



TELLURIDE
ACADEMY

**Telluride
Academy
2025
Annual
Report**

Mission



“Connecting youth with nature through outdoor adventure, creativity, and environmental stewardship.”



A letter from the Executive Director

2025 was a year of growth, connection, and continued impact for Telluride Academy. More than 766 students participated in 130 unique programs, filling 1,375 total enrollment spots across summer and after-school sessions. From climbing and wilderness expeditions to creative and environmental learning, our programs once again inspired confidence, resilience, and lifelong connections to the natural world.

Accessibility remained central to our mission. We awarded \$268,350 in tuition assistance to 258 students, ensuring that every child, regardless of income, background, or ability, could explore and thrive outdoors. These funds supported youth throughout the Telluride region and beyond, including 41 Latinx students and 32 from West End communities through bilingual outreach and Norwood-based programs.

Through the Wendy Brooks Scholarship Program and Chason Russell Memorial Scholarship, eight students earned full scholarships for advanced programs such as the Outdoor Leadership Challenge, which cultivates leadership and self-reliance among teens. Our inclusion efforts also expanded to better support participants with diverse cognitive, emotional, and physical needs.

Behind every adventure stands an extraordinary team. In 2025, 53 seasonal instructors, specialists, and interns, along with four full-time staff members, delivered world-class outdoor education, supported by new housing partnerships and professional development opportunities. Collaborations with the Telluride School District, Wilkinson and Lone Cone Libraries, True North, and One-to-One Mentoring strengthened community ties and broadened our reach.

Financially, Telluride Academy remains strong and forward-looking. With a balanced \$1.9 million budget, positive net equity, and six months of reserves, we are investing strategically in program growth, staff housing, and long-term sustainability. Our board and staff have also initiated a new strategic planning process to guide the Academy's next chapter, while maintaining Wendy Brooks' founding values at its core.

As we look ahead, I am deeply grateful to our dedicated staff, board, donors, and partners who share the belief that access to nature changes lives. Together, we are building a stronger, more inclusive future where every child can grow, explore, and lead in the great outdoors.

Jason Merritt
Executive Director



2025 Initiatives in Action



Tuition Assistance

Met goal of 20% of tuition revenue given with \$268,350 awarded to local students.



Cultural Outreach

Facilitated multiple bilingual registration events at the Wilkinson Public Library. Had 41 participants this summer.



Regional Outreach

Facilitated a West End Enrollment Event at the Lone Cone Library and ran two dedicated West End programs for 24 students.



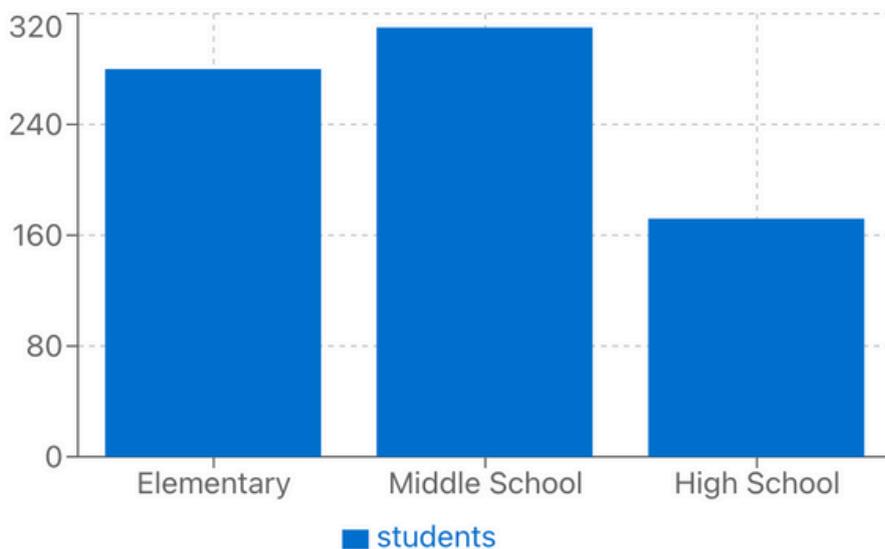
Student Support

Provided one-on-one “buddy” support for 13 camps, ensuring that each child could thrive in a safe, inclusive, and empowering environment.

