

# THE NEXT CHAPTER

## 2025 ANNUAL REPORT



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**Front cover:** Northport High School students skiing at Crystal Mountain at sunset

**Right:** Glen Lake Middle School student picking apples locally



Our Dearest Supporters,

LIFT Teen Center is stepping boldly into a future that is bright with possibility, purpose, and the power of young people. We are committed to uplifting our community through meaningful connections, youth leadership, and inclusive spaces where every voice is heard.

Because of you, 2025 was filled with bold steps and bright impact:

- Tweens and teens across Leelanau County joined us as mentors, friends, participants, and student volunteers.
- Multigenerational relationships were strengthened as community members invested more than 1,500 volunteer hours with youth!
- LIFT kids stepped up as creative leaders, guiding programming ideas and community impact efforts.

We believe in the brilliance of our youth and the strength of a community that shows up for them. Thank you for being part of this bold and bright journey with us. Together, we are creating something powerful, and it belongs to all of us.

With endless gratitude,



Rebekah TenBrink  
Executive Director

**Executive Director, Rebekah TenBrink, with  
coins collected from donation boxes around  
Leelanau County**



# HONORING LIFT'S ROOTS AT THE COMMUNITY CENTER

In 2017, our Executive Director, Rebekah TenBrink, formally founded Leelanau Investing For Teens (LIFT) in the basement of the local community center. The Friendship Community Center served as LIFT's 501(c)(3) nonprofit and fiscal sponsor, and through them, we were able to establish LIFT's first safe space for local teens.

We cleaned up the basement, painted the walls LIFT's signature green, and moved in staple teen center items like a pool table and board games. From there, we offered programming every Wednesday to middle and high school students at Suttons Bay Public Schools.

We continued operating our afterschool programs from The Friendship Community Center's basement on a weekly cadence until 2020, when we, along with the rest of the world, needed to reimagine how we could safely stay connected to youth. We did that through doorstep drop-offs and virtual visits.



**Top: Students shooting hoops in the basement at the Friendship Community Center**  
**Middle: Suttons Bay teen playing their ukulele on the front steps**  
**Bottom: Teens and volunteers paint together in the basement at the end of 2020**

In 2021, LIFT officially moved out of the basement and into Suttons Bay Middle School, where students could more easily access our programs. It was then that we created a strategic plan to one day have permanent spaces in each of Leelanau County's four public school districts, providing year-round out-of-school programs for every middle and high schooler.

Five years later, that vision is close to reality. LIFT now operates in all four districts, supporting 6th–12th graders across Leelanau County, with Leland High School as the final expansion on the horizon.

At the beginning of 2026, LIFT, with so much gratitude and respect, officially separated from the Friendship Community Center and formed its own nonprofit.



**Games in the basement of the community center, Spring 2021**



**Moving day! LIFT's first in-school space, August 2021**

**2020:**  
Basement of the  
Friendship  
Community Center



**2021:**  
Suttons Bay Middle  
School, part-time

**2022:**

Suttons Bay  
Schools, full-time



**Spring 2023:**  
Suttons Bay and Northport  
Schools, full-time



**Fall 2023:**  
Suttons Bay, Northport and  
Glen Lake Schools, full-time



**2025:**  
Suttons Bay, Northport,  
Glen Lake, and Leland  
Schools, full-time



# NORTHPORT SCHOOLS

LIFT at Northport is super inclusive and feels like one big group of friends. Our room sits right in the middle of everything, so it's always buzzing, especially at lunchtime when students pack the room, eat together, and fill the space with nonstop conversation. After school, they're off exploring Northport and the rest of Leelanau County. A top favorite is swimming at Northport Highlands' indoor pool!

**Northport students with horses and bowling**



# SUTTONS BAY SCHOOLS

LIFT at Suttons Bay is just plain fun. There are always jokes flying around, big smiles, and a really silly, welcoming energy. With one room in the middle school and one in the high school, there's something for everyone. The middle schoolers love games and art projects and the high schoolers go all-in on the pool, hockey, and foosball tables. It's the program where laughter never really stops.

