

# YOUNG INVINCIBLES

# IMPACT REPORT 2021





## Mission

Young Invincibles' mission is to amplify the voices of young adults in the political process and expand economic opportunity for our generation.

## Values

### Young Adult Power

Lasting social change is created by empowering local young adult leaders with deep community ties who can drive the work. By providing young people with tools and practice to better use their voices and skills, we create a ripple effect of young adult leaders addressing systemic barriers.

### Community

We build and sustain a community of belonging, where everyone brings their full selves. Our relationships are authentic, empathetic, compassionate, and respectful. We are mutually responsible for and accountable to one another, meeting each other wherever we are.

### Bold Ideas

We are not satisfied with business as usual or the status quo. Tangible and sustainable systemic change requires new and different leaders whose ideas and approaches can design better solutions to the challenges we face. We commit to creating, learning, growing, and improving together.

### Equity

We want to live in a world of opportunity, cooperation, and abundance. A world that does not yet exist. We work to ensure political, educational, social, and economic equality for all people by understanding the complex and interconnected systems of power and white supremacy that have marginalized people and created entrenched inequities. We must acknowledge the world in which we currently live in order to change the institutions that preclude justice. In our programming and advocacy, we create opportunities to shift power for communities with the least access to political and economic power. Our diverse team aims to implement inclusive and equitable practices, policies, and strategies.

### Collaboration

We care about one another and take joy in working together to set and accomplish our goals. We value and celebrate each other's unique lived experiences, worldviews, talents, and contributions. We work through the courageous and difficult conversations that build better relationships and stronger teams. We bring high quality data, youth voice, facilitation, and strategic thinking to our relationships with our partners.

# LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Thirteen years ago, Young Invincibles (YI) was founded with a mission to amplify the voices of young adults in the political process and expand economic opportunity. Today, we hold fast to that mission, while we are more intentional about whose voices we are centering.

Young adults today face compounding crises: a global pandemic, an economic downturn, rising student debt, and increasing inequities. The global pandemic revealed outdated and weakened public policy frameworks, economic and health care injustices, and a public reckoning on racial inequities. To make a meaningful shift in our country's approach to policy, our leaders must build an agenda that tackles the root causes of today's problems; envisions a new model for policymaking that is grounded in an inclusive, diverse, and equity-oriented worldview; and creates policy solutions to promote broadly shared prosperity.

The challenges of the last two years led YI to review our values to ensure we are truly standing in solidarity with the young adults we support. Our updated values reflect our recommitment to advance diversity, inclusivity, and racial equity. Additionally, we explicitly center young adult power, knowing that lasting social change is created by empowering local young adult leaders with deep community ties who can drive the work.



In the upcoming year, we are deepening our commitment to equity and strengthening our values throughout our programs. I will be leading the development of a new strategic plan, which will guide our work for the coming years. We see this year as an opportunity to build on our successes, thoughtful collaborations with our coalition partners, and the creative solutions designed and informed by young people across the country. We have recently expanded our health care program to more intentionally encompass young adult organizing around the COVID-19 pandemic, and we are using lessons learned from these activities to inform our policies broadly.

Your partnership and support are part of our efforts every day. I hope you will find inspiration in YI's accomplishments and invigorate our resolve for the future.

In solidarity,

**Kristin McGuire**  
**Executive Director**

# IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

138  
YOUNG  
ADVOCATES  
TRAINED

35  
LAWS  
ENACTED  
WITH YI  
SUPPORT

66+ MILLION  
PEOPLE  
REACHED  
ON SOCIAL  
MEDIA

4  
POLICY  
RESEARCH  
REPORTS  
RELEASED

7,038  
EVENT  
ATTENDEES

44,525  
SOCIAL  
MEDIA  
FOLLOWERS

170  
YOUNG ADULTS  
TESTIFIED  
BEFORE  
LEGISLATORS

101,585  
VIDEO  
VIEWS

82  
PRESS  
HITS

# YEARLY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

This year has been challenging in unprecedented ways, and even so, our young adults have fought tirelessly for equity, better access to health care and higher education, and to make their communities better. Our accomplishments include:

## National

- Researched and released our report, "[Young Adult Perspectives on the COVID-19 Vaccine](#)" with findings from facilitated discussions with young adults nationwide about their concerns, motivations, and issues of access related to the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Led an outreach campaign around the 2021 Affordable Care Act Special Enrollment Period. On September 16, the Biden administration announced that 2.8 million people gained affordable health coverage during this time. [YI led messaging](#) across our online platforms and provided support to our coalition partners to amplify this remarkable achievement. YI elevated the work of current enrollment assisters by publishing our report, "2021 State of Enrollment: Health Insurance Outreach and Enrollment during COVID-19".
- Campaigned to shift the narrative around canceling student debt from the early days of the Biden administration. With the new presidential administration in place and state legislative sessions underway, YI immediately took action on our policy agendas. YI, along with more than 200 organizations, sent an open letter to the Biden administration demanding the student loan repayment pause remain in place as millions across the nation continued to struggle during the pandemic. In December, President Biden extended the repayment pause, and [YI applauded](#) this move.



The National Youth Advisory Board (NYAB) is a diverse group of individuals who weigh in on YI's work and strategies for engaging with young adults. After serving their term, leading and facilitating advocacy events, speaking directly to elected officials, and changing the way we view and evaluate policy, our NYAB has completed its most powerful year yet.

## California

- Led the passage of The Private Student Loan Collections Reform Act. This new law adds requirements on private student loan lenders before initiating any collection activity and requires student loan settlements by private student loan lenders and debt collectors to be done in open court.
- Co-presented with the US Surgeon General at a White House briefing showcasing our work in Los Angeles, including a snapshot of our [Don't Miss Out, LA](#) campaign, designed and launched in partnership with YI Advocates. YI is working with our community partners to reduce the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 in LA. The consumer education campaign engages young people as trusted messengers to their peers: training them to provide unbiased information about vaccines in hard-hit neighborhoods.
- Advocated for higher funding for students' basic needs. In July, Governor Gavin Newsom signed Assembly Bill 132, which provides a coordinated and integrated approach to meet college students' basic needs. AB 132 requires each community college to establish a basic needs center and hire a basic needs coordinator. The basic needs coordinator will act as a broker in linking students to on- and off-campus housing, food, mental health, and other basic needs services and resources.



YI California staff attended the Los Angeles Comic Con expo and distributed information on COVID-19 vaccines, booster shots, and Affordable Care Act open enrollment.



# YEARLY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Colorado

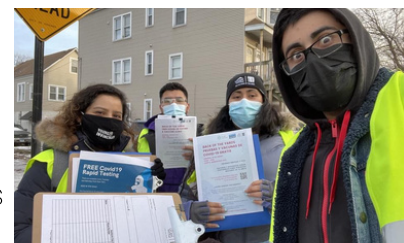
- Led on and [helped to pass major state legislation](#) increasing access to mental and behavioral health care, improving the health care delivery system, and making higher education more equitable and accessible.
- [Released research on the future of women’s involvement in the workforce.](#) We found that the child care crisis, created partly by the pandemic’s effects, had a massive impact on women and families, especially in marginalized communities in Colorado.
- Convened a virtual advocacy day in July where Young Advocates pushed state lawmakers to invest in higher education, health care, and equity policies. Young Advocates discussed our policy priorities with more than 10 bipartisan Colorado legislators.
- Collaborated with Well Being Trust and Active Minds to create a mental health advocacy digital toolset for young adults ages 16-24 years old, which will be released in mid-2022. These tools, along with training and workshops, are being created by young adults and for young adults.
- Facilitated the Hunger-Free Community College Fellowship for 10 Colorado community college students, in collaboration with Hunger Free Colorado, to build applied skills, knowledge, and experience in advocacy and outreach in the anti-hunger space.



