



**ANNUAL** **2025**  
**REPORT**



# A NOTE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*Dear Friends, Supporters, and Community Partners,*

*As I reflect on the past year at Van Go, I am filled with deep gratitude and pride for what we have accomplished together. This year has been one of growth, resilience, creativity and meaningful impact, made possible by the dedication of our apprentice artists, staff, volunteers, board members and the many supporters who believe in our mission.*

*Over the past year, we have continued to provide young people with more than just employment. Through art, mentorship and job training, Van Go has remained a place where creativity becomes a pathway to confidence, stability and opportunity.*

*Every mural completed, every canvas created and every workday shared has represented something larger: young people discovering their voices, building skills and realizing their potential.*

*One of the most powerful highlights of this year has been hearing directly from our apprentice artists how Van Go has shaped their lives. Time and time again, we have listened as young people shared stories of growth, belonging and hope. Some have said that Van Go gave them direction when they felt lost; others have shared that this community quite literally changed, and even saved their lives. These moments remind us that our work extends far beyond art. We are building confidence, connection and a sense of possibility that stays with our artists long after they leave Van Go.*



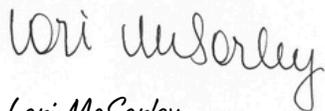
*This year has also brought exciting partnerships and new opportunities to engage our broader community through art and events. Each collaboration strengthened our belief that when a community invests in its young people, everyone benefits. The creativity our artists bring to Douglas County continues to inspire conversations, beautify shared spaces and reflect the spirit of who we are together.*

*While we celebrate these accomplishments, we also recognize that our work is ongoing. The need for supportive, creative spaces for young people has never been greater. Looking ahead, we are committed to deepening our impact, expanding access to our programs, strengthening workforce development opportunities and ensuring that every young person who walks through our doors feels seen, valued and capable of success.*

*The future of Van Go is bright because of the foundation Lynne Green laid early on – a foundation that is built around community. With your continued support, we will keep growing, innovating and creating opportunities that empower the next generation. Together, we will continue to use art as a tool for transformation, not only for individual artists, but for our entire community.*

*Thank you for believing in this work and for walking alongside us! I truly believe the best is yet to come.*

*With gratitude,*



Lori McSorley

Executive Director, Van Go, Inc.



# 2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Jen Carttar  
2025 President  
Van Go Board of Directors

**PRESIDENT** Jennifer Carttar

**PAST PRESIDENT** Katie  
Winter

**SECRETARY** Sarah Mahoney

**TREASURER** Aaron Urban

## **MEMBERS-AT-LARGE**

Justin Cordova

Steve Kelly

Meghan Bardwell

Kaylin Dillon

Gina Gardner

Cassie Gilmore

Kevin Kelley

Michel Loomis

Curtis Marsh

Stephen O'Neill

Rachel Rademacher

Charlie Sedlock

Lindsey Slater

Courtney Vardar

*“One of the best things about serving on the Van Go Board of Directors has been the opportunity to view the transformation of the youth who cross the threshold of this amazing place. They arrive looking for job skills training but find so much more.*”

*Through Van Go’s holistic approach to arts-based job-skills training, they receive so many invaluable services—collaboration and team building, routine structure, paid internships, social work services, financial readiness, healthy meals along with how to prepare them, and daily kindness and friendship—just to name a few. The apprentice artists emerge from their time at Van Go empowered for their future.”*

*“Few things are as fulfilling as seeing firsthand how Van Go transforms creative potential into tangible economic opportunity. Every group of apprentice artists who graduates from Van Go is a win for the Lawrence/Douglas County community.”*

# ABOUT US



Van Go was founded in 1997 with a borrowed van and a big vision. Today, Van Go is a nationally recognized, arts-based 'earn while you learn' employment program for young people ages 14-24. An invaluable fixture in the social service landscape of Douglas County, KS, the wraparound services Van Go youth receive are as individualized as the art they create.

