

**FY2024
IMPACT
REPORT**

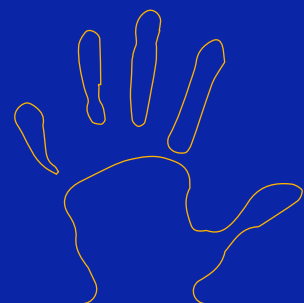
EMPOWER BOSTON'S YOUTH

One Leap at a Time



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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

May Vaughn



What a year it has been for Girls LEAP! Despite the ups, downs, and all the surprises life threw our way, we continued to grow and empower more young women than ever before. And honestly, we couldn't have done it without you!

This year, we expanded our Teen Mentor Program, where older girls and gender-expansive youth took on the incredible role of mentoring younger and near-aged youth participants. Watching these young people step into leadership roles was like watching a superhero movie, except it is real—and even more inspiring! We also held numerous community programs and workshops to help our youth develop the emotional resilience they need to navigate the path of growing up (which can feel like an extreme sport sometimes).

We're proud to say that we reached over 352 youth, including 17 Teen Mentor Program participants, across the greater Boston area communities this year! That's a lot of strong, confident young women and gender-expansive youth who are ready to face the world with new skills and perspectives. Our leadership and staff have worked tirelessly to ensure each participant walked away feeling empowered, and their feedback has been incredible.

Of course, none of this would be possible without our amazing community—YOU! Whether you've donated, volunteered, spread the word, or simply cheered us on, you've played a huge part in making this year a success. You're the reason we can keep going, growing, and dreaming bigger every day.

As we look toward the future, we can't help but feel excited about what's next. We've got big plans to reach even more youth and continue building a world where every girl and gender-expansive youth knows their worth, their strength, and their power.

Thank you for being part of this incredible journey. Here's to an even brighter year ahead!

"Together, with the unwavering support of our partners, mentors, and volunteers, we will ignite a ripple effect of change that empowers and uplifts generations to come."

May Vaughn
Executive Director

02 OUR MISSION & VISION

Our vision

A world where all girls and gender-expansive youth grow into powerful, capable adults realizing the power of their aspirations.

Our mission

To disrupt the violence that surrounds girls and gender-expansive youth by amplifying their voices, emboldening their courage, and imparting critical life and self-defense skills so they can thrive in the face of challenges.

Our founding

In the mid-90s, there was a spike in sexual assaults in Cambridge, MA. Deborah Weaver and Peggy Barrett, then Cambridge residents, found no resources available to empower and protect girls. In response, they created an original curriculum with experts from around the country to meet the needs of this population.



We have the right people

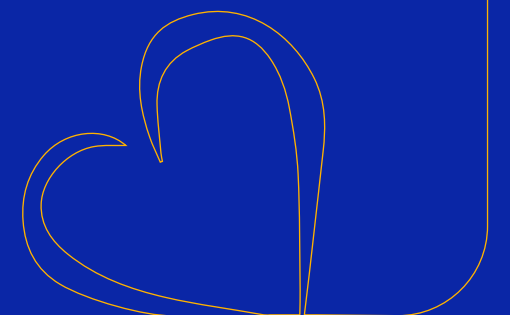
Girls' LEAP is led by Executive Director May Vaughn, who joined us in February 2024 and brings valuable leadership experience from her previous roles at Sitters for Scholars, Roxbury Tenants of Harvard, and YMCA of Greater Boston. May chairs the Boston Children's Hospital Community Advisory Board, sits on the Board of the Philanthropy Connections, and is a Site Visit Leader for Cummings Foundation. Former Co-Executive Director Lynn Carberry Masterman recently transitioned into the role of Director of Operations and Co-Executive Director, Cynthia Maltbie, remains an active and committed Board Member. Alkia Powell, Board Chair, leads a fourteen-member Board that includes three Teen Mentors exercising full voting rights, reflecting our commitment to inclusivity and youth empowerment. The Board brings a wide range of expertise in public health, education, communications, DEI, and business operations.

Our full team comprises a Program Director, two Program Managers, eight part-time Lead Teachers and Trainers, twenty paid part-time Teen Mentors, ten paid part-time Teaching Assistants and many wonderful interns and volunteers.

We represent who we serve

77%	75%	100%
of Board members	of our full team	of our part-time Teen Mentors

are persons of color



KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND IMPACT

2024 Program participants reported:



FY24 programs included

Boston Centers for Youth & Families
 Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston
 JFK Elementary School
 Mother Caroline Academy
 Somerville Parks and Recreation
 East Somerville Community School
 GROW (Girls' reflecting Our World), Dorchester
 METCO
 Prospect Hill Academy
 Roxbury Yawkey Boys and Girls Club
 Roxbury Tenants of Harvard
 Edgerley Family South Boston Boys and Girls Club

Additional workshop locations included:

Intergenerational Community Center in Randolph
 Cambridge Boarding School
 Time of Butterflies at Black Box Theater in Dorchester
 Dudley Street Charter School
 My Life My Choice



04 PROGRAM EXPANSION AND REACH

This past year, Girls' LEAP successfully provided empowerment and self-defense programs to over 350 girls in Boston and surrounding communities. In addition to maintaining the core of our mission, we expanded outreach efforts, allowing us to serve even more girls, increasing our participant numbers by 15% compared to the previous year. These efforts were supported by key new partnerships. We joined forces with several schools and community organizations to bring Girls' LEAP programs into new neighborhoods, reaching underserved communities. We were invited into Somerville by Mayor Katjana Ballantyne (a former Girls' LEAP Executive Director) to address growing incidents of violence within the school system. Our network also grew with the support of new relationships formed with non-profits and corporate sponsors, which helped us extend our program delivery and lay the foundation for future expansion.

Regarding empowerment and leadership outcomes, our Teen Mentor Program saw 20 girls and gender-expansive youth participating in specialized workshops, including career and college readiness, financial literacy and economic empowerment, and self-care and confidence building. Our Teen Mentor program has shown positive community impact, with 100% of participants from 2024 gaining admission to their top-choice colleges, and one Teen Mentor receiving the Youth Leader Award at the 2024 Mayor's Youth Summit.

A new youth-led initiative was also launched this year, to research and develop curriculum on the impact of social media on youth mental health. We will be piloting separate programs for middle-school, high school, and parent/youth workers in FY2025.

Boston After School and Beyond administered participant surveys and certified independent observations in Summer and School Year 2023-2024 and rated our programs in the top quartile, with perfect 4.0 scores in key areas such as Social-Emotional Environment, Staff's Positive Guidance of Behaviors, and Youth Relationships with Adults and Peers.

Like many organizations, we faced challenges this year, particularly due to economic pressures. We implemented new funding strategies to help us navigate the economic challenges while keeping our mission and programs intact.

Together, these accomplishments reflect the strength and resilience of the Girls' LEAP community, and we look forward to building on this momentum in the coming year.

“Something Girls' LEAP has taught me is to be confident within myself ... and to have the highest self-esteem that I can have.”

Janesica Johnson
Class of 2023



STORIES FROM THE FIELD

Alexis Lawton Lewis

Alexis first got involved with Girls' LEAP in 2022 after finishing an internship at another nonprofit, Breakthrough. She found that she loved being a mentor and wanted to further that experience. Since then, Alexis has held positions including Teen Mentor, Lead Teen Mentor, and Clerk for the Board of Directors. "While being at Girls' LEAP, I learned how to be confident in my own voice and understand that being loud isn't always a bad thing. Before working here, I was somewhat shy in big settings and spoke very softly, but now I can walk in a room ready to face the world."

Alexis's experience with Girls' LEAP has impacted their future goals by making them confident in their abilities as an upcoming artist and mentor. In the fall, they will be attending Union College in Schenectady, New York studying studio fine arts. Ultimately, Alexis would like to work with talented youth and give them a space to create and promote their own artwork while also running their own gallery.

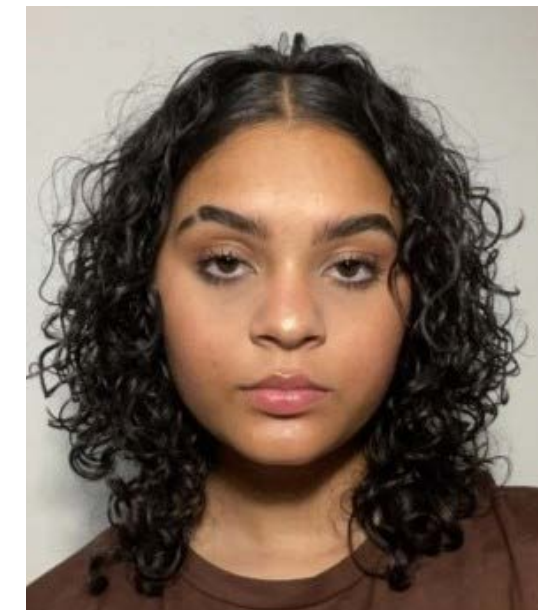


"Before working here, I was somewhat shy in big settings and spoke very softly, but now I can walk in a room ready to face the world."

Grace Malave-Darling

We are excited to announce that our Lead Teen Mentor and Board Member Grace Malave-Darling was selected to receive the Youth Leader award at the 2024 Mayor's Youth Summit. They have been with Girls' LEAP since they were in 9th grade at age 14. Since then, Grace has grown as a leader and mentor to other youth both in and outside of the program. We are honored to have Grace at 17 still on our team and to celebrate their accomplishment!

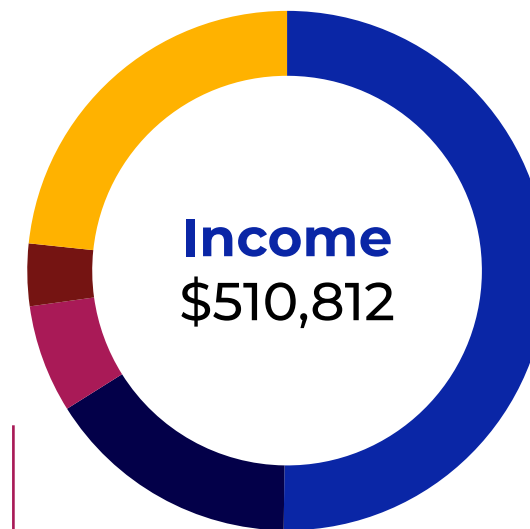
When interviewed about their nomination, Grace said, "As a Lead Teen Mentor, I want to inspire others as I was inspired. As a queer person and a person of color, I didn't feel like I had role models until I came to Girls' LEAP. I want to be an inspiration to someone else like me – I want them to think 'If Grace can do it, then I can do it.' I want them to be confident and to know they can achieve more."



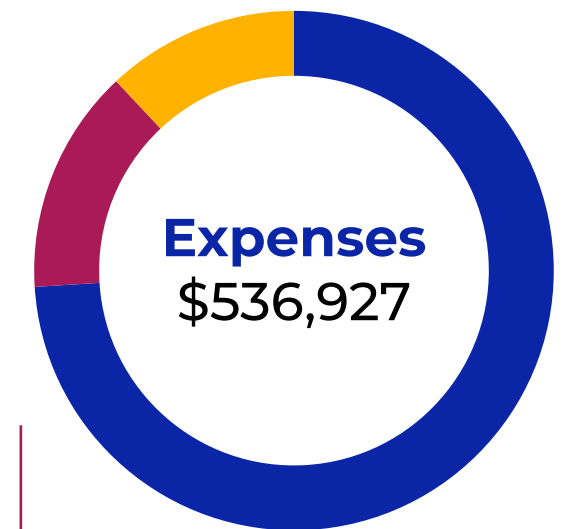
"I want to be an inspiration to someone else like me – I want them to think 'If Grace can do it, then I can do it.' I want them to be confident and to know they can achieve more."



06 FINANCIAL SUMMARY FY 2024



Foundations	56%
Government	10%
Corporate	6%
Earned Income	3%
Individual Donations	25%



Program	75%
Management & Administration	20%
Fundraising	5%

07

DONOR RECOGNITION

Girls' LEAP is proud to announce that we have been selected to receive a transformative Boston Children's Hospital "Youth Leaders for Mental and Behavioral Health" grant! This two-year grant is made possible through Boston Children's Collaboration for Community Health. It is a significant milestone for Girls' LEAP, underscoring the collective belief in our mission to help girls and gender-expansive youth to develop the skills needed to create pathways to opportunity, foster self-worth, and tackle challenges like higher education and workplace representation. We intend to allocate this grant support towards a comprehensive response to the challenges posed by social media, particularly its impact on the mental and behavioral health of youth.

"Boston Children's support and investment in Girls' LEAP and the other grantees will have a profound impact," says May Vaughn, Girls' LEAP Executive Director. "On behalf of the youth and families we serve, I am incredibly thankful for their belief in our mission and vision and willingness to partner with us to make a difference. Boston Children's commitment to listening to the community, being good stewards of funding, and ensuring that it is utilized effectively over the years makes me so proud."

Boston Children's Hospital joins a growing list of generous supporters, including the Cummings Foundation with a three-year grant, The Boston Foundation through the two-year Boston Safety Net Grant, and the Anna B. Stearns Foundation with a two-year grant, among many others. Together, they are helping us empower and protect the next generation of girls.