YI Colorado staff discussed the Hunger Free Community College Fellowship with students at the Community College of Aurora.

## Illinois

- Hosted a [Digital Advocacy Day](#) where Young Advocates met with legislators to share their stories about campus mental health resources, financial aid, financial literacy in higher education curricula, and more. One Advocate described the day as an opportunity to learn how to talk to elected officials and gain confidence to speak out about what matters to them.
- Provided up-to-date information for homeless youth and service providers on critical services through the StreetLight Chicago app. The pandemic has been especially difficult for those who rely on these services. We reached 10,325 users, giving them information on basic needs, COVID-19, and voting options.
- Advocated for the Student Parent Data Collection Act, which was signed into law. The law requires public colleges and universities to collect data on students who are also parents to better understand their challenges. [YI worked with the bill sponsors and with a student parent to share her story with legislators.](#)
- Established a Learning Collaborative with NAMI Chicago after the passage of the Mental Health Early Action on Campus Act. The Act is designed to improve student mental health services at state universities. We distributed a survey to public colleges and universities to understand their challenges; heard from our student interns about challenges they face, such as insurance coverage for mental health services on campus; and outlined a best practice guide for participants to use.



Young adults went door-to-door in Chicago, Illinois, neighborhoods to educate their peers about the COVID-19 vaccine and register community members for a free vaccine clinic YI hosted.

# YEARLY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## New York

- Organized [#StudentsTakeAlbany2021](#) a virtual advocacy day kicked off by a rally with student leaders and elected officials. Students met with more than 30 state legislators, sharing their policy priorities to create a more equitable and affordable higher education system.
- Launched the inaugural cohort of the [Mayor's Fellowship in Policy and Advocacy](#), a youth leadership development program for out-of-school and out-of-work youth. Fellows developed recommendations on how leaders can increase education and work opportunities for these youth.
- Advocated to end transcript withholding as a debt collection practice and published research on the impact across New York. The City University of New York – the nation's largest urban public university – temporarily suspended this practice. We published new research, with our partners, which found that [students living in majority Black or Latino neighborhoods were eight to 10 times](#) more likely to have their transcripts withheld.
- Hosted the student-led State of Young New York virtual summit. Topics included ["Addressing Basic Needs on New York's College Campuses"](#) and ["Equitable Pathways When Transferring Colleges."](#) We shared stories of young adult experiences during the pandemic



YI New York's young adults distributed health information and talked to residents about COVID-19 in Brooklyn at Assembly Member Stefani L. Zinerman's Disability Access Resource Fair.

## Texas

- Released the ["Student Debt in Texas"](#) report, written with a racial equity lens to advocate for changes at the Texas legislature. This [video](#) features stories from Texas borrowers on navigating debt during the pandemic.
- Launched the first cohort of the Young Women Apprenticeship Council, a six-month paid opportunity to shape recommendations for making apprenticeships more accessible and equitable for young people, women, and moms. YI is working with 12 women to identify shared challenges and barriers in the school/apprenticeship-to-workforce pipeline and craft solutions.
- Organized the virtual HealthE conference to gather insights from young people about the pandemic. HealthE reached 320 participants, and Young Advocates produced policy white papers on the health care needs of young Texans. All Advocates shared that they will use what they've learned in the future, and they are ready to mobilize their community around a health policy.
- Students across Texas took action on campus mental health, leading to a bill to establish a Higher Education Mental Health Task Force. The bill passed both the Texas House and Senate and was sent to the Governor for signature.
- Advocated for and helped pass a four-month expansion of postpartum Medicaid coverage benefits for new mothers, which is more than the 60 days required by federal law.