**We put art to work, meet young people where they are, and spark what is possible through creative expression.**

**Our Vision: To spark self-expression and hope.**

**Our Mission: To inspire young lives through art, work, and community.**

## WHO WE SERVE

Van Go serves teens and young adults who often face social, emotional, and educational barriers; the majority of whom live in poverty and have a mental health diagnosis. Our participants may struggle to find their place in school, but at Van Go they form relationships with co-workers in a safe, supportive, and creative environment.

Youth qualify to work at Van Go by having an identified barrier to employment and educational attainment including, but not limited to: living with financial insecurity, court involvement, mental health diagnosis, placement in foster care, truancy, or having an IEP in school.

### 2025 OPPORTUNITIES

**94** Youth and Young Adults Served  
**163** Work Opportunities  
**\$174,525** Paid in Youth Wages  
**221** Hours of 1:1 Social Work  
Contacts  
**42** Hours 1:1 Employment Services  
contacts

### 2025 QUALIFIERS

**67%** Low-Income Household  
**76%** Mental Health Diagnosis  
**34%** IEP in School  
**5%** Foster Care  
**6%** Dropped out of High School  
**78%** Of youth have 2 or more  
qualifying factors

### ALUMNI REPORT

Van Go's 25 Year Alumni Survey produced the following results:

**100%** feel Van Go prepared them for future employment

**99%** Feel their life was made better by working at Van Go

# OUR SERVICES

## JOB TRAINING

Van Go's 'earn while you learn' employment programs serve youth by teaching them important job skills employers value. While providing paid employment, Van Go gives youth real world work experiences including performance evaluations, client interactions, public speaking opportunities, resume building, interview prep, and paid internships. Our aim is to set youth up for successful employment, educational attainment and self-sufficiency. Our 98% program completion rate demonstrates that **Van Go works!**



## ART

Van Go provides meaningful opportunities for youth to create art. Hired as Apprentice Artists, our youth are given all the tools needed to express themselves, build self-confidence, generate lasting artwork, and create their own visions for success. Through art, youth benefit from the therapeutic aspects of ideation and creation; they gain a sense of accomplishment and pride in their completed work.

Employing youth to create art is an investment in both our youth and in the community, developing public art works such as murals and benches to be enjoyed and used for years to come.

## SUPPORT SERVICES

Van Go provides comprehensive social service support and life skills lessons, addressing the individual needs of each Apprentice Artist. At a time when these services are in high demand yet out of reach for many, these no-cost services are a lifeline for youth in crisis. Our 'Go Healthy' wellness initiative, central to all of our programs and services, provides a holistic approach to self-care and wellness that includes mental health supports, healthy snacks and summer lunches, nutrition education, physical activity, and wellness activities/education.



