A large natural rock archway made of reddish-brown sandstone dominates the center of the image. A group of approximately 20 people, including men, women, and children, are posing for a group photo on the flat rock surface in front of the arch. The background shows a vast, arid landscape with more rock formations under a clear blue sky. The overall scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.

trekkers

ANNUAL REPORT

2024/2025



trekkers

Dear Trekkers Friends,

For more than three decades, Trekkers has been rooted in a simple but powerful idea: when young people are surrounded by consistent, caring relationships, they thrive.

In the past year, we've seen students build the kind of resilience, confidence, and a sense of belonging that will carry them far beyond their time in the program. As our community evolves, it has never been more important to prepare students to view change not just as a challenge, but as an invitation to reflect, improve, and grow. At Trekkers, we embrace change as part of the journey. It challenges us to deepen our commitment to what we do. In the following pages, you'll see how we are meeting this moment and preparing for the year ahead through:

- Our ongoing partnership with Oceanside High School to provide programming for alternative-education students
- The successful completion of our capital campaign, which has already funded the purchase and buildout of our new bus, Dottie
- Continued training for staff to deepen our ability to create to spaces where students and community partners feel welcomed and supported

The strength of this community runs deep. In every student finding their voice, every volunteer offering their hands, and every supporter standing beside our mission, we are reminded that even as the world keeps changing, connection endures.

Thank you for walking with us through each new chapter. With your partnership, Trekkers continues to flourish – not in spite of change, but because of it.

In Community,

Stephanie Welch
Executive Director

Jessie Davis
Board President



“Trekkers has made me more confident in myself and in my ability to interact with peers and community members. It has also given me the opportunity to make memories with my team and explore places very different from where I grew up.”

Zoe Hufnagel (bottom right),
Trekkers Student Board Member,
Class of 2027



2024-25 PROGRAM SNAPSHOTS

EDUCATIONAL COMPONENTS

- ADVENTURE
- WILDERNESS
- ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION
- CULTURE
- COMMUNITY SERVICE



Top Right: Team Squaliform volunteering at Food for Children Food Pantry in Manchester, NH
Bottom Right: Team Meridian 7th grade Acadia trip hike, Cadillac Mountain



ADDITIONAL OFFERINGS

- NOVA ALT ED PROGRAMMING AT OCEANSIDE HIGH SCHOOL
- STUDENT LEADERSHIP, OPEN TO 11TH-12TH GRADE STUDENTS
- RURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM, OPEN TO 10TH-12TH GRADE STUDENTS

Left: Team Meridian, 7th grade trip, rock climbing at Otter Cliffs, Acadia National Park

ORGANIZATION UPDATES

NOVA

Trekkers continued to collaborate with Oceanside High School to offer “mini-expedition” programs to the Alternative Education program, NOVA. Twice a week, NOVA students and teachers joined Trekkers staff during the school day. Together, they explored the outdoors, contributed to community service, and discovered local cultures and professions, all while practicing social-emotional learning. Though each session lasted only two hours, the program included over 60 hours of out-of-classroom curriculum designed to foster belonging and awareness of community resources.

Highlights included volunteering at AIO Food and Energy Assistance, working with farmers at Erickson Fields, studying natural sciences at the Maine Wildlife Park, and creating art with visiting CMCA artists. Each activity was grounded in Trekkers’ proven framework, helping students see themselves as capable, valued, and connected to a larger community.

Trekkers partnered closely with Oceanside High School staff and local organizations to provide mentoring and meaningful experiences for vulnerable youth. We are proud this successful program is continuing in the 2025–2026 school year.



NOVA students harvesting potatoes at Erickson Fields in Rockport



NOVA students reading to toddlers at The Good School in Rockland

ORGANIZATION UPDATES

New Sliding Scale Fee Structure

We are excited to announce a new sliding scale fee structure for the 2025–2026 program year to increase access and equity for our students. In response to growing economic pressures and limited time and resources among families, Trekkers made the decision to replace student-led fundraising events with a flexible fee model that allows families to contribute what they can. While these events were meaningful traditions over the years, they had become increasingly difficult for families to support.

We've already received positive feedback from families. One Trekkers parent shared, "As a lower-income family, it's comforting to know my kids can participate even though I can't contribute much monetarily." This decision reflects Trekkers' commitment to meet students and families where they are. We look forward to learning more about its impact in the months ahead.

Creating Inclusivity

Ahead of the 2025–2026 program year, staff completed a two-day training with the National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI), supported by the Rocking Moon Foundation. Developed through years of work by Trekkers' Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee, the training addressed key learning priorities for staff – including how to foster a welcoming environment, build cultural competence among students and volunteers, facilitate non-violent conflict resolution processes, and implement anti-bullying strategies.

