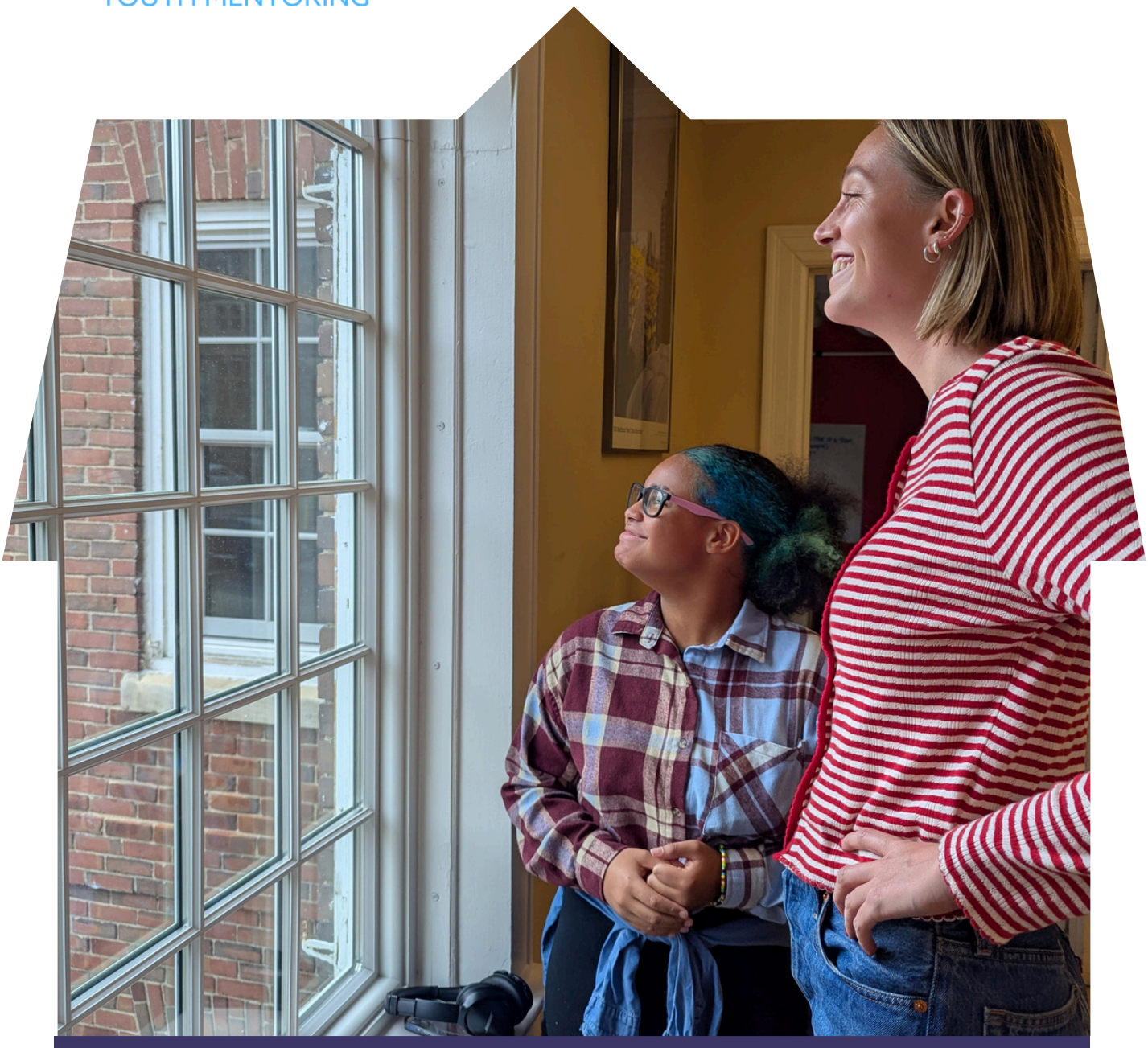
BOLDER OPTIONS
YOUTH MENTORING

2025 ANNUAL REPORT



Bolder Options: A Place to Belong

Dear Friends and Supporters,

In April, Bolder Options lost our founder and my friend, Bill Steele. I first met Bill when Bolder Options was still an idea taking shape. What I remember most was his optimism, his compassion, and his ability to bring people together around a vision. Bill believed in relationships and in giving young people opportunities to see more for themselves. More than 30 years later, that belief is still at the heart of Bolder Options.

