

TREKKERS ANNUAL REPORT



September 2017 - August 2018



Long-Term Mentoring Changes Lives

High school dropout rates, low college persistence, the opioid crisis, low aspirations, too much screen time, lack of community connections, feelings of hopelessness, isolation and defeat.

Every day we see how this overwhelming list of challenges impacts our students and the future of our communities. We also see the resiliency and hope that builds throughout students' six years with Trekkers.

Research shows that quality mentoring relationships have powerful and lasting positive effects on young people personally, professionally, and academically.

Young people who were at risk of falling off track but have a quality mentoring relationship:

- Maintain better attitudes toward school and report better connections to both peers and adults
- Are 55% more likely to enroll in college, 78% more likely to volunteer regularly, and 130% more likely to hold leadership positions

Since 1994, Trekkers has been providing long-term, mentoring relationships to hundreds of students from Midcoast Maine. Our students consistently report

statistically significant positive change in indicators of resilience, including reflection, empathy, trust, and optimism; relationships with peers and adults and indicators of learning and school engagement, including learning interest, critical thinking, and academic motivation.

Recognizing the need to scale our model to reach even more young people, we launched the Trekkers Training Institute (TTI). We are energized by the early success TTI is having in providing students across the state, and beyond, with the opportunity to benefit from long-term mentoring relationships.

Trekkers provides students with a community support network, which wouldn't be possible without the generosity of our own network of supporters. **The investment that our volunteers and donors make in young people and the future of our community continually inspires us and fuels our growth into the future.** Thank you.

Stuart Rich

Stu Rich
President, Board of Directors

Amie Hutchison

Amie Hutchison
Executive Director

Six-Year, Year-Round, Expeditionary Learning Model



7TH
GRADE

TEEN TREKKERS
THREE-DAY
EXPEDITION TO
ACADIA
NATIONAL PARK

Build connections with caring adults & increase sense of community belonging. Increase self-esteem through safe risk-taking activities (hiking, canoeing, rock climbing). Increase peer relationships with students from six communities. Create a relational foundation within the community for students to rely on. Learn basic outdoor skills.

8TH
GRADE

ADVANCED TREKKERS
THREE-DAY & 10-DAY
EXPEDITION TO
MAINE, VERMONT
& NEW ENGLAND
WILDERNESS

Practice self-direction with the educational process by designing, implementing & participating in a three-day & 10-day expedition. Learn consensus decision making. Increase self-awareness through personal reflection & group discussions. Practice communication, critical thinking, and mediation skills.

9TH
GRADE

URBAN TREKKERS

10-DAY
EXPEDITION
TO HISTORICAL
LANDMARKS IN
MA, PA & D.C.

Expands civic and cultural awareness through an exchange with Trekkers sister program, Urban Trekkers, in Camden, New Jersey, & by retracing significant U.S. historical events in Boston, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C.

10TH
GRADE

CROSS AMERICA EXPEDITION

10 TO 12-DAY
EXPEDITION TO
A WESTERN REGION

Increase awareness of natural resources & cultures by travel outside of New England. Investigate & explore a unique bioregion of the U.S. & learn about environmental issues from stakeholders. Build aspirations through career exploration and preparation including mock interviews, resume writing, & engagement with local businesses.

11TH
GRADE

COLLEGE/CAREER EXPLORATION

10-DAY TRIP TO
EXPLORE CAREER
PATHS & VISIT
COLLEGES

Continue to increase knowledge of the range of opportunities that exist after high school through career exploration. Actively explore, compare, & contrast a variety of post-secondary options with peers, learn college application processes, & funding options. Recognize personal strengths & goals to identify career paths.

12TH
GRADE

rites of passage

FIVE-DAY RETREAT
IN THE BERKSHIRES
INCLUDING A 36
HOUR WILDERNESS
SOLO

Mark the end of adolescence and beginning of adulthood by reflecting on the past 18 years of life & answering the questions: Who am I? Who do I want to be? Practice self-reflection & personal responsibility through participation in a wilderness solo. Create a safe place to talk about fears, dreams, & intentions about life after graduation.