# OUR PROGRAMS

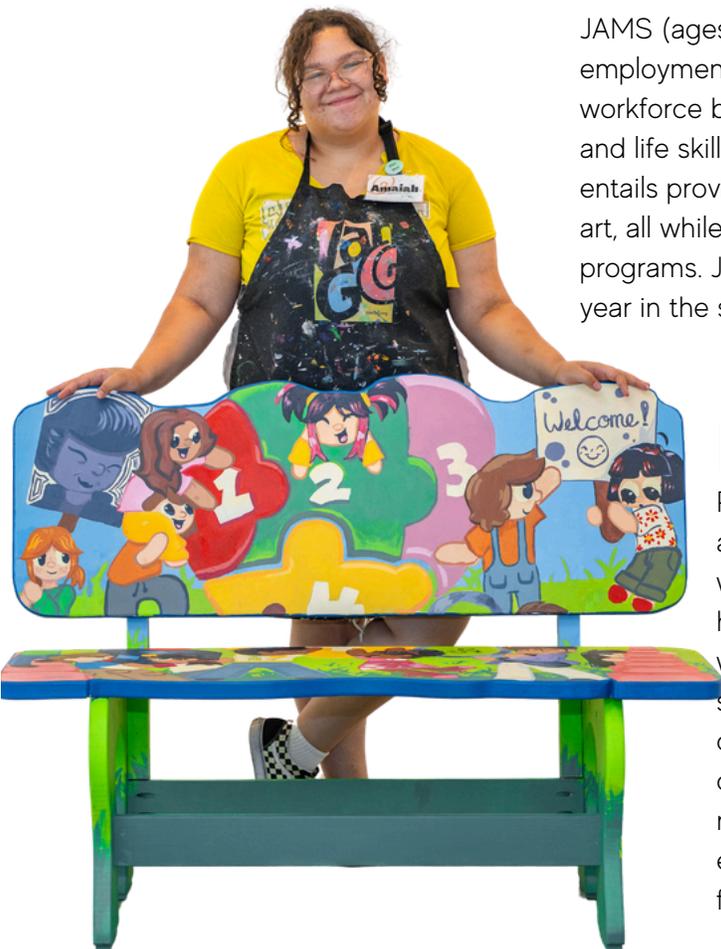
## THE ARTS TRAIN

The Arts Train (ages 18-24) is Van Go's year-round, transitional employment program designed to engage disconnected youth who often "fall through the cracks." TAT provides paid employment, employability skills training and comprehensive wraparound services to prepare participants for successful employment, educational attainment and self-sufficiency. The Arts Train provides nine months of paid, on-site job training followed by a paid, community-based internship matched with their career interests or skill set to help these young adults successfully transition to independence.



## JAMS

JAMS (ages 14-18) serves teens who have identified barriers to employment and educational attainment. JAMS trains the emerging workforce by teaching them important job skills employers value and life skills needed for self-sufficiency. Our holistic approach entails providing youth with meaningful paid employment to create art, all while addressing the needs that qualified the youth for our programs. JAMS operates in three 8-week sessions throughout the year in the spring, summer, and fall.



## PEPP

Pre-Employment Prep Program 'PEPP' (ages 14-15) is a learning opportunity for youth with little or no prior work experience. PEPP engages participants in 30 hours of pre-employment and life skills curriculum while earning a paid stipend. Youth learn employability skills, soft skills, employee rights, advocacy and self-care with an element of art expression. At the conclusion, every youth will leave with a customizable resume and cover letter, mock interview experience, employability and life skills training, and a paid stipend for their full participation in the program.

# VAN GO WORKS



View our Flickr page for  
albums of recent works

[www.flickr.com/photos/van-go/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/van-go/)



