

World **Youth** Alliance



2024

ANNUAL REPORT

**STANDING UP FOR
HUMAN DIGNITY
AROUND THE GLOBE**



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Letter from the Founder

2024 was a year of significant growth for the World Youth Alliance, which was a fitting way to celebrate 25 years of our work! Our annual International Solidarity Forum started the celebrations by highlighting outstanding global speakers on the theme of Totalitarianism and Human Dignity. This provided an international look at challenges we continue to face today, after 25 years, and new ways that the dignity of the human person is under assault in many ways around the world.

Our World Youth Alliance members continue to stand up—and step forward—with courage, intellectual honesty, and commitment. These are young people willing to put themselves on the line to learn about and defend the dignity of each human person. Over the past 25 years, it is the members of WYA who have turned the ideas at the heart of our work into concrete activities and commitments at local and international levels. Our members today demonstrate that the hope and strength of WYA continues to be present in this new generation.

As we move into our next quarter century, the core work of WYA remains strong, and our program solutions for the challenges we face are growing. You'll continue to read about the external research that is supporting the growth and adoption of the Human Dignity Curriculum, and the exciting curriculum growth that we are witnessing in the Philippines.

Yours sincerely,



Anna Halpine

Founder



2024 at a Glance

Your generous support made 2024 another amazing year for WYA.



11,534 New Charter Members



39 Interns



73 Retained Chapters and Committees



314 Certified Members



13 New Chapters and Committees



59 Trained Advocates



43 New Strategic Partners

Reflections on the 21st International Solidarity Forum

Persevere in the Truth: You're Not Alone

by **Max Yun**

The four days of the 21st International Solidarity Forum (ISF) were packed with lectures and presentations from experts and distinguished speakers.

Professor Carlo Lancellotti spoke about the “new form of totalitarianism” that has taken over our contemporary times; Dr. Eithan Haim shared his story as a whistleblower, exposing the secret transgender program at the world’s largest children’s hospital; Mr. Chen Guangcheng, a human rights lawyer and advocate, has risked his life in bringing awareness to the crimes of the Chinese Communist Party; and WYA’s very own Mislav Barišić and Clare Halpine spoke about the history of Marxism and the impact of language within the pervasive creep of ideology.

During a break, I went to the entrance of the WYA Headquarters and found Caroline Maingi, the founding staff member of WYA Africa, chatting with a couple of delegates. Caroline shared with us the story of WYA’s beginnings. She spoke about the struggles and hardships. She said several people didn’t believe in the WYA movement. Despite criticism (and borderline hostility) from various opponents, Anna, Caroline, and the rest of the team persevered.



Max Yun (Canada) with WYA President, Paula Lopez

I stayed, listening to Caroline’s story. Bit by bit, more and more delegates gathered to listen in the entrance foyer. Soon, the room was packed with ISF participants from every corner of the world, sharing the same mission from its start 25 years ago.



TOTALITARIAN IDEOLOGIES INSIST ON A SINGLE IDEA OR WORLDVIEW AS THE ONLY LEGITIMATE UNDERSTANDING OF REALITY AND REJECT ALL DISSENT... THE INTOLERANCE OF IDEAS MISALIGNED WITH THE DOMINANT IDEOLOGY, DEMONSTRATED IN TODAY'S "CANCEL CULTURE" EXEMPLIFIES TOTALITARIAN TENDENCIES. IN SUCH AN ENVIRONMENT, INDIVIDUALS INTERNALIZE THE DICTATED NORMS AND SILENCE DIVERGENT OPINIONS.

DECLARATION ON HUMAN DIGNITY AND TOTALITARIAN IDEOLOGIES

While it was a short moment amidst the week's intensity, I believe it encapsulates the spirit of the International Solidarity Forum.

In between lectures, participants engaged in deep discussions, playing with the new ideas and perspectives from the speakers. Our conversations drew from both the lectures and the readings we were provided.