"I really liked getting to know new people. Even if they were students, student leaders or leaders. It was a cool experience getting to know my peers in a deeper way."

Teen Trekkers May 2018

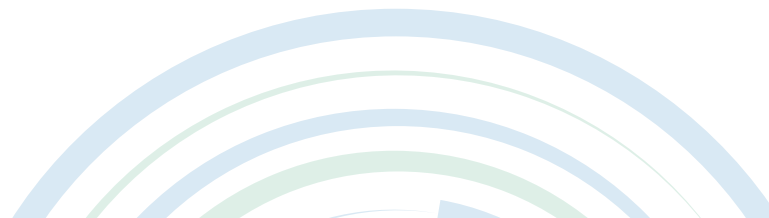
Over the course of two weekends, two teams of 20 students, plus numerous adult mentors and student leaders jumped on the Trekkers buses bound for Mt. Desert Island. Over the course of three days, students hiked Cadillac Mountain – the tallest peak in Acadia National Park, paddled on a river, and spent half a day climbing on Otter Cliffs.

Throughout the trip, Trekkers provides a shared wilderness experience for students and community volunteer mentors as a way to lay the foundation for ongoing relationships to occur throughout the rest of their high school years.

For this trip, we aim for a 1:1 ratio of students to community mentors as a way of demonstrating the network of support that exists within our community.

OUR COMMUNITY

Trekkers serves students from the towns of Cushing, Owls Head, Rockland, South Thomaston, Thomaston, and St. George. Each fall, Trekkers staff are welcomed into the schools for Trekkers orientation, where we play games and provide an overview of the entire program. In conjunction with a community meeting, we work closely with families during the application process to determine if they want to be a part of Trekkers.



Advanced Trekkers

June 2018

During our eighth grade Advanced Trekkers program, students learned consensus decision making and practiced self-direction with the educational process by designing, implementing, and participating in a 3-day and 10-day expedition.

Shortly after the close of school, Teams Osprey and Albatross took to the road to visit five states outside of Maine. Each team planned activities to satisfy five learning components: community service, wilderness experience, cultural awareness, environmental education, and outdoor-based recreation.

Both teams began their expeditions with treks into the wilderness. Team Albatross headed to the Catskills in N.Y. for a hike up Mt. Overlook while Team Osprey explored the Appalachian Mountains with a visit to Rickett's Glen State Park. The adventure component is always a student favorite. This year Team Albatross enjoyed zip lining in the Berkshires while Team Osprey went spelunking in Pennsylvania at Laurel Canyon. Crawling and maneuvering down 45 stories to the cave floor demonstrated the degree to which this group can work as a team to support one another. Visits to the Chuang Yen Monastery to learn about Buddhism, practice meditation,

and complete community service projects at two animal farm rescue organizations gave the students a chance to practice community service albeit cleaning out animal pens! Yvon Chouinard said 'True adventure begins when everything goes wrong' which Team Osprey adopted wholeheartedly when their bus broke down and they spent four unplanned days camping in rural Pennsylvania. At this time, practicing the Trekkers mantra of being in the moment turned the tables to make a small catastrophe into an opportunity for spontaneity and deepening friendships.



"The world has many cultures and ideas, and everyone can spread the light of their insight. It's a really big world out there."

"I realized how big the world is and how sheltered we are in Maine. It was really amazing to see the big cities, but also very eye opening to see poverty, and other things on such a large scale."



Urban Expedition February 2018

Teams Beacon and Atlas explored historical sites and city life in Boston, Philadelphia, and Washington D.C. over 10 days during February school break.

After walking the Freedom Trail in Boston with a guide, the teams met up in Camden, New Jersey, home to Trekkers' sister organization, Urban Trekkers. During their visit, students discussed similarities and differences in their home communities and openly explored topics of racism and civil rights. A tour of the city helped Trekkers students grasp the enormity of cultural differences in our country. Highlights of the expedition included a tour of the Naval Academy in Annapolis, the Natural History Museum, Museum of American History, Arlington National Cemetery, and the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. On their way back up the East Coast students spent another night outside of Philadelphia where they toured Eastern State Penitentiary to learn about the history of mass incarceration in our country. In between visiting historical and cultural sites, students spent time reflecting on their experiences through discussion and personal journaling.

