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# YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN PARKS

## 2018 Annual Program Report

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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.



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# 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.

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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 350 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 resource 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.

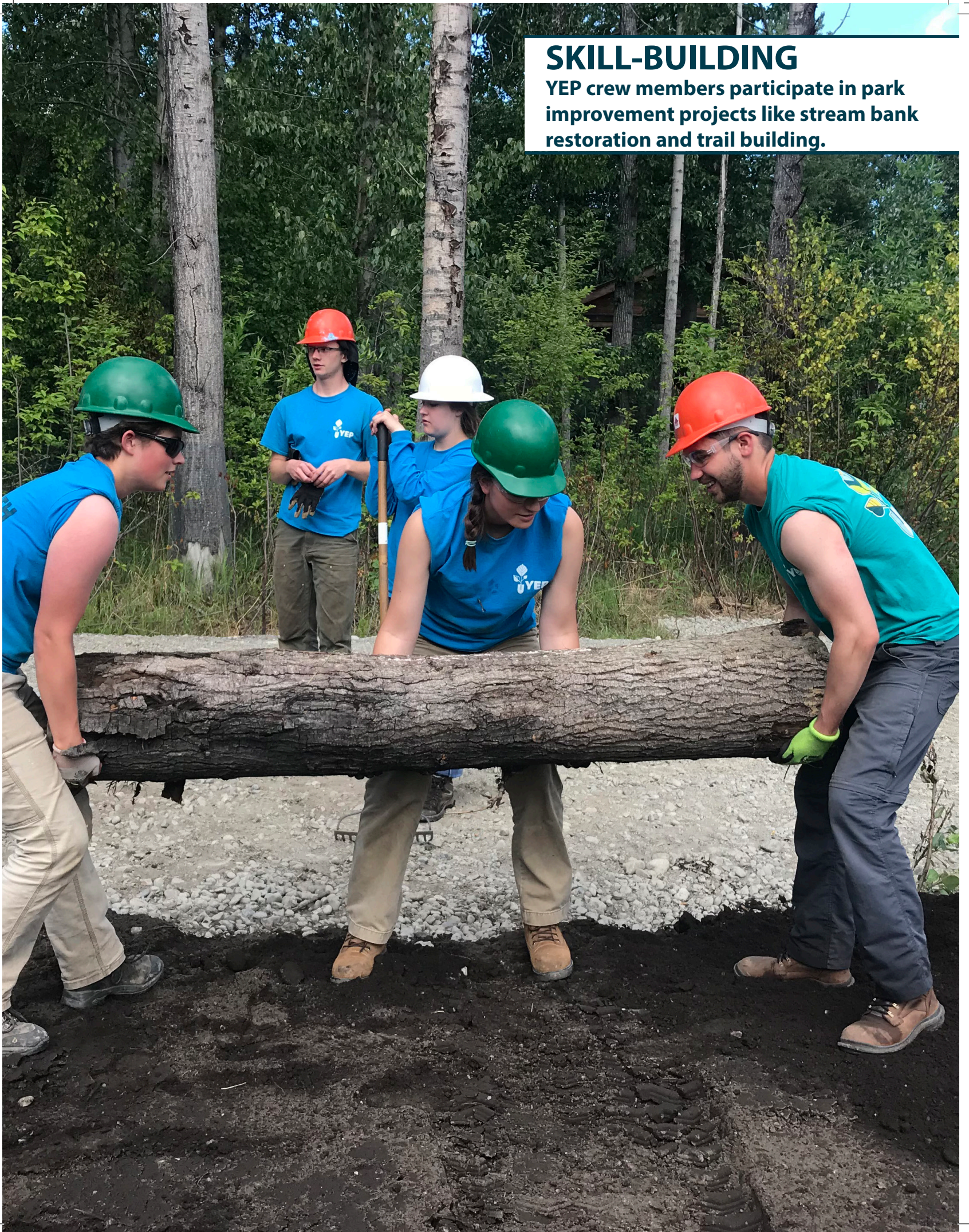


## **THE YEP CREW**

**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.**

## SKILL-BUILDING

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



# PROGRAM STRUCTURE

## PROGRAM DESIGN

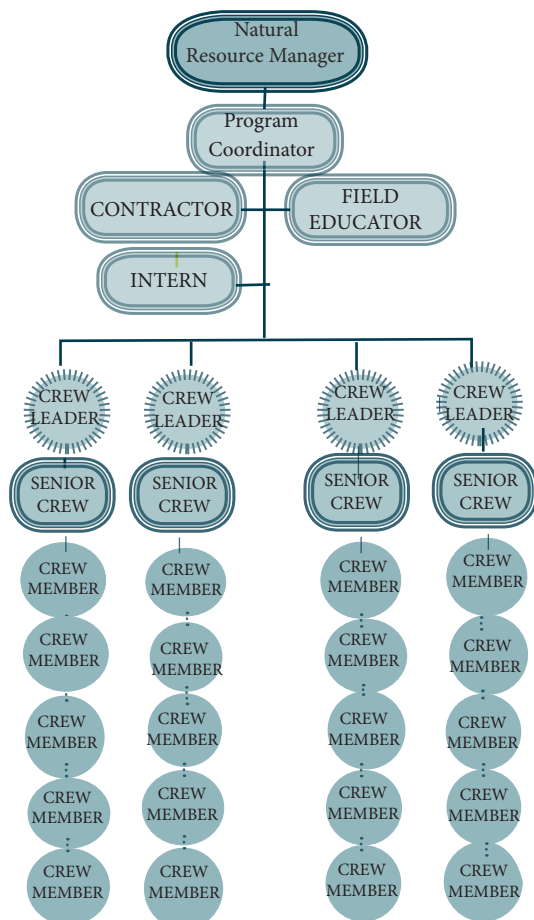
Youth Employment in Parks is modeled after the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) program of the 1930s. The YEP program is designed as a service learning program which balances the work product with job skills training, recreational activities, civic engagement, and environmental education.

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 resource 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.

## 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 2018 the YEP staff divided into three field crews consisting of 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 2018, the YEP program hired 25 diverse Anchorage youth as crew members, senior crew members, and an intern. In addition, YEP hired three 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.

**2018 YEP PROGRAM NUMBERS:**

24/4

**CREW MEMBERS/  
CREW LEADERS**

12

**HIGH SCHOOLS  
REPRESENTED**

7

**LANGUAGES SPOKEN**

33

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

14

**FIRST JOB EXPERIENCES**

46/54

**% MALE/FEMALE**

10

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

## ETHNICITY:

- 71% - White/Caucasian
- 21% - American Indian/Alaska Native
- 17% - Black/African American
- 13% - Hispanic/Latino
- 13% - Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- 4% - Asian