NCBI, a nationally recognized leader in fostering inclusive environments, used a Train-the-Trainer model to equip staff to share their knowledge with future team members, volunteers, and the broader community.

Staff Transitions

This year brought meaningful transitions for Trekkers. In 2024, we welcomed three AmeriCorps members—alumni Kamryn Prior (returning for a second term), Clara Dale, and Emily McKnight. AmeriCorps remains central to our success, and we are grateful for their service. At the transition of the AmeriCorps term in September 2025, we welcomed Trekkers alum Moe Mitchell as the newest AmeriCorps member.

We said goodbye to Deputy Director and Interim Executive Director Kate Elmes, whose six years of leadership included guiding a successful capital campaign and helping bring on our new Executive Director, Stephanie Welch. Her first hire was Nicole Pomeroy, now leading Development. Nicole hit the ground running by organizing Trekkers' largest annual fundraiser, Fired Up, and positioning us for a strong year.

We also bid farewell to Kaleb Robinson—former student board member, long-time volunteer, and beloved Program Manager—who will support Team Crux through graduation. He passes the torch to Ryker Weaver, our newest Program Manager. As an alum, former student board member, and dedicated volunteer, Ryker brings invaluable experience to the team.

We are profoundly grateful to all who shape Trekkers' journey.



A student from Team Wobbegong setting up camp for his 12th grade Rites of Passage 36-hour solo expedition



Team Crux in front of our beloved bus, Lucy

New Bus & Campaign Updates

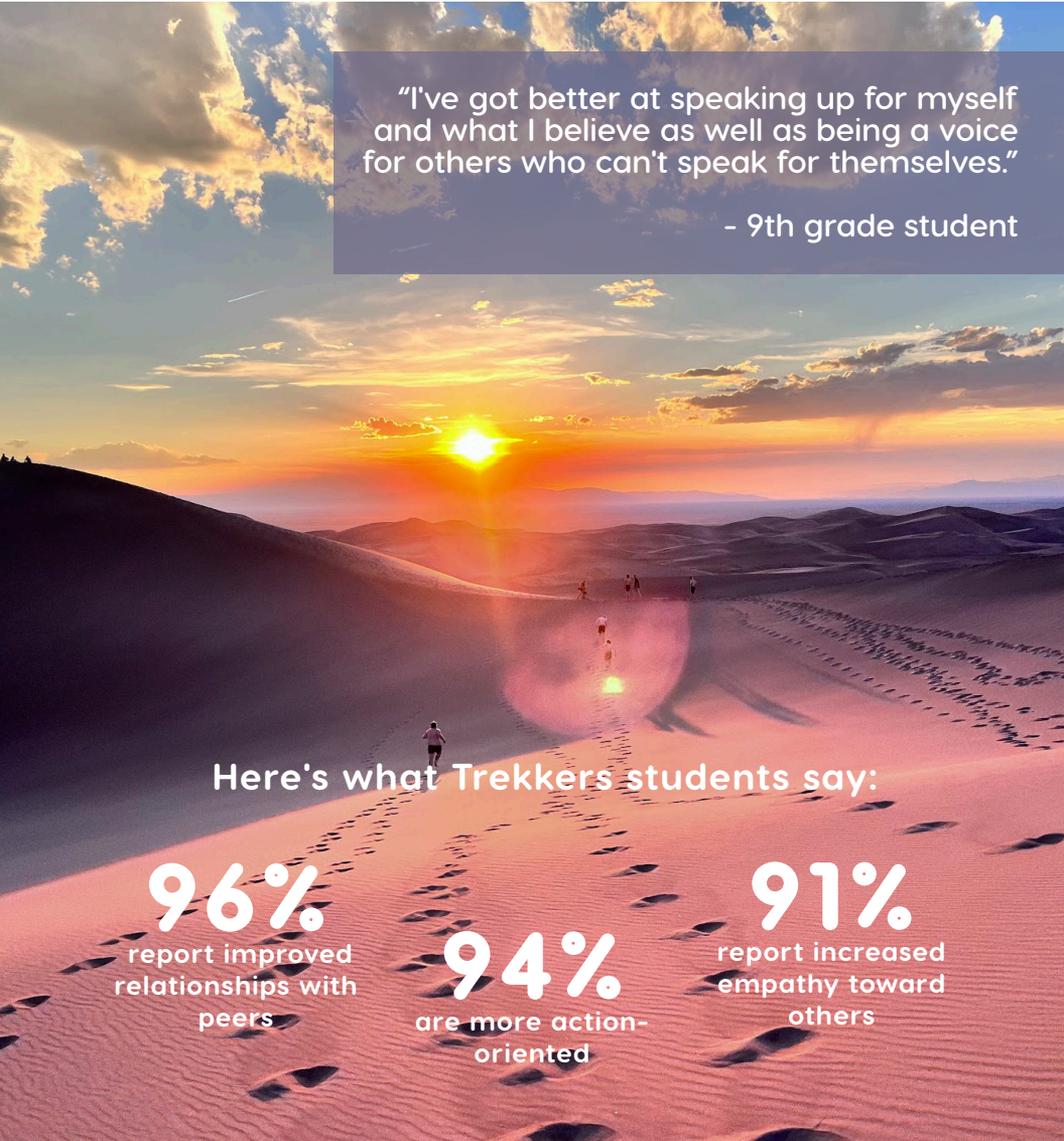
Thanks to the Road Ahead Capital Campaign, Trekkers purchased a gently used bus in May, marking a new era in expedition travel. We refreshed its school bus look with fresh blue and green paint, added custom woodwork by Appenzeller Woodworkers, and benefited from expert advice from long-time program volunteer and engineer Will Morrison and former Board Chair Stu Rich. A community naming competition gave the bus its perfect name: Dottie. She debuted on Team Crag's 12th grade trek to New Hampshire in December. As the first purchase of the capital campaign, Dottie will keep Trekkers rolling for years to come.

