



North Bay  
Education

# IMPACT REPORT

2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR



***Dear friends and partners,***

I am writing with a full heart. This year at NorthBay was more than a series of milestones, it was a rush of moments that reminded us why outdoor, experiential learning changes lives. I walked past the ropes course where students coached each other through fear, listened to quiet reflections by the Bay after a day of inquiry and adventure, and watched sixth graders discover they are braver, kinder, and more capable than they knew.

Together, we served almost 9,000 students across Maryland and Pennsylvania. We are excited to welcome back some schools that missed last year and new schools that will be visiting for the first time. That partner is already committed to returning next year, which makes this year's growth even more meaningful. And in Baltimore City, 3,332 sixth graders, nearly 65% of all 6th graders joined us, the most in our 20-year history.

In March 2025, we launched Rising Tide Farm, a living classroom that now engages more than 400 students each week. From seed starts in the greenhouse and hoop house to tastings in our field beds and a new aquaponics system, students are learning science, stewardship, and the joy of growing food. Their faces light up when they harvest something they tended themselves.

Thanks to Knorr-Bremse Global Care North America, we refitted our floating classroom, The Miss Nancy. In the new school year, entire classes will head to the Bay to study microplastics, bivalves, water quality, and submerged aquatic vegetation, hands-on science that fosters genuine care for this watershed.

In order to scale impact and address barriers to participation, we've moved to a flexible three-day overnight program. This approach reduces cost and time away from classrooms while preserving the transformational heart of NorthBay. It also positions us to serve significantly more students in the years ahead.

Relationships deepened: new school partners came aboard, more are booked for 2025–26, and momentum grew with new foundations and corporate partners. We're also building a thoughtful pathway for individual supporters who want to walk with us over the long term.

Our partners at Virginia Tech conducted an external evaluation that affirmed what we observe every day: students report gains in self-awareness and decision-making, stronger peer relationships and empathy, and a deeper understanding of environmental issues.

The strongest drivers are adventure, trusted adult relationships, and storytelling, the ingredients our educators cultivate with care.

I'm fiercely proud of this team, which has created a welcoming space that offers an opportunity for learning and transformation to all our staff, students, and retreat guests. I am grateful for every partner, schools, retreat groups, foundations, and companies, who believe in young people and the power of the outdoors.

With new programs, new partners, and a clear, student-centered vision, NorthBay is poised to deepen its impact across the Mid-Atlantic. Thank you for your trust, advocacy, and investment in the next generation.

With gratitude,  
Jenn Foy  
Executive Director, NorthBay

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the 2024–2025 grant year, NorthBay Education made meaningful strides toward its mission of empowering youth through transformative outdoor and environmental education.

Supported by many generous donations from our Corporate and Foundation Partners, NorthBay engaged a record number of students, piloted new program models to increase accessibility, launched innovative educational initiatives, and expanded its institutional capacity through strategic staff and partnership growth.

**8,500+**

**TOTAL STUDENTS**

**3,300+**

**BALTIMORE STUDENTS**



Serving  
**8,655** students

Surpassing 2023-2024 totals.

Providing experiential  
learning to

**3,332** Baltimore City  
6th graders

Launching Rising  
Tide Farm

an immersive agricultural  
education site

Relaunching our  
educational boat

The Miss Nancy, enhancing  
hands-on Bay learning

Establishing **13**  
**new school** partnerships

and booking 9 more  
for 2025–26

Gaining momentum in  
fundraising with

**14 new foundation**  
**supporters** and **9**  
**corporate partners.**

Initiating a scalable  
3-day program model  
to reduce participation  
barriers

Conducting an **in-depth**  
**third-party program** evaluation

by Virginia Tech Graduate Research  
Assistant, Paige Crane, which  
confirmed strong impacts on student  
identity, relationships, and inspiration.

# STUDENT PARTICIPATION

NorthBay reached a total of 8,655 students during the 2024–25 school year, achieving growth despite significant challenges. Notably, one of our largest and longest-standing district partners was unable to send their usual 1,100 students due to internal budget constraints.

Their absence this year underscores the significance of our overall growth, and they have already committed to returning in the coming school year.

## BALTIMORE IMPACT

3,332 6th graders participated in our Outdoor School, representing 60% of all 6th grade students in Baltimore City Public Schools—a historic high.

## SEL CURRICULUM EXPANSION

An additional 150 Baltimore City students received in-school Social and Emotional Learning programming in early 2025.