**Suttons Bay students at Leo Creek and playing tug of war**



# LELAND SCHOOLS

LIFT at Leland may be our newest program, but students figured out fast that it's *the* place to be. Staff and students stop by all day just to say hi to Jesus, who always has something fun up his sleeve, like bedazzling rubber ducks. After school, students love helping out next door with 5Loaves2Fish, building community in a natural and joyful way!



**Leland students petting goats and on a hike**



# GLEN LAKE SCHOOLS

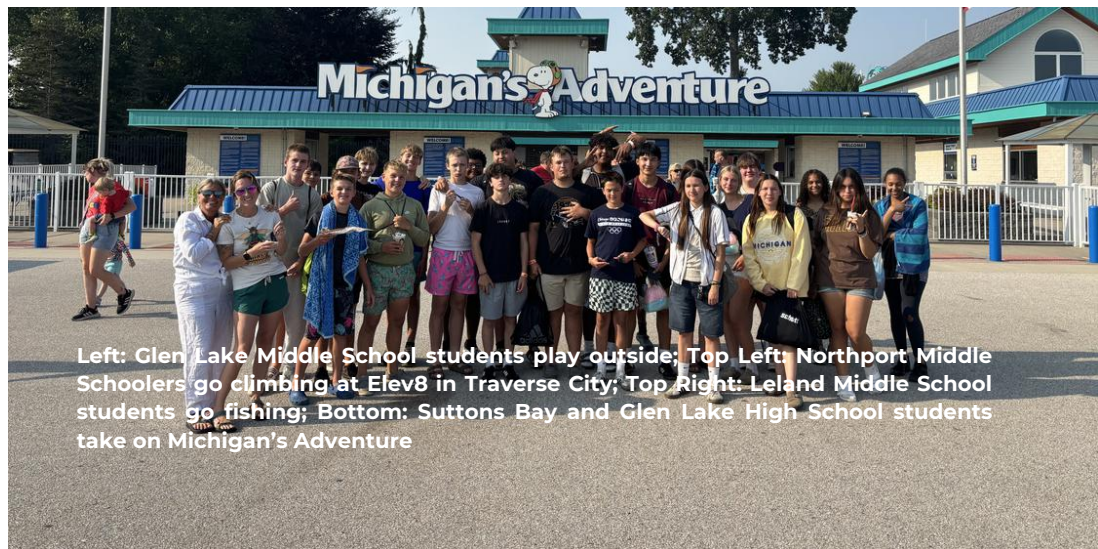
LIFT at Glen Lake feels like walking into your favorite childhood living room. It's cozy, calm, and the perfect place to decompress after school. Students make PB&Js, settle into comfy spots, and get creative with fun craft projects. And when the weather's nice, it's the easiest jumping-off point for a Lakeshore adventure.

**Glen Lake students making pottery and doing homework**





7



Left: Glen Lake Middle School students play outside; Top Left: Northport Middle Schoolers go climbing at Elev8 in Traverse City; Top Right: Leland Middle School students go fishing; Bottom: Suttons Bay and Glen Lake High School students take on Michigan's Adventure



# MATTHEW

7TH GRADER, GLEN LAKE  
MIDDLE SCHOOL

“

*I like LIFT because I  
get to go to new  
places, have fun,  
meet new people,  
and form friendships.*

”



Matthew, LIFT Middle School  
student hanging out after a  
hike in Empire

# BY THE NUMBERS

LIFT teens, volunteers and staff continue to generate impressive impact on a variety of fronts. Each one of these numbers represents a new friendship established, a mentor found and a happy memory made.

