

there were over 10,000 students dropping out of **Colorado** schools within the 2005-2006 school year. We work with high risk **Youth** and their families in urban areas across the state. We continually looking for a real model to effect the way people view this issue and make a **Change** in this state. According to a report of the Colorado Department of Education in 2010. An **Annual Report** tells

summary

Dear Friends,

Colorado Youth for a Change experienced tremendous growth over the past year, and we are pleased to share with you our stories, accomplishments, and impact through this annual report. Our generous donors and committed community partners have helped the organization to find financial stability and growth during otherwise uncertain economic times.

As our knowledge surrounding the dropout issue continues to grow each year, we feel honored to work with our district partners and students in finding creative solutions that keep young people engaged in education and strengthen schools and communities. Our work aligns with Governor Bill Ritter's call to action: to decrease the Colorado high school dropout numbers by 50% by the year 2017. While the state of Colorado has already seen a slight decrease in the number of dropouts over the past few years, this work continues to be important. Of the high schools across Colorado with over 100 dropouts, 76% were found in the metropolitan Denver area (Colorado Department of Education, 2010).

Local data analysis coupled with national research allows CYC to understand the struggles of students and schools and make strategic decisions around dropout outreach and recovery, intervention, and new school creation. We continued to refine our Dropout Intervention services to 9th and 10th graders this past year at West High School and expanded these services into Boulder Valley Public Schools, providing direct service to students and capacity building in schools simultaneously.

CYC also helped to start two new schools this past year in partnership with Denver Public Schools, Aurora Public Schools, and a host of community partners. We believe in the potential of all youth as learners and understand that every path to high school graduation and post-secondary work does not look the same. Both these schools began in response to specific student needs and continue to thrive today.

Thank you once again for partnering with us to solve America's dropout crisis.

Sincerely,

Derek Bamonte
Board Chair

Steve Dobo
Founder & Executive Director



Colorado
Youth
for a
Change



Solving America's Dropout Crisis

Our Services

Dropout Outreach and Recovery: CYC reached out to over 3,000 high school dropouts last year, provided educational case management to 705 youth, and helped 525 to re-enroll in educational programs. In addition to outreach, the following services are provided to youth for up to one year following re-enrollment: case management, school transition, and coordination of school support services. CYC is one of the only agencies providing these services in the Denver area in partnerships with Denver Public Schools, Boulder Valley Public Schools, and Aurora Public Schools.

Dropout Intervention: CYC partnered with Denver Public Schools and Boulder Valley Public Schools last year to implement a hybrid model of service that combines direct service to students with capacity building in schools to help all 9th graders move to 10th grade on time by credit. Our Dropout Intervention services began in response to research that links success in ninth grade to future academic success in terms of on-time graduation.

New School Design and Creation: Recognizing the need for alternative educational environments, CYC co-founded two schools last year specifically designed for dropouts.

- Futures Academy began in collaboration with Aurora Public Schools and combines an intensive academic program with post-secondary transition services to students who are significantly behind in credits for their age. Futures Academy served 150 former dropouts and students at-risk of dropping out last year, helping them move successfully into post-secondary career-technical and community college environments.
- In collaboration with Denver Public Schools and AIMS Community College, CYC helped to open a unique competency-based high school program for students who are too old to finish their high school diploma by traditional credit means. Now transitioned to Denver Public Schools, Scholars Continuing to College (SCC) boasted 53 graduates in its first year.

The Facts

- America's graduation rate ranks 21st out of the 27 industrialized countries.
- In our urban areas of Colorado, only half of all youth will graduate. In Denver, 49% of African American males and 41% of Hispanic males are graduating. (Colorado Department of Education)
- Youth who drop out are more likely to go to prison, rely on social welfare, and continue the detrimental cycle of poverty. (Alliance for Excellent Education)
- The dropout crisis is solvable, and we can all be part of the solution.

Demographics of those served by Colorado Youth for a Change

- 53% were Hispanic/Latino, 28% were Black/African American, 11% were White/Caucasian, 3% were Multi-Racial, 3% were American Indian, and 2% were Asian/Pacific Islander
- Of the top five reasons youth dropped out of school:
 - 22% reported they were unmotivated
 - 19% missed too many days
 - 18% lacked support
 - 10% became a parent
 - 8% needed to work
- 42% were ages 17 and 18 years old when they dropped out of school

“I feel like my life is back on track and that I am going somewhere.”

