YOUTH CONNECT

The Summit Foundation
Soul of the Summit

2020 GRANT & IMPACT REPORT
Youth Connect uses philanthropy and leadership to teach teens how to change the world.

Ten students from Summit County joined this year’s Youth Connect program. They collectively spent 600 hours working to improve their community while becoming leaders and activists in the process. The team completed a community needs assessment on the most pressing issues facing youth in Summit County, spread awareness of the issues with the community, and raised over $12,000 for local nonprofit organizations benefitting Summit County youth.
Youth Connect is the youth-led arm of the Summit Foundation. Each year, students conduct a grant cycle.

**THE PROGRAM**

Youth meet with community members to raise awareness about and funding for the biggest issues.

Youth decide which nonprofits are doing the best at meeting the needs and give away 100% of the funds raised.

**NEEDS ASSESSMENT**
Youth dive deep to find the most pressing issues facing children and youth in their local community.

**FUNDRAISING**

**GRANT MAKING**

**PARTICIPANTS**
Facilitator: Laura Landrum

Soledad Borrego  
Tommy Boston  
Maclean Donovan  
Amanda Duchow  
Samson Kahle  
Hance Langley  
Korben Long  
Rilla Long  
Logan Reid  
Jennifer Ruiz
After many hours of research, the Youth Connect board decided to focus on the following funding priorities:

**Youth Substance Abuse**
The Youth Connect board sees youth substance abuse on a regular basis in their community, and they believe the issue needs to be addressed rapidly. They also recognize that mental health and substance abuse can occur together, making the problem even grander.

**Youth Mental Health**
The Youth Connect board sees poor mental health as a widespread issue experienced by many youth in Summit County. The Board has been personally affected by mental health issues either through personal experience or watching their friends struggle. They also saw it as a potential result of their other identified issue areas.

**Effects of the High Cost of Living on Youth**
The Youth Connect board found both statistical and anecdotal evidence of the impacts of the high cost of living on youth - including themselves - in Summit County. They wanted to fund programs that educate and assist youth at risk for various financial barriers.
The Youth Connect board created a fundraising plan to raise as much money as possible to support their chosen priorities. They met with local business, community, and nonprofit leaders (known as “Impact Partners”) from across Summit County to talk about their funding priorities and ask community leaders to invest in their work.

**RAISED: $12,050**

Thank you to our Impact Partners!

Cindy & Dana Bargell
Brian Blankenmeister
Nick Brinkman
Jen Cawley
Cary & Marsha Cooper
Deb Edwards
Marge & Jerry Gavenda
Kathy Grotemeyer
Cate Hamlin

Ed & Joanne Kilepla
Mike & Jenny Lundin
Julie & Mike Magliocchetti
Annie & Mark McKinnon
Kelly & Tony Pestello
David Preaus
Bill Sanders
Jack Wolfe

Interested in volunteering?
Contact info@youthroots.org
GRANT WINNERS

The following organizations were awarded a grant based on their ability to meet the funding priorities of the Youth Connect board:

Family & Intercultural Resource Center - $3,000
Through education and support, FIRC helps families make healthy choices and provide an environment for children to thrive. They assist families in Summit County with housing and food assistance, obtaining access to health care, and resources on parenting & child development.

Summit County Care Clinic - $3,000
Summit County Care Clinic is a nonprofit health care clinic for the residents of Summit County and its neighboring communities. They work to ensure that health care services are available to all patients, regardless of their ability to pay.

Building Hope - $2,000
Building Hope Summit County is a community-wide initiative designed to create a more coordinated, effective and responsive mental health system that promotes emotional health, reduces stigma and improves access to care and support for everyone in Summit County.

Smart Bellies - $4,050
The Smart Bellies Backpack Food Program strives to eliminate childhood hunger on the weekends by providing backpacks full of nutritious food, allowing children to get the full benefit of their education and development.
STUDENT IMPACT

**EMPOWERMENT**
100% of participants said Youth Connect improved their ability to identify an issue and take action.

**COMMUNITY**
Students raised awareness and funding (over $12,000) for pressing issues.

**LEADERSHIP**
100% of participants said they would be more likely to take on a leadership role after Youth Connect.

**KNOWLEDGE**
93% of participants gained significant knowledge in curriculum topics.

**EMPATHY**
100% of participants stated Youth Connect significantly improved their empathy skills.

**LIFE SKILLS**
Participants showed improvement in non-cognitive skills 100% of the time.

“**Youth Connect strongly impacted my life… I learned a lot about myself and others…and how I can make an impact in my community.”**

“**Youth Connect made me more confident to speak out on current issues and motivated me to get more involved.”**
The Youth Connect program is a joint project between the Summit Foundation and YouthRoots, a national nonprofit organization whose mission is to unleash the power of youth to change the world. The Summit Foundation uses the YouthRoots curriculum to teach Summit County teens how to change the world through philanthropy and gain valuable leadership skills. Together, they are cultivating the next generation of Summit County leaders and change-makers.

Learn more at:
www.summitfoundation.org
www.youthroots.org

“*Youth Connect taught me that changing the surrounding area and community can come in all shapes and forms.*” - 2020 participant