Bill also understood that relationships need places to grow. Our Minneapolis headquarters has become that place for generations of youth, mentors, families, alumni, staff, and friends. We gather here every week, celebrate graduations and milestones, welcome people back, and sometimes simply provide a familiar place to be.

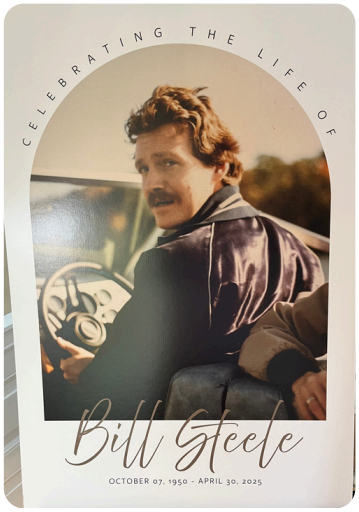
In 2025, relationships helped us take care of that home. Renewal by Andersen replaced every window in our historic building through a project championed for years by former mentor Nate Peterson. The American Rental Association Foundation and The Toro Company Foundation transformed our outdoor space, and our new Garden-in-a-Box partnership gave youth and mentors another way to spend time and learn together.

It was fitting that Bill's family chose Bolder Options for his celebration of life. The building looked better than it had in years, but what mattered most was who was inside it: people connected by an organization Bill had imagined decades earlier.

That is Bill's legacy. It lives in the relationships built here and in the people who continue to show up for Bolder Options and for one another. As we continue investing in our Minneapolis home, we also hope to create that same kind of place for our Rochester community.
Thank you for being part of it.

Peace,

Darrell Thompson







CELEBRATING
LEADERSHIP & SERVICE

At the 2025 Bolder Bash, we honored two people whose relationships with Bolder Options have grown into years of leadership, service, and impact.

2025 ALAN & DIANE PAGE AWARD

ROD YOUNG



Rod Young has been a longtime friend, supporter, and trusted advisor to Bolder Options. His involvement has included financial support, introducing new mentors to the organization, bringing his company's board to Bolder Bash, and helping Bolder Options navigate difficult financial and strategic decisions. In 2025, Rod also helped organize a youth event with Delta Dental of Minnesota that connected Bolder Options youth with athletes, health leaders, and professionals. Darrell describes Rod as someone who notices what needs to be done and steps in—often without being asked.

INAUGURAL WILLIAM C. STEELE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

NATE PETERSON



Nate Peterson's relationship with Bolder Options began in 2015, when he became a mentor and was matched with Dion. Even after their formal mentoring relationship ended, Nate stayed connected—attending events, hosting fundraisers, and advocating for Bolder Options. Years later, as a senior sales manager at Renewal by Andersen, he saw another way to help. Nate spent years championing replacement of the windows at Bolder House, navigating historic preservation requirements and coordinating resources until the project grew from replacing a few windows to replacing them throughout the building—a gift valued at nearly $250,000.

HONORING BILL STEELE'S LEGACY



Bill Steele's wife, Kristen Steele, presented Nate with the inaugural award named in honor of Bolder Options' founder.

Nate's years of advocacy helped bring nearly $250,000 in donated windows and installation to Bolder House in 2025.



Renewal by Andersen installation at Bolder House.



New windows and doors preserve our historic home.

WATCH THE STORY

Scan to see the Renewal by Andersen project and hear more about its impact.

Bolder Options prepares youth to succeed in all of life's races.

