

# TELLURIDE ACADEMY ANNUAL REPORT 2024



TELLURIDE  
ACADEMY



# OUR MISSION

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"Inspire children and teens through experiential education that promotes physical activity, creative learning, environmental stewardship, responsibility to others, and positive life choices."





# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

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2024 was another remarkable summer for Telluride Academy, with over 600 students benefiting from outdoor experiential learning in the world-class San Juan Mountains and beyond.

To ensure these experiences are accessible to all young people in our region, we continue to focus on overcoming social, cultural, and financial barriers through various outreach initiatives. This year, we proudly launched the Wendy Brooks Legacy Fund to honor our founder's extraordinary contributions. The Wendy Brooks Scholarship Program, starting in summer 2025, will further our commitment to providing every child with access to the outdoors.





“We’re also honored to continue the Chason P. Russell Memorial Scholarship, allowing students from the West End to join our Outdoor Leadership Challenge.

Telluride Academy’s success is a testament to the collective efforts of our board, staff, community partners, and the families we serve. Together, we continue to build a more inclusive, adventurous future for all.”

**Jason Merritt**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR





# Our work extends across several impactful initiatives:



## Tuition Assistance

Tuition Assistance, offering need-based support as well as discounts for local families, non-profits, healthcare workers, and educators.



## Regional Outreach

Regional Outreach, where we partner with non-profits and schools to provide scholarships, gear, and logistical support to students from neighboring communities.

## Cultural Outreach



Cultural Outreach, which provides deeply reduced tuition and support through bilingual staff and cultural liaisons.

## Specialized Student Support



Specialized Student Support, led by our Inclusion Specialist and "Buddy" staff, ensures neurodivergent students and those with special physical needs participate alongside their peers.



# 2024 TELLURIDE ACADEMY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Peiper Kirkendoll, Board President

Halle Cane, Vice President

Lisa Cabrera, Secretary

Nathan Frerichs, Treasurer

Trisha Cowart Westfall

Zoe Gillett

Hannah Richman

Alison Dunn Wright

Ericka De Maquera

## **Administrative Staff**

Jason Merritt, Executive Director

Sonja Ames, Communications & Enrollment Director

Ross Perrot, Program Director

Brian Meyer, Program Manager



# 2024 SUMMER IN REVIEW

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## In 2024 Telluride Academy...

Ran 100+ programs

With 1,187 program spots filled

For 606 students

By 48 seasonal staff

## As well as...

- Expansion of Climbing Program
- Expansion of Inclusion Program & Student Support Specialist
- Rapid growth of the relaunched After-School Climbing program
- New program offerings: Teen Wellness, Adventures of Bigfoot, Via Ferrata!



# 2024 SUMMER PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

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## OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE



One of this summer's standout programs was the **Outdoor Leadership Challenge** for teens aged 15–18. Over the course of two weeks, these young leaders developed life-changing skills while embracing the challenges of the outdoors. Eight of the OLC participants were able to enroll with full scholarships. Two of those students were recipients of the Chason Russell Memorial Scholarship.

This is the camp you dream about as an instructor. From day one, the campers were engaged, eager to learn, and by the end of two weeks, they were not only proud of themselves but also of each other.