Brandon, a student who re-enrolled in school with CYC's assistance after dropping out over a year ago

2009 - 2010 Impact on the Community

- 525 former dropouts re-enrolled in school.
- Of those re-enrolled, 71% ended the year with a positive outcome:
 - 89 students graduated
 - 194 students were still enrolled and continued into the 2010-2011 school year
 - 90 students transferred to another school district or academic program
- Of the 9th and 10th grade students with one or two Fs served during year one in Boulder Valley Public Schools, 71% passed all classes and progressed to the next grade with their peers.
- In year three at Denver's West High School, 84% of the 9th grade targeted population served passed Algebra, up 13% from year one.
- 1,228 youth were served by all CYC's programs across three school districts: Aurora Public Schools, Denver Public Schools, Boulder Valley Public Schools.

Community Highlights

- CYC in its association with the Colorado Graduates Initiative helped create a new dropout office within the Colorado Department of Education.
- In June, Mile High United Way selected CYC as an Impact partner for the next three years under the Youth Success priority area.
- The Colorado Department of Education and the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth recognized CYC as a best practice for serving homeless dropouts.
- CYC hosted the first annual Enrollment and Resource Fair which brought together over 30 schools and community supports to assist youth in returning to school.

“The result of our work with Colorado Youth for a Change is system wide change to how we meet the needs of our students through intervening, welcoming and responding to students. This work has been the most significant work I have ever seen in secondary schools! CYC is changing the lives of our most at risk youth.”

Deirdre Pilch, Assistant Superintendent for School Leadership Middle Schools and High Schools, Boulder Valley School District

success

After becoming a father nearly three years ago, Jose dropped out of school as he struggled to balance work, school, and family. Jose quickly discovered that the most promising jobs required a high school diploma: “I want to finish (high school) so I can get a job. Everywhere you apply, they ask for a high school diploma.” CYC staff member Christen reached out to Jose and connected him with RAMP, a program created in partnership between CYC and Boulder Valley Public Schools. As part of the Arapahoe Campus, this program allows him to catch up on high school credits while being concurrently enrolled in a program to become a Water Technician. He says he appreciates the flexibility of the program and would like to eventually work for the City of Boulder with his certification. Jose plans to graduate by the end of the year.

Jose



Alondra

As her ninth grade year began, Alondra earned average grades in all her classes. As the semester progressed she began hanging out with a different group of students, started to ditch classes, and adopted a defiant attitude with some of her teachers. As a result, her grades began to slip into the D and F range by the end of the semester. At this point, CYC’s Educational Intervention Specialist Aviva began to work with Alondra one-on-one and also connected her with Algebra volunteers. Together, they addressed time management and how to communicate effectively with peers and adults. By second semester, she was passing all classes once again and pulled up her grades enough to play soccer. Alondra stayed in touch with CYC’s Aviva over the summer and sought help with employment opportunities. As a sophomore, Alondra has maintained grades of C or better in all of her classes and is excited to play soccer again in the spring. She still stops by to check in with the Educational Intervention Specialist and is proud to report on her grades.

Raul struggled in high school and disliked the overcrowded environment and lack of individual support. As he fell behind on credits, he spiraled into a negative cycle of discouragement: “You don’t really feel like being here so you just go home.” A direct referral from Aurora Public Schools enabled Sharla, one of CYC’s Educational Outreach Specialists, to meet with Raul and his mother and explore different school options. He eventually enrolled in Futures Academy and says he enjoys the additional attention and support from his new teachers. At his old school, Raul never asked questions and always sat in the back of the class. At Futures Academy, he contributes to classroom discussions and has discovered that he enjoys reading and writing. Because his work at Futures Academy is preparing him with college-readiness behaviors, Raul is on track to begin some courses at the Community College of Aurora during the spring. While he says he has problems adapting to new things, Raul’s drive and determination will continue to open doors for him in the future.

