

It's More Than Just One Day.



ANNUAL REPORT 2011

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**The Youth Frontiers Board of Directors and staff were saddened by the loss of board member Peter Benson on October 2, 2011. As President of the Search Institute, Peter was best known for developing the 40 Developmental Assets®, which are the building blocks that kids need to grow into healthy adults. Our thoughts are with Peter's family and friends. We're grateful for the legacy that Peter leaves and his contribution to kids nationwide.*

Special thanks to outgoing board members Tony Enrico, Jeff Heegaard, Steven Kennedy, Scott Lutz, Mike Maney and Colleen Needles Steward.

"Youth Frontiers is first on our list of nonprofits. We support YF because we believe their work changes lives every day. We know they make a difference that starts with one life and reverberates through schools and communities."

– Carol Culp

"Youth Frontiers develops the character backbone within our children that is so critical to our community's future."

– Chuck Mooty

"Supporting Youth Frontiers is one of the few direct things you can do to ensure your kids have a safe and supportive school environment. We donate in honor of our grandchildren because we know YF will teach them the skills to resolve conflict and make the right decisions."

– Marialice Harwood

Getting an 'A' in Life



Joe Cavanaugh, Founder & CEO

Dear Friends,

In 1987, I set the course for Youth Frontiers: meaningful, daylong retreats focused on inspiring good character – asking kids to see differently, to look into their hearts, to do what is right and to stand up for what is good.

Seven schools called me that entire first year.

This school year, Youth Frontiers will work with seven schools every day.

You have helped us build a stable, healthy organization that serves tens of thousands of kids each year – making their lives at school better, and therefore, their lives at home and in their communities better.

With your support of program evaluation, we are learning how to build a more comprehensive model that extends the impact of our retreats beyond one day. You have helped us remain innovative and relevant to the growing needs of our schools.

With your support of program development, we are now offering two new retreats for educators.

- **The Mind Retreat:** A partnership with David Walsh's Mind Positive Parenting™ that unpacks the brain science behind why connection and community-building matter for schools.
- **The Purpose Retreat:** A day of renewal and commitment for educators around their chosen vocation of teaching the hearts and minds of our youth.

With your support of our community events like the Ethical Leadership in Business Luncheon, we are continuing the important dialogue with business and educational leaders about how raising ethical kids matters.

On behalf of kids who just want to go to school and learn without being tormented, teased or bullied, **we are grateful.** On behalf of kids who gain the courage to stand up for what is right and what is ethical, **we are grateful.** On behalf of educators who are re-energized to do their important work, **we are grateful.**

Thank you for your investment and your belief in our good mission – to change the way young people treat each other in schools so that today's young people can make tomorrow's world better.

All the best,


Joe Cavanaugh
Founder & CEO



IT'S US. IT'S STANDING UP. IT'S STANDING ALONE. IT'S ME. IT'S HONORING TEACHERS. IT'S US.
IT'S FINALLY SAYING YOU'RE SORRY. IT'S A DAY FOR THE UNDERDOG. IT'S US. IT'S ME. IT'S STANDING UP. IT'S US.
IT'S US. IT'S STANDING ALONE. IT'S YOU. IT'S YOU. IT'S COURAGE.
IT'S KINDNESS. IT'S US. IT'S YOU. IT'S YOU. IT'S COURAGE.
STANDING TOGETHER. IT'S COURAGE.



Liz, with Dover-Eyota counselor Katie.

One Act, One Million Ripples

We often hear stories from past retreat participants about how their Youth Frontiers experience years ago changed their lives. Recently, Liz, an 11th grader at Dover-Eyota High School in Dover-Eyota, Minn., shared with us about the ripple effect of her commitment to courage.

When I was on the Courage Retreat as a seventh grader, I committed to stand up for others who were bullied. But I didn't realize what that meant until I was a ninth grader on the school bus and I saw a younger student getting picked on. She started crying, so I went over to her to see what was wrong.