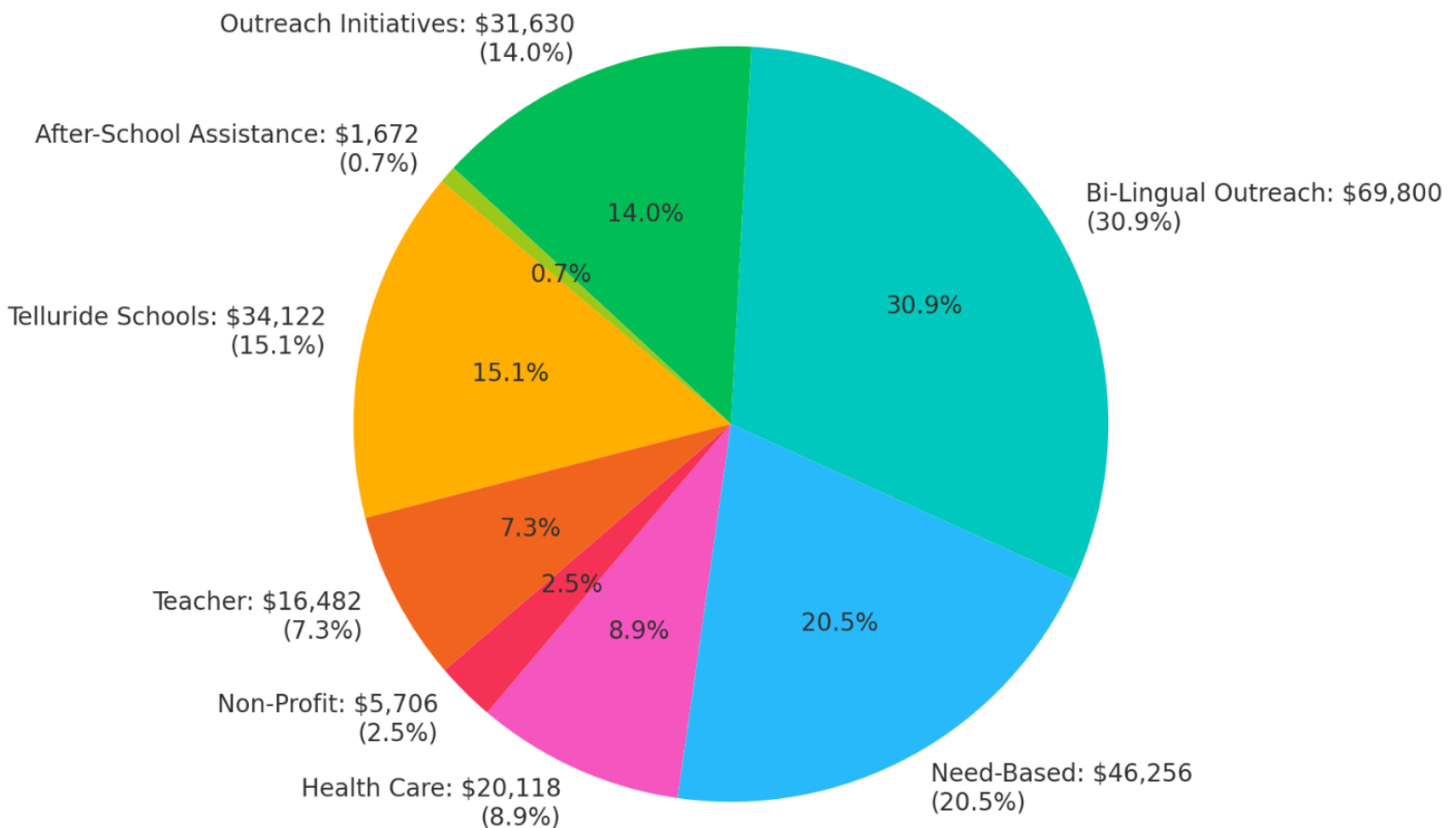
– Ray Dahlstrom,  
Instructor



# 2024 SCHOLARSHIPS & ASSISTANCE

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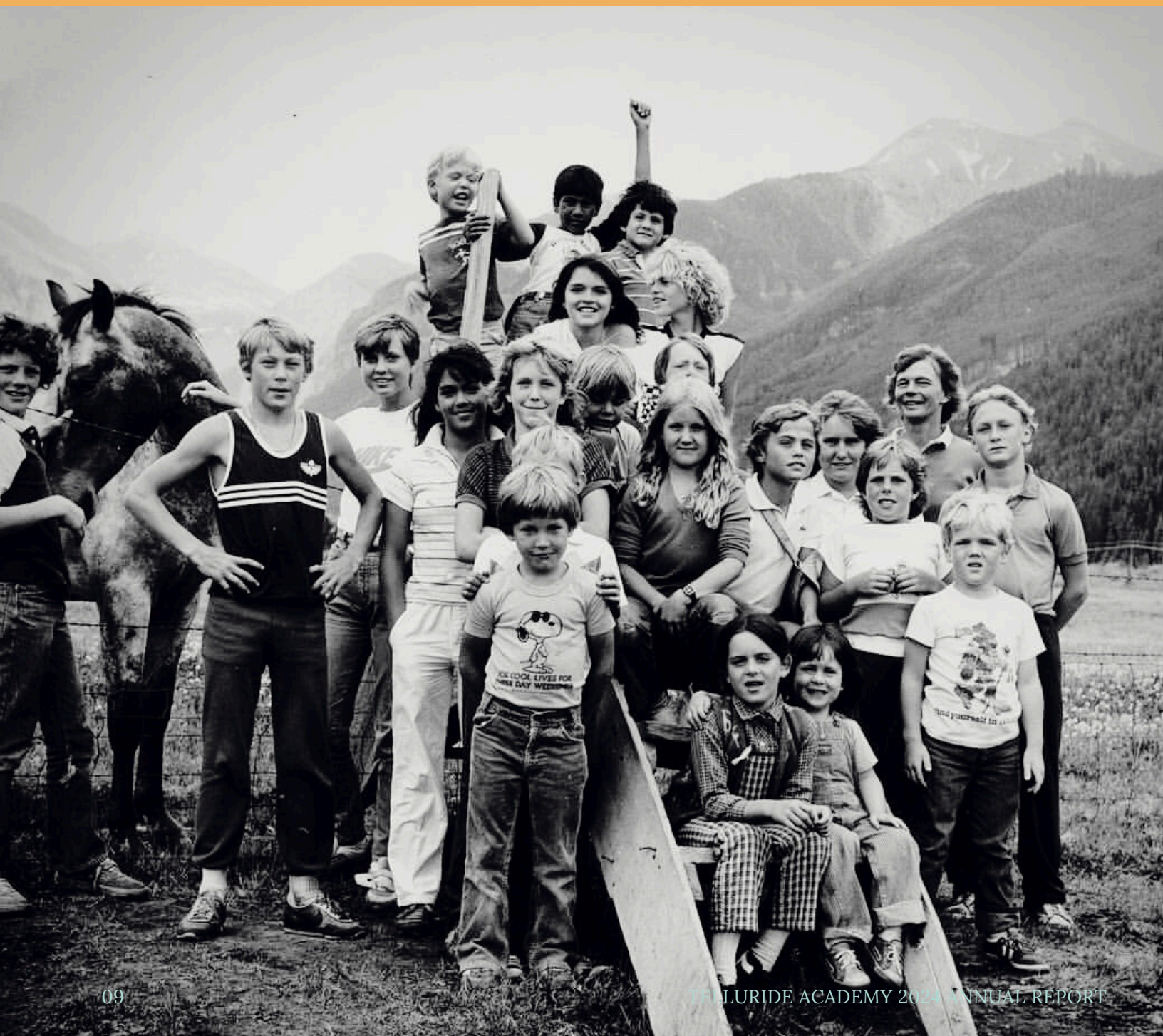
2024 Scholarships & Assistance Allocation  
Total: \$225,786



