

2019

**ROTARY
LEADERSHIP
CIRCLE**

ANNUAL REPORT

PREPARED BY

YOUTH AGENCIES ALLIANCE

www.youthagenciesalliance.com



BACKGROUND

During the summer of 1995, a tragic gang related shooting took the life of a Winnipeg youth. In reaction to this incident and to better offer community supports, a group of youth serving organizations came together to reduce gang activity and the associated violence. This inaugurated the Coalition of Community Based Youth Serving Agencies (CCBYSA) organization. Presently, the CCBYSA has been renamed Youth Agencies Alliance (YAA), a not-for-profit network of youth serving organizations. As a result of these organizations sharing resources, the Rotary Leadership Circle (RLC) program was established and continues to be facilitated by YAA through the board governed entity and registered charity, RLC Youth Leadership Inc.

The 2019 RLC program marked the 23rd year that it has been offered to youth aged 10 – 14 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Many youth who are eligible for RLC face negative influences and barriers that can lead to substance abuse, low graduation rates, and unemployment. With the increased prevalence of drugs and gang recruitment, programs like RLC which provide youth with safe alternatives are needed. During six-weeks in July and August, RLC is designed to engage participants in a minimum 60-hours of hands-on volunteer experience to promote community engagement and skill-building. Through quality mentorship, RLC provides marginalized youth with the opportunity to interact with positive role models, learn life skills, and positively contribute to their communities.

RLC OUTCOMES

01

Employment Skills

Enhance each youth participants' skills so they obtain marketable employment opportunities

02

Neighbourhood Pride

Build participants' sense of belonging and pride towards their neighbourhoods

03

Leadership Skills

Develop positive and individual team leadership skills





WHO'S INVOLVED?

YAA MEMBERS

YAA is a collective network of 15 youth-serving organizations. This year, 13 out of 15 YAA agencies were involved in RLC with a combined total of 18 different sites.

- Art City
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Winnipeg
- Broadway Neighbourhood Centre
- Evermore Gather Grow Lead Inc.*
- IRCOM Inc.
- Kildonan Youth Activity Centre
- Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre
- Maples Youth Activity Centre
- N.E.E.D.S. Inc.
- Rossbrook House
- Spence Neighbourhood Association
- Teen Stop Jeunesse
- West Broadway Youth Outreach.

18
SITES

*Formerly known as West Central Community Programming

SITE COORDINATORS

The participating RLC sites are responsible for hiring or delegating a staff member to act as the RLC Site Coordinator from June – September. Some of the Site Coordinators have been program participants and are predominately university students from the Faculty of Education or Faculty of Social Work.

Each Site Coordinator was responsible for creating the six-week activity calendars for their organization. To ensure diversity in program planning, the activity calendars followed RLC's one-third program policy where one-third of the activities happen at the independent organizations, one-third are planned within the community, and one-third have the participants explore Winnipeg at large.

In June, the Site Coordinators took part in First Aid, CPR and AED; Non-Violent Crisis Intervention, and Behaviour Management trainings. They also participated in program orientations hosted by YAA for them to gain familiarity and understanding of the RLC outcomes. These initial meetings allowed the Site Coordinators who are located all throughout Winnipeg, to connect with each other and plan joint activities during the summer.



YOUTH LEADERS

Youth Leaders are sourced from RLC sites through an application and interview process lead by the Site Coordinators. This year, the RLC program received applications from 351 interested youth. Unfortunately, due to funding limitations and staff capacities, only 56% of those who applied were selected to participate. As well, 69% of the participants were new to the program.

Table 1. Youth Leader Age Breakdown

Age	10	11	12	13	14	n/a
	25	41	47	28	21	35

Table 2. Participant Numbers by Site

RLC Site	Participants
Art City	18*
Boys and Girls Clubs of Winnipeg	
Freight House	7
Gilbert Park	14
Norquay	5
Ryerson	11
Sister MacNamara	12
Victor Mager	12
Broadway Neighbourhood Centre	11*
Evermore Gather Grow Lead Inc.	10
IRCOM Inc.	11
Kildonan Youth Activity Centre	10
Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre	8
Maples Youth Activity Centre	12
N.E.E.D.S. Inc.	17
Rossbrook House	11
Spence Neighbourhood Association	7
Teen Stop Jeunesse	11
West Broadway Youth Outreach	10



*Provided direct organizational support to fund Youth Leaders



ACTIVITIES

Following the one-third program model, Youth Leaders had the opportunity to enhance their leadership and employability skills through the planned activities. These activities were individualized to the specific needs of the Youth Leaders and aligned with the program outcomes. Below is a list of examples, but there were many more opportunities across the sites allowing the Youth Leaders to contribute 13,598 volunteer hours to their organizations, their communities, and within Winnipeg.

**13,598
VOLUNTEER HOURS**

**\$3,056.20
DONATED TO CHARITY**

During the program, the sites were encouraged to get together for activities or outings so that participants could connect with youth from other organizations. Youth Leaders brainstormed, planned, and implemented fundraisers and collectively raised \$3,056.20 for community organizations. These organizations included: D'Arcys ARC, Children's Hospital Foundation, North Point Douglas Women's Centre, Bear Clan Patrol Inc., Siloam Mission, Agape Table, Winnipeg Humane Society, United Way Winnipeg, and Aiding Hope.

