The Greater Lawrence Summer Fund (GLSF) focuses on closing the opportunity and achievement gaps for thousands of low-income youth in Greater Lawrence each year by providing greater access to enrichment activities during out-of-school time. For 30 years, this fund has supported high-quality summer programs that achieve these three important outcomes:

1. Enhance social, academic and emotional abilities
2. Discourage unhealthy behaviors by providing safe alternatives
3. Reduce the summer learning gap between low-income youth and their more affluent peers
LAWRENCE YOUTH FACE A NUMBER OF CHALLENGES...

30% of Lawrence youth live in poverty.

44% of Lawrence youth are overweight.

68% of Lawrence 3rd graders are not reading proficiently.

BUT... **GOOD THINGS** ARE ALSO HAPPENING FOR OUR LAWRENCE YOUTH.

While the statistics prove that Lawrence youth face many challenges, area schools and nonprofits are doing good work that is improving their lives. Just visit any of our 42 funded programs and you will see vital work that is:

1) Improving learning scores.

2) Increasing physical activity and access to healthy foods.

3) Giving youth access to hands-on summer learning opportunities.

We are intentionally working to show our students that they come from cultures and communities that have a lot of value. There are strengths and opportunities that are just as rich and helpful to academic success as any other culture.

“- A 2020 GLSF Grant Recipient (shared during final report)
I HAVE LEARNED THAT MY MINDSET CONTROLS MY LIFE AND EVERYONE AND EVERYTHING IN IT. I HAVE LEARNED THAT WITH CONFIDENCE, I CAN DO ANYTHING. I CAN ACHIEVE ANYTHING THAT I BELIEVE THAT I CAN.

- A 2020 GLSF Program Participant

Youth playing pickleball at Bellesini Academy

GLSF 2020
THE BIG PICTURE:

42 programs supported
$226,000 granted

4,672 youth served
youth ages 0-24 engaged
This summer was unlike any other. Amidst a backdrop of the COVID-19 public health pandemic, severe economic disruption, and global protests calling for the protection of Black lives, GLSF partners proved that they are...

RESILIENT - Co-founded and launched the Lawrence Sports Leadership Collaborative with leaders from all city sports to initiate collaborative efforts that intend to create a more unified and more vibrant sports community.

CREATIVE - Partnered across City departments to host a summer programs calendar that promoted socially distanced, outdoor activities in various City parks designed to engage youth and their families in person and online. Also gave back to the local economy by using gift cards from local businesses to incentivize participation.

STEPPING UP TO MEET THE NEED - Actively collaborated with City agencies and fellow nonprofits to conduct community outreach and provide critical material supports such as food, clothing, and rental and housing counseling.

STEPPING UP TO MEET THE MOMENT - Facilitated virtual discussions with youth about the Black Lives Matter movement, food equity, housing and infrastructure protests, and the cycle of socialization. Youth were able to overcome the uncomfortable nature of participating in these discussions and learned to lean into the discomfort and engage in constructive discourse with their peers and leaders.

Summer out-of-school time provides Lawrence youth with an unparalleled opportunity to prevent learning loss, build and strengthen skills and relationships, and take part in engaging experiences. Creating more equitable access to summer opportunities can reduce many of the life outcome disparities created by poverty.

The Greater Lawrence Summer Fund helps make a wide range of high-quality summer programs possible. These programs keep kids safe, and also make an enormous impact in these key areas:

- Summer learning gap
- Opportunity gap
- Healthy lifestyles
- College and career readiness
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math)
- Writing
- Arts

**AREAS OF IMPACT**

**2020 SUMMER IMPACT IN ACTION**

Campers showing off the tie dye shirts they made at Camp Y-Wood (YWCA Northern Massachusetts)
Essex County Community Foundation, working with an all-volunteer grant committee, raises funds annually and distributes those funds to organizations that best meet the Fund's program priorities.

On behalf of GLSF, ECCF accepts grant proposals from qualified 501(c)(3) organizations to support summer programs serving Greater Lawrence youth. As grant applications were due in early March, ECCF staff and GLSF committee members spoke with applicants over the course of the spring months to check in about shifting plans given rapidly changing public health guidance. Grants were awarded in the beginning of June.

OUR SUPPORT
MAKES A DIFFERENCE

GLSF funds are awarded to ensure that many areas of programming are covered:

Programs by Field of Funding:

37 OPPORTUNITY
GAP

27 ACHIEVEMENT
GAP

9 OPPORTUNITY
YOUTH

Programs by Impact Area:

Arts

26

College Readiness/
Transitions

17

Environment
Awareness/
Nature Education

20

Field Trips

28

Healthy
Lifestyles

26

Job/Career
Readiness

17

Language
Arts/
Literacy

28

Outdoor
Recreation

30

STEM

21

*Grantee programs may operate in multiple fields and/or impact areas.

OUR GRANT PROCESS & REVIEW

Communities Together’s Manos Felices! youth working on their masterpieces
Lack of educational experiences over the summer months contribute significantly to learning loss and the growing achievement gap between low-income children and their more affluent peers. Leveraging additional education and enrichment hours through summer programs go a long way towards closing that gap, stemming – and in some cases reversing – learning loss.

