

# YSD SCOOP!

IN

THIS  
ISSUE

NaCO Achievement 2023  
National Award

Palm Beach County Level  
Up Mentoring Program  
recognized as 'Best in  
Category' by the National  
Association of Counties p.2

YSD and Palm Beach  
County 'Gets Its Green On'  
for Eighth Year

Youth Services Department  
and County 'Get's Its Green  
On' for eighth year in  
support of mental health.  
p.3-5

Palm Beach County Youth  
Summit 2023

400 Youth learn 'The Best  
of Me and We' at the 2023  
Palm Beach County Youth  
Summit  
p.9



August 2023





# PBC EARNS NATIONAL 'BEST IN CATEGORY' ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FOR THE LEVEL UP MENTORING PROGRAM



Palm Beach County Level Up Mentoring Program has been recognized with a Best in Category for Children and Youth Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties (NACo). The awards honor innovative, effective county government programs that strengthen services for residents.

Palm Beach County Youth Services Department, in partnership with the United Way of Palm Beach County's Mentor Center and the Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County, launched the Level Up Enhanced Mentoring Program in 2021 to offer mentoring opportunities for youth ages 11 to 19 who are involved with or at risk of entering the juvenile justice or dependency systems. The goal is to match youth with a long-term, positive role model, make referrals to community-based services, and provide opportunities to continue education or career exploration. When a young person has a consistent supportive adult in their life, they can overcome adversity and build resiliency. Often young people involved in the dependency or delinquency system lack that supportive adult.

"Collaboration is key in providing opportunities for young people in Palm Beach County, and we are very appreciative

that the NACo recognizes this unique collaboration with United Way and the Children's Services Council," said Tammy K. Fields, Director of Palm Beach County Youth Services.

Each year, NACo's Achievement Awards are given in 18 categories that reflect the vast, comprehensive services counties provide. The categories include children and youth, criminal justice and public safety, county administration, information technology, health, civic engagement and more. One program is selected as Best in Category in each of the categories from all the submissions from across the nation.

Launched in 1970, the program is designed to recognize innovation in county government.

"The Achievement Awards demonstrate excellence in county government and the commitment to serve our residents every day," said NACo President Denise Winfrey. "This year's winners represent some of the most innovative and collaborative efforts we have seen in over 50 years of presenting these awards."

For more information about Level Up Mentoring click [here](#).

For more information about NACo's Achievement Awards, click [here](#).





# PBC 'GETS ITS GREEN ON' FOR EIGHTH YEAR IN SUPPORT OF MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS



The Palm Beach County Youth Services Department, in partnership with Birth to 22: United for Brighter Futures and the Becoming a Trauma Sensitive Community Action Team, celebrated the Eighth Annual "Get Your Green On" (GYGO) campaign and invited Palm Beach County to wear green on May 18, 2023. The Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners issued a proclamation declaring May 2023 Mental Health Awareness and Trauma Informed Care Month in Palm Beach County.

The GYGO campaign aims to raise awareness by creating visible support and fostering safe spaces to talk openly about mental health and trauma. Lauren Zuchman, Executive Director of BeWellPBC, and Katherine Murphy, Chief Executive Officer of NAMI Palm Beach County, co-chairs the campaign.

This year the campaign committee, in collaboration with Deon C. Jefferson and Kenya Madison, hosted a countywide signature event on May 18 called the 'Express Yourself Fashion Art Ball 2.0.' The theme of the Art Ball was 'Super Hero,' where guests were encouraged to wear their favorite superhero costume or create a new mental health superhero. Attendees were entertained with special performances supporting mental health awareness from Palm Beach County talent. Special giveaways were awarded to the "Best Expressed" attendees; treats to eat and a live DJ for dancing were also provided. The event was free, open to the public, and held at the ARTS Warehouse in Delray Beach. Sponsors for the Fashion Art Ball were Palm Beach County Youth Services Department, BeWellPBC, NAMI of PBC, United Way of PBC, Healthier Delray Beach, Birth to 22, United Way of PBC, and Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County.



