



RUNNING STRONG
for American Indian Youth®
AMERICAN INDIAN YOUTH RUNNING STRONG®

2017-2018 Biennial Report



Who We Are



Our Mission

To help American Indian people meet their immediate survival needs – food, water, and shelter – while implementing and supporting programs designed to create opportunities for self-sufficiency and self-esteem, especially for Native Youth.

Programs

- Dreamstarter™
- Organic Gardens and Food
- School and Youth Centers
- Clean Water
- Culture and Language
- Safe Housing
- Women and Children’s Health
- Seasonal and Emergency Assistance
- Basic Needs

Board of Directors

Running Strong is governed by a seven-member volunteer Board of Directors

- **James J. O’Brien, Esq.**, Chairman Founder, *O’Brien Law LLC*
- **Emil Her Many Horses** (Oglala Lakota), Treasurer, *Assistant Curator, Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian*
- **Ashley Wahiaronkwas Morris** (Mohawk of Kahnawake), Secretary Youth Board Member
- **Clyde B. Richardson**, Director, *Retired*
- **Elayne Silversmith** (Diné), Director, *Librarian, National Museum of the American Indian*
- **Loretta Afraid of Bear Cook** (Oglala Lakota), Director
- **Rear Admiral Eric C. Jones**, Director, *U.S. Coast Guard Executive Assistant to USCG Deputy, Commandant for Operations*

Running Strong Staff

Our Home Team

- **Billy Mills** (Oglala Lakota), *National Spokesperson*
- **Bryan Krizek**, *CEO*
- **Lauren Haas Finkelstein**, *Executive Director*
- **Paul Krizek, Esq.**, *General Counsel*
- **Bieu Do**, *CFO*
- **Cassandra R. Chee-Tom** (Diné), *Grants Administrator*
- **Dave Frank**, *Fulfillment Manager*
- **Sydney Farhang** (Oglala Lakota), *Program Coordinator*
- **Kiera Parece**, *Program Associate*

Our Field Team

- **Tom Kanatakeniate Cook** (Akwesasne Mohawk), *Field Coordinator*
- **Billie Rose Garreaux** (Cheyenne River Lakota), *Food Distribution*
- **Stacie Lee** (Cheyenne River Lakota), *Summer Food Service Program*
- **Dave Lone Elk** (Oglala Lakota), *Field Coordinator*
- **Ken Lone Elk** (Oglala Lakota), *Utilities Assistance/Water*
- **Rose Fraser** (Oglala Lakota), *Field Coordinator/Oyate Teca Director*
- **Mary Little Sky** (Cheyenne River Lakota), *Backpack Food Coordinator*
- **Karen Lone Elk** (Oglala Lakota), *Program Assistant*

Letter from Staff

Dear Friends of American Indian Youth,

We at Running Strong proudly present our 2017-2018 Biennial Report to share all the valuable work that you make possible. This past year marked another successful year for Running Strong with the launch of Dreamstarter Teacher and a new partnership formed with the Oyate Teca project. With your support, we promoted Native-led initiatives to cultivate healthy foods and organic gardens, provide clean water and safe housing, and supply Native communities with necessities such as backpacks stocked with school supplies, warm coats and boots, and dental care to promote oral health education.



Together, we empower the next generation of Native children to dream not only for themselves but for their communities, and to inspire others to do the same. By providing Native children with the essentials necessary to succeed, and encouraging them to pursue their dreams with conviction and determination, we strive to create a generation of Native children who are RUNNING STRONG.

Co-founded over 30 years ago by Billy Mills (Oglala Lakota) as a “giveaway” following his 10,000-meter Olympic win, Running Strong is dedicated to creating opportunities for self-sufficiency and self-esteem across Native country. As our national spokesperson, Billy continues to travel across the nation to this day, inspiring and motivating Native youth to follow their dreams. To assist Billy in this endeavor, Running Strong developed Dreamstarter, a grant program designed to jumpstart the dreams of Native youth.

