



# YOUTH ENRICHMENT SERVICES

*Community News, YES Updates, Spotlights, & more!*

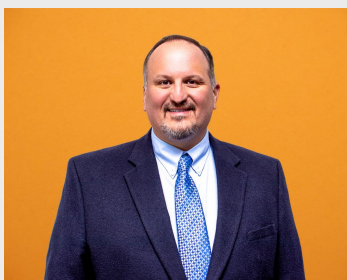
February 2025

## The Power of Volunteer Leadership: Celebrating Our Board and Welcoming New Members



Volunteerism is not only a hidden value on which many organizations depend, but it is also a mechanism they employ to multiply impact. Dedicated individuals with expertise, wisdom, experience, and passion volunteer in nonprofit organizations. In doing so, these individuals make immeasurable contributions that advance the mission, and, in many cases, far outweigh what staff are able to accumulate.

This newsletter reflects what YES believes is one of its best assets: our Board of Directors. As a grassroots, community-based organization, it is important that individuals not only have expertise and skill, but also an authentic and organic connection to the people, neighborhoods, and communities that the agency serves. Our Board is composed of dedicated and committed individuals who have a deep understanding of our mission and the work we do. They are talented and skilled professionals who represent diverse occupations and industries. Some are retired, some are C-suite level executives, and some are former teachers and principals. Some work in government organizations. Some are even former program participants or parents of current youth participants. Regardless of their involvement with YES, we are the beneficiaries of these expert professionals who bring an unlimited amount of goodwill, branding, and information that helps YES problem solve, iterate, manage funds, and gain resources. Below is a list and bio of each member.



### Bill List

Bill is the Director of Capital Markets Funding and Hedging at the Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburgh, bringing over 20 years of banking and investment experience. A Penn State and Duquesne University graduate, he is also a dedicated community volunteer and serves on several Boards, including HAAE and YES for more than three years. In addition to his Board Leadership, he was also the previous

President of the Norwin Soccer Club.

### **Cheryl Biggs**

Cheryl Biggs has been a dedicated board member of YES since 2009, bringing a passion for education, mentorship, and community empowerment. As a consultant and business owner, she has supported students facing academic and economic challenges, designed enriching educational travel experiences, and contributed to impactful mentoring and environmental initiatives at YES and beyond.



### **Della Binion**

Della Watson Binion is a passionate and dedicated biology educator with over 20 years of experience inspiring students in urban school districts across the country. Since joining Pittsburgh Public Schools in 2007, she has brought a wealth of knowledge, innovation, and leadership to the classroom, while also making a lasting impact through grant writing and community advocacy. Mrs. Binion has been a YES Board Member for more than 7 years and has leveraged her expertise as a former educator to support YES' mission.

### **Erica Michelle Lamar Motley**

Current YES Board President, Erica Lamar Motley, has dedicated nearly 10 years of volunteer service to YES' Board. She has also served as a Board Member for other local organizations and is an active member within her sorority. Through her previous role at Allegheny County Sanitary Authority (ALCOSAN), Mrs. Lamar-Motley designed programming for elementary and middle school students in alignment with the PA Academic Standards and to encourage inquiry based learning in the classroom, afterschool programs and other out-of-school time settings. Mrs. Lamar-Motley has assumed a leadership role at ALCOSAN as the Supervisor of Scholastic Outreach and continues to connect YES to STEM enrichment and summer internship opportunities.



### **Sarah Sumpter**

Mrs. Sumpter has been a dedicated Board Member at YES for over 10 years and has served in the capacity as the former Board President for many of those years. Mrs. Sumpter has helped oversee YES' growth and has been a catalyst in the agency's expansion. Mrs. Sumpter dedicated 40 years to Pittsburgh Public Schools as a teacher and principal, shaping countless students' futures. A proud graduate of the University of Pittsburgh and

Carnegie Mellon University, she remains active in her church, community, and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, embodying a lifelong commitment to service and education.

