

**LEAD
WITH
CARE.
CENTER
EQUITY.
BUILD
ON
STRENGTHS.
ACHIEVE
MILESTONES.
CULTIVATE
JOY.**



2025 Annual Report

Message from Our Founder & CEO

Dear Friends,

As I reflect on this past year, I am struck by how necessary our work is to everyday life, especially now. Our communication skills help us achieve dreams and push back on the forces that threaten to crush them. They help us build and maintain relationships and engage effectively at work and in school. This year represents our biggest growth in total people served and our widest reach in terms of geographic regions and industries. Despite the varying contexts, our methods remain the throughline that allow us to meet people where they are and prepare them for the high stakes they may face.

In the age of AI, it continues to baffle me that there aren't more investments in oral communication. Oral communication is essential to job performance and the development of leaders. We also live in a time when it is increasingly scary to speak your mind or engage in controversial topics. Words matter and we have not backed down or revised our commitment to equity. This is the time when we all need practice spaces and mentors to guide us because staying true to ourselves is hard work.

While 2025 was our biggest participant growth, it was more challenging to find funding to keep up with demand. We are eternally grateful to our Board, Junior Board, staff, funders, donors, and volunteers who helped us sustain the work during these difficult times. As we enter 2026, we hope you will help us build our network and connect us with more partners, participants, funders, and donors who care about our values: **Lead with Care. Build on Strengths. Achieve Milestones. Center Equity. Cultivate Joy.**

