



10,000

# CATALYSTS:

OUR NEXT CHAPTER

2025 Impact Report





Letter from our

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Dear Friends,**

At Dream Volunteers, we spend a lot of time thinking about moments—the brief but powerful points when a young person encounters a new place, a new perspective, or a new sense of what’s possible. Over the past year, I’ve been struck by how often those moments become momentum: curiosity turning into commitment, exposure into empathy, and experience into action.

In a world that can feel increasingly divided, our community continues to move in a different direction. In 2025, young people across the Dream Volunteers network stepped forward as learners, collaborators, and leaders—crossing borders, building relationships, and engaging with communities in ways that deepen understanding and create lasting impact. Each service trip, scholarship, workshop, and youth-led initiative reaffirmed a simple truth at the heart of our mission: meaningful change begins when young people are trusted, supported, and connected.

This vision is not about scale for scale’s sake. It is about depth, continuity, and exponential impact. Each experience strengthens cross-cultural understanding, enables youth-led collaboration, and opens pathways to education. When multiplied across years, countries, and communities, these moments become catalysts—fueling lasting change within families, schools, and neighborhoods, both locally and globally.

None of this happens alone. Dream Volunteers’ progress is made possible by a community of supporters like you who believe in young people even before they fully believe in themselves. Your partnership sustains the trust, resources, and relationships that make this work possible—and ensures that the next generation is equipped not just to inherit the world as it is, but to help shape a world they believe in.

As you read this Impact Report, I invite you to see it as both a reflection and an invitation: a look at what we’ve built together, and a call to continue this journey toward a more connected, equitable, and youth-led future. Thank you for being part of Dream Volunteers’ story—and for helping turn moments into momentum.

My sincere gratitude,

**Brian**

## BRIAN BUNTZ

- **Celebrating:** 5,000 participants in 5 years achieved 2 years early
- **The ripple effect:** One student creates exponential change across families and communities
- **Looking ahead:** 10,000 participants by 2030
- **Our commitment:** Building cross-cultural understanding, enabling cooperative action, expanding educational access





# MISSION & VISION

## MISSION

Connect and educate young people across the globe to address today's most pressing challenges in and beyond their own communities.

## VISION

An equitable and sustainable world where all youth believe in their power and responsibility to change the things they are unwilling to accept.



# 2025 BY THE NUMBERS

## 18 YEARS OF CUMULATIVE IMPACT



**5,000**

program participants  
(Goal achieved 2 years early!)



**188,175**

service hours



**1,891**

scholarships awarded



**144**

international high school graduates



**585**

community impact projects completed



**10** countries

where participants have made an impact

## 2025 ANNUAL IMPACT

- 559 participants this year
- 151 Young Dreamer scholarships
- 7,325 service hours completed
- 20 Community Impact Awards
- 24 Global Citizenship Awards





# BUILDING A WORLD WE BELIEVE IN TOGETHER

Equity, inclusion, and access have always been at the heart of our mission—regardless of the challenges we face. Thanks to your generosity, we continue to break down barriers by providing travel scholarships for students who might not otherwise have the opportunity to experience service travel. At the same time, we remain deeply committed to our international students, ensuring they receive the academic scholarships and resources needed to pursue their education and create lasting change in their communities.

Despite political rhetoric, diversity, equity, and inclusion remain central to our work. Now more than ever, we are strengthening our investment in global citizenship and cross-cultural understanding, recognizing that the ability to connect, collaborate, and serve across differences is essential. This year, we are expanding access to our programs by building new school partnerships, broadening our impact, and welcoming more students into a community-driven network dedicated to service, leadership, and cultural exchange. As part of this commitment, we continue to foster a safe and inclusive space for LGBTQIA+ participants on our service trips.

We believe that every trip location should serve as a home away from home, where all students feel seen, valued, and supported. By establishing policies that promote respect and belonging, we ensure that every traveler can fully engage in the transformative experience of service and cultural immersion. We are also proud to recognize the exceptional young people who are leading change in their communities and beyond through our Community Impact and Global Citizenship Awards.

