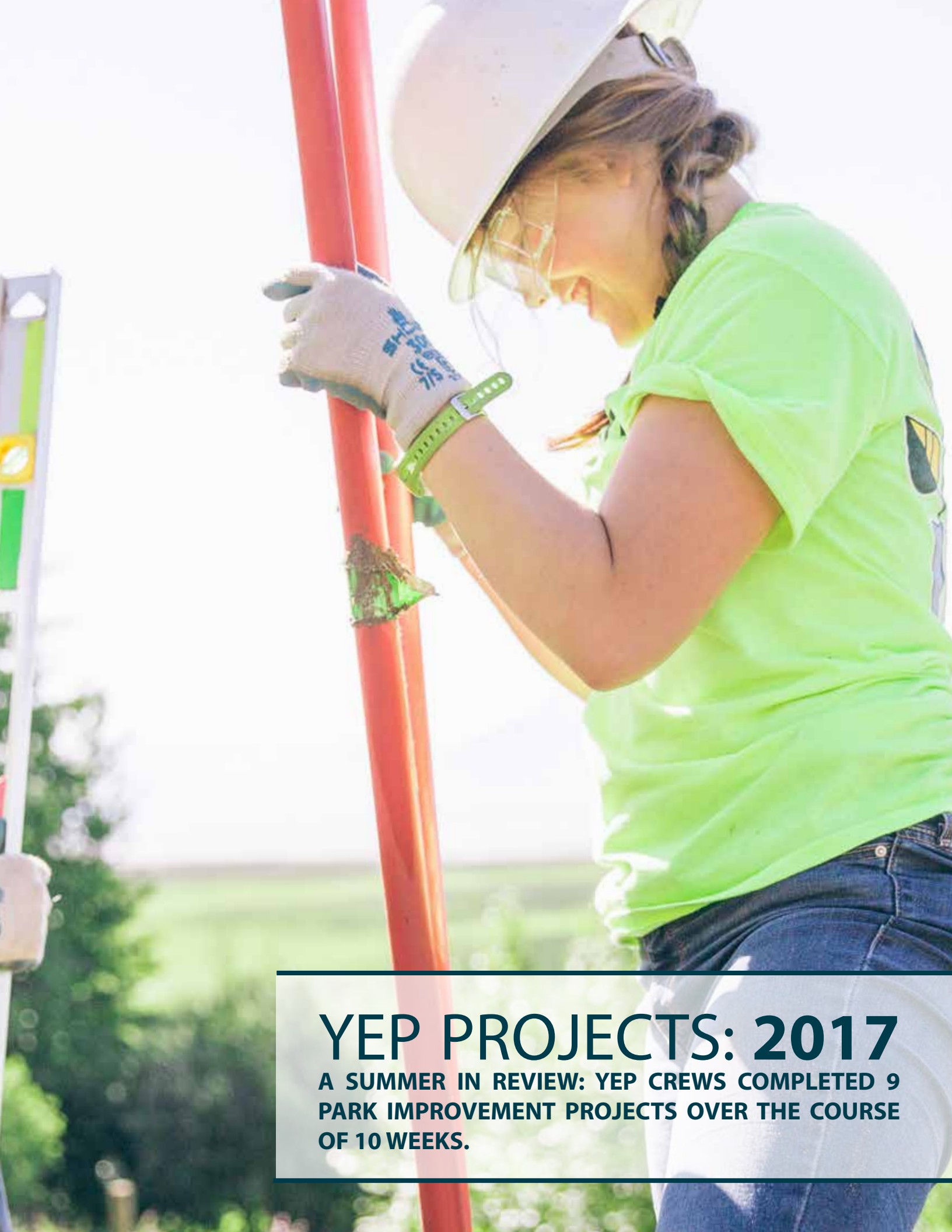
A day of fun, imagination, and exploration for all kids



This summer the YEP teens learned about inclusive play, which is a movement in Anchorage that strives to build playgrounds that are accessible for all, removing physical and social barriers. The teens participated in a community event focused on bringing awareness to inclusive play and celebrating the first inclusive playground built in Anchorage. To learn more about inclusive play in Anchorage please visit the Anchorage Park Foundation website at:

www.anchorageparkfoundation.org/programs/inclusiveplay





YEP PROJECTS: 2017

**A SUMMER IN REVIEW: YEP CREWS COMPLETED 9
PARK IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS OVER THE COURSE
OF 10 WEEKS.**

Russian Jack Springs Park

Neighborhood Trail Connector and Training Week



Funding:

MOA Funds: \$24,200

Private Funding: \$17,400

Project Scope:

YEP teens spent their first week learning about tools, safety, team building, and trail building. For their first project the teens worked on improving a social trail that will provide residents with year-round access to Russian Jack Springs Park, local schools, and the trail system.