## FAMILY:

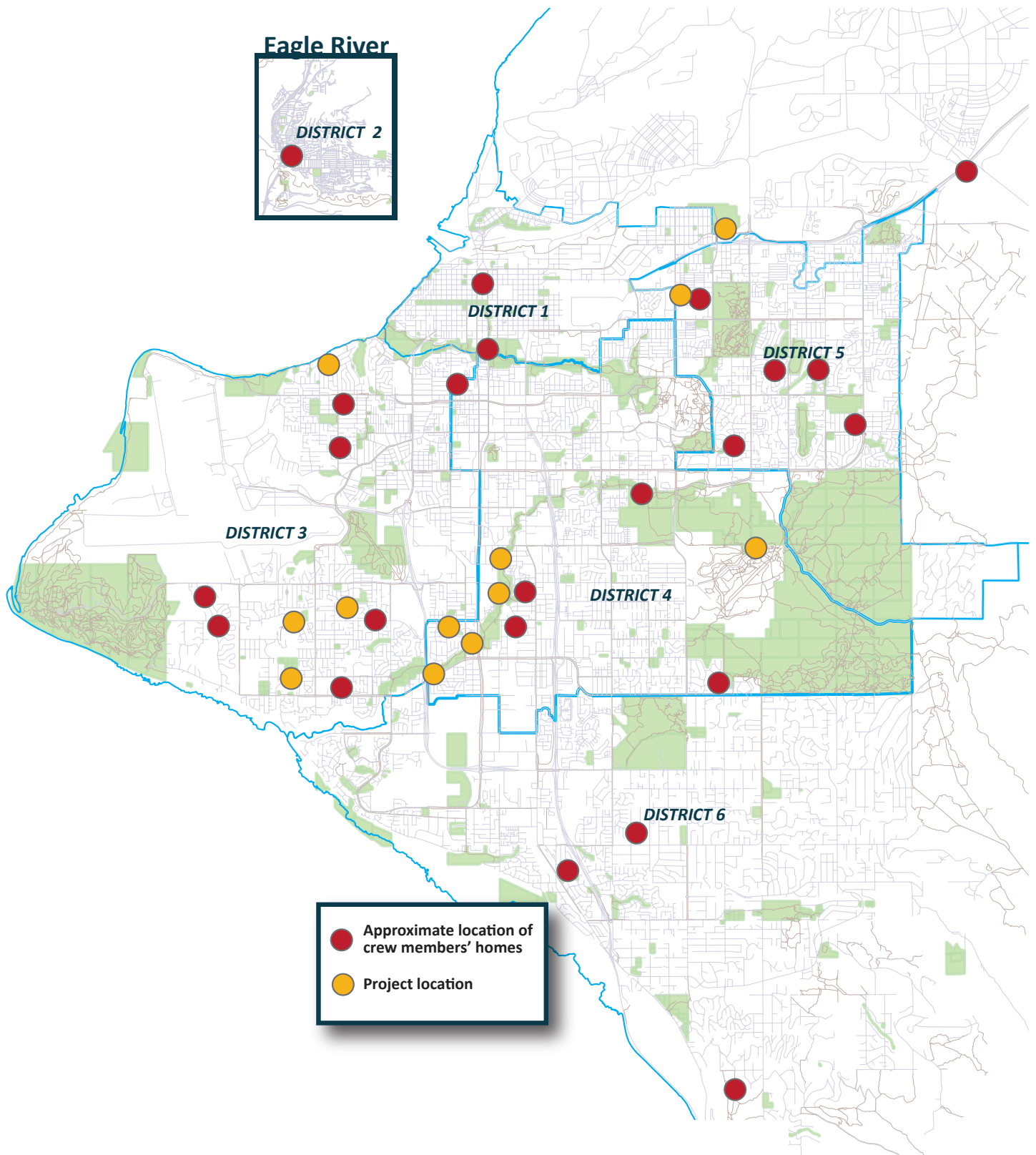
- 33% - have families that are considered low income
- 25% - are from military families
- 29% - live in a single parent home
- 21% - are members of Alaska Native tribes
- 21% - experience a disability
- 4% - have parents who are unemployed

## EARNINGS:

- 54% - will spend earnings on clothing and food
- 42% - will save part of their earnings
- 29% - will spend earnings on tuition
- 17% - will spend earnings on basic household expenses

Some participants identify with more than one background





## 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 TEACHES 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 future leaders.

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: Wildlife Cruise in Prince William Sound



## 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 three weeks of restoration projects along the Campbell Creek corridor.



Friends of the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge (FAR) talked with the YEP teens about the coastal wildlife refuge and the importance of protecting this unique ecosystem.

*"YEP has opened me up to a lot of outdoor activities and opportunities that I would have never known otherwise."*  
- Carlos Cosio



*"YEP has helped me notice the natural beauty of Alaska more than I used to" - Isaiah Atseriak*



*"In YEP, I learned where, when, and why erosion is caused and a lot about riparian vegetation."*  
- John Moses

*"My favorite education/recreation activity was visiting the bio-shelter. The living house was fascinating and inspiring!" -Holly Hoback*





# YEP PROJECTS: 2018

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

# Wolverine Park

## Schools on Trails Project and Training Week



### Funding:

MOA Funds: \$25,000

Private Funding: \$8,000

### 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 students at Campbell Elementary School with year-round access to Wolverine Park and their outdoor learning labs.