Seeking to combat the “poverty of broken dreams” among Native children, Dreamstarter provides \$10,000 grants to 10 Native youth each year to bring dreams to life for their communities. We are excited to share that we are now entering the fifth year of our Dreamstarter program, for dreams revolving around the theme of entrepreneurship.

In 2017, following the resounding success of Dreamstarter, Running Strong launched a companion program called Dreamstarter Teacher to galvanize the dreams of American Indian students across the country. Through Dreamstarter Teacher, Running Strong will distribute \$50,000 in grants to teachers to fulfill unmet needs in their classrooms, and encourage Native students to chase their dreams.

Every year, we continue to adapt to meet the changing needs identified by the Native communities that we serve. As we consistently face new challenges each year, rather than be disheartened, we aim to discover new ways to expand our outreach and impact. At Running Strong, we strive for excellence and are committed to accomplishing our mission with efficiency, transparency, and integrity.

As you read through the following pages, we hope that you share in our pride for the critical work that we do in Native communities across the country. On behalf of Billy and all of us here at Running Strong, we thank you for your generous support and loyalty. 🦋

Spotlight on Billy Mills

On October 14, 1964, Billy Mills (Oglala Lakota) shocked the world with a historic upset in the 10,000-meter Olympic race in Tokyo, blazing past Mohammed Gammoudi to secure the gold medal. Setting a new world record time of 28 minutes 24.4 seconds, Billy became the first American Indian man to win the event, and the only American to ever do so. Exemplifying perseverance, resilience, and strength, Billy's success illustrated to indigenous communities across the country that no dream is out of reach. As the Olympic Games prepare for a return to Tokyo in 2020 where Billy first made history, we at Running Strong look forward to celebrating Billy's incredible victory and the legacy he created in the aftermath of his win.

Raised on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota, Billy lost both parents at the early age of 12. Confronted with challenges and obstacles that many Native children continue to face today, Billy channeled his energy into running and continued to run throughout high school, college, and his time as a U.S. Marine.

In Lakota culture, when one achieves success, they honor the support system of friends and family who helped them achieve this goal by hosting a "giveaway" to express gratitude. Seeking to give back to his community of Pine Ridge and Native communities across the country, Billy founded Running Strong for American Indian Youth, a non-profit organization dedicated to investing in Native-led efforts to meet the needs of American Indians. Working with Gene Krizek of Christian Relief Services, Billy established Running Strong in 1986, "to give opportunity ... to give hope," and to create a brighter future for the next generation of Native children.



Serving as our national spokesperson for well over three decades, Billy continues to travel over 300 days of the year to promote Running Strong's work, inspire Native youth to realize their dreams, and encourage healthy lifestyles among Native communities. This year alone, Billy presented at Yale University's TED Conference, and was honored with the dedication of Billy Mills Middle School, the only school to bear the name of an American Indian public figure. In addition to traveling transcontinentally, Billy also recently visited Tunisia to honor and celebrate the achievements of Mohammed Gammoudi, 1968 Olympic Champion and Billy's former competitor in the 1964 Olympic Games.

As the 2020 Olympic Games approach, all of us here at Running Strong are excited to commemorate Billy's win and honor the important work that Billy continues to do for Native communities across the country. We hope that you share in our excitement and celebrate all of Billy's accomplishments both on and off the track. 🐾



Celebrating Billy Mills' Legacy through Dreamstarter

On the fiftieth anniversary of his Olympic win, Billy Mills announced a new dream: to help the next generation of Native youth achieve their own. Each year for the past four years, Running Strong has distributed \$100,000 in grants to ten Native youth to bring to life dreams for their communities through our Dreamstarter program.