17,223

**MILES DRIVEN**

FREE RIDES OFFERED  
FOR LIFT ACTIVITIES

\$7,350

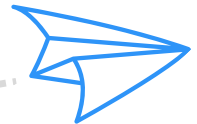
**SAVED FOR FAMILIES**

TOTAL BASED OFF AVG.  
NOMI YEARLY CHILD  
CARE COSTS

195

**FIELD TRIPS TAKEN**

FROM MUSKEGON ALL  
THE WAY TO MACKINAC  
ISLAND



765

**6TH THROUGH 12TH  
GRADE STUDENTS  
SERVED**

+124 STUDENTS  
COMPARED TO 2024

236

**DAYS OF FREE OUT-OF-  
SCHOOL PROGRAMMING**

NO CHANGE COMPARED  
TO 2024

1,500

**VOLUNTEER HOURS  
GIVEN**

VOLUNTEERS ARE IN  
OUR PROGRAMS ALL  
YEAR-ROUND

Although we often focus on anecdotes, special memories, and firsthand testimonies, numbers tell another incredible story at LIFT. In addition to this year's statistics, here are some other notable datapoints:

**Our programming budget has grown 494% since 2021**

**LIFT's donor network has grown 40% since 2021**

**We have 150% more employees than we did in 2021**

Thank you for continuing to believe in the value of youth empowerment in our community!



# CARRIE SHARP

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER

“

I love volunteering with LIFT. It's a rich experience working with our youth. I hope I make a difference.

”

Carrie and Glen Lake Middle School student building with Legos afterschool

LEELANAU  
INVESTING  
FOR TEENS



Glen Lake Middle School students showing off their homemade lanterns

# COMMUNITY PARTNERS

13

5LOAVES2FISH  
9 BEAN ROWS  
AROUND THE CORNER  
BAHLE FARMS GOLF COURSE  
BAHLE'S OF SUTTONS BAY  
BAY BOOKS  
BAY PIZZERIA  
BEAR PAW  
BEL LAGO/FRENCH VALLEY VINEYARDS  
BLUE LAVAMEDIA  
BIRCH POINT FARM  
BOTANIC GARDENS AT HISTORIC BARN  
PARK  
CANDY WORLD  
CATHOLIC HUMAN SERVICES  
CEDAR NORTH  
CHERRY REPUBLIC  
CLARK FAMILY FOUNDATION  
COTTAGE BOOK SHOP  
CUNNINGHAM LIMP DEVELOPMENT CO.  
CRYSTAL COMMUNITY SKI CLUB  
DELTA KAPPA GAMMA  
DOG EARS BOOKS  
DUNE BIRD  
EASLING CONSTRUCTION CO.  
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ELEV8 CLIMBING AND FITNESS

EMPIRE LION'S CLUB  
EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH  
EVERGREEN CONSIGNMENT  
FARM CLUB  
FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
FIND NORTH  
FRONT PORCH  
GENUINE LEELANAU  
GILCHRIST FARMS  
GLEN ARBOR ARTS CENTER  
GLEN ARBOR BAKERY  
GLEN ARBOR WOMEN'S CLUB  
GLEN LAKE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS  
GLEN LAKE LIBRARY  
GLEN LAKE SCHOOLS FOUNDATION  
GLEN LAKE WOMAN'S CLUB  
GRAND TRAVERSE BAND OF OTTAWA AND  
CHIPPEWA INDIANS  
GRAND TRAVERSE REGIONAL COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION  
GREAT LAKES TEA & SPICE  
GREEN BRICK FOUNDATION  
HANSEN FOODS  
HAYSTACKS  
HIVE COFFEE CO.  
HOP LOT  
IMPACT100

INLAND SEAS EDUCATION  
ASSOCIATION  
INTER-TRIBAL OF MICHIGAN  
KAL EXCAVATING  
KESWICK UNITED METHODIST  
CHURCH  
LAKE LEELANAU RENTAL  
PROPERTIES  
LAKEVIEW HILL FARM AND  
MARKET  
LEELANAU CHRISTIAN NEIGHBORS  
LEELANAU ENTERPRISE  
LEELANAU TOWNSHIP  
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION  
LEELANAU TOWNSHIP LIBRARY  
LELAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
LELAND TOWNSHIP LIBRARY  
LEO CREEK PRESERVE  
LIMA BEAN  
LITTLE FLEET  
LIVELY FARMS  
LIVELY NEIGHBORHOOD MARKET  
LYLAH'S  
MARKET 22  
MAWBY'S  
MARSP - LEELANAU CHAPTER  
MI MARKET