OUR PATHWAY

FOUNDATIONAL YEAR
Ages 10–14 | 12 Months

1:1 MENTORING
Consistent, caring relationships

PHYSICAL WELLNESS
Be active, try new things, and build healthy habits

GOAL SETTING
Discover interests and build confidence

ALUMNI PATHWAY
Ages 14–21 | Ongoing

I BELIEVE + I ACHIEVE
Career and college exploration and planning

LEADERSHIP + INTERNSHIPS
Real-world experience and skill building

FINANCIAL LITERACY
Knowledge and tools for future success

ADVENTURE LEARNING
New experiences that build confidence and resilience

BE WELL. DO WELL.

Young people have the relationships, skills, confidence, and opportunities to pursue their education, career, and life goals.



Foundational Year: Mentoring

Bolder Options pairs youth ages 10–14 with a trained volunteer mentor for one year of consistent, one-to-one mentoring. Pairs spend time together each week, attend monthly Bolder Options activities, and work toward a physical wellness goal and a future-oriented goal chosen by the young person. Through new experiences, goal setting, and a caring relationship, youth build confidence, healthy habits, and skills for the future.



Alumni Pathway

After completing their foundational year, youth can stay connected to Bolder Options through age 21. The Alumni Pathway includes I Believe and I Achieve, career and postsecondary exploration, financial literacy, internships, Adventure Learning, scholarships, and leadership opportunities. Monthly social events also give alumni opportunities to have fun and stay connected to the Bolder community.

MENTORING IMPACT



93% of youth accomplished at least one goal they set for themselves.



82% of youth said their grades improved while being in the program



91% of youth reported being more physically active than when they started

FOUNDATIONAL YEAR

Mentoring

Bolder Options pairs youth ages 10–14 with a trained volunteer mentor for one year of consistent, one-to-one mentoring. Through new experiences, goal setting, and a supportive relationship, youth build confidence, healthy habits, and skills they can carry into the future.

80

MENTORING PAIRS

46 Twin Cities | 34 Rochester

87%

SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION RATE

34 of 39 pairs reaching the end of their program year successfully completed the full year.

MORE MENTORS. MORE YOUTH SERVED.

Our ability to match more youth is limited by the number of volunteer mentors who step forward.

1. **APPLY & MATCH**
Youth ages 10–14 apply and participate in an interview. After a careful matching process, each young person is paired with a trained, background-checked volunteer mentor.

2. **MEET WEEKLY**
Pairs spend time together each week doing activities they enjoy, building relationships, and working toward their goals.

3. **SET GOALS**
Each young person sets one physical wellness goal and one future-oriented goal, with support from their mentor and Bolder Options staff.

4. **JOIN AS A GROUP**
Pairs attend at least one Bolder Options event each month, connecting with other pairs and experiencing new activities and opportunities.

5. **COMPLETE & CELEBRATE**
After 12 months, pairs who meet program requirements complete their Foundational Year and are invited to continue in the Bolder Options Alumni Pathway.









"The most beautiful lesson I've learned is that you can't change the whole world, but you can change someone's world"

-Mentor, Erick

PROGRAM PARTNERS

Our program partners expand what's possible for Bolder Options pairs—providing places to be active, equipment to get moving, and new experiences to share together.

DICK'S HOUSE OF SPORT

DICK'S Sporting Goods opens their House of Sport to our pairs for climbing, ice skating, and more. They also hosted a Back to School Shop with a Pro event with Vikings safety Joshua Metellus, giving our youth a memorable experience and gear for the year ahead.





Minnesota State Horticultural Society

GARDEN-IN-A-BOX

The Minnesota State Horticultural Society's Garden-in-a-Box program helps bring our garden to life. Pairs start seeds, plant and tend the garden, then harvest and cook with the herbs and vegetables they grow.





FULL CYCLE

Through our partnership with Full Cycle, donated bikes are getting out of the Bolder basement and onto the bike path. Mentees choose a bike with their mentor, then Full Cycle provides a safety check, needed repairs, and access to a helmet and lock so they're ready to ride.