The younger student told me that a boy on the bus was teasing her because of her weight. I remembered my Courage Retreat, my commitment to courage. So I went over to the boy and told him that he needed to stop. After that, the younger student didn't get picked on again.

The commitment Liz had made two years earlier stuck with her. Her choice to stand up for what's right rippled out in ways that we could not even imagine ... because it's more than just one day.

Partnership Academy

Mike Ducar first heard about Partnership Academy Charter School in Richfield, Minn., when he was a member of the education committee of Project for Pride in Living, the school's sponsor when it launched. When Mike and his wife Debbie found out about Partnership Academy's great work, they designated a portion of their annual gift to Youth Frontiers to donate a Kindness Retreat to the school's fourth graders.

"Both organizations are doing great work," says Mike. "It was an easy decision to link our support of YF to Partnership Academy."

The mission of Partnership Academy (PA) is to empower students. PA strives to make a difference with underserved youth by teaching them the skills they need to be successful in their futures, says Ashley Leary, Academic Coordinator and Master Teacher at PA. To the Ducars, that goal fit like a puzzle piece with the work YF does. "Teachers in schools are less able to teach appropriate social behavior today with the significant financial cutbacks. YF helps fill the gap with retreats that focus exclusively on this issue."

The Ducars' donation came at a perfect time for PA. Ashley says that when YF called with the Kindness Retreat donation, she and her staff had already been considering the program for a class that really needed it. "I was so thankful!" she says.

What's more is the impact the retreat had, says Ashley. "Many students left with a realization about what life at school is like for them and their peers. ... The grade formed a special bond during the retreat that carried through the rest of the year. Behavior problems and bullying decreased as a result of the retreat."

The effect was felt not only on Partnership Academy's students, but also on Debbie Ducar, who went to observe the retreat. "Seeing those teachers in tears as they came over to thank us for supporting the retreat was the sweetest gift one could receive!"



Ashley Leary (back left) introduces Mike and Debbie Ducar to Partnership Academy students who participated in the Kindness Retreat.



Mike and Debbie Ducar meet some of the Partnership Academy students who participated in the Kindness Retreat.



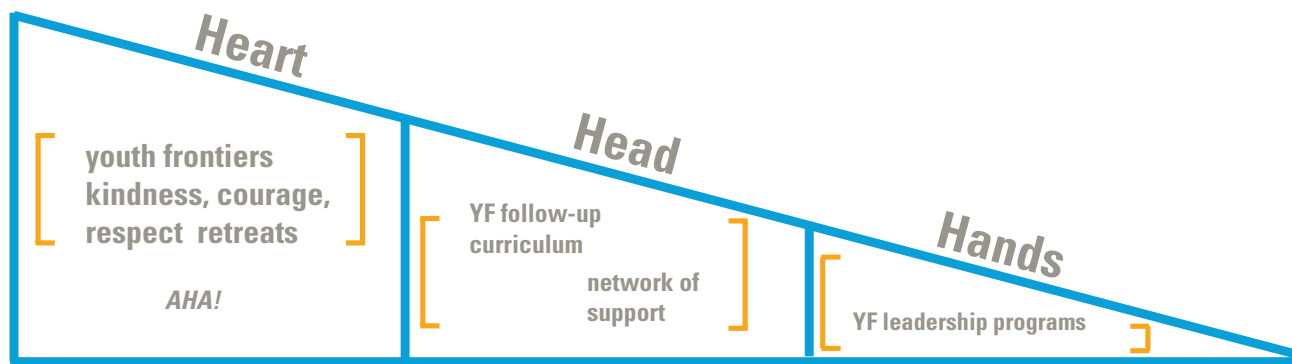
BEYOND ONE DAY: THE YOUTH FRONTIERS SCHOOL CHANGE MODEL

IT'S COURAGE. IT'S YOU. IT'S STANDING ALONE. IT'S YOU. IT'S STANDING UP IT'S STANDING ALONE. IT'S STANDING TOGETHER. IT'S US
 IT'S YOU. IT'S STANDING UP IT'S DOING WHAT YOU KNOW IS RIGHT. IT'S A DAY FOR THE UNDERDOG IT'S STANDING UP IT'S ME. IT'S STAND
 IT'S A DAY FOR THE UNDERDOG IT'S US. IT'S KINDNESS. IT'S ME. IT'S YOU. IT'S US. IT'S ME. IT'S A CHANCE TO CHANGE. IT'S COURAGE
 IT'S STANDING TOGETHER. IT'S US. IT'S A CHANCE TO CHANGE. IT'S ME. IT'S HONORING TEACHERS. IT'S STANDING UP IT'S A CHANCE TO CHANGE.