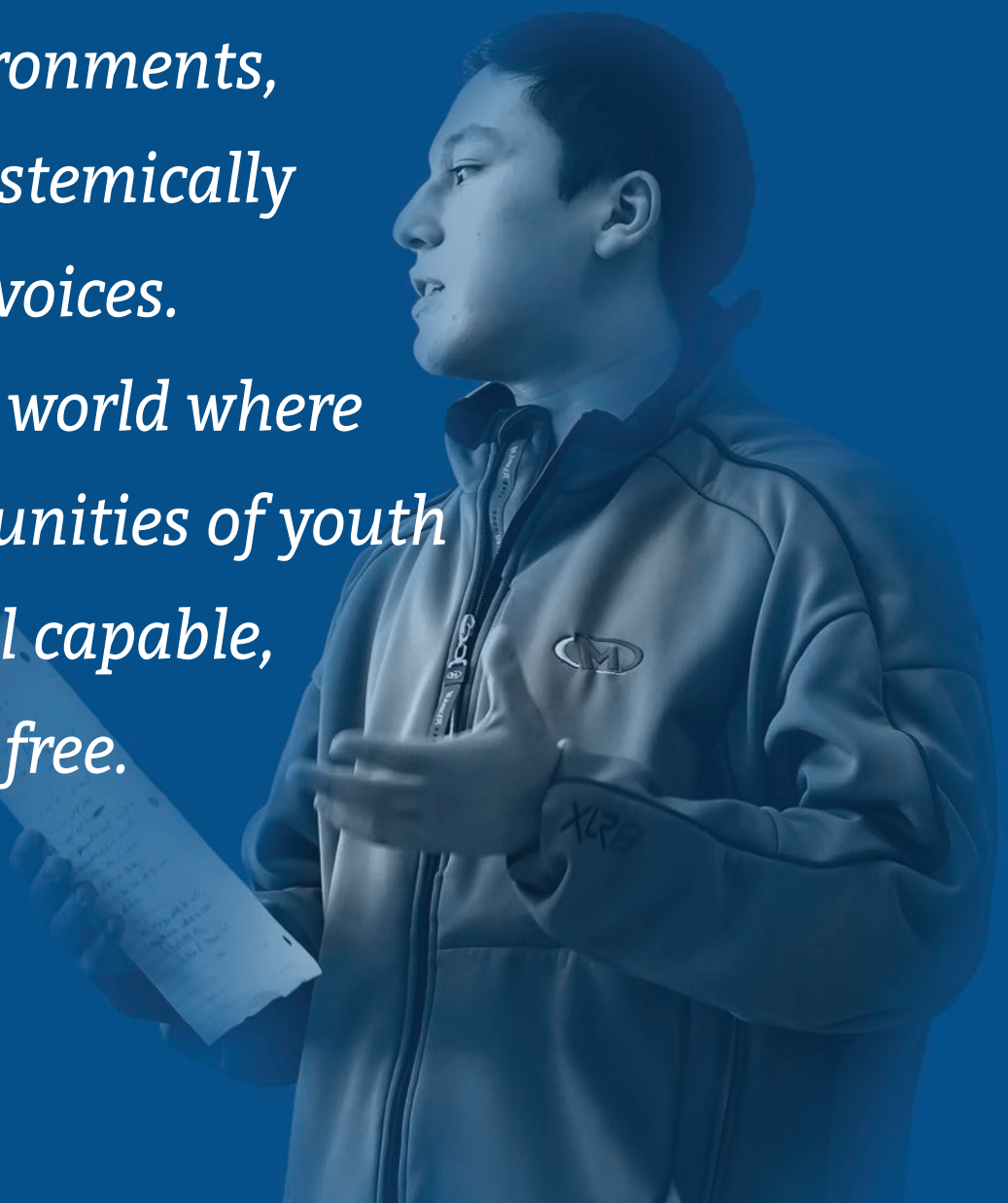
Onward,
AnnMarie Baines, PhD



Our Mission & Vision

We build confidence and community through leadership and communication skill development to advance equity, create inclusive environments, and elevate systemically marginalized voices.

We envision a world where diverse communities of youth and adults feel capable, cared for, and free.



Our Work At-a-Glance

Communication is a lifelong skill that requires mentorship and community. We improve social and economic mobility through communication and leadership.



YOUTH

- » For youth, we prioritize community, fun, and healthy competition through performing arts and leadership development
- » In-person, year-round and seasonal programs held on site at schools or in our Richmond, CA office
- » Programs include: speech and debate teams, mentorship for young leaders, creative performances, and networking and work experiences
- » Current and Past Funders: William & Flora Hewlett Foundation, City of Richmond, New Schools Venture Fund, Quest Foundation, Chamberlin Foundation, Leshner Foundation, McMicking Foundation



ADULTS

- » For adults, we focus on job-embedded communication skill development, practice, and feedback through workshops and coaching
- » In-person and virtual workshops, lessons, and curriculum with professional coaches
- » Industries include: Health Care, Education, Social Impact & Corporate Responsibility
- » Current and Past Clients: Dolby Media, Kaiser Permanente, Sutter Health, Capital Group, San Francisco Unified, Davis Joint Unified, Winters Joint Unified, West Contra Costa Unified, Transform

Who We Serve

Total served to date:

5,296

Total unique youth:

3,593 (68%)

Total unique adults:

1,703 (32%)

Total served in 2025:

1,975

Total youth in 2025:

1,492 (76%)

Total adults in 2025:

483 (24%)

88% identify as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color)

50% identify as Women and Girls

48.5% identify as Men and Boys

1.5% identify as Nonbinary/Trans

20 Title I Schools Served in 2025

35 Organizational Partners Served in 2025

The Ripple Effects of Voice



Children increased their comfort with public speaking through choice.

“Before The Practice Space, I felt nervous and excited about public speaking. The Practice Space taught me about three kinds of speeches: advocacy speech, recital speech and storytelling speech. And I like how they made it fun. Like they pretended we were real Congress and we had Congress debate. I like how they made it fun like that.” —3rd grader

Teens built community and fostered critical thinking skills.

“I learned how to structure arguments, present my thoughts, and speak clearly. I also became more comfortable speaking my mind, and I love how the program helped me build community and find friends!”

—High School Student



Managers improved their ability to communicate more effectively at work.



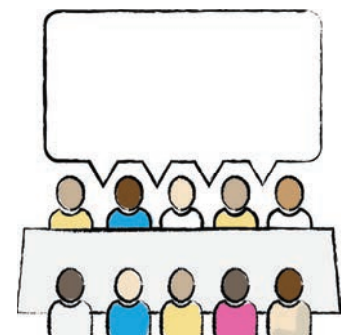
“Your guidance on how to speak confidently in front of others and structure our communication with a clear beginning, middle, and end was extremely valuable. You made the process engaging and practical, and I especially appreciated how you emphasized ensuring we include all the key facts and points when addressing staff. The techniques you shared will definitely help us communicate more effectively as managers. Overall, the session was amazing, and we learned a lot.”

—Adult participant

Student voice helped inform district strategies.

“In our efforts to bring Universal Design for Learning and Mitigating Bias to the forefront of teaching practices, we continually heard from staff that they wanted to hear from students. The Practice Space helped us find just the right way to make that possible. Their customized approach to developing a podcast series allowed us to gather the powerful stories that conveyed the right message. The Practice Space handled the entire process with care, creating a welcoming environment for students and staff to share their stories. As a result, staff connected intellectually and emotionally to the mission and felt purpose to engage in meaningful professional development.”