The project consisted of:

- Clearing a 4' wide trail: removing tree stumps, roots, and other vegetation
- Hauling 27 cubic tons of D1 aggregate
- Raking and compacting 350 feet of trail

Project Dates:

June 5 - 8

Refuge Access at Jodhpur

Trail to Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge



Funding:

MOA Funds: \$24,200

State of Alaska Grant: \$35,000

Project Scope:

In 2016 the carcass of a humpback whale beached in the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge near the base of the bluff below the Jodhpur Motocross Track. Foot traffic down the bluff and across the tidelands increased dramatically from people wanting to see the whale. It is estimated that hundreds of people a day were walking down the bluff. The increased traffic on this trail caused significant erosion down the steep and sandy bluff. Vegetation was trampled and deep ruts developed due to the increased foot traffic. In the summer of 2017, the YEP teens worked on redirecting and stabilizing the steep social trail to address stability and erosion issues. They constructed a new trail with a more gradual slope, blocked off deeply rutted social trails by setting posts connected with rope, revegetating, fencing and posting signs. Informational signs were installed along the new trail.

The project consisted of:

- Grubbing 1,500 feet of trail
- Installing 60 4x4 posts with 700 feet of rope, 100 ft of orange safety fence, and trail closure/directional signs
- Hauling, planting, and watering Aspen saplings, Silverberry, Buffaloberry, and Prickly Rose bushes.

Project Dates:

June 12 - 15

Campbell Creek Bank Restoration

Bank Restoration at Emerald Hills Park, Arctic Blvd., and Lynnwood Park



Funding:

MOA Funds: \$68,300

US Forest Service Grant: \$ 52,000

Private Funding: \$13,500

Project Scope:

This project was part of a three year grant and this year YEP worked at 3 different sites helping stabilize and restore the streambank while enhancing fish rearing habitat. These areas have been degraded over time from overuse and erosion. Campbell Creek is an anadromous stream and this project was necessary to restore the banks and vegetation that provide fish habitat. These restoration projects repaired the streambanks while still allowing for public access and recreation.

The project consisted of:

- Emerald Hills site: The YEP crew installed 120 feet of coir log, Feltleaf Willow brush layers, 120' X 10' of vegetated mat, a 100'X 6' of Elevated Light Penetrating (ELP) walkway for fishing access, and pulled invasive weeds.
- Arctic Blvd site: The YEP crew installed 100 feet of coir log, brush layers, and vegetated mat, 60 feet of cabled spruce, and 50 feet of Elevated Light Penetrating (ELP) walkway for fishing access.
- Lynnwood Park: The YEP crew restored 1,200 feet of the east bank of Campbell Creek with a combination of 40 feet of coir logs, brush layering, vegetative mat, live staking, tree planting and re-vegetating the banks with 28 Red Elderberry, 30 Rusty Menziesia, 80 Devils Club, 50 Rose, 20 Raspberry, 25 Silverberry, 25 Birch and Spruce saplings, along with protective fencing. YEP also pulled invasive weeds at this site.

Project Dates:

June 19 - 29

Campbell Creek Streambank Restoration

Bank Restoration at Emerald Hills Park, Arctic Blvd., and Lynnwood Park



Kincaid Beach Trail

Trail Maintenance



Funding:

MOA funds: \$24,200

Alaska State Legislative Grant: \$16,500

Project Scope: This was a YEP project two years ago, and this year the YEP teens did some trail maintenance and added some finishing touches. The crews added more gravel to the upper landing creating a more sustainable, level walkway. They also added a wood fence to block unsustainable social trails, and more posts and rope to help direct traffic down the bluff.

The project consisted of:

- Hauling 14 tons of D1 gravel
- Installing 9 posts and decking to create a fence and natural trail corridor
- Installing 90 feet of rope

Project Dates:

July 3 - 6

Girdwood Lions Club Park

Park Maintenance



Funding:

MOA Funds: \$24,200

Private Funds: \$10,500

Project Scope:

The YEP team worked together to removed old rotting picnic tables and built approximately 12 new picnic tables, gravel pads and paths to picnic areas, removed underbrush, graveled more than 300 feet of trail throughout the park, and made improvements to the volleyball court. YEP worked with the Girdwood Parks and Recreation team to complete this project.

