



City Kids Wilderness Project

ANNUAL REPORT 2014



Building Resiliency
Broadening Horizons
Ensuring Skills for Success

**“I can do anything, I just have to put my mind to it
and work hard enough.”**

—Portia Chambers, JET 2014



Dear Friends,

For nearly 20 years, City Kids has provided extraordinary opportunities for our youth, and in 2014, we worked to strengthen our foundation to ensure that City Kids will be able to offer stability and support to our youth and families for many more years to come. In the past year, City Kids launched a new evaluation system based on our newly completed Theory of Change, and we are now better able to articulate and track the connections between our program activities and outcomes. We recently completed our first evaluation analysis since implementing our new system, and have already put our findings to work in order to strengthen our impact.



Our youth live in communities where access to resources are limited, adult unemployment rates are high, and formal education levels are low. 81% of our youth are eligible for free or reduced school lunch.

City Kids continues to receive prominent recognition and support, and in 2014, we were awarded a capacity building grant from the City Fund through the Community Foundation for the National Capital Region. City Kids was also awarded a second partnership year with Fair Chance, and we continued our work together to strengthen our internal capacity and long term sustainability.



These achievements are only possible due to the generosity and support of our individual donors, foundation and corporate partners, dedicated board, staff, and volunteers. We are deeply grateful for your support and are honored to be partnering together to create positive opportunities for our youth and lasting change in our community.

With heartfelt thanks,

Randy Luskey
FOUNDER AND BOARD CHAIR

Eloise Russo
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

OUR MISSION

City Kids Wilderness Project is a nonprofit organization founded on the belief that providing enriching life experiences for underserved and at-risk DC youth can enhance their lives, the lives of their families and the greater community.

OUR MODEL

Our program is based around three core principles: long-term youth engagement, outdoor adventure and experiential education programming, and goal setting with a focus on future planning. Youth develop a positive self-identity by overcoming challenges, building strong relationships with peers and adult mentors, and exploring personal possibilities.

OUR IMPACT

In the past three years, **96 percent of participants have graduated from high school.** In comparison, the DC graduation rate was 61 percent this year. After high school, 82 percent of youth enrolled in college or other formal programs such as vocational training or the military.



2014 Snapshot

In 2014, City Kids served 128 DC youth and young adults through its multi-year programming.

21

Job Experience Trainees

232

program activities held

2,910

participant days



Outcomes

90% of youth believe strongly that there are other opportunities for them outside of where they live

92% of parents said their child is more open to trying new things

88% of youth report that they set personal goals

91% of second and third year participants tried again when experiencing failure, compared to 79% in the first and second year

The City Kids Journey

THE CITY KIDS journey begins when youth enter the program in the sixth grade and continues through middle school, high school, and beyond. Youth explore Washington, DC, the wilderness areas of the Mid Atlantic, and participate in summer programming at Broken Arrow Ranch in Jackson, Wyoming. Each year brings new challenges, opportunities, and excitement, and the program is carefully structured to provide age and stage appropriate support as youth mature.

AGES 11–13

Ranger & Mountaineer

Participants learn outdoor skills and try new things at summer camp, and during the school year through our afterschool and weekend outdoor adventure programming:

- Backpacking
- Canoeing
- Horseback riding
- Study skills and homework support

Youth Development Focus

- Goal-setting
- Teamwork
- Taking care of self, others and the environment
- Nonviolent conflict resolution

AGES 14–15

Elite

Participants tackle physical challenges in the wilderness including:

- Backpacking in the Sawtooth Mountains and kayaking in Yellowstone
- Weekend outdoor adventures
- Week-long kayak trip in the rivers, swamps and ocean of South Carolina

Youth Development Focus

- Overcoming challenges
- Managing feelings in a constructive way
- Personal contribution and leadership

AGES 15–16

Leadership

Participants test their mastery of outdoor skills through high adventure activities, and demonstrate newfound leadership skills by exploring issues within their communities.

- Rock climbing and white water kayaking
- 24 hour solo
- Weekend outdoor adventures
- Community service and volunteer programming
- Social justice workshops

Youth Development Focus

- Mastering and applying new skills
- Community leadership and civic engagement

AGES 15–18

JET (Job Experience Training)

Year-round training opportunities lay the foundation for transferrable job skills, and future focused planning provides youth with a clear road map after high school.

