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Photo: Kelli Udall

Carmel Mainstay Raises Funds for Youth Programs

BY RENEE BRINCKS

Carmel Youth Center Executive Director Jessica Faddis explains that it costs the center around \$1,800 per child each month to offer care during school closures.

Seventy-one years after Bing Crosby established the Carmel Youth Center (CYC), the nonprofit is fundraising to secure its future.

It costs approximately \$1,800 per child, per month, to provide safe, full-day care during pandemic-related school closures, explains CYC Executive Director Jessica Faddis.

"Over 20% of our children are on scholarships. Keeping our doors open includes subsidizing enrollment costs to make this more affordable for the working parents who depend on the youth center," she says.

The CYC serves students in kindergarten through grade eight. Seasonal day camps and after-school activities emphasize science and technology, while also fostering creativity, self-confidence, life skills and community mind-

edness. When COVID-19 closed the center this spring, Faddis pivoted from planning summer camps to gathering groceries. Board members partnered with Flaherty's to secure food for more than 5,000 people.

Now, the CYC hopes to raise \$750,000 to provide scholarships, accommodate children during prolonged school closures, and address Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) building updates planned before the pandemic.

"We've served the community for more than 70 years. We want to be that stable community presence for the next 70," says Faddis. "We want to continue providing education and equal opportunities to all the children who walk through our doors."