# PBC 'GETS ITS GREEN ON' FOR EIGHTH YEAR IN SUPPORT OF MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS (CONT)

Youth Services Department's Public Relations Specialist, Tevin Ali, worked with the Palm Beach County Information Systems Services (ISS) web services team to update the Get Your Green On website to feature 2023 mental health events hosted in Palm Beach County, mental health resources, and a newly recorded 2023 Channel 20 promo video for the County Connection Channel 20 show in support of Mental Health Awareness & Trauma-Informed Care.

The Youth Services Department's Education & Training Center held four Lunch & Learns to celebrate. These events offered presentations on topics related to mental health, such as "Child Abuse Awareness and Presentation," presented by Allie Picardi, M.S.; "Using Inclusive Language to Create Equitable Spaces," presented by Dr. Danniella Jones, Psy.D.; "Take Control of Your Coping: Steps for Coping with Anxiety & Depression" presented by Emily Deming, Ph.D.; and "Body Esteem: Ways to Boost Your Child's Self-Esteem," presented by Megan O'Connor Szuma, M.S.

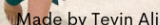
Among those that got their green on were Palm Beach County Commissioners and many County Departments, BeWellPBC, Chil-

dren's Services Council of Palm Beach County, Faulk Center for Counseling, The School District of Palm Beach County, Healthier Delray Beach, United Way of Palm Beach County, NAMI Palm Beach County, Alpert Jewish Family and Children's Service, Ruth & Norman Rales Jewish Family Services, Community Partners of South Florida, Center for Child Counseling Palm Beach County, City of Greenacres, Healthier Boynton Beach, Palm Health Foundation, 211 Helpline Palm Beach and Treasure Coast, The Lord's Place, Young Singers of the Palm Beaches, Neuro Behavioral Hospitals, Health Care District of Palm Beach County, Families First of PBC, Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies PBC, HCA Florida JFK Hospital, West Palm Beach Center for Arts & Technology, Genesis Community Health, Palm Beach County Behavioral Health Coalition, Unity3 Palm Beach, Florida Department of Children & Families, Miss Palm Beach County 2023, American Association of Care Giving Youth, West Palm Beach Mental Health Coalition, Pathways to Prosperity, Love Hope and Healing, and many others.

To view all of the "Get Your Green On" photos shared in May, visit the Get Your Green On campaign's social media pages on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).





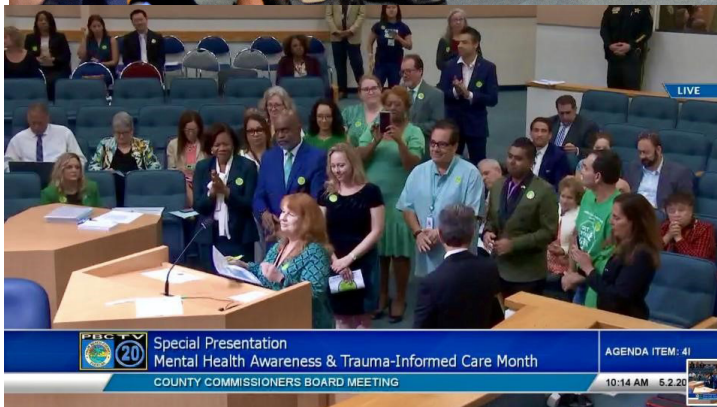




# 'GET YOUR GREEN ON' PROCLAMATION 2023

At the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners meeting on Tuesday, May 2, 2023, Palm Beach County Mayor, Gregg K. Weiss, presented a proclamation declaring May 2023 as Mental Health Awareness and Trauma Informed Care Month in Palm Beach County.

