



## 2025 - 2026 By Youth For Youth Funding Recommendations

We seek your approval of 9 funding recommendations totaling \$26,130 from the By Youth For Youth (BYFY) Committee.

By Youth For Youth is a committee of Dane County high school students that make investment decisions to support youth-led programs and projects in Dane County. BYFY members identify issues impacting youth in Dane County, establish funding priorities, review grant proposals, and recommend funding from County and City grants to support projects developed and implemented by youth to serve youth. The BYFY program is a collaborative effort between UW-Madison Extension, the Dane County Youth Commission, the City of Madison, and United Way of Dane County.

3 sponsors made \$26,130 available for investment:

- Dane County Youth Commission (\$14,630)
- United Way of Dane County (\$6,000)
- City of Madison, Office of Community Services (\$5,500)

In past years, a portion of the funding would be reserved for programming expenses for weekly meetings. Because the 2024/25 BYFY program was held in a hybrid format as well as from generosity from the City of Madison to create an operational fund, 100% of the funding is going towards the selected youth programs and initiatives in Dane County.

The BYFY students worked together to identify and select the priorities below for funding in this year's round of investments, spread the word among youth groups about the availability of funds, and evaluated and deliberated funding requests to recommend funding. A total of 43 projects across Dane County applied for financial support; with the requests totaling \$125,505 (compared to last year, 23 projects applied for a BYFY grant with requests totalling \$66,170). Schools, community centers, non-profit organizations and individual youth were among the applicants.

2025 - 2026 BYFY Funding Priorities:

- Mental Health (*Anxiety, Depression, Suicide Ideation & Self-Harm*)
- Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School (*Belonging, Equity & Inclusion, Bullying*)
- Food Security (*Food Access, Nutrition for Low-Income Youth*)
- Immigration (*Accessing Services & Resources*)
- Sexual Assault (*Prevention, Accessing Services & Resources*)
- Climate Change

The attached list of 9 recommended projects totaling \$26,130 align with these priorities and will directly impact youth, their peers, and their families in their community.

## **2025 - 2026 By Youth For Youth Members**

Zoha Adnan	Madison Country Day
Hannah-Kay Amuzu-Gassou	Edgewood High School
Fatima Romero Alvarado	MMSD La Follette High School
Amogh Avadhani	Middleton High School
Brandon Ballweg	Waunakee High School
Brooke Ballweg	Waunakee High School
Ruth Bawithadim	Sun Prairie West High School
Aditya Behara	Middleton High School
Jailen Clark	MMSD La Follette High School
Denise Espirito Santo Dias	Waunakee High School
Sophia Downs	Cambridge High School
Hanshika JaiPravinKumar	Sun Prairie West High School
Angelina Li	Waunakee High School
Sharon Medina	MMSD West High School
Andry Negovani	MMSD Memorial High School
Kobe Ni	Waunakee High School
Cassy Puntney	Sun Prairie West High School
Christian Rubio Robledo	MMSD La Follette High School
Frances Schaller-Davis	MMSD East High School
Jinal Shah	Middleton High School
Lily Shapiro	MMSD West High School
Evelyn Soukup	Waunakee High School
Jill Thompson	Cambridge High School
Faith Waefler	Belleville High School
Yesenia Naomy Villagomez	MMSD La Follette High School

## **2025 - 2026 By Youth For Youth Staff**

Nathan Beck, City of Madison  
Taylor Seale, UW-Madison Extension  
Michelle Van Asten, United Way of Dane County

### By Youth For Youth 2025/2026 Recommended for Funding

Proposal #	Project Name, Organization	Summary	Priorities Addressed	Youth Involvement	Location	BYFY Sole Funder?	Requested Amount	Recommended Amount
#5	"Nourish & Flourish Initiative" (Dairyland Dancing Diamonds)	Weekly dance/wellness sessions, nutrition education workshops, community food pantry, youth wellness/mentorship opportunities	Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School, Food Security	Yes	Dane County	Yes	\$3,000	\$3,000
#6	"Wisconsin Heights Closegap Initiative" (WI Heights School District)	Training and implementation of "Closegap", a daily digital check-in for students that enables early mental health intervention in school settings.	Mental Health, Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School	Yes	Dane County	No	\$3,000	\$3,000
#12	"Rooted in Community Gardens" (Rooted, Inc.)	Funding supports youth construction of new and damaged garden beds that are used for families to grow their own personal produce.	Food Security, Climate Change	Yes	City of Madison	Yes	\$3,000	\$3,000
#15	"Menstrual Equity Project" (East High School WAVE Club, MMSD)	Funding supports putting menstrual products in all of the bathrooms at East HS, including educational and promotional materials dissemination menstruation equity and access.	Mental Health, Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School	Yes	City of Madison	Yes	\$3,000	\$3,000
#16	"Run/Walk for Sexual Assault Awareness Month" (Imagine Club, Oregon High School)	Educational fundraiser supporting survivors of sexual violence, organizing a run/walk and proceeds are donated to local organizations in Dane County.	Mental Health, Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School, Sexual Assault Prevention	Yes	Dane County	No	\$3,000	\$2,630
#19	"AHA & NAMI 5K Run" (Cardea)	Youth-led community fundraiser run supporting the American Heart Association and National Alliance on Mental Illness.	Mental Health, Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School, Immigration	Yes	Dane County	Yes	\$2,500	\$2,500
#23	"Team Building Through Art Experiences" (Elver Park Neighborhood Center, Wisconsin Youth Company)	Youth-led and designed arts projects and field trips (creating a community mural, story telling, design techniques, 3D printing).	Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School	Yes	City of Madison	Yes	\$3,000	\$3,000
#29	"Plates With Purpose" (Meadowood Neighborhood Center, MSCR)	Student-led community initiative addressing food security and stigma, supporting consistent nutritional support to 35 families and 896 students.	Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School, Food Security	Yes	Dane County	Yes	\$3,000	\$3,000
#38	"Planted with Purpose" (MTZ Charitable Organization)	Increases access to fresh, locally grown produce and engages youth in climate action practices. Youth are involved in the planning, planting, and maintenance of the site.	Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School, Food Security, Climate Change	Yes	City of Madison	Yes	\$3,000	\$3,000
							Grant total:	\$26,130
							Remaining:	\$0
							# of funded proposals	9

## By Youth For Youth 2025/2026 Not Recommended for Funding

Proposal #	Project Name, Organization	Summary	Priorities Addressed	Youth Involvement	Location	BYFY Sole Funder?	Requested Amount	Recommended Amount
#1	"Carving Confidence" (Horizon High School)	Mental health project for youth recovering from substance misuse, youth use the arts to laser/carve affirming, supportive messages into cutting boards	Mental Health	Yes	Dane County	Yes	\$3,000	\$0
#2	"Brothers United" (Verona Area High School)	Funding for a young BIPOC mens club at Verona HS, focusing on self-esteem, healthy lifestyles, and community. Funding would support attending a conference or hiring a guest speaker.	Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School	Yes	Dane County	Yes	\$3,000	\$0
#3	"Project P.E.A.C.E." (Mendota Elementary, MMSD)	Funding for "Breathe for Change" training program for a teacher at Mendota Elementary (SEL + Yoga certification), will select students to be leaders for weekly yoga clubs and whole group lessons.	Mental Health, Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School	No	City of Madison	Yes	\$3,000	\$0
#4	"Food Support" (West High School, MMSD)	Funds support grocery store gift cards to disperse to students in need (approximately 120 gift cards, \$25 each)	Food Security	No	City of Madison	Yes	\$3,000	\$0
#7	"Souls in Bloom" (Latino Student Union, Middleton High School)	Monthly mental health support for latinx youth through storytelling, conversations, and activities (cooking, crafts).	Mental Health, Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School, Food Security, Immigration, Sexual Assault Prevention	Yes	Dane County	Yes	\$3,000	\$0
#8	"Project Food for All Mouths" (McFarland Youth Center)	Food security program where youth can cook larger meals to take home to family, will engage in kitchen utilization skills, and food preparation safety.	Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School, Food Security, Immigration	Yes	Dane County	Yes	\$3,000	\$0
#9	"Riders 4 Race Amity" (R4RA)	Long distance cycling program that incorporates youth leadership, community service, active lifestyles, presentations, community events.	Mental Health, Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School, Food Security	Yes	Dane County	No	\$3,000	\$0
#10	"Building Bridges" (Catholic Charities of Madison)	School-based mental health program for families facing immediate mental health challenges.	Mental Health	No	Dane County	No	\$3,000	\$0
#11	"Powerful Teen Leaders" (Sustain Dane)	Summer youth employment program for teens in Madison, focusing on composting, recycling, food scraps, sustainability, and green careers.	Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School, Climate Change	Yes	Dane County	No	\$3,000	\$0
#13	"Young Samaritans Food Bowls" (Belleville High School)	Provides students with access to food before and after lunch hours (fruit, granola bars, etc)	Food Security	Yes	Dane County	No	\$2,892	\$0
#14	"GSA Field Trip" (Badger Rock Middle School, MMSD)	Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA) field trip to a LGBTQ+ owned business, fostering local business support and community identity and belonging.	Mental Health, Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School	Yes	City of Madison	No	\$1,160	\$0
#17	"Latinos Unidos Leadership Summit" (Verona High School)	Funding for a latinx youth summit, includes guest speakers, activities, and workshops that foster community, identity, and culture.	Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School	Yes	Dane County	No	\$3,000	\$0
#18	"Music Makers Instrument Library" (Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestra)	Funding keeps instruments high quality, which allows students access to them (who otherwise can't afford them)	Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School	Yes	Dane County	No	\$3,000	\$0
#20	"JUSTIFY Youth Summit" (Student Leadership Board, Cooperative Educational Service Agency)	Youth-led summit that promotes mental health, positive youth experiences, and leadership development. Session includes keynotes speakers and workshops.	Mental Health, Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School	Yes	Dane County	No	\$3,000	\$0