TICKETS for KIDS CHARITIES

Tickets for Kids gives Bolder Options pairs access to experiences they might not otherwise have, creating more opportunities to spend time together, try something new, and strengthen their relationship.



the YMCA

The Y provides our pairs with access to activities, programs, and healthy opportunities to learn and grow together throughout the year.

"The Y gives us a place to be active, try new things, and just have fun together. It's one of our favorite places to go."

— Bolder Options Mentor

More ways to move togeth

TWIN CITIES IN MOTION

MNRun series

loppet

Free race registrations help Bolder Options pairs set goals, train, and cross finish lines together.

PROGRAM PARTNERS

Our program partners expand what's possible for Bolder Options pairs—providing places to be active, equipment to get moving, and new experiences to share together.

DICK'S HOUSE OF SPORT

DICK'S Sporting Goods opens their House of Sport to our pairs for climbing, ice skating, and more. They also hosted a Back to School Shop with a Pro event with Vikings safety Joshua Metellus, giving our youth a memorable experience and gear for the year ahead.





Minnesota State Horticultural Society

The Minnesota State Horticultural Society's Garden-in-a-Box program helps bring our garden to life. Pairs start seeds, plant and tend the garden, then harvest and cook with the herbs and vegetables they grow.





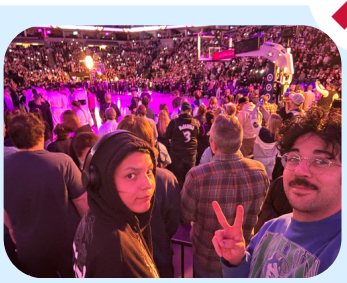
FULL CYCLE

Through our partnership with Full Cycle, donated bikes are getting out of the Bolder basement and onto the bike path. Mentees choose a bike with their mentor, then Full Cycle provides a safety check, needed repairs, and access to a helmet and lock so they're ready to ride.



TICKETS for KIDS

Tickets for Kids gives Bolder Options pairs access to experiences they might not otherwise have, creating more opportunities to spend time together, try something new, and strengthen their relationship.





the YMCA

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

The Y provides our pairs with access to activities, programs, and healthy opportunities to learn and grow together throughout the year.

> The Y gives us a place to be active, try new things, and just have fun together. It's one of our favorite places to go.
>
> — Bolder Options Mentor

More ways to move together

TWIN CITIES IN MOTION

loppet

MNRUN series

Free race registrations help Bolder Options pairs set goals, train, and cross finish lines together.

ALUMNI PROGRAM



112

Events hosted by the Alumni Program

24

Youth completed I Believe & I Achieve



41

Youth participated in Adventure Learning Program

22

Youth attended an Adventure Learning trip



7

Youth worked a summer internship



"I was able to open up more about myself and to be able to talk more positively about myself and explain more about me."

- Jimena, Alumni Participant

Thank you to Wilderness Inquiry for collaborating with Bolder Options to build on youth experiences, guiding them into the Boundary Waters and creating opportunities for adventure, growth, and connection.

Thank you to DEED for supporting Bolder Options' Alumni Program through funding that strengthens our career readiness curriculum, helping youth build skills, explore opportunities, and prepare for future success.

"The more I work at Bolder Options, the more confidence I have gained."

-Lillian, Alumni Participant

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 SUPPORTERS

EVENT SPONSORS

Delta Dental of Minnesota

Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation
Think Bank
21st Century Bank
TruStone Financial Foundation
Denise Blomquist
Gaumond Charitable Giving Fund
Flint Hills Resources
Eagle Rock Bank Expense
Allianz Life Insurance Company
Deborah R. Olson
Sterling State Bank
Complete Auto Repair
Gillette Pepsi Companies
David A. Williams
CureIS Healthcare
Peter Dokken Realty
Coordinated Business Systems
Federated Insurance
Mayo Foundation
21st Century Bank
Grand Exteriors
Swan Mountain Associates LLC
GEN Financial Management, Inc.
Edward Jones
KLN Family Brands
First Tee Minnesota
Luther Burnsville Volkswagen
Eckerline Wealth Management Group
Barry Butzow
Rochester Police Benevolent Association
Blaze Credit Union
Christopherson Advocates LLC
JADT Food Group
Olmsted Medical Center
Altra Federal Credit Union
Powers Ventures
Tile Superstore and More
Minnesota Twins
Andersen Corp