Members of the 'Get Your Green On' (GYGO) Campaign Committee and the Birth to 22 United for Brighter Futures Alliance were present and encouraged everyone to wear green on Thursday, May 18, 2023, to support mental health awareness and trauma-informed care.





# PALM BEACH COUNTY COMMUNITY REMEMBRANCE PROJECT AND EQUAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE (EJI) ANNOUNCES 2023 SCHOLARSHIP ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS



The Palm Beach County (PBC) Community Remembrance Project Coalition, in partnership with the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI), announced the winners of the 2023 EJI Racial Justice Essay Contest. Students were asked to examine the history of a topic of racial injustice and to discuss

its legacy today. The submitted essays explained students' chosen topic using a specific historical event(s), explored how the injustice persists, and imagined solutions for a future free from racial injustice. Students were encouraged to reflect on how the topic impacts their own lives and communities.

The 2023 EJI Essay Contest Recipients are:

- **Jade Shaw**, Suncoast Community High School
- **Nedjie Aurelien**, Atlantic Community High School
- **Tyson Elliott**, Wellington Community High School

- **Samantha Pierre**, South Tech Academy
- **Jazmin Matney**, Santaluces Community High School
- **Dafany Miranda-Zepeda**, Grove Community High School

An awards ceremony was held on June 29th, 2023, at the Palm Beach County Main Library, where recipients received formal recognition of the scholarships in the presence of family, EJI representatives, and PBC Community Remembrance Project coalition members.

Ted White served as the emcee for the ceremony. The student recipients also read their winning essays to the coalition and audience members at the event.





# PALM BEACH COUNTY COMMUNITY REMEMBRANCE PROJECT AND EQUAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE (EJI) ANNOUNCES 2023 SCHOLARSHIP ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS (CONT)





# 400 YOUTH LEARN 'THE BEST OF ME AND WE' AT 2023 YOUTH SUMMIT OF PBC

The 2023 Palm Beach County Youth Summit occurred on April 29th at Palm Beach Central High School, attracting nearly 400 middle and high school students. The annual event focused on the theme "The Best of Me and We in 2023" and featured engaging discussions on topics such as healthy relationships, mental health, substance abuse, and more.

A highlight of the summit was the presence of renowned motivational speaker SaulPaul, whose inspiring words were accompanied by his guitar and loop pedal, creating a unique and captivating experience. Participating students had the opportunity to earn ten community service hours for their attendance at this full-day

event, which aimed to empower and educate young individuals.

Additionally, Youth Services' very own Tania Shindo-Henderson, Program Evaluator, and Tevin Ali, Public Relations Specialist, presented a workshop titled "Financial Literacy: The Stuff I Bet You Didn't Know" to high school students. The workshop was well received, with lots of interaction. Youth Services also shared resources about the department at the event.

Are you interested in helping out next year? Please get in touch with Marcia Bahia at the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office at [mbahia@pbso.org](mailto:mbahia@pbso.org).





## YSD DIRECTOR PRESENTED WITH 'SPIRIT OF SANCTUARY' AWARD FOR DEDICATION TO IMPLEMENTING POSITIVE CHANGE IN THE COMMUNITY

On April 19, 2023, Tammy K Fields, Director of Palm Beach County Youth Services Department, was presented the 'Spirit of Sanctuary' Award at the 2023 Sanctuary Institute Network Days in White Plains, NY.

At this year's Sanctuary Institute Network Days, the Sanctuary Institute honored individuals their organization nominated for living and breathing the tenets of The Sanctuary Model. Tammy K. Fields was recognized for exemplifying the Sanctuary's commitments and values of being kind, compassionate, trustworthy, humble, capable, ethical, brave, and generous. Recipients of this award were also recognized for creating a safe haven for colleagues and/or clients, who approach their work from a place of curiosity and support rather than judgement and are dedicated to motivating others for positive change in their communities.

