



YOUTH ENRICHMENT SERVICES

STAY CONNECTED WITH YES AND GET THE SCOOP ON OUR STUDENTS & STAFF!

MARCH 2022

A Message from YES' Executive Director

There is very little question that life has returned to the YES Office with the buzzing of our students, our preparations for summer programs, and the energy we feel amongst our stakeholders, advisors, and partners to recreate a pre-pandemic lifestyle with added support systems we have put in place over the last two years.

That said, as YES begins its second year of its Strategic Action Plan we have found that it is anything but back to normal as no one can really define "normal" these days. However, we are approaching this season with optimism and a clear-eyed vision for what we believe to be a plan that will meet the needs, interests, and support of our youth and families who are many of which are still struggling to find their footing post-COVID.



To this end, in March 2022 I attended the PA STEM Ambassador lobbying effort at the State Capitol. It was truly my pleasure to meet with Representative Anita Astorino Kulick, representing the 45th District of Pennsylvania. The unique take away from Representative Kulick was how concerned and committed many of our political leaders are to the plight of our children and families.

Representative Kulick was sincere in her request for follow-up to share future ideas for expanding YES' services to some of her other communities. During my visit to the capital, I was struck by the following statement: "Government does not belong to everyone, only those who show up." We need to continue to be aggressive in visiting legislators at the local, state, and national levels to press our cause and voice our concern for the decisions they make and the impact these decisions have on the lives of the youth and families we serve.

More to come on these initiatives in our forthcoming newsletters.

For now, peace and blessings,



Dr. Jones

CMU Center for Shared Prosperity

YES' Executive Director Dr. Jones is a member of a subcommittee within the Center for Shared Prosperity at Carnegie Mellon University. Through this membership, Dr. Jones has created two requests for proposals related to leadership and advocacy. These leadership projects would be of significant help to local community groups who have an interest in addressing challenges they identify in their communities. The novel idea has promise and potential. More details are forthcoming as the Center for Shared Prosperity continues to develop these proposal requests for planning grants to address community challenges.

YES Board Retreat

On March 19th, 2022 YES hosted its annual Board of Directors retreat at the YES Office, facilitated by Marlin Woods, current YES Board Member. The event featured a working case study presented by YES' consultants Michelle Walker and James Shealey. The retreat was highlighted by robust discussions addressing significant organizational challenges such as sustainability, succession planning, and future growth opportunities. Moving forward, the YES Board of Directors is focusing its efforts on major fundraising connected to corporate partners, securing new office space, and organizing our extensive alumni base to move the YES mission forward.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Preparing Students the "YES Way"

YES is expanding its after-school enrichment opportunities for Mentoring Partnerships (MP) participants. MP students can now engage in "YES Way," weekly sessions ranging from culinary arts and hands-on science to documentary/film study and community development. These sessions enrich students' experiences and foster their sense of belonging. While the program is in its pilot stage, students and staff are enjoying the

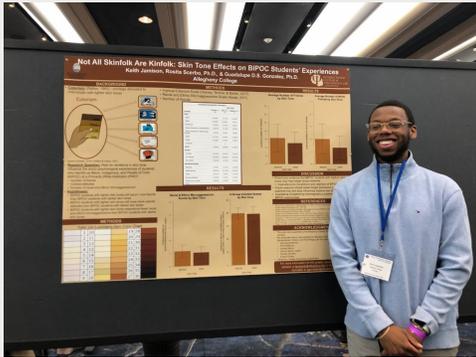
space.

YES Students take on the Roller Rink

On March 30th YES took a group of young people to the Neville Island Roller Drome for a night filled with fun and skating. Throughout the night, YES students became more comfortable on the rink and many were participating in the fun skating activities by the end of the night. Social outings like this one are a good reminder for YES staff and students to take a break from the academic and career preparation work to build comradery and relax. We cannot wait for our next social outing!



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Keith is a social scientist and uses his research platform to engage in critical conversations on race, gender, and sexuality.

Keith is all but new to this conversation – as he served as a lead researcher on our 2017 Leading the Discussion on Lead (Pb) Project where he and his peers investigated Lincoln Lemington residents' exposure to lead.

Months before his graduation, Keith's college career culminated in a recent opportunity to present his undergraduate research on BIPOC college students' experiences with colorism at the National Psychology Conference. He had a stellar presentation with a large following of curious and engaged audience members.

As he commands this stage, he looks forward to making future contributions through his continued

TFA
TEACH FOR AMERICA

Glen, a former YES student, cements his post-college plans just one month before he walks the stage. Glen was selected as a Teach for America Corps Member and will be placed in Greensboro, NC to facilitate the learning of elementary students. Glen is excited about the opportunity and hopes it will catalyze his journey to receiving his PhD. Congratulations on this awesome opportunity, Glen.

applied research.

Congratulations, Keith.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Thanking and Welcoming YES Interns



Since August 2021, YES has been blessed to have Kylee Kolbicka, a current University of Pittsburgh sophomore and Community Assistant. During her short time at YES, she has impacted multiple facets of the organization through fundraising, one-on-one tutoring, and special program planning. YES is excited to see what the future has in store for Kylee and is hopeful that she will find her way back to YES.

As we express our gratitude to Kylee, we also welcome a new group of interns to support YES' Learn and Earn program for the summer. For the first time, YES will serve as a host site for Carnegie Mellon University's Pittsburgh Summer Internship Program. In doing so, YES will receive two CMU students for the summer who will weave their information science expertise into YES' existing program structure.

The summer is quickly approaching and YES is eager to continue developing its partnerships with the area's top post-secondary institutions.

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