The project consisted of:

- Clearing a 3' wide trail: removing tree stumps, roots, and other vegetation
- Hauling 48 tons of D1 aggregate
- Raking and compacting over 1,000 feet of trail

### Project Dates:

June 4 - 8

# Davis Park

## Trail Maintenance



### **Funding:**

MOA Funds: \$30,000

Private Funding: \$8,000

### **Project Scope:**

YEP spent one week at Davis park removing vegetation along 1 mile of existing 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 110 tons of D1 gravel
- Removing vegetation from tread
- Cutting vegetation to improve sight lines
- Graveling and compacting approximately 0.5 mile of trail

### **Project Dates:**

June 11 - 15



# Campbell Creek Bank Restoration

Bank Restoration at Rovenna, Minnesota, Greenhill Park, RR Tracks, and Fairbanks St.



## Funding:

MOA Funds: \$68,300

US Forest Service Grant: \$21,000

Private Funding: \$8,000

## Project Scope:

This project was part of a three year grant from the US Forest Service and this year YEP worked at five different sites helping stabilize and restore the streambank while enhancing fish rearing habitat. Many areas along the Campbell Creek Trail corridor 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:

- **Rovenna Site:** The YEP crews worked to restore approximately 250 ft of bank next to the stream and a new swale that diverts water away from the trail. The teens planted 50 Birch and Spruce saplings, 1,500 Willows using stakes and bundles, 50 native shrub species including Sweet Gail, Potentilla, Ostrich Fern, Red Twig Dogwood, Iris, and Devils Club, and spread native grass seed. Protective fencing was installed and invasive species removed.
- **Minnesota Site:** The YEP crew worked to stabilize 200 ft of bank post streambank restoration. The teens planted 2,500 willows using live stakes and bundles, 20 Labrador Tea, Rose, Raspberry, High Bush Cranberry, Iris, 10 Alder, and 5 Dogwood shrubs. Protective fencing was installed and invasive species removed.
- **Greenhill Site:** The YEP crew revegetated 250 feet of bank along Campbell Creek. The teens helped plant 1,500 Willows using live stakes and bundles, 5 Sweet Gail, 5 Potentilla, 5 Rose, 10 Iris, and 15 Spruce and Birch sapling. Protective fencing was installed and invasive species removed.
- **Railroad Tracks and Fairbanks St. Sites:** Both of these sites were approximately 40 ft long and required in stream bank restoration. The teens installed coir logs, brush layers, and 2,000 willows at each site.

## Project Dates:

June 19 - 29

# Campbell Creek Bank Restoration

Bank Restoration at Rovenna, Minnesota, Greenhill Park, RR Tracks, and Fairbanks St.



# Bragaw Community Garden

## Trail Construction



### **Funding:**

MOA funds: \$12,500

Private Funds: 8,000

### **Project Scope:**

The YEP teens grubbed 200 feet of trail, removing the top organic layer, laying down fabric, and added mulch to the trail in the Bragaw Community Garden Orchard. Former Anchorage Park Foundation Board Member, Victor Mollozzi, joined the teens on site with lunch to thank them for all of their hard work.

The project consisted of:

- Hauling 20 yards of wood chips
- Grubbing and removing sod from 200 ft of trail

### **Project Dates:**

July 2 - 6

# Jewel Lake Park Trail Construction

**Funding:**

MOA Funds: \$27,000

Private Funds: 8,000

**Project Scope:**

The YEP team worked together to grub, remove vegetation, and gravel approximately 1,000 feet of trail at Jewel Lake Park.

