Impact Report 2026



Fiscal Year 9/1/2025-8/31/2026

Letter From Our Executive Director

Dear Kismet Community,



I am thrilled to have completed my first Kismet summer and experienced firsthand the magic of our program. In 2026, Kismet celebrated its 27th summer, filled with beautiful weather to climb and connect with one another throughout the Mount Washington Valley. It was incredible to witness how much can happen over the course of eight weeks. This summer, through climbing, mentorship, and growth, students found their place within the Kismet community and reminded us all of just how much is possible when young people are given the opportunity to be themselves.

This summer, we welcomed 62 students to the Kismet House, and 10 returning graduates joined us as summer interns and house staff. While the climbing is important, the relationships and community formed throughout the school year and summer are why Kismet is such a powerful program. The consistency of staff, students, guides, and mentors allows our community to grow each year. From first-year students learning to trust their newly formed skills to fourth-year students tackling multi-pitch objectives, each student experiences a progression that is both physically and mentally challenging to them. Throughout the school year, we continued building relationships by giving students opportunities to connect, climb, and stay involved in their own communities.

The impact of this work is best expressed through the voice of our students. As one fourth-year student shared this summer:

"Kismet was an experience you only get to do once or twice in your life. It has been the happiest moments of my life."

Another student told us:

"Without it I wouldn't be who I am now."

These insights remind us the relationships, confidence, and sense of belonging built at Kismet can extend far beyond a week of climbing or even four years in the program.

Looking forward to the year ahead, we are counting down the days until we get to travel to our partner schools for Kismet presentations and interviews with new first-year students. This fall, winter, and spring, we continue to host climbing opportunities in our students' communities, and we can't wait to be joined by our house staff, interns, and climbing guides again for our 28th summer.

Thank you for believing in Kismet and, most importantly, the young folks who make this community what it is.

Gratefully,

Katrina Meserve

Katrina Meserve
Executive Director

Interested in Volunteering?
Email us to learn more!



Our Mission:

Kismet Rock Foundation nourishes the physical, intellectual and emotional development of rural and urban children throughout New England before they enter their formative teen years. Our success in redirecting the path and supporting the potential of children is accomplished by providing scholarships for a comprehensive education in technical rock climbing within the context of a stable and loving fami-

Our Vision:

Kismet creates opportunities for young people to recognize their own value through shared experiences on the cliffs and the daily experience of building a supportive, collaborative community. The most meaningful measure of our impact comes directly from our students, whose reflections offer a glimpse into the growth, connections, and sense of belonging they experience at Kismet:

"Kismet will definitely teach me others skills in life like patience is key and helping others helps yourself." - 2nd Year Student 2026, Manchester, NH"



GRIT * EMPATHY * LOVE
KISMET ROCK FOUNDATION

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Discovering What's Possible - The Impact of Kismet



When Kismet selects students for our program, we make a commitment, ensuring they can attend all four years. When Olivia (Liv) first applied for Kismet, she thought it would be a fun way to meet new people and push herself outside of her comfort zone. At the time, she wasn't sure who she was or what she was capable of, but at the beginning, something clicked. She found a group of people who quickly became some of her closest friends.

Over the course of her four years, Kismet challenged Liv to push herself and what she could do. One of her most memorable experiences was multi-pitch climbing - when she was confronted with challenge and wasn't sure she would be able to make it to the top. With encouragement from her friends and Kismet staff she kept going and now remembers that experience fondly. Looking back, she laughs about how she thought she may not make it. More importantly, she came away knowing she could accomplish things she once thought were impossible.

"That's definitely changed my mindset and the way I think," she reflected. "I always think I can't do something, but then I actually can."

Graduating from Kismet was a milestone for Liv. After her third year she moved away from northern New Hampshire to Louisiana. Kismet was able to fly Liv back to the White Mountains for her final Kismet week this summer thanks to support from our Board of Trustees. Her four years at Kismet gave her more than climbing skills. They helped her trust herself and find a community where she could belong. As she moves beyond the program, she carries with her the knowledge that what once felt impossible may be within reach - and the friendships that helped her get there. She shared **"I achieved something I never thought I would achieve, and I made lifelong friends."**



Liv on her multi pitch climb.

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2026 Kismet Summer

Thank you to our BBQ hosts, climbing guides, house staff, interns and everyone who made this summer possible!