Hearing from other delegates, especially about their experiences with totalitarian ideology in their countries, impressed me. The lectures were followed by rigorous language negotiations on this year's WYA Declaration on Human Dignity and Totalitarian Ideologies. It was enlightening to hear the perspectives of other delegations and how language was interpreted differently.



This year's ISF was intellectually rewarding but also remarkably inspiring. I learned so much and we quickly became a big family. The last day of the ISF was the hardest part, but now I have friends around the globe—I think that's pretty awesome.

Human Dignity and Totalitarian Ideologies

Excerpts from Keynote Address, 'Totalitarian Tendencies in Contemporary Democracies'

by Ryszard Legutko

We would not be here if we lived in a totalitarian society. I vividly remember how aggressively and often brutally the communist government reacted to the dissenting initiatives, and it would be indecent to say that today's dissenters are in the same situation. ...For this reason, perhaps the word 'totalizing' would be more acceptable.

Let us point out some of the characteristics of a totalitarian society. The first of these would be a one-party system with no political opposition. A small correction: in some communist regimes, for instance, in my country, there were several parties, but only one, the communist, held the real power, whereas the rest had only an ornamental function... Do we have something like this today? Yes, we do, though in a diluted form.



Let's take another trait of totalitarianism – the omnipresence of politics. The communist politicization was indeed comprehensive in scope and painfully intrusive. No wonder for some, the oppressive nature of the system was unbearable, and they tried to find refuge in the areas that could be fairly safe from politics—private life being most obvious. Some tried to find it in art or intellectual activities, though it was more difficult because schools and education, in general, were considered a top priority for the communists to take control of.

Today, we have a similar trend to subordinate everything to politics, with education at the forefront. Schools have become highly politicised, and political correctness has been imposed with shocking harshness. The campuses in the entire Western world are still in the avant-garde of political correctness and woke'ism.

THE CONCEPT OF POLITICAL CORRECTNESS – LET ME ADD – GOES BACK TO COMMUNISM, WHERE IT MEANT BEING IN ACCORDANCE WITH COMMUNIST IDEOLOGY. TRUTH DID NOT MATTER BECAUSE TRUTH WAS SAID TO BE CLASS-RELATIVE AND CLASS-CONDITIONED. WHAT MATTERED WAS TO BE FAITHFUL TO THE RULING IDEOLOGICAL ORTHODOXY.

Like under the communist regime, language is of primary importance, and the language particularly strictly controlled and enforced. ...We will see the growing corruption of language... In Orwell's world – it will be recalled – war was peace, freedom, slavery, and ignorance strength. We should not treat the other side as the proponents of the project that was well-meant but somehow got wrong; no, the project was, from the very beginning, animated by a totalizing potential.



International Summer School on Bioethics and Human Rights

A Brilliant Week of Bioethics

In August, forty young people gathered for the 4th Annual International Summer School of Bioethics and Human Rights in Šibenik, Croatia. This year's conference addressed abortion, assisted suicide and euthanasia, population control policies, and totalitarian ideologies.

Attendees were joined by renowned bioethics and human rights experts such as Belgian theorist, Michel Bauwens; member of the European Parliament, Stephen Bartulica; and lawyers, Sofia Maruri and Oliver Tuazon.

Over the week, participants discussed topics such as:

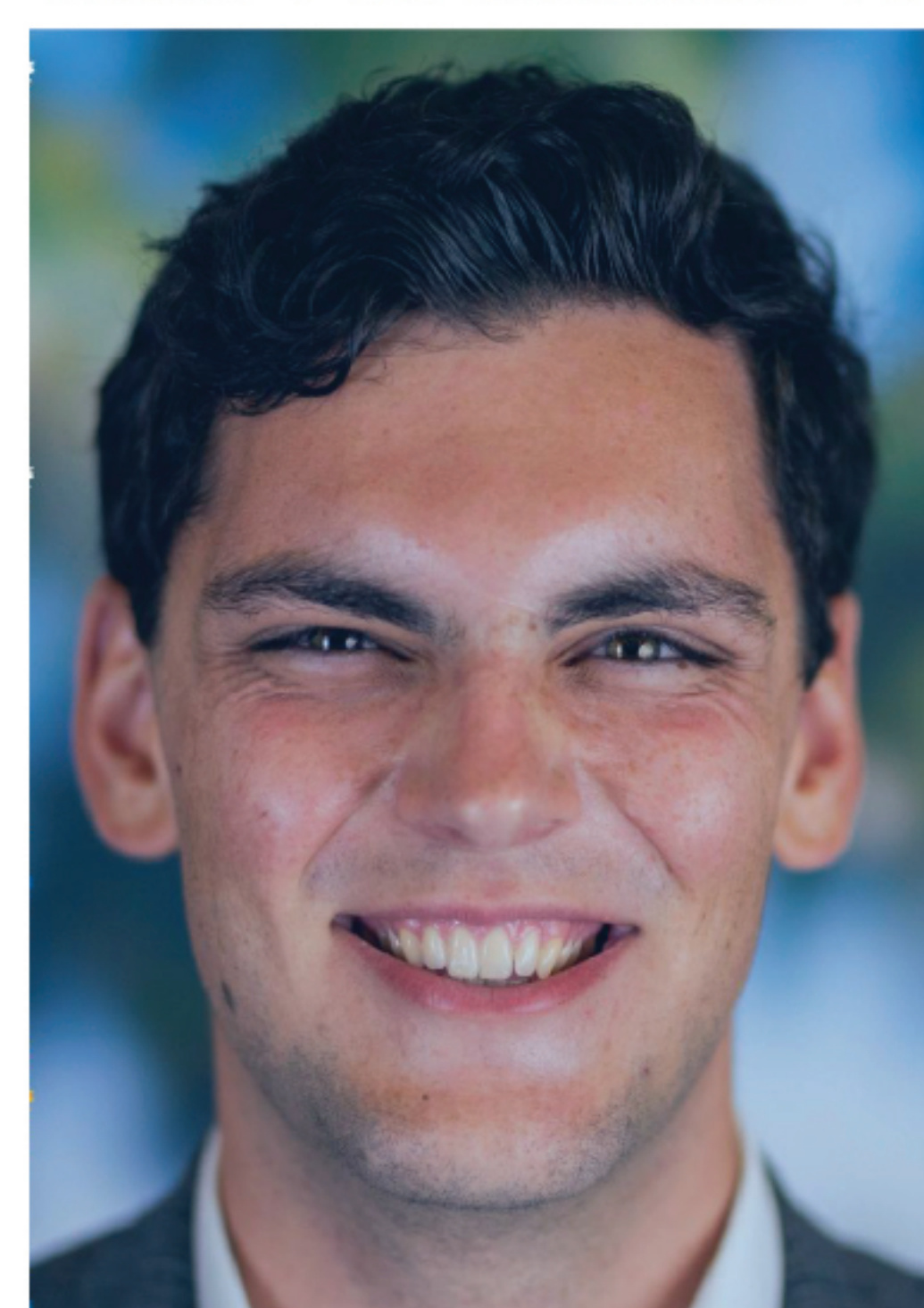
- Metaphysics of life and authority
- Biological and medical status of the human embryo
- Ethical and medical considerations of euthanasia
- Ethical implications of genetic research

Guided by mentors from WYA Croatia and WYA Europe, participants also engaged in a series of structured debates throughout the week. On the final day, at the much-anticipated Master Debate, attendees engaged in a spirited argument, demonstrating their mastery of the topics discussed during the conference and showcasing their debate skills.

At the end of the week, attendees bid farewell to each other with a sense of accomplishment, ready to bring what they'd learned back to their own corners of the world.

THIS SCHOOL WAS THE EXPERIENCE OF A LIFETIME... LEARNING RIGOROUSLY FROM EXPERTS IN MANY DIFFERENT FIELDS, EXPLORING THE BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY OF CROATIA, AND FORMING FRIENDSHIPS WITH FELLOW PARTICIPANTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD! I CAN'T THINK OF A BETTER WAY TO SPEND SUMMER.