The project consisted of:

- Hauling approximately 50 tons of gravel
- Compacting 1,000 feet of trail
- Grubbing approximately 1,000 ft of tread

**Project Dates:**

July 9 -13

# Far North Bicentennial Park

## Streambank Restoration



### **Funding:**

MOA Funds: \$25,000

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Grant: \$23,000

Private Funding: \$8,000

### **Project Scope:**

This project was part of a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. YEP spent two weeks at Far North Bicentennial Park working at two different sites along Salmon Run Trail to stabilize and restore the streambank while also enhancing fish rearing habitat. Many areas along the Campbell Creek corridor have been degraded over time from overuse and erosion. Campbell Creek is an anadromous stream and this project was necessary to restore the banks, reestablish vegetation that provide fish habitat, and to protect recreation areas loved by Anchorage residents. These restoration projects repaired the streambanks while still allowing for public access for recreation.

The project consisted of:

- Pole Point Site: The YEP crew revegetating 250 feet of bank along Campbell Creek with 5,500 Willows, using live stakes and bundles. The teens also installed protective fencing.
- Campbell Creek Site: This site was approximately 70 ft long and required in stream bank restoration. The teens installed coir logs, brush layers, spruce cabling, and planted 2,500 willows using live stakes and willow bundles.

### **Project Dates:**

July 16 - 20

# Michael J. Shibe Park

## Trail Maintenance



### **Funding:**

MOA Funds: \$25,000

Private Funds: \$8,000

### **Project Scope:**

YEP teens spent a week at Michael J. Shibe Park maintaining a half mile trail and constructing three new boardwalks through a wetland.

The project consisted of:

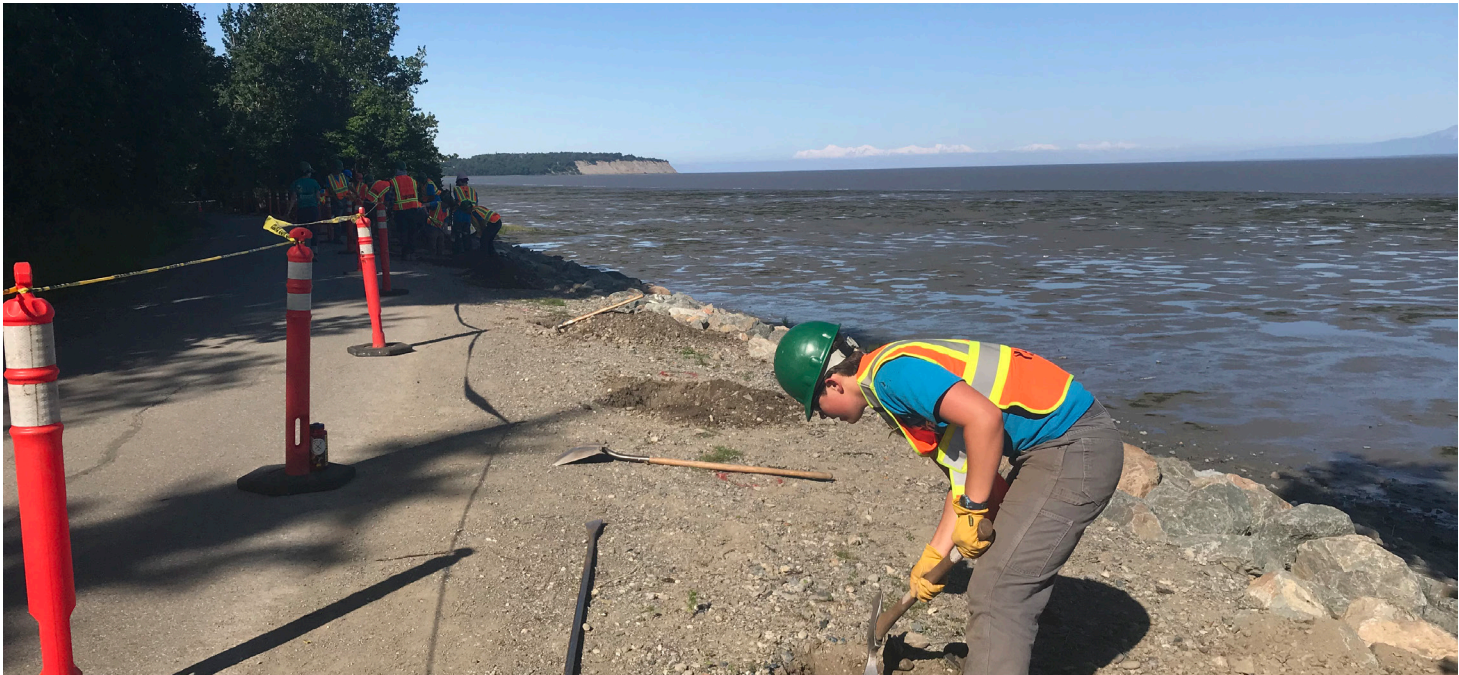
- hauling 60 tons of gravel to reinforce a 0.5 mile walking trail
- deconstructing and building three boardwalks
- hauling out old lumber from the deconstructed boardwalks

