A year of THRIVING in the face of uncertainty

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Learn more about LEAD Girls and make a donation at leadgirls.org
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Dear LEAD Supporters,

As I reflect on the past year and the immense success of LEAD Girls of North Carolina, I am reminded of a shelter in the storm. Though many of us envisioned that another year would bring a world without the COVID-19 pandemic, LEAD Girls has persisted, persevered, and adapted in the face of uncertainty. Our programs have remained a “shelter” for our students, despite the uncertainties they face.

Perhaps even more impressive, however, was LEAD Girls’ ability to dare to dream in a time where many merely existed. Over the past year, LEAD Girls has experienced tremendous growth and also extended a listening ear to you and so many others through the community needs assessment. Geared with this knowledge and insight, LEAD Girls is well-positioned to tackle whatever the future may hold.

The mission of LEAD Girls is carried out by a team of dedicated staff who believe in the work they are doing. The investment they have sowed reaps back into them, as LEAD Girls was delighted to be able to offer health benefits to full-time employees for the first time this year. These are the sorts of exciting changes that demonstrate that LEAD is ready: for now, for what is next, and for what is to come.

Most importantly, none of this would be possible without you: our village. You have adapted to the waves of change and found new ways to support LEAD Girls. Our village has remained steadfast: a source of encouragement when difficulties arise. Moreover, our village has continued to inspire us: to be greater, to dream bigger, and to remain encouraged.

We sincerely thank you for your support and for your dedication to LEAD’s mission.


Sincerely,

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Chelsea Barnes
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Our Mission

Learning Everyday Accomplishing Dreams (LEAD) is dedicated to providing the tools and resources that low-income/at-risk preteen girls must have to become productive citizens and active leaders in their communities. Using an evidence-based curriculum, LEAD encourages and mentors girls to aspire and achieve greatness academically, emotionally and creatively. We envision a world where every girl has the confidence, social skills and leadership ability she needs to become an independent, financially-stable woman.
What parents like about LEAD

Leadership. Skills building. Positivity. Support. Parents share their firsthand experiences and thoughts about the LEAD program. We are proud that parents see our program challenging, nurturing and making a difference in the lives of their children.

“What I like most about LEAD is that my daughter is developing skills and friendships even though she’s out of her comfort zone.”

Mariel V.
Mom of a Community LEAD participant

“I decided to enroll my child in LEAD to give her something positive in her life. Since joining, she is not as shy and bashful.”

Melissa R.
Mom of a LEAD elementary participant

My child is developing skills.

“I chose the LEAD program because my daughter needed a positive safe environment where she could express herself without judgment.”

Meira E.
Mom of a Community LEAD participant

LEAD is something positive in her life.

“Since joining LEAD, my child has made a change socially as well as mentally. This program has afforded her opportunities to learn things about herself!”

Alexis L.
Mom of a Community LEAD participant

LEAD is a safe, positive space.

“My favorite part about LEAD is that it gives the kids direct education about leadership. My child has become more confident in their abilities.”

Laura H.
Mom of a LEAD middle schooler

My child has made a change.

“I enrolled my child in the LEAD program because I wanted her to be around girls who are positive role models.”

Jessica M.
Mom of a LEAD middle schooler

LEAD teaches about leadership.

LEAD girls are role models.
The road to success starts here
At LEAD, girls learn and hone skills to fuel their personal development journey

Girls learn critical skills that help them to communicate more effectively, work through and channel their negative feelings, and create positive outcomes for themselves.

Girls see a change in their lives at home, in school, and as they navigate new challenges each day. Our girls report improved family and friend relationships.

Girls are motivated to stick with their newfound skills, set goals, and pursue success in their lives. They see what they learn at LEAD creating positive impact.

LEAD Girls of NC delivers programs that create an immediate and lasting impact in the lives of our participants and their families. In FY21, we introduced LEAD programs to new groups of girls by launching an elementary school program and a program in partnership with Communities in Schools (CIS) in High Point.
FY21 LEAD Programs Snapshot

286 girls served in FY21

251 Middle school
24 Elementary School
11 High School

15,000 hours of service
85% attendance rate
5 school partners*

Demographics:
African American: 82%
Hispanic: 14%
Native American: 2%
White: 2%

* Our FY21 partner schools included: Mineral Springs, Cook Literacy Model School, Wiley Middle School, Carver High School, Flat Rock Middle School

Lead Girls of NC is on a mission to encourage and mentor girls to aspire and achieve greatness academically, emotionally and creatively.
2020-2021 Middle School Program
Girls build confidence, self-esteem and learn leadership skills.

Our middle schoolers participate in LEAD workshops during school and on weekends to learn fundamental skills that help them chart success in school and in life.

15% more girls strongly agree/agree “I am able to do things as well as most other people.”

23% more girls strongly agree/agree “I take a positive attitude toward myself.”

36% more girls strongly agree/agree “I enjoy my school.”