As we enter our 18th year, our commitment to building a world we believe in is stronger than ever. With your support, we will empower 1,000 new student participants over the next three years, equipping them with the tools, experiences, and resources to make a difference. Together, we are shaping a future defined by empathy, opportunity, and collective action. Together, we truly are building a world we believe in.



10,000 by 2030

## OUR THEORY OF CHANGE IN ACTION

### Why 10,000?

Our research shows that young people who participate in Dream Volunteers programs become catalysts for change. By doubling our reach to 10,000 participants by 2030, we're not just growing—we're deepening the three core impacts that drive our Theory of Change.

### IMPACT 1: Building Cross-Cultural Understanding

*Theory of Change: Maintaining relationships with people of different cultural backgrounds fosters empathy, reduces fear of "other," and creates confident global citizens.*

#### How we're expanding this impact:

- New community partnerships in Guatemala, Costa Rica, Ghana, India, and Vietnam
- Student Advisory Board connecting more US students with int'l Young Dreamers
- Enhanced post-trip engagement that keeps domestic and international participants connected long term

**What this means: By 2030, we'll facilitate 10,000+ sustained cross-cultural relationships that break down barriers and build global citizenship.**

## IMPACT 2: Enabling Cooperative Community Action

*Theory of Change: Youth who take cooperative action through service are inspired to continue meaningful community impact work.*

### How we're expanding this impact:

- Monthly/quarterly service projects led by Student Advisory Board
- Expanded mini-grant program empowering more youth-led initiatives
- Alumni networks creating peer mentorship and collaborative projects

**What this means: By 2030, we'll empower thousands of young people to lead hundreds of community projects that improve conditions locally and globally.**

## IMPACT 3: Expanding Educational Access

*Theory of Change: Education alleviates poverty, improves social conditions, and equips youth to transform their communities.*

### How we're expanding this impact:

- Completed infrastructure projects (El Astillero Phase 2: computer lab, additional classrooms, library)
- Additional Young Dreamer scholarships funded
- Travel scholarship expansion removing financial barriers for deserving US students

**What this means: By 2030, we'll provide 500 new academic and travel scholarships, plus permanent educational infrastructure serving entire communities for generations.**



# SPOTLIGHT: THE ALUMNI IMPACT STUDY

## What Happens After the Trip? We Asked Years Later

### THE FINDING:

9 out of 10 Dream Volunteers alumni specifically credit their service trip experience with shaping their future career direction.

### WHAT THIS MEANS:

The impact of our programs doesn't end when students return home. Years later, they're pursuing careers in education, healthcare, environmental conservation, social work, and nonprofit leadership—fields where they can continue serving communities.

### THE RESEARCH

Between January and April 2025, we conducted surveys with hundreds of students 1 year after their program participation and interviews with students 3+ years after. The findings validate our Theory of Change: transformative experiences create lasting ripples across careers, communities, and generations.



## IN THEIR WORDS:

### ELI AGUAYO

Public Service Professional

I trace my academic focus directly to the meaningful connections I made during my service experience abroad.

### ADAM ZWAANSTRA

Attending medical school in the fall

Looking at my career, looking at going into medicine... that service aspect, that being able to help people, being able to make an impact on a community, is something that I've always wanted my career to do."

### SAUMYA PATEL

Pursing a Master's in Psychology

"I think Dream Volunteers taught me a lot about how to talk to people who don't come from my same background and have meaningful conversations...I don't think I would have learned skills like that empathy and communication—if I hadn't immersed myself in a different culture for a longer period of time."

# STUDENT ADVISORY BOARD IN ACTION



## FROM PARTICIPANTS TO PROGRAM LEADERS

In 2019, we launched our Student Advisory Board to amplify youth voice in program development and create leadership opportunities for domestic alumni. By 2030, our Student Advisory Board will double in size, with 30+ members driving initiatives that strengthen the entire Dream Volunteers community.



