



Youth Employment in Parks 2026

WORK THAT BUILDS MORE THAN PARKS





Youth Employment in Parks

Every summer, Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) gives Anchorage teens the opportunity to earn a paycheck while making a lasting difference in their community. Through hands-on conservation projects, participants build trails, restore streambanks, enhance parks, and care for the natural spaces that make Anchorage unique. Along the way, they gain confidence and develop essential workplace skills that prepare them for future success.

IMPROVING PARKS AND TRANSFORMING LIVES



CAREER SKILLS

Prepares diverse youth with essential career skills and direct pathways into natural resource professions.



PERSONAL WELL-BEING

Inspires youth to explore the outdoors, cultivating a deep connection to nature and healthy, active lives



COMMUNITY

Empowers youth with the civic leadership skills and agency to drive positive change in their communities.

“Before YEP, I was a lot less confident in myself. Over the season I learned I am a lot stronger than I think I am. I can give myself that credit and be more confident in myself on the jobsite and in life.”

~ Auda, Senior Crew Member

More than a Job

YEP is about much more than the work completed in our parks and trails. As many participants' first job, the program helps teens build confidence and develop the workplace skills they need to succeed in school, careers, and life. Working alongside their peers and professional mentors, crew members gain experience in teamwork, communication, problem-solving, time management, leadership, and responsibility.

Weekly Education & Recreation Days extend learning beyond the job site through workshops, guest speakers, and outdoor adventures. Teens strengthen their career readiness through resume writing, career exploration, financial literacy, and first aid training while learning Leave No Trace principles and environmental stewardship. Together, these experiences prepare young people to become confident leaders and engaged community stewards.

“I learned you have to be patient, life does not move in straight line, and it's important to be flexible.”

~ Isaac, Crew Leader



We Reflect Anchorage

YEP serves teens from across Anchorage, creating crews that reflect the community they serve. Participants work alongside peers from different schools, neighborhoods, and backgrounds while developing the teamwork and communication skills needed for future success.

2026 CREW AT A GLANCE

26 teens employed • 9 high schools represented • 5 languages spoken
23% multilingual households • 38% first-time job experiences • 5 returning crew members



Not pictured: Cordelia McCarthy & Javen Jordet*

* = senior crew members



CREW MEMBER PROFILE

Ishrakha

Ishrakha moved to Alaska from Sudan three years ago. YEP is her first job. She says she is proud of the work she's able to do with YEP. Her favorite parts of the program are that every week is different; a new project at a new location with new challenges like pouring rain, steep, slippery hills to wheelbarrow down and all of the new people she gets to meet. Her favorite project was the Romig Hill Trail Improvement because it was the most challenging, and the whole crew worked their hardest.

Building a Better Anchorage

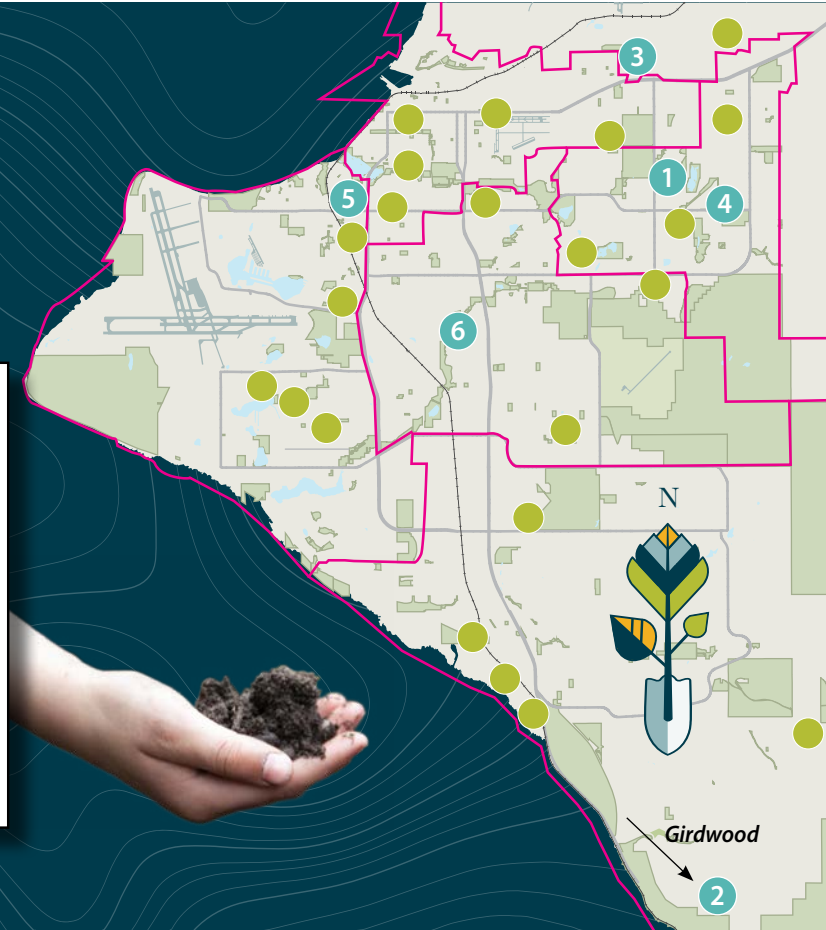
YEP brings together teens from across Anchorage to improve parks and trails throughout the municipality, creating lasting benefits for people, wildlife, and future generations.

-  Trail Improvements
-  Habitat Restoration
-  Park Enhancements
-  Safer Access

Crew Member Neighborhood

Park & Trail Projects

-  1 Cheney Lake Trail Rehabilitation 
-  2 Girdwood Middle Iditarod Trail Rehabilitation 
-  3 Davis Park Disc Golf Course Expansion 
-  4 Cheney Lake Shoreline Restoration 
-  5 Romig Hill Trail Rehabilitation 
-  6 Greenbelt Native Tree Planting 



CREW FAVORITE PROJECT

The YEP crew chose Girdwood as their favorite project because it was one of the most challenging projects requiring a half mile long fire line to move gravel in five-gallon buckets. The challenge combined with the amazing beauty of the Chugach Mountains made this project special.



20 Years of Impact

For twenty years, Youth Employment in Parks has prepared young people for future careers while leaving a lasting legacy in Anchorage's parks. Hundreds of teens have gained workplace skills, earned their first paycheck, and completed projects that benefit residents for generations.

WHAT WE'VE BUILT TOGETHER



560
alumni

193
first-time job
experiences

1 in 5
crew members return
for another season

Investing in Parks. Investing in Youth

Youth Employment in Parks is made possible through the generosity of public agencies, foundations, businesses, and community partners who invest in Anchorage's parks and its young people. Thank you for helping create opportunities that build stronger parks, stronger communities, and brighter futures.

The 2026 Youth Employment in Parks Program is Supported by:

LEAD PARTNERS

Anchorage Park Foundation
Anchorage Parks & Recreation

PUBLIC PARTNERS

US Forest Service
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
Alaska Department of Fish & Game
Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Forestry Division
Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Boating Safety

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King Tech High School
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Moose's Tooth
Skinny Raven Sports
The Home Depot

INDIVIDUALS

Victor Mollozzi

“YEP is a wonderful program that keeps kids in the community engaged. It's improving everything that we're going to have access to. I walk this trail everyday with my dog and I'm very excited to see what [Romig Hills] looks like when it's done.” ~ Mark, Park Neighbor



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www.muni.org/Departments/parks/Pages/YEP.aspx



YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN PARKS

Every trail improved, every tree planted, and every stream restored represents something even greater, a young person who discovered new skills, new confidence, and new possibilities for their future.