17% more girls strongly agree/agree “My life has meaning.”

30% more girls are in clubs and activities in addition to LEAD

Our middle schoolers report being more satisfied with themselves, more proud of who they are, and feeling more like they are part of a community after completing LEAD workshops.

60% of middle school participants reported that they give an honest “no” to people, and ask for what they want without hurting someone’s feelings.
2021 Elementary Program
Empowering and encouraging our youngest girls to feel worthy and proud.
LEAD expanded to serve girls in elementary school, bringing our leadership-focused programs to a new, younger audience of girls eager to learn ways to thrive and be successful.

25% more girls strongly agree/agree "Overall, I am satisfied with myself."
19% more girls strongly agree/agree "I take a positive attitude toward myself."
25% more girls strongly agree/agree "My life has meaning."
33% more girls report that they feel like they are part of a community
57% more girls are in clubs and activities in addition to LEAD

Our elementary school participants report being more satisfied with themselves, having a good relationship with parents, and feeling grateful for the life they have after completing LEAD workshops.

67% more elementary school participants reported that they enjoy their school.
2021 Communities In Schools (CIS)

Girls experienced a big boost in feelings of self-worth and positive outlook.

Our community-based LEAD program, offered in partnership with High Point Communities in Schools, showed significant impact during the 2021 service year.

- 21% more girls strongly agree/agree “I am able to do things as well as most other people.”
- 34% more girls strongly agree/agree “I enjoy my school.”
- 26% more girls strongly agree/agree “I feel happy most of the time.”
- 21% more girls strongly agree/agree “School is important to me.”

Our CIS program girls report being more satisfied with themselves, feeling proud of who they are, and feeling happy about school after completing LEAD workshops.

100% of participants in our CIS program are in clubs/activities in addition to LEAD
2021 Annual Girls Expo
Building support systems to cultivate and amplify girls’ success.

Our girls face unique challenges. A collective focus shared by a connected support network is the best way to ensure their success. At our annual Expo, we provide an intensive skill-sharing space to equip parents and allies to build and sustain support systems for girls.

**Among the Girls who participated in the 2021 Expo:**

- ★ 100% Agree/Strongly agree “I recognize what skills and attributes I have as a young lady.”
- ★ 98% Agree/Strongly agree “I recognize that I have the ‘equation of possible’ inside of me.”
- ★ 90% Agree/Strongly agree “I can identify ways to build community after COVID-19.”
- ★ 90% Agree/Strongly agree “I understand what triggers social anxiety.”
- ★ 92% Agree/Strongly agree “I am able to find resources that I need.”
- ★ 69% Agree/Strongly agree “I am not ashamed to ask for support.”
- ★ 92% Agree/Strongly agree “I believe that I can be a leader in the field of Science, Technology, Engineering or Math (STEM).”

**Among the Parents who attended the 2021 Expo:**

- ★ 100% Agree/Strongly agree “After today, I can identify ways to bolster resilience.”
- ★ 100% Agree/Strongly agree “I recognize strategies to improve health and wellness, as well as strengthen relationships.”

100% of parent participants strongly agree: The LEAD Girls Expo was a good use of my time.
Summer Fashion Camp
Girls explore finance and business skills at summer camp.
Girls learn financial literacy, explore small business start-up, and gain hands-on experience upcycling bargain finds to resell.

Financial literacy is a critical building block for girls’ future success. Creating a healthy understanding of finances and budgets, and introducing girls to business ownership, are vital tools for inspiring and motivating girls to set career and financial independence goals.

FY21 Snapshot
• 13 girls served
• Middle school girls: 13
• 520 hours of service

520 hours
Girls and our camp team devoted over 500 hours to learning, building financial literacy and exploring entrepreneurship at our summer camp.
Support & Revenue
Grants, contributions and public support 300,189
Federated campaigns 24,689
Government grants 17,500
Program income 9,409
Total support & revenue 351,788

Expenses
Program services 191,130
Management and general 29,660
Fundraising 19,023
Total expenses 239,813

Change in net assets 111,975\(^1\)

\(^1\) In 2019, our Board of Directors determined that to be truly fiscally responsible, it was important to create a reserve fund for our long-term financial stability. Our nonprofit relies heavily on grants, sponsors, and individual funding in a community whose needs often outweigh our capacity. Throughout the past two years, we have created a reserve which is there should we need it, and will support our work with our girls and their families who depend on us daily.
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2021 LEADher Circle

The LEADher Circle recognizes the commitment and contributions of those who support LEAD Girls at a leadership level. Based on the belief that every girl deserves the chance to thrive, the LEADher Circle was created in 2021, in partnership with three amazing local leaders and friends of LEAD Girls: Natalie Broyhill, Mary Jamis, and Dr. Paula Wilkins.

The following individuals and businesses joined the inaugural circle and donated in early spring of 2021 to help sustain LEAD Girls’ programs.

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