

# Collaborating with the Monteverde Community Fund to Develop a Plan for Youth Programs in Monteverde, Costa Rica

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## **Abstract**

Due to the reliance on tourism in Monteverde, Costa Rica, young people face a lack of diversified career opportunities and activities within the community. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated this problem, revealing the gaps that exist within the community. This project, sponsored by the Monteverde Community Fund, emphasizes the importance of listening to the experiences of youth and exploring where their needs and interests lie. We interviewed young people, teachers, and leaders of nonprofit organizations. We found that youth are most interested in programs that offer professional training, recreational activities, and life skill development. Our plan for the development of youth programs consists of recommendations on program topic areas, partnerships, and the operations of the MCF.

# Collaborating with the Monteverde Community Fund to Develop a Plan for Youth Programs in Monteverde, Costa Rica

## Executive Summary

Sophie Chase, Marine Herman, Samantha Mora, Ana Paula Navarro Aguayo

Over the years, the Monteverde economy has shifted to become dominated by the tourism industry, and that has left the community vulnerable to situations like the COVID-19 pandemic. The success in the tourism industry led to more tourism infrastructure being built and an educational focus on eco-tourism (Ruiz et al., 2015). The pandemic has put a halt to visitors, deeply affecting the community and causing great job loss (Biggar, 2020). The youth have been especially affected by this situation because their ecotourism education prepared them for careers in an area that is vulnerable to sharp recession.

Community groups, both new and established, have stepped in to serve community needs as much as possible. The Monteverde Community Fund (MCF) supports a healthy and sustainable community through a Small Grants Program which finances grassroots initiatives including a youth fund. The MCF aims to rebuild the community better by providing long term support for the youth, who have been hit the hardest by the pandemic and are ultimately the future of Monteverde's economy. The goal of our project was to provide the MCF with a plan for youth programs that reflect the needs and concerns of the youth in the community.

### Methodology

In order to help the MCF reach its goal of providing long term support for young people, we investigated and analyzed the needs, concerns, and aspirations of youth in the community through completion of the following four objectives.

1. **Assess** the perspectives of the youth of Monteverde regarding their needs,

interests, and concerns within the community.

2. **Identify** potential local partnerships to facilitate youth programs for the Monteverde Community Fund.
3. **Initiate** a long term collaborative effort between youth and the Monteverde Community Fund for the planning of program opportunities.
4. **Develop** an initial plan for the Monteverde Community Fund that addresses the major concerns and needs of the youth within the community.

We used semi-structured interviews to determine how prepared the youth feel for the future and how to best prepare them for any obstacles they may encounter in their careers. We obtained contact information for potential interviewees from the MCF and we interviewed 18 young community members in order to assess their perspectives. We also interviewed two Monteverde teachers and two other community leaders to obtain an outside view from people who know the youth and their concerns. In our interviews we used a five-component trust model called SWOPE (Strong working alliance, Warmth and support, Open communication, Professionalism, Ecosystemic approach) to establish a trusting relationship with the interviewees (Valenti, 2020). We utilized snowball sampling to identify potential local organizations for the MCF to partner with and identified individuals interested in facilitating youth programs by asking the interviewees about their past involvements and interest in volunteering with the MCF.

After our interviews we analyzed the content using inductive coding analysis and summarized our findings in an infographic,

which we presented to a group of youth and the MCF to gain their feedback (Glaser & Strauss, 2009). We compared potential program opportunities by using a specific set of criteria from the U.S. Institute of Peace to assess the viability of potential programs (Ebenezer-Abiola et al., 2020). The criteria include education, peer-to-peer empowerment, partnership, and participation. We also analyzed the feasibility of each program and then scored them in each category to determine the potential effectiveness.

### Findings

We organized our findings in terms of the needs and interests of the youth within the community; potential program opportunities based on their needs; and potential local partnerships. Even though participants were contacted through MCF, we believe we have gathered a representative sample of stakeholders, reflecting the concerns of the youth within the community and the perspectives of outside leaders.

***Finding 1:*** *Monteverde has an extremely strong sense of community.*

The shortage of tourists caused financial issues for small businesses, but the community shopped locally to help support one another. Exchange systems and online platforms were utilized to offer services or goods within the community. Many interviewees also discussed how they developed new hobbies and businesses to financially support themselves and their families. We also learned that the community is regularly exposed to various cultures due to the high amount of tourism in Monteverde, which contributed to a very open minded, adaptable, and welcoming community.

***Finding 2:*** *The youth are concerned about the lack of opportunities in the community.*

The youth requested a variety of programs and public spaces to host activities. The interviewees saw limited opportunity due to Monteverde’s focus on tourism and wanted to explore other options. The youth were also concerned about program continuity and that initiatives only last a few years. Many interviewees had the drive to participate in new activities to acquire knowledge or skills, but felt that they are limited by the small town and the absence of opportunities to do so.

***Finding 3:*** *The most prevalent topics expressed by the youth of Monteverde were professional development, recreational programs, and life skill training.*

Figure A summarizes the top seven most requested program areas. The percentages are based on the number of interviewees who requested the topics; therefore, the percentages do not add up to 100% because the interviewees requested multiple program topics.

What Youth Programs are Needed in Monteverde Based on Youth Opinions

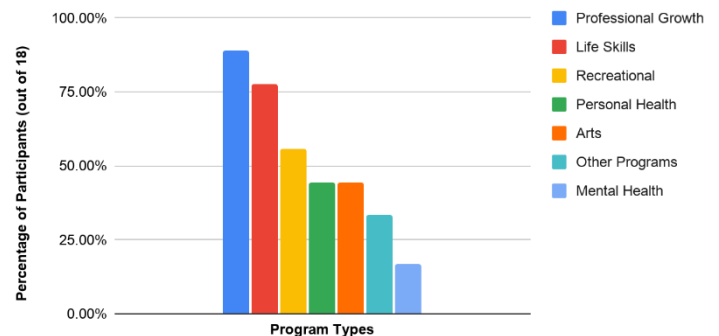


Figure A: Common themes derived from our interviews

Specific programs in the most requested topic areas include job coaching, university help, financial help, nature walks, and climbing. Others highlighted the significance of sexual education due to its current absence in Monteverde, and mental health because many community members

struggled mentally throughout the pandemic.

We determined that most potential program options fit the criteria for successful youth programs, and therefore are all suitable to be implemented as long as community members are willing to volunteer to help run specific programs. The programs that fit the criteria best were job coaching, business management, mentorship programs, finance workshops, university guidance, programming lessons, and mental health guidance.

***Finding 4: Members of the Monteverde community are interested in becoming involved in youth programming in varying capacities.***

We found that all interviewees (18/18) wanted to be involved with the MCF and the planning of youth activities in some manner. Additionally, all survey respondents from the youth-MCF meeting thought that it would be helpful to continue having regular meetings with the MCF to discuss youth programs. The amount of time people wanted to be involved varied from an hour or two on multiple days per week to several hours on one day per week. The overall range was one or two hours per week and up to 15 hours per week, but on average the young interviewees are willing to commit seven hours per week to youth programming. However, we also found that there was some confusion on how to get involved with youth programs, and many participants agreed that the MCF website could improve in clarity.

***Finding 5: There are several partnerships with local organizations that can be expanded or formed with the MCF.***

Through the interviews with the youth, it became evident that the Hormiguitas Summer Camp conducted by the Monteverde Institute (MVI) was a very

successful and well-liked activity in the community. However, in recent years funding has been a major challenge for the camp because it is challenging to obtain sponsorships. The MVI has supported the community fund several times in the past for the successful implementation of community-based activities. The MCF could build upon their partnership by working with the MVI in the expansion of the summer camp into a more developed youth program.

Parque EcoPaz is a grassroots project of the Costa Rican non-profit organization EcoPaz, which aims to support the health and well-being of the local community (Parque EcoPaz, n.d.). The park is located just one kilometer from the town center of Santa Elena and could potentially fulfill the need for a safe public space that many of the youth were looking for. It has the capability to provide space for varying nature-related youth activities where young people can connect with one other. The organization also facilitates programs in several of the categories suggested by the interviewees such as internships, education, sports, local culture, and environmentalism.

La Alianza de Monteverde is a group of tourism-related businesses that are working together to allocate a portion of their sales towards a selected project to benefit the community. “Escape” is the current project that La Alianza is working on; it is going to be a two day event focusing on the mental health of young people in the community. This event reflects what the youth need right now, as many interviewees spoke about the toll the pandemic had taken on their mental health. The MCF is currently working with La Alianza and a leader of La Alianza pointed out that they “have felt very supported by the MCF.” However, the MCF could expand their collaborative effort to help with program promotion and provide information about the needs of the youth for La Alianza’s future youth projects.

## Recommendations

Based on our findings, we recommended specific ways that the Monteverde Community Fund can initiate and continue youth activities in the community. We have organized our detailed plan for the MCF into the following four recommendations.

***Recommendation 1: Develop program partnerships on the topics of professional development, recreational programs, and life skill training.***

We determined it would be most helpful to prioritize programs related to professional development because of its prevalence in the interview data and it best fit the criteria. The MCF should focus on areas such as job coaching, business management, mentorship programs, finance workshops, university guidance, mental health, and programming lessons. Based on our findings there is high interest in youth programming, so we think it would be fairly feasible to get people to lead these programs.

For job coaching we recommend that members in the community or nearby volunteer their time to help and provide knowledge to youth who are interested in their careers. This could be one on one advising, or a one or two day group workshop. University guidance would be structured similarly in a group workshop, but it would supply information about the college application process and the various colleges in Costa Rica. We recommend training workshops for business management and finance skills, where a leader could explain a topic of interest, and facilitate exercises or group work.

A mentoring program could be used for many programs topics, but would entail a community member mentoring youth to help with a specific problem. For more variety in topics, remote mentoring could be used on

an online platform. Computer programming lessons could be conducted by a mentor or in an open group workshop, and if in person, the computer room in the library in Monteverde could host these workshops. We also recommend developing mental health programs because mental health support for youth in Monteverde is limited as they lack psychologists or guidance counselors at school, and these could be structured one on one or in a group setting. Finally, we recommend including recreational programs such as cycling clubs and nature walks in the future plans. A climbing gym was highly requested; there is one starting in Monteverde and we recommend the MCF help support the new climbing gym.

***Recommendation 2: Expand its current partnerships and form new partnerships with local businesses/organizations.***

The organizations discussed in the findings sections are effective partners for the MCF because of their many shared goals and because these organizations are working towards improving many of the same areas of concern described by the interviewees. The Monteverde Institute is a good partner because they have a strong past relationship, and they are seeking more experts and collaborators to assist them.

The Parque EcoPaz is another organization that the MCF could support because EcoPaz depends on the generosity of people and organizations for its operations, so the MCF could provide EcoPaz with financial assistance with their youth initiatives and events. The MCF could also help EcoPaz find volunteers for their youth activities by sharing its network of people who want to be involved with youth programs. Additionally, the Parque EcoPaz could address the lack of public space for youth activities, which was repeatedly expressed in our research.



We also recommend that the MCF continue its partnership with La Alianza because the partnership has been very effective thus far. The MCF could assist beyond just money management by helping fund future projects/events. Furthermore, La Alianza already is working to support the mental health of the youth, which was one of the important categories that came up during our interview analysis. The MCF could also provide useful insight about the needs of the youth in the community in order to assist with La Alianza's future projects.

**Recommendation 3:** *Continue facilitating collaborative meetings with the youth of Monteverde.*

Based on our findings that the difficulties exist for continuity in youth programs, we recommend continuous collaboration between the MCF and the youth through periodic meetings. The youth prefer short term formats, so we recommend conducting collaborative online meetings between the MCF and youth once or twice a month to discuss potential programs. We suggest that these meetings are well advertised on Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp since we found that many people in the community already use those platforms to stay up to date. Also, once more of the COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, we also recommend shifting to in-person meetings following the sanitary protocols, to allow for more socializing.

**Recommendation 4:** *Update its website to better encourage youth empowerment and involvement.*

Since some participants felt that the MCF needs to provide clearer notification on how people can be involved, we recommend improving the youth section of the MCF website to highlight past and future events or activities that were/are specifically

for youth so that youth can see what the MCF does for them. We also suggest posting a sign up for upcoming events so people can sign up for what they want to be involved with and the times they can help. To further clarify the need for volunteers, we suggest adding an option to leave contact information to be added to a specific list of people who want to be contacted for future programs. To encourage youth involvement in program planning, we recommend adding a section specifically for suggestions where the youth can bring any new ideas they have and provide their contact information so that the MCF can work with them. In addition, we think that incorporating quotes from the various youth interviews will personalize the section. We created a website template displaying all our suggestions on Wix.com and the first page is shown in Figure B.



Figure B: Website template created on Wix.com

## Conclusion

The plan we developed based on our findings will guide the MCF to provide long term support for the youth within the community. Based on the positive responses from interviewees and the potential partnerships we researched, we believe that the MCF has significant support in the community to create a long lasting impact on the community's youth. The outlined programs will address the current needs of the youth, as well as successfully prepare them for the future, ultimately benefiting the entire Monteverde community.

## **Acknowledgments**

We would like to thank everyone who has contributed their effort and time to help us achieve our goals. The Monteverde Community was very friendly and eager to participate even in the remote nature of this project. We would not have been able to complete our project without their input and ideas. First and foremost, we would like to thank our sponsor, the Monteverde Community Fund, for giving us the opportunity to help develop a plan for youth programs in Monteverde. More specifically, we would like to thank Tim Curtis and Maria Vargas for their endless support and aid throughout this whole project. We appreciate all of the help and feedback they gave throughout the project and the help with arranging all of our interviews that we conducted throughout this remote project.

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	Appendices	All Authors	All Authors

## 1.0 Chapter 1: Introduction and Literature Review

Countries or regions that lack economic diversity provide limited opportunities for future generations and are highly vulnerable to unemployment (Asian Development Bank, 2015). Over the past 30 years, Costa Rica has been established as one of the world's leading ecotourism destinations, so that industry has become prominent in the economy. Some of Costa Rica's other leading industries include agricultural exports and the manufacturing of electronics, textiles, medical devices, pharmaceuticals, plastics, and machinery (Sawe, 2019). However, the economy in Monteverde, Costa Rica has become largely dependent on the tourism industry specifically (Vivanco, 2001). The massive loss of tourism due to the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the lack of relevant opportunities available for the youth of Monteverde (Ruiz et al., 2015). The younger population (people ranging from 18 to 30 years old) was disproportionately impacted financially by the pandemic. Monteverde's youth are raised learning the importance of the cloud forest and the environment (Mello et al., 2010). Due to the prevalence of ecotourism in Monteverde, students are taught how to obtain a tourism-related career. Monteverde's focus on preparing the youth for an economy driven by tourism resulted in an overall lack of resources that foster youth development such as art, recreational, and professional development programs (Global Summit on Community Philanthropy, 2016). The COVID-19 pandemic has amplified this issue because the loss of ecotourism left many people vulnerable to job loss and left the younger population with few alternatives for their futures.

Founded in 2010, the Monteverde Community Fund (MCF) is an organization that supports innovative projects in Monteverde, helps educate and empower the local community, and creates a positive impact on environmental protection. The MCF supports the community by distributing small grants and acting as a fiscal sponsor for grassroots organizations in the region, enabling them to receive tax-free donations (Monteverde Community Fund, 2019). In response to the pandemic, the MCF focused on aiding the community in the form of food packages and worked towards sustaining the organization itself. As the pandemic continued, the MCF wanted to develop a focus on the goal of providing long-term support for the younger community members who have been deeply impacted by the pandemic.

Our project goal was to help the MCF support the youth by proposing a plan for implementing programs that reflect the needs and concerns of the youth within the community. We identified diverse opportunities that allow for growth and development beyond an ecotourism-focused education. To achieve this goal, we interviewed several young community members which allowed us to identify the major interest areas in the community, learn how young people were affected by the COVID-19 crisis, and gauge people's interest in devoting time to facilitating youth programs. We also interviewed other key community leaders to gain more perspectives on the needs of the youth and to determine potential partnerships for the MCF. With this information, we equipped the MCF with a plan for youth programs based directly on the needs and concerns of the youth within the community.

Within our literature review, we examine information about the Monteverde region and discuss how it evolved to become a prominent tourism destination. The chapter explores the vulnerability of the Monteverde economy in terms of its heavy reliance on tourism and how the COVID-19 crisis exposed this. We then discuss the ecotourism-focused education, and the resulting impact of the pandemic on the youth. We also discuss a need for youth programming in small communities with reference to effective youth program examples, which were critical to enhancing our designs for the Monteverde Community Fund. We conclude by discussing the MCF's past efforts to empower youth and the need for a more long-term vision that supports

them beyond the confines of a tourist-focused education. In our methodology chapter, we outline the specific objectives and methods utilized to achieve our project goal. Finally, we discuss the analysis of our collected data, and the resulting recommendations for the MCF formulated from our findings.

## **1.1 Monteverde**

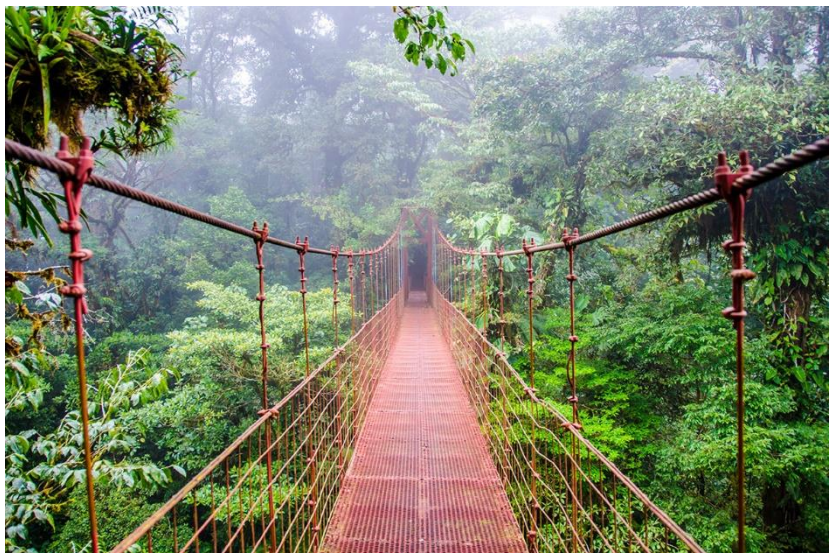
### **1.1.1 History of Monteverde**

Environmentalism and conservation have always been prominent in the Monteverde community. Beginning in the 1920s, a small group of campesinos, or Costa Rican farmers, migrated into the forests of Monteverde where they settled and maintained their land through subsistence farming (Harwood & Zapata, 2006). In 1951, a group of Quakers left the United States to escape its militaristic vision and came to Costa Rica, which had no armed forces to push a precedent of peace (Vivanco, 2006). The Quakers founded Monteverde with the help of the campesinos, who lent them support and knowledge of the environment (About MFS, 2020). The Quakers had originated in farming communities and utilized the pastures in Monteverde for cattle and initiated dairy production. Their work continuously supported the rest of the community and other areas of Costa Rica.

The culture of Monteverde was a blend of Quaker and campesino beliefs, which consisted of a desire for volunteerism, collaboration, self-governance, and public conversation (Harwood & Zapata, 2006). The blending of the communities created changes, evidenced in the campesino adoption of dairy production. The community remained independent and unified, but the blending decreased diversity in the economy, encouraging a mono-economy and placing the community at a higher risk for an economic depression (Harwood & Zapata, 2006).

### **1.1.2 Geography of Monteverde**

Costa Rica is filled with an abundance of different climates and geographical destinations such as coastal beaches, volcanos, mountains, and the cloud forest. Monteverde, Costa Rica is one of the popular destinations in Costa Rica due to the 100,000 acres of endangered tropical forest and abundance of biodiversity, which are significant to ecological discovery (Monteverde Cloud Forest Biological Reserve, 2020). The cloud forest contains over 850 species of birds and 237 species of mammals (Jones & Spadafora, 2017). This abundance of biodiversity and the unique biomes highly contribute to the prevalence of ecotourism in Monteverde.



*Figure 1: Hanging bridge in the Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve (Monteverde Travel Guide, 2018)*



### **1.1.3 The Beginning of Ecotourism in Monteverde**

The Monteverde region has become famous for its ecological wonders such as the cloud forest, due to the Quakers and campesinos efforts to maintain a healthy environment and protect the watershed from pollution (About MFS, 2020; Harwood & Zapata, 2006). The scientific community grew interested in Monteverde's cloud forest due to its ecological diversity and gained public attention through a scientist-created BBC documentary about the cloud forest (Jones & Spadafora, 2017). This created widespread awareness and interest in Monteverde, leading to increased visitors and the start of ecotourism. The International Ecotourism society defines ecotourism as, "responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and sustains the well-being of local people" (Koens et al., 2009). Ecotourism in Monteverde is mainly directed towards the cloud forest in support of conservation of the natural environment and wildlife. The ecotourism industry grew quickly and represented 65-75% of regional income by the mid-1990s (Vivanco, 2001).

Prior to 2020, ecotourism had been thriving in Monteverde, with approximately 250,000 tourists coming to the cloud forest each year (Living in Monteverde, 2020). The successful industry was bringing in over a million dollars to Costa Rica annually, and specifically to the Monteverde region through the money generated from spending at restaurants, hotels, and souvenir shops (Koens et al., 2009). Over the years, ecotourism brought economic prosperity to Monteverde, but the small community grew to heavily rely on the ecotourism industry for income. Although the projections for 2020 were great, the COVID-19 crisis had a massive impact on the community and the economy (Shah, 2020). It is vital that the community find ways to recover from this setback and lay the groundwork to prevent this situation from happening again.

## **1.2 Problems Surrounding Economic Dependency**

The economic and community dynamics of a small town differ from big cities because small towns, like Monteverde, are limited in size, reach, and/or scope (Roundy, 2018). Finding effective ways to stimulate the economy and community through the creation of new organizations, community initiatives, products, markets, or technological innovations, is crucial for the success of the economy (Roundy, 2018). Small towns also struggle with inclusive growth, so the creation of quality jobs is crucial (Salder & Bryson, 2019). Small town labor pools have historically invested in only two or three industries and the limited resources creates an economic necessity, where a town relies on a couple industries for the majority of their income (Roundy, 2018; Salder & Bryson, 2019). For example, in Geneva, Ohio in the 1950s-60s a person did not need a college education to obtain a job because of the high demand for laborers in manufacturing plants (Roundy, 2018). However, when the General Motors plant shut down its night shift, it resulted in 1,500 layoffs that created major economic disruptions throughout the whole town (Roundy, 2018). The shutdown was an extensive problem because many of the workers did not pursue higher education so they were left with few resources and lacked the necessary training for new jobs.

Similarly, on small tourist-reliant islands like the Maldives, the education level of the general public is typically low and non-diverse because the highly demanded tourism-related jobs do not require higher education (Asian Development Bank, 2015). The insufficient education and absence of variety in job training puts people at risk of situations when unskilled labor jobs suddenly become unavailable. For example, in 2009-2010, the Maldives' unemployment rate was 20% higher for people with no or low-level education. A large drop in

tourism made it difficult for people with little education to find alternative employment because they lacked the necessary skills for the stable professional or technical jobs (Asian Development Bank, 2015). The government recognized this issue and heavily invested in education by launching a skill development program to equip people with necessary skills for dependable employment (Asian Development Bank, 2015). Bridging that gap in skill level and education was vital to achieving stable employment and can lower the risk of situations like the COVID-19 pandemic, where many service industry jobs are lost.

### **1.3 Tourism in Monteverde**

#### **1.3.1 The Vulnerability of a Tourism Driven Economy**

Monteverde's shift from an economy dominated by dairy production to a tourism-based economy changed the demands of the labor market (Ruiz et al., 2015). The move towards a tourist-based economy caused the labor force to demand more unskilled wage labor, which induced a decrease in the participation and completion of schooling (Ruiz et al., 2015). The increased investment in tourism-related infrastructure instead of education, social, and health programs also contributed to the lack of alternatives for employment (Ruiz et al., 2015). This is problematic because people's education/skill level is often not sufficient to enter a different career field. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed this vulnerability and created a major problem in the small community of Monteverde.

The problem with the lack of diversity in education also became more prevalent since the COVID-19 pandemic because people found that their education was not applicable to a wide range of careers. The success of the ecotourism industry in Monteverde led to a school curriculum that focuses more on ecotourism and environmental education. Additionally, the non-governmental Asociación Comunal para el Manejo Forestal (ASCOMAFOR), which promotes tourism in the Monteverde region, allocates a portion of its profits towards environmental education in the local schools (Koens et al., 2009). The continued investment in ecotourism led to overdependence on one industry and created under development in other areas, which is common for single source economies (Musa & Ajibade, 2017). In the case of Monteverde, the overdependence on the tourism industry resulted in a large portion of graduates having an eventual career path in that industry. The severe loss of tourism due to the COVID-19 pandemic left a large part of the Monteverde community vulnerable to unemployment.

#### **1.3.2 The Impact of COVID-19 on the Tourism Industry**

The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic caused many international borders to close, resulting in a massive decrease in tourism worldwide. It created an economic crisis in tourism-dependent locations all over the world and these impacts are summarized in Figure 2. The UN World Tourism Organization estimated a 60-80% decline in international tourism compared to 2019, which led to trillions of dollars and millions of jobs lost (Biggar, 2020). The COVID-19 crisis created economic disruptions especially in the small Monteverde region because the main source income that was critical for the sustainment of rural communities is now absent.

The lack of visitors to hotels, restaurants, and tourist attractions forced community members to search for alternative ways to provide income for their families (Shah, 2020). For example, Monteverde's Belmar Hotel had to lay off the majority of its 75 employees and looked to generate income by expanding its garden to sell produce in the community (Shah, 2020). In addition, the closure of national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, and game reserves led to unemployment and lost incomes for many of the workers. For the April-June quarter, the

unemployment rate in Costa Rica reached an all-time high of 24%, as seen in Figure 2, which was an increase of 256,000 people since 2019 (Unemployment in Costa Rica, 2020). The layoffs and closures in the ecotourism sector created shockwaves throughout the community and the youth of Monteverde were particularly affected by the drastic increase in unemployment.

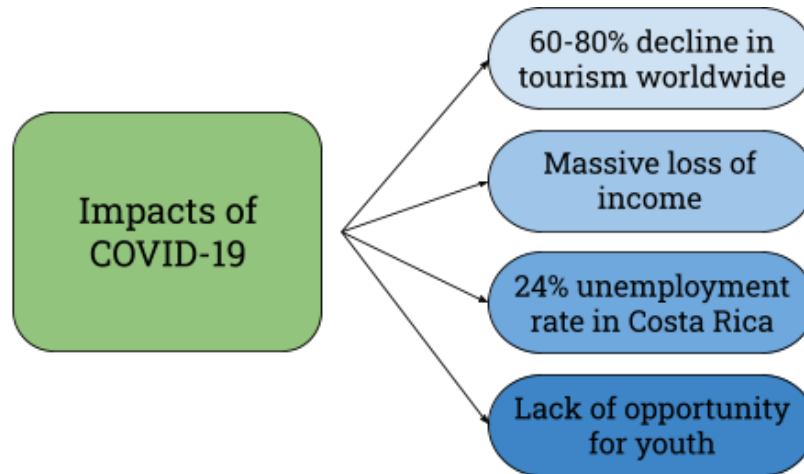


Figure 2: COVID-19 effects (Biggar, 2020; Unemployment in Costa Rica, 2020).

## 1.4 Youth Programs

### 1.4.1 The Impact of Youth Programs

New challenges are placed on youth every day because of societal expectations. In today's society, adults are expected to have social and emotional skills, as well as training and education for a rapidly changing, globalized, and complex world (Eccles & Gootman, 2002). Youth programs work towards generating major developmental impacts on young-adults from any kind of background and help them meet these societal demands (Duerden & Witt, 2010). Youth programs are activities that are designed to involve youth between ages 10 and 25 by focusing on a wide variety of areas such as sports, recreation, career development, leadership, art, education, and job training. These programs typically complement the education system with after school or summer activities. Investing in the younger generation through positive youth development programs contributes to the formation of a productive career and a fulfilling lifestyle as an adult (Duerden & Witt, 2010).

In order to create success for children and teens, programs need to create an environment where they can feel physically and psychologically safe, have a strong sense of commitment, belonging, rules, responsibilities, and expectations. Youth programs can also provide formal and informal spaces for young people to explore different interests, learn new skills, and gain personal or group recognition (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). Additionally, youth programs can help a young person avoid any behaviors or decisions that limit their full potential (Eccles & Gootman, 2002). Overall, the goal of youth programs is to provide the necessary resources to best prepare young people for their futures.

### 1.4.2 Community Youth Programming

The future well-being of a community depends on preparing a generation of capable, skilled, and reliable adults. Youth development programs offer different platforms to satisfy these needs of the community. They provide rich contexts where relationships prosper and

opportunities for growth in several areas can occur (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). In order to achieve these goals, youth program practitioners need to determine the challenges the youth face and the development areas that will help elevate the community's potential.

Some of the challenges communities deal with involve education, career preparation, a shortage of safe recreational activities, drug and alcohol use, crime, poverty, and others. These scenarios are where youth programming can have a critical role. Youth programs can complement families' efforts and public policies to provide them with better opportunities to reach economic, emotional, and social stability during adulthood (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). All people need a variety of experiences to develop their full potential for a successful future, and a great youth program can help foster this development (Eccles & Gootman, 2002).

### **1.4.3 Effective Youth Programming**

A strong example of successful implementation of youth programs that target a wide variety of areas is The Worcester Youth Center (WYC). The WYC serves people between the ages of 14 and 24 who are often in situations of poverty, deteriorating surroundings, crimes, drugs and alcohol, food and housing insecurity, etc (Worcester Youth Center, 2020). In the area of academics, the WYC works to provide high school preparation for later access to college education (Worcester Youth Center, 2020). Members also have the opportunity to participate in creative expression and develop several artistic skills such as singing, dancing, crafting, and painting (Worcester Youth Center, 2020). The health and wellness programs help members develop their socialization skills through participation in recreational activities such as competitive sports and other games (Worcester Youth Center, 2020).

Additionally, the WYC has work preparation programs that allow members to learn "soft skills" that prepare them for employment. The WYC promotes career awareness and teaches young people about workplace fundamentals to be productive and how to have a healthy work-life balance (Worcester Youth Center). Work experience is gained through internships provided by the WYC which gives members job experience in a real work environment (Worcester Youth Center, 2020). Overall, the WYC is working towards raising a generation of healthy and skilled adults that will shape the future of the Worcester community. The WYC addresses different youth issues with a holistic approach and provides several tools to support areas where society is lacking.

## **1.5 The Monteverde Community Fund**

### **1.5.1 Past Efforts Supporting Youth**

A Monteverde organization known as the Monteverde Community Fund finances programs in the areas of public recreation, the arts, civic participation, as well as projects that address local environmental and economic challenges. These programs are funded by an initiative known as the Small Grants Program, which is also used by the MCF to promote youth empowerment opportunities in Monteverde. In doing so, the MCF provides supplemental opportunities for youth to diversify their skill sets beyond the ecotourism-centered education. The MCF works towards this by partnering with community-minded organizations and channeling money into various environmental, social, and economic causes (Monteverde Community Fund, 2019). The MCF partners with nonprofit organizations such as the Far Corners Musical Theatre, which utilizes education in the performing arts to foster growth and success amongst youth as collaborators, creators, and thinkers. In addition, the MCF finances the Biblioteca Pública Interactiva Santa Elena, which is the first Spanish-language library in

Monteverde. It provides a public space for youth and all other community members to learn and discover their interests.

The MCF further supports youth empowerment through its Youth Fund, which was established based on the premise that youth can best determine what activities would best support them in the community (Monteverde Community Fund, 2019). The Youth Fund, managed by young people in a Youth Advisory Board, supports local organizations that provide varying opportunities for youth empowerment in the community. The MCF sustains the Youth Fund through several sponsorships and donations. For example, the 200KM For Monteverde is a community event that brings together teachers, businessmen, athletes, and others to participate in a run over four days in a celebration of youth philanthropy. The donations and sponsorships were able to raise an impressive \$2,300 in 2019 for the Youth Fund.

### **1.5.2 COVID-19 Response and Long-Term Vision for Youth**

In response to the COVID-19 crisis, the Monteverde Community Fund shifted their focus to a more immediate response centered around sustaining the organization itself. With little to no income from the larger partnered organizations, much attention was placed on covering administrative costs and searching for new funding opportunities. To tackle the more immediate problems that the community faced such as food insecurity, the MCF created a food bank and developed a local food production plan (Monteverde Community Fund, 2019). In addition, funding was redirected to gather community unemployment information by surveying local businesses and identifying family groups that were most impacted by the pandemic. The MCF also has a Micro Grants program, where they offer grants between one and five hundred dollars for initiatives that address challenges due to COVID-19 (Monteverde Community Fund, 2019).

After eight months of working through the pandemic, the MCF refocused their attention from tackling current problems to the long-term support of the younger population. The MCF hopes to not only empower youth, but to prepare them with skill sets necessary for careers in more of Costa Rica's other leading industries. By helping the youth develop a mixed skill set, they can have increased options after finishing their education, as opposed to relying on the tourism economy, which was exposed as vulnerable. Our team worked to address the lack of youth opportunity by helping the MCF develop a plan for programs that reflect the needs and concerns of the young people in the community. Ultimately, the youth represent the future of the community's economy, so it is necessary that they diversify their skills and knowledge to prosper beyond the confines of an ecotourism-focused economy. In the next chapter, we discuss the methods we used to gather the necessary information to develop a plan for youth programs in Monteverde.



## 2.0 Chapter 2: Methodology

In this chapter, we explain how we achieved our goal of helping the Monteverde Community Fund develop a plan for the creation of youth programs based on the needs and interests of the youth within the Monteverde community. We investigated the current opportunities and areas where programming is needed or can be improved. We reached our goal through the completion of the following four objectives:

1. **Assess** the perspectives of the youth of Monteverde regarding their needs, interests, and concerns within the community.
2. **Identify** potential local partnerships to facilitate youth programs for the Monteverde Community Fund.
3. **Initiate** a long term collaborative effort between youth and the Monteverde Community Fund for the planning of program opportunities.
4. **Develop** an initial plan for the Monteverde Community Fund that addresses the major concerns and needs of the youth within the community.

We conducted several interviews with young community members in order to obtain information about their needs, concerns, desires, and aspirations (Adams, 2015). We also conducted interviews with several other key community members to gain different perspectives. More detailed information about our methods and data analysis strategies can be found in the later sections of this chapter.

### 2.1 Objective 1: Assess the perspectives of the youth of Monteverde regarding their needs, interests, and concerns within the community.

The Youth Advisory Board in the Monteverde Community Fund was founded in 2016, based on the idea that the youth can best determine what they need to be prepared for their future (Global Summit on Community Philanthropy, 2016). We utilized this principle to determine the youth's needs and concerns within the community by interviewing 18 members of the Monteverde youth community. In order to familiarize ourselves with the community in an informal way before the interviews, we attended an Instagram live on January 29, 2021 on the Cafe de Monteverde account. The discussion was between a few Monteverde community members and they talked about lessons learned from the past year and their goals for this year.

Our sponsor provided the contacts for all the young adult interviewees, sending us their information about their gender, age, and preferred language. We spoke with 18 people, a mix of males and females aged 18-27. In an effort to gain an outside perspective on the needs of the youth from individuals who directly work with them, we spoke to two teachers from the Monteverde Friends School.

We aimed to obtain the maximum amount of useful information from these interviews, by first establishing trust with the youth. We followed a five-component trust model known as SWOPE, to establish a trusting relationship with the youth interviewees (Valenti, 2020). This trust model was developed through a study of healthcare and social service providers' relationships with youth (Valenti, 2020). The five components of SWOPE are summarized in Table 1 (Valenti, 2020).

Table 1. Describes the five components of the SWOPE trust model from a study published in the *Children and Youth Services journal* (Valenti,2020).

<b>S</b>	A Strong working alliance is represented by collaboration on the development of mutually agreed-upon goals.
<b>W</b>	Warmth and support is demonstrated by showing genuine caring and communicating a safe space for the youth.
<b>O</b>	Open communication is active listening, withholding judgment, and not rushing the youth with your own agenda.
<b>P</b>	Professionalism is shown by setting clear boundaries, expectations, and structure.
<b>E</b>	An Ecosystemic approach is incorporating both existing and previous elements of a youth’s life and taking time to understand them and their experiences.

We applied this trust model to our interview process by beginning any conversation in an open and friendly manner. We explained our goals initially to the interviewee, and asked questions to discover more about them. We listened to each interviewee without judgement, allowed them to speak at their own pace, never interrupted to rush them, and only asked prompting questions for further elaboration. We worked to ensure the interviewee felt that we wanted to learn about them and their experiences, and not just extract data from them.

Based on the open communication aspect of the SWOPE model, we utilized semi-structured interviews to allow for a more open discussion (Adams, 2015). We incorporated a blend of closed and open-ended questions, often accompanied by follow-up why or how questions. There were always two interviewers per interview, one person asked the questions and continued the conversation, while the other person took notes that summarized what the interviewee said. Our notes were not direct transcriptions, so with the interviewee’s consent, we recorded these interviews so that we could refer back to them if necessary. At the beginning of each interview we asked for verbal consent using the script in Appendix A, and we guided the youth conversations using the set of questions found in Appendix B and the teacher conversations using the questions in Appendix C. These included some key questions about what the interviewee thought was missing in the community and their ideas on how to improve opportunity in the community. We also asked some open-ended questions about the participant’s general interests, career aspirations, and personal experiences with the COVID-19 pandemic. The questions were not exactly the same for each interview because the interviewee’s unique input allowed us to come up with follow-up questions during the interview (Gilman et al., 2019). In order to ensure that our methodology of interview questions aligned with the standards of human research, we submitted the procedure to the WPI Institutional Review Board for approval. We analyzed the information obtained from these interviews using the methods described in the data analysis section.

## **2.2 Objective 2: Identify local partnerships to facilitate youth programs for the Monteverde Community Fund.**

Utilizing snowball sampling, we identified potential individuals who might be interested in helping facilitate youth programs in the community (Gyarmathy et al., 2013). We completed



this during the interview process by asking interviewees if they had interest in devoting time towards youth programs and then asking if they knew anyone else in the community who would be interested. The specific questions that we asked can be found in Appendix B. We compiled a list of interviewees who expressed interest in devoting time as potential volunteers and provided it to the MCF. The names of other people who were recommended by the interviewees were also recorded in the list under the person who mentioned them.

In order to determine potential partnerships, we asked about past involvements in youth programs. We researched the organizations and programs that were mentioned and contacted the leaders of former or current programs through WhatsApp to obtain additional interviews to discuss partnerships. We interviewed a former camp leader of the Monteverde Institute, as well as a leader of the Alliance, which is a group of businesses that allied with the MCF to work together to benefit the community. The interview questions for these interviews can be found in Appendices D and E.

### **2.3 Objective 3: Initiate a long term collaborative effort between the youth and the Monteverde Community Fund for the planning of program opportunities.**

Utilizing the information obtained from our coded interviews, we found common themes among them. We took the most prevalent concerns and desires and discussed the feasibility of the suggested ideas. Based on the frequency of concerns of the participants, we picked several key topics of interest to further research and discuss. We investigated and brainstormed strategies of various successful youth activity ideas and organized these ideas into an infographic in English and Spanish (see Appendix F), in order to showcase the important information to the youth and the MCF as well as integrate the youth in our planning process.

We created a flyer, which can be found in Appendix G, to invite the youth and other interested community members to a Zoom meeting with the MCF to discuss potential youth activity ideas based on the interest areas that we derived from our analysis. We sent the flyer to all of our interviewees and the MCF distributed it in the community. We organized a meeting time to initiate collaboration between the MCF and youth within the community. During this meeting we presented the infographic to the group and initiated an open discussion between the seven interviewees and MCF. After the meeting, we administered a survey to evaluate the success of the meeting and obtain any additional feedback. We also sent another survey to evaluate the MCF's website. The two sets of survey questions can be found in Appendices H and I. We held the voices of the youth and the MCF equally important during these meetings to encourage the youth to provide their honest feedback about our current findings and ideas (Sabo, 2003). Our team recorded information throughout the discussion and analyzed it using the methods explained in the data analysis section. We considered any suggestions and new strategy ideas in our planning process.

### **2.4 Objective 4: Develop an initial plan for the Monteverde Community Fund that addresses the concerns and needs of the youth within the community.**

We used the themes that emerged within our inductive coding analysis of the interviews to develop an organized summary of the expressed needs and interests of the youth. After considering the feedback from the youth-MCF meeting, we assessed the viability of potential program opportunities by comparing them to a specific set of criteria developed by the U.S. Institute of Peace, which has an abundance of youth programs funded worldwide (Ebenezer-Abiola et al., 2020). The criteria found in effective youth programs falls into the categories of

education, peer-to-peer empowerment, partnership, and participation (Ebenezer-Abiola et al., 2020).

Each program was analyzed for its predicted feasibility and in the four categories of the criteria to standardize how we determine the potential viability and effectiveness of each program. In alignment with the criteria, we examined the programs' potential to promote education in terms of transferring useful skills to the youth, as well as their ability to engage youth collaboration and empowerment. In addition, we examined the programs' capacity to promote youth being held equally important as partners with the MCF. We scored each program on a scale of one to three in each category and then totaled the scores for each program. We used a three to signify that the program successfully met the criteria, a two to signify that it somewhat met the criteria, and a one to signify that it insufficiently met the criteria. Based on the combined information from the interviews and our examination of the criteria, we developed an organized summary of viable potential program opportunities for the MCF to implement that address the needs and concerns of the youth within the community.

## **2.5 Data Analysis**

After we conducted the interviews, we translated the notes from Spanish to English as needed and analyzed the information. We used Grounded Theory with an inductive coding analysis to examine and analyze the qualitative data in the form of interview notes in a structured way (Glaser & Strauss, 2009). We applied an inductive approach to coding to allow the data to determine our themes rather than trying to find evidence for any preconceived themes, which is typically utilized in deductive coding (Chun Tie et al., 2019). In doing so, we avoided inserting our own ideas of where the youth's needs lie during the coding process.

We first created a system of category labels, also known as codes, so that we could organize our notes from the interviews (Angrosino, 2010). We documented and defined the codes in order to minimize variation in the codes over the course of the analysis (Qualitative coding—CESSDA TRAINING, n.d.). We re-read our interview notes alongside the list of codes to confirm that we only kept information related to our research objectives and ensured that we coded all information correctly (Bengtsson, 2016). To increase validity, at least two team members coded each interview and we all discussed our results to reach a consensus (Bengtsson, 2016). In addition, we evaluated our information by reading through our notes and codes on a regular basis and formulated any additional questions that needed to be answered to fill any gaps in our knowledge (Angrosino, 2010). In the next chapter we discuss the findings we developed from this data analysis.

## 3.0 Chapter 3: Findings and Discussion

The following chapter discusses and interprets the key findings derived from our interviews with the youth of Monteverde, Costa Rica, and other research based on our methodology. We organized our findings in terms of the needs and interests of the youth within the community; potential program opportunities based on their needs; and potential local partnerships. We completed this project remotely and therefore the Monteverde Community Fund provided all of the contacts for our interviews, resulting in possible bias. However, we believe that we gathered a representative sample of these stakeholders, reflecting the concerns of the youth within the community, as well as the perspectives of outside organizations and teachers.

### 3.1 Finding 1: Monteverde has an extremely strong sense of community.

Through our semi-structured interviews, we had the opportunity to become familiar with the community and each participant's unique story in depth. Although our group is focused on determining what the youth are lacking, we found that there is a powerful sense of community in Monteverde. Several interviewees expressed that the community managed to stay connected through the pandemic and that community members actively supported each other.

We found that community members support each other by buying local. Small businesses were extremely affected by the shortage of tourists in the area, but the absence of income ignited the creativity of community members to find different ways to make a profit. Frequently, interviewees explained how they adapted to COVID-19 and the decreased tourism by discovering new hobbies and ways to provide income for themselves and their families. For example, one interviewee started a gelato company from scratch with her father, taking a sharp detour from her plans to pursue a career in nursing. Additionally, several interviewees were disappointed that they missed out on their college experience but were grateful for the extra time they got to spend with their families. Overall, we found that people in the community successfully adapted to changes and came together to support one another.

A common theme that emerged from the interviews was the use of exchange systems and online platforms where one can offer services or goods. People from all around Monteverde connected through Facebook and WhatsApp groups to encourage buying from community members in need of economic support. "Comision Enlace Monteverde" was one of the organizations that several of our interviewees highlighted. It is a local NGO that works as a point of contact for small businesses and serves as a network to share ideas within the community. Its Facebook page helped people to stay connected during the COVID-19 lockdown and informed people about the ongoing projects, future events, and crisis support available to the community. Because people already utilize these virtual platforms to remain connected they could be used by the MCF to inform the community about any of their upcoming projects or events.

In addition, we learned that the Monteverde community is a warm environment abundant with hospitality and hard-working people. Through every interview, we connected with the youth and experienced Monteverde's culture in these interactions. People in Monteverde are constantly exposed to different cultures of people from around the world, which created an open-minded and welcoming community. In fact, one of our interviewees highlighted that growing up in the touristic area of Monteverde exposed her to all different kinds of people which taught her to adapt to new things easily. Fortunately, this has also translated into a caring community during the difficult times of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **3.2 Finding 2: The youth are concerned about the lack of opportunities in the community.**

Through analyzing our research, it became apparent that there are gaps in opportunity within the Monteverde community, which emphasized the need for programs. For example, youth expressed that there is a lack of available external programs outside of school. As one youth interviewee stated, “there is a lack of youth groups and activities,” and another reflected that there are “no external programs besides school... [and] no programs for work skills.” In addition, eight youth interviewees commented on the absence of public spaces for young people to connect with each other and conduct youth activities. One youth interviewee stated that “there are not enough spaces for organized activities for youth,” and another emphasized that “there is no public park or green space to hang around.” Overall, our team identified a clear concern for the lack of opportunity and space for the youth in the community.

The interviewees were generally frustrated by the lack of opportunity due to Monteverde’s focus on tourism and stressed the need for opportunities to explore other options. The youth discussed the limited resources in the community and many felt that it was necessary to leave Monteverde in order to access training for professional skills in areas unrelated to tourism, such as Costa Rica’s other popular industries. An interviewee expressed the importance of diversifying career opportunities in the community by providing “youth with the opportunity to find their interests.” In the group meeting with community members and the MCF, several people pointed out that the typical path of studying tourism and then becoming a tour guide is a “circle that needs to be broken.” This absence of variety in career preparation is also evident in public school education, which is typically centered around ecotourism. One youth interviewee emphasized how “...ecotourism is a focus in education,” and felt that it would have been helpful to learn a mixture of other skills.

Program continuity was another problem that emerged several times throughout the interview process. Two interviewees felt that “there is no initiative to keep programs going,” often causing program opportunities to only last a few years. The staff for youth programs are often young, and therefore move on to university or another job. Because of this, “a lot of initiatives come and go” in Monteverde, according to a teacher at the Monteverde Friends School. A participant at the Far Corners Musical Theatre further elaborated on this when he explained, it is “very hard to keep staff consistent because it is mostly made of interns.” In the combined meeting with the youth and MCF, the participants repeatedly mentioned the importance of mentorships and formalizing leadership to keep things going. Although there was concern about the lack of opportunity, many interviewees had the drive to participate in new activities to acquire knowledge or skills, but felt that they are limited by the small town and the absence of opportunities to do so.

### **3.3 Finding 3: The most important topics for the youth of Monteverde were professional development, recreational programs, and life skill training.**

#### **3.3.1 Requested Program Types**

When we inquired about what programs the youth wanted within the community, the youth requested programs in a wide variety of areas. The participants most commonly requested professional development, life skills, and recreational programs. Professional development was requested by about 89% of the interviewees, as displayed in Table 2. This represents a significant percentage of the participants, which implies that the youth view this training as crucial. Under

the topic of professional development, the youth most frequently requested learning how to manage a business and job coaching or vocational development, which consisted of requests for guidance on how to obtain specific or general jobs. These two categories were requested six and seven times respectively, as displayed in Table 2. Requests for vocational skills also fell under the professional development category as four participants requested computer programming, two requested welding, and two requested science lab experience. There were also three requests for help with applying and preparing for university. At the meeting we facilitated between the MCF and community members, additional people prioritized job coaching for professional development. A teacher we interviewed from the Monteverde Friends High School reiterated this need when he explained that he often took on the role of a guidance counselor for his students because the school did not provide them.

Approximately 56% of the youth requested recreational programs, which we defined as physical and outdoor activities. The majority of these were nature-related activities, walks, and sports. Furthermore, multiple interviewees discussed their positive experiences participating in the Monteverde Institute's former camp, which occurred for one week annually in June and primarily focused on recreational and cultural activities. Many enjoyed their experiences so much that they eventually went on to become counselors at the camp and highlighted their desire for the camp to be a more regular and developed program. One camp attendee stated that, "most of the kids that did the camp wanted to be counselors later because it was fun" Many youth interviewees wished that they had more opportunities to participate in the camp for a longer period of time. The camp was clearly successful during its prime and can act as a model for future programs.

Finally, 78% of the interviewees requested life skills. When prompted about what programs they wanted to see within the community, the youth desired programs related to finances and how to complete taxes, learning English or other languages, and team building activities. They also wanted training to improve their communication, organization, and ability to focus. The youth found these program areas as crucial, and therefore are most prevalent in our recommendations.

There were also other program topics that were suggested at a lower frequency in comparison to the previous suggestions, which are displayed in Table 2. These include programs related to personal health, the arts, and mental health, and the breakdown of each of these topics is shown in more detail in Table 2. Most notably, when discussing personal health, participants almost exclusively requested programs in sexual education and stressed the lack of knowledge due to the absence of it in the public schools of Monteverde. As one interviewee remarked, sexual education is "not talked about very much because it is sort of like taboo." Although the lack of mental health support was not often explicitly mentioned by the youth interviewees, the need was apparent through numerous conversations about the drastic mental toll the pandemic had on the younger population. One interviewee confessed that the pandemic "was very challenging emotionally and psychologically and it was not easy to switch to the virtual world." In addition, a teacher we interviewed from the Monteverde Friends School emphasized that his school did not have a mental health center and thought that it could have been useful for many of the students.

The interviewees requested art programs six times, which consisted of suggestions for musical activities or crafting. Altogether, the youth of Monteverde have many different interests and wanted programs in a variety of areas. It is not feasible to address all of these areas;

however, we aimed to make recommendations that encompass as many of the frequent requests as possible.

The youth also commented on the structure of the programs during the interviews as well as in the larger meeting. While this was not a specific question in the interviews, five interviewees requested less frequent workshops opposed to a longer, more structured format. In the group meeting, multiple members of the community expressed the importance of shorter and less frequent workshops to minimize time commitment issues and to allow for better organization and advertisement of the events within the community. As seen in Table 2, there were also requests for a wide variety of programs to allow exploration of multiple interests, and activities targeting high school students, which would be well suited for professional growth programs. It was also stressed that the activities should encourage youth from different high schools to connect with each other.

### **3.3.2 Program Evaluation**

When assessing the most requested programs requested by the youth, it was important to evaluate them to find the most feasible and fitting programs. We determined the effectiveness of specific programs by utilizing the four types of criteria explained in Objective 4, as well as an additional feasibility criteria to ensure any program would be reasonable to implement. The four types of criteria include education, peer-to-peer empowerment, partnership, and participation. The rankings of each program in each different category and their total score can all be seen in Table 4. We scored each program by the respective categories, using a three to signify that it successfully meets the criteria, a two to signify that it somewhat meets the criteria, and a one to signify that it insufficiently meets the criteria given. We have included Table 4 for the MCF's reference and to exemplify a standardized way to assess the potential effectiveness of future programs.



Table 2. The program types and other information about the programs the Monteverde youth requested during the interviews, organized by type and frequency of request.

<p><b>How the table was created:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All of the information from the youth interviews about what they wanted for programs was compiled into the specific types listed here.</li> <li>The specific requests under the general topics were put in bullets below, with the quantity of times next to it if more than once.</li> <li>The percentages were found by compiling how many participants asked for each general program type in their interviews.</li> <li>These percentages do not add up to 100 because they are based on the number of participants and each participant requested multiple programs.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Professional Development = 88.89% of participants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General Professional Development (7x)</li> <li>Job Coaching (7x) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning about certain jobs</li> <li>Resume help/how to find a job/career planning</li> </ul> </li> <li>Business Management (6x)</li> <li>Computer Programming Skills (4x)</li> <li>University Guidance (3x)</li> <li>Welding (2x)</li> <li>A Wet Science Lab (2x)</li> <li>Academic Help (2x)</li> <li>Career Fair (2x)</li> <li>Land Management</li> <li>Science Fairs</li> <li>Leadership Training</li> <li>Woodworking</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recreational Programs = 55.56% of participants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General Recreational Programs (4x)</li> <li>Wants more organized walk/hikes (4x)</li> <li>Wants nature-related activities (3x)</li> <li>More sports (2x) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climbing gym (3x)</li> <li>Cycling (2x)</li> <li>Rugby</li> <li>Soccer</li> <li>Dance</li> </ul> </li> <li>A regular summer camp (2x)</li> <li>Fairs, festivals</li> </ul>	<p><b>Life Skills = 77.78% of participants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General Life Skills (4x)</li> <li>Finance workshops (taxes specifically) (4x)</li> <li>Learning English (3x)</li> <li>Money Management (2x)</li> <li>How to be self-employed (2x)</li> <li>Good morals (2x)</li> <li>How to focus</li> <li>Communication skills</li> <li>Teamwork growth</li> <li>Organizational Skills (time management)</li> <li>Sewing</li> <li>Cooking</li> <li>How to make money in alternate ways</li> </ul>
<p><b>Personal Growth /Development = 44.44% of participants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General Personal Growth (4x)</li> <li>Sex Ed (4x)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Arts and Crafts = 44.44% of participants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wants arts and crafts (4x)</li> <li>Artistic/cultural focused activity</li> <li>Music activity</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other Programs = 33.33% of participants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wants cultural development</li> <li>Wants competitions</li> <li>Wants a religious group</li> <li>Women and youth topics</li> </ul>	<p><b>Mental Health = 16.67% of participants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General Mental Health Program (2x)</li> <li>Guidance counseling</li> <li>Psychological support</li> <li>Emotional and psychological support for leaders</li> </ul>
<p><b>Structure Suggestions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workshops (5x)</li> <li>Not a strict curriculum</li> <li>Activities targeting high school kids</li> <li>Activities to encourage the youth of different schools to meet</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lack of Public Space= 27.78% of participants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No public park, or infrastructure, for youth to spend time at (8x)</li> <li>Public spaces are closed because of COVID</li> </ul>



Table 3. Specific program types that the youth wanted as noted from the interviews, compared by the four criteria as well as how feasible it is.

Programs	4 Types of Criteria				Predicted Feasibility	Total Score
	Education	Peer-to-Peer Empowerment	Partnership	Participation		
<b>Job Coaching</b>	3 Enhances knowledge and experience	2 Not necessarily working with peers their age, but can be	3 Encourages work between the coach and the youth	3 Encourages youth into decision making and leadership	In general fairly feasible	11
<b>Business Management</b>	3 Enhances business knowledge and awareness	2 Not necessarily working with peers their age, but can be	3 Encourages work between the leader and the youth	3 Encourages youth into decision making and leadership	Feasible	11
<b>Mentorship Programs</b>	3 Given knowledge to enhance skills	2 Not necessarily working with peers their age, but can be	3 Encourages work between mentor and mentee	2 Somewhat brings youth into learning and decision making	Depends on # people willing to mentor	10
<b>Mental Health Guidance</b>	3 Enhances knowledge on self-care and wellbeing	2 Will be with youth their age	2 Encourages self-reflection	3 Highly encourages healthy decision making	In general fairly feasible with trained people	10
<b>Finance Workshops</b>	3 Enhances finance knowledge	3 Will likely be doing group work in the workshop	1 Encourages youth-youth work or information	2 Encourages youth on decision making	Feasible	9
<b>University Guidance</b>	3 Enhances knowledge and awareness of University necessities	2 Not necessarily working with peers their age, but can be	1 Doesn't encourage collab with organization and youth	3 Highly encourages leadership and decision making	Feasible because of previous/current college students	9
<b>Programming Lessons</b>	3 Enhances knowledge on programming	2 Not necessarily working with peers their age, but can be	1 Encourages more youth-youth work	2 Encourages youth in decision making on coding	Feasible if programmer is in CR	8
<b>Climbing Group</b>	3 Enhances climbing knowledge and awareness of environment	2 Will be with youth their age	1 Doesn't encourage collab with organization and youth	1 Doesn't really encourage leadership or decision making	There is already a new climbing gym	7
<b>Organized Nature Walks</b>	3 Enhances knowledge on environment	2 Will be with youth their age	1 Encourages more information	1 Doesn't really encourage decision making	Very feasible	7
<b>Cycling Club</b>	1 Enhances bicycling ability	2 Will be with youth their age	1 Encourages youth-youth collab	2 Doesn't really encourage decision making	Very feasible	6

The programs that best fit the four types of criteria and are the most feasible include job coaching, business management, mentorship programs, finance workshops, university guidance, programming lessons, and mental health guidance. Many of the programs had similar scores because they successfully met the criteria. So, there is not necessarily one specific program or topic area that is the best option for the community, we found that a variety of the suggested programs met the criteria for a successful youth program. For example, job coaching, which consists of teaching the youth about specific jobs and how to obtain them, scored one of the highest overall scores, with the program successfully upholding the education, partnership, and participation aspects and mostly upholding the peer-to-peer empowerment criteria. It was also seen as fairly feasible as long as the community members are willing to assist.

### **3.4 Finding 4: Members of the Monteverde community are interested in becoming involved in youth programming in varying capacities.**

Through the interview process, we found that all interviewees wanted to be involved with the MCF and the planning of youth activities in some manner. Four out of 18 youth interviewees said they were specifically interested in teaching/advising a program or workshop and two out of 18 said they were interested in coordinating. One youth interviewee expressed that he “is interested in pushing programs forward,” and another insisted “[he] would be interested in teaching because [he] sees it as valuable.” Also, all survey respondents from the youth-MCF meeting thought that it would be helpful to continue having regular meetings with the MCF to discuss youth programs. Numerous people conveyed enthusiasm about helping initiate programs in the community and were willing to shift their work or school schedules to be involved. The amount of time people wanted to be involved varied from an hour or two on multiple days per week to several hours on one day per week. The overall range was one or two hours per week and up to 15 hours per week, but on average the young interviewees are willing to commit seven hours per week to youth programming.

In addition, a multitude of participants had previous leadership experience from either school or other youth programs. For example, one youth interviewee was a local youth leader for the Youth Red Cross, another worked as a teaching assistant at his college, and two worked as camp counselors at the camp conducted by the Monteverde Institute. Several interviewees also suggested additional people from the community that could potentially devote time towards facilitating youth programs. Detailed information regarding each person’s expressed interest level, approximate amount of time they could contribute, and other people they identified, can be found in Appendix J. We also included this information in our deliverables for the MCF as potential volunteers whom the organization can contact for facilitating or participating in youth programs.

When we examined the MCF website and spoke with María Vargas, the development and communications specialist for the MCF, we found that the website could improve its clarity. More specifically, the ways in which community members can get involved with the MCF’s funds and opportunities can be more clear. The official website has a “Stay Updated” page for information about past events and information on how to become a donor, but it is a bit unclear about how to volunteer time for events or how the youth can share their ideas. One interviewee explained that “Many people are willing to put work into it. If MCF were more clear about the projects and help they need, a lot of people would sign up.” From our survey about the MCF website, the respondents also agreed that adding a sign up option to help with events could be beneficial.

Additionally, one of our interviewees explained that she wanted to apply for the “Small Grants Program” but did not finish completing the application because she thought that the grant would not cover the project she wanted to work on. She expressed that the application “seemed to be more for people that have their own business already” and she wished that there was more information about the application process and what the grant actually covers. The MCF assured us that they could always put someone in contact to help with any questions but agreed that the website did not clearly convey that. From our findings from the meeting between community members and the MCF and the survey results about the website, we concluded that the website could improve in clarity.

### **3.5 Finding 5: There are several partnerships with local organizations that can be expanded or formed with the MCF.**

#### **3.5.1 The Monteverde Institute**

Through the interviews with the youth, it became evident that the Hormiguitas Summer Camp conducted by the Monteverde Institute (MVI) was a very successful and well-liked activity in the community. A leader from the MVI said that, “People look forward to this camp so much, they even count the days.” The camp typically takes place at the end of June and focuses on recreation and cultural activities, that consist of group games, campfires, group meals, and sleepovers. The camp brings together kids from both public and private schools to create a bigger community and allows young people to develop important relationships with each other. The camp provided an educational experience as well as leadership training for youth and taught several values including tolerance, respect, acceptance, and kindness. However, in recent years funding has been a major challenge for the camp because it is hard to get sponsorships. The MVI always wants to make the camp 100% free for the youth because they do not want anyone to be excluded, but an MVI leader noted that there are many challenges to that. She said that “they always have to maintain the cost, which is \$400 per person for the entire week.” The MVI maintained the camp for eight years but unfortunately had to cancel it in 2020 due to economic struggles and the necessary social distancing measures from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The MCF originated as an initiative between the Monteverde Institute and Monteverde residents in 2010. From our interview with a leader of the MVI, we learned that the Institute has supported the community fund several times in the successful implementation of community-based activities. The MVI is also currently committed to work with local organizations to expand the summer camp from a short annual event “...into a fully developed youth program [focused on] recreation, arts, community service, outdoor education, self-development, social life, and prevention” (Monteverde Institute, 2021). The community fund could build upon this partnership by working with the Institute in the expansion of the summer camp into a more developed youth program. Many of the topics the MVI wants to focus on were commonly requested within the interviews, and the MCF could provide the data on the youth needs to create a more targeted program. The Institute could also use the MCF’s connections with several other organizations to help coordinate other sponsorships.

In addition, since the pandemic, the Institute has been looking to provide activities that contribute to young people’s mental health and motivation, which were also common topics from the interviews. The MVI wants to create accessible activities for young people such as, one-day activities/workshops on topics like mental health, entrepreneurship, art, and leadership. The ways that the community fund can assist the Institute with this are further discussed in the recommendations chapter.

### 3.5.2 Parque EcoPaz

The Parque EcoPaz was highlighted as a potential partner by a leader from the Monteverde Institute as well as a participant from the youth and MCF meeting. The park is a grassroots project of the Costa Rican non-profit organization EcoPaz, which aims to support the health and well-being of the local community (Parque EcoPaz, n.d.). The park depends entirely on the work, shared ideas, grants, and donations from people and organizations (Parque EcoPaz, n.d.). Some of the main goals of the Parque EcoPaz include connecting people and nature, supporting a healthier, happier, and more constructive community, strengthening cultural identity, and encouraging the exchange of ideas (Parque EcoPaz, n.d.). The park is located just one kilometer from the town center of Santa Elena and could potentially fulfill the need for a safe public space that many of the youth were looking for. It has the capability to provide space for various nature-related youth programs or activities where young people can connect with one other. One participant of the youth-MCF meeting even suggested having a movie night at the Parque EcoPaz. The organization also facilitates programs in several of the areas suggested by the interviewees such as internships, education, sports, local culture, and environmentalism.



*Figure 3: Parque EcoPaz (Parque EcoPaz, n.d.)*

### 3.5.3 La Alianza de Monteverde

La Alianza de Monteverde is a group of tourism-related businesses that are working together for the benefit of the community. The businesses are partnering with each other to sell packages with hotels and different tours in the community and then putting a portion of sales towards a project. “Escape” is the current project that La Alianza is working on; it is going to be a two day event focusing on the mental health of young people in the community. The event is targeting resilience and empathy in an effort to aid with the effects of the pandemic on the younger population. Based on our data, this type of event seems to reflect what the youth need right now, as many interviewees spoke about the toll the pandemic had taken on their mental health and a few vocalized a need for mental health programs. The MCF is currently working with La Alianza by managing the businesses’ money raised for the specific project, and a leader of La Alianza pointed out that they “have felt very supported by the MCF.” La Alianza is looking to continue their projects/events twice a year. The MCF could expand their collaborative

effort to help with program promotion and provide information about the needs of the youth for La Alianza's future youth projects.

### **3.6 Discussion**

The findings provide information for us to develop a plan for the Monteverde Community Fund to implement youth programs in Monteverde. Through our research, we found that Monteverde values the power of a connected and supportive community, which was especially visible as community members supported one another financially by buying local goods during the pandemic. This sentiment of support was also reflected in the high interest in our interviewee sample, as all interviewees wanted to assist with youth programming. From our sample of youth, we also learned that young community members were already interested in taking initiative to lead programs and teach. This sense of support from the community will be helpful when the MCF's programs are implemented. However, we recognize that the sample is small and was provided by the MCF so it may not reflect the interest level of the entire community. Additionally, the higher interest rate could be attributed to the interviewees' association with the MCF. With this acknowledged, we believe that there are enough people and organizations that want to support the MCF within the community. More importantly, the MCF can present to these partners the research and data we acquired about the programs youth want within the community. Thus, the MCF can move forward in their partnership with the MVI and La Alianza to implement relevant programs that truly highlight the needs of the youth of Monteverde.

Since we provided the youth with an opportunity to share what programs they need for support, we found that the youth are concerned about the scarcity of youth opportunities within the community, and we better understand the gaps within the community. Programs under the topics of professional development, recreational programs, and life skills were of most importance to the youth interviewees and are therefore prioritized in our recommendations. Targeting the areas requested by the youth themselves ensures that resources are directed to the necessary areas in the community and will encourage a productive planning process. As one of the teachers from the Monteverde Friends School emphasized, "Having young people listen to other young people is important, it can spark some valuable conversations that there may not have been the space for." Similarly, a leader of La Alianza de Monteverde stressed the importance of "learning about the youth, hearing them, and getting to know them and their needs..." before planning programs to support them.

Considering our findings about the need for continuous collaborative meetings between the MCF and the youth and the need for more effective measures to encourage youth participation in program planning, it will be essential to establish a connection between the MCF organization and community members. A strong connection will promote youth involvement in program planning because the youth will be able to see their ideas become reality, which will foster program continuity. The long term success of the MCF's programs is key for creating continuous support for young people in the community.



## 4.0 Chapter 4: Recommendations

Based on our findings, we recommend specific ways that the Monteverde Community Fund can initiate and continue youth activities in the community. We have organized our detailed plan for the MCF into the following four recommendations where we recommend the MCF:

1. Develop program partnerships on the topics of professional development, recreational programs, and life skill training.
2. Expand its current partnerships and form new partnerships with local businesses/organizations.
3. Continue facilitating collaborative meetings with the youth of Monteverde.
4. Update its website to better encourage youth empowerment and involvement.

While it is imperative to have a variety of programs and workshops available to meet the wide range of concerns expressed by young people in the area, it is unrealistic to expect every need to be met through these recommendations. However, we considered the feasibility of the varying potential programs and aimed to address as many youth concerns as possible through these recommendations.

### 4.1 Recommendation 1: Develop programs on the topics of professional development, recreational programs, and life skill training.

Utilizing finding three, we determined that the MCF should focus on programs pertaining to the topics of professional development, recreational programs, and life skill training. We believe it would be most helpful to prioritize programs related to professional development because of its prevalence in the interview data and because it best fit the criteria in finding five. Since there were many professional development programs that were equally effective based on our criteria evaluation, the MCF should focus on areas such as job coaching, business management, mentorship programs, finance workshops, university guidance, mental health, and programming lessons.

For job coaching we recommend that members in the community or nearby volunteer their time to help young adults who are interested in their careers. Experienced people in the community could provide the younger population with knowledge on their respective career paths, allowing youth to further prepare for their future. We recommend that this be carried out as one on one advising to allow for more flexibility in scheduling or one or two-day group workshops to avoid an extended, strict scheduled program. We believe that a group workshop program style would be the most beneficial because this style was requested by the youth in both the interviews and the group meeting. Another program that could use a similar structure is university guidance, which would supply information about the college application process and the various colleges in Costa Rica. This would be structured as group programs because it pertains to a wider audience, but it could still be administered as a training workshop. Based on our findings there is high interest in youth programming, so we think it would be fairly feasible to get people to lead these programs.

We recommend that skills for business management are offered as a training workshop where a leader or two could explain how to run a business, and possibly facilitate different exercises and group work. This would encourage collaboration among young people, inspire new ideas, and foster more leadership potential. Multiple interviewees had been looking to or had started a business, such as a gelato business, a climbing gym, and a home repair business. They

talked about how business skills were something they wished they had known more about, so other young community members would likely take advantage of an opportunity to learn about running businesses. Finance workshops would also be useful to help the youth transition into adulthood where they need to be prepared for taxes and managing their money. This could follow a very similar program style as the business management workshop.

Another potential program could be a mentoring program, which could be used for many programs topics, but would entail an older youth or adult mentoring younger people to help them with the college process, learning a specific job or skill, etc. This would be a more flexible and achievable option since many of the older youth we interviewed were interested in helping the younger population. There is also potential for remote mentoring on an online platform, which could expand the mentoring areas since mentors would not be limited to only the people in Monteverde. The scheduling could be decided by the mentor and mentee so that they can do what works best for them and the program could continue until the specific goal is completed. Programming lessons could be conducted in a mentoring style or in a more open workshop. However, it would probably be more practical to have an open workshop to allow for more youth opportunity and lessen the need to find lots of experienced coders. The computer room in the library in Monteverde could potentially host these workshops in which an adult could guide a group of youth through programming.

We also recommend developing more mental health programs to help the youth because mental health support for youth in Monteverde is mostly nonexistent as they have no psychologists or guidance counselors. While mental health programs were not frequently identified as a need in interviews, the majority described struggles with mental health due to the pandemic. La Alianza and the MCF are currently working on their first combined mental health program and plan to continue holding related events (possibly twice a year) that could be beneficial for the youth in the community. Mental health programs could be structured one on one or in a group setting where all of the youth's opinions are respected.

We also recommend including recreational programs in the plans for the future; while they do not score as high on the criteria because they are not as educational, they still encourage collaboration among peers and help improve physical and mental health from physical activity. The youth requested a climbing gym; fortunately there is currently one starting in Monteverde and we recommend the MCF help support the new climbing gym in any way possible. The youth could also participate in a cycling club or nature walks in groups to encourage more exercise and youth bonding.

#### **4.2 Recommendation 2: Expand its current partnerships and form new partnerships with local businesses/organizations.**

The organizations discussed in the findings sections are effective partners for the MCF because of their many shared goals and because these organizations are working towards improving many of the same areas of concern described by the interviewees. The Monteverde Institute is a good partner because our findings revealed that they have a strong past relationship, and they are seeking more experts and collaborators to assist them. The MVI's goal of offering "a safe, fun, and educational space where the youth can feel comfortable and the parents are aware is a healthy space to explore new skills and experiences within the community" aligns with both the youth and MCF's goals for the community. Additionally, one of the MVI's main challenges was securing donations and sponsorships for the creation of youth activities and facilitating their camp, so the MCF could use their connections with other organizations to assist



with that. As discussed in our findings, the MVI is also looking to expand the summer camp into a more regular youth program focused on many of the topic areas discussed in our interviews. The MCF could also share information learned from this project with the MVI to help with the planning and structuring of programs that further target the needs of the youth.

Based on our findings and suggestions from a leader from the MVI and a leader from La Alianza, the Parque EcoPaz is a potential effective partner for the MCF. The Parque EcoPaz is another organization that the MCF could support because EcoPaz depends on the generosity of people and organizations for its operations, so the MCF could provide EcoPaz with financial assistance with their youth initiatives and events. The MCF could also help EcoPaz find volunteers for their youth activities by sharing its network of people who want to be involved with youth programs. Additionally, the lack of public space for youth activities was repeatedly identified as a need in our research and the Parque EcoPaz could be a potential space for that. The MCF and EcoPaz also have many shared values such as encouraging the exchange ideas and supporting the community, so they could work together towards their common goals.

We also recommend that the MCF continue its partnership with La Alianza because the leader of La Alianza emphasized that the partnership has been very effective thus far. The MCF could assist beyond just money management by helping fund future projects/events. Furthermore, La Alianza already is working to support the mental health of the youth, which was one of the important categories that came up during our interview analysis. Based on this finding, the MCF could provide useful insight for the planning of future projects by sharing information from this project about the needs of the youth. In this section we have elaborated on potential local partnerships that we could find the most information on, but we included a full list of all suggested potential partnerships and potential public spaces that could host youth activities for the MCF's reference in Appendix K.

## **4.3 Operational Recommendations**

### **4.3.1 Recommendation 3: Continue facilitating collaborative meetings with the youth of Monteverde.**

Based on our findings that the difficulties exist for continuity in youth programs, we recommend continuous collaboration between the MCF and the youth through periodic meetings. The youth prefer workshops and short term formats, so we recommend conducting collaborative online meetings between the MCF and youth once or twice a month to discuss potential programs. We also suggest that these meetings are well advertised on Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp since we found that many people in the community already use those platforms to stay up to date. It is important that these meetings are planned well in advance because the youth emphasized that they are motivated by well-organized and advertised events in the community. We chose to err on the side of less frequent meetings because although many people seemed inclined to dedicate their time, their answer in our interview may be higher than the actual amount of time people can commit to. We want to ensure the feasibility and continuity of any programs that are created, so we think that a lower time commitment would be more successful. Once more of the COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, we recommend shifting to in-person meetings following the health protocols. This way, the youth could socialize and meet new people outside the online format that has been limiting everyone's interactions and motivation.

#### 4.3.2 Recommendation 4: Update the MCF website to better encourage youth empowerment and involvement.

Based on our findings from the interviews, there was an abundance of excitement about youth programs, but some felt that the MCF needs to provide clearer notification on how people can be involved. When looking at the MCF website as well as discussing with the MCF, we agreed that the ‘Society, Culture, and Youth’ section of the website was short on resources to assist the younger community members and could better encourage them to approach the MCF with their ideas. All community members who attended the meeting with the MCF also agreed that there was a need for increased clarity on how to get involved in programs with the MCF. In order to improve this section, we recommend highlighting past and future events and activities that were/are specifically for youth so that it is easier for young people to see what the MCF does for them. In addition, we think that incorporating quotes from the various youth interviews will personalize the section and reflect that the MCF truly values the voices and ideas of the youth. Additionally, we recommend adding a section specifically for suggestions where the young adults can bring any new ideas they have and leave their contact information so that the MCF can work with them to make it happen or put them in contact with the right people who can help.

While there is a way to contact the MCF on the ‘Join Us’ page, it is general and pertains to donating money, not becoming an active facilitator or participant of the MCF’s programs. To further clarify the need for volunteers, we suggest implementing an option to leave contact information to be added to a specific list of people who want to be contacted for future programs. We also suggest posting a sign up for upcoming events or activities so all community members can choose what they want to be involved with and the times they can help. All the people who expressed interest during our interviews could also be added to this list of potential volunteers. This provides the MCF with a running list of the people who are interested in becoming involved and can easily contact them when they need volunteers for youth activities. We utilized Wix.com to create a website template displaying all of the discussed suggestions as a point of reference for the MCF to improve their website in Appendix L.



Figure 4: Website template example made on Wix.com for the MCF.

#### **4.4 Project Conclusion**

The goal of this project was to help the Monteverde Community Fund develop a plan for the creation of relevant programs based on the needs and interests of the young people within the Monteverde community. We found an overall lack of development opportunity within the community and that people are eager to diversify their skill sets beyond tourism through new program offerings. The COVID-19 pandemic brought this issue to the forefront, but also brought the community together in new ways. By creating a space for the young people to share their stories in our interviews, we learned where their needs and concerns lie. We found that the younger community could benefit from a wide variety of programs under the topics of professional development, recreation, and life skills, and that many individuals and organizations in the community are excited to become involved.

The plan we developed based on our findings will guide the MCF to provide long term support to the younger community members. Based on the positive responses from interviewees and the potential partnerships we researched, we believe that the MCF has significant support in the community to create a long lasting impact on the community's younger generation. The outlined programs will address the current needs of the youth, as well as successfully prepare them for the future, ultimately benefiting the entire Monteverde community.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A. Script for Oral Consent

Purpose: To get to know youth through their experiences and obtain an idea of their needs and concerns within the community by discussing their opinions about the current youth opportunities and the support the MCF gives.