The Sanctuary Institute provides training and consultation services to organizations that work with vulnerable adults, children, and families to help an agency's leaders reclaim a culture of hope and innovation. The Sanctuary Model, originally developed by Dr. Sandra Bloom, is a blueprint for clinical and organizational change. The trauma-informed model promotes an environment emphasizing the seven commitments of nonviolence, emotional intelligence, social learning, open communication, social responsibility, democracy, and growth and change.

In September 2022, the Sanctuary Institute certified the Youth Services Department department-wide in the Sanctuary Model of Trauma-Informed Care. Palm Beach County Youth Services Department and the communities within Palm Beach County have benefited from the leadership of Tammy K. Fields for bringing the

Sanctuary Model of Trauma-Informed Care to the department and nurturing a safe haven environment for colleagues and the community the department serves. "Some of the children and families we serve have experienced multiple traumatic events that impact behaviors and the ability to cope. Providing services with a trauma-informed lens is essential. Our goal is to build resiliency for our youth," said Tammy K. Fields, Director of the Youth Services Department.



## YOUTH SERVICES PRESENTS AT THE 2023 'SANCTUARY INSTITUTE NETWORK DAYS'

Tammy K Fields, Director of Youth Services, and Dr. Twila Taylor, Director of Residential Treatment and Family Counseling at Youth Services, presented "One Size Doesn't Fit All, But Everyone Fits in the Sanctuary Tent" at the Sanctuary Institute Network Days 2023 in White Plains, NY on April 19, 2023.

The theme of the conference was 'Agility Through Loss and Change.' Attendees came from all over the United States and internationally as far away as Australia. Palm Beach County Youth Services is certified by the Sanctuary Institute in their trauma-informed care model.





# BIRTH TO 22 COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

As Birth to 22 creates the updated Youth Master Plan 2.0, it is vital that the voices of youth and the adults who care about them are being heard. Palm Beach County's Youth Services Department – Outreach and Community Programming Division engaged our communities in eleven targeted Community Conversations in 2023. These in-person events were throughout the county in April and May. These conversations were open to the public and utilized locations that previously had regular participants in attendance.

The Community Conversations started by providing youth and county data through a game of Family Feud. Questions centered around the possible strategic priority topics of mental health, economics, and education; such as "What are the leading causes of mental health struggles for high school students?" and "What Palm Beach County city has the highest number of juvenile arrests?" Two groups of five competed as either youth versus youth

or youth versus adults. Then the group transitioned into an open discussion about the data, concerns related to their community, and to provide possible solutions.

In total, 402 participants attended the eleven Community Conversations, 222 of those participants identified as youth. Next, the information will be provided to the Birth to 22 consultant Jeanette Gordon to see how the Youth Master Plan 2.0 can take the recommendations and concerns gathered by the community and create a plan to be executed over the next three to five years. Another set of Community Conversations is scheduled to occur towards the fall before the plan is finalized.

Additional information can be found on the Birth to 22 [Engagement Team website](#) and will be shared in future publications of the YSD Scoop.



## BIRTH TO 22: ENSURING SAFETY & JUSTICE KICKOFF

Governmental agencies, community stakeholders, youth advocates, service providers, citizens and young adults joined forces on April 17, 2023, to learn more about Birth to 22's initiative to support youth in Palm Beach County. PBC's Birth to 22 Ensuring Safety & Justice Action Team hosted the first inaugural community kick-off event at Mounts Botanical Gardens. The mission of the Action Team is to "develop and implement a collaborative process to support youth (ages 13 to 18) who are involved in the justice and/or criminal justice systems by enhancing and expanding resources and activities to reduce criminal activities."

The event kicked off with entertainment courtesy of Digital Vibez and a vendor marketplace where attendees had the opportunity to network and learn about resources and programs in Palm Beach

County while enjoying refreshments provided by United Way.