Table 3. Activity Examples

Site Level	Community Level	City Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cooking classes• Facility painting• Babysitting Certification• Resume writing workshops• Writing letters to the Mayor• Nutrition presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visiting Senior's Homes• Community gardening• Bear Clan Patrol Inc. walks• Getting library cards• Indigenous-Newcomer Welcoming BBQs• Wise-Kinetic Energy Camps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Volunteering at Fort Whyte Farms• Assiniboine Park Zoo• Folklorama• Beach days• Tours (Ex: United Way Winnipeg, Red River College, Winnipeg Harvest)



ART SHOW

As a component of RLC, the Youth Agencies Alliance Collaborative Art Show brought 161 Youth Leaders together to create art based on a central theme and medium. The Collaborative Art Show workshops took place from July 8 – 12, 2019 at The Forks Market. The main goal was to create a safe and supportive environment for youth to work collaboratively on an art project and expand their understanding of artistic expression. The 2019 Collaborative Art Show was titled potluck pARTy. This year's Art Show focused on global awareness and promoting cultural understanding. Through highlighting the social aspect of food and bringing youth together to 'share their favourite meal', the potluck pARTy had youth replicate their favourite foods using fabric, felt, paper and materials. The youth set up their handmade creations on colourful tablecloths which culminated in a multicultural display.



The Art Show workshop facilitators were artists from Art City and Graffiti Art Programming, and their role was to assist the youth in effectively portraying their vision and give them technical instructions. The potluck pARTy partnered with Winnipeg Harvest, NorWest Co-op Community Food Centre, Food Matters MB, Tall Grass Prairie Bread Co., and one local dietitian. These organizations acted as mentors for the youth and provided presentations about the social role food has in cultures and why an understanding of food sovereignty is important.

After the workshops there were many positive remarks from participants. One youth explained that "I learnt how to expand my creative thinking, and we learnt about different foods" (Participant 006). Another realized that "there are a bunch of cultures in my community and the food looks good" (Participant 018).

The artistic theme and medium were conceptually understandable for the Youth Leaders and they had no problems relating with one participant saying "My favorite part of the art show was making the samosa because it reminded me of when I helped my mom make samosas" (Participant 156). Based on the evaluations, 86% of youth said they had fun at the workshops, and Participant 120 summarized the project well with "umm...art is AWESOME."

The final component of the Collaborative Art Show was an exhibition-style display of the completed artwork over the July 12 – 14, 2019 weekend at The Forks Market and on August 8, 2019 in conjunction with the RLC Graduation. Both events were accessible to the public, the youth, funders and media personnel. You can watch the film produced by Just TV at www.youthagenciesalliance.com.



PROGRAM WRAP UP

For the Youth Leaders who completed the minimum 60-hours of volunteering throughout the summer, a graduation was hosted by YAA to celebrate their community contributions. This event brought all the Youth Leaders together in honour of the RLC program and gave the sites another opportunity to connect. This year the graduation was held at the West End Cultural Centre. Youth Leaders invited their friends and family to celebrate. Three Youth Leaders were recognized as Valedictorians for their dedication to obtaining marketable employment skills, fostering a sense of pride towards their neighbourhoods, and developing positive individual and team leadership skills. The Valedictorians were encouraged to present at the ceremony allowing the audience the chance to hear directly from the youth. It also served as an opportunity for the Youth Leaders to gain formal speech writing and public speaking skills.



As an incentive for their participation in the program, youth received an honourarium that reflected the number of hours they contributed to the program (up to \$200.00). Site Coordinators took the youth on a supervised shopping trip to purchase items such as clothing, shoes, and school supplies with their honourariums. This process encouraged financial management as the youth took great care in calculating the value of their purchases. For many of the participants, this was the first time they were able to purchase something with money they earned themselves, which helped to instill a sense of accomplishment at the conclusion of the program.





EVALUATIONS

RLC uses various methods to evaluate the program's quality. In 2017, RLC introduced a longitudinal study to identify the long-term connection youth have to the program. However, there were no voluntary participants this year for the research study. Also, at the beginning of RLC, Youth Leaders completed pre-program questionnaires ($n= 173$). Following the program, participants completed post-program questionnaires ($n= 157$) and data was collected from the Site Coordinators ($n= 18$) so that the program quality can be enhanced and tailored to the needs of the participants.

YOUTH LEADERS

Pre-Program Questionnaires

The pre-program questionnaires were used as a guideline to gather information from the youth before planning and implementing the program activities. It collected data about their experiences, certifications, trainings, and general information on how they feel about their neighbourhood and volunteering.

Specifically, Youth Leaders were asked what they would like to be when they grow up, with responses ranging from "I want to be a program staff in IRCOM" (Participant 50) and "pediatrician on weekdays and either a baker or a hair dresser on weekends" (Participant 115) as examples. Although some participants stated they didn't know yet what they wanted to be ($n= 39$), among the top reported responses were careers in the medical profession ($n= 27$) and to be a professional athlete ($n= 27$).