The bus will directly and immediately impact programs, providing much-needed capacity to transport students and be their home away from home. In addition, we have been making smaller improvements to our building and staff workspaces while we await the USDA's approval of architectural details for larger-scale campus improvements, a final step in finalizing the grant.

CREATING COMMUNITY

At Trekkers, we create community through cultural immersion and acts of service, as well as by amplifying voice and choice within teams. Every team, from 8th-12th grade, has built a team charter, written a full value contract,

and made consensus decisions about where to go and what to do. With a platform to voice opinions, each team feels a sense of agency as they observe their impact on the world.



"I've got better at speaking up for myself and what I believe as well as being a voice for others who can't speak for themselves."

- 9th grade student

Here's what Trekkers students say:

96%

report improved relationships with peers

94%

are more action-oriented

91%

report increased empathy toward others

Team Meridian, 7th grade trip, rock climbing at Otter Cliffs, Acadia National Park

"[On expedition] I didn't think I could make it to the top but I did because I pushed myself hard."

- 10th Grader

BUILDING RESILIENCE

Trekkers students build resilience when they encounter challenges and actively push themselves outside their comfort zone. This can mean rock climbing through a fear of heights, having the courage to share opinions with a group, or

taking time to reflect before acting. As our students transition to adulthood, they are equipped to navigate challenges with confidence, adapt to new environments, and persevere in the face of adversity.



Students from Team Katmai hiking the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, Colorado

Here's what Trekkers students say:

86%

say they are more optimistic

85%

report increased ability to persevere

87%

report improved reflection skills

"The expedition has made me have a more calm approach to my choices in the future. I feel more confident about the path I will follow."

- 11th Grade Student



7th grade Team Meridian canoe adventure, Mount Desert Island



Team Katmai enjoying a sunset during their 10th grade Cross-America expedition, Woodland Park, CO

DEVELOPING ASPIRATIONS

Trekkers encourages students to see a world of possibility when they think about their future. Teams explore various pathways to success (like college, career, and other options) but also discuss ways to make life fulfilling. Students visit Canada and get to see themselves in another country. They hear from people with a variety of perspectives, from being immersed in a French-speaking country to learning from small business owners about their paths. 11th and 12th graders are invited to become Student Leaders. With mentor training and opportunities to practice community leadership, they can apply what they learn.

Exposure to Professions & Skills

- Alumni Professional Panel
- Life Priorities Brainstorm
- Resumé Writing Workshops
- College Visits

Here's what Trekkers students say:

93%

report increased interest in learning

69%

report increased academic motivation

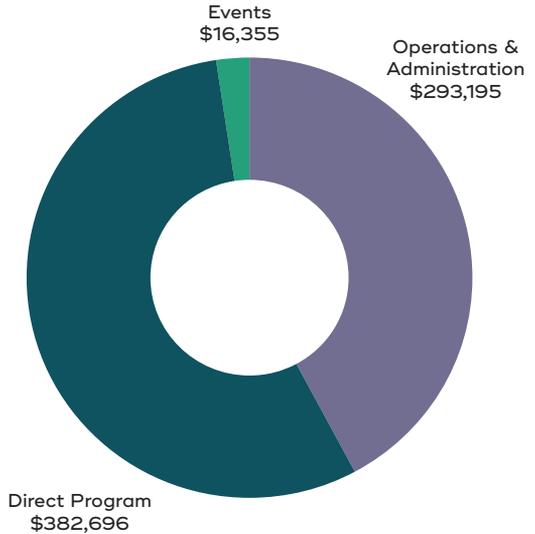
91%

report improved critical thinking skills

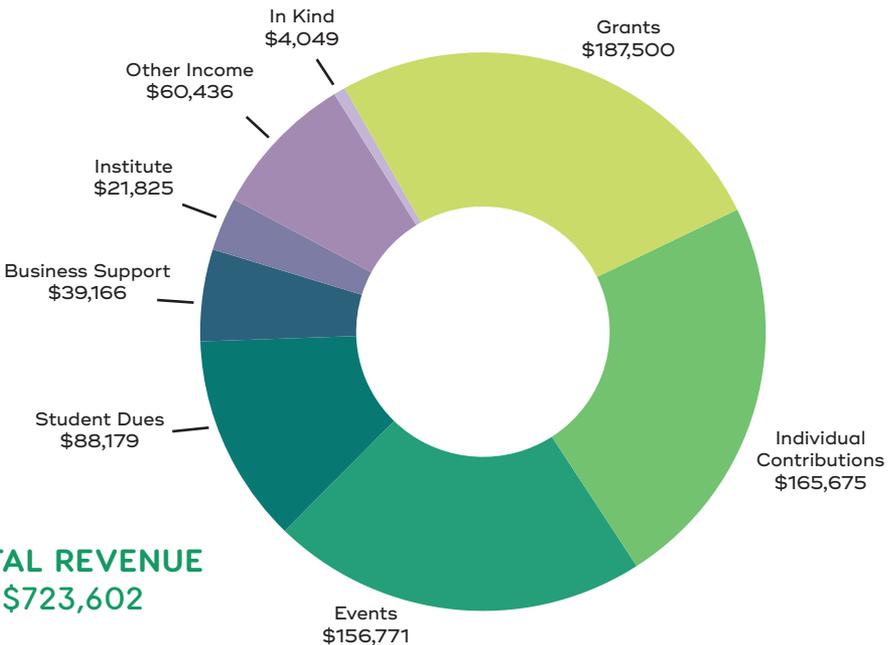
FY24/25 FINANCIAL REVIEW

Trekkers remains in a strong financial position. Careful fiscal management allowed us to end the year ahead of our net operating income goal, even amid some revenue shortfalls. Thanks to our successful capital campaign, Trekkers holds adequate restricted funds to meet the grant match required to complete our planned campus improvement projects. Our strong finance committee, engaged funders, and diverse revenue streams position Trekkers for long-term stability and flexibility to meet the evolving needs of students, families and our community.

TOTAL EXPENSES \$692,247



TOTAL REVENUE \$723,602



WAYS TO GIVE

Join Trekkers by investing in young people and the future of Maine!

Donate Today

Donate or learn more about gifts of stock at trekkers.org/donate

Monthly Gifts

Trekkers' Compass Club is a meaningful plan for helping local youth chart their future. An automatically deducted monthly gift in the amount of your choosing provides Trekkers with the consistent support we need so we can do the same for our students.

You can set up an automatic, recurring gift at trekkers.org/donate or by calling (207) 594-5095.

Carpenter Legacy Circle

Adding Trekkers to your IRA, will, or life insurance policy is a wonderful way to leave a legacy and impact the next generation. If you are interested in naming Trekkers as a beneficiary, please call us at (207) 594-5095.

For more information on ways to give, please call (207) 594-5095 or email Nicole Pomeroy at nicole@trekkers.org.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jessie Davis, President
Pete Rand, Treasurer and Trekkers Parent
Alyssa Landrith, Secretary and Trekkers Alum
Melissa Carr
Makaila Hickey, Trekkers Alumna
Zoe Hufnagel, Current Trekkers Student
Laura Miller, Trekkers Parent
Evan Riley, Current Trekkers Student
Jesse Rutter, Trekkers Parent
Yvonne Thomas
Jack Carpenter, Emeritus Founding Member

STAFF LEADERSHIP

Stephanie Welch, Executive Director
Diane Sternberg, Program & Training Director
Nicole Pomeroy, Director of Development

Platinum
Transparency
2025

Candid.



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

Team Katmai's sunrise hike to Delicate Arch in Arches National Park, Utah

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