1. Building Data Capacity: During a 36-month project with Wilder Research, Evidencing YSE, 16 YSE enterprises have been building or retooling their internal data capacity by creating indicators, analyzing continuous program improvement, and monitoring student skills development. Cohort members created or refined 16 logic models, 16 evaluation plans, installed or refined 16 databases, and collected verifiable data. Members are initiating longitudinal studies to track the success of their alums moving into the workforce or training programs. As a result of this work, cohort members are positioned to gain access to new state and federal dollars. MN DEED awarded 7 YSE cohort members over $1,000,000 as of 2018. In 2019 Sundance will release a ground-breaking report demonstrating the effectiveness of a model that integrates youth personal agency and skills development.

2. Bridges and Pipelines: Coordinating information exchanges with employer HR representatives and youth employment navigators, tours, events and convenings created over 860 new connections between those needing new workers with those helping youth enter work. More than 80 participants at a “Speed Dating” Forum created entry-level opportunities. Over 200 YSE youth, parents, guardians, and managers have toured manufacturing, business, training, and technical colleges. More than 24 Manufacturing owners, industry, labor and government representatives have visited 10 nonprofit youth training enterprises (YSE).
Sundance believes that Youth Social Entrepreneurship (YSE) programs provide workforce readiness skills and introduce career options. YSE programs also inspire youth to acquire the self-confidence, entrepreneurial thinking, and community support needed to put poverty out of business.

3. Innovative Supports: Sundance will celebrate 51 youth who are entering apprenticeships or “Earn & Learn” training programs from high school on May 1, 2019 (5.1). The 51 x 5.1 Initiative elevates the status of Earn & Learn career pathways to equal college acceptance awards and scholarships. A combination of school and employer outreach, as well as a multi-media marketing campaign is being developed. Groundwork to support this effort has included hiring additional staff, convening stakeholders, sponsors, and developing media supports.

4. Communicating Bold Innovations: Since 2016 Sundance has been convening teams of manufacturers, trades, apprenticeship, and union representatives with community and academic leaders to build career pathways. Many high school student to counselor ratios are 800:1. Mentor-rich YSE nonprofit training enterprises are becoming the places to develop work readiness skills. These bridging networks are opportunities for youth “Earn & Learn” placement with supportive wrap around services between nonprofits, manufacturers, business, trades and industry.

5. Wunderkammers: Community Tech and Training Exploratoriums, providing hands-on career exploration with local technicians, have influenced the development of “reverse job fairs” and similar events at local high schools and industry gatherings. In 2018 three Wunderkammers enabled more than 60 employers to engage with more than 300 newly participating students. In 2019 three Wunderkammers, each with a different focus: a public sector event focusing on entry-level municipal careers, a Wunderkammer with the city of Minneapolis, and a summer Wunderkammer at Maplewood YMCA will bring youth who are facing 23% unemployment with employers offering 21st century career work and skills training.
Other Accomplishments

» $487,000 in grants provided to YSE programs and housing support services to formerly homeless youth

» $62,640 in cumulative global micro-lending

» 85% of Foundation assets were placed in Impact Investing using environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors relative to each company’s internal and external operations

» 4 employer focused videos on How To Build A Wunderkammer Exhibit

» Awarded the 2018 Inspiring Hope Award from Hope 4 Youth, Anoka MN

» Awarded the 2018 Responsive Philanthropy Award, a community-nominated and determined achievement from the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits

» Supported database development of 11 nonprofits, increasing the skill levels of 32 staff members


» Developed an abstract on Indicators of Youth Personal Agency using the United Nations Sustainable Development Indicator #8: Workforce Development

» Supported the YSE Cohort advancing Youth Training Wage recommendations for the St. Paul City Ordinance

Strategic Partners
Providing Tours, Transportation, Personnel and Products:

Manufacturing:
AirTex Design, Design Ready Controls, Du Fresne Manufacturing, Graco, Herold Precision Manufacturing, MME Group, Smyth Co, Structural Wood Corporation

Post-Secondary: Century College (Fab Lab, Orthotics and Prosthetics, and tech programs), Dunwoody Technical College, St. Paul College (Trading Up), Support the Trades

Intermediaries and Innovators: 360-Minnesota Center for Excellence in Manufacturing—Bemidji, Keystone Teen Tech Center, Ramsey County Workforce Center, North Minneapolis Workforce Center, Vadnais Heights Economic Development Corp

Wunderkammers: City of Maplewood, Goodwill/Easterseals, Maplewood YMCA, St. Paul College, Takoda Institute, Vadnais Heights Economic Development, YMCA
Measuring Our Mission

The Sundance Family Foundation, founded in 2003 by Nancy Jacobs and Mark Sandercott supports youth development and strengthens family stability. Sundance has a strong interest in Youth Social Entrepreneurship (YSE) programs—youth-led businesses or community social initiatives that use the asset-based model of youth development. About 50 YSE programs currently operate in the greater Twin Cities metro area. Like many small, community-based nonprofits, these organizations have limited financial and human resources needed to implement rigorous evaluation, or to develop capacity building partnerships.

By advancing the field of YSE, Sundance Family Foundation drives the changes that enable the economic and personal transformation of youth, their families, and their communities. Youth are learning social and emotional skills, and community engagement along with 21st Century workforce skills that will lead to their prosperity and independence.

“Youth workers intuitively know that they’re having an impact on the youth they serve; however, in an era of scarce resources, it’s important to show evidence of these impacts by conducting rigorous evaluation that quantifies specific skill and social-emotional development.”

— Jennifer Valorose, Research Scientist, Wilder Research
“Instead of a system where nonprofits report on progress over several years, change will more often be systemic and led by relative novices. United by hashtags and shared values, these newcomers will galvanize the public to address injustice by pressuring companies, governments and even social sector organizations. In this new environment, a new leadership style is required.”

—Trista Harris
Former President
Minnesota Council on Foundations

Sundance Family Foundation is boldly rallying our philanthropic, manufacturing, and business partners to revitalize Minnesota’s industry, labor, and business enterprises by engaging multitalented youth from low-income communities and communities of color.

Help us launch our 51 x 5.1 Initiative and celebrate 51 students entering apprenticeships on May 1, 2019.

We invite you to partner with us.

sundancefamilyfoundation.org
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“Working in the collaborative of YSE programs has helped Cookie Cart refine our evaluation process, and better illustrate the impact of our employment and training program on young people.”

—Matt Halley
Executive Director
Cookie Cart