



OUR FUTURE IS LOOKING UP

2017 ANNUAL REPORT

Self-sufficient young adults thriving and improving their communities



STUDENT STORY:

Alan

Alan was challenged with adult responsibilities when he became a single parent at a young age. He wanted to provide for his two-year old son but knew he couldn't do that without a high school diploma and a good job. Alan knew he wanted to work in construction but he didn't know how to get started. He needed a connection, a lead, in order to land that job. Without the support or the benefit of a professional network, which many of us have and take for granted, his search for employment was very difficult.

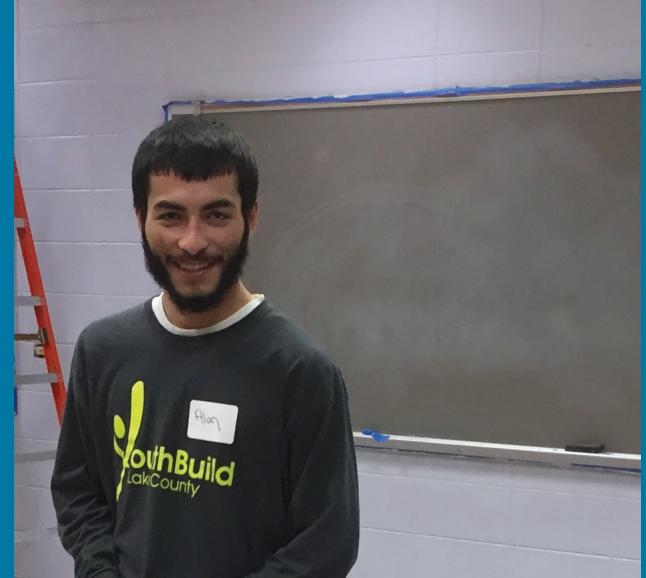
Alan enrolled in YouthBuild and worked hard. He kept his goals in mind and had the drive he needed to reach them. His classmates recognized something special in Alan and when they elected him to YBLC's Youth Policy Council (YPC). Similar to student council, the YPC works with staff to make decisions that benefit the student body. YPC members also plan student luncheons and provide tours to donors and visitors.

While at YouthBuild, not only did Alan earn his high school diploma, but he also earned an Occupational Safety and Health Admiration (OSHA) 10-hour certification, a National Center for Construction Education & Research (NCCER) certification, as well as forklift and CPR certifications. He also completed 453 hours of community service hours earning himself an AmeriCorps Segal Education Award.

Alan's success didn't stop there but rather catapulted him to new heights. His success caught the attention of our corporate partner Zoro. In fact, they were so impressed, their leadership team awarded Alan with the inaugural Zoro/YBLC achievement award. Alan graciously accepted this award and then offered to split the award with his best friend and fellow YouthBuild classmate.

Alan's goal after graduation was to work in construction and he is so proud to have achieved that. His success, high school diploma and certifications he earned while at YouthBuild landed him a job at Bliderman Construction Company and according to his supervisor, Jack Hobbs, he has proven himself a great addition to Bliderman. "Alan is a hard-working, reliable and driven self-starter - always looking to do more, always thinking a step ahead. Though Alan's commute is a long one, nonetheless he is at the jobsite early every day, ready to work."

Alan is proof you can overcome obstacles with hard work and dedication.



It is hard to believe that another year has come and gone at YouthBuild Lake County. The past year has reaffirmed our commitment to enhancing the lives of our students and their families through academics, career training, and community service.

The students at YouthBuild Lake County reached tremendous heights last year. Successes came in the classroom where high school diplomas were earned and on the construction site where we partnered with Community Action Partnership of Lake County to rehab two housing units that were given to well-deserved American military veterans. Community service projects were completed on a monthly basis that benefited our community as well as the greater Chicago area. In total, YouthBuild Lake County completed over 9,000 hours of service. While we made many strides this year and achieved many goals, our largest success was securing the funding necessary to expand our reach as we move into the next two years.

As we look ahead there is no doubt that we will be able to make an even larger impact on the communities that we serve. A grant from the

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity has allowed us to introduce the YouthBuild Career Access Program, a second-year program that focuses on post-secondary education navigation and specific industry credential attainment. The Career Access program allows YouthBuild to continue training in construction trades while expanding our industry certifications in Information Technology and Public Utilities.

Along with our partners, including the College of Lake County, this program will allow us to double the number of students we serve while providing them with the necessary guidance and support as they begin their path to college.

I would like to thank all of our donors, volunteers, elected officials, community members, and corporate partners for your support during the past year. It is because of you that we are able to impact the lives of the young people we serve. Enjoy the rest of our annual report, we look forward to an even better 2018!

