

# Karen and Nathan Sandler LEAD Programs

Leadership through Exploration, Action, and Discovery



## 2022-2023 PROGRAMS UPDATE



*Explore. Experience. Excel.*







The Buddy Program empowers youth through mentoring experiences to achieve their full potential.

## **We are grateful for your support of the Buddy Program's Karen and Nathan Sandler LEAD Programs!**

Our LEAD (Leadership through Exploration, Action, and Discovery) Programs help teens develop life skills while exploring hands-on activities alongside peers and caring adults. LEAD serves teens from Aspen to Glenwood Springs, and Rifle in a group setting where they achieve personal growth while supporting their peers to do the same. We prioritize serving youth who could benefit from extra support in their homes, communities, or school environments.

During the 2022-2023 school year, the LEAD Program served 186 unduplicated students in grades 6-12 with a combined total of **17,496** contact hours!

### **These students participated in a wide variety of programmatic offerings:**

- Outdoor Leadership served a total of 107 students:
- Aspen Middle School, in its fifth year, enrolled 14 participants
- Basalt High School, in its seventh school year, enrolled 14 students
- Basalt Middle School, in its fourth year, had 15 participants
- Carbondale Middle School, in its tenth year, had 12 participants
- Glenwood Springs Middle School, in its first year, had 13 participants
- Rifle High School, in its fifth year, had 13 students
- Rifle Middle School, in its fifth year, had 13 participants
- Roaring Fork High School, in its tenth school-year, enrolled 13 students
- Hosted 62 participants for monthly activities including a Youth Camp reunion, an evening of bowling, a Winter Celebration, ice skating, an evening snowshoe, and an afternoon swimming at Aspen Rec Center.
- Our annual Youth Camp in Moab, Utah, in June served 24 campers entering grades 9-12
- Our annual Dream Day Camp served 23 campers entering grades 6-8 in the Roaring Fork Valley in July
- 30 youth participated in more than one LEAD program

Without your generosity, these accomplishments would not be possible.

*Programmatic Partners include: 10th Mountain Division Hut Association, Aspen Center for Environmental Studies, Aspen Middle School, Aspen School District, Aspen Valley Ski and Snowboard Club, Basalt Middle School, Basalt High School, BLM Moab, Carbondale Arts, Carbondale Middle School, Colorado Mountain College, Desert Mountain Medicine, EcoFlight, Elk Mountain Expeditions, 5Point Film Festival, Garfield County Outdoors, Garfield Re-2 School District, Glenwood Springs High School, Glenwood Springs Middle School Navtec, Rifle High School, Rifle Middle School, Roaring Fork High School, Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers, Roaring Fork School District, USFS Manti-La Sal, and Wilderness Workshop.*

*Contributions equaled over \$75,000 combined toward these programs from individuals*

*Major LEAD Program funders: Karen and Nathan Sandler and Jessica and John Fullerton, Sasha Semple, Tracy and King Grant*

*Additional grants for LEAD Programs totaled over \$67,500: Aspen Community Foundation, The Clough Foundation, Western Colorado Community Foundation, Colorado Health Foundation, Colorado Parks & Wildlife Partners in the Outdoors*

Thank you for your financial leadership within our LEAD programs. We hope that the enclosed materials give you a small glimpse into the incredible impact you make on the lives of the students we serve.

These moments of growth, skills gained for lifelong learning, and unforgettable memories would not be possible without your generosity.