"On behalf of the youth and families we serve, I am incredibly thankful for their belief in our mission and vision and willingness to partner with us to make a difference..."

May Vaughn
Executive Director

A special thank you to our FY2024 major sponsors!



08 CALL TO ACTION

As we celebrate the accomplishments of this past year at Girls LEAP, we invite you to continue or even increase your support as we move forward into a new chapter of growth and empowerment. Your contributions, whether through donations, volunteering, or advocacy, are vital to sustaining our programs and expanding our reach to more girls in need.



Tax-deductible Donations

Every dollar you donate helps us provide life-changing programs that empower young women with the skills and confidence to face any challenge. Consider making a one-time gift or becoming a monthly supporter to ensure our programs remain accessible and impactful.



Volunteering Professional Skills

Join our incredible team of volunteers who dedicate their time and skills to mentoring and inspiring the next generation of leaders. Whether you can commit to leading workshops or providing support in other ways, your involvement will make a tangible difference in the lives of the girls and non-binary youth we serve.



Be An Advocate

Help us amplify our mission by spreading the word about Girls' LEAP in your networks. Share our story, engage with us on social media, or organize community events to raise awareness about the importance of girls' and non-binary youth empowerment and safety.

Together, we can create a brighter future for the young women and gender-expansive youth in our community. Your support is crucial to this mission, and we are grateful for every contribution you make. Thank you for being a part of the Girls' LEAP family!

LEADERSHIP TEAM



May Vaughn
Executive Director



Lynn Masterman
Director of
Operations



Jennyde Dessius
Program Director



Roxanna Higginson
Teen Mentor
Program Manager

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Alkia Powell - Board President, Community Outreach Specialist

Lillian Tsinikas - Board Treasurer, Director, Investment Banking, Lazard

Andrea Haddad - Board Development Chair, Principal, Ernst Young LLP

Alexis Lawton Lewis - Board Clerk, Lead Teen Mentor, Girls' LEAP

Neva Coakley-Grice - Executive Director of Safety Services, Boston Public Schools

Helen Li - ESL/Chinese Mandarin Educator

Grace Malave-Darling - Lead Teen Mentor, Girls' LEAP

Cynthia Maltbie - Retired Girls' LEAP Co-Executive Director, Organizational Consultant

Aisha Miller, Ph.D - VP, Community & Corporate Engagement, Related Beal

Raquel Sáenz Ortiz, PhD - Professor of Education at Southwestern University

Nyacko Pearl Perry - Equity Diversity & Inclusion Consultant, Co-founder of Comfort Kitchen

Aanya Riddick - Lead Teen Mentor, Girls' LEAP

Loreen Watts - Operations Manager & HR Specialist, Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce

Wendy Rue Williams - Global Wellbeing Strategy Leader, Manulife



CLOSING REMARKS

As we conclude another remarkable year at Girls LEAP, I want to reflect on our journey and express my deepest gratitude to everyone participating. This year, we faced challenges that tested our resilience. Still, thanks to our dedicated staff, volunteers, supporters, and the incredible young women we serve, we met those challenges and emerged stronger than ever.

Together, our programs empowered over 352 girls and gender-expansive youth, fostering confidence, self-defense skills, and leadership qualities that will last a lifetime.

Our commitment to building a community where every girl feels valued and capable has never been more vital, and I am proud of our meaningful impact.

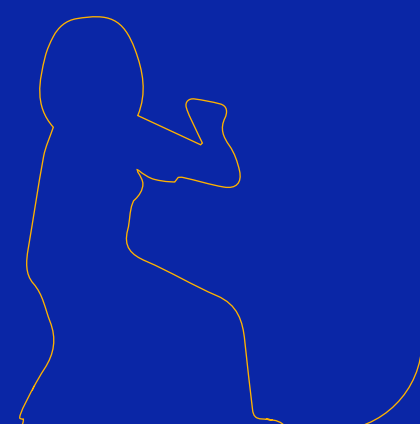
As we look to the future, our vision remains clear: to continue expanding our reach, enhance our programs, and provide even more resources for the young women in our community.

With your ongoing support, we can help every girl leap into her potential, equipped with the tools to navigate life's challenges with strength and grace.

Thank you for believing in our mission and being an essential part of the Girls' LEAP family. Together, we will continue to make a difference in the lives of young women, empowering them to stand firm and thrive.

With heartfelt gratitude,

May Vaughn
Executive Director
Girls LEAP



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Safety. Self-defense. Courage.