At Youth Frontiers, we believe we are a critical piece of the puzzle in developing cultures of respect in schools where students can thrive socially, emotionally and academically. Youth Frontiers retreats engage the **heart** – the affective component of character development. Our retreats act as a **catalyst** because students experience the AHA! moment of why a respectful school culture matters. When their hearts are engaged, students are empowered, and learn social-emotional competencies like empathy, perspective-taking and responsible decision-making. Youth Frontiers also provides follow-up lessons to keep the momentum of the retreat going. Furthermore, we provide retreats for educators to help build a respectful, professional learning community where relational trust among faculty is at the core.

Youth Frontiers also engages students in the behavioral element of character development through two student leadership development experiences: 1) as mentors on our core retreats and 2) through the Responsibility Retreat, which challenges 11th graders to take ownership for a culture of respect at school.

As the model below shows, YF is part of a network of support for schools, and our programs are used in conjunction with other curricula to develop a safe, connected and healthy school environment.



Heart: Inspiring

YF Retreat: Your students experience the AHA! moment of why a respectful school culture matters. When their hearts are engaged, students are empowered and learn the following Social-Emotional Learning competencies:

1. Empathy
2. Perspective-taking
3. Responsible decision-making

Head: Educating

YF Follow-up Curriculum: Your teachers get an *a la carte* menu of options to keep the momentum of the retreat going and to go deeper into issues that are affecting your students.

Network of Support:

1. PBIS
2. Olweus
3. Responsive Classroom
4. Restitution
5. PACER (parent resources)

Hands: Leading

Ongoing Leadership

Development: Your student leaders experience continuous opportunities to realize their potential. Your parents and teachers receive access to resources to become better caregivers themselves and build a positive school community.

1. YF Responsibility Retreat for students
2. Service learning opportunities
3. LINK crew (leadership development)
4. YF Honor Programs for educators

Based on the Character Education Partnership concept of HEART/HEAD/HANDS: For students to live a life of character, they need to care about (HEART), understand (HEAD) and act upon (HANDS) their core ethical values (www.h3.acoe.org/). The "YF Wedge" Model is adapted from Zanzig's Wedge Model.



Research Findings

Youth Frontiers recently completed a three-year evaluation project with the University of Minnesota's Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI). Through a diverse array of methodologies, we learned the following:

1. YF retreats enhance social-emotional learning (SEL) competencies like empathy, perspective-taking and conflict resolution.

- a. Eight of 10 participants believe that since the Kindness Retreat, their peers are more likely to help someone who is being picked on (2010).
- b. In focus groups, students reported the retreat leaders' storytelling and other students' remarks during the retreat's closing activity helped them gain perspective (2011).

2. Students feel more connected to classmates and teachers, and to school.

- a. Nearly seven out of 10 participants believe that since the Kindness Retreat, less popular students feel more a part of the school (2010).
- b. After the Respect Retreat, more students reported feeling a part of their school than before the retreat (2011).

3. YF retreats promote prosocial, positive behaviors at school.

- a. After the Courage Retreat, fewer students reported that bullying was a problem at their school than before the retreat (2011).
- b. Administrators believe YF retreats "reinforce values, make students better citizens and develop leaders in society" (2011).





EARLY ETHICS EDUCATION: YOUTH FRONTIERS AND THE CORPORATE COMMUNITY



HealthPartners CEO Mary Brainerd and Ecolab CEO Doug Baker speak at YF's March 2011 Ethical Leadership in Business Luncheon.

Each year, corporate fraud costs the United States nearly \$1 trillion due to ethical lapses and greed. A faulty moral compass clearly threatens our economy and your bottom line.

As we prepare our young people in schools today to become our workforce tomorrow, there must be a focus on what we're calling "Early Ethics Education."

Ensuring our young people obtain math, reading and science skills is only half the battle. If our kids grow up with holes in their consciences or an inability to communicate and work well with others, our economy and community will suffer.

At Youth Frontiers, we are forging a deliberate partnership between the business community and schools, to help create a new generation of courageous and principled leaders.

In part, this work is accomplished by the hundreds of character development programs YF delivers for nearly 90,000 students each year.

But it's also about shining a light on the very best

role models in our business community – and passing their wisdom down to the kids Youth Frontiers works with each day.

In March 2011, Youth Frontiers hosted its second-annual Ethical Leadership in Business Luncheon at the Minneapolis Club. More than 200 corporate leaders and educators gathered for a candid conversation led by moderator Hank Shea, Senior Distinguished Fellow at the University of St. Thomas School of Law and Youth Frontiers Board Member.

Our world-class panel included three outstanding examples of Minnesota business leaders modeling exemplary character: Doug Baker, CEO of Ecolab; Mary Brainerd, CEO of HealthPartners; and Ross Levin, President of Accredited Investors and Star Tribune business columnist.

Baker, Brainerd and Levin emphasized that what young people learn on the playground and in the school hallways has everything to do with what kind of future we have together. If young people learn to value themselves and their principles and to respect each other, they will carry that strong character from the classroom to the boardroom.

The event – and subsequent 11th grade Responsibility Retreats that focused on cultivating youth leadership – was generously sponsored by LifeTouch; Robins, Kaplan, Miller & Ciresi; Best Buy; Hank and Chris Shea; the C. Charles Jackson Foundation and 19 other generous table sponsors and hosts.

It's about impact.

Last school year, your financial support made it possible for Youth Frontiers to work with **86,000 students and educators!**

Because you chose to give to Youth Frontiers:

- 19,365 fourth and fifth graders apologized to a classmate for past hurts and pledged to be kinder to each other.
- 30,718 seventh and eighth graders committed to acts of courage like standing up against bullying and prejudice.
- 21,609 ninth and 10th graders committed to respecting themselves and others more.
- 11,651 student and parent mentors developed leadership skills and forged relationships with students who need more caring adults in their lives.
- 1,420 educators honored their colleagues for their tireless service to young people.

All of us at Youth Frontiers are humbled and grateful that you committed yourself to our work last school year. We hope you'll stand beside us as we grow to work with 90,000 more students and educators.



Seventh grade students discuss how to stand up for courage on a Courage Retreat at their school.

The Ripple Effect of Your Investment

"We don't see a lot of other places where basic values are being taught. Youth Frontiers does a fabulous job and we like the results.

We realize there are lots of ways to reach kids – various organizations do it. But Youth Frontiers does it very effectively. You get more bang for your buck. We look for organizations that will do the most they possibly can with our contribution. Youth Frontiers is a great opportunity to give back and they make a true difference!"

– Fritz and Glenda Corrigan



Youth Frontiers donors Fritz and Glenda Corrigan.