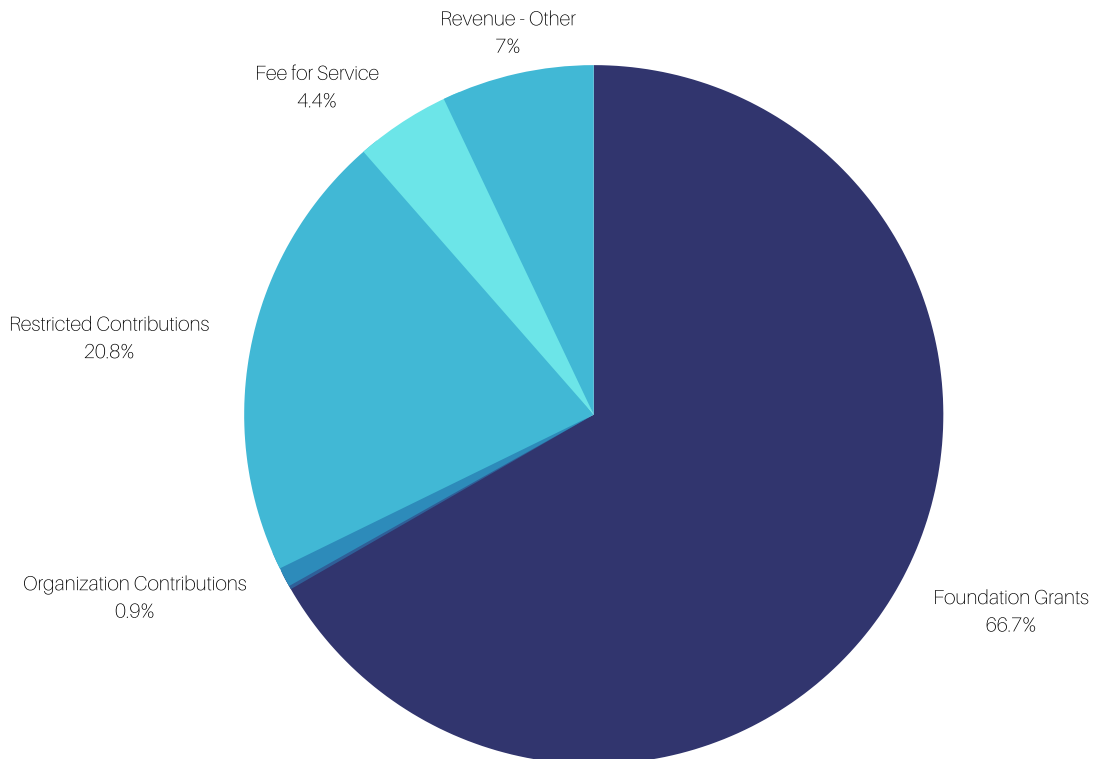


YI Texas staff attended the Good Vibes Festival in Houston, where they conducted vaccine outreach and education with young adult attendees.

# FINANCIALS

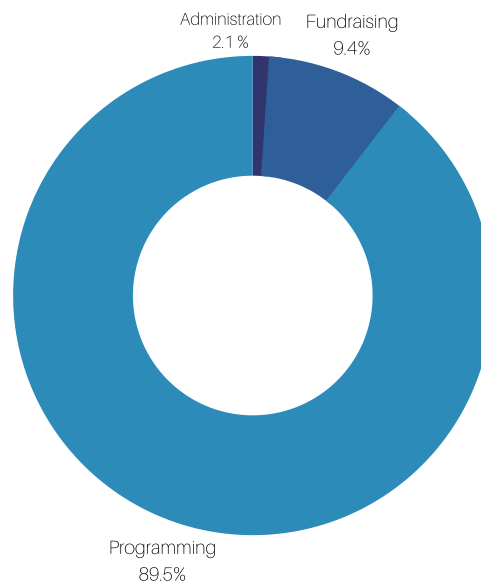
## Revenue Sources

Total amount raised in 2021 was \$10,921,214.88



## Expenditures

Nearly 90% of funds were spent on programming





# DONORS

**Thank you to our funding partners for contributing to our work and ongoing sustainability.**

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