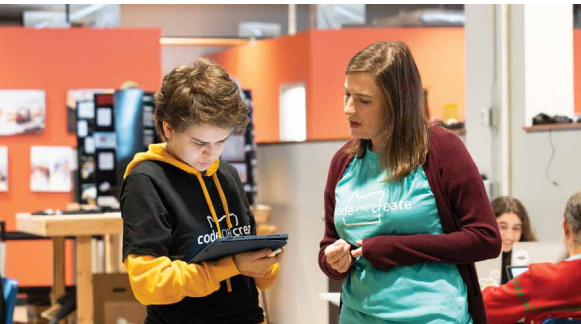




Connected  
Lane County



# 2024 - 2025 Annual Report ***A YEAR OF IMPACT***

Every young person deserves a future they can be excited about. We connect youth ages 14–24 with opportunities, experiences, and support to help them build lives full of possibility and purpose—helping them explore careers, access paid job training, receive education guidance, find needed resources, and thrive in safe spaces.



## Reflections from the Executive Director

Greetings, and thank you for taking a moment to learn more about Connected Lane County! Since joining in January 2025, I have also been in the learning phase. It has been deeply rewarding to learn from our talented team, observe the tremendous accomplishments of the youth and young adults coming through our doors, and meet with so many who share our energy for this work.

**In this report, you'll learn how we are working to expand access and opportunities for 14 to 24-year-olds in Lane County. There are too many highlights to shout out, but the following are representative of our year.**

- Strengthened our Excelerator model by deepening our capacity for one-on-one support, ensuring youth with a range of disabilities have equitable access to opportunities.
- Collaborated with local youth-serving partners to continue the Direct Cash Transfer program, providing \$100,000 in critical financial support to 45 young adults at risk of homelessness.
- Partnered with the Eugene Springfield NAACP to hold the inaugural Black Youth Leadership Summit and educator convening, empowering 47 youth and connecting 12 local educators.
- Launched after-school Invention Clubs with Oregon MESA at Cascade, Hamlin, and Lincoln Middle Schools, expanding STEM opportunities in Bethel, Springfield, and South Lane.

Notwithstanding the positive growth we have experienced over the last few years, we fully recognize there is important work yet to do. According to the most recently available Oregon Department of Education District Profiles, one in three Lane County youth (8th - 12th graders) experience poverty, and one in six experience a disability. In more specific terms, we're talking about 6,000 youth in Lane County who experience the impacts of poverty and 3,000 who experience the effects of a disability. There is much we can do to ensure these youth can access pathways that will support them as they build their future.

Whether you are a long-time partner or just learning about us, I hope a story, photo, or quote in this report sparks your interest and touches your heart. The work we do is life-changing and community-building, but we don't do it alone. Your partnership, through program support, worksite opportunities, and financial contribution, is vital to meeting the needs of young people.

These first months have shown me that the work of Connected Lane County is, at its core, a shared journey of listening and learning. I invite you to reach out to me to explore ways to expand possibilities for youth. Together, we can ensure the rising generation, with their varied lived experiences and identities, feels their worth and can access fulfilling education and employment pathways.

With appreciation for our shared work,

**Jesse Nelson**  
Executive Director

[jnelson@connectedlane.org](mailto:jnelson@connectedlane.org)



# What We Achieved Together

As we say goodbye to the 2024–25 year, we are energized by the progress we’ve made and excited for the opportunities ahead. Guided by a strong sense of purpose, we have been listening, learning, and working to expand opportunities for youth across our community.

**This year’s achievements reflect what is possible when community and purpose come together.**

We strengthened our Excelerator model to expand one-on-one support for youth with disabilities, provided \$100,000 in direct cash assistance to 45 young adults at risk of homelessness, empowered 47 youth through the inaugural Black Youth Leadership Summit in partnership with the Eugene Springfield NAACP, and launched hands-on STEM Invention Clubs in three middle schools with Oregon MESA. These accomplishments represent just a portion of the impact we’ve made this year, and reflect the power of collaboration and community-driven action, yet they also remind us of the work still ahead. As we look forward, we are eager to deepen partnerships, engage more community voices, and keep advancing our shared mission of uplifting youth and expanding opportunities for every young person to thrive.



**\$620,086**  
Paid Youth Wages



**2,062**

Youth  
Served



**320**

Youth  
Paid



**45,102**

Participation  
Hours



**188**

Industry and  
Community Partners

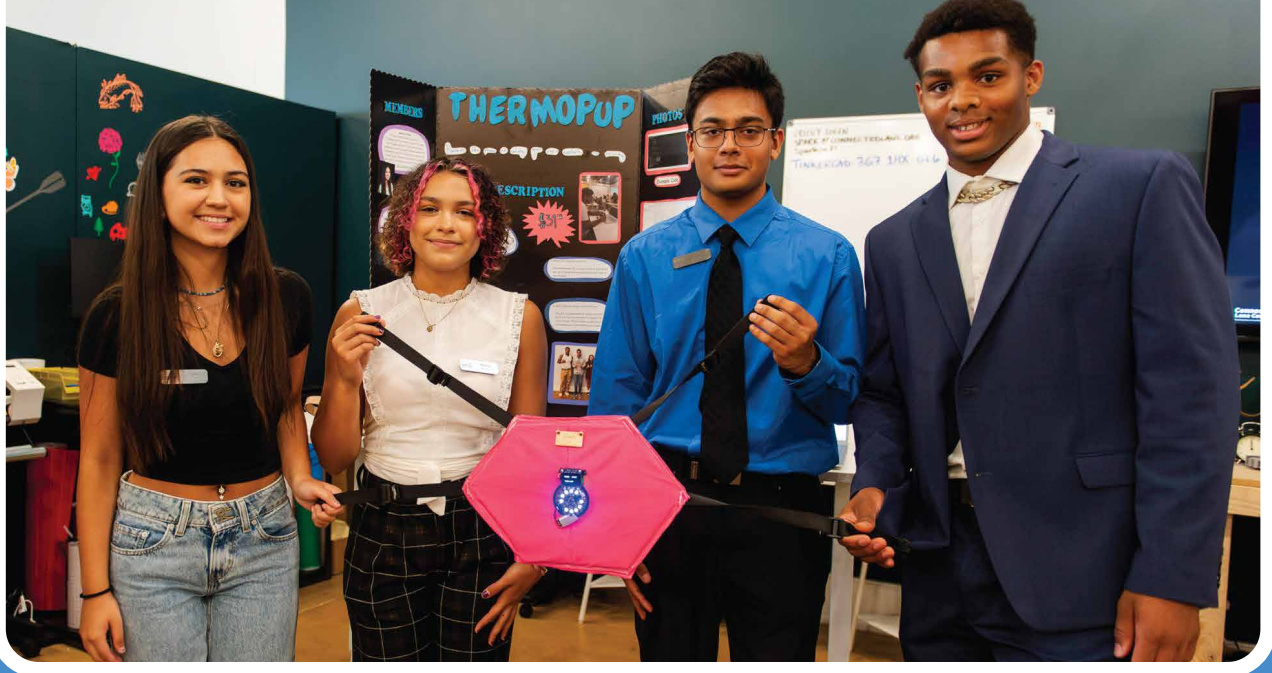
**Meet Day**  
(she/her)



“I really appreciate the classes and the program staff, everything they did, and the effort they put into the Healthcare Excelerator. Working with my friends helped me study and refresh everything. I don’t really like to study, but they made it fun and I felt like I was actually helping them study too. I never felt like I was stupid.”

## Learn Her Story

Day connected with our team while working toward her GED at Kalapuya High School. She took part in Rent Well and DevNW Financial Foundations and built her confidence and organizational skills. Her Resource Navigator encouraged her to pursue the Health Excelerator, where she committed fully, leaving her day job and coordinating childcare to complete the 10-week program. Despite past struggles in school, Day finished at the top of her class and earned her CNA-1 certification. She now plans to use that credential to support her family and help others, and she credits her study group as one of the best parts of the experience.