"We founded the Dreamstarter Program to help young people who have these incredible dreams partner with a mentor, and with our support, bring their dream to reality for the betterment of themselves. For the betterment of America." – Billy Mills

Launched in 2014, Dreamstarter is currently entering its fifth year, this time for dreams revolving around the theme of entrepreneurship. Previous Dreamstarter themes have included "Wellness" (Year 1), "Arts and Culture" (Year 2), "Education" (Year 3), and "Science and the Environment" (Year 4).

Over the course of the past four years, our Dreamstarters have served over 25,000 people in

Native communities across the country, working with 36 tribal nations within 23 states. By giving away over \$530,000 in grants to bring these dreams to life, Running Strong is committed to empowering the next generation of Native youth.

On the following pages you will learn more about our third and fourth class of Dreamstarters, who are making a difference in their communities with their incredible projects. From Hokani Maria's creation of a traditional canoe to Michael Charles' goal to overwhelm higher education with Native voices, Dreamstarter projects create a lasting impact in Native country.

Capitalizing on the success of Dreamstarter, Running Strong developed Dreamstarter Teacher in 2017 to support the dreams of American Indian students. Since its inception, Running Strong has had the privilege of working with 54 Dreamstarter Teachers who have transformed the lives of Native students. Projects have included designing and maintaining a school garden, hosting cultural presenters to educate students, and many more. To learn more about the projects of our Dreamstarter Teachers, visit indianyouth.org/DreamstarterTeacher. 🐾

Dreamstarter Impact



2017 Dreamstarters Year 3: Education



Brian Barlow, 24
Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma
Tahlequah, OK
Cherokee Nation Foundation
Brian's dream is to engage Native youth and elders in Cherokee County with Tsalagi Gawonihisdi (the Cherokee language) and traditional ecological knowledge by incorporating Tsalagi Gawonihisdi into public spaces such as grocery stores and gardens.

Caitlin Bordeaux, 27
Rosebud Sioux
Saint Francis, SD
St. Francis Indian School
Caitlin's dream is to increase educational opportunities for students at the St. Francis Indian School through the creation of an after-school program dedicated to computer science education, fostering excitement and interest among Native youth in technology.

Shayleena Britton, 19
Round Valley Indian Tribes
Covelo, CA
Round Valley Native American Studies Program
Shayleena's dream is to teach the Wailaki language through social media, utilizing multiple platforms to engage the greater Wailaki community. Shayleena will host a series of community events for individuals who may not have access to the internet.

Sara Chase, 26
Hoopa Valley Tribe
Albany, CA
Hoopa Tribal Education Association
Sara created a Hupa Language Immersion Camp to revitalize the *Na:tinixwe mixine:we* language. The camp aims to cultivate new Hupa language speakers by introducing children to the language through cultural activities and games.

Stephan Cheney, 28
Kul Wicasa Oyate
Blue Lake, CA
Native Hope
Through the Ts'Denoni Youth Program, Stephan established an after-school mentorship program for Native youth designed to build meaningful relationships, encourage positive behavior, and foster Native leadership.

Roo George-Warren, 27
Catawba Indian Nation
Rock Hill, SC
Catawba Cultural Preservation Project
Roo's dream is to create the first ever Catawba language learning application, utilizing engaging, multi-sensory games to teach the Catawba language to members of his community.