Raul



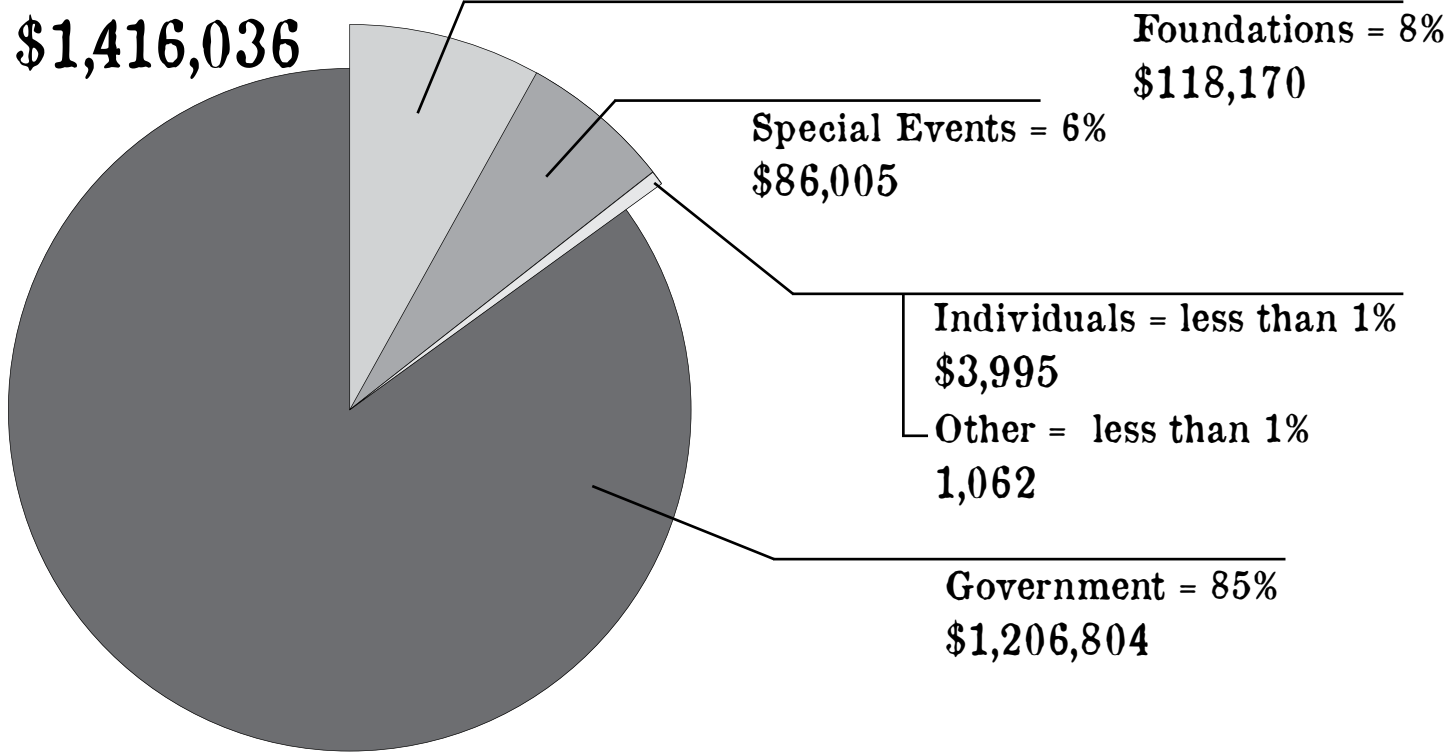
Michael

Michael remembers struggling in school from a very early age. Diagnosed with ADHD while in elementary school, Michael found himself easily distracted in school and as a result was viewed as disobedient. After getting kicked out of his dad’s home in Texas, Michael left school, made his way to Colorado, and eventually became homeless at age 18. While finding refuge at Urban Peak’s homeless shelter, Michael connected with Katie, CYC’s Transitions Coordinator. As his advocate, she helped him to enroll in Denver’s South High School and worked with Urban Peak staff members to move Michael into transitional housing. She also advocated for Michael to be re-tested for ADHD and discovered that he was mildly autistic. Today Michael receives additional support through his Individual Education Plan and is on track to graduate in May. His connection with the school’s work study program has allowed him to engage as a community volunteer and work as an intern over the summer. Michael serves as an example of resiliency and strength, and he thanks Katie for being his advocate as he has worked to get his life back on track: “If it wasn’t for Katie I wouldn’t be here. I’m proud of the fact that I can come to school each day and not complain.”