FOUNDATION PARTNERS

Minnesota DEED
Grotto Foundation
Allianz Life Insurance Company
F. R. Bigelow Foundation
Hubbard Broadcasting Foundation
Schwan's Corporate Giving Foundation
Medica Foundation
Minnesota Office of Justice Programs
American Rental Association
Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation
Minnwest Bank
Hurdles Foundation
Securian Financial Foundation
U.S. Bank Foundation
Aegon Transamerica Foundation
DICKS Sporting Goods
Mayo Foundation
Twin Cities Orthopedics Foundation
Bank of America
Boss Foundation
Minnesota Alliance for Volunteer Advancement
RBC Foundation - USA
NAILBA Charitable Foundation
Northeastern Minnesotans for Wilderness
Great River Energy Foundation
Peoples Energy Cooperative
Seward Co-op
Youth Collaboratory
Huntington Foundation
Blaze Credit Union



My name is Ryan Foss and I have been involved in Bolder Options as a mentor, committee member, board member and now as the Donor Relations Director. If you are interested in supporting or partnering with Bolder Options please reach out to me at rfoss@BolderOptions.org

INTERESTED IN OUR WORK?

FINANCIALS

For the year ended December 31, 2025 with comparative totals for 2024.

	2025	2024
Total Support and Revenue	3,332,643	1,977,646
Total Expense	1,932,458	1,682,390
Total Assets	3,331,902	2,005,914
Total Liabilities	717,200	726,033
Net Assets	2,614,902	1,279,881
Cash/Cash Equivalents	1,519,897	399,528

To view our full 2025 Audited Financials & IRS Form 990, click here.



STAY INFORMED!

Follow us on social media

Subscribe to our newsletter



STAFF & BOARD

2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brian Alday
Ben Bache-Wiig
Brian Barlow
Brad Becker
Ukee Dozier
Cynthia Fraction
Bill Gaumond
Kellie Hand
John Hoffman
Dave Jones
Jasmyn Martin
Steve Mayle
John McCormick
Melanee Meegan
Jacob Murray
Keith Nelson
Karen Prest
Marcus Sherels
Craig Wolgemuth
Rodney Young









2025 STAFF

Darrell Thompson, President & CEO
Sarah Antinozzi, Alumni Program Coordinator
Izzy Canizares, Program Assistant (Spanish speaking)
Dominique Darbaki, Development Manager
Julia Fetters, Mentoring Program Coordinator
Ryan Foss, Donor Relations Director
TyTeeona Howard, Data & Engagement Manager
Emmanuel Kannah, Mentor Program Coordinator
Rebecca Keyes, Marketing & Communications Manager
Sarah Kimmes, Alumni Program Manager
Sam Lovejoy, Office Manager
Heather McConnell, Mentoring Program Coordinator
Dominique Pierre-Toussaint, Mentor Program Coordinator
Kyle Reed, Mentoring Program Coordinator
April Riordan, Chief Operating Officer
Sarah Schaller, Rochester Program Director
Mandee Sorensen, Senior Mentor Program Coordinator
Olivia Zindren, Mentor Program Coordinator

BOLDER OPTIONS

Twin Cities Location:
2100 Stevens Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55404
Tel: 612.379.2653

BOLDER OPTIONS
YOUTH MENTORING

www.bolderoptions.org

Rochester Location:
2830 18th Avenue NW
Rochester, MN 55901
Tel: 507.269.4799