# STORIES OF IMPACT



**PRISCILLA (GHANA)**

*Breaking Barriers Through Education*

Priscilla, a Young Dreamer from Ghana and a participant in the program for several years, exemplifies leadership and community responsibility. Seeing trash scattered throughout the streets of her village made her deeply uncomfortable and inspired her to take action. Alongside her friends, she organized a community clean-up to improve local environmental conditions. Though small in scale, the initiative created meaningful change and raised awareness about proper waste disposal. Through her time in the program, Priscilla has grown in confidence and leadership, standing out among her peers as a dedicated young changemaker committed to improving her community.

Service Trip Participant Anika launched an action pledge project dedicated to supporting the mental well-being of only-children in their teenage years, a group research shows is significantly more vulnerable to anxiety and depression. Drawing from her own experience as an only child, she created workshops and panels with mental health professionals to provide tools, community, and validation for youth who often feel overlooked.



**KEVIN (GUATEMALA)**

*Breaking Barriers Through Education*

Kevin, a high school Young Dreamer from Guatemala, is breaking barriers through education. Despite limited access to clean water, no internet for school assignments, and working during vacations to support his family, he has distinguished himself academically among his peers, earning a place on his school's honor roll. Guided by a strong passion for learning, Kevin hopes to attend university and use his education to inspire his family and create lasting change in his community.



**“Manos que Transforman”** Anthony, a Young Dreamer from Bajo San José, Costa Rica, saw a need in his community and chose to act. Anthony applied for and received a mini-grant, giving him the opportunity to turn his vision into reality. His inspiration was deeply personal: his 8-year-old sister lives with a cardiovascular condition that requires regular physical activity to strengthen her body and improve her health. Like many children in the community, she lacked a safe, clean place to play and exercise.

With the support of our program, Anthony led the creation of Manos que Transforman, transforming an underused space into a welcoming recreational area. Trash bins now help keep the space clean, painted structures ensure its longevity, and children can safely climb, play, and strengthen their bodies together. Manos que Transforman shows what’s possible when we invest in young leaders and trust them to transform their communities.

**ANTHONY (COSTA RICA)**  
*Environmental Stewardship*

**Service Trip Participant Cecily launched a Bilingual Service Club at her school that brings multilingual students together to practice English while participating in environmental service projects across the Bay Area. By combining language learning with hands-on environmental work, the club created an inclusive, multicultural space where students could build confidence, community, and leadership skills.**



When Hieu first joined the Dream Volunteers scholarship program, he was a quiet and reserved student. Coming from a disadvantaged background, he often doubted himself and rarely spoke up in the meeting. Speaking in front of others was something he tried to avoid. Like many students in similar situations, Hieu had the potential—but not yet the confidence to show it. Through the program, Hieu was given more than just academic support. He was placed in an environment that encouraged him to think differently, express his ideas, and believe in his own voice. Step by step, he began to change. Participating in group discussions, presentations, and meeting the Volunteers from the USA helped him overcome his fear of speaking in public. Over time, Hieu became noticeably more confident. He started raising his hand, sharing his opinions, and even supporting his peers during group activities. His mindset shifted—from seeing limitations to seeing possibilities.

**HIEU (VIETNAM)**  
*Building Confidence & Leadership*



Payal, a Young Dreamer in India, believes that no child should be invisible when it comes to education. She led her cohort of fellow Young Dreamers through a community service initiative focused on identifying children who were not enrolled in or regularly attending school. Payal organized small teams to conduct door-to-door visits in her community, speaking directly with families to understand barriers to education and collect vital information.

Beyond data collection, Payal worked closely with community members—raising awareness, building trust, and reinforcing the importance of education. Her efforts helped ensure that children who had been overlooked were seen, counted, and connected back to learning opportunities. Payal’s project is a reminder that when we invest in young leaders, entire communities move closer to equity and opportunity.