Welcome to our interview! Before we begin, we want you to know that we would love it if you could answer all questions asked but you are not obligated to answer any question; if you do not want to answer a question, please let the interviewer know. We are a team of students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) in Massachusetts working with the Monteverde Community Fund to help them create the best and most relevant programs for the youth to support your needs and concerns within the community. This interview will take approximately 30-45 minutes. With your permission we will record this discussion, but it is completely anonymous. Once the information from the tapes is written down, the tapes will be destroyed. The purpose of the interview is to get to know you through your experiences in the Monteverde community by discussing your opinions about the current youth opportunities and the support the Monteverde community provides. This is a collaborative effort between the MCF and WPI, and your participation is greatly appreciated. The research will be published in the archives of Worcester Polytechnic Institute. All information will be anonymous as names will be redacted. Please feel free to ask any questions prior, during, or after the interview has finished.

Project Advisors: Sarah Strauss [sstrauss@wpi.edu](mailto:sstrauss@wpi.edu) and Melissa Belz [mbelz@wpi.edu](mailto:mbelz@wpi.edu)

Team Contact: [gr-MCF\\_ID2050-MV-C21@wpi.edu](mailto:gr-MCF_ID2050-MV-C21@wpi.edu)

## Appendix B. Interview Protocol and Youth Interview Questions

The purpose of these interview questions is to learn about the experiences of the youth during the COVID-19 pandemic to best understand the resources, or lack thereof, available to support youth beyond their ecotourism-focused education.

### Interviewer Introductions:

**\*\*\*Note: There will only be two interviewers per interview.**

- Sophie Chase is a Junior Chemical Engineering major from Portland, Maine. At school is a member of the varsity swim team, works as a teaching assistant in the chemistry labs, likes to participate in intramural sports, cooking, and outdoor activities.
- Marine Herman is a Junior Biology/Biotechnology major from Peabody, MA, and is a member of the club soccer team and the African Percussion club. She is also a copy editor for the pre-health newsletter.
- Sam Mora is a Junior Bioinformatics and Computational Biology major and participates in the school's marching band. She is also a member of a community service fraternity and an animal club called PAWS.
- Ana Paula Navarro is a Junior Mechanical Engineering major and a native Spanish speaker from Paraguay. She works as a Resident Advisor on campus and is a member of the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers. Some of her interests outside of school include art, music, and cooking.

Refer to Appendix A for the script for oral consent before conducting the interview.

1. Could you tell us a little bit about yourself?
  - a. What are your interests?
  - b. Did you grow up in the Monteverde area?
  - c. What do you do as your career/want to do?
  - d. How does that compare to what your parents/grandparents did for a living?
  - e. How much schooling have you had/ what schooling are you still doing?
2. How have you spent most of your time since March?
  - a. Are there any hobbies or jobs that you are no longer able to do due to COVID-19?
  - b. Has COVID-19 caused you to lose opportunities // Have you experienced a lack of opportunity due to COVID-19?
  - c. How have you been staying in touch with your friends and family?
3. What types of technology or social media platforms have you been using to stay connected in the community during this time?
  - a. In what ways do you think it has impacted the community?
  - b. In what ways are these methods effective or not?
4. Have you been involved in youth activities?
  - a. How was your experience?
  - b. Would you change anything about your experience?
5. Were you involved in the youth advisory committees that the Monteverde Community Fund had and, if so, when were you involved?

- a. Have you had any other youth leadership positions in the past?
6. If you were able to design youth programs, what types of programs would you want to design?
  - a. Would it be related to recreational programs (i.e. art, sports, games science, etc.), job training (i.e. coding, programming, personal development, business skills), OR both?
  - b. What would be your main goal?
7. (If planning on staying in Monteverde) Would you be interested in having a role in youth programs? (As a young advisor or program participant)
  - a. Just for interest, how many hours a week would you be willing or able to devote? (This is not to sign up, just to gauge interest within the community)
  - b. Do you know of anyone else in the community that would be interested in this role?
8. Ideally, what do you envision yourself doing for the next several years?
  - a. Do you feel that you have the resources to achieve those goals?
  - b. If yes, what are the resources in place in the community to help you?
  - c. If not, is there something that the community could be provided to help you get there?
9. How has living in a touristic area impacted your life?
  - a. In what ways was ecotourism incorporated into your education?
  - b. What other skills did you learn in school to help in the future?
10. How has COVID-19 impacted your life?
  - a. Have you encountered any challenges during the pandemic?
  - b. Are there any other skills you wish you had learned in school to have a successful professional or personal life?

## Appendix C. Teacher Interview Questions

1. Could you tell us about your role at the school?
2. How has the pandemic impacted school?
  - a. How do you think the changes have impacted the students?
  - b. Are the students more prepared? Less prepared?
  - c. What do they need to focus on now?
3. What type of activities/organized groups do you think would be most helpful to prepare the students for their futures and meet their current needs?
  - a. Many youth have mentioned recreational, professional, artistic, job training, like skills?
  - b. What would be the goal of this program?
4. How does the school prepare the students for employment/careers?
  - a. Is there a focus on the tourism industry? If so, in what ways?
  - b. What areas do you think could be improved?
  - c. What does the school do to help connect students with the university?
5. What subject areas does the curriculum cover the most?
  - a. Is there any important area that the school does not cover?
  - b. Do you think that the curriculum impacts the students' career paths/choices?
6. Could you see yourself having a role in youth programs or activities? (this is just to gauge interest, this is not a sign up)
  - a. If so, how would you like to be involved? Approximately how many hours a week?
  - b. If not, do you know anyone else in the community that would be interested?
  - c. Do you know of any organizations/businesses that could be a potential partnership with the MCF to implement youth programs?
7. Do you have any advice for someone who is organizing youth programs or activities in Monteverde?
  - a. Is there any aspect that jumps out as very important?
8. What advice would you like to pass on to this generation?
  - a. What would you like to see in the community in the next few years?

## Appendix D. Monteverde Institute Interview Questions

1. Many interviewees have spoken very highly about the MVI camp, so could you tell us a little bit about how you developed that?
  - a. What was the main goal of the camp?
  - b. What types of activities did you focus on?
  - c. What aspects do you think have contributed to the success of the MVI?
  - d. Did you face any challenges?
  - e. What areas do you think could be improved?
2. How has the pandemic impacted the young people in the community?
  - a. What do you think they need right now?
3. What type of activities/organized groups do you think would be most helpful to prepare the students for their futures and meet their current needs?
  - a. Many youth have mentioned recreational, professional, artistic, job training, like skills?
  - b. What would be the goal of this program?
4. Could you see the MVI partnering with another organization to facilitate youth programs or activities? (this is just to gauge interest, this is not a sign up)
  - a. If so, how would you envision this partnership?
  - b. Do you know of any organizations/businesses that could be a potential partnership with the MCF to implement youth programs?
5. Do you have any advice for someone who is organizing youth programs or activities in Monteverde?
  - a. Is there any aspect that jumps out as very important?



## Appendix E. La Alianza de Monteverde Interview Questions

1. Could you tell us a little bit more about the alliance?
  - a. What does it typically do?
  - b. Has it helped the youth in the past?
2. Could you tell us about your experiences with coordinating youth programs?
  - a. What aspects are important when planning a youth program?
  - b. Have you faced any challenges?
3. How do you think the pandemic has affected the young people in the community?
  - a. What do you think they need to focus on now?
4. What type of activities/organized groups do you think would be most helpful to prepare the youth for their futures and meet their current needs?
  - a. Many youth have mentioned recreational, professional, artistic, job training, like skills?
  - b. What would be the goal of this program?
5. Could you tell us about the Alliance and its relationship to the MCF?
  - a. What is the main goal of this partnership?
  - b. Do you know any other organizations/businesses in the community that could be a potential partner for the MCF?
6. Could you see yourself having a leadership role in youth programs or activities? (this is just to gauge interest, this is not a sign up)
  - a. If so, how would you like to be involved? Approximately how many hours a week?
  - b. If not, do you know anyone else in the community that would be interested?
7. Do you have any advice for someone who is organizing youth programs or activities in Monteverde?
  - a. Is there any aspect that jumps out as very important?

## Appendix F. Findings Infographic

English (left) and Spanish (right) infographics presented in the meeting between the youth and MCF.

### YOUTH PROGRAM FINDINGS

A collaborative effort between the Monteverde Community Fund and students from WPI

### RESULTADOS SOBRE PROGRAMAS JUVENILES

Un esfuerzo de colaboración entre el Fondo Comunitario de Monteverde y los estudiantes de WPI

#### OUR PROJECT GOAL


Our goal is to help the MCF develop a plan for the creation of youth programs based on the needs and interests of the youth within the Monteverde community.

#### NUESTRO OBJETIVO

Ayudar al FCM a desarrollar un plan para la creación de programas juveniles basados en las necesidades e intereses de los jóvenes dentro de la comunidad de Monteverde.


#### HOW WE LEARNED ABOUT THE CONCERNS AND NEEDS OF THE YOUTH

- Interviews with 17 youth focused on learning about their needs and concerns within the community
- Interviews with teachers and youth organization members

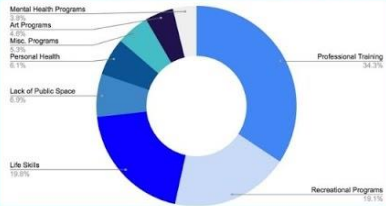


#### COMO APRENDIMOS SOBRE LAS NECESIDADES DE LA JUVENTUD

- Entrevistas con 17 jovenes enfocadas en conocer las necesidades y preocupaciones de la juventud.
- Entrevistas con profesores y miembros de organizaciones juveniles

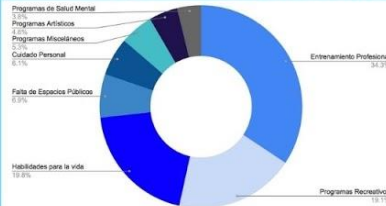


#### HERE'S WHAT WE DISCOVERED



Category	Percentage
Professional Training	34.2%
Recreational Programs	18.1%
Life Skills	13.8%
Lack of Public Space	8.9%
Personal Health	6.7%
Misc. Programs	4.3%
Art Programs	3.2%
Mental Health Programs	2.2%


#### ESTO ES LO QUE DESCUBRIMOS



Category	Percentage
Entrenamiento Profesional	34.2%
Programas Recreativos	18.1%
Habilidades para la vida	13.8%
Falta de Espacios Públicos	8.9%
Cuidado Personal	6.7%
Programas Misceláneos	4.3%
Programas Artísticos	3.2%
Programas de Salud Mental	2.2%


#### POTENTIAL PROGRAMS/ WORKSHOPS


- vocational training
- help with university application process
- recreational programs (sports,nature walks)
- life skills (money management, financing)





#### POTENCIALES PROGRAMAS/TALLERES

- Formación Vocacional
- Ayuda con el proceso de aplicación a universidades
- Programas recreativos (deportes, naturaleza, caminatas)
- Habilidades varias (finanzas, organizacion personal, etc.)
- Entrenamiento profesional






LET'S HAVE A DISCUSSION REGARDING YOUR THOUGHTS!

¡CONVERSEMOS SOBRE LO QUE PIENSAS TU!



## Appendix G. Meeting Flyers

The English (left) and Spanish (right) flyers utilized to invite the youth interviewees as well as other members of the Monteverde community to a larger meeting with the MCF to discuss program ideas.

**EVERYONE IS INVITED!**

### SHARE YOUR VOICE

Meet members of the **Monteverde Community Fund** and a group of students working with them from Massachusetts over Zoom to determine **youth programs** needed within the Monteverde community. The Zoom link is attached to the email. The date and time is below:

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26 AT 3:00 PM  
MONTEVERDE COMMUNITY FUND**

Let's hear your ideas and thoughts about what youth programs/workshops are needed within the community to meet the needs of the youth! **Register for the event by scanning the QR code below with your camera!**

**Fondo Comunitario Monteverde**  
Institución de Desarrollo Comunitario Sostenible

**WPI**

**TODOS ESTAN INVITADOS**

### COMPARTE TU VOZ

Conoce a miembros del **Fondo Comunitario Monteverde** y a un grupo de estudiantes de Estados Unidos que trabaja con ellos para determinar **programas juveniles** necesarios en la comunidad. El evento se llevara a cabo virtualmente por Zoom.

**VIERNES, 26 DE FEBRERO A LAS 3:00 PM  
FONDO COMUNITARIO MONTEVERDE**

Queremos escuchar tus ideas y opiniones sobre que programas juveniles/talleres son necesarios en la comunidad para satisfacer las necesidades de la juventud! **Regístrate para el evento escaneando con tu camara el codigo QR de abajo!**

**Fondo Comunitario Monteverde**  
Institución de Desarrollo Comunitario Sostenible

**WPI**

## Appendix H. Post Meeting Survey



The banner features a green and white leaf pattern on the left and right. In the center, there is a circular logo for Fondo Comunitario Monteverde and the WPI logo (Worcester Polytechnic Institute) with the text 'WPI' in red.

### Encuesta FCM

¡Esperamos que hayas disfrutado del evento!  
Tu opinion cuenta y nos ayuda muchisimo a mejorar.  
Puedes completar este formulario de forma anonima si prefieres.