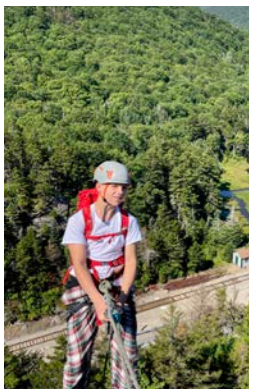




Photo by Josh Laskin

Annual Report

Fiscal Year September 1, 2025 to August 31, 2026

Thank you for supporting Kismet in our 27th year.

We couldn't do this important work without the incredible support of our community!

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Thank you to all of our Volunteers, BBQ hosts, Photographers, Guides, and Donors for making Kismet possible!

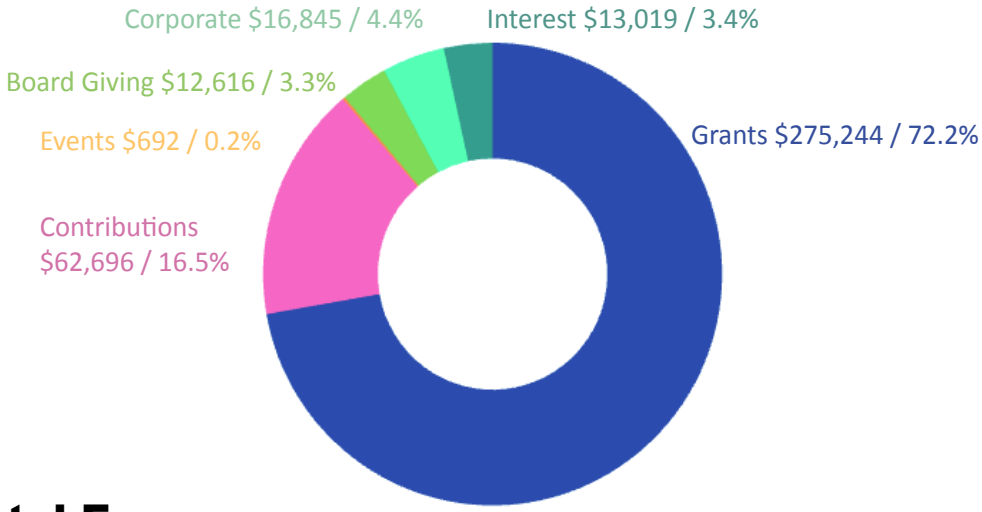


Financial Highlights

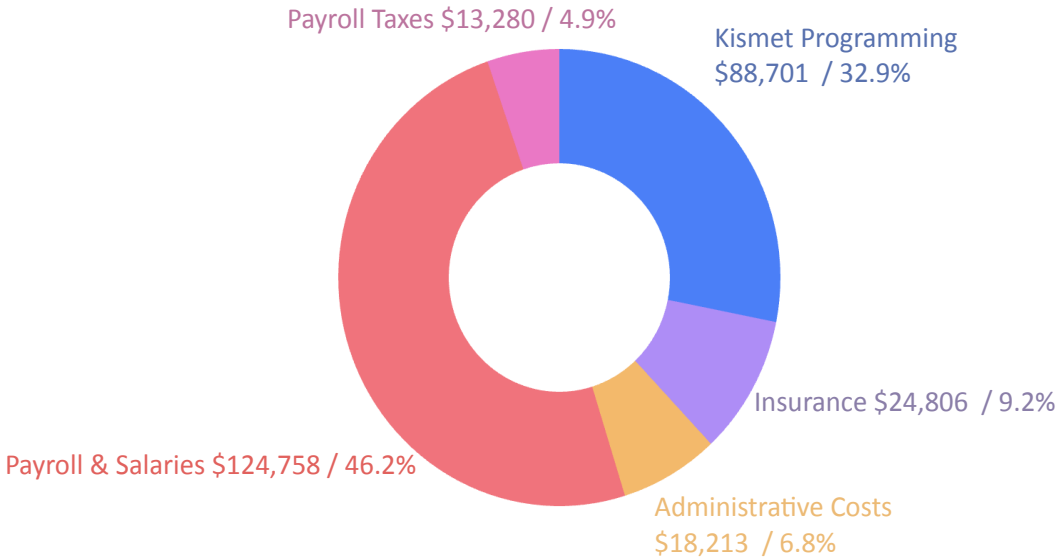
'25-'26 Fiscal Year September 1, 2025 to August 31, 2026