Motivational speaker, Caleb Walesco got the crowd pumped up for an exciting session, followed by Marie Victor, who impressed everyone as she bravely shared her personal story and journey. The Birth to 22 Ensuring Safety & Justice Action Team Co-Chairs provided an overview of the committee's work and highlighted their priorities for 2023. This included a presentation on youth data by Sarah Freglette as well as a presentation of the first two Birth to 22 Partner Badges by Randi Taylor. The event concluded with a call to action by Winter Jones and Holly Carotenuto, encouraging attendees to join the work of the Action Team.





# YSD'S PR SPECIALIST GIVES COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS TO THE FAU CLASS OF 2023



On May, 4, 2023, Tevin Ali, Public Relations Specialist for Youth Services Department, delivered the Commencement Address to the Florida Atlantic University (FAU) Spring Graduating Class of 2023.

Tevin, who has received numerous awards and national media attention as a speaker and author for his impact on students and professionals across the nation, paid tribute to his father for paving the way through struggle and sacrifice to make his story possible.

In his address, Tevin recounts his father's lessons of selflessness and sacrifice to work hard and how his father put heartfelt effort into providing for his two boys while also helping his family, friends, and the community.

"Because of my father's ambition and hard work, he paved the way for my brother and

me to get an education in the United States. He built a road that not only he could use but one many others can benefit from. His road led me to forge my own road as a speaker and author, impacting the next generation and helping them overcome their life barriers, obstacles, and challenges," said Tevin Ali in reflection of his commencement address.

Ali inspirationally concluded to the graduating class, "This moment has been entrusted to you, the next generation, by many people. Praying that their investment in you and your investment in yourself would work for the good of all. That all their hopes would, one day, become manifested to make the world better. That hope is you. You are the dream. You are the legacy."

To view Tevin's Commencement Address, please visit: <https://www.youtube.com/live/uWC8NvdVypI?feature=share&t=1976>





# YSD STAFF GRADUATION SPOTLIGHTS

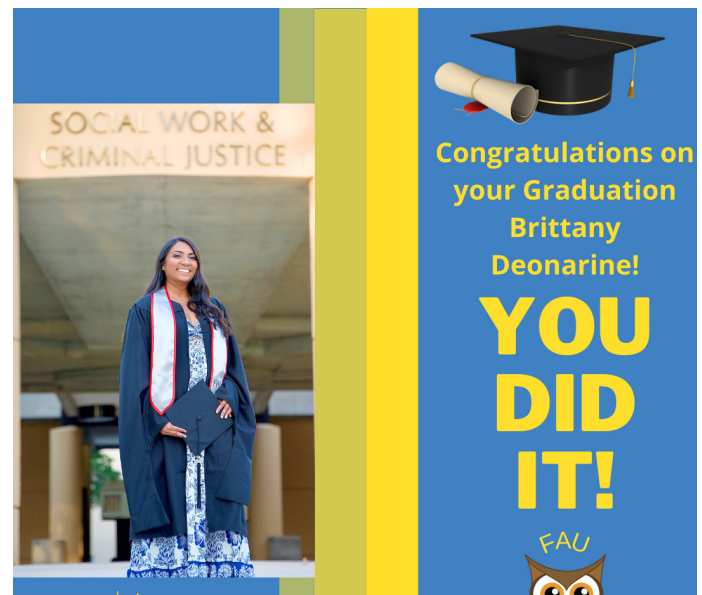
Graduate Spotlight | Freddy DuBois | Graduating from Florida Atlantic University (FAU)

Kudos to Freddy who graduated this past May from FAU with a Bachelor of Administration Degree in Business Management. Freddy previously served as YSD's Student Technician in the Finance, Contracting, and Administrative Services Division, assisting with Public Relations work. He now serves as the department's Procurement Specialist.

Graduate Spotlight | Brittany Deonarine | Florida Atlantic University (FAU)

Kudos to Brittany, who completed her internship with Youth Service's Youth and Family Counseling (YFC) this semester.

In her next steps Brittany will be pursuing a career in social work at FAU.



## HIGHRIