



THE RIPPLE EFFECT

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News from Grand Canyon Youth

Winter 2020

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT:

Upward Bound
Math & Science

Northern Arizona University's Upward Bound Math & Science (UBMS) program supports high schoolers who are potential first-generation college students. According to the program's director, Mark Despain, "UBMS focuses on working with students from five high schools in northern Arizona. Most of

our students self-identify as Diné and live on the Navajo Nation."

UBMS offers students a summer academic program, called The Academy, designed to give students the experience of living in a college atmosphere before graduating from high school. **The culmination of The Academy is a GCY expedition, where students apply the science skills they've been learning on the NAU campus to the spectacular classroom of the San Juan River.**

The GCY expedition provides these students with new experiences and skills as they prepare for the transition to college. From collecting field data to cooking their own meals, skills gained on the river help set these students up for future success in academics and life.

According to Despain, "Our partnership with GCY has helped these students understand how water in northern



UBMS students and a Glen Canyon National Recreation Area scientist review data collected from acoustic monitoring equipment they have set up to listen for and record bat species while on the river. Photo: Walt Carr

Arizona, as a scarce commodity, is so important to their daily lives, communities, and Nation. Students take biological, chemical, and physics measurements at each camp site, then compile that data. But beyond the educational curriculum, the trip helps students understand that the San Juan River is a part of their heritage, and a part of their life as a water source for their homes and communities."

Your donations to Grand Canyon Youth are the first drop in the ripple effect that these programs have on students' lives! Thank you.



UBMS students prepare to launch on the San Juan River for four days of science and fun. Photo: Mark Despain.

YOUR DONATION AT WORK: 2019 PROGRAM REPORT

Dear Friends,

We are so pleased to report on the impact of your generosity last year. As you can see from the stories included here, your contributions open young minds to possibilities for the future – whether that is as a civically-engaged climate activist, a scientist, or an outdoor leader.

Your generosity is the beginning of a ripple effect for these young people that, in many cases, lasts a lifetime!

Likewise, we have you to thank for laying the foundation for the future of Grand Canyon Youth with your support of our Downstream 2020 campaign to purchase the GCY Headquarters. On January 30, we closed on the building

and secured a permanent home from which to launch the next phase of Grand Canyon Youth's transformative programs. Thank you to each and every one of you who made this dream into a reality.



With gratitude,

Emma Wharton
Executive Director

IN 2019 YOU SUPPORTED

76 EXPEDITIONS

FOR

1,093 YOUNG PEOPLE

FROM

23 STATES & 3 COUNTRIES

AND PROVIDED

314 PARTICIPANTS

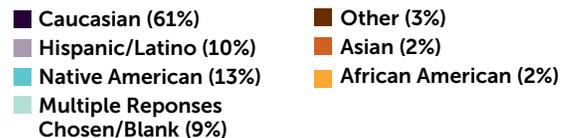
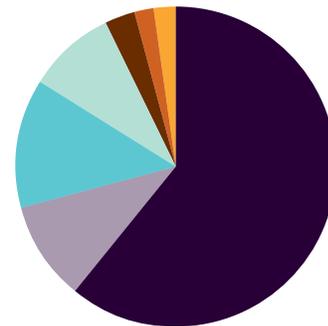
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\$74,000 IN FINANCIAL AID

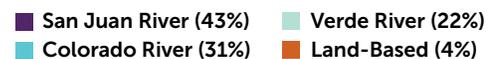
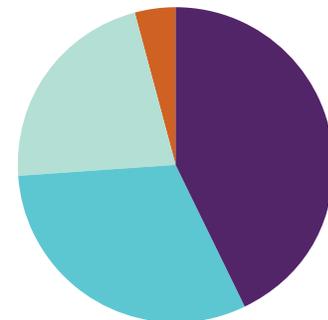
AND

REDUCED COSTS TO ALL PARTICIPANTS BY **50%**

2019 Participants by Ethnicity



2019 GCY Expedition Destinations



"Now all my daughter wants to do is sleep outside under the stars."

-2019 Parent



A participant enjoys a moment of reflection on the San Juan River. Photo: Walt Carr

YOUTH HIGHLIGHT:

Lauren

In Her Own Words

Last summer, on the Lower Colorado River, there was a big lightning storm. We sat on the rubber boats, listening our guide, Maddie, read poetry between the loud screams of thunder. It was

such a peaceful moment, despite all the energy in the sky. We were very wet from the rain, and nobody spoke except Maddie. We shared an energy that I will never forget.

My most powerful connections to Earth happen when I am given the opportunity to row a boat. The water is so powerful, and when you enter the rapid, there is no going back. You have to go the way the water wants you to go, because it will rip the oar right out of your hand. **I realize that I can't always be in control. I learn to focus on the present, and respect the Earth's movement.** I gain confidence in myself when I come out the end of the rapid, when I am in harmony with the river instead of fighting against it.

I think every young person deserves these types of experiences and the chance to grow in a way unique and empowering to them.

My trips with GCY taught me that my voice was needed in the Climate Justice movement. **I need to protect these places that have been such a huge part of my life.**

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In 2019, I found myself in charge of organizing the September 20th Climate Strike. After seeing the passion evoked in my peers, a group of friends and I created the Youth Climate

Alliance (YCA) to bridge the youth voice and make more impact on climate policy.

As president of YCA, as well as just existing as a youth in the 2020 climate crisis, I often find myself overwhelmed. **One step outside—or ten days on the river—and I find myself even more stoked to vote, protest, get my peers stoked, and overall make solid change!**



GCY alumna Lauren takes the oars on the Colorado River. Inspired by her GCY experience, Lauren will be heading to Fort Lewis College this fall to study adventure education and environmental policy. Photo: Carla Roybal

“On my first GCY trip, as we were going through a rapid in the snow on the Upper San Juan, I remember thinking how much I wanted to be at home under a blanket with my dog, but I pushed through the day. Looking back, those uncomfortable moments are perhaps my favorite, because I feel I have so much more respect for everything around me, and most importantly, myself.”

-Lauren



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DOWNSTREAM 2020

In April of last year, we launched our Downstream 2020 campaign to purchase the GCY Headquarters, with a goal of raising \$150,000 for a down payment. Thanks to the generosity of 150 donors, we exceeded our goal and purchased the building in January.

YOU CAN CONTINUE TO SUPPORT EXPEDITIONS FOR YOUTH BY:

- Becoming a **Watershed Donor** and making monthly donations to support GCY's year-round operations.
 - Including GCY **in your will** to create a **lasting legacy**.
 - **Volunteering** your time and skills to connect with our daily operations.

Learn more about these options and many more at
gcyouth.org/donate