Warm regards,



Lindsay Lofaro  
Executive Director



John Brasier  
LEAD Program Director



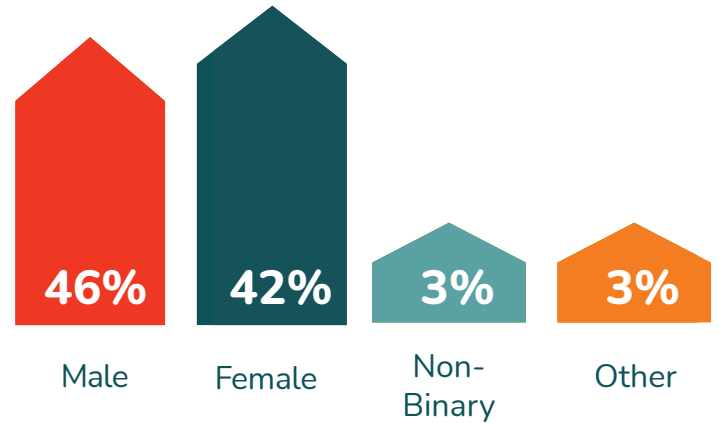
# LEAD Snapshot

**216** > Total Students 












**186** > Unduplicated Students

**30** > Youth participated in more than one LEAD Program

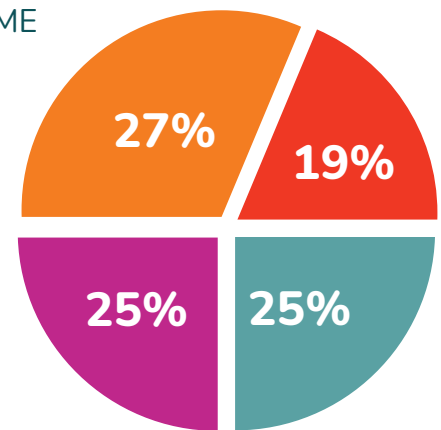
## DEMOGRAPHICS







## ATTENDANCE FROM SCHOOLS

Students	Schools 
	Ross Montessori - 1%
	Aspen High - 5%
	Roaring Fork High 11%
	Rifle High 11%
	Rifle Middle 11%
	GWS Middle School 11%
	Aspen Middle 11%
	Basalt High - 12%
	Carbondale Middle 16%
	Basalt Middle 16%

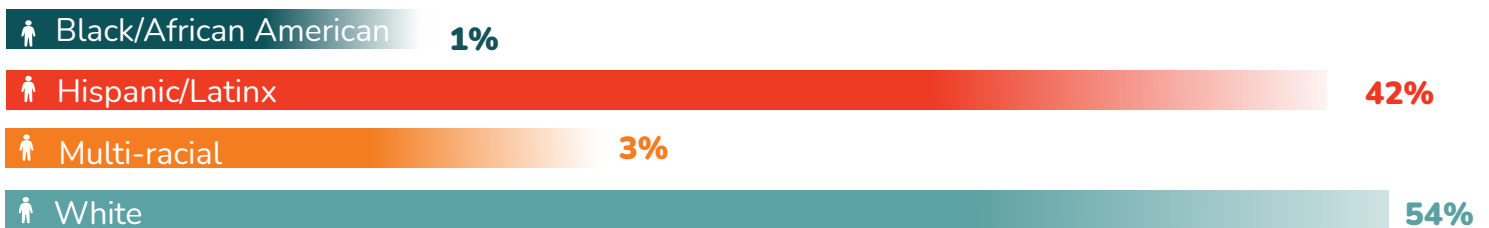
## INCOME



\*\* The self-sufficiency wage for a family of four in Pitkin County is \$72,408 – Colorado Center on Law and Policy

-  Under \$25,000
-  \$25,000 - \$50,000
-  \$50,001 - \$75,000
-  \$75,001 and above

## RACE/ETHNICITY



Data from 186 unduplicated students who participated in Outdoor Leadership, Camps, and Monthly Activities. Unless specified, percentages are based on only students and families who disclosed information for each demographic category.



# LEAD serves youth through four components

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## OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP

Just finished with its ninth year, Outdoor Leadership is our signature LEAD program. It consists of a high school class designed, taught, and funded by the Buddy Program. In 2022-2023 we offered programming at three high schools-Basalt, Roaring Fork, and Rifle, and five middle schools - Basalt, Carbondale, Aspen, Glenwood Springs, and Rifle. The program expands to Glenwood Springs HS and Riverview School in 2023-2024.



