

Waterside Workshops

At Waterside, innovative means being willing to step outside of what is expected, understanding that some youth will not fit the framework, and being willing to evolve. There will always be a young person with a new set of needs who causes you to take another look at your program design, and question what you could have done better. This process should never stop. Every young person has a unique story, unique needs, and will teach you something you didn't know before.

In a world that relies on bureaucratic systems, the willingness to take this information and continue to develop a program that speaks to the needs of the individual is truly innovative.

RMYF Funding will provide the flexibility we need to continue to fully implement our expanded services while maintaining our core of vocational training. Specifically, this will provide expanded staff hours to continue to provide youth with the type of individual attention that has shown such positive results over the last year. Particularly, we will focus on developing our Leadership Group, and providing these young men with the foundations necessary to become future leaders and mentors for younger youth in our programs.

We provide job-training, classes, and recreation opportunities for some of the Bay Area's most at-risk youth while offering services to the community including a bicycle shop and repair facility, a full service wooden boat building shop, and Berkeley's only youth-run coffee shop. We are committed to strengthening Bay Area neighborhoods by empowering people of all ages through hands-on education and development of vocational skills.

We offer two programs for youth: Berkeley Boathouse and Street Level Cycles. Berkeley Boathouse replaces now-extinct woodworking programs in local high schools and takes the concept a step further by using an internship/apprentice model. Street Level Cycles is a community bicycle shop that combines a do-it-yourself studio with a youth education program, creating a space where members of the community can fix their bicycles for free while supporting local vocational training.

In our programs and through our network of partners, we assist youth in locating and accessing necessary transitional services including housing, access to food, diploma and GED assistance, and medical/mental health care.

We also offer in-house therapeutic services including group meetings, opportunities for one-on-one therapy, crisis intervention, and quarterly outings.

The structure of our organization is a hybrid business model combining the ground-level, real experience of a small, locally owned business, and the mission-driven focus and financial accountability of a nonprofit organization. 60% of our staff are program graduates.

Specific activities funded by RMYF will include:

- Expanding staff hours to provide more comprehensive wrap-around services for our youth.

- Fostering future leaders and mentors by providing expanded services and assistance for the 10 young men in our Leadership Group.

 - Expanded services include:

 - opportunities for individual therapy

 - weekly Leadership Group Meetings

 - quarterly travel opportunities

 - assistance with finding and maintaining housing

 - assistance with maintaining access to food

 - assistance with accessing necessary medical and mental health care

 - assistance with finding and securing additional part-time work

 - assistance with completing diploma or GED

 - assistance with applying to community college and ongoing support

- Training members of the Leadership Group to be able to provide assistance for other youth in our programs and in their communities

- Provide Expanded Services to new youth in our programs