#21	<b>"Restorative Justice Mentors"</b> (East High School, MMSD)	Peer to peer mentorship program (East HS paired with students from O'Keefe MS and Emerson ES), to foster connection, belonging, and identity.	Mental Health, Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School, Food Security	Yes	City of Madison	No	\$3,000	\$0
#22	<b>"The Drum that Unites Us"</b> (Huegel Elementary, Kind Leslie Ann Ambassadors)	Cultural support club at Huegel ES, funding supports activities, materials, food, and guest speakers. Weekly club for Latinx students, activities include planning a community service project.	Mental Health, Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School, Immigration	Yes	City of Madison	No	\$3,000	\$0
#24	<b>"La Follette Angel Fund"</b> (La Follette High School, MMSD)	Yearbook purchasing and senior photos assistance program, yearbooks are created by students in the Writing for Media & Publications class.	Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School	Yes	City of Madison	No	\$3,000	\$0
#25	<b>"Fostering Belonging, Equity, Inclusion and Learning Through Afterschool Clubs"</b> (Lake View Community School, MMSD)	Funds support after-school programs free-of-cost for students, also allows students a wide range of choices.	Mental Health, Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School	Yes	City of Madison	No	\$3,000	\$0
#26	<b>"Madym Teen Senate"</b> (Madym)	Leadership program for Madym participants, including designing community outreach activities and providing feedback to Madym staff.	Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School	Yes	Dane County	No	\$3,000	\$0
#27	<b>"STEMs Her Way Initiative"</b> (Memorial High School/MMSD, Courage to Dream Foundation)	Leadership program for BIPOC girls, supporting mental health, belonging, academic confidence, STEM exploration, and mentorship.	Mental Health, Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School	Yes	City of Madison	No	\$3,000	\$0
#28	<b>"Youth Wellness Scholarship"</b> (Freedom, Inc.)	Scholarship for Black and Southeast Asian youth to support youth with transportation costs, copays and other medical fees, food access, legal support, reproductive health needs, and more.	Mental Health, Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School, Food Security, Immigration, Sexual Assault Prevention	Yes	Dane County	Yes	\$3,000	\$0
#30	<b>"Pathways to Belonging"</b> (Union Latina Club, La Follette High School, MMSD)	Cultural student club focusing on field trips, community service, academic support, career/college readiness, and identity.	Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School, Immigration	Yes	City of Madison	Yes	\$3,000	\$0
#31	<b>"The Catalyst"</b> (Verona High School)	Verona HS student-run newspaper, focuses on youth life skills, youth-driven topics, and peer communication.	Mental Health, Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School	Yes	Dane County	No	\$3,000	\$0
#32	<b>"Mindful Moments"</b> (Meadowood Neighborhood Center, MSCR)	Six-week summer program focusing on teen mental and emotional wellness.	Mental Health, Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School	Yes	Dane County	Yes	\$3,000	\$0
#33	<b>"The Birthright Experience"</b> (Memorial High School/MMSD, Courage to Dream Foundation)	Program for seniors at Memorial HS, who vocalized wanting student-led classroom discussions and deeper connections to literature and history studied in class. Curriculum focuses on identity, belonging, and emotional resilience.	Mental Health, Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School	Yes	Outside Dane Co	No	\$3,000	\$0
#34	<b>"SPIRIT Day"</b> (Spartan Youth Service Club, Memorial High School/MMSD)	Student-led volunteer event, where HS students volunteer in classrooms at feeder elementary schools (assist teachers, engage with students, lead activities, etc).	Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School	Yes	City of Madison	No	\$2,500	\$0
#35	<b>"O'Keefe Compost System"</b> (O'Keefe Middle School, Marquette Elementary, MMSD)	Funds cover a partnership with Greenbox for an afterschool compost club. Program reduces waste in school environments and supports peer-to-peer education activities.	Climate Change	Yes	City of Madison	Yes	\$3,000	\$0
#36	<b>"Mendota Community Opportunities/Field Trips"</b> (Mendota Elementary, MMSD)	Funds support attendance of Step Afrika! performance and workshop at the Overture Center, followed by a trip to the ice skating rink on UW campus. Program promotes socialization and experiencing new cultures and activities.	Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School	Yes	City of Madison	No	\$2,453	\$0

#37	"Mindful Matters at the ALC" (MTZ Charitable Organization)	Academic Learning Center provides free-after school academic support through social-emotional learning, mentorship, enrichment activities, and access to behavioral health services.	Mental Health, Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School	Yes	City of Madison	No	\$3,000	\$0
#39	"STEM Sisters" (Madym)	Mentorship program at Madym, where youth work alongside college and high school alumni to design projects, give feedback, and support each other in STEM activities.	Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School	Yes	Dane County	Yes	\$3,000	\$0
#40	"Madym Mapping" (Madym)	Geographic Information System program where high school youth engage in hands-on environmental data collection and analysis to investigate real-world climate and environmental issues affecting Dane County.	Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School, Climate Change	Yes	Dane County	No	\$3,000	\$0
#41	"Madym Mindful Moments" (Madym)	Summer internship program for high school students interested in STEM careers.	Mental Health, Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School	Yes	Dane County	No	\$3,000	\$0
#42	"Hmong Club" (Memorial High School, MMSD)	Cultural immersion and connection club, funding supports engagement activities including guest speakers, field trips, and Hmong focused food.	Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School	Yes	City of Madison	Yes	\$3,000	\$0
#43	"Conditioning Your Mental Health" (Black Student Union, La Follette High School/MMSD)	Mental health awareness and advocacy group through the Black Student Union, where BSU students design and lead activities focused on mental health promotion.	Mental Health, Positive Experiences Inside & Outside of School	Yes	City of Madison	Yes	\$3,000	\$0