FROM THE 'HOOD TO THE WOODS

Our annual from the 'Hood to the Woods program was designed to provide Trekkers high school students with the opportunity to engage in cross-cultural awareness raising with our sister organization, Urban Trekkers, based in Camden, New Jersey. Through meaningful relationship building and purposeful expeditions, students practiced civil discourse and shared appreciation for Maine's natural resources.

Cross America Expedition

February and July 2018

For the first time in Trekkers history, a group of 10th-grade students made the decision to forgo their much anticipated 'Cross America expedition to participate in disaster relief work for a neighborhood affected by Hurricane Harvey in Houston, Texas. Team Everest spent the first three days of their trip working with SBP, an organization that deploys volunteers and workers to areas affected by natural disaster, in three homes where they mudded sheetrock, painted, and installed flooring. After three days of labor, the group traveled to San Antonio for a rodeo, concert, and spelunking. Next they moved on to New Orleans to experience

local foods, explore, and learn about the bayous and swamps. They also visited the headquarters of SPB which began in New Orleans as a response to Hurricane Katrina. Returning to Houston, the group wrapped up their trip by working with the pastor of the Bethel Baptist Church distributing water and cleaning supplies to the most affected neighborhoods. When students join Trekkers in 7th grade, it is the anticipation of the 'Cross America trip that often drives their decision. Along the way relationships, team dynamics, maturity, seeing the world through others eyes, and building compassion changes priorities. The decision to spend February break

helping others speaks to the power of the Trekkers experience.

In July, Team K2 embarked on Trekkers more traditional 'Cross America trip visiting three national parks, performing community service at the Grand Valley Catholic Outreach Soup Kitchen, learning about wildfires, examining petroglyphs, exploring cliff dwellings at Mesa Verde, and getting dressed in the dark for a sunrise hike at Independence Pass on the Continental Divide. Throughout the trip, students practiced their deep reflection skills using the vast landscape of the West as a mirror for their own lives.



“I’ve realized that I love helping people and that I want to make Trekkers a large part of my life beyond my student experience.”



"The trip let me realize that there is SO much out there for schools and it's okay not to know what to do. The trip really helped me get an idea of what I want to do post high school."

College and Career Expedition

April 2018

Teams Allagash and Penobscot visited a total of 26 colleges, trade schools, and gap year programs during their 10-day excursion. The trip took them throughout Maine, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Vermont, and New York. Students visited several schools attended by Trekkers alumni where they got an inside peek into college life. Included in the tour was a visit to City Year in Boston to learn about gap year opportunities, including service in AmeriCorps, as well as a visit to a military academy.

Throughout the 11th grade year, Trekkers students learn to recognize and appreciate their personal strengths and goals. Each student works to define what success means for them and the tools and traits they'll need to be successful and happy.

LEAP

Our LEAP (Launching empowered and aspiring professionals) was established five years ago to better prepare 10th, 11th, and 12th-grade students for college, trade school, and the professional workplace. LEAP works in conjunction with the 11th grade trip to teach students tactical skills they need to realize their aspirations, apply for jobs, complete a college application, weigh educational loan options, and enter the workforce.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING

What does it mean to be a leader? This question is at the core of Trekkers' Leadership Training Program for students in the 11th and 12th grade. This program provides students with the opportunity to learn, reflect, and discuss what it means to be a Trekkers community and global leader through a series of overnight leadership retreats. After participating in these leadership training opportunities, students put that knowledge to use by participating as a student leader on the 7th, 8th and/or 9th-grade expeditions.

Rites of Passage March 2018

Rites of Passage is the grand finale of the Trekkers experience. Students spend five days together reflecting on adolescence and how those experiences define who they are and who they want to be as they enter adulthood. Through this reflection of their past, students prepare for a 36-hour wilderness solo. For both students and the leaders, the experience is deeply moving and poignant as experiences of extreme closeness counter balance the realization that this is the final experience of a six-year journey.