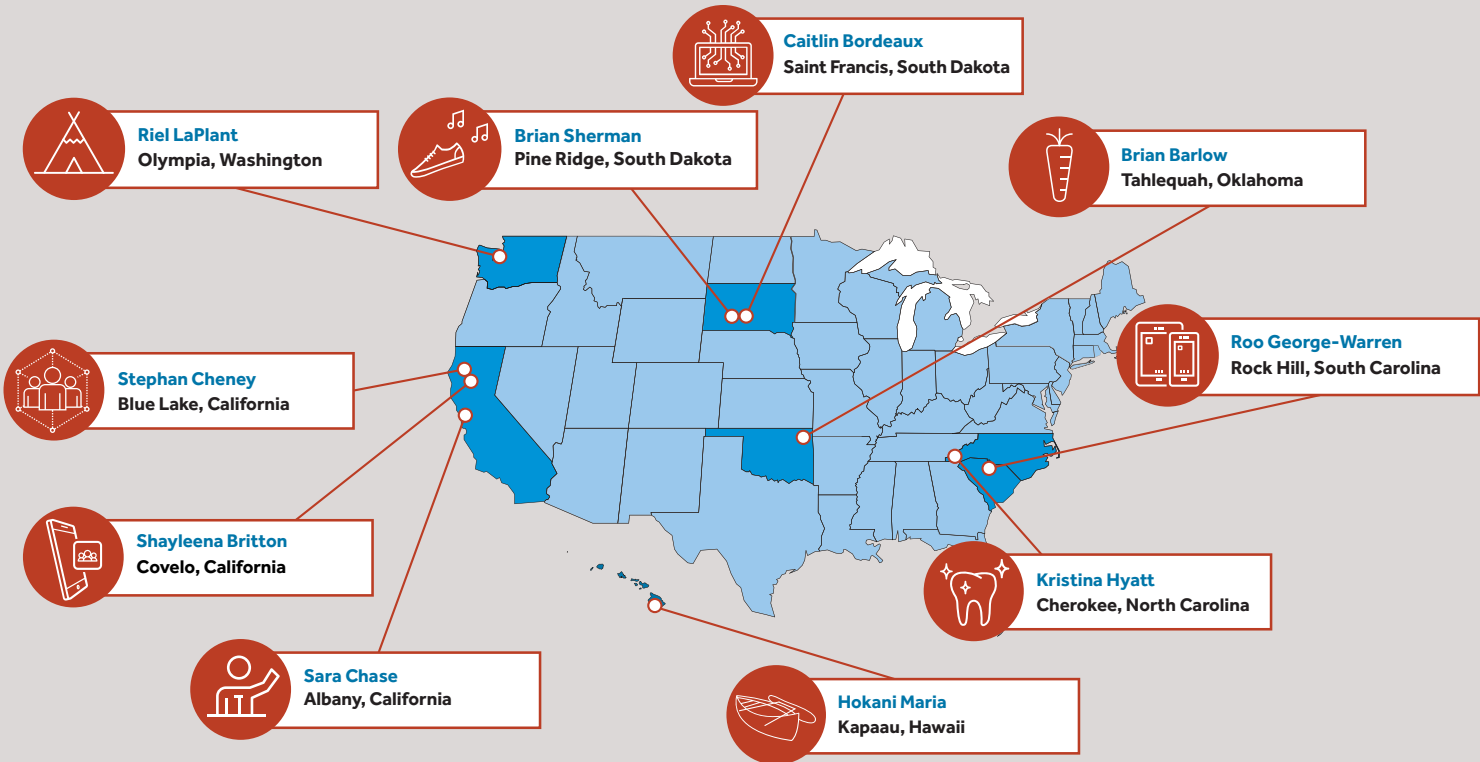
Kristina Hyatt, 29
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
Cherokee, NC
America's Tooth Fairy: National Children's Oral Health Foundation
Dubbed the "Native American tooth-fairy," Kristina's dream is to provide oral health education to Native children in North Carolina and Oklahoma. Kristina will visit nearly twenty schools and after school programs to teach children how to properly care for their teeth, and provide them with the toothbrushes needed to do so.

Brian Sherman, 22
Oglala Lakota
Pine Ridge, SD
The Mitakuye Foundation
By creating community dance classes on Pine Ridge, Brian's dream is to create a space for children to learn and explore dance, music, and art.

Riel LaPlant, 26
Blackfeet
Olympia, WA
The Evergreen State College Foundation
Riel's dream is to create lasting relationships between teacher candidates and urban Native

youth through the construction of a tipi, which will be used as a mobile site of storytelling by indigenous storytellers, elders, and historians.