The project consisted of:

- Hauling 100 yards of gravel
- Compacting gravel picnic pads and trails to pads
- Deconstructing and constructing 12 picnic tables
- Volleyball court improvements

Project Dates:

July 10 -13

Jewel Lake Park

Park Maintenance



Funding:

MOA Funds: \$29,000

Private Funding: \$7,000

Project Scope:

The youth spent several days at Jewel Lake Beach repairing and maintaining this popular beach front park. They added 25 tons of sand to the volleyball court, added mulch garden beds, painted the gazebo, painted over 100 parking lot bollards, and pulled invasive weeds.

The project consisted of:

- Using 10 gallons of paint
- Hauling 25 tons amount of sand
- Hauling 25 yards of mulch

Project Dates:

June 18 - 22

Russian Jack Springs Park

Trail Maintenance



Funding:

MOA Funds: \$6,000

Private Funds: \$2,500

Project Scope:

YEP reopened a .5 mile long walking trail in Russian Jack Springs Park. This .5 mile long trail had fallen victim to the 2012 wind storm that brought down thousands of trees around Anchorage. YEP used hand saws and other hand tools to reopen this wooded trail.

The project consisted of:

- Grubbing 0.5 miles of a five foot wide hiking trail
- Removing vegetation and downed trees from the trail corridor

Project Dates:

July 24

Davis Park

Trail Maintenance



Funding:

MOA funds: \$38,000

Private Funds: \$14,000

Project Scope:

YEP spent two weeks at Davis park removing vegetation along approximately 1 mile of trail to improve sight lines for added safety. The teens also graveled approximately 0.5 mile of trail to help improve the tread and overall trail sustainability.

The project consisted of:

- Hauling 14 tons of D1 gravel
- Removing vegetation
- Improving sight lines
- Graveling approximately 0.5 mile of trail

Project Dates:

July 25 - August 3

Fairview Lions Park Community Garden

**Funding:**

MOA Funds: \$12,500

Private Funds: \$5,000

Project Scope:

YEP constructed twelve 10ft x 20ft garden beds for the Fairview Community Garden expansion. They wheelbarrowed 40 cubic yards of topsoil to fill the raised beds and spread over 60 cubic yards of mulch to create sustainable walkways around the beds.

The project consisted of:

- Hauling 40 cubic yards of topsoil and 60 cubic yards of mulch
- Building 12 raised beds

Project Dates:

August 2-3



"I really liked the Campbell Creek restoration project because we got to walk in the creek , get wet, and actually get our hands dirty. " -Kylie Barham

"My favorite project was Davis Park, it involved a lot of hard work and taught me a lot." - Brian Moten



"I am most proud of the community garden project, it really looked good and it was nice to hear praise for our work." - Jack Wright



"I liked doing the streambank restoration projects. I really felt like I was helping the salmon population in Anchorage." - Brenna Krugger



Mentorship Week

The final week of Youth Employment in Parks is a mentorship week. To kick-off the week, the youth shadowed professionals to learn more about the careers they are interested in pursuing. A few of the mentorship opportunities included engineers, park rangers, a lawyer, an outdoor educator, a physical therapist, a veterinarian, and a teacher. YEP teens spent the rest of the week hearing about future job options, writing resumes, touring a renewable energy facility, the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA), and the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS), and learning about financial literacy from Wells Fargo. Thank you to all of the mentors and partners who helped make this week so successful!





Youth Employment in Parks

A program of the Anchorage Park Foundation and Anchorage Parks and Recreation

2017 YEP Crew Members



Brian
Plans to
work with
Ptarmigan
Ptrails



Emma
Loves to
bake



Gavin
Enjoys
playing
the drums



Hannah
Makes
great hot
chocolate



Zachary
Likes to play
pool



Ben
Likes to
watch
Hockey



Kylie
Enjoys
hiking



Brianna
Likes to go
shopping



Brenna
Enjoys
hiking



Cara
Enjoys
building
model
rockets



Declan
Enjoys
biking



Jraezon
Likes to
travel



Luis
Likes to
help out the
community



Leya
Likes to play
with her
nieces and
nephews



Liam
Likes to
play video
games



Noah
Loves the
city of
Anchorage



Ismaeel
Enjoys
helping
others



Tony
Enjoys
playing
frisbee



Brandon
Likes to ski



Quinn
Likes to try
new things



Quyanna
Believes in
recycling



Henry
Likes
working
with large
groups



Jack
Loves the
winter time



Holly
Loves to
sing

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

The YEP program has a positive impact on local youth and our parks. You can support their work by becoming a funding partner.