### **Barb Cardinal-Busse**

Mrs. Cardinal-Busse is a retired Family Nurse Practitioner who dedicated her career to caring for young people at the University of Minnesota, the University of Pittsburgh, and Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh. Originally from Minnesota, she has lived in Pittsburgh for 43 years, where she and her husband raised their two children.

After retiring, Barb found new purpose with YES. Passionate about supporting young people, she is honored to serve on the board and contribute to their

mission of helping youth reach their full potential.



### **Abby Wilson**

Abby Wilson is a full-service Pennsylvania realtor with Compass RE and offers design-thinking coaching and facilitation services through Steam Creative, LLC. With a background in cultural anthropology, international law, psychology, and social work, she has worked across various sectors, including healthcare, education, and public policy. Abby previously served as Deputy Director for Policy at the Allegheny County Health Department, leading design-led initiatives on healthcare access and public health. Her global experiences and

passion for innovation drive her commitment to creating people-centered solutions. Abby is dedicated to empowering communities and fostering positive change within grassroots organizations like YES where she has served as a catalytic Board Member for over 5 years.

## **YES Advisors and Legal Counsel**

Our advisor has four decades of legal service and expert council under his belt. Our legal counsel reflects one of the largest law firms in the region, as the head practicing attorney providing pro bono legal counsel for YES. They both are hidden gems and represent the agency with tenacity and selflessness.

### **Carl Rothenberger**

Carl Rothenberger retired in 2023 after 45 years as a corporate finance lawyer with Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney. A Penn State graduate with a law degree from the University of Pittsburgh, he has been a dedicated supporter of Youth Enrichment Services for over 21 years, offering pro bono legal services, board guidance, and fundraising support. Active in local politics, he serves on the Churchill and Allegheny County Democratic Committees and is a proud grandfather to four young granddaughters.



### **Jaime Tuite**

Jaime Tuite, shareholder and head of her firm's Pittsburgh office, is a seasoned employment attorney dedicated to helping businesses navigate complex workplace issues. With experience litigating over 150 cases in state and federal courts, she delivers strategic solutions for clients across industries, from finance and healthcare to technology and manufacturing. Recognized on the *Pittsburgh Power 100* list and as a *Pennsylvania Super Lawyer*, Jaime is known for her



tenacity in employment litigation, non-compete disputes, and workplace investigations. A passionate advocate, she fiercely protects her clients' interests while shaping policies that strengthen businesses and communities. Jaime has dedicated nearly 10 years of pro bono support and legal services to YES and continues to be a critical team member.

## New Board Developments

While examining the existing list of Board Members, we realized the only way it can get better is to add more individuals with expertise and passion for the work. YES has a slew of prospective new board members who are set to join the board in May 2025. These prospective members include Chris Tooker, Clarence Jackson, Michael Fickley, and Reginald Belon. With this breadth and depth of new talent, YES is set to expand its organizational footprint and capacity. Of the newest members, one is an expert technology and engineer, another an expert in government communication, two reflect the top financial services institutions in the region (both being branch managers), and the final addition is a Human Resources specialist by trade with a photographic memory of HR policies and procedures that are extremely helpful in this day and age. Meet them below.

### Chris Tooker

Chris Tooker is a U.S. Army veteran with over 20 years of experience in Operations, Human Resources, and Recruitment & Retention. A dedicated mentor, he volunteers as a youth soccer coach and serves as an interim substitute teacher for the South Fayette School District. Having faced personal challenges as a young person, Chris is passionate about guiding and supporting youth through training, development, and mentorship. Inspired by YES's mission, he is honored to serve on the board and contribute to its impact in the Pittsburgh community.



### Reginald Belon

Reginald Belon is excited to express his interest in joining the YES Board. With a background in government relations, he is committed to empowering young people through mentorship, education, and advocacy.