There is a very real difference between the educational and economic opportunities available to youth in Lawrence versus the majority of their peers living in Essex County. Summer programs offer greater access to resources like the internet or transportation beyond the city, opening youth up to engaging experiences that can advance their life outcomes.

Building bridges at Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence

Remote learning with Phillips Academy Andover’s PALS program

Afternoon art program at Bellesini Academy

Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts making s’mores
The Lawrence Public Schools lack adequate physical education facilities to accommodate the ever-growing student population. At the same time, there are limited private sports organizations in the city offering healthy living programs. Though our children suffer the consequences with higher rates of childhood obesity and diabetes, sports-based youth development programs work to counter this by engaging Lawrence youth in ways that promote healthy living while simultaneously building confidence, leadership skills and academic achievement.
COVID-19 UNDERSCORES THE IMPORTANCE OF THE GREATER LAWRENCE SUMMER FUND.

For GLSF committee members making funding decisions, one of the things they kept paramount throughout the grants process was the health and safety of program participants.

"We had to ensure that any program that could still run was doing so without putting kids and their families in harm’s way."

- A 2020 GLSF Committee Member

Lawrence History Center Zoom call with guest speakers
I think it's important for people to understand the genuine value that exists in delivering summer programming to youth in urban areas. Working together to provide opportunities to kids who might not otherwise have them can help to change their lives.

- A 2020 GLSF Committee Member

Adapting to a New Normal

The Lawrence Public Library, which usually hosts hundreds of kids each summer for story times, craft activities and special events, pivoted to include virtual programming and safe, outdoor activities that kids could enjoy with their families.

Partnering with the Lawrence Senior Center and the Lawrence Recreation Department, the Library offered scavenger hunts, virtual story times, outdoor activity and craft kits and a story walk in three of the City's parks. This pivot in plans did not come easily, however; it took time, innovation and collaboration.

Community member discovering a lawn sign at a park inviting her and her family to pick up a free recreational bag at the Lawrence Public Library

CONGRATULATIONS
Youth Jobs and Leadership Program GRADUATES

SUMMER 2020
GOING VIRTUAL WHILE STAYING HEALTHY, SAFE AND EDUCATED

Summer Dance Institute with Jean Appolon Expressions and Izizwe Dance Studio

Students and teacher show their “fun” side in Zoom class at the Youth Writing Workshop at Merrimack Valley Immigrant & Education Center
MAKING UP FOR THE COVID SLIDE

This year, traditional summer learning loss is followed on the heels of what education experts have coined “COVID Slide,” a result of schools closing three months early and pivoting to distance-learning – a process that shined a light on stark inequities in the educational system. It’s also elevated the vital importance of engaging kids over the summer.

Although the vast majority of GLSF partners were able to alter summer plans and move forward with programming in ways that met new social distancing and health guidelines, GLSF committee members also emphasized the importance of supporting a few long-term partners like Windrush that, due to the nature of their programming, could not.

“These programs are so critical to Lawrence youth and we want them to be here for the kids next summer,” explained the GLSF Committee. “We wanted to let these nonprofits know that we still support them.”

In normal times nonprofits face budget and fundraising challenges. But COVID-19 – which forced organizations to cancel programming and events – exacerbated those challenges by slashing revenue needed to cover day-to-day operations.

GLSF SUPPORTING THOSE WHO COULDN’T OPERATE DUE TO COVID
MANY THANKS TO OUR 2020 FUNDERS

Mr. and Mrs. John N. Adams
Mr. and Mrs. Christopher B. Andrews
Brad Gatlin Family Fund
Brand Fund
C. Pringle Charitable Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. Wayne R. Cannella
Catherine McCarthy Memorial Trust
Charlotte Home
Cornelius A. Wood & Muriel P. Wood Trust
Dusky Fund
Eastern Bank Charitable Foundation
Enterprise Bank and Trust Company
Mr. Vincent Errico
Mr. and Mrs. Ed Planagan
Foundation M
Francis Family Fund
Ms. Kay Frishman
Gable Family Foundation
The Glore Fund
Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Gore
Helen & David Tory Fund
Highland Street Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. Edward F. Hines
Ms. Diane J. Huster
Mr. and Mrs. Hooks K. Johnston, Jr.
Ms. Holly Langer
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Margaret Collins Charitable Foundation
Ms. Vivian Marmol
Mr. and Mrs. Gary Martin
Mr. and Mrs. Joshua Miner
Mount Blue Fund
Mr. and Mrs. Frederick L. Nagle, Jr.
Nellie Mae Education Foundation
Ms. Marianne Paley Nadel
Quaker Hill Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. Jim Richards
Rosman Family Fund
The Stevens Foundations
Mr. and Mrs. Richard L. Sumberg
Mr. Jesús Suriel
The White Fund
Mr. and Mrs. Timothy Vaill
The Webster Family Legacy Fund
Mr. and Mrs. Alexander and Anne White
The White Fund
Worden Family Foundation
Ms. Pamela Yameen

GREATER LAWRENCE SUMMER FUND VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE

Sandi Cannella
Holly Langer
Josh Miner
Francisco Paulino
Pavel Payano
Dick Purinton
Arinelli Villa
Pamela Yameen

Small group orientation at Esperanza Academy led by staff music therapist

Cake decorating with Family Services of the Merrimack Valley