MOMENTUM  
MR. HOXIE'S GARAGE  
MURDICK'S FUDGE SHOPPE  
NEW MISSION GALLERY  
NORTHERN LATITUDES DISTILLERY  
NORTHPORT ARTS ASSOCIATION  
NORTHPORT LIONS CLUB  
NORTHPORT PHYSICAL THERAPY  
NORTHPORT TRADING POST  
NORTHPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
NORTHPORT WOMEN'S CLUB  
NORTH FARM  
NORTH SHORE OUTFITTERS  
OLESON FOUNDATION  
OMENA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
OMENA WOMEN'S CLUB  
OPUS FOUNDATION  
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CHURCH  
SUBSTANCE FREE LEELANAU  
SUGAR2SALT  
SURFACES, INC.  
SUTTONS BAY CONGREGATIONAL  
CHURCH  
SUTTONS BAY-LEELANAU COUNTY  
ROTARY CLUB  
SUTTONS BAY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
THREADS  
TOTEM SHOP  
TWIN BAY DOCKS  
UNION YOGA  
UNITED WAY OF NORTHWEST  
MICHIGAN  
VAN'S GARAGE  
WILD LETTIE  
WOODBINE

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JOHN AND SANDY ZUBIK

IN LOVING MEMORY OF STAN  
AND MARY RIDGEWAY

**Leland Middle School students decorating bags at  
nonprofit neighbor 5Loaves2Fish**



# GRAHAM POWERS

COMMUNITY PARTNER AT  
THE BAY THEATRE IN SUTTONS BAY

“

We have greatly enjoyed working with LIFT and appreciate the opportunity to connect with the middle school students. Being able to bring students into the theatre who otherwise wouldn't normally come in is a fun way to be able to introduce them to cinema and other forms of visual storytelling.

LIFT provides a vital lifeline for students, and we're thankful they're right here in our communities!

”  
18

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Representative

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Senior Representative

**Northport Middle School  
student baking cookies for  
Valentine's Day**



# STAFF

Rebekah TenBrink  
Executive Director

Audrey Luksch  
Associate Director

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Ashley Martin  
Glen Lake Program  
Assistant

Coda Mix  
Suttons Bay Middle  
School Program  
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Jesus Ledesma  
Leland Middle School  
Program Coordinator

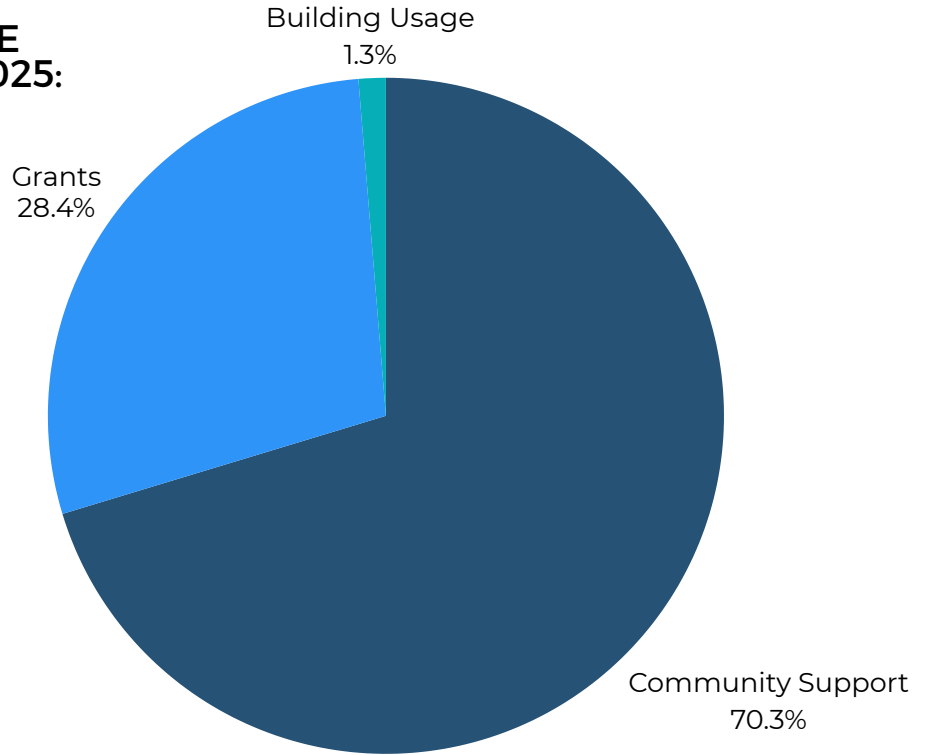
Meg Jean  
Northport Program  
Coordinator