### **Project Dates:**

July 23-27

# Lyn Ary Park

## Coastal Trail Tree Planting



### **Funding:**

MOA funds: \$8,000

Private Funds: \$2,000

### **Project Scope:**

YEP spent one day revegetating the coastal trail. The teens planted 9 Quaking Aspen, 6 Paper Birch, 10 Red Oseir Dogwood, 8 Alders, and 20 High Bush Cranberry plants.

The project consisted of:

- Hauling 53 trees and shrubs
- Digging holes
- Planting 53 trees and shrubs
- Staking trees

### **Project Dates:**

July 30

# Davis Park

## Disc Golf Course



### **Funding:**

MOA Funds: \$40,000  
Private Funds: \$8,000

### **Project Scope:**

YEP constructed 18 tee boxes on a nine hole disc golf course. The teens wheelbarrowed 78 tons of gravel and 15 yards of concrete to fill constructed tee boxes. They also built 9 small connector trails to each hole.

The project consisted of:

- Hauling 78 tons of gravel and 15 yards of concrete
- Constructing eighteen 16x6 ft tee boxes out of treated lumber
- Grubbing and removing vegetation to build 9 small connector trails
- Graveling 9 small connector trails

### **Project Dates:**

July 30- August 3





*"I loved building the Jewel Lake Park trail because we had great team work and communication." - Carlos Cosio*

*"My favorite project was the disc golf course. I learned many new skills. I can't wait for my family and friends to use it" - Yepper*



*"I am most proud of the Davis Park project. It was the most challenging work, but I feel I made a lasting impact." - Liam Lally*

*"I liked doing the streambank restoration projects because I got to do work I have never done before and we really put our new knowledge to use" - Tony Fedullo*



# 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 the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA), 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