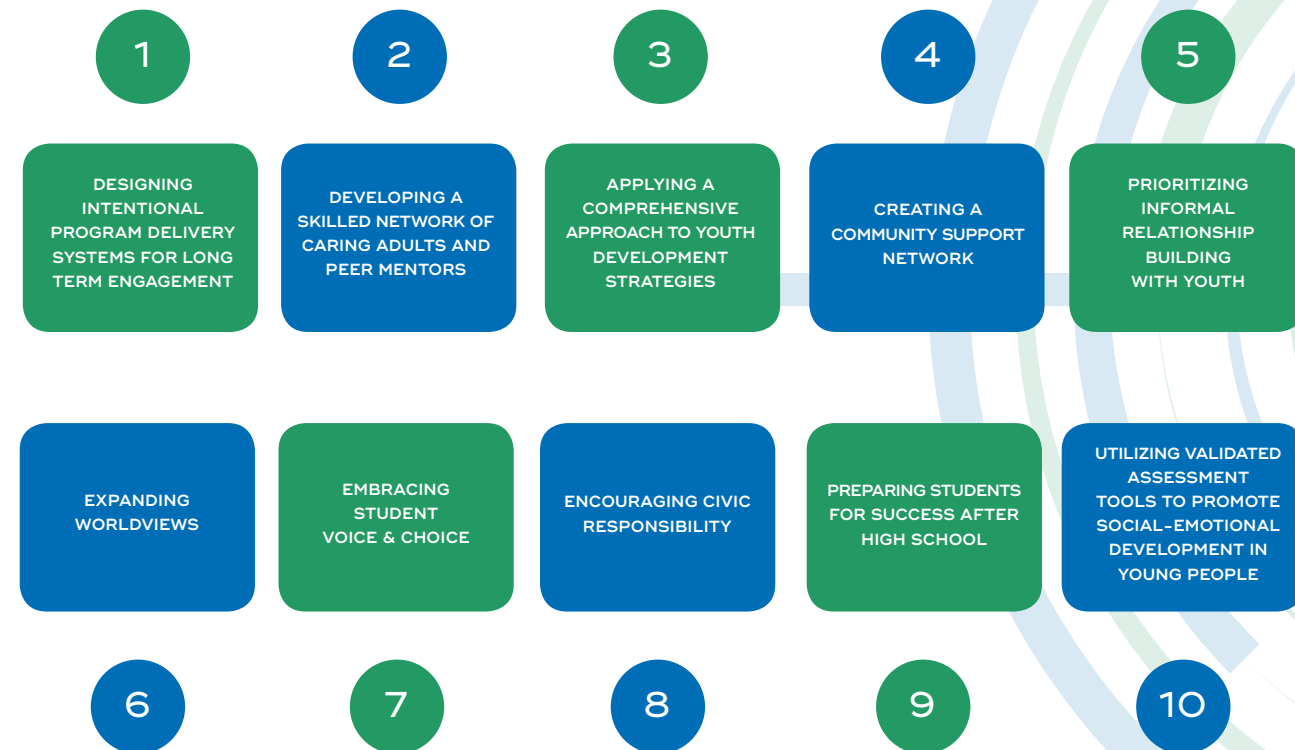
This year, both expeditions took place at Stump Sprouts in western Massachusetts. March in New England can be extreme, which held true for this expedition, with single-digit temperatures and one of the season's biggest snow storms. Students were prepped very thoroughly on safety precautions before beginning their solos which included reflective writing, writing a personal mission statement, and making a parting gift for another Trekker.



"The solo is a terrific culminating experience that will result in memories that will last a lifetime."

TEN PRINCIPLES

The Trekkers model is based on our Youth Programming Principles – a flexible, responsive, model for nurturing social and emotional development that honors students for who they are and what their potential makes possible.



TREKKERS TRAINING INSTITUTE

In 2016, we launched the Trekkers Training Institute (TTI) with the goal of advancing the field of youth development. Using our experiences and principles of youth programming, TTI is dedicated to improving outcomes for young people by providing training, coaching, and professional development opportunities that are based on some of the most effective, tested techniques and principles.

