

# By Youth For Youth

Taylor Seale  
Positive Youth Development Educator



Extension  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON  
DANE COUNTY



**BYFY**  
By Youth For Youth

**BYFY**  
By Youth For Youth

**BYFY**  
By Youth For Youth

**BYFY**  
By Youth For Youth

**BYFY**  
By Youth For Youth

**BYFY**  
By Youth For Youth

**BYFY**  
By Youth For Youth

**BYFY**  
By Youth For Youth

ANGELINA  
BYFY

SHARON  
BYFY

ZONA  
BYFY

THE  
BYFY

HANSHIKA  
BYFY

EVELYN  
BYFY

ANDREW  
BYFY

FATIMA  
BYFY

LILY  
BYFY

# BY YOUTH FOR YOUTH (BYFY)

# STRUCTURE & PROGRAM GOALS

## Goals:

- Youth learn about community issues facing young people across Dane County
- Youth philanthropy funding model
- Gain skills in teamwork, deliberation, grant review, and public speaking

## Program Collaborators:

- UW-Extension
- City of Madison
- United Way of Dane County
- Dane County Youth Commission



# PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

## October - December

- Funding Priorities Activity
- RFP Opens
- Site Visits, Guest Speakers

## December - February

- Grant Review
- Deliberations, Voting

## March - April

- Funding Recommendations Presentation
- Awards Ceremony

## Summer

- BYFY Internships



# PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

## 2025/2026 Grant Overview

- 43 applications total
- \$125,505 in requests
  
- \$26,130 in funds available
  - \$14,630 DCYC
  - \$6,000 UWDC
  - \$5,500 City of Madison
  
- Operational funds for expenses
  
- 8 fully funded, 1 partially funded
  
- 78% new awardees
- 45% Madison, 55% Dane County



# PROGRAM IMPACTS



“BYFY is a program where youth are given the opportunity to impact their community by funding different youth programs in the area. It’s a great program to be a part of and helps you understand the needs of our community along with helping others.” – *Past BYFY Member*

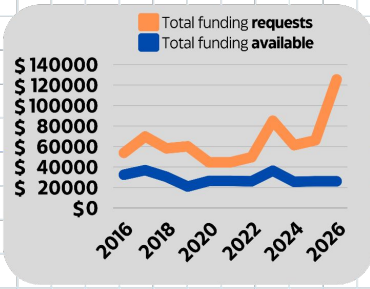
# CELEBRATING 30+ YEARS OF BYFY IMPACT!

## DID YOU KNOW?

BYFY is 1 of 2 youth funding models in the entire state!



**What is BYFY?** By Youth For Youth (BYFY) is an after-school program composed of high school students across Dane County that make investment decisions to support youth-led programming and initiatives. BYFY members analyze data to identify critical issues impacting youth, establish funding priorities, review grant proposals, and recommend funding from County and City grants to support \$3,000 projects developed and implemented by youth to serve youth.



Since 1993, an average of **\$30,000 is available** for BYFY youth members to award. But, an average of **\$71,000 in grant requests** come from across Madison & Dane County annually.

Funding priorities are chosen by each BYFY cohort, but over the years youth have consistently focused on:

- MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT
- RACIAL JUSTICE
- CLIMATE CHANGE
- LGBTQ+ SUPPORT
- POVERTY & FOOD SECURITY



**In 1993**, United Way of Dane County, Dane County Youth Commission, and the Madison Community Foundation work together to establish By Youth For Youth (BYFY), a youth grant review committee that distributes funds based on priorities identified by youth.

**Oscar Mayer** agrees to be the main fiscal sponsor and provide snacks for BYFY meetings.

**In 1995**, the City of Madison creates a Youth Services Coordinator position. They provide administrative support to the BYFY program.

**In 2015**, Kraft closes the Oscar Mayer facility. United Way, the Youth Commission, and the City shift internal funds to fund BYFY. UW-Extension is brought on as the BYFY program leader.



**Today**, UW-Extension, the City of Madison, the Dane County Youth Commission, and United Way of Dane County collaborate together to provide administrative, fiscal, and programmatic support for the By Youth For Youth program.



**\$1,104,313**

AWARDED IN GRANT FUNDING

**542**

FUNDED PROJECTS THAT BENEFIT K-12 YOUTH ACROSS MADISON & DANE COUNTY

**750**

TOTAL BYFY ALUMNI SINCE 1993

**100%**

YOUTH-DECIDED FUNDING MODEL

### Project Highlight:

#### LINCOLN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

"Outdoor Education Kits for Kids" (2014)

Elementary students lead initiatives and hands-on engagement in an outdoor learning laboratory through bird projects, fitness stations, wellness path, and an outdoor kitchen to make healthy recipes, as well as participate in a local volunteer project with seniors.