With gratitude,

Tameka Wilson
Executive Director

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to provide underserved young adults with the education and training necessary to become gainfully employed and build a better future.



MOVING UP THE ACADEMIC LADDER

Academics are an important component of our program at YouthBuild Lake County. The 30 students who comprised the class of 2017 took us to new heights through their diligence and hard work. This past year we saw an increase in each area of academic performance, including numeracy and literacy gains, that culminated in 22 new high school graduates.

In addition to their classroom success our students excelled in every aspect of our program. This year's graduates collectively earned over 100 career certifications including forklift and CPR certifications as well as construction certifications in OSHA 10 and NCCER. In fact, 95% of all enrolled students earned these career credentials.

As an AmeriCorps site our students are AmeriCorps Service Members. Throughout the year we undertake community service projects to better our community. During these projects, which are done with many partners including Bernie's Book Bank and Feed My Starving Children, the class of 2017 provided over 9,000 community service hours in Lake County. As each student completed 225 or more service hours, they earned an AmeriCorps Segal Education Award, which many of our students use to help defer the cost of post-secondary education.

Overall the achievements of the class of 2017 were beyond our expectations and we are very proud of all they achieved.

PARTNERING UP WITH OUR WELLNESS PROGRAM

There are many elements that contribute to the success of our students as they begin the journey to sustainable futures for themselves and their families. For over a decade, Prema Center and Rosalind Franklin University have provided a comprehensive wellness program to the students of YouthBuild Lake County.

This past year, under the direction of Dr. Chinni Chilamkurti and administered by a talented team of externs, our students were provided over 1,200 hours of group counseling. During the group sessions externs work directly with our students to identify issues or barriers and work to provide coping mechanisms and strategies to overcome those obstacles.

In addition to group counseling the program also provides each student with assessments to screen for a wide array of areas including undiagnosed learning disabilities, mental health issues and emotional trauma issues. When these issues are identified by the Rosalind Franklin team they assist YouthBuild staff with referrals to outside professionals who can develop individualized plans with our students to address and ultimately overcome any challenges they may be facing.

We are grateful and very proud of the partnership between Rosalind Franklin and YouthBuild and we look forward to many more years of partnership!



1222
HOURS OF
COUNSELING
PROVIDED

 **26**
INTERNSHIPS
COMPLETED

 **16**
JOB PLACEMENTS

 **140**
MOCK INTERVIEWS
COMPLETED

 **2,790**
PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT
HOURS COMPLETED



OUR PROGRAM EMPLOYMENT SERVICES ALL ADD UP

YouthBuild Lake County offers a comprehensive career development and job placement component designed to place our graduating students in high-growth industries in Lake County. We focus primarily within the industries of construction, healthcare, information technology, and transportation/distribution/logistics.

There are many opportunities and steps that occur during our programming year that help prepare our students to enter the workforce. Activities designed specifically for professional development include resume writing workshops, mock interview sessions with our employer partners, career shadow days and internships.

This past year we hosted four mock interview sessions with employers from all over Lake County including Zoro, The Lake County Housing Authority, Prudential, and the Department of Defense. Through our relationship with the Workforce Development Center of Lake County our cohort completed internships throughout the year; twenty-six were completed at various locations throughout northern Lake County. The year wrapped up with our annual Career Expo, an event where students have the chance to interview for available positions once they graduate from YouthBuild.

As the year concluded at YouthBuild we were proud to see many of our students earn placements with many of our terrific employer partners. This year the opportunities for employment came from the Naval Facilities, Blinder-man Construction, and many more.

Overall this year was a huge success for our students and employer partners alike, we can't wait to see what next year has in store!

OUR FUTURE IS LOOKING UP

YouthBuild Lake County has served young adults for over a decade and in that time we have seen the need for our education and career training grow each year. The communities we serve struggle to meet the needs of our young adults. We have been fortunate enough to help fill that gap but there is so much more we can and want to do. Looking ahead for YouthBuild Lake County means one thing – finding a way to serve more young adults who are in need of their second chance to build lives for themselves and their families.

In the short term this means the implementation of our newly created YouthBuild Career Access program. With a grant from the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and in conjunction with our partners from across Lake County we will be able to double the amount of students served from thirty-five to seventy. The Career Access program will be focused on post-secondary education opportunities, higher level career credential attainment, structured internship/apprenticeship opportunities, and ultimately job placement.

Our long term vision is also focused on the capacity we have to meet the community needs that we are presented with on a yearly basis. Specifically, our goal is to expand YouthBuild Lake County to the point where we are able to support one hundred students per year.