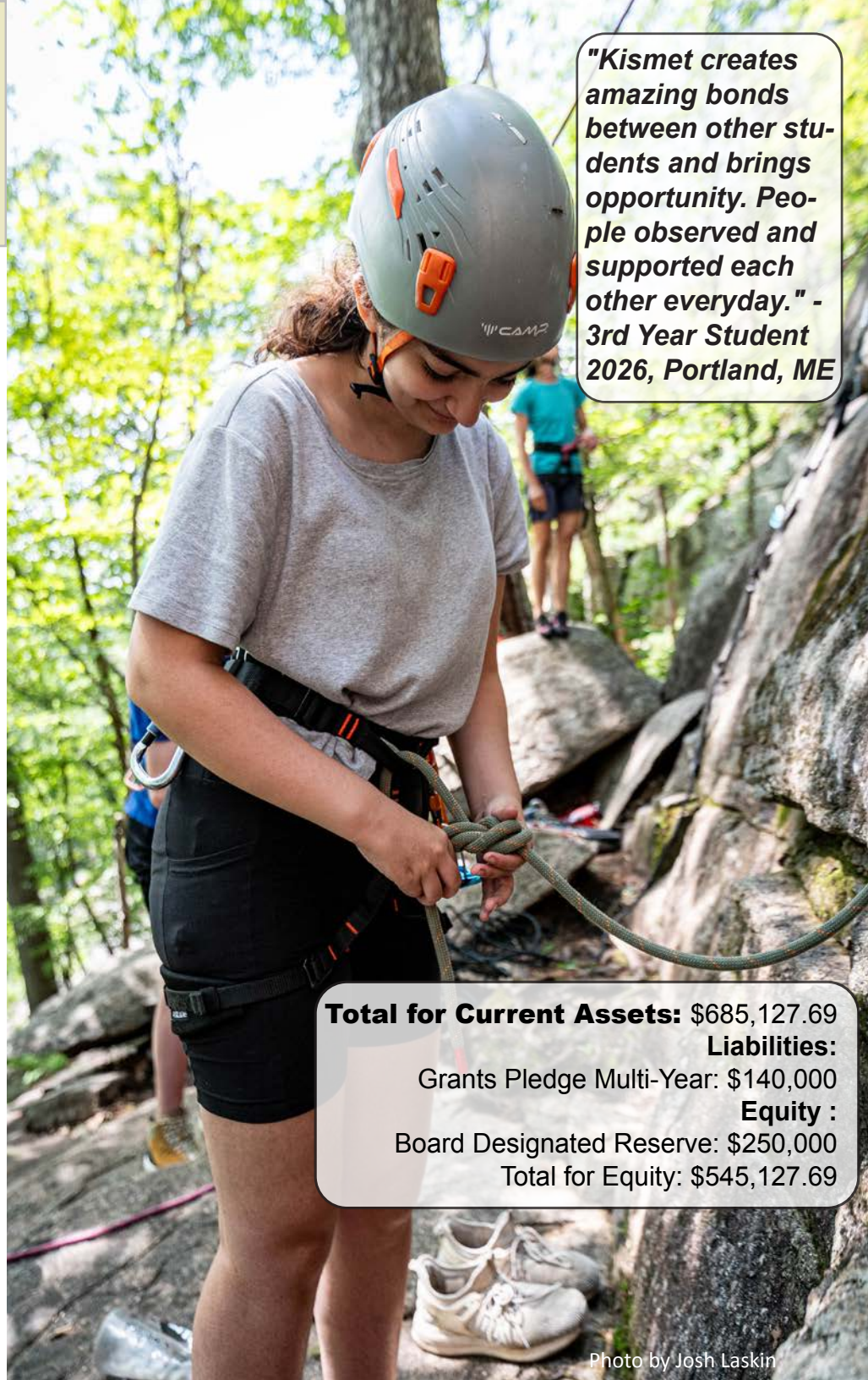
Kismet Rock Foundation's operating funds come from charitable foundations, Board support, contributions and event support. We continue to fundraise and invest and have created a reserve account to ensure the future sustainability of Kismet.