With a commitment to meeting young people and the adults that care for them where they are, our work is driven by the idea that relationships are critical in keeping youth on an aspirational trajectory and therefore vital for the future of thriving communities.

TTI piloted its first training program in partnership with the Emanuel & Pauline A. Lerner Foundation's Aspirations Incubator, a mentoring program focused on developing the postsecondary goals of young people in Maine, in the summer of 2017. The pilot

project brought together eight staff from youth development organizations across the state of Maine for a three-month intensive training in the Trekkers Youth Programming Principles.

Concurrent with the Aspirations Incubator launching programs across the state, TTI furthered its influence by expanding activities in 2018 to include training and coaching opportunities for practitioners in the field of youth development, mentoring, and education.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:
www.trekkersinstitute.org



Programs Don't Change Lives, Relationships Do

With guided support from caring adult mentors, Trekkers students work hard, have fun, form lifelong relationships, expand their world views, take supported risks, build resiliency, and acquire the skills they need to identify and realize their aspirations.

Be a caring adult mentor in a young person's life by volunteering today!

We are tremendously grateful for the generosity of the many individuals, businesses, charitable organizations, foundations, and local communities who make our work possible.

Join Trekkers in investing in young people and the future of Maine.

Visit www.trekkers.org to learn more.

If you are associated with a Foundation or Donor Advised Fund or interested in making a gift of stock, please contact us. Adding Trekkers to your IRA, Will, or Life Insurance Policy is a wonderful way to leave a legacy and impact the next generation. For more information, (207) 594-5095.

IN FY18, TREKKERS
BENEFITED FROM
THE SUPPORT OF
225 VOLUNTEERS
WHO COLLECTIVELY
DONATED 6,944
VOLUNTEER HOURS
IN SUPPORT OF
OUR MISSION.

Board of Directors

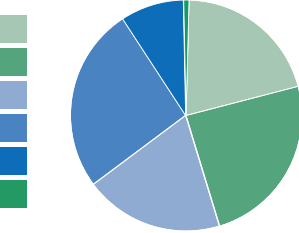
- Stuart Rich—President
- Dee Megna—Vice President
- Doug Erickson—Treasurer
- Alyssa Rolerson—Alumna, Secretary
- Jack Carpenter—Founder
- Susan Grover
- Bryson Cowan King—Alumna
- Mike Hersom
- Makaila Hickey—Student
- Kathleen Meil
- Wyatt Winchenbaugh—Student
- Larry Schooley
- Amie Hutchison—Executive Director



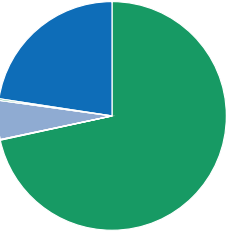
Financial Review

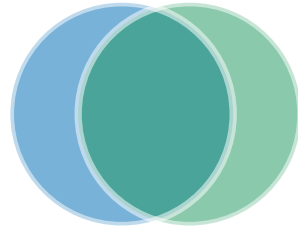
FY18 was an exciting year of programmatic growth for Trekkers and the Trekkers Training Institute. We continue to benefit from diverse revenue streams and a growing network of individual and business support.

REVENUE	
Student Dues	\$100,582
Grants	\$120,000
Organizational Fundraisers	\$95,556
Contributions	\$123,476
State and Government Contracts	\$43,250
Other Income	\$2,063
Total	\$484,927

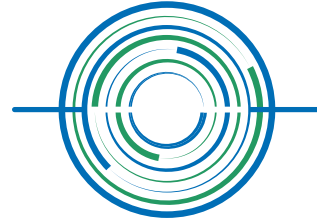


EXPENSE	
Program	\$365,900
Fundraising	\$25,180
Admin	\$118,969
Total	\$510,049





trekkers
TRAINING INSTITUTE



trekkers

Cultivating the inherent strengths of young people through
the power of long-term mentoring relationships

www.trekkers.org | 58 Park Street, Suite 202 Rockland, ME 04841