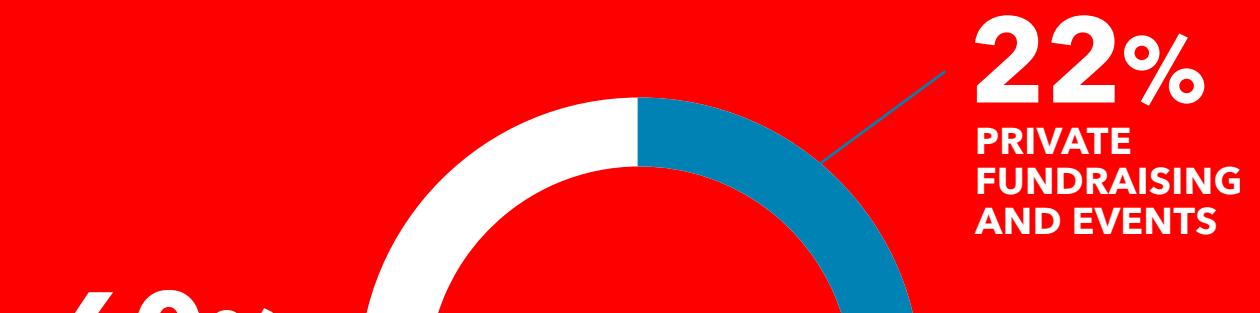
We look forward to working towards this goal with you, our supporters who make the work we do possible year in and year out. Please join us on this exciting next chapter at YouthBuild Lake County.

CALL TO ACTION

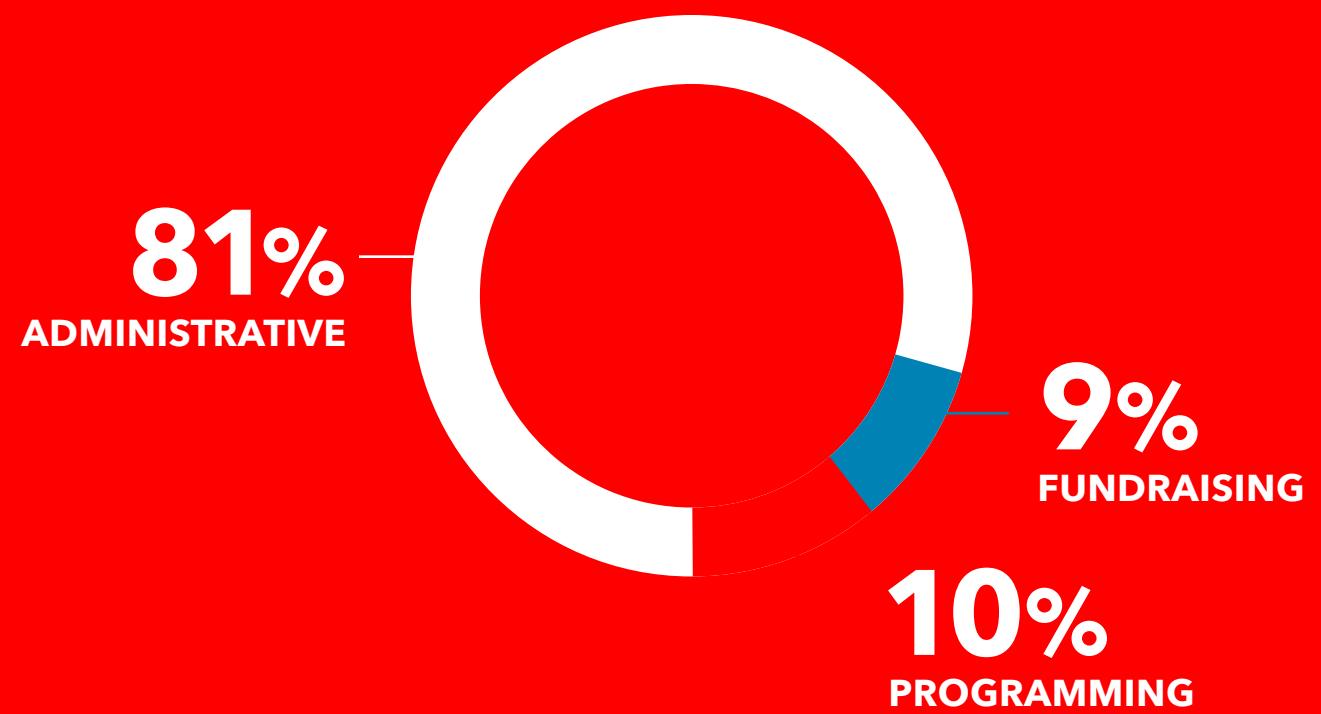
Visit our website at www.YouthBuildLakeCounty.org to make a donation or volunteer your time. We rely on the help from our donors and supporters to make our programs even more successful. Help now!



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