Hokani Maria, 16
Native Hawaiian
Kapaau, HI
Kohala Unupa'a
Hokani's dream is to educate the North Kohala community about the construction of a traditional three-man Hawaiian canoe, while also conducting workshops exploring the history, building and best practices for caring for a canoe.



2018 Dreamstarters Year 4: Science & the Environment



Kunu Bearchum, 29
Northern Cheyenne
Portland, OR
Wisdom of the Elders, Inc.
Kunu’s dream is to teach Native youth about the health benefits and nutritional value of first foods. Kunu will host a summer science camp in the greater Portland area where children will find and catalogue indigenous foods and learn about traditional ecological knowledge.

Lauren Carpenter, 18
Catawba Indian Nation
Rock Hill, SC
Catawba Cultural Preservation Project
The goal of Manuhe Kuri is to support the use and consumption of traditional foods and plants through the establishment of an outdoor nature classroom. Lauren will develop an environmental education curriculum for her community, which will provide detailed information about the indigenous plants found in the classroom.

Michael Charles, 24
Dine
Monument Valley, AZ
American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES)
Michael’s dream is to overwhelm higher education, in particular STEM fields, with Native youth by providing local high schools on the Navajo Nation with preparation resources for standardized testing and college applications. Michael’s goal is to highlight the value of indigenous knowledge in academia.

Easton Chong, 18
Native Hawaiian
Kamuela, HI
Kailapa Community Association
Easton’s Dreamstarter project “Watchers and Caretakers of our Aina” aims to engage Kailapa youth with traditional and sustainable practices of caring for the land and ocean. Through this project, Easton hopes to develop a new generation of resource managers by connecting traditional Hawaiian practice and modern science.

Kendrick Eagle, 25
Standing Rock Sioux
Bismarck, ND
Sacred Pipe Resource Center
The purpose of the Mni Wiconi Traditional Knowledge Camp is to integrate traditional knowledge and science to help Native youth understand the importance of the environment. Kendrick and participants will visit four different reservations to connect Native science the environment.

Kelsey Leonard, 30
Shinnecock Indian Nation
Southampton, NY
Citizens Campaign Fund for the Environment
Kelsey’s dream is to inspire Native youth to protect the ocean by educating about the issue of marine debris from cigarette butts and reducing litter in the environment.

Sunny Nez, 19
Shiprock, NM
Dine
Capacity Builders, Inc.
The goal of Earth Daughter is to test the Animas and San Juan riverbeds for metal and metalloid contaminants and perform a water quality analysis following the Gold King Mine Spill in 2015. Sunny will educate the public about the significance of preserving natural water resources.

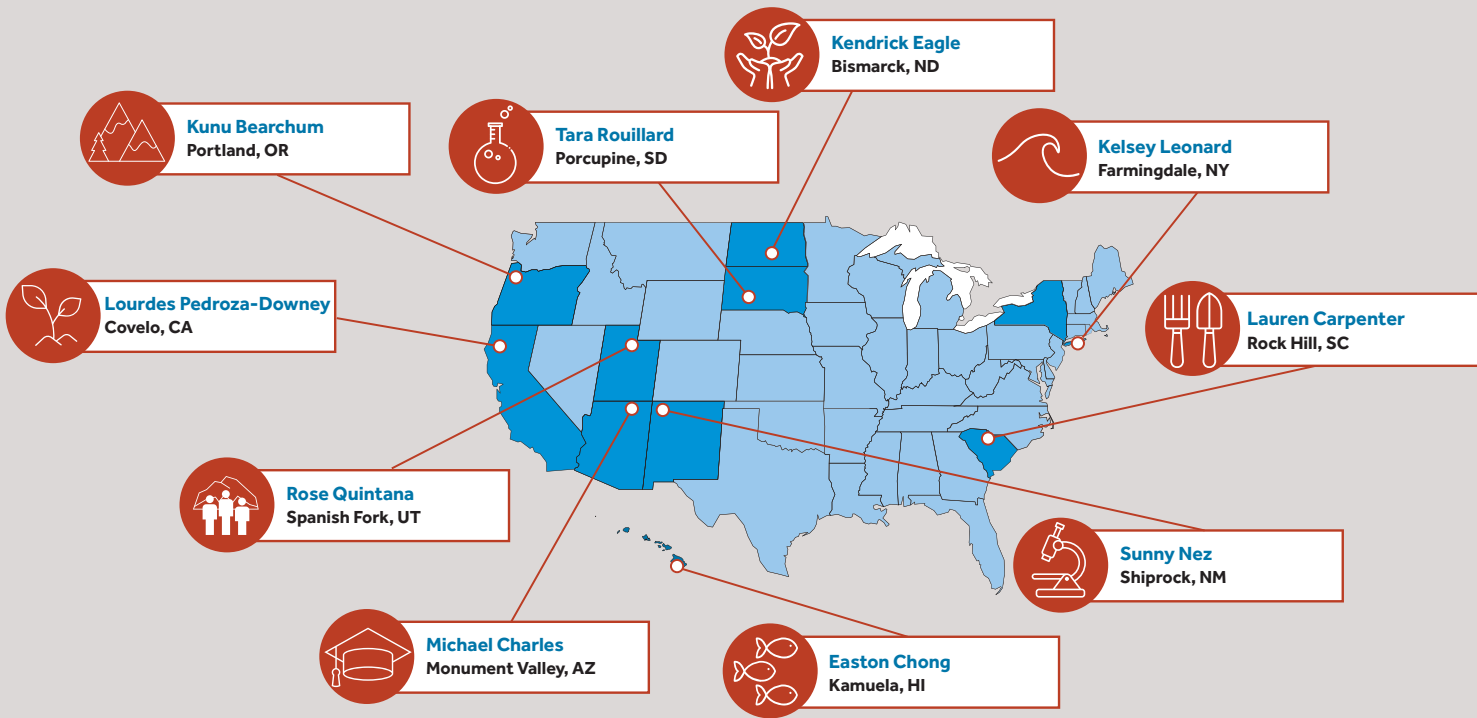
Lourdes Pedroza-Downey, 18
Round Valley Indian Tribes
Covelo, CA
Round Valley Native American Studies Program
Lourdes’s dream is to identify the indigenous plants used to create Wailaki cultural items and educate her community about the uses, history, and current locations of these plants in the area.

Rose Quintana, 21
Dine and Northern Ute
Spanish Fork, UT
Nebo Title VI Indian Education
Rose’s project “Living in Hozho” seeks to empower Native youth to become stewards of the environment by exploring the current policy initiatives to protect Bears Ears National Monument, the traditional teachings related to this site, and traveling to visit the location.

Tara Rouillard, 15
Oglala Lakota
Porcupine, SD
Pine Ridge Girls School
Tara’s dream is to create the first ever indigenous science lab at the Pine Ridge Girls School, which will be founded on traditional Lakota science and traditional ways of life.

“We are more than statistics or stereotypes. We are youth that are going to be leading both our tribal nations as well as our country. People can either choose to support us, or stand by and watch, because either way, we are a generation rising.”

– Breanna Potter, Year 1 Dreamstarter



Youth and Critical Needs



Youth and Critical Needs



Critical Needs Met in 2017-2018



5,000
Study Strong Kits
Distributed



3,311
Dental Kits
Distributed



5,030
Coats Distributed



1,010
families served
through Heat Match

Oyate Teca

Oyate Teca



Navajo Water Expansion



Navajo Water Expansion

Access to clean water for drinking, cooking, bathing, and washing remains a challenge for many Native families on reservations throughout the country. Providing water to families on Pine Ridge Indian Reservation has been a 30-year-long mission of ours, initially by delivering water by the truckload and digging wells hundreds of feet deep, and most recently by connecting hundreds of households to the main water service line which runs through the reservation.

Following the success of our Mni Wiconi program on Pine Ridge, Running Strong is expanding our water programs to the Navajo Nation, beginning with the District 11 communities of Wheatfields, Tsaile, and Lukachukai.



"We are all happy about our new septic tank. The kids are happy, saying 'oh wow, we got a new septic tank' ... jumping up and down saying, 'we don't need to go outside for the restroom.' "

This past year, Running Strong connected 13 households to water in these communities, providing 92 individuals with access to clean running water. 🦋

"We now have running water. The sound of the water coming through our kitchen sink is happiness. Now we don't have to worry about hauling water."

Culture and Language



Culture and Language



"The longevity of funding from Running Strong to Brave Heart has allowed us to impact at least two generations of families whose youth have been impacted by our Coming of Ages ceremonies, which are part of the Seven Sacred Rites of our people. This is major strength building for cultural self-esteem, that is not offered anywhere in our communities."

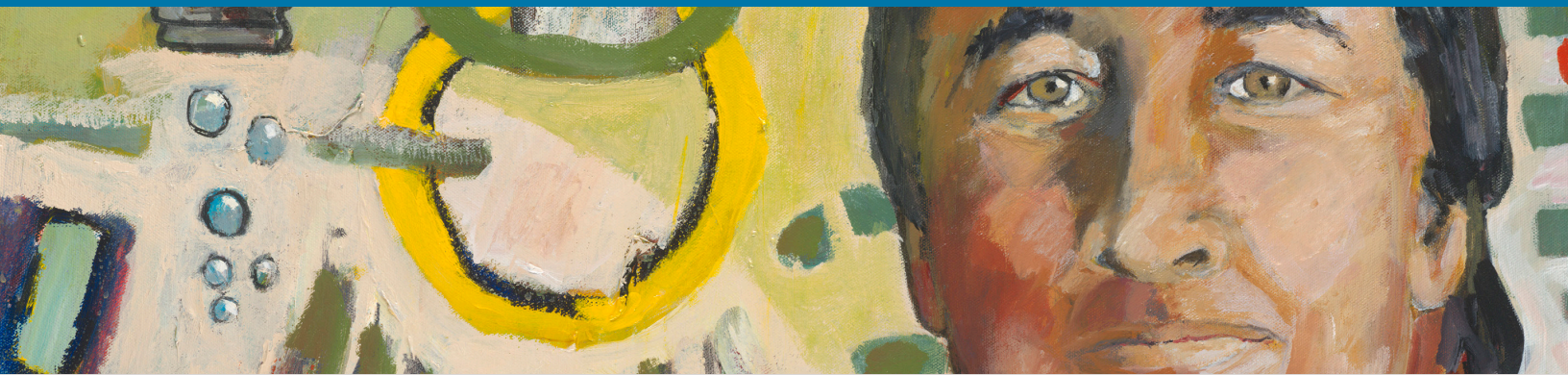
Dreamstarter Teacher



Dreamstarter Teacher



Legacy: Circle of Life



Running Strong Tour

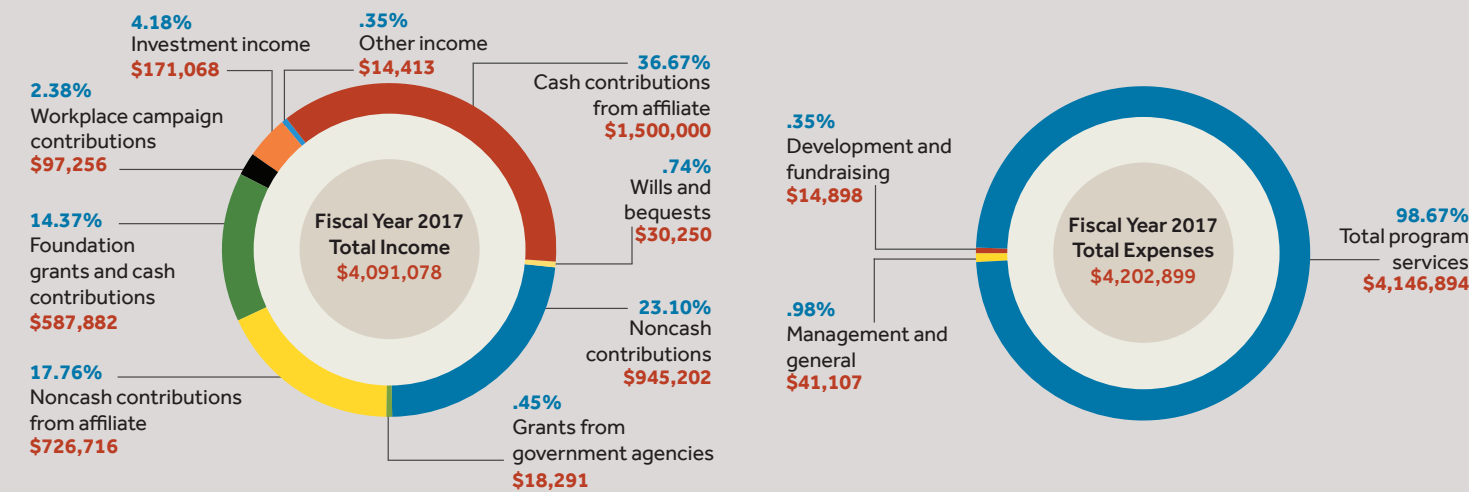


Thank You

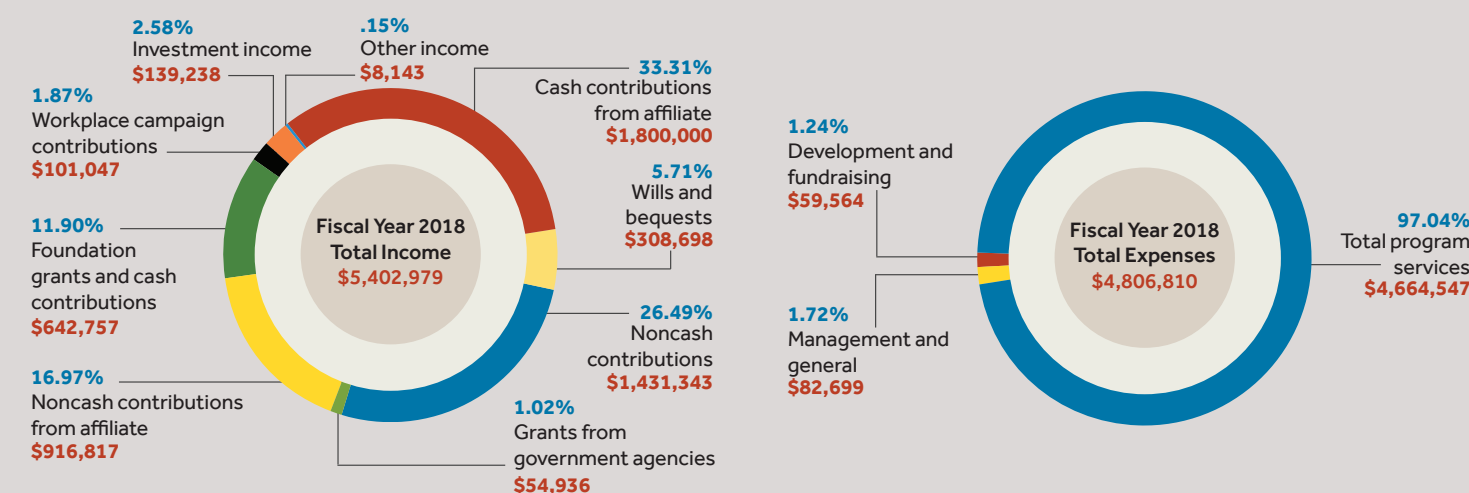
Financials



2017 Financial Statement



2018 Financial Statement



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