Mr. Belon's experience working with senior members of Congress on economic development, financial services, and housing has given me insight into shaping policies that create opportunities for communities. He is passionate about YES' mission and believes his expertise in government relations, strategic partnerships, and community development can help further its impact.

### Clarence Jackson

Clarence Jackson is a banking professional with over 20 years of experience in financial services. As Branch Manager at First National Bank in Pittsburgh, he leads a team focused on exceptional customer service, financial literacy, and community-driven banking.

A proud member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Clarence is dedicated to mentorship and

community service. He is also a devoted father to four daughters, instilling in them the values of integrity, perseverance, and education. His leadership and commitment continue to make a meaningful impact in Pittsburgh.



**Mike Fickley**

Mike Fickley currently works as a DevOps Engineer for a global logistics software company. With his technical background and perspective, Mike hopes to help YES achieve its organizational goals in a world where technology plays an increasingly integral role in all things. As a lifelong resident of the Greater Pittsburgh area as well as a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh, Mike is excited to have an opportunity to give back to the community in a meaningful way.

These prospective board members will have their credentials reviewed at our March board meeting with the vote on their status to take place. Those approved by the board will take their positions at our May 17th meeting and at the board retreat, where all of the board members will review their expected contributions, roles and responsibilities, and dates for 2025-2026 meetings.

Remember, the mission of YES is to provide socially and economically at risk kids the opportunity to achieve success through participation in mentorship, education, and enrichment programs. If you or anyone you know would like to join our advisory committee or join our board, please do not hesitate to contact me and we would be happy to consider your volunteer interest.

I could not be more proud, grateful and excited, for this group of young professionals who want to donate their time and expertise to YES to improve the lives of young people from our communities and around the county.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis Jones".

Dennis Jones, PhD

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## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

### FeWi and VTM: Empowering the Next Generation



FeWi, facilitated by Dr. Reynolds, meets every 2nd and 4th Monday, offers young women a powerful space for sisterhood where they can uplift one another, build confidence, engage in skill-building, and prioritize self-care, all while having real, meaningful conversations.



VoicesToMen, facilitated by Mr. Don, Mr. Willie, and Mr. Mario, meets every 2nd and 4th Thursday, providing young men with strong brotherhood, a voice to express themselves, and a safe space to grow, challenge themselves, and step into their full potential.

These two programs focus on mentorship, empowerment, and opening doors to opportunities that many students might not have otherwise. YES is committed to ensuring that every participant gains the support, skills, and opportunities that they need to succeed. Through fostering connection and personal growth, FeWi and VTM aspire to inspire, support, and transform the next generation into happy, healthy, and successful individuals.

## STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

### Trust, Leadership, and Growth: Junya's Path Through YES



"My name is Junya Dorsey, and I am in the teen council program. I have been with the YES program for at least 3 years now, and I can say I've learned a lot. I've overcome a lot of anger, and learned how to deal with my emotions. I'm always encouraged to take on new opportunities, and be inspiring. I've also learned to trust others around me and how to better react to certain situations. I've had great experiences with YES. They teach and guide us to be a better version of ourselves everyday. I've also bonded with a lot of the staff here and have learned things from them through personal experiences. Me being in teen council gives me a voice to help other youth around me. With all said, the YES program has helped me through my journey and has helped many others."

## General YES Updates

### Honoring Black History: Our Staff's Personal Reflections

#### Melinda Jones

"Every day is Black History to me. I live and exist in this world as a Black Woman. I am proud to be a Black Woman. I am proud of our lineage. That is what Black History Month is for me. It is a beautiful reminder that it is





not just by my strength that I am here, There are tears, sweat, blood, sacrifice, loyalty, love, joy, pain, endurance, and perseverance that has been experienced for me to be where I am today. If not for them, there would be no me and that means something. So when I am writing my life story, the flashbacks are the most important part. Flashbacks to my paternal grandparents migrating from the South to the hills or West Virginia to provide a better life for their thirteen children. To my maternal grandparents raising their eleven children in St. Clair Village. My life's fingerprint is engrained with their love, nurturing and guidance. So this Black History Month, take time to reflect

on the ways your life has not only been enhanced by Black ingenuity, but Black scholarship, Black leadership, and Black love."

### **Meiloni Erickson**

"One exciting moment I have learned about in Pittsburgh history is the Freedom House Ambulance Service, founded in 1967 which was the first ambulance service in the U.S. operated by highly trained emergency service employees, all of which were black male residents of the Hill District. Prior to that, police or funeral homes handled ambulance services in Pittsburgh and racist attitudes led to the black community unfairly dealing with overly long wait times for medical assistance. The Freedom House Ambulance Service was a direct response to the lack of support for black communities, and it's team was comprised of 25 black men who received the first iteration of EMS training including a 300 hour, 32-week course which included anatomy, physiology, CPR, advanced first aid, nursing, and defensive driving. Their skill and response time was unmatched, and in their first year of operation they responded to over 5,800 calls and saved at least 200 lives. Their work laid the foundation for the modern day EMS system all U.S. citizens can utilize, and we should all be grateful to the Freedom House Ambulance Service."



### **Mario McGee**

"Coach Jones from Westinghouse represents the epitome of Black History and Black Excellence. I first met Coach in 2009 visiting my now wife Shameika. She played for Coach Jones. Coach is one of the reason I push so hard for inner-city youth and basketball opportunities. She has made a big impact in the city and on the lives of over thousands of young women. Although she has retired from teaching, she is still coaching and making contributions to the lives of young people. She demonstrates love for the young women she coaches. I aspire to be like Coach Jones and coach my 6th grade the same way she does with her high school girls. She holds them accountable and she pushes them to better themselves. She hasn't given up so why should I? #TheVillage."



### **Lori Crawford**

"Black History is the truth of the world, the possibilities of humankind, and the richness



that makes life vibrant and fulfilling. Black History is past, present, and future - and I am endlessly inspired by the youth YES serves who are creating their legacy of perseverance and brilliance, in real time, despite systems and social structures set up against them. Former YES student and employee Raheem Perry once wore a shirt that said "I am Black History" and the conversations had with strangers on the street as a result of him wearing that shirt while we were out on a YES field trip continue to inspire and encourage me."

### **Glen Almon**

"When I was in the 8th grade, my history teacher recruited me to be in a Black History Bowl where I would compete against other schools. Throughout the training process, she made me aware of the integral role Black folks have played throughout history from sports to scientific inventions to politics. Witnessing the ways in which Black History has been rewritten and erased pushed me to explore the archives, study, and center the ways in which Black folks, globally, have contributed to the increased life experiences of humanity."



### **Dr. Sinex**

"Black history month is an important time to reflect and celebrate the boundless contributions of our people throughout history. It is also a time to reflect on the direct impact of those who have touched our lives. This black history month, I remember my grandfather, William B. Easley, Sr. He instilled in me the importance of learning and understanding history as a means of empowerment. He taught me that knowledge is power, and education is the one thing that no one can take away from you. He also taught me to give back, take care of others, and to share your "wealth", as our family "wealth" was a result of decisions and

opportunities of relatives long ago. These lessons have helped me accomplish seemingly impossible goals, and impact the lives of so many others in the same way he did when he was alive. Black history celebrates well-known leaders (like Martin Luther king, Jr.), but it is important to also celebrate and remember that there are so many others (like my grandfather) who contributed to the cultural legacy of America."

### **Danielle Stewart**

"Recently, I watched Judas and the Black Messiah, a film based on Fred Hampton and the Black Panther Party. What struck me most was how



young he was—just 21—and FEARLESS in his commitment to uniting and uplifting his people. Fred's ability to organize, educate, and mobilize communities was truly inspiring.

Even though his life was tragically cut short, his messages of empowerment and self-determination still resonate today. His story is a reminder that, regardless of our age, we all have the power to challenge injustice and take action to build stronger communities."



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