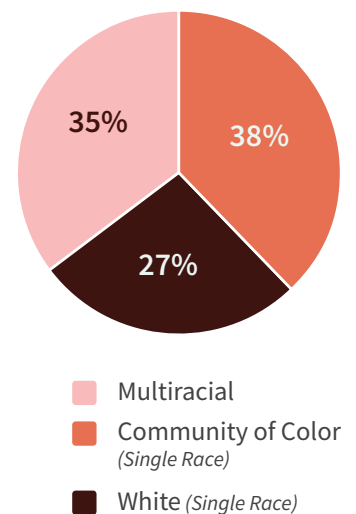
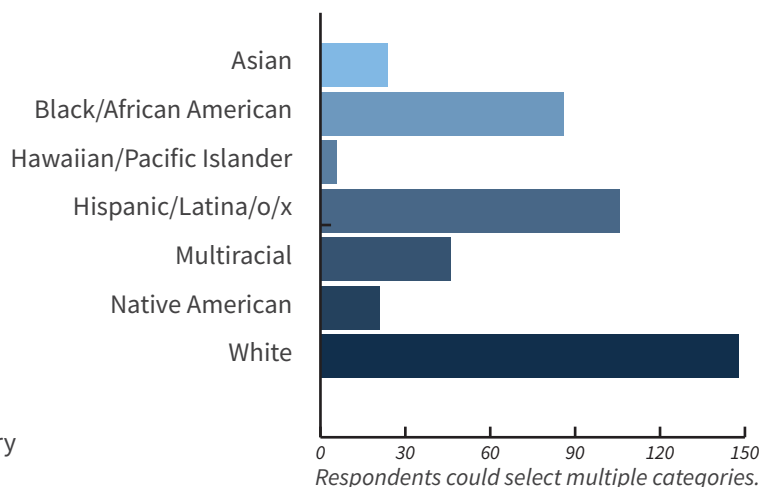
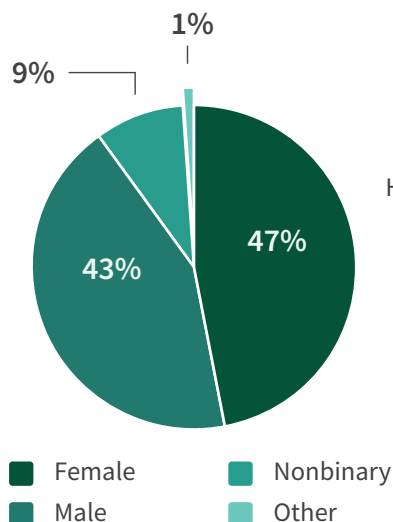
## Learn His Story

*In Summer of 2024, Kishan participated in Invention Lab after his sophomore year at Willamette High School. During this time, he (shown in bright blue) and his team created ThermoPup, a product designed to alert dog owners when it is unsafe for their pet to be outside in extreme temperatures. He and his team worked on their product over the course of the four-week Invention Lab program and presented their work to family and supporters at the 2024 Invention Lab Showcase! He stayed connected through the school year as a member of The Agency and became a mentor to students at Cascade Middle School through their after-school Invention Club and MESA Chapter.*

## Meet Kishan (he/him)

“My experience was a big eye-opener for trying to find career options that suit me. It helped me learn that I enjoy designing and creating. Using the CPX was a huge learning experience, teaching me how to code in basic computer skills.”

## Who We Engaged Through Paid Opportunities (Gender and Race/Ethnicity)



*All data is self-reported participant data. Percentages are only of those who reported.*

# Celebrating our Champions for Youth!

With a gift of \$500 or more, these individuals provided youth with access to paid work experiences, job training, STEM education, mentorship, and essential support. Beyond giving, Champions amplify their impact by sharing our mission and advocating for youth in the community. Thank you!

*Adam Wendt • Angela Cherbas • Beatrice Dohrn • Darren Emmons • Deborah Burns Deppen • Elaine Twigg Cornett and Zane Cornett • Eric and Katie Sucre • Heidi Larwick • Jamila Hunter • Joseph Calbreath • Kraig Sproles • Robert Lang • Todd Hamilton*

## Supporting Partners

Your generosity fuels our mission, providing critical resources, safe spaces, and opportunities in education, job training, and mentorship. Thanks to your support, thousands of young people are gaining the skills, experiences, and confidence to navigate challenges and reach their full potential.