Total Income:
$381,112



Total Expenses:
$269,759





"Kismet creates amazing bonds between other students and brings opportunity. People observed and supported each other everyday." - 3rd Year Student 2026, Portland, ME

Total for Current Assets: $685,127.69

Liabilities:

Grants Pledge Multi-Year: $140,000

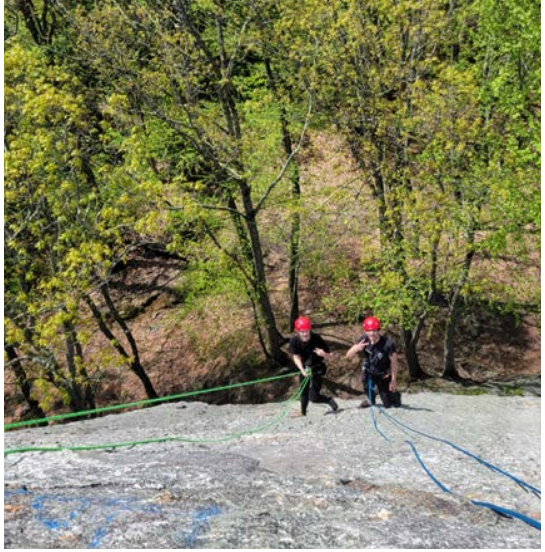
Equity :

Board Designated Reserve: $250,000

Total for Equity: $545,127.69

Photo by Josh Laskin





School Year Programs

70 total students this fiscal year

Why School-year Programs:

While sustaining eight weeks of summer programming, Kismet has also invested in strengthening school-year programming and maintaining meaningful connections with students throughout the year. This year-round approach reinforces our four-year model by providing continued opportunities for mentorship, community building, and personal growth beyond the summer months. By expanding our work beyond the summer season, Kismet is building the capacity to provide more consistent support to students year-round while strengthening the organization's ability to sustain and grow its impact over time.







"Kismet has helped me learn to deal with conflict and how to push past hard things and keep trying" - 2nd Year Student 2026, Lovell, ME





Sign up for Kismet's Newsletter

Stay up to date with everything happening in the Kismet community! Sign up at kismetrockfoundation.org

Volunteer with us

Interested in joining a school-year program, helping out at the cliff, or supporting office work? Email info@kismetrockfoundation.org to get involved!

Visit our Website!



Photo by Dominic Lentini

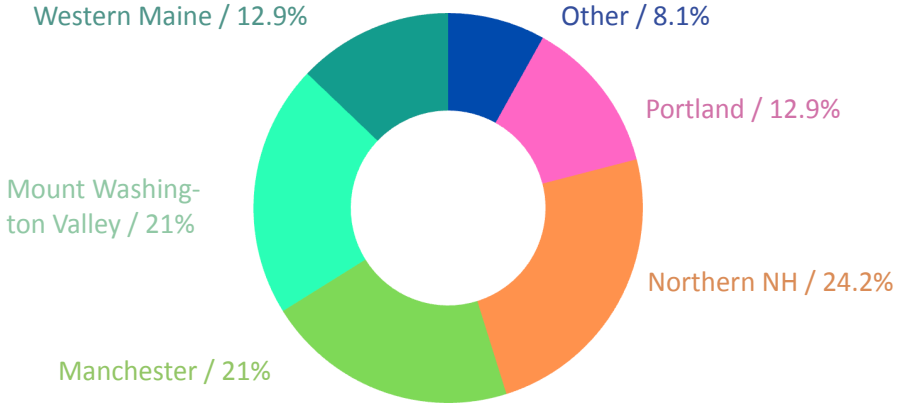
2026 Kismet Summer

62 total students this fiscal year

Throughout Kismet's eight-week summer program, a familiar weekly rhythm created consistency and connection while each group's relationships and experiences continued to evolve. Students arrived on Sundays, spent Monday through Friday climbing, gathered for a Thursday evening barbecue hosted by a local community member, and returned home on Saturdays. Within this steady structure, every week brought new challenges, shared experiences, and opportunities for growth.

- 8 Student Groups
- 8 Weeks of Programming
- 11 House Staff
- 7 Interns

Student Demographics





Kismet Rock Foundation
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North Conway, NH
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