CAMP LEADER

- Paid summer job opportunity as a peer mentor and program assistant, preceded by six weeks of training during the school year

CAREER EXPLORATION WEEK

- Workshops, job shadows, and mini-internship placements to test and explore career and post-secondary education interests

CITY KIDS SERVE

- School year service learning program

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

- Weekend outdoor adventures
- Post-secondary planning and college preparation support
- Opportunity to be certified in CPR and Wilderness First Aid
- Opportunity to attend a course through the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS).
- Opportunity to summit the Grand Teton as a culminating adventure

Youth Development Focus

- Mentorship
- Developing a positive vision for the future



AGES 18+

Alumni

Alumni receive regular check-ins and support for at least two years after completing the program. All alumni are eligible for the following:

- One-on-one mentorship and career planning support
- Post-secondary education and job coaching
- Alumni outdoor adventures and networking gatherings
- Volunteer engagement and job opportunities with City Kids programs

In Their Own Words

"I am so glad that I was here, my confidence improved and I had fun. I enjoyed it so much!"

—Ranger, 12 years old, after his first summer at camp

"Being a JET is an empowering experience. It gives you the experience of an actual worker. This is going to be something that helps all JETs in the future. The whole City Kids experience gives people what they need and I want to be a part of that."

—Jeru Crawford
JET 2015

"City Kids has helped my son grow into the young man he is today. His experiences developed his character and resilience. He has been able to accomplish some amazing feats through his participation in the program. The skills he developed will last a lifetime."

—Parent of a City Kids Alum

WHAT WOULD YOU TELL NEW KIDS ABOUT CITY KIDS?

"The most valuable thing I have gained from my City Kids experience so far is the courage to try new things. With all the experiences I've had and all of the challenges that City Kids has put me up to as a camper, I am no longer afraid to try new things." —Liliana Campos, JET 2015

Leading Example



EDDIE VAN III joined City Kids as a 6th grader, and worked his way up through each level in the program. From backpacking to rock climbing to white water kayaking, Eddie was open to trying new things and stretching out of his comfort zone. On his 24 hour wilderness solo, Eddie reflected on his time with the program, “City Kids taught me team leadership and how to work with a group. It also taught me to have more endurance, and all of these challenges have made me stronger.”

After completing the four camper levels at City Kids, Eddie joined our high school program as a part of the Job Experience Training (JET) program. As a JET, Eddie used his new leadership skills as a mentor to younger youth, and gained critical skills in communication, conflict resolution, and group management. As a culminating expedition, Eddie put everything he had learned to the test by joining the first City Kids team to climb the Grand Teton.

In 2014, Eddie graduated from Bell Multicultural High School and is now enrolled in Garrett College. Eddie’s mother shares, “I honestly believe the outdoor and leadership skills he mastered at City Kids have allowed him to successfully adapt to the environment he is currently in at college.”



Financial Statement for Calendar Year 2014

January 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014

Cash Basis Statement of Activities*

SUPPORT AND REVENUE

Donations	\$ 866,663
In-Kind Donations	99,683
Rental Income	51,455
Other Income	11,473
TOTAL	1,029,274

EXPENSES

Program Services	841,108
Management and General	184,087
Fundraising	146,317
TOTAL	1,171,512

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS**	(142,238)
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CASH BASIS ADJUSTMENTS

Deposit received on installment sale of property	400,000
Depreciation	64,807
Sale of Investments	229,819
Other Adjustments	(246,955)

NET CHANGE IN CASH POSITION	305,433
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ASSETS

Total Current Assets	769,113
Property, net of accumulated depreciation	2,609,234
Other Assets	188,448
TOTAL ASSETS	3,566,795

LIABILITIES

Total Current Liabilities	42,185
Non-Current Liabilities	2,130,000
TOTAL LIABILITIES	2,172,185

UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS

Undesignated	399,280
Board Designated	895,330
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED	1,294,610

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$3,566,795
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*Statement of Activities presented on cash basis reflect \$400,000 cash inflow for installment sale of land, buildings, and improvements from City Kids to Randy Luskey. The sale is expected to close in 2016. Income from the transaction will be recognized as a change in net assets at the time of closing.

**Net Change in Assets as presented in City Kids 2014 Audited Financial Statements

Our Donors

A DEEP AND HEARTFELT THANK YOU to our many donors, whose generous support makes it possible every day for imaginations to be sparked, academic success to be achieved, self-confidence to grow, and wilderness areas to be explored.

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Stacy Payne
 Micha Schultze





Our sincere thanks to both our summer programs and school-year staff, and to our many volunteers, for their hard work and enthusiasm in supporting City Kids youth. You continue to make a critical difference.



City Kids is honored to be featured in the 2013-14 Catalogue for Philanthropy as one of the best small charities in the Washington, DC region.

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City Kids is a registered 501(c)3
United Way # 8527, CFC #18529

www.citykidsdc.org

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