ANSELM HARROLD



Advocacy Updates

Global Advocacy Fellows Advance WYA's Mission on the World Stage

by **Max Yun and Simona-Elena Vatamanu**

This fall, our Global Advocacy Fellowship Program officially launched, bringing together dedicated WYA members from seven countries, each selected to represent WYA's mission at home and at the United Nations.

Fellows stepped into the heart of global diplomacy at the United Nations, kickstarting the Fellowship by attending the 3rd Committee Session and General Assembly as part of their orientation week. This experience helped equip them with the skills to advocate with national policymakers and drive a culture centered on dignity and people-first values.



Following a rigorous two-week training program covering United Nations technical language, the Human Dignity Curriculum (HDC), and effective communication techniques, each fellow is now prepared to act as an advocate, building bridges with Member States to promote WYA's mission.

This spring, the fellows will represent our members on the international stage, actively participating in the United Nations Commissions, including the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), the Commission on Population and Development (CPD), and the Commission on Social Development (CSocD).

WYA Welcomes Italy's Landmark Decision to Ban Surrogacy

by **Advocacy Fellow, Rokaia Elhommosani**

On October 16, 2024, the Italian Senate took a decisive step by totally banning surrogacy, and thus, upholding the dignity of human life and the rights of children. The World Youth Alliance applauds Italy on this pivotal decision, which not only reinforces the value of family but also protects the vulnerable in society.

The new law expands on Italy's previous ban from two decades ago, now expanding the prohibition to include Italians seeking surrogacy arrangements abroad. The Senate voted 84 to 58 in favor of the measure, recognizing the ethical concerns associated with surrogacy.

This legislative action aligns with the proposals given in WYA's White Paper on Surrogacy, which emphasizes that surrogacy represents the commodification of children and leads to the exploitation of women.



Advocacy Updates

WYA Stands Up for Human Dignity in Kenya

WYA members in Kenya have been fighting some troubling ideologies being pushed on their region. One focus in particular has been on the Healthcare Providers Training Manual on Human Rights, which was first released in 2023. The Manual introduces ideas that contradict the Kenyan constitution and local values.

Chapter One of the Training Manual focuses on abortion, contraception, reproductive rights, assisted reproductive technologies, and surrogacy. Access to abortion is said to “pose a challenge” when dealing with “minors, people with disabilities, marginalized populations, and people in prisons and other conned settings.” What the document *doesn’t say* is that abortion also “poses a challenge” to the Constitution of Kenya: “Every person has the right to life. The life of a person begins at conception” (Constitution art. 26). The Manual also discusses challenges to the practice of surrogacy and the need for greater support for it—despite the fact that attempts to legalize surrogacy in Kenya have been rejected by Kenya’s legislature in the past decade.

Meanwhile, Chapter Two of the Manual presents case studies on how to provide minors with contraception and abortion without parental knowledge and consent. WYA advocates have given constructive feedback on this document, fighting to ensure that the law protects human dignity and the family. Notably, our team successfully removed the case studies from the final draft of the Manual, in the attempt to uphold respect for parental rights in the context of minors. Additionally, advocates made contributions to the facilitator’s guides and training slides.



The Healthcare Providers Training Manual on Human Rights project proved significantly unpopular amongst Kenyans, and ultimately was dropped in the country. With the hard work of WYA members in Kenya, as of the end of 2024, the project remains formally dismissed.

New Milestones for the Human Dignity Curriculum

HDC Makes the Grade in one of the World’s Largest Research Publications


“Globally, young people are experiencing unprecedented levels of socio-emotional loneliness, stress, and uncertainty,” begins the important research, *Human Dignity Curriculum: Teachers’ comfort, commitment, and perceived support teaching a new socioemotional learning curriculum* published by Dr. Moira Law, a psychology professor at Saint Mary’s University, Canada. Published in July of 2024, the article has already been viewed almost two thousand times on *Frontiers in Education*, one of the world’s largest publications of peer-reviewed research.