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

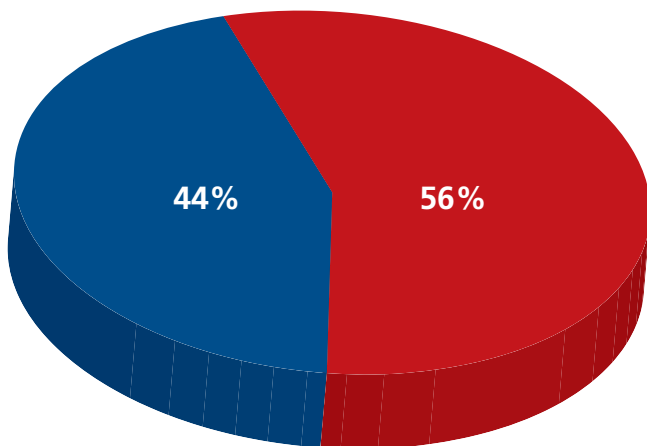
Income Statement

	TOTAL FY 2010	UNRESTRICTED 2011	TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED 2011	TOTAL FY 2011
Revenue	\$ 2,279,009	\$ 2,472,911	\$ 6,000	\$ 2,478,911
Net Assets Released	\$ 0	\$ 6,750	\$ (6,750)	\$ 0
Expenses	\$ 2,305,851	\$ 2,427,450	\$ 0	\$ 2,427,450
Change in Net Assets	\$ (26,842)	\$ 52,211	\$ (750)	\$ \$51,461

Balance Sheet

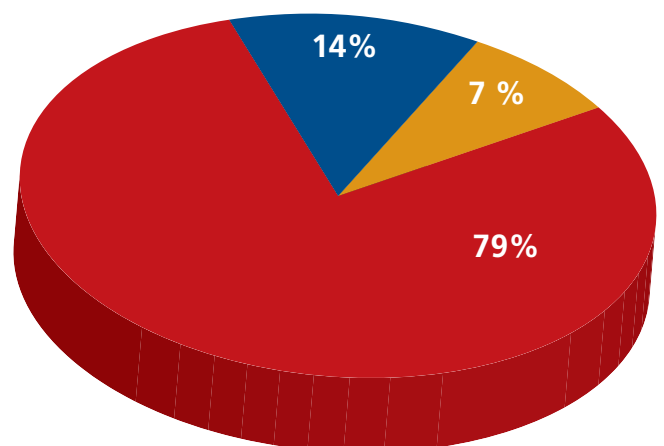
	JUNE 30, 2010	JUNE 30, 2011
Unrestricted Funds and Working Capital	\$ 363,335	\$ 423,473
Temporarily Restricted Assets	\$ 6,750	\$ 6,000
Net Property and Equipment	\$ 38,163	\$ 30,236
Total Net Assets	\$ 408,248	\$ 459,709

