In its tenth year, the Explorers program steered more elementary students than ever before to unique nature locations around Richmond each month. Second through fifth graders from our community’s most disadvantaged neighborhoods were transported from their city block to inspiring green spaces to bring their classroom science concepts to life at nature. From learning about their impact on the James River at Belle Isle, to identifying tree species at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, to understanding animal adaptations at Powhitas State Park—students spent off on the road to exploration and discovery that’s crucial to a child’s academic and character development during these young formative years.

**OUTDOOR ADVENTURE CLUBS**

Middle school students pushed to new limits each week in our Outdoor Adventure Clubs (OAC), overcoming the challenges and uncertainty of lifelines often beyond their comfort zone. Students met 1 to 2 times per week to cycle through outdoor adventure sessions such as hiking, rock climbing, biking, paddling, and then parked in destinations beyond the city for an overnight camping trip each semester. Middle school can be a turbulent season with stormy weather, no matter your circumstances—through OACs, the outdoors provide an outlet for students to gain confidence in their ability to rise above challenges with the support of staff trained to manage trauma. Middle school navigated the challenges of first landing state Park and assisted out in the Blue Ridge Mountains, crossing plenty of adventures off their map within the city as well.

**OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE**

Our Outdoor Leadership Institute (OLI) students traveled the furthest and spent the most time in nature—driving 300 miles to Grayson Highlands State Park for five days of wilderness immersion while summiting Mount Rogers. OLI is a year-long leadership program for high schoolers that intentionally brings together students from diverse backgrounds and sets their wheels in motion to become inclusive and service-oriented community leaders. The program started in the summer, ignored by team building and leadership sessions that led the outdoor expedition, followed by monthly sessions throughout the school year to complete community service projects. Thirteen students graduated from the OLI program in June and were inducted into the alumni family, who embarked on an epic adventure to bike from Pittsburgh to Washington, D.C. along the Chesapeake and Allegheny Canal.

**FINANCIALS**

**Income**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising:</td>
<td>$140,375</td>
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<tr>
<td>Programs:</td>
<td>$503,545</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corporations and Churches:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Board:</td>
<td>$22,480</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Revenue:</td>
<td>$748,791</td>
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**Expenses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salaries and Benefits:</td>
<td>$580,245</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Management:</td>
<td>$78,641</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Expenses:</td>
<td>$759,881</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BLUE SKY FUND TEAM**

We are endlessly grateful for our dedicated team of both volunteer Board of Directors and staff that work tirelessly to push the Blue Sky Fund mission forward and change the lives of so many increasing number of children in our community.

**Board of Directors**

- President: Mint Perry
- Vice President: Debbie Edwards
- Treasurer: Logan Varvocet
- Secretary: Andy Thompson
- Website Owner: richmondadventure.com and terrains360.com
- Full-time Staff in bold

**Staff**

- Renee Alloway
- Brittny Bailey
- Julia Beri
- Tamelah Blue
- Brittany Claus
- Lucks Christian
- Eric Coggins
- James Daniel
- Sarah Jane Dillhart
- Erica Edkins
- Mitra Farsa
- Mason Gach
- Laura Green
- Madeline Grzyb
- Danya Guadagnoli
- Ryan Hamlet
- Calvin Hedgpeth
- Logan Hill
- Miranda James
- David Kamm
- Jerry Kuhndahl
- Kaitlyn Kavanagh
- Kristin Lewis
- Brittany Mccarthy
- Rachel Miller
- Jacob Morris
- Haley Mosc
- Katie Noland
- Maggie Nunn
- Erin O’Regan
- Darius Parks
- Amanda Payne
- Emily Phoest
- Craig Pilkingon
- Wax Post
- Tamela Powell
- Will Powell
- Vic Batch
- Emily Robbins
- Rosa Rovnick
- Katy Rosenberg
- Jake Rosher
- Kayla Ruster
- Ashley Singletary
- Natale Stokel
- Tae Wolyn
- Ashley Wida
- Karly Williams
- Marla Wingfield
- Phil Wood

- *Full-time staff in bold*

**EXPLORERS**

- “Youth who spend a lot of time outside develop a passion for rock climbing, but I found that the real joy is helping kids embrace coming out of their comfort zones to try something new and scary. The joy is how they feel when they first climb their rock wall just stronger muscles, and stronger minds and a stronger sense of self, the more they need to face the world.”
  
  ~ Sarah Franz, 2018 Volunteer of the Year

- “These are the moments that make me feel so much more relaxed and I become the best version of myself.”
  
  ~ Hannah Sjovald, Douglas Freeman HS

- “My favorite thing to do at Blue Sky Fund is every time we came back to school, we would talk about the things we learned.”
  
  ~ Kayla Wilson, 3rd grade, Fairfield Court ES
Blue Sky Fund is on the road to more exciting outdoor adventures in 2019! In both the urban and rural schools and middle schools we've aligned with the community-wide focus to ensure that ALL children in Richmond — no matter their race, their class or zip code — have access to outdoor education programs enabling them to experience outdoor opportunities and acquiring the necessary skills and confidence to push their boundaries.

Held aboard the Blue Sky Fund bus, we've metered the opportunity for underserved youth to discover themselves by actively engaging the kids in need to the outdoors to experience the power of nature. They are en route to transporting even greater numbers of kids in need to the outdoors to experience the power of nature. Each month, the Explorers leadership program of 37 students traveled to far-away landscapes to be immersed in wilderness leadership, increase confidence, and build collaboration skills.

Help children achieve academic success, especially in the sciences, through active outdoor education that is appropriate for every student science curriculum.

Development and leadership through outdoor experiences that expand beneficiaries' horizons, increase confidence, and build collaboration skills.

Donors
Blue Sky Fund is a Missouri non-profit organization 501(c)(3) that is a tax-exempt charitable organization.