2025 - At a Glance

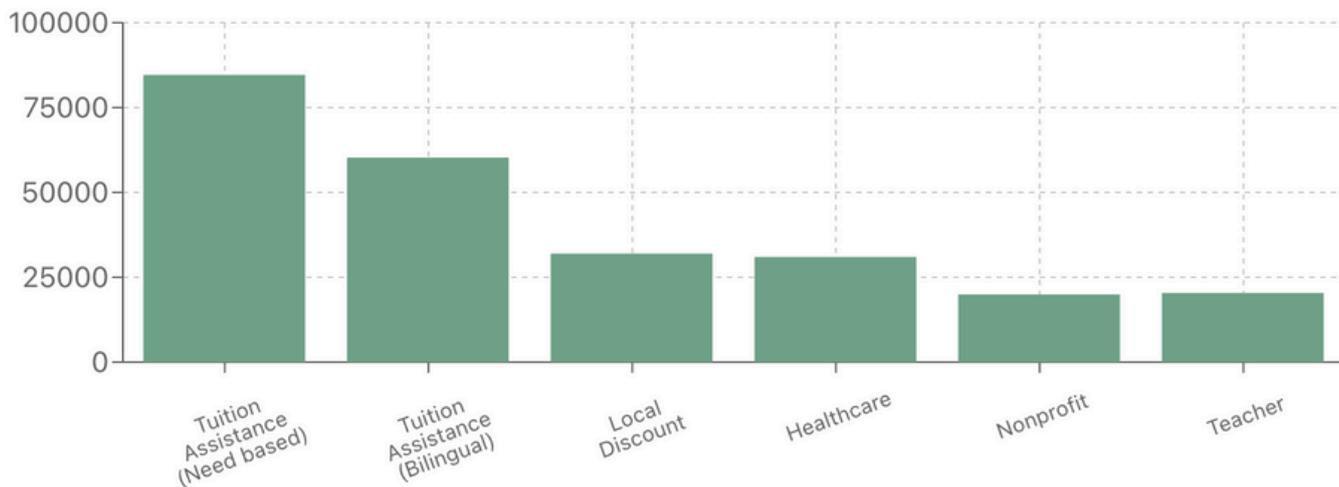
Students Served (2025)

762 students participated across programs in 2025.



Tuition Assistance

\$268,350 awarded across six funding categories.



2025 Telluride Academy Board of Directors

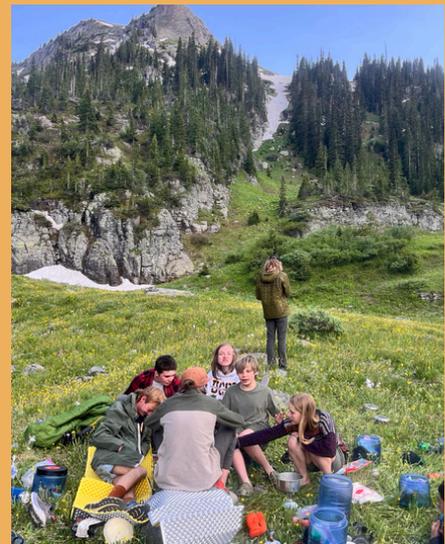
Halle Cane, President
Trisha Cowart Westfall, Vice President
Lisa Cabrera, Secretary
Alison Dunn Wright, Treasurer
Nathan Frerichs
Zoe Gillett
Heather Boucher
Ericka De Maquera
Austin Collins

Administrative Staff
Jason Merritt, Executive Director
Sonja Ames, Communications & Enrollment Director
Ross Perrot, Program Director
Brian Meyer, Program Manager



Program Spotlight: Outdoor Leadership

This year, our Outdoor Leadership Program (OLC) continued to shape confident, capable, and connected young leaders. Through multi-day expeditions, backcountry cooking, team challenges, and self-reflection, participants learned both practical outdoor skills and deeper lessons in collaboration and resilience.

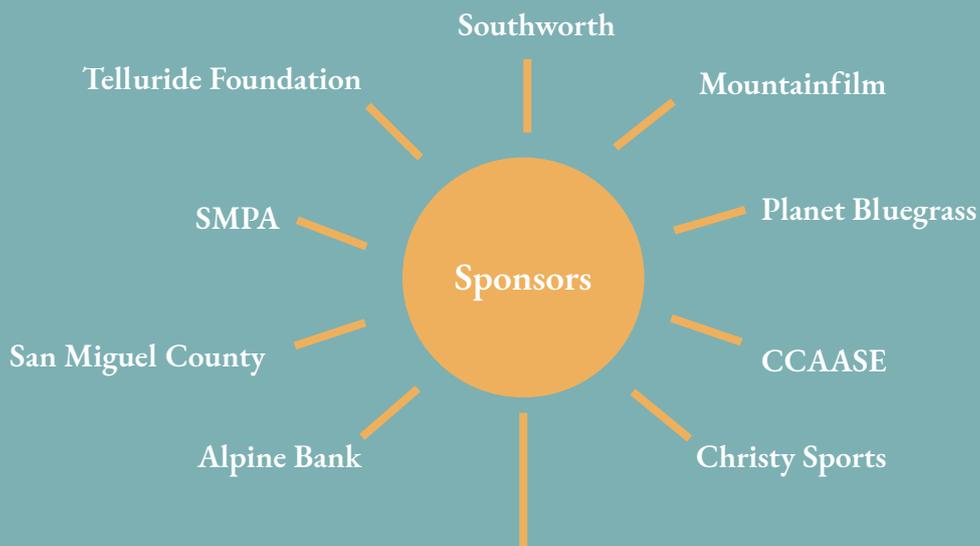


“I learned to play Hearts, how to make a loon call with my hands, how to cook over a small butane stove in the backcountry, new campfire games like Courtroom and Werewolf, that I should appreciate frontcountry food more often, more karaoke songs from van rides, among so many things, big and small.