The study was conducted across two sites: a public school in the U.S. and a private school in Canada. Perhaps not surprisingly, the research notes that the Human Dignity Curriculum works well for all students—those struggling with behavioral/learning difficulties as well as those who do not share those difficulties. The research also highlights the vocabulary of human dignity and human excellence as a shared language that may hold potential in addressing issues of broad social impact.

Front. Educ., 31 July 2024
Sec. Mental Health and Wellbeing in Education
Volume 9 - 2024 |
<https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2024.1427079>

This article is part of the Research Topic
Students' Social and Emotional Skills in
Educational Settings
[View all 19 articles >](#)

Human Dignity Curriculum: Teachers’ comfort, commitment, and perceived support teaching a new socioemotional learning curriculum


 Moira A. Law^{*†}
Department of Psychology, Saint Mary’s University, Halifax, NS, Canada

Introduction

“I could see that there’s a change in the way that people view each other and treat each other. This program centers it back to we are all the same, we all struggle, we all go through things.”

-Teacher Interviewee, May 2023

Youth are distressed (Owais et al., 2022; Van Meter et al., 2023) due to a variety of reasons (Keles et al., 2020; Paul et al., 2022). Effective preventative measures for bolstering youth well-being include socioemotional learning (SEL) programs delivered in schools (Cavioni et al., 2020; Gueldner et al., 2020; Ağırkan and Ergene, 2022; Durlak et al., 2022). When implementing new curriculums, successful implementation of the program depends heavily upon teachers’ commitment to the curriculum (Rahman et al., 2019; Muliya and



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TEACHES THAT IN A
VERY BEAUTIFUL WAY,
IN A WAY THAT THE
CHILDREN LOVE TO
LISTEN TO.”**

—SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

HDC Grows by Leaps and Bounds in the Philippines

On March 18, 2024, the Province of Antique, Philippines adopted a provincial ordinance institutionalizing the Human Dignity Curriculum in all public and private schools.

The statute is entitled, *“An Ordinance Empowering Children, Adolescents and Youth Through Enactment of the Human Dignity Education Program in the Province of Antique.”*

It aims to recognize the importance of instilling values such as respect, empathy, and kindness in educational institutions. Christian School and Sta. Rita Academy were the first schools in Antique to pilot the HDC, with great success. Educators and parents were amazed by the changes they saw in students who took HDC classes.

One teacher recounts a particularly moving story: “There was one parent who came to me teary-eyed and told me that her child repeatedly tells her: ‘Mama, thank you for your hard work. I love you!’ She was so touched, she couldn’t believe such a transformation was happening in her child.”

The curriculum was also piloted in select public schools in the towns of Libertad and Sebaste in September. The HDC now has the potential to reach over 500 schools and over a hundred thousand students all over the province.

And it’s not just the Antique Province. WYA also held a province-wide HDC training in Lanao del Norte (South Philippines), which was approved by the Department of Education. The future of HDC in the Philippines is bright!



I NOW BEGIN TO SEE SOME CHANGES IN THE ATTITUDE OF THE STUDENTS AND HOW THEY TREAT ONE ANOTHER AND OTHER PEOPLE BECAUSE OF THE HUMAN DIGNITY CURRICULUM. - HDC TEACHER



I’M INSPIRED BY THE LESSON ON THE POWERS TO THINK AND CHOOSE. I WANT TO REACH MY DREAMS, SO I’LL STUDY WELL IN SCHOOL. - HDC STUDENT

Meet the 2024 Viktor Frankl Awardees

The Viktor Frankl Award is presented to WYA members who have made significant contributions to promoting the dignity of the human person in their communities. Meet this year's class of exceptional young leaders:



Jervis Lyonga

WYA AFRICA

Jervis Lyonga from Cameroon joined WYA in 2021. He completed the Certified Training Program (CTP), became a trainer, and went through the WYA Advocacy Academy. Jervis also completed an internship at WYA's regional office in Kenya. Back in Cameroon, he taught the Human Dignity Curriculum to 40 students at Bishop Rogan College. Jervis has been essential in spreading the message of human dignity in his community.