"Building Communities" for GPW & Associates; The Arts Train; Spring 2025



"Growing and Going"  
for Van Go Transit Van;  
JAMS; Spring 2025



# OUR 2025 STATS



## 2025 JAMS

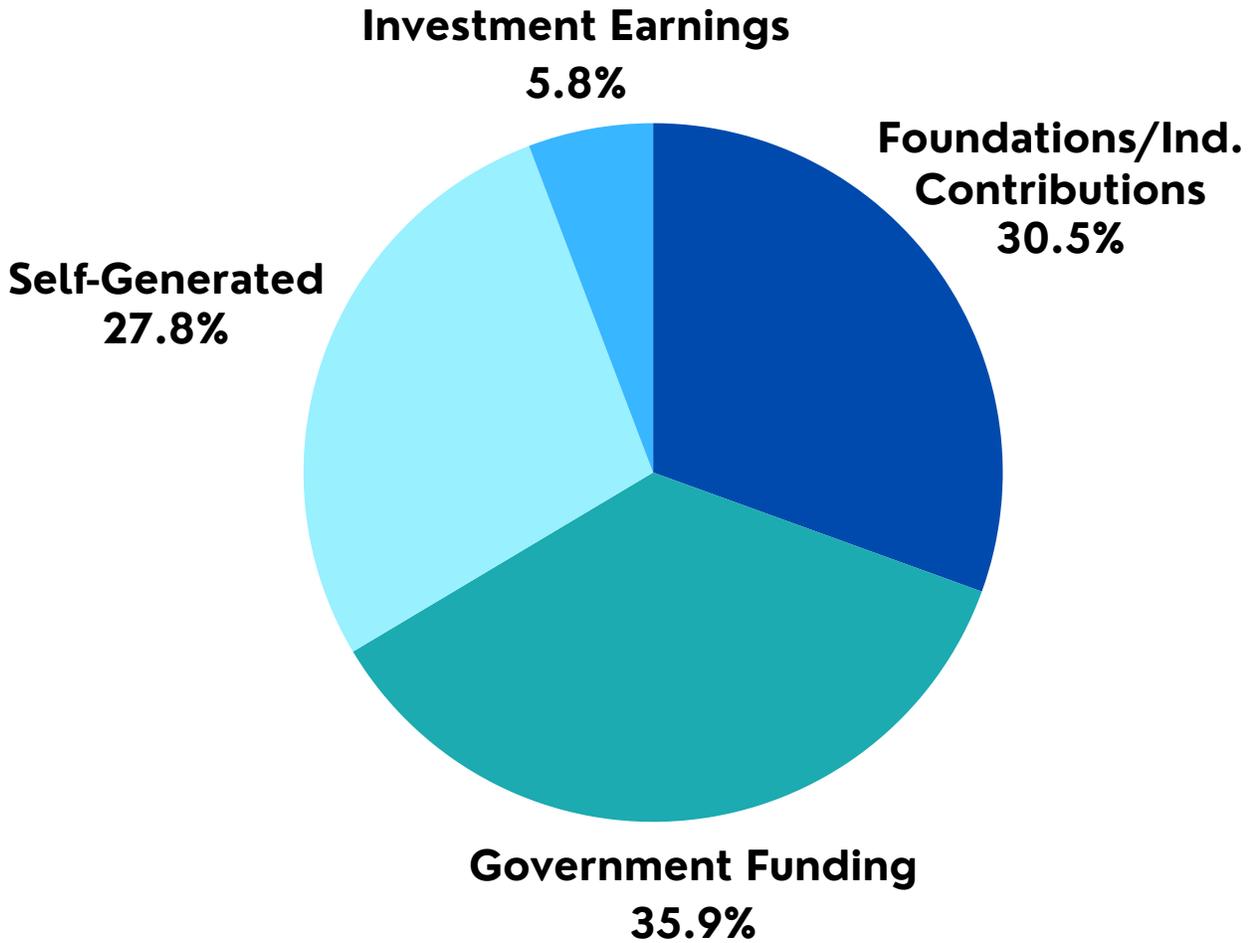
|                             |      |
|-----------------------------|------|
| Attendance Rate             | 95%  |
| Punctuality Rate            | 96%  |
| Completion Rate             | 100% |
| Evaluation Improvement      | 100% |
| High School Graduation Rate | 100% |

## 2025 THE ARTS TRAIN

|                        |     |
|------------------------|-----|
| Attendance Rate        | 93% |
| Punctuality Rate       | 97% |
| Completion Rate        | 84% |
| Evaluation Improvement | 95% |
| Internship Placements  | 10  |



# FY2025 Income - \$1,021,213.87



- Investment Earnings**  
\$58,983.82  
Endowment Earnings, CD Interest
- Foundations & Individual Contributions**  
\$311,836.74
- Government Funding**  
\$366,569.84  
WIOA, Douglas County, KAC
- Self-Generated Income**  
\$283,823.47  
Fundraisers, Commissions, Gallery Sales



# avant garde

Pamela Alexander  
Deena Marie Amont  
Marlo Angell and Peter Jasso  
Linda Bailey  
Meghan Bardwell & Leigh Housman  
Mary and Charles Briscoe  
Janis Bulgren  
Jennifer and Hans Carttar  
Rosalea and Peter Carttar  
Betsy and Scott Coons  
Justin and Loree Cordova  
Matt & Katherine Cullen  
Dee Ann Deroin  
Becki and Gary Dick  
Kaylin and Grayson Dillon  
Mary Dillon and Jon Hafker  
Stacey and Reed Dillon  
Julie and David Dunlap  
Maria and Bart Fisher  
Sarah and Ross Freese  
Martha Gage  
Gina and Greg Gardner  
Janet and Steve Garlow  
Cassie Gilmore & Brandon Hemel  
Joan and Web Golden  
Lynne Green  
Tree Hanna  
Barbara and Jon Heeb  
Ann Frame and Steve Hertzog  
Anne and David Hollond  
Mary Howe and Rick Stein  
Pam and Eric Huerter  
Tom Jennings  
Leann Johnson & Samuel Porritt  
Bob Johnson  
Dr. Panos and Debi Kalaritis  
Kevin Kelley  
Steve and Elizabeth Kelly