|                                                         |                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>5th St. Public Market</i>                            | <i>National Philanthropic Trust</i>                        |
| <i>Andersen Construction</i>                            | <i>Network Charter School</i>                              |
| <i>Autzen Foundation</i>                                | <i>Oakshire Public House</i>                               |
| <i>Baker's Gas &amp; Welding Supplies</i>               | <i>OCCU Foundation</i>                                     |
| <i>Cascade Manor Residents Association</i>              | <i>OnPoint Community Credit Union</i>                      |
| <i>Central Lane Metro Planning Organization</i>         | <i>Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative</i>               |
| <i>Chambers Family Foundation</i>                       | <i>Oregon Community Credit Union</i>                       |
| <i>City of Eugene Transportation Department</i>         | <i>Oregon Community Foundation</i>                         |
| <i>CLF Network</i>                                      | <i>Oregon Department of Education</i>                      |
| <i>Corson and Johnson Law Firm PC</i>                   | <i>Oregon Department of Human Services</i>                 |
| <i>Cow Creek Umpqua Indian Foundation</i>               | <i>Oregon Food Bank</i>                                    |
| <i>Discard Upcycling</i>                                | <i>Oregon Forests Resource Institute</i>                   |
| <i>Dowl, Inc.</i>                                       | <i>Oregon MESA</i>                                         |
| <i>Elias Wolf Music LLC</i>                             | <i>Oregon Pacific Bank</i>                                 |
| <i>Eugene Education Foundation</i>                      | <i>Oregon Social Learning Center Developments, Inc.</i>    |
| <i>Eugene Emeralds</i>                                  | <i>PacificSource Community Solutions</i>                   |
| <i>Eugene Family YMCA</i>                               | <i>PacificSource Foundation for Health</i>                 |
| <i>Eugene School District 4J</i>                        | <i>Peace Health</i>                                        |
| <i>Fern Ridge School District</i>                       | <i>Pivot Architecture</i>                                  |
| <i>Henry E. Niles Foundation</i>                        | <i>Rainbow Valley Design and Construction Company</i>      |
| <i>Higher Education Coordinating Commission</i>         | <i>Reser Family Foundation</i>                             |
| <i>Homes for Good</i>                                   | <i>Roundhouse Foundation</i>                               |
| <i>Honoring Our New Ethnic Youth</i>                    | <i>S Foundation of Silicon Valley Community Foundation</i> |
| <i>John Serbu Youth Campus Fund of OCF</i>              | <i>Siletz Tribal Fund</i>                                  |
| <i>Junior League of Eugene</i>                          | <i>Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce</i>                |
| <i>Kelly Middle School</i>                              | <i>Springfield Education Foundation</i>                    |
| <i>Lane Arts Council</i>                                | <i>Springfield Public Schools</i>                          |
| <i>Lane Community College</i>                           | <i>Travel Lane County</i>                                  |
| <i>Lane County</i>                                      | <i>Tykeson Family Charitable Trust</i>                     |
| <i>Lane County Community &amp; Economic Development</i> | <i>UnitedHealth Group</i>                                  |
| <i>Lane County Health and Human Services</i>            | <i>University of Oregon</i>                                |
| <i>Lane Education Service District</i>                  | <i>U.S. Bank Foundation</i>                                |
| <i>Lane Workforce Partnership</i>                       | <i>Washington Federal Foundation</i>                       |
| <i>McKenzie-Willamette Medical Center</i>               | <i>Weyerhaeuser</i>                                        |
| <i>McMenamins North Bank</i>                            | <i>Willamalane Park &amp; Recreation District</i>          |
|                                                         | <i>Youth Development Oregon</i>                            |



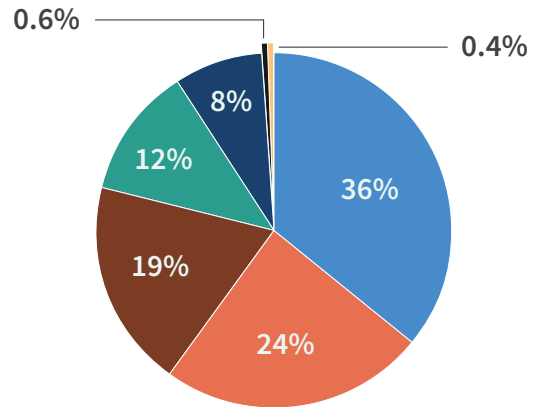
## Turning Talents Into Impact

Albert has long had an interest in passing his wealth of technical and engineering knowledge on to the next generation. He has volunteered in Connected Lane County's Tech and Manufacturing Excelerators since spring 2024. Always patient, Albert guides Excelerator participants through projects in programmable logic computing, welding and metal fabrication, and sheds light on what it's like to work in the industry.

*"Something that stayed with me as an instructor was this one student who stayed late, welding quietly long after the others had moved on. As a dad, I see how much today's youth carry. Watching her set that aside and give herself fully to something new that could grow into a career and a creative outlet meant a lot."*

## Our Funding Sources

*Diverse funding makes us resilient; community giving makes us thrive.*



|                                      |             |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| State Grants                         | \$1,462,711 |
| Local Education & Workforce Partners | \$963,422   |
| Federal Grants                       | \$760,906   |
| Foundations & Donor Advised Funds    | \$472,845   |
| Earned & In-Kind                     | \$330,913   |
| Individual Donations                 | \$21,725    |
| Business Contributions               | \$10,344    |

**Total Income \$4,022,866**

*"Connected Lane County greatly influenced my desire to pursue my skills in computer science... it significantly strengthened my resume, confidence, and experience, which led me to achieve scholarships, a job in information services, and remain confident in pursuing my degree."*

## How to Get Involved

- Give — [connectedlane.org/donate](https://connectedlane.org/donate)
- Partner — Host a Job Shadow or Internship
- Share — Spread the Word with Your Networks
- Follow our Socials — @connectedlane

Learn More