Though it was so cool learning all these things, the most important thing I left OLC with was a fantastic sense of camaraderie and friendship. I got the phone numbers of three of my fellow participants and am still in contact with them, which is such a cool concept of friendship, even though I may never see them again. But the stories were undoubtedly the funniest thing that I can take away from this trip.”

— Outdoor Leadership Participant, Summer 2025

Community & Partnerships



Wendy Brooks
Memorial Fund



Outreach

Chason P Russell
Memorial Fund

West End
Enrollment Event

Bilingual Registration
Events

West End
Programs

Telluride School
District



Partners

True North

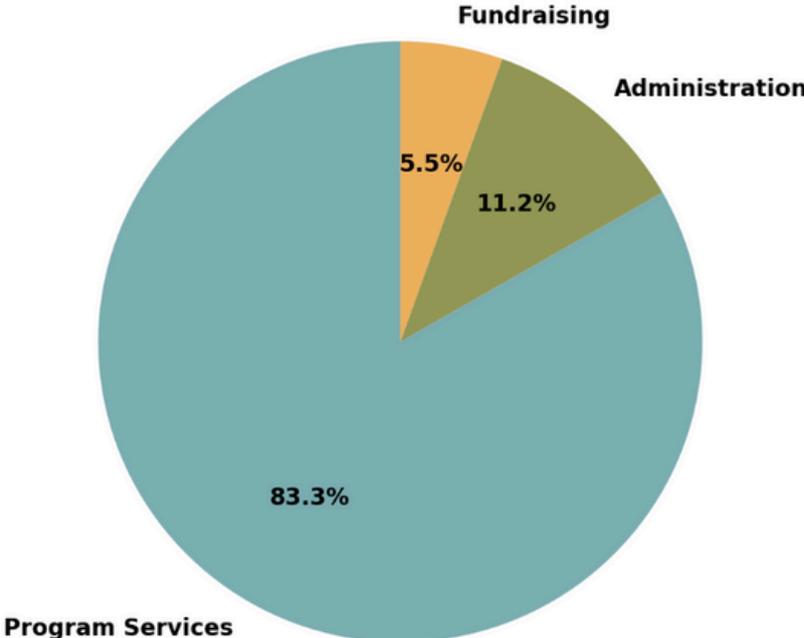
Wilkinson Public
Library

Lone Cone
Library

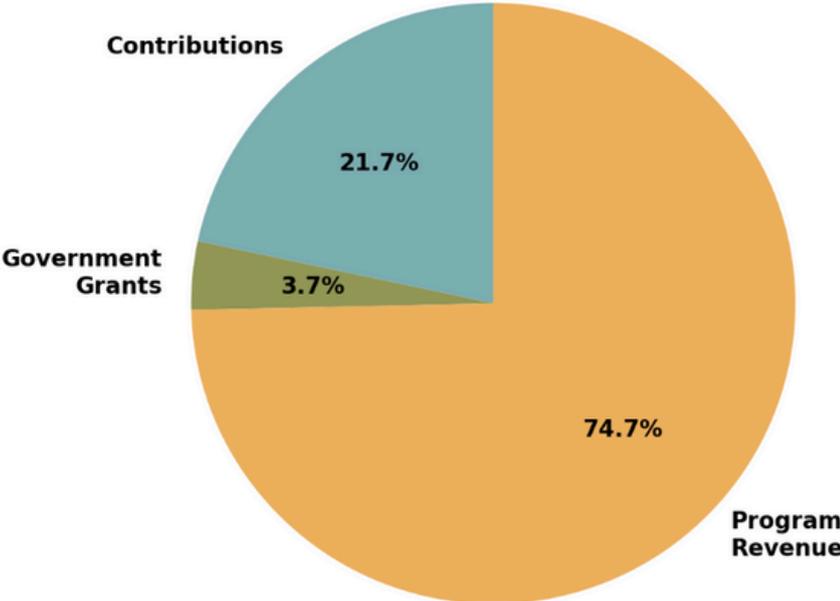
One to One
Mentoring

Financial Overview

Expenses Distribution (2024)



Revenue Distribution (2024)





For more information and to support Telluride Academy and the Wendy Brooks Legacy Fund, please visit our website at www.tellurideacademy.org



TELLURIDE
ACADEMY