



Unaccompanied Student's Initiative Annual Report

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MISSION

Providing a safe and stable home to develop sustainable independence for students ages 16-20 experiencing homelessness.

A Note from our Director:

Dear Friends,

We are excited to present to you the annual report for the Unaccompanied Student Initiative (USI) for the year 2023. It has been a year of growth, expansion, and significant accomplishments in our mission to provide a safe and stable environment for unaccompanied students and develop their skills for independent living. Here are some highlights from the past year:

- **Number of Students Served:** In 2023, USI successfully served over 30 students. We are proud to have made a positive impact on their lives by providing support, guidance, and resources to help them thrive academically and emotionally.
- **Increased Capacity in Casper:** To meet the growing demand for our services, we have increased capacity in Casper. We now have 14 rooms available for unaccompanied students, ensuring that more students have access to a safe and stable living environment.
- **Expansion into Laramie:** In addition to our presence in Casper, we have expanded our program into the Laramie community. We have established services and support systems for unaccompanied students in that area, reaching out to meet the needs of students in more regions across Wyoming.

We are grateful for the continued support and collaboration from our dedicated staff, community partners, and stakeholders. It is through these strong partnerships that we have been able to achieve these milestones and make a difference in the lives of unaccompanied students.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to our mission and will continue to work towards expanding our reach, improving our services, and supporting the academic and personal growth of unaccompanied students in Wyoming.

We extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the success of USI. Together, we are making a positive impact on the lives of unaccompanied students and helping them build a brighter future.

Yours Truly,



-Jessica Sayers, Executive Director





2023 Financial Overview

The following is an overview of USI's income and expenses for the fiscal year that ended December 31, 2023.

Revenues

Federal Funds	\$320,000
Individual Donors	\$438,000
Community	\$60,000
State/Local	\$345,000
Private Trust/Foundation	\$100,000
Total Revenues & Support	\$1,268,000

Most of our net income comes from foundations and private donors, with continuous fundraising coupled with applications to local foundations and trusts.

Expenses

Cheyenne	\$ 27,062.68
Casper	\$ 99,129.00
Laramie	\$ 68,112.44
Administration	\$ 60,510.51
Fundraising/Marketing	\$ 53,671.76
Payroll (fees & taxes)	\$ 699,517.19
Total Expenses	\$ 1,008,003.58
Net assets at the end of the year (accumulated)	\$ 259,996.42

Many of these funds are to be utilized for program expenses and some administrative costs.





2023 Community Impact Overview

With direction from our Board of Directors, USI branched out into another location in 2023, serving youth homelessness in Albany County. USI spearheaded the Rural Health Network (RHN) that supports mental health awareness in addressing the needs of youth in rural communities. We are supported by our community partners: LCSD #1, NCSD #1, ACSD #1, United Way of Laramie & Natrona Counties, Laramie County Community Partnership, UniWyo FCU, Cent\$ible Nutrition, My Front Door, Food Bank of the Rockies, Wyoming Hunger Initiative, City of Mills, Highlands Park Community Church, Laramie Connections Center, Albany County Sheriff's Office, CRMC, The Lodge Nutrition & Energy, Laramie Interfaith, Pole Mountain Pharmacy & UW – Institute for Disabilities (Project ECHO) in all locations. USI gained a new Executive Director late in the summer of 2023 and our volunteer policy was rewritten in the winter of 2023, but in the beginning months of the year we were blessed to have Highlands Park Community Church (Casper), First Christian Church (Cheyenne), and community members in each county volunteering time, materials, and meals for our youth.

USI is proud to announce that our staff members have undergone extensive training with our community partners to cover difficult subjects like QPR Suicide Prevention, Trauma & Boundaries, Project ECHO, HMIS (Homeless Management Information System), and the First Aid & CPR training. We were lucky enough to send 2 of our staff to the National Youth Homelessness Summit on the Hill in Washington, D.C. for the 2nd year in a row. From this they brought back knowledge of how to implement deliverables like Project TND, QPR Suicide Prevention and Financial Literacy to our youth while keeping pathways open for all demographics of youth ages 16-20 who are struggling with homelessness.

In 2023, USI coordinated several fundraising events with the support of our Members, Community Sponsors and Volunteers. We held mini-fundraising events at a local level such as Paint & Wine Night with Flydragon Art Studio, Comedy Night, WyoGives, a Golf Tournament for Education in Cheyenne, Monte Carlo Night in Casper, and larger statewide events like our 5k run, or even seasonal events such as Boo Bags for our supporters.



Facebook: /unaccompaniedstudents/



Instagram: /buildingafoundationusi/

2023 Core Programs

QPR Suicide Prevention: this program holds a mission to reduce the suicidal behaviors of our youth and save lives by providing innovative, practical, and proven suicide prevention training. The signs of crisis are all around us. USI staff believed that education empowers everyone, regardless of their background, to make a positive difference in the life of someone in need. This program is offered to both staff and students alike in all our locations.