## RISING TIDE FARM

NorthBay's Rising Tide Farm debuted as a dynamic agricultural learning space, directly engaging over 1,500 students in its inaugural year.

Designed to integrate seamlessly into Outdoor School programming, the farm empowers students with hands-on experiences in sustainable food systems, biology, and environmental stewardship.

### GREENHOUSE AND HOOPHOUSE

One historic greenhouse was restored, and a new hoop house was constructed. These indoor grow spaces now serve as working classrooms for seed propagation and early-stage plant development.

### FIELD CULTIVATION

A  $\frac{3}{4}$ -acre farm plot was tilled and enriched with mushroom soil, yielding 18 grow beds. Students actively participated in planting, transplanting, harvesting, and tasting crops.

### AQUAPONICS SYSTEM

An innovative indoor unit combines a catfish tank with an herb grow bed, modeling a sustainable, closed-loop food system.

### EDUCATIONAL REACH

The farm now serves 400+ students each week, multiplying the reach of a typical educator by more than 5x and embedding experiential learning into every visit.



## THE MISS NANCY

Thanks to a generous donation from Knorr-Bremse Global Care North America, NorthBay fully refitted its educational vessel, The Miss Nancy.

**This floating classroom will host entire classes for immersive environmental science lessons on:**

- Microplastics and ghost pots
- Bivalves and Bay ecosystems
- Water quality sampling and analysis
- Submerged aquatic vegetation and habitat preservation

## FUNDRAISING

NorthBay significantly expanded its development capacity this year:

- **Foundation Support:** 14 new foundations joined as supporters.
- **Corporate Engagement:** 9 new corporate partnerships were secured under new leadership.
- **Individual Donors:** NorthBay began cultivating individual donors, laying the groundwork for a long-term giving base.

# 3-DAY PROGRAM PILOT

To address logistical and staffing challenges that schools face, NorthBay began developing a **3-day residential experience** as a flexible alternative to the traditional 5-day model.

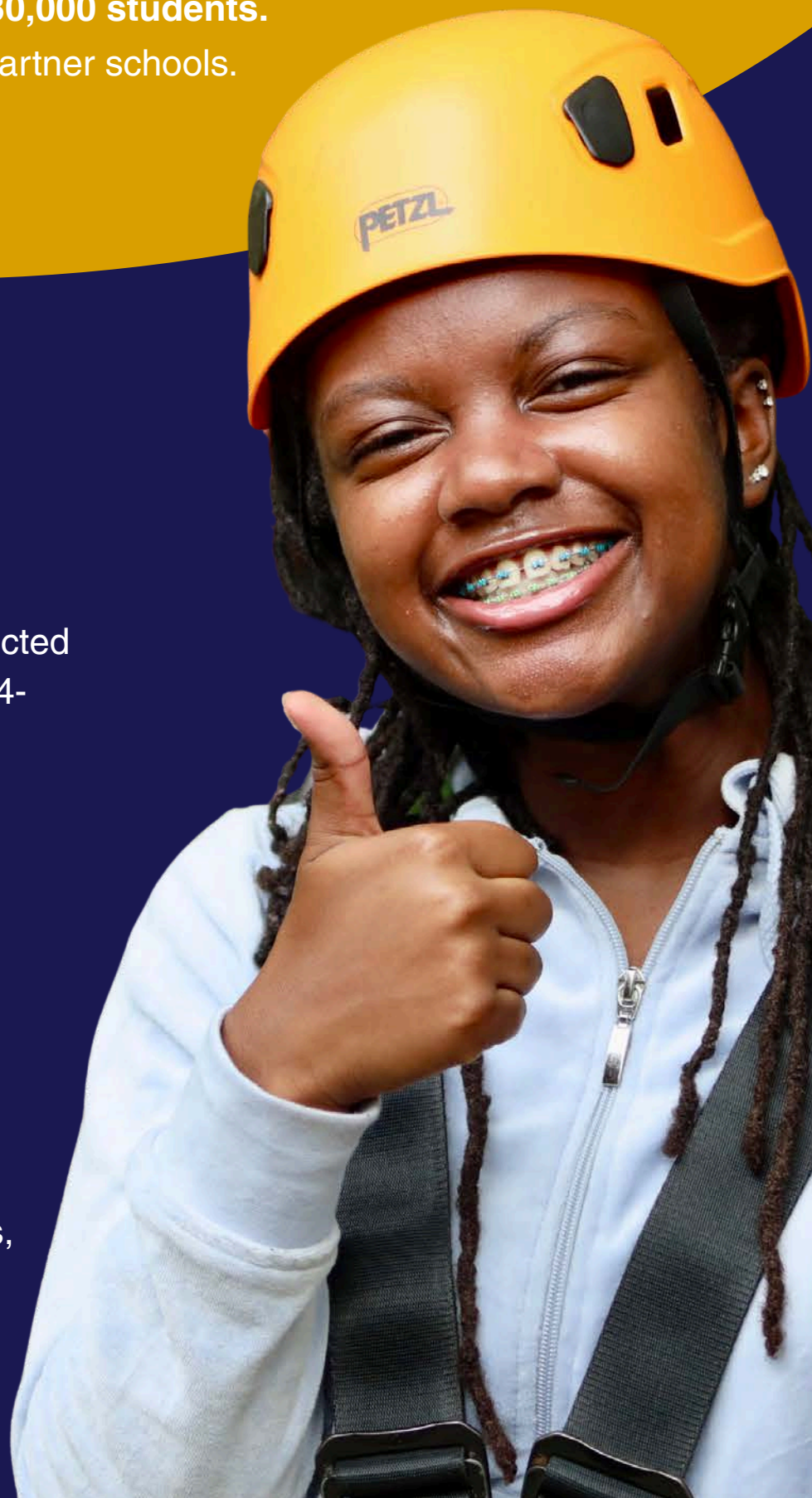
## Benefits include:

- Reducing teacher time commitment, easing school participation.
- Lowering costs, increasing accessibility.
- Doubling the potential annual reach to **up to 30,000 students**.
- Providing a lower-barrier entry point for new partner schools.

## EVALUATION AND OUTCOMES

An external mixed-methods evaluation was conducted by a Masters candidate from Virginia Tech over a 4-week residency, focusing on identity development among 6th graders in Baltimore City.

- **44%** reported gains in self-awareness and decision-making.
- **27%** noted improved peer relationships and empathy.
- **10%** identified increased environmental awareness and mindfulness.
- Adventure-based activities, adult relationships, and personal storytelling emerged as **top drivers of student growth**.



# FROM THE STUDENTS

VA Tech's focus groups and "Meaning Quest" drawing prompts elicited striking reflections. Below are some direct quotes and student illustrations that capture the depth of their transformation:



## Overcoming Fear and Self-Discovery

- "I was really scared when I saw how far off the ground I was... but I didn't want to chicken out and make anyone else scared." — Student reflecting on the ropes course.
- "Once you make up your mind to do something, don't let yourself talk you out of it... even if you're scared." — Student during high ropes jump



## Realizations About Relationships

- “Even if we don’t like each other that much, we can still have fun together.” — Fishing activity reflection



- “That it’s really fun to work with others... it feels good to be part of something bigger than just yourself.” — Talent show memory

## Deep Emotional and Existential Insights

- “It’s OK to be sad.” — Outdoor moment reflection
- “I should have gone on the zipline... I don’t think I would be able to do it any other time!” — Regret and realization from missed adventure



# FINANCIAL REPORT

In FY25, NorthBay operated with an institutional budget of **\$8,537,870**, advancing our mission to serve students across Maryland and Pennsylvania through immersive education, outdoor learning, and workforce readiness at Rising Tide Farm. This year's financial strategy reflected a healthy balance of earned income and philanthropic support, enabling us to expand access to under-resourced communities, strengthen staff capacity, and invest in essential infrastructure, all while maintaining strong alignment with our core values.



## CONCLUSION

NorthBay's work in 2024–25 exemplifies innovation, resilience, and commitment to youth development through outdoor education. With new programs, new partners, and new leadership, NorthBay is poised to deepen its impact across the Mid-Atlantic. The support of the Rosenberg Foundation has been instrumental during this period of growth and transformation, and will continue to yield dividends in the lives of students for years to come.

# THANK YOU

FY2025 Supporters

YOUR SUPPORT MEANS THE  
WORLD TO US.

We are lucky to have you on the team.

## **\$100,000 and above**

Maryland Department of Education

Anonymous

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## **\$20,000 to \$99,999**

Baltimore Community Foundation

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Johnson Controls

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Horizon Farm Credit

## **\$1,000 to \$4,999**

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