WYA ASIA PACIFIC

Lovey began her WYA journey as an intern in WYA Asia Pacific, where she quickly demonstrated her passion for advocacy work. For years, she served as the co-coordinator of WYA India. Lovey also earned her trainer certification and engaged again as an advocacy intern with WYA HQ. She has represented WYA at various UN commissions and supported WYAAP by training, hosting online events, and mentoring new interns and trainers.



Lovey

WYA EUROPE



Fran Zgombic

Fran Zgombic first got involved with WYA in 2016. He has served as co-coordinator of the WYA Croatian National Committee, organizing exchanges and gatherings between the Committee and its chapters (Osijek and Split). Fran also plays a key role in coordinating our annual International Summer School in Šibenik. He's helped the WYA Croatia chapter secure new partnerships and served as an ambassador of the Human Dignity Curriculum throughout the country.

Meet the 2024 Viktor Frankl Awardees

WYA LATIN AMERICA

Maria Bianculli is a certified trainer and former leader of WYA's Venezuela chapter. She has taught the HDC and the CTP with other trainers on multiple occasions. Under her leadership, WYA Venezuela became one of the most important chapters in the region. Maria has also fundraised and organized campaigns to support the implementation of the HDC in vulnerable communities.



Maria Bianculli

WYA MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA



Perla Tannous

As the National Coordinator of the Lebanon Committee, **Perla Tannous** has engaged young people across Lebanon in the fight for human dignity and justice. Perla has worked with groups like the Holy Family Congregation, the Antonine Sisters, and several universities to implement the CTP and HDC. As a certified trainer, Perla brings together youth from all parts of Lebanon for cultural activities and educational training programs.

WYA NORTH AMERICA

Ashley Kutter has led the charge to expand WYA in Georgia, USA. After attending a WYA summer camp, Ashley started a club at her school and taught the CTP to her classmates. This led to certifications for herself and her peers. Today, they're working to integrate the CTP into their school's curriculum. Ashley's efforts have paved the way for other certified members to attend the International Solidarity Forum, further extending WYA's impact in the community.



Ashley Kutter

Leadership



WYA Staff

WYA Foundation

Founder: Anna Halpine

Grants and Partnerships: Hrvoje Vargić

Director of Policy and Research: Mislav Barišić

Human Dignity Curriculum Director: Clare Halpine

HDC Philippines Expansion Director: Lord Pomperada

Director of Marketing: Demy Cruz Jr.

WYA Headquarters

President: Paula Andrea Lopez Rodriguez

Online Course Coordinator: Faye Ysabela Ong

WYA Africa

Regional Director: Cynthia Maingi

Regional Director of Operations: Joy Wangui Maina

WYA Asia Pacific

Regional Director of Operations: Rejean Marie Darroca

WYA Europe

Regional Director: Myriam Audras-Kaufmann

Regional Director of Operations: Ina Delić

Regional Director of Advocacy: Ramón Barba Castro

Southeast Europe Director: Ermelinda Gjeki

WYA Latin America

Regional Program Officer: María Laura Hernandez

Leadership

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Princess Margareta of Liechtenstein
The Lord Daniel Brennan
H.E. Renato Cardinal Martino
H.E. Christoph Cardinal Schönborn

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Anna Halpine (ex-officio)
Paula Lopez Rodriguez (ex-officio)