When the participants were asked why they chose to join RLC, the most prevalent responses included to help others and the community (23%), to have fun (21%), and to earn the honourarium (17%). Examples included "I wanted to join this because I wanted to have fun in the summer instead of sitting at home doing nothing. (part of it is for the money 😊)" (Participant 22), and another expressed their reasoning was to "enhance work experience, improve life skills and interpersonal communication skills. Apart from these, I expect to build [a] sense of responsibility, level of confidence, stamina, sense of humor and a 'help others' mindset" (Participant 110). Many youth leaders echoed the sentiments of Participant 156 who said they participated to "gain leadership skills and have fun this summer. I want to go out and make a difference."

"I want to go out and make a difference."

(Participant 156)



Post-Program Questionnaires

Following the six-week program, Youth Leaders received a follow up questionnaire. The results below indicate whether youth leaders learned and tried new things and whether they felt these new skills would help them in life. Also, the Youth Leaders were given an open-ended response question to indicate what their favourite part of RLC was. Some responses included simple experiences like "going on the bus for the first time" (Participant 138), while other Youth Leaders took more deliberate pride in "Fundraising money at [the] bake sale and taking the money to make hygiene bags for the less fortunate" (Participant 115), and "Meeting amazing people and making friends and forming family. Making MEMORIES!!!" (Participant 31). Through the cross examination of questionnaire results, there was the most substantial increase in the number of youth leaders who reported gaining experience in fundraising, sales, and money management after the program. The post-program questionnaire asked the participants if they would like to be involved in the program next year, and 87% of Youth Leaders responded yes.

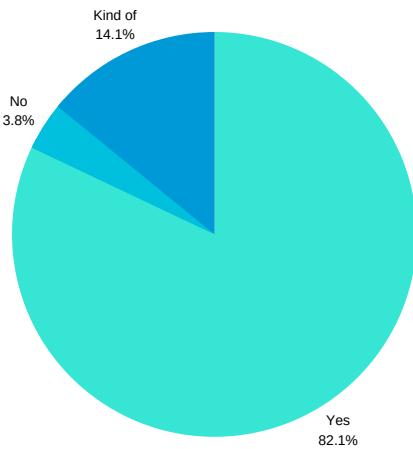


Chart 1. Do you feel the things you learned will help you in life?

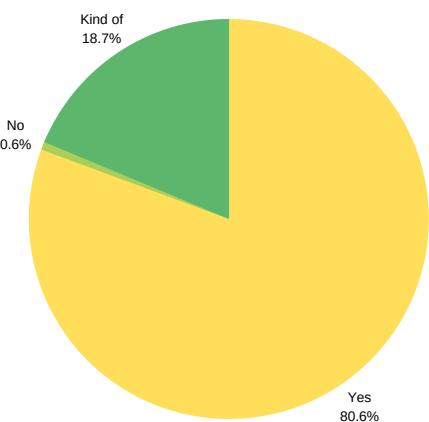


Chart 2. Did you learn and try new things?



SITE COORDINATORS

Post-program, there was a debrief session for the Site Coordinators to share their experiences and complete an evaluation. All Site Coordinators ($n=18$) reported that their program was successful in meeting the three outcomes of RLC. When reflecting on the strengths of their program, one Site Coordinator indicated that "The strength of the program was the youth creating relationships together, [and] connecting youth to other youth in their community" (Site Coordinator 11). Also, when recognizing teamwork and inclusion, another Site Coordinator said "Acceptance was one of our best strengths. The kids also displayed empathy while talking about those less fortunate than us" (Site Coordinator 16).



Throughout the program, 94% of Site Coordinators believed the relationship they formed with the youth was helpful. The Site Coordinators also reported that they benefit from being involved in the program. Site Coordinator 18 stated "you get the same energy that you put out in the universe. If you want good results, you have to show [the Youth Leaders] how to do it and have the same energy that you want them to have."

Something valuable that I learned from working with the youth leaders is the level of hope that I have for the upcoming youth and our future leaders. Seeing them being involved in the community in several different ways was an eye-opening experience and made me so happy to be a part of the process. I was learning just as much as the young leaders during this journey.

(Site Coordinator 8)





CONCLUSION

The RLC program is a core program facilitated by Youth Agencies Alliance. It continued to be successful in helping youth aged 10 – 14 enhance their volunteer and leadership abilities and foster relationships. The cross-community connections between the sites were essential to meet the program outcomes. Throughout the six-weeks of volunteering, youth obtained marketable employment opportunities, increased their sense of belonging and pride towards their neighbourhoods, and developed positive leadership skills.

PROGRAM FUNDERS

The 2019 RLC program could not have happened without the generous support of RLC Youth Leadership Inc., Youth Agencies Alliance, Rotary Club of Winnipeg, The Winnipeg Foundation, Wawanesa, Graham C. Lount Family Foundation, Dr. Alfred Deacon Medical Research Foundation, United Way Winnipeg, and Province of Manitoba Arts Development Project Support.

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