### Project Highlight:

#### GOODMAN COMMUNITY CENTER

"Summer Fun Backpacks" (2018)

70 backpacks including bus passes, pool passes, movie passes, climbing gym passes, ice cream and food vouchers are distributed to homeless youth in Madison to give them an opportunity to engage in safe summer activities with free vouchers.

### Project Highlight:

#### AVICENNA SOCIETY OF MADISON

"Afghan Refugee Students" (2024)

Supports English language tutoring and education costs for Afghan refugee students with specific needs: such as, flexible scheduling for students who have demanding work hours and are caregivers, have disabilities, and are women.

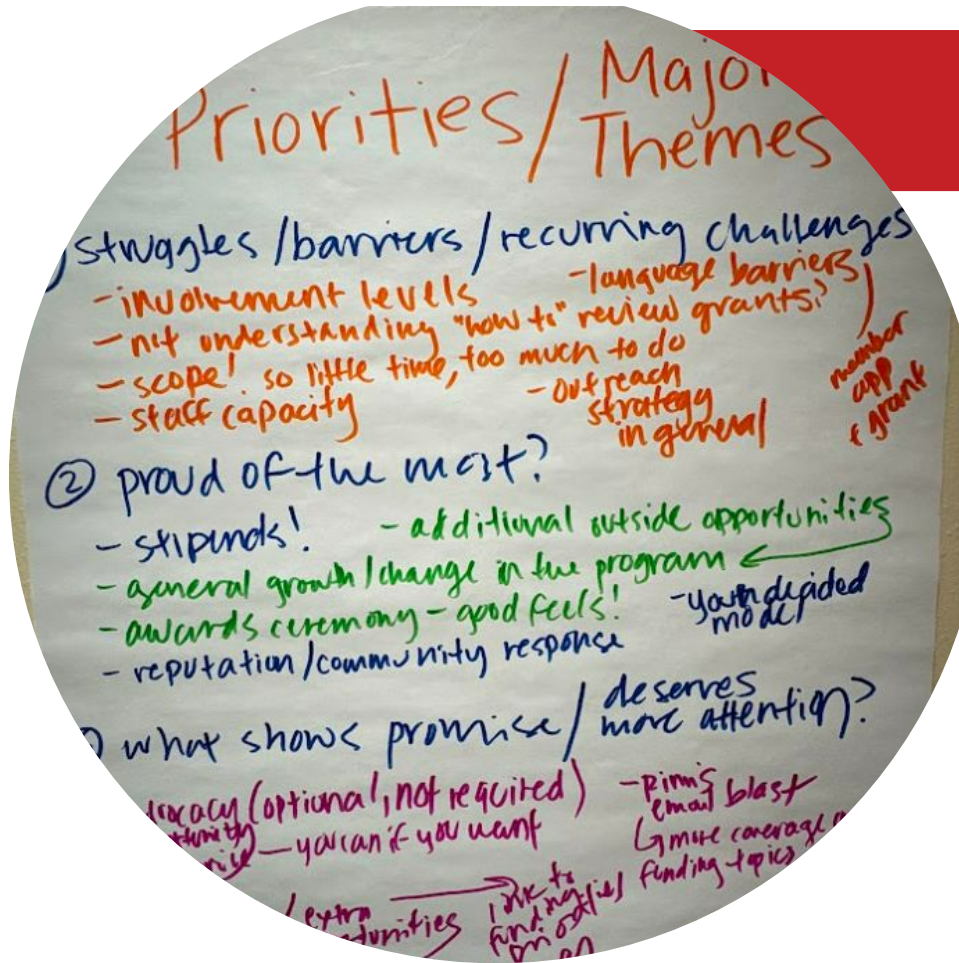
## WHY BYFY MATTERS

In program evaluations, BYFY youth consistently vocalize their personal improvements in **leadership skills, critical thinking skills, facilitation, ability to work in large groups**, as well as gaining a better understanding of youth issues in Dane County and how to address them.

When asked what skills they gained from participating in BYFY, youth said they gained **"teamwork, leadership, and confidence building skills"**, **"collaborative and communication skills in a professional setting and learning how local funding works"**, and **"being able to accept other people's opinions and learn new perspectives."**

When asked what they were most proud of from participating in BYFY, youth said they were proud **"to give funds to people in need and make an impact"**, **"to make new friends in different schools"**, and to **"be a part of the whole process and feel like we made tangible, positive change in our county."**

# NEXT STEPS



- Program evaluation, preparing for 2026/2027 (October)
- QR Code: PBS "Field Notes on Climate" BYFY Episode



# Thank you!

# Questions?

Taylor Seale, Positive Youth Development Educator  
Seale.Taylor@danecounty.gov



Extension  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON  
DANE COUNTY