—School District Administrator



2025 Outcomes

Huge Growth Year for K-12 Youth

2025 represents our largest annual growth to date for K-12 youth

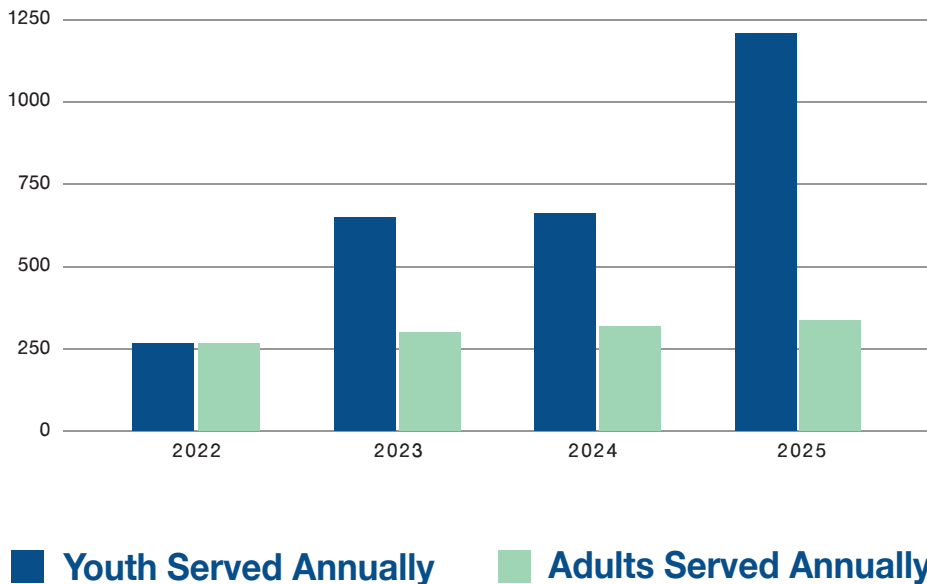
We served 1,193 new youth participants, resulting in an 83% growth rate from the previous year

We Doubled Our Students Served

80% of youth served in 2025 were new to The Practice Space

20% of youth returned for another year of programming

Rate of New Participants Served Annually



We Expanded Our Regional Reach

We continued to serve adult programs virtually nationwide

We grew our in-person youth services in the SF Bay Area, including:

- 10% in Oakland
- 19.6% in Vallejo
- 68.2% in West Contra Costa
- 2.2% in Winters

2025 Outcomes (continued)

Youth Participants Built a Sense of Belonging and Confidence

- 95% program satisfaction
- 94% felt a sense of belonging and community
- 82% grew confidence with public speaking
- 84% felt a sense of identity affirmation



Adult Participants Were Satisfied and Supported

- 98% program satisfaction
- 100% felt safe to learn new skills
- 97% reported high program quality
- 100% learned communication skills relevant to their current role



Investing in Future Leaders

Our 2025 teen programs engaged youth in debate, civil discourse, extemporaneous speaking, presentation, and facilitation. Representatives from our award-winning speech and debate program at El Cerrito High took top 24 in the state of California in speech. Members of The Practice Space Junior Board of Directors created public speaking curriculum materials and facilitated workshops at a youth-led event. We also helped Winters Joint Unified School District launch their first-ever Junior Board, with youth advising on school safety, student engagement, and future readiness.

According to teens, their top skills gained included:

- **Being a free thinker**
- **Being able to research well**
- **Being open minded**
- **Being a skilled listener**
- **Being able to take criticism more effectively**



Confidence-Building in New Regions

We reached more youth in Title I schools and low-income neighborhoods through school and district partnerships. By providing free programs to youth during the school year and summer, we were able to increase access to confidence-building and mentorship. This included school-board approved work with Expanded Learning departments in West Contra Costa Unified School District and Vallejo Joint Unified School District, partnerships with Oakland schools and Girls Inc of Alameda County, and partnerships with the City of Richmond and West Contra Costa Public Education Fund.



Bringing Community Together

Our youth programs culminated in engaging community events, including our Spring 2025 Young Speakers Tournament and Winter 2025 Power of Practice Showcase, which reached 134 people. We also launched our “Amplifiers” volunteer group, who served as mentors in our Civic Leaders Academy and helping hands during events.



Strengthening Workplaces & Social Impact

In 2025, we engaged in multiple “leadership collaboratives” to help organizations enhance their social impact systemwide. In health care, this included workshops with Kaiser Permanente and Sutter Health to support emerging leaders and managers speak more effectively “on the spot” at work. We also partnered with Dolby Media to provide workshops to strengthen storytelling and audience adaptation for members of their Employee Networks. In education, we collaborated with Davis Joint Unified School District to support their districtwide inclusive and special education professional development initiatives by producing a podcast to uniquely capture student voice.