Trauma & Boundaries: assisting our youth with creating boundaries has been proven to help them create their own sense of safety within themselves and while interacting with others. Boundaries are vital to trauma work and helping youth heal, mentally and emotionally. It has proven to be an extremely effective way to help our youth re-establish a sense of safety in the world. This skill bridges into helping them establish an awareness of their space and how to take ownership of that space. This program is required by all staff members.



Project ECHO: UW ECHO Networks provide ongoing support for educators and other professionals in a rural state where specialized knowledge is not always locally available. By connecting educators and experts, barriers to specialized knowledge are removed and outcomes improved. USI uses this network for our youth to help establish mental, emotional, and medical support throughout our communities. With the goal that our youth maintains comfortable communication with health care providers, so they have a sound structure for healthcare when they graduate from our program. This program is attended by our Program Coordinators and Network Director.

2023 Core Programs

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Program TND: this program is an effective drug abuse prevention program that targets high-school aged youth. It was developed to assist in stopping or reducing the use of cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana, hard drugs and vape use by using accurate information about the consequences of drug use and abuse, including environmental, social, physiological, and emotional consequences. The program also touches on weapon carrying and victimization to help create a safe environment for our youth to thrive in. This program is taught by our staff to our students in all locations.



Financial Literacy: this course was taught to assist with the student's knowledge of how to make smart decisions with money. It included preparing a budget, knowing how much to save, deciding on favorable loan terms, impacts of money decisions on one's credit and distinguishing different paths to saving long term for personal goals. This program is taught to our students in all locations.

2023 Board of Directors

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Occupation</u>
Marisa Beahm	President	Accountant III @ BCBS of WY
Beth Lance	Vice- President	Partner @ Lance & Hall, LLP
Kayleigh Reardon	Secretary	Comm. Lender @ FirstTier Bank
Diane Bendinskis	Treasurer	Loan Officer II @ Pinnacle Bank
Richard Peterson	Member	System Manager @ US Attorney's Office – Wyoming
Max Bassman	Member	Command Inspector General @ Army Joint Force Headquarters
Shawn Taylor	Member	Executive Director @ WREA
Greta Spencer	Member	District Homeless Liaison @ NCSD #1
Tim Stubson	Member	Partner @ Crowley Fleck, PLLP



2023 Supporters



- Memorandum of Understanding (on file)
 - ◆ Health Resources and Services Administration
 - ◆ ServeWyoming
 - ◆ AmeriCorps
 - ◆ Hughs Foundation
 - ◆ Albany County
 - ◆ Laramie County
 - ◆ City of Laramie
 - ◆ Casper Area Transportation Coalition
 - ◆ Albany County School District #1
 - ◆ Laramie County School District #1
 - ◆ Natrona County School District #1
 - ◆ United Way of Laramie County
 - ◆ United Way of Natrona County
 - ◆ Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration Charitable Choice
 - ◆ Natrona County Health Trust
 - ◆ Ellbogen Foundation
 - ◆ Daniel's Fund
 - ◆ Mary Storer Foundation
- Tax Exemption Letter (attached)

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
P. O. BOX 2508
CINCINNATI, OH 45201

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date:

FEB 26 2019

UNACCOMPANIED STUDENTS INITIATIVE
P O BOX 22103
CHEYENNE, WY 82003-0000

Employer Identification Number:
83-2885380
DLN:
26053435004729
Contact Person:
CUSTOMER SERVICE ID# 31954
Contact Telephone Number:
(877) 829-5500
Accounting Period Ending:
December 31
Public Charity Status:
170(b)(1)(A)(vi)
Form 990/990-EZ/990-N Required:
Yes
Effective Date of Exemption:
August 31, 2018
Contribution Deductibility:
Yes
Addendum Applies:
No

Dear Applicant:

We're pleased to tell you we determined you're exempt from federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c)(3). Donors can deduct contributions they make to you under IRC Section 170. You're also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under Section 2055, 2106, or 2522. This letter could help resolve questions on your exempt status. Please keep it for your records.

Organizations exempt under IRC Section 501(c)(3) are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined you're a public charity under the IRC Section listed at the top of this letter.

If we indicated at the top of this letter that you're required to file Form 990/990-EZ/990-N, our records show you're required to file an annual information return (Form 990 or Form 990-EZ) or electronic notice (Form 990-N, the e-Postcard). If you don't file a required return or notice for three consecutive years, your exempt status will be automatically revoked.

If we indicated at the top of this letter that an addendum applies, the enclosed addendum is an integral part of this letter.

For important information about your responsibilities as a tax-exempt organization, go to www.irs.gov/charities. Enter "4221-PC" in the search bar to view Publication 4221-PC, Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Public Charities, which describes your recordkeeping, reporting, and disclosure requirements.