Audited Financials *(in US Dollars)*

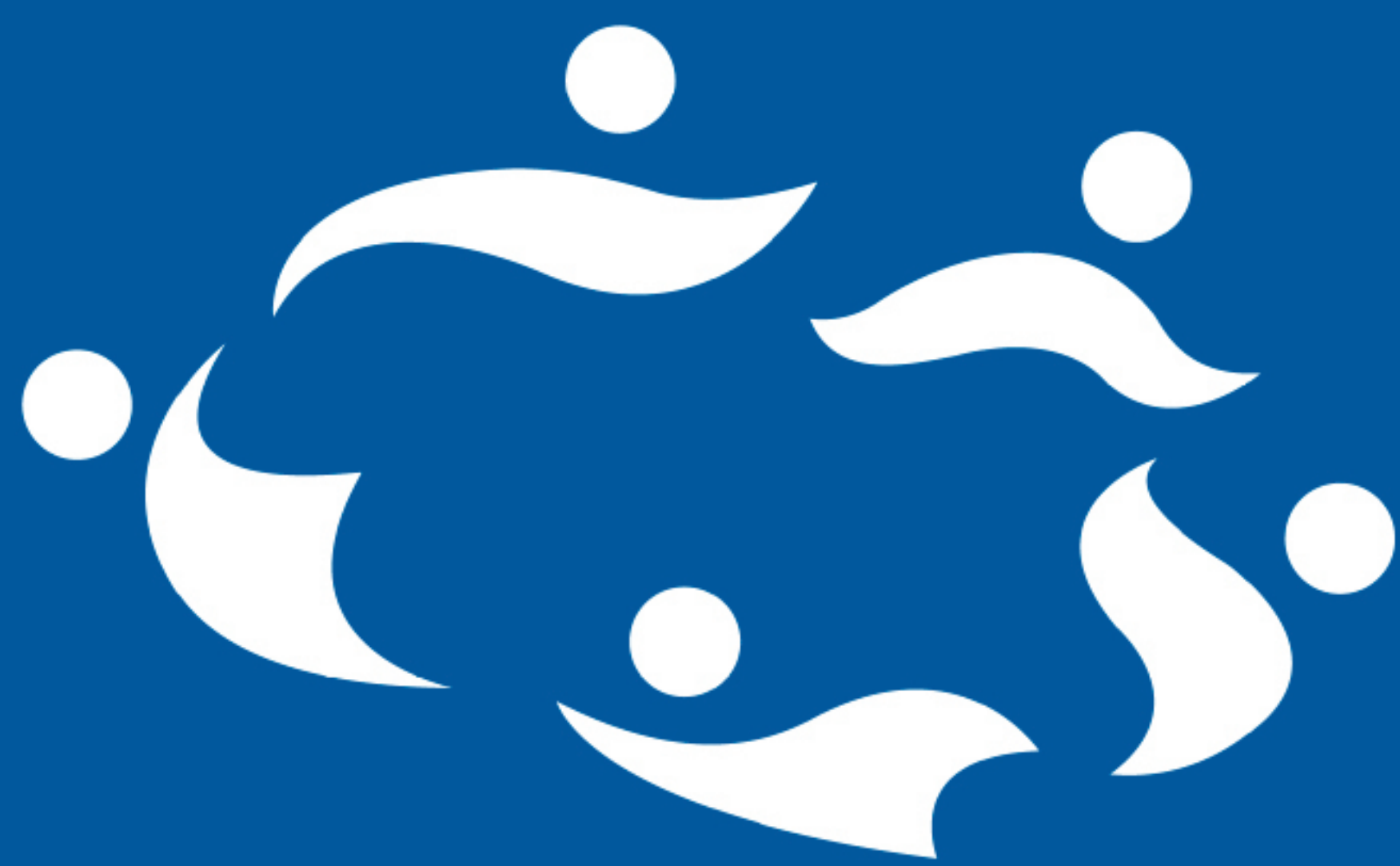
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024

REVENUE AND SUPPORT:	2024	2023
Contributions and grants	718,128	732,547
Program Revenue	24,463	27,626
Donated Rent	12,000	12,000
Employee Retention Credit income	-	6,402
Other income	6,887	94
	<hr/>	
Total Revenue and Support without Donor Restrictions	761,478	778,669
EXPENSES:	2024	2023
Program services	633,973	649,579
General and Administrative	67,408	73,625
Fundraising	4,935	19,454
	<hr/>	
Total Expenses	706,316	742,658

Change in Net Assets	55,162
Net Assets (Start of Year)	168,612
<hr/>	
Net Assets (End of Year)	223,774

WYA is tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
Donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.





World **Youth** Alliance

www.wya.net