Nombre y apellido (opcional)

Short answer text

### **MCF Survey**

We hope you enjoyed the event!  
Your opinion counts and helps us so much to improve.  
You could complete this form anonymously if you prefer.

**Question 1:** Name and Last name (optional)

¿Como te sientes con respecto a colaborar con el Fondo Comunitario Monteverde en programas juveniles? \*

Long answer text

¿Consideras que sería útil tener reuniones periódicas con el FCM para seguir debatiendo sobre programas juveniles en el futuro?

- Si
- No

¿En que tipo de programas estarias interesado/dispuesto a ayudar? \*

- Deportivo (Comite deportivo, competencias, talleres)
- Desarrollo personal (Salud mental, Educacion Sexual, etc.)
- Apoyo academico (talleres de programacion, Excel, etc.)
- Otro

**Question 2:** How do you feel about collaborating with the MCF in youth programming?

**Question 3:** Do you consider it useful to have periodic meetings with the MCF to keep debating about future youth programs?

- A. Yes
- B. No

**Question 4:** What types of programs would you be interested/willing to help with?

- A. Sports (Sports Committee, Competitions, Workshops)
- B. Personal Development (Mental Health, Sexual Education, etc.)
- C. Academic Support (Programming workshops, Excel, etc.)
- D. Other



Si respondiste "Otro" en la pregunta anterior, deja una breve descripción aquí

Short answer text

¿Que te pareció el evento? \*

- Estoy muy satisfecho. Me encanto!
- Me gusto, la pase bien
- Estuvo bien
- No me gusto tanto
- No me gusto, me pareció una pérdida de tiempo

¿Algun otro comentario, duda o recomendación acerca del evento o los programas del FCM?

Long answer text

**Question 5:** In case you chose 'Other' in the previous response, leave a brief description here

**Question 6:** How do you feel about the event?

- A. I am very satisfied. I loved it!
- B. I liked it, I had a good time
- C. It was okay
- D. I did not like it much
- E. I did not like it, it was a waste of time

**Question 7:** Any other comment, doubt or recommendation regarding the event or MCF programs?



## Appendix I. Website Survey



**Encuesta Sitio Web**

Ayudanos a mejorar el sitio web del Fondo Comunitario Monteverde!

**\*Obligatorio**

¿Has visitado alguna vez el sitio web de FCM? \*

Sí

No

### Website Survey

Help us improve the MCF's website

**Question 1:** Have you ever visited the MCF website?

- A. Yes
- B. No

En caso que no, visite el sitio web de FCM a través de este enlace para responder las siguientes preguntas: <https://www.monteverdefund.org/>

En una escala del 1 al 5, ¿qué tan fácil es encontrar la sección 'Juventud' del sitio web? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Muy difícil	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Muy fácil

¿Qué tan efectivo cree que es el sitio web para mostrar cómo los miembros de la comunidad pueden participar en la programación juvenil? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
No efectivo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Muy efectivo

If not, please visit MCF's website through this link to answer the following questions:  
<https://www.monteverdefund.org/>

**Question 2:** On a scale of 1-5, (1 being difficult and 5 being very easy), how easy is it to find the Youth portion of the website?

**Question 3:** How effective do you think the website is in showing how community members can get involved in youth programming? (on a scale of 1-5, 1 being not effective, 5 being very effective)

¿Crees que el sitio web explica claramente que puedes acercarte al FCM con nuevas ideas? \*

Sí

No

¿Cree que sería beneficiosa una opción para inscribirse como interesado para ayudar con programas juveniles? \*

Sí

No

**Question 4:** Do you think the website clearly explains that you are able to approach the MCF with new ideas?

A. Yes

B. No

**Question 5:** Do you think an option to sign up as interested in joining or assisting with youth programs would be beneficial?

A. Yes

B. No

¿Cuál sería la mejor manera de que FCM se comunice contigo/difunda información nueva? \*

Whatsapp

Instagram

Facebook

El sitio web de FCM

Correo Electrónico

Otro: \_\_\_\_\_

¿Tiene alguna otra sugerencia para el sitio web que crea que sería beneficiosa? \*

Tu respuesta \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 6:** What would be the best way for MCF to contact you/spread new info?

- A. WhatsApp
- B. Instagram
- C. Facebook
- D. MCF Website
- E. Email
- F. Other

**Question 7:** Do you have any other suggestions for the website that you think would be beneficial?

A continuación, tenemos una lista de todos los espacios públicos que tenemos hasta ahora para que se lleven a cabo los programas para jóvenes, ¿hay otros que pueda agregar? \*

- Parque EcoPaz
- Valle Escondido
- Cascadas El Tigre
- Espacio Verde de Monte Verde
- Campo de fútbol de Santa Elena

Tu respuesta

---

Alguna pregunta, comentario o recomendación? Lo que sea!

Tu respuesta

---

**Question 8:** Below we have a list of all the public spaces we have so far for youth programs to take place, are there any others you could add?

- A. Parque EcoPaz
- B. Hidden Valley
- C. El Tigre Waterfalls
- D. Monte Verde Green Space
- E. Santa Elena Soccer Field

**Question 9:** Any other questions, comments, or recommendations?

## Appendix J. Involvement Interest

All this information was obtained through our interviews so in order to maintain the privacy of the interviewees, we hid the names for this report but the names have been provided to the MCF.

Name	Interest in devoting time/how much time	Anyone else they know
Person 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, before April bc she leaves for school then</li> <li>• Approximately 5hrs/week</li> </ul>	
Person 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, one day per week</li> <li>• ~ 6-8 hrs</li> </ul>	
Person 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes. About 4-5hrs/week</li> <li>• Has some leadership experience from university</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will ask around</li> <li>• Maybe her cousin</li> </ul>
Person 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is busy but is still interested in getting involved</li> <li>• Fridays are completely free</li> <li>• Was part of MCF in high school</li> <li>• Leadership experience from school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Person 19: interested in volunteering</li> <li>• Has another friend that might be in MV and is looking for volunteering</li> </ul>
Person 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, definitely</li> <li>• Loves teaching and tutoring</li> <li>• Doesn't know how much time he can give</li> <li>• Worked on staff at Far Corners</li> <li>• Interested in teaching/tutoring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Person 20</li> <li>• Person 21</li> </ul>
Person 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Definitely interested in teaching</li> <li>• Isn't sure about time, could maybe do 6 hrs on Sat or Sun</li> <li>• Interested in teaching</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friends Person 22 and Person 23</li> <li>• Has climbing friends with interest</li> </ul>
Person 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, interested in pushing programs forward</li> <li>• About 10hrs/week</li> <li>• Has youth leadership experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Person 24</li> <li>• Person 25</li> </ul>
Person 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, not more than 15 hrs/week</li> <li>• Depends on value of hours</li> <li>• Started a climbing project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Said many people are willing to put in work but MCF should be more clear about projects and how people can help</li> </ul>

Person 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interest in helping</li> <li>• 1hr/day for 5 days per week</li> <li>• Interested in teaching/leading things</li> </ul>	
Person 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, willing to move her schedule around</li> <li>• About 3-4hrs/week</li> <li>• Could help in mornings</li> <li>• Has leadership experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Person 26 and Person 27</li> <li>• There are some active people in the community</li> </ul>
Person 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interested in helping, don't know how many hours</li> <li>• Maybe 10hrs/week</li> <li>• Did a mentorship program at school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Probably her friends or their friends</li> <li>• People from her school</li> </ul>
Person 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, really wants to make it work</li> <li>• About 5hrs/week</li> <li>• Will make time!</li> </ul>	
Person 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes! Could be free 4 afternoons per week</li> <li>• Right now only Sat after 3pm and Mon at 7pm</li> <li>• Flexible schedule</li> <li>• Student leadership and mentorship experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Person 28</li> <li>• Says a lot of people would be eager</li> </ul>
Person 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Definitely! Has a lot of flexibility</li> <li>• 1-2 days per week</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Person 29</li> </ul>
Person 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, maybe 3hrs/week</li> </ul>	
Person 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, would like to participate</li> <li>• About 4hrs/week to accommodate university</li> <li>• Leadership experience at Youth Red Cross</li> <li>• Worked at MCF</li> </ul>	
Person 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, 10hrs/week</li> <li>• Lots of leadership experience</li> <li>• Interested in teaching/coaching</li> </ul>	
Person 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, but she may leave Monteverde</li> <li>• 1-2 hrs/week</li> </ul>	



## **Appendix K. List of Potential Local Partnerships and Public Spaces**

### **Potential Partnerships to be Formed or Expanded**

1. Monteverde Institute
  - Looking for more experts and collaborators
  - Has financial challenges with facilitating their widely popular camp that the MCF could help with
  - MVI is looking to work with other local organizations to expand the annual camp into a more developed youth program that focuses on recreation, arts, community service, outdoor education, self-development, social life, and prevention
  
1. Parque EcoPaz
  - EcoPaz has programs for youth on in areas such as sports, community service, environmentalism education
  - Organization is sustained on donations
  
2. La Alianza de Monteverde
  - a. El Tigre Waterfalls
    - Working towards mental health project
    - Businesses in La Alianza are committed to allocating a portion of their profits to invest in the well-being of the young people in the community
    - Wants more information about the needs/wants of the youth in the community
  
3. Hotel Alliance
  - a. Belmar Hotel
  - b. Senda Hotel
  - Hotel Alliance directs some of its profits to the MCF to use for activities that promote food insecurity in the short and medium term
  
4. Monteverde Friends School and Escuela Creativa (Cloud Forest School)
  - Could provide leaders for workshops
  - Could help the MCF advertise their youth events
  
5. Coffee Alliance
  - a. Cafe de Monteverde
  - Coffee Alliance donates a portion of their profits to the MCF to use for social and environmental projects that benefit the community

### **Potential Open Spaces for Youth Activities or Meetings**


1. Parque EcoPaz
  - Park located one kilometer from town center of Santa Elena
  - Open green space for the community with gardens and space for sports
  
2. Valle Escondido (Hidden Valley)

- Open air, covered space, and enclosed
3. Monteverde Institute
    - Multiple indoor spaces with and without technology/screens
    - Has outdoor space as well
  4. Belmar Hotel
    - Has small conference room/table
    - Potentially could fit 8-10 once social distancing is gone
  5. Cala Lodge
    - Has a multi-purpose room that could hold up to 30 people for meetings
  6. Café Caburé
    - Building has large covered balcony and small indoor “amphitheater”
    - Could be used like a movie theater for presentations
  7. Monteverde Friends School
    - Has a meeting room with a stage
  8. Monte Verde green at CASEM
    - Has space that is outdoors and public
  9. Bajo del Tigre (Monteverde Conservation League)
    - Has a classroom/meeting room
  10. Community Center, San Luis
    - Has a very comfortable meeting/gathering space
    - Includes technology, kitchen, bathrooms, chairs, etc
    - Can fit 30 people even with current restrictions
    - Managed by San Luis Development Association
    - Runs a field station with sendero Pacifico which is available for day or overnight use
  11. ASADA
    - Water commission outside of town a bit
    - Has a conference room with screen
  12. La Cuchara de mi Abuela
    - Small restaurant behind CASEM
    - Closes after lunch, so maybe could provide space for youth activities

# Appendix L. Potential Updated Website Template Created Using Wix.com

## THE YOUTH OF MONTEVERDE


Jovenes de MV
Programas
Nuevas Ideas
Eventos
Contacto



Fondo Comunitario Monteverde

Invirtiendo en el Desarrollo Comunitario Sostenible

### YOUNG PEOPLE SHARING THEIR VOICES IN THE COMMUNITY

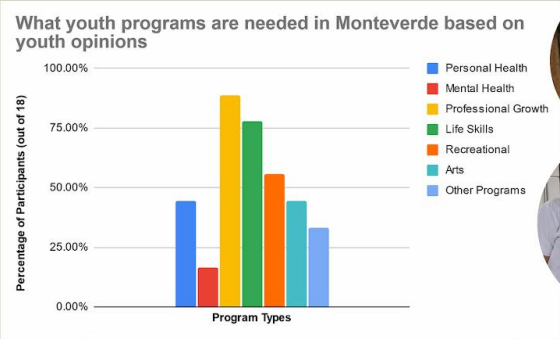


"I created my gelato business from scratch!"



Ryan S.

### Here's what we've learned so far about what programs youth want to see in the community

What youth programs are needed in Monteverde based on youth opinions



Program Type	Percentage of Participants (out of 19)
Personal Health	42%
Mental Health	16%
Professional Growth	88%
Life Skills	76%
Recreational	54%
Arts	44%
Other Programs	32%

## Have any ideas or suggestions for youth programs?

Share them with us!

[Click Here](#)

## PAST EVENTS SUPPORTING YOUTH



## FUTURE EVENTS



## CONTACT US

Leave your info to stay in the loop!

Sign up to be notified about upcoming events/programs

First Name	Last Name
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Email *	Subject
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Message	
<input type="text"/>	
<input type="button" value="Send"/>	

123-456-7890

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