Patty and Marty Kennedy  
Bo Killough  
Jill Kleinberg  
Julie Klinghoffer  
Christopher and Marie Kohart  
Shea and Ryan Kruse  
Sophie and Jeff Lamb  
Ms. Amy Lee  
Leslie Lerner  
Alice Lieberman & Thomas McDonald  
Bernadette Gray Little & Shade Keys Little  
Michel Loomis  
Sarah Mahoney & John McCluskey  
Carrie and Jim Mandigo  
Sandy and George Marshall  
Cynthia Maude  
Roxie and John David McGee  
Jennifer McKnight  
Lori and Marty McSorley  
Molly Milligan  
Martin Moore & Durand Reiber  
Stephen and Beth O'Neill  
Lois Orth-Lopes and Steve Lopes  
Barbara and Gary Petersen  
Nancy Peterson  
Sandy and Mark Praeger  
Rachel and Phill Rademacher  
Usha and Michael Rafferty  
Teresa and Stan Rasmussen  
Cathy Reinhardt  
Marcia Roberts

**The Avant Garde is a group of loyal Van Go supporters who value innovation and forward thinking; they believe in the bright futures of Douglas County youth. Join the Avant Garde with an annual unrestricted contribution of \$1,000 or more.**

Jennifer and Gordon Roe  
Jennifer Roth and Greg Rupp  
Susan Schott and Mike Briggs  
Katie and Steve Schwada  
Mary Ann and Roger Scott  
SJ Scott  
Sharon Graham & Anthea Scouffas  
Kathleen and Gary Sebelius  
Brad Shanks and Christina Robinson  
Amy & Eric Shumaker  
Lisa and Dolph Simons III  
Jenny and Keith Skillman  
Lindsey Slater & George Diepenbrock  
Denise Stone  
Kerry Sutorius  
Brad and Susan Tate  
David and Maria Thompson  
Kitty Tinsman  
Michael Treanor  
Bob Tryanski  
Joyce Tuman  
Aaron and Laura Urban  
Courtney & Suleyman Vardar  
Bruce Vaughn  
Beth Warner  
Dan Watkins  
Annette and Ken Wertzberger  
Jan Willey  
Evan Williams and Roger Walter  
Beverly and George Wilson  
Kathy Sanders and Jack Wilson  
Katie Winter & Matthew Klein  
Mary and Wint Winter, Jr.  
Doug Wolff

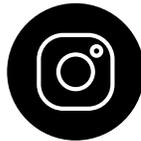




[www.van-go.org](http://www.van-go.org)



@vango.lawrence



@van\_go\_inc

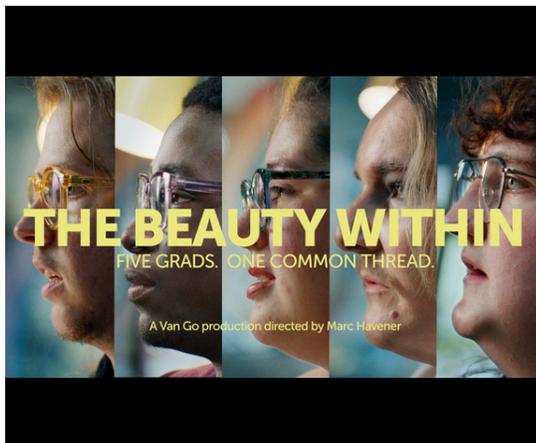


Van Go, Inc.

View our latest video



"Van Go is Closing the Gap"



## SHORT FILM

Learn more about Van Go and take 6 minutes and 44 seconds to watch our ADDY award winning short film which highlights five Van Go Grads with one common thread.

<https://youtu.be/8utsEaOda2l?si=QSPG4P3sUQ3MYIFn>