financials

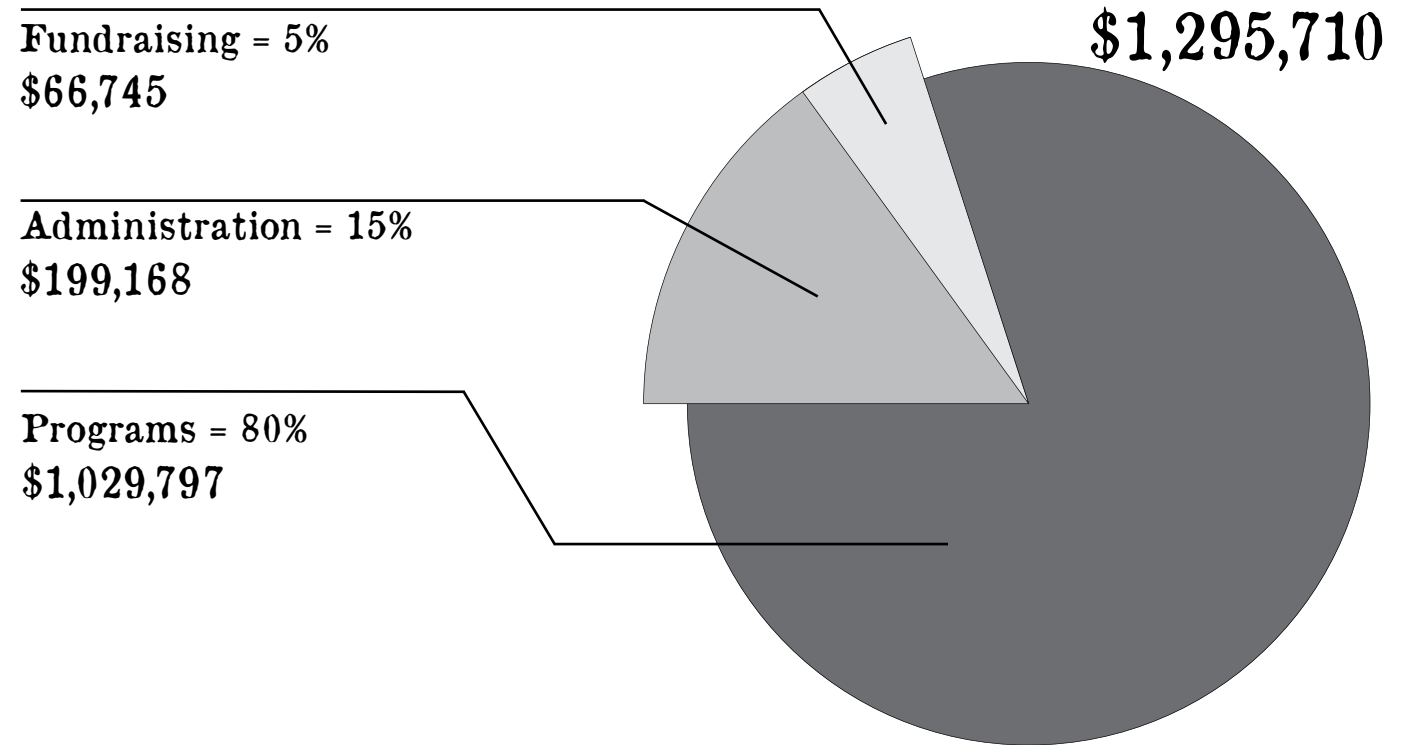
Income

\$1,416,036



Expenses

\$1,295,710



“

“CYC has been an integral partner with Aurora Public Schools in reducing our dropout rate. We can’t do it alone and our students are better for CYC’s superb expertise.”

John Barry, Superintendent, Aurora Public School District

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“Thank you for giving him the tools so that he can graduate. Your help is greatly appreciated. You always help him and I only want you to keep helping me and making sure that school stays of importance to him. I really want him to finish school.”

- Eva Adame, mother of Elio who re-enrolled in school with CYC's assistance

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