**PAYAL (INDIA)**  
*Building Confidence & Leadership- leading the project of door-to-door visits in slum areas*

# OUR DONORS MAKE CHANGE POSSIBLE

## CHAMPIONS CIRCLE:

*EMPOWERING GLOBAL CHANGEMAKERS*

Carol Glover  
Ted Hannig  
Mike Hutton & Donna MacIsaac  
Farah & Jason Klein  
Luisa & Mustafa Ozgen  
Loren & Robyn Shalinsky  
Sam Sobell  
Lucy Southworth

Kristin & Yao Sun  
Dara & John Tynefield  
Diane & Victor Valenzuela  
Brett & Melody Westervelt  
Karen White & Paula Folawn

## LEADERS CIRCLE:

*TAKING YOUTH BEYOND THE CLASSROOM*

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Karelle Celestin & Sean Quinlan  
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Kara Sun  
Ha Tran  
Paula Uccelli  
Sophia Vicent  
Dave & Grace Yuan

## BUILDERS CIRCLE:

*FOSTERING A GLOBAL LEARNING COMMUNITY*

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Jen & Matt Tyler  
Meng Xu  
Jennifer & Paul Zemanek  
Todd & Olivia Zwaanstra

# OUR DONORS MAKE CHANGE POSSIBLE

## DREAMERS CIRCLE:

### *GENERATING GLOBAL CITIZENS*

Miguel Acosta & Nieves Perez  
Todd Aronson & Genevieve Lee  
Javier & Lori Badillo  
Ralph Baja  
Jimmy & Kacy Baker  
Subodh Bapat &  
Geetha Shankar  
Adam & Veronique Baughman  
Eran Bendavid & Dona Tversky  
Tina Bhatnagar  
Jami & Kim-Trang Blair  
Nathan Blumberg & Tracy Lee  
Eric & Natalie Botto  
Thorsten & Sabine Brants  
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Patricia Selleck  
Arlene Shalinsky  
Paul Single  
Marvin Smith  
Patrick Timons  
Nerissa Van Tuyl  
Trae Vassallo  
Sonia Wadhawan  
Anna Wolde-Yohannes  
Jim Wolford

# RECOGNIZING OUR CHANGE MAKERS

## 2025 Global Citizenship Award Recipients

*Students who participated in 3+ programs over 3+ years*

Adrienne Lec  
Alexa Hengehold  
Anika Warriier  
Arya Yarlagadda  
Caia Scholz  
Charlotte Westervelt  
Clea Limbrey  
Ela Viswanathan  
Gabriel Andrade  
Emma Krikorian  
Jack Smith  
Kaitlyn Sun  
Makenna Harris  
Martina Aliffi  
Nicolas Leventopolous  
Niksa Sheikh-Bahaei  
Senna Hong  
Airealana Williams  
Eva Mock  
Luna Vega Alfaro  
Atessa Gholamy  
Elise Andrade  
Graham Stuart  
Phoebe Chen

## Student Advisory Board Members

**ELISE ANDRADE**  
*12, Palo Alto HS*  
**GABE ANDRADE**  
*9, Palo Alto HS*  
**SOPHIE BLANK**  
*11, Cate School*  
**OLIVER BLUMBERG**  
*12, TAHOE EXPEDITION ACADEMY*  
**JENNA BOTTO**  
*12, Sacred Heart HS*  
**BELLA DOWD**  
*11, Delta School*  
**ATESSA GHOLAMY**  
*11, Menlo Atherton High School*

**PIPER KALINOWSKI**  
*12, Woodside Priory High School*  
**BRYN MERRIDEW**  
*12, Middle College at College of San Mateo*  
**KEERTI RAJ**  
*12, Palo Alto High School*  
**EILA SAWHNEY**  
*12, Woodside Priory High School*  
**KATHERINE TIMONS**  
*11, St. Ignatius High School*  
**GALILEA VALLECIOS**  
*10, Nueva School*  
**ANIKA WARRIER**  
*11, Carlmont HS*