Thanks to your generous support, in 2024, Telluride Academy provided **over \$225,000** in tuition assistance, ensuring that **more than 200** students from the Telluride region received assistance to participate in our programs.

# HONORING THE LEGACY OF WENDY BROOKS

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# THE WENDY BROOKS LEGACY FUND

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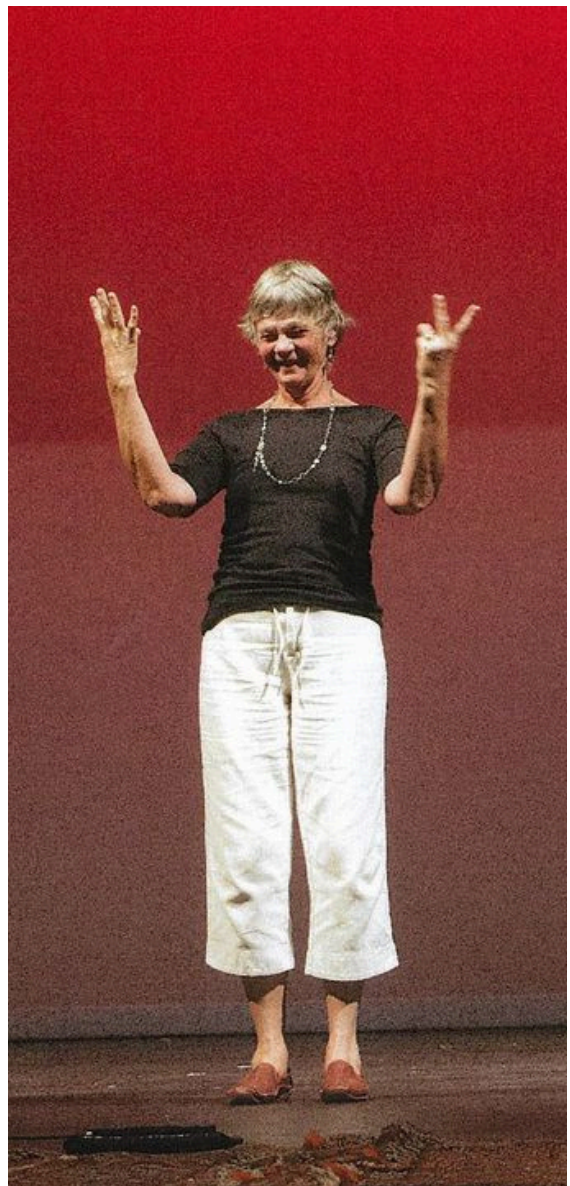
This year, we established the **Wendy Brooks Legacy Fund** to continue Wendy's vision of empowering children through outdoor adventure. Annual fundraising now supports this fund, ensuring tuition assistance and operational sustainability.



“In the wake of Wendy’s passing, we are profoundly humbled and grateful for the opportunity to carry forward her remarkable legacy. I am immensely proud of our team, whose unwavering dedication and energy drive the realization of our mission everyday.”

**Jason Merritt**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR







For more information about how to support  
Telluride Academy and the Wendy Brooks Legacy Fund,  
please visit [www.tellurideacademy.org](http://www.tellurideacademy.org)