## 2018 YEP Crew Members



**Brenna**

Enjoys painting and sculpting



**Holley**

Loves to sing



**Declan**

Enjoys playing video games



**Liam**

Likes to play video games



**Fallon**

Plays the euphonium



**Hannah**

Likes to cross-country ski



**Riley**

Enjoys swimming



**Ava**

Loves to dance



**Kyle**

Enjoys model aircraft



**Keaton**

Loves fishing



**Bryn**

Enjoys playing soccer



**Travis**

Likes taking photos



**Mya**

Loves shopping



**Cade**

Enjoys archery



**John L.**

Likes playing video games



**John M.**

Likes to play video games



**Isabelle**

Loves writing and drawing comics



**Denise**

Enjoys singing



**Matthew**

Loves to garden



**Zoryna**

Likes to draw



**Isaiah**

Is a meme enthusiast



**Carlos**

Enjoys hiking



**Caroline**

Likes to play football



**Sydnie**

Loves to draw and paint

## **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.

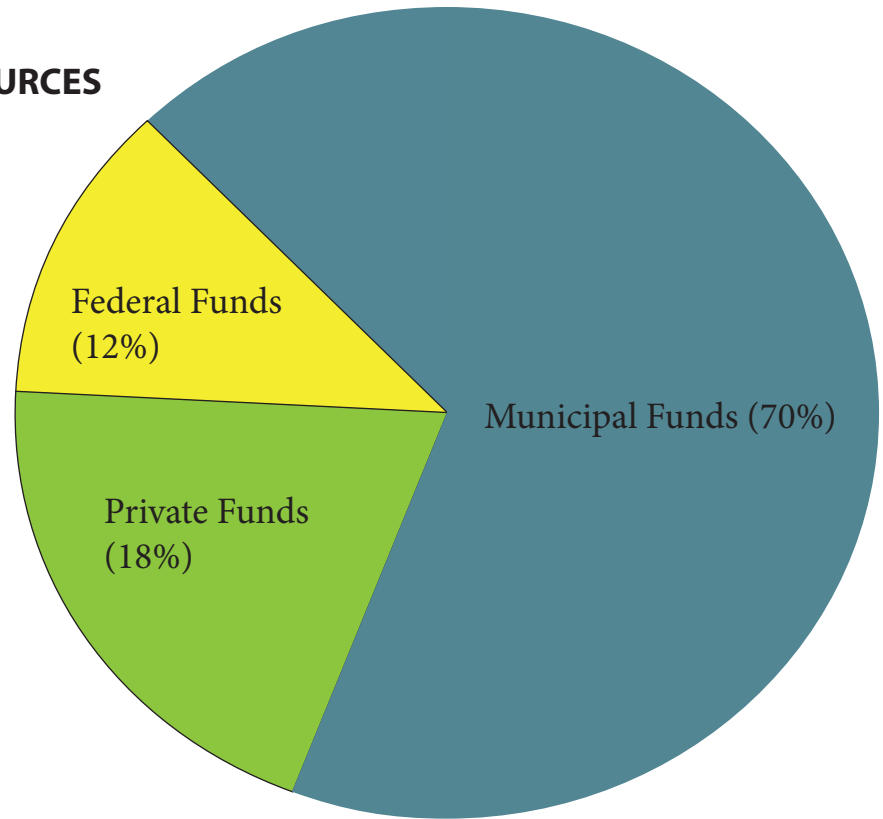


# YEP FUNDING

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

## 2018 PUBLIC-PRIVATE FUNDING SOURCES AND FUNDING BREAKDOWN

- Private Funds - \$66,000
- Municipal Funds- \$261,000
- Federal Funds - \$44,000
- Total Funds = \$371,000



### THANK YOU!

We are grateful to these partners and funders of the 2018 YEP program who have made a difference in the lives of 25 youth and thousands of community members through Anchorage parks and trails improvements.



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# YEP ACCREDITATION

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

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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.

Proud Member of




**The Corps Network**

Strengthening America through service and conservation



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

 907-274-1003

 [www.anchorageparkfoundation.org](http://www.anchorageparkfoundation.org)

 3201 C Street, Suite 110  
Anchorage, AK 99503

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 2019 YEP Employment Information

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

YEP Crew Leader, Jan 14-Feb 18 (4 positions)

YEP Senior Crew Member, Jan 14-March 15 (4 positions)

YEP Crew Member, Jan 14-March 15 (20 positions)



## A Special Thanks....

**We would like to thank the following individuals, 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 Natural Resources, Forestry Division
- AK Invasive Plants
- Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center
- Alaska Geographic
- Anchorage School District
- Anchorage Sand and Gravel
- Anchorage Waterways Council
- AWUU
- BLM Campbell Creek Science Center
- Deha Yoga
- E.A. Hamm
- Fire Island Bakery
- The Hotel Alyeska
- Kaladi Brothers
- King Career Center (KCC)
- Lifetime Adventures Alaska
- Moose's Tooth
- Musk Ox Farm
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
- NOLS
- People Mover
- Rasmuson Foundation
- Skinny Raven Sports
- The Student Conservation Association
- University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA)
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- U.S. Forest Service
- Victor Mollozzi
- Wells Fargo
- WestRock Anchorage Recycling Center

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  
907.343.4720  
duboisam@muni.org