## 2025 Community Impact Award Recipients

*Students who completed Post-Trip Action Pledges*

### Mini-grant completion

**Costa Rica:**  
Anthony  
Xavier Ureña  
**India:**  
Neha  
Anushka  
Payal  
Pooja

### Action Pledge Completion:

**Guatemala:**  
Caia Scholz  
Martina Aliffi  
Adrienne Lec  
Jack Smith  
Mayeli Reyes  
Sajni Gaitonde  
Luna Vega Alfaro

**Costa Rica:**  
Senna Hong  
Cecily Mock  
Elise Andrade  
Gabe Andrade  
Eloise Ihde  
Raagini Arvind

**Vietnam:**  
Phoebe Chen

**Ghana:**  
Sophie Blank

## LEGACY OF SERVICE AWARD

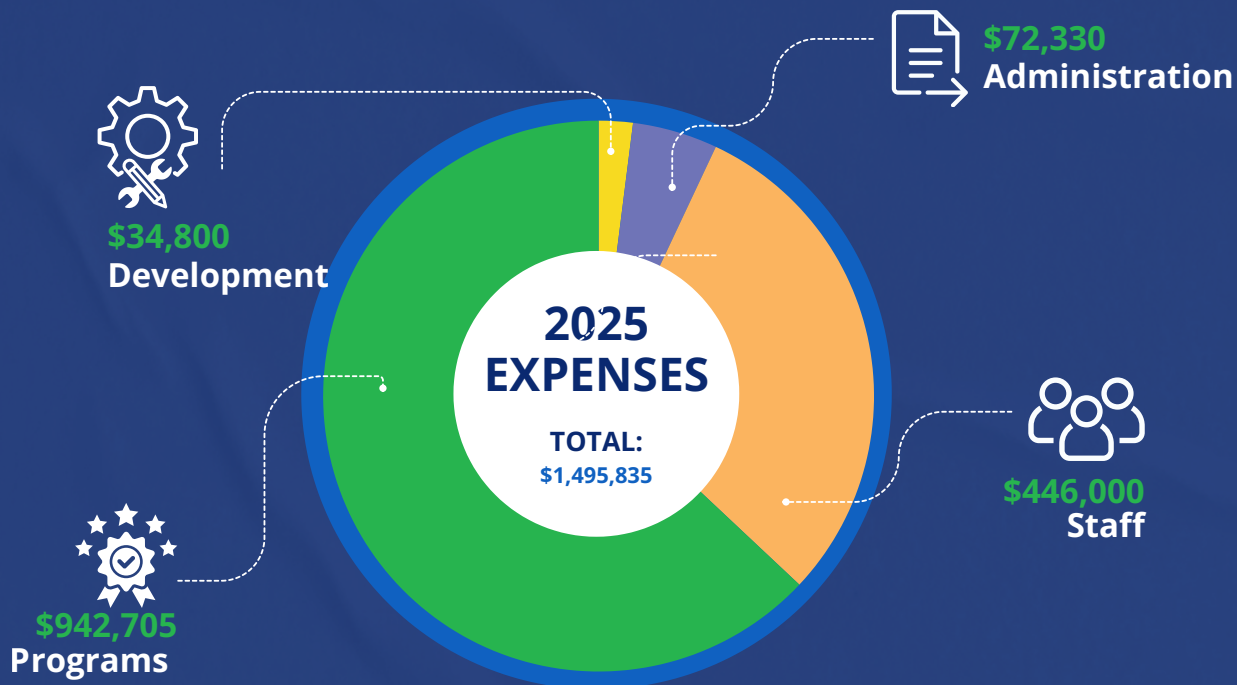
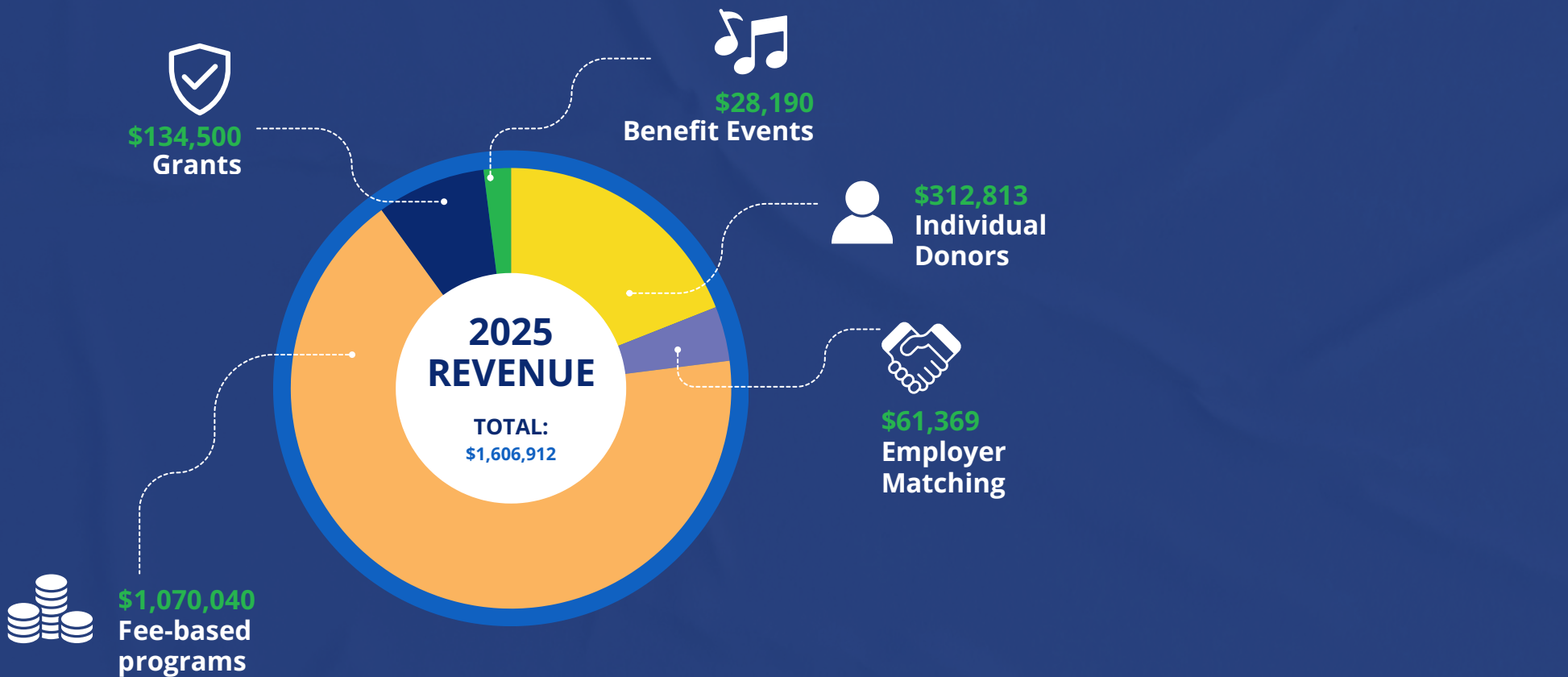
*Awardees:*



**Oliver Blumberg**  
Programs participated in:  
Student Advisory Board,  
Service Trips to Vietnam,  
Ghana, Costa Rica, and  
Guatemala, Action Pledge  
Completion



**Alma Bendavid**  
Programs participated in:  
Student Advisory Board,  
Service Trips to Vietnam  
and Guatemala, Action  
Pledge Completion



\*\*Every dollar invested represents trust in young people --and the ripple effects will continue for generations.