REVENUE FY 2011



- Program Fees \$1,382,379
- Donations \$1,096,532

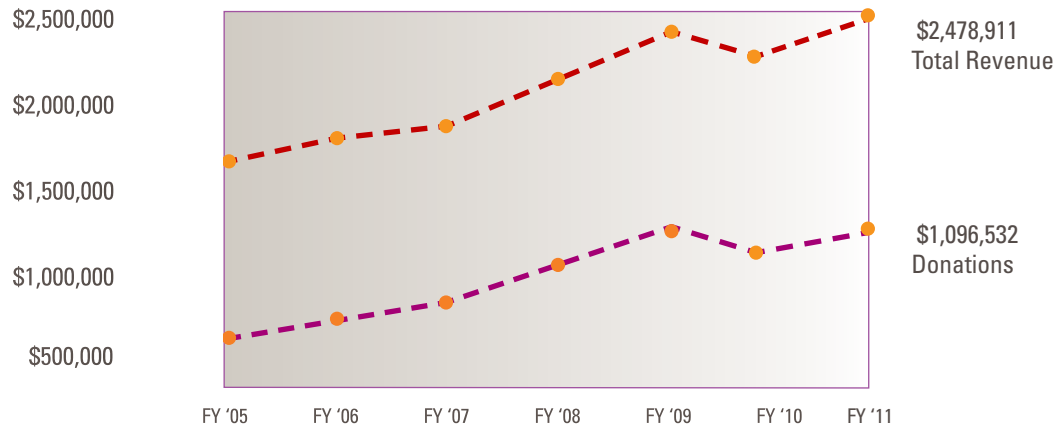
EXPENSES FY 2011



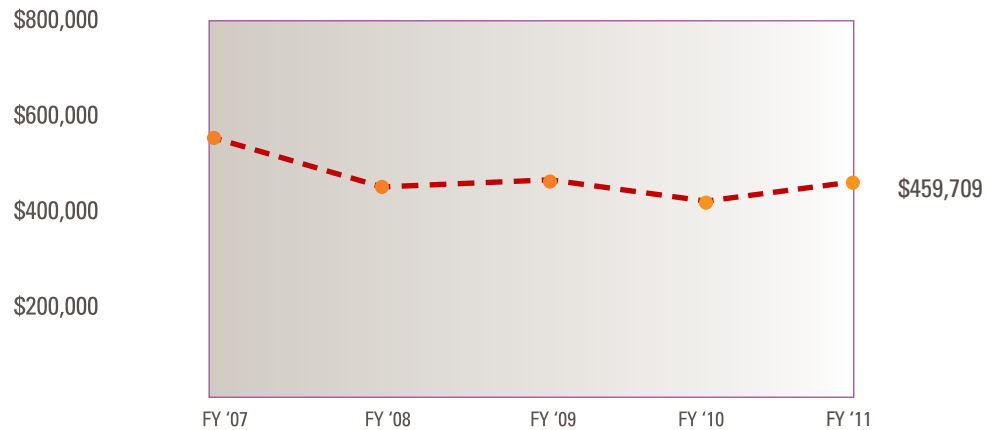
- Program \$1,927,388
- Development \$342,444
- Mgmt & General \$157,618

For fiscal year July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011

Revenue



Net Assets

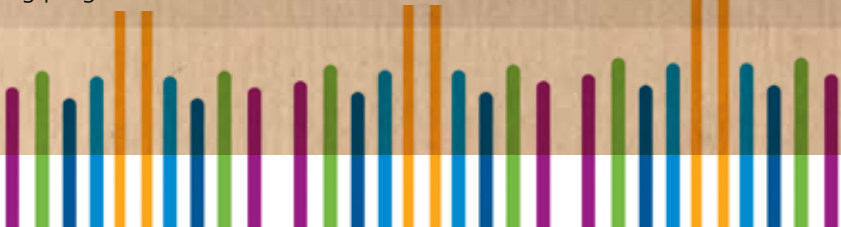


A note from our CFO, Jack Lee

At Youth Frontiers, we maximize the impact of our programs by ensuring a healthy financial position. This means having a strong business model and managing our finances carefully. Program fees generate approximately 60 percent of our revenue, with our generous individual, foundation and corporate funders supporting the remaining 40 percent.

Through fiscally conservative practices and increased school outreach and fundraising, we have built stable cash reserves. In 2007, the board approved a three-year investment of \$300,000 to fuel growth and build upon our three strategic initiatives at the time. Although the economy worsened substantially shortly after these plans were approved, this investment helped us fund a comprehensive research project with CAREI, which proved the efficacy of our model and has helped improve the quality of our retreats. It also helped us invest in hiring directors to run our sales and fundraising departments. These investments resulted in a retreat sales growth of 25 percent and a fundraising growth of 40 percent. We were able to accomplish this while utilizing significantly less than the amount originally approved by the board and we emerged from this period as a stronger organization in a stronger financial position.

We ended our fiscal year 2011 having met our net budget for the ninth consecutive year and we maintain a responsible cash balance. This, along with continued support from donors and schools, allows Youth Frontiers to deliver outstanding programs.





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This year, we said goodbye to Tom Cavanaugh, Founder & CEO Joe Cavanaugh's father and our dear friend. It was our honor to work beside Tom during his countless volunteer hours at Youth Frontiers. The following gifts were made in Tom's memory to continue his legacy of investing in young people. Thank you for your generosity and thoughtfulness.

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Founded in 1987 by Joe Cavanaugh, Youth Frontiers is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization based in Minneapolis, Minn. We partner with schools to build cultures of respect where students thrive socially, emotionally and academically.

Our vision is to change the way young people treat each other in every hallway, lunch line and classroom of every school in America so that today's young people can make tomorrow's world better.

Research shows that a positive, healthy social-emotional environment is critical to students' academic success and a reduction in negative behaviors like bullying. Visit www.youthfrontiers.org for more information.

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