Capacity through Curriculum

We increased our impact through the creation of curriculum to help organizations strengthen their ability to deliver inclusive, engaging experiences that center community voice. Most notably, our partnership with investment firm Capital Group supported the launch of their Community Wealth Council, which supports 16 nonprofits around the country to increase access to financial literacy. Another national partnership included Girls Write Now, where we created a civil discourse curriculum for girls and gender-expansive youth nationwide. Locally, we worked with teachers to launch oral literacy courses at their schools and produced curriculum guides for our coaches.



Team Updates

Our team is made up of Core Staff, Coaches, Board and Junior Board members

75% identify as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color)

64% identify as Women

30% identify as Men

6% identify as Nonbinary/ Trans

43% identify as multilingual, speaking over 15 languages



New Board & Team Members



Jasmarie Aguiar

Manager of Program Operations



Ryan Kazen

Program Coach (AmeriCorps VISTA)



Jeni Frudden

Board Member



Sneha Banerjee

Board Member



Angela DeBarger

Board Member



Sarah Alvarez

Board Member

2025 Financial Snapshot

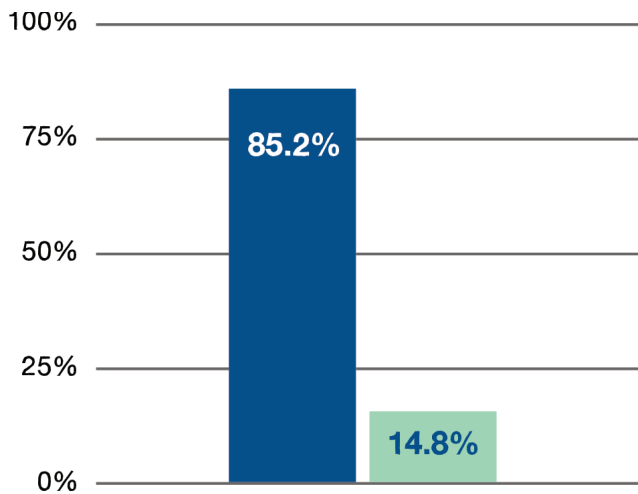
Total 2025 Revenue

\$1,100,000

Total 2025 Expenses

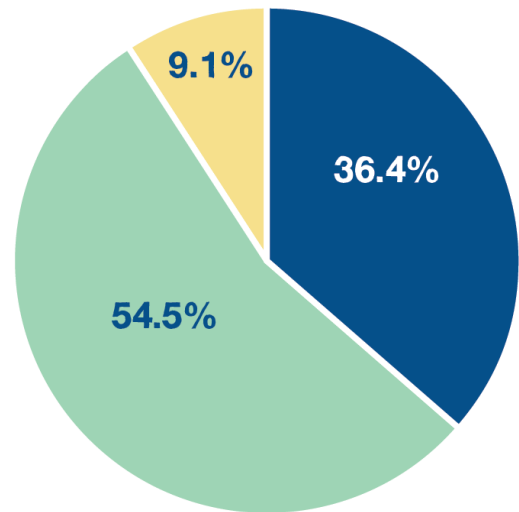
\$1,065,600

Admin vs. Program Expenses



■ Program: 85.2% ■ Admin: 14.8%

Diversified Sources of Income



■ Earned Revenue ■ Grants ■ Donations

The Practice Space Staff



AnnMarie Baines
Founder & CEO



Moneek Bhanot
Chief Program Officer



Aliza Heslop
*Director of
Development &
Business Operations*



Maribel Lopez
*Senior Program &
Outreach Facilitator*



Caitlin Healy
*Senior Manager of
Learning & Impact*



Cynthia Pinto
*Manager of Events &
Administration*



Jasmarie Aguiar
*Manager of Program
Operations*



Taylor Berberich
*Senior Coordinator
of Marketing &
Communications*



Ryan Miller
*Coordinator of
Elementary Programs*



Ryan Kazen
*Program Coach,
Americorps VISTA*

The Practice Space Board of Directors



Todd Groves
Board President



Paul Porter
Board VP



Sylvia Sudat
Board Secretary



Paul Baines
Board Treasurer



Sarah Alvarez
Director



Sneha Banerjee
Director



Lorna Contreras-Townsend, Director



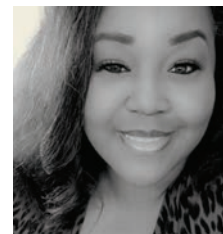
Angela DeBarger, Director



Jeni Frudden, Director



Jade Shipman, Director



Angel Ward-Jackson, Director



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