**Northport Middle School  
student climbing a tree on a  
local trail**



# 21 REVENUE &

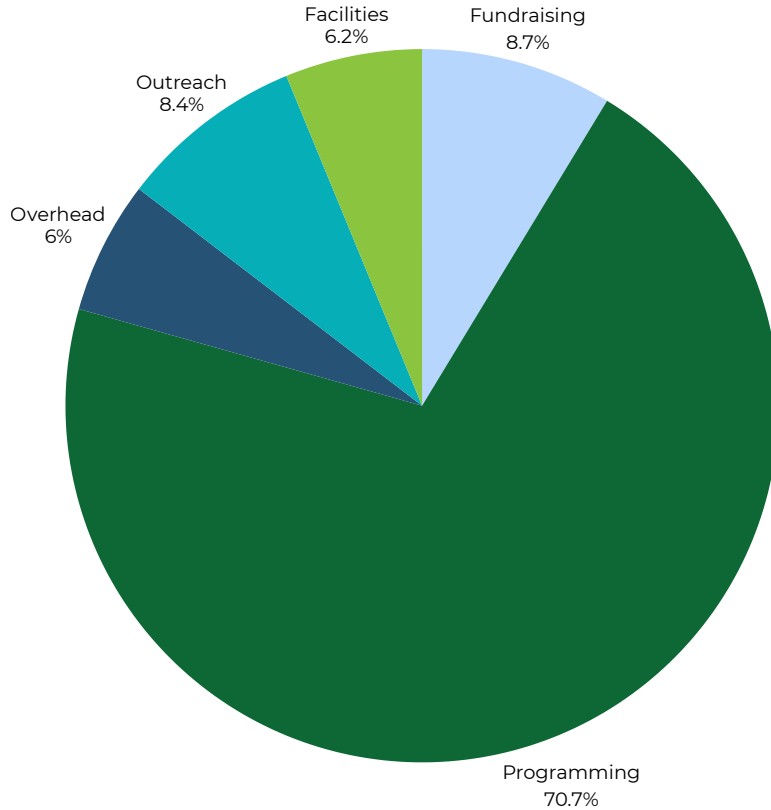
**TOTAL REVENUE  
JAN 2025 - DEC 2025:  
\$611,690.61**



*As LIFT was still fiscally sponsored by the Friendship Community Center in 2025, these numbers are representative of both entities. We estimate LIFT makes up approximately 90% of the total financials. 2026 will be our first fiscal year as our own independent nonprofit.*

**TOTAL EXPENSES  
JAN 2025 - DEC 2025:**

**\$588,007.29**



# EXPENSES

# CONNECT WITH US

[www.liftteencenter.com](http://www.liftteencenter.com)

[info@liftteencenter.com](mailto:info@liftteencenter.com)



Glen Lake Middle School students after a pottery class with  
Glen Arbor Arts Center at Thoreson Farm