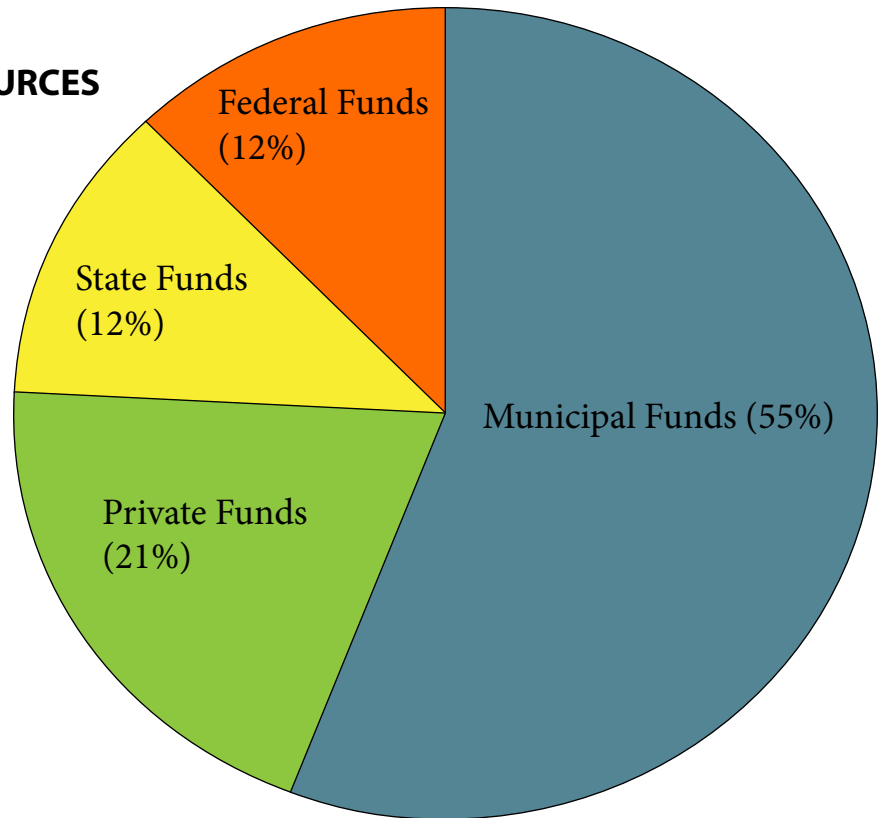


YEP FUNDING

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN PARKS IS MADE POSSIBLE BY A COMBINATION OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE FUNDING.

2017 PUBLIC-PRIVATE FUNDING SOURCES AND FUNDING BREAKDOWN

- Private Funds - \$96,500
- Municipal Funds- \$247,000
- State Funds - \$51,500
- Federal Funds - \$52,000
- Total Funds = \$447,000



THANK YOU!

We are grateful to these partners and funders of the 2017 YEP program who have made a difference in the lives of 25 youth and thousands of community members through Anchorage parks and trails improvements.





To learn more about supporting Anchorage's Youth Employment in Parks program,
please contact the Anchorage Park Foundation:

☎ 907-274-1003

💻 www.anchorageparkfoundation.org

✉ 3201 C Street, Suite 110
Anchorage, AK 99503

📄 2018 YEP Employment Information

YEP will be accepting applications for the following positions on the following
approximate dates:

YEP Field Educator, Jan 16-Feb 13 (1 position)

YEP Crew Leader, Jan 16-Feb 20 (4 positions)

YEP Senior Crew Member, Jan 16-Feb 20 (4 positions)

YEP Crew Member, Jan 16-March 19 (20 positions)



A Special Thanks....

We would like to thank the following organizations and groups for helping to make YEP a reality this year!

- Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
- Alaska Department of Fish & Game
- Alaska Department of Health & Social Services
- Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Forestry Division
- Alaska Native Heritage Center
- Alaska SeaLife Center
- Alaska State Legislature
- Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center
- Alaska Geographic
- Anchorage School District
- Anchorage Sand and Gravel
- Anchorage Waterways Council
- Barbara and Michael Carlson
- BLM Campbell Creek Science Center
- Catholic Social Services - State Refugee Program
- Downtown Bicycle Rentals
- E.A. Hamm
- Friends of the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge
- Fire Island Bakery
- The Hotel Alyeska
- Kaladi Brothers
- King Career Center (KCC)
- Lifetime Adventures Alaska
- Moose's Tooth
- Musk Ox Farm
- NOLS
- People Mover
- Rasmuson Foundation
- Recreation Equipment, Inc. (REI)
- The Student Conservation Association
- University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA)
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- U.S. Forest Service
- Wells Fargo

Many individuals get involved with YEP by helping conduct education activities. Contact us if you want to contribute!

To Contact YEP:

Ann Marie DuBois, Program Coordinator
907.274.1003
yep@anchorageparkfoundation.org



**YOUTH
EMPLOYMENT
IN PARKS**