

# MONROE PHILANTHROPISTS

## 2023–2024 Review



**November 2023 — May 2024**



***“[I learned] that you don’t give up when you don’t know how it’s going to work out and to keep working.”***

### **Overview**

Monroe Philanthropists is a youth-led philanthropy program at Monroe Middle School where a team of 14 8<sup>th</sup> grade students designed and executed a philanthropic process with \$10,000. The program was developed in partnership with the Ed Darby Foundation and Monroe Demonstration Academy staff.

The Monroe Philanthropists convened over one full-day launch workshop and 22 work sessions between November 2023 and May 2024. Through the process they identified five areas of focus for their philanthropy: food insecurity, violence (inside and outside the school building), theft, drug usage, and homelessness. After discussion, students narrowed their focus to student hygiene and access to fresh food. Upon completion of the program, students were compensated through a gift card for sharing their time and expertise.

## Results

### Actions and Wins:

- Connected with nonprofits around Tulsa to determine the best partner for the hygiene packets
- Created a distribution plan for the hygiene packs
- Researched and wrote hygiene best practices to include in each pack
- Participated in a field trip to different grocery stores to compare fresh produce prices and create a budget for their produce boxes
- Determined the most important fresh produce to include in each box
- Communicated with Food on the Move to determine distribution plan
- Created a survey for families to opt into the fresh food boxes and analyzed the data collected
- Attendance was consistent throughout the program

10 surveys were collected for the program. Below is the youth survey data:

- 100% students enjoyed coming to Monroe Philanthropists.
- 90% would recommend Monroe Philanthropists to a friend.
- 90% are more committed to making positive community change/civic change in the future
- 80% reported learning things during this program that can help them make positive change in the future.
- 91% reported that they are more committed to impacting their community than they were before Monroe Philanthropists.
- 90% reported that they are proud of the work they did with Monroe Philanthropists.
- 80% reported that Monroe Philanthropists helped improve their leadership skills.
- 70% reported that they improved their teamwork skills.
- 100% reported that Monroe Philanthropists helped improve their teamwork skills.
- On average, students who took The Children's Hope Scale survey reported being moderately hopeful (24.1) before the program and highly hopeful (28.7) after.



## Fresh Food Boxes

*By the Numbers*

*Cost: \$2,000*

*Partner: Food on the Move*

<b>26</b> Families signed up	<b>30</b> Families received boxes	<b>65%</b> Eat at home 5+ times a week
<b>59%</b> Don't have vegetables in the house or only sometimes do	<b>54%</b> Families eat vegetable everyday	<b>62%</b> Don't have access to vegetables in their neighborhood
<b>14</b> of the families had <b>5+</b> people in their home	<b>27%</b> Families that worry <b>often</b> about having something to eat	<b>46%</b> Families that worry <b>sometimes</b> about having something to eat

## Hygiene Packs

*By the Numbers*

*Cost: Hygiene products: \$5,200, Canvas Bags: \$560*

*Partner: Lend A Hand Foundation*

<b>650</b> Packs were purchased	<b>100%</b> Monroe students received a pack	<b>Over 3,250</b> Individual hygiene products given out
------------------------------------	--	--

## **Reflections on Objectives**

The primary objectives for Monroe Philanthropists were:

1. Develop the leadership, social emotional, executive functioning, and professional skills of participating Monroe Middle School students.
2. Empower Monroe Middle School students to execute a youth-led philanthropic process that positively impacts their community.
3. Collect data to learn the best way to position youth as the stewards of philanthropic funds.

**Objective 1** was predominantly measured through a post survey which had very encouraging results, as described above. We are particularly excited about the results of The Children's Hope Scale Survey. To improve scores in the building of leadership skills and teamwork skills, it will be crucial to develop more structure into the curriculum for more intentional leadership lessons intentionally placed throughout the program. While we see the value in leadership and team-building through the projects

themselves, we believe a clearer articulation of *how* leadership is taking action could be helpful in creating a stronger belief amongst students that they are leaders.

The degree to which **Objective 2** was a success will be determined in the coming months and years as the full impact of the cohort's giving and advocacy is realized. An exciting part of this year's program is that there was some general brand recognition of the program and excitement from students throughout the building about the program. Reactions from both students and staff indicate that, at the very least, the youth identified and attempted to address relevant challenges in their school community. These challenges were not all easily identified by adults inside or outside of the building. We believe the results of the third year of this program suggest that including primary stakeholders (in this case, youth) in philanthropic decision-making and execution not only helps in the personal development of stakeholders, but it also can make giving more effective.

**Objective 3** warrants continued discussion. There are still ways to make this program stronger. The current cohort model that we employed is one of many ways that youth-led philanthropy can look. We can conceive of a program with similar objectives lasting a lot longer and supporting youth with the implementation and evaluation of each intervention they fund. We can also conceive of a shorter engagement, perhaps even a single meeting, where youth set priorities and allocate funds. The indeterminant nature of the program has both advantages and disadvantages for executing the philanthropic process.

One of the challenges this year was tying action to the major challenges identified early on in the program. While violence and theft were identified as major challenges, there was no project directly tied to these particular challenges. One action step moving forward is for facilitators to be more intentional about revisiting these initial community challenges throughout the program to see if they spark any further ideas about potential actions.

## **Potential Next Steps for Tulsa Changemakers**

- Collect a list of both leadership building and team building activities to be utilized for every session
- Restructure how routines like Rose, Bud, Thorn and Appreciations can be added into the sessions
- Work with admin at Monroe to come up with a logistics plan for the upcoming year
- Ideate around ways to get more Monroe students involved in the process

## Budget

Topic	Action(s)	Budget
Hygiene	The Monroe Philanthropists partnered with Lend A Hand Foundation to purchase 650 hygiene packs.	\$5,760
Fresh Food Boxes	The Monroe Philanthropists partnered with Food on the Move to purchase 50 fresh food boxes.	\$2,000
Facilitator Stipend	Monroe teacher, Ms. Robinson, was the faculty Coach for the program and facilitated alongside Tulsa Changemakers Staff.	\$1,000
Student Gift Card Stipends	Each student received \$50-\$100 gift card based on their attendance in the program.	\$1,250
Meals/Catering	This includes both the meal for the retreat and snacks purchased for each Friday morning session.	\$600
		<b>TOTAL SPENT = \$10,610</b> <i>Pending approval, the remaining \$2,240 will be donated to the school to be used for more hygiene products for future classes.</i>

## Student Quotes

What is the most important thing you learned during this program?	What could we improve in this program?	Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your experience?
How to be a better teammate	More stuff to work on	It was amazing
How to use money to help others	We can have more time	The field trips were amazing
How our community is in need of a lot of things and different ways to problem solve and conquer our challenges.	More leadership	It was amazing that I can make a change while having fun I have had an amazing time and I'm glad I was apart of this group. Especially meeting Ms. Hannah.
Giving ppl happiness	Nothing really I definitely feel comfortable here and have feel my opinions are heard.	That i really liked it And it was amazing!
That you don't give up when you don't know how it's going to work out, And to keep working	Helping out more people	Nothing I had fun this year
How to help people	By getting more people sign up	It was amazing that I can make a change while having fun