## YOUTH CAMP

Coordinated by the Buddy Program since 2010, Youth Camp offers teens the opportunity to spend 5 days camping in the wilderness of Moab, UT, pushing their physical boundaries through hiking, canyoneering, rafting, rock climbing, and other activities. Evenings around the campfire are for emotional growth, as participants share their stories, dreams, and struggles, and build lasting peer connections.



## DREAM DAY CAMP

Dream Day Camp, also in existence since 2010, provides middle school youth the opportunity to experience hands-on and team building activities for 5 days in late summer, including an overnight camp-out. Activities include arts, outdoor, and service adventures, and help prepare students to enroll in Youth Camp in high school.



## MONTHLY ACTIVITIES

Throughout the year, monthly activities and informal check-ins with our LEAD program staff enable students in grades 6 - 12 to stay in touch with their peers and continue to expand their horizons. Activities include art workshops, camp reunions, snowshoeing, hiking, and other fun and educational pursuits.

# Outdoor Leadership

Outdoor Leadership, in its tenth year of operation, served a total of 90 students at 8 schools. Our Outdoor Leadership curriculum is planned and taught by Buddy Program staff members.

Students develop skills for successful travel and exploration in the outdoors and give back to and connect with their community through service projects. They develop teamwork, communication, decision-making, leadership, and planning skills applied in and out of the classroom. At the high schools, where students earn high school Physical Education credit and Colorado Mountain College Outdoor Education credit for class participation, topics include Leave No Trace, Wilderness First Aid, trip planning, public lands management, map and compass use, group dynamics, and community service project development and execution.



## Some highlights from Outdoor Leadership this year:

### At the High School level:

- We continued offering Outdoor Leadership at Basalt, Roaring Fork, and Rifle High Schools
- Students enrolled in year-long classes participated in 300 hours of classroom learning and backcountry trips, including backpacking, trips to Fruita, Moab, and Dominguez Escalante, rafting, canyoneering, rock climbing, snowshoeing, hiking, and service projects.
- 26 high schoolers earned Colorado Mountain College credits for the courses of Non-Technical Mountaineering and Mountain Orientation.

### At the Middle School level:




- We continued offering Outdoor Leadership at Aspen, Basalt, Carbondale, and Rifle Middle Schools, and in January of 2023 we launched a new Outdoor Leadership program at Glenwood Springs Middle School
- Students took 3-day trips to the Colorado National Monument, Dinosaur National Monument, Moab, Sylvan Lake State Park, and Shrine Mountain Inn (backcountry hut)





# LEAD Outdoor Leadership Evaluation Data



Outdoor Leadership students self-assess personal growth and improvement in relation to their participation in the LEAD Outdoor Leadership Program. The following data indicates the percentage of students self-identifying improvement in each category:

 Life Skill	 Percentage of High School Students Identifying Improvement	 Percentage of Middle School Students Identifying Improvement
Teamwork	93%	95%
Communications with students	100%	95%
Communications with adults	93%	97%
Decision making	86%	86%
Goal setting	82%	86%
Leadership	79%	95%
Confidence	89%	86%
Trust	81%	92%

 Hard Skill	 Percentage of High School Students Identifying Understanding
Impacts on humans on environment	100%
Leave no trace ethics	100%
Outdoor travel safety	96%
Outdoor planning logistics	100%
Winter backcountry travel	96%
Leadership and personal growth	100%
Public lands management	100%
Positive impact on community through service	91%
Map and compass reading	92%
Service project implementation	91%

## OVERALL STUDENT SATISFACTION

**100%**

of all middle and high school youth evaluated indicated overall satisfaction with the Outdoor Leadership Program.

# Youth Camp

Youth Camp is perhaps the program our high school-aged youth anticipate the most each year. For 5 days each June, a staff of Buddy Program camp counselors and climbing guides head to the La Sal Mountains outside of Moab, Utah, with students entering grades 9-12. Our camp family spends their days rock climbing, canyoneering and rappelling, rafting the Colorado River, hiking, building a respectful camp community, and creating strong bonds and memories.

## For our campers, Youth Camp is:

- A chance to make new friends and build peer networks from Aspen to Carbondale
- A healthy and constructive break from the pressures of everyday teen life at home and a place where they can be themselves
- A safe place to expand their individual comfort zones and try new things, taking the lessons learned with them to apply at home and school
- A time to set goals and work on achieving them
- An opportunity for our Peer Counselors (returning campers who help foster a strong camp community and give back) to gain leadership skills
- An environment where youth are surrounded by encouraging peers and positive adult role models

## In 2023...

24 Buddy Program youth from Aspen to Rifle participated in our annual Moab Youth Camp for 5 days and 4 nights.

Challenges were met, fears were faced, friendships were formed, and memories were made!





# Dream Day Camp



Dream Day Camp takes place annually in the Roaring Fork Valley in August, serving youth entering grades 6 – 8. This camp is one of the entry points into LEAD for new, young participants, and graduates frequently go on to Youth Camp upon completion.

## At Dream Day Camp campers:

- Make new friends their age and build peer networks from Aspen to Carbondale
- Explore the amazing natural resources of the Roaring Fork Valley through activities such as art projects, rafting, service projects, hiking, and camping
- Build life skills such as communication, teamwork, positive attitude, participation, and trust
- Participate in a respectful camp community for a week during late July – a great way to re-engage in a structured environment prior to school starting, and a break from summer when many participants lack activities to keep themselves constructively busy



## In 2023...

*Youth experienced everything from arts and crafts with Carbondale Arts, to outdoor adventures with Elk Mountain Expeditions, the ropes course at Colorado Mountain College, fishing with the Roaring Fork Conservancy, and swimming at the Basalt pool. Additionally, the group had the opportunity to engage in meaningful community service with Roaring Fork Volunteers.*

# Monthly Activities and school visits help us keep in touch with our summer program participants throughout the school year:



# LEAD

Leadership through Exploration, Action, and Discovery

EXPLORE. EXPERIENCE. EXCEL



Karen and Nathan Sandler LEAD Programs  
Experiential Group Mentoring for students in grades 6-12

## EVENTS

### YOUTH CAMP REUNION - OCTOBER 3

Did you attend Moab Youth Camp with us this past summer? This evening is just for you! We will look at photos, share camp memories, eat dinner together, and catch up with friends.  
Wednesday, October 3, 5:30-7:30 p.m., at the Third Street Center. 502 S. Third St, Carbondale, CO in the Calaway Room.

### THE ART BASE! - NOVEMBER 8

Join your friends in our LEAD program for an evening of tapping into your creative side! Dinner will be served afterwards. Space is limited so RSVP ASAP!  
Thursday, November 8th from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Basalt Art Base located at 99 Midland Spur, Basalt, CO

### WINTER CELEBRATION PARTY! - DECEMBER 4

Reunite with friends from Day Dream Camp, Moab Youth Camp, and Outdoor Leadership while participating in some fun winter traditions! We will have wintry treats and participate in a White Elephant Gift Exchange. For the gift exchange, please bring a wrapped gift- the gift should be something you do not spend money on, and should be something you think no one wants or is silly and funny but school/ Buddy Program appropriate!  
Tuesday, December 4 from 5:30-8:30 p.m. at the Third Street Center. 502 S. Third St, Carbondale, CO in the Calaway Room.



## WANT TO SIGN UP?

Students must have their own transportation to and from the program location.

For more information or to sign up, please contact

John  
[john@buddyprogram.org](mailto:john@buddyprogram.org)  
970.205.906

Or visit the Buddy Program at our offices in Aspen (Red Brick Center for the Arts) or Carbondale (3rd Street Center).

These programs are provided at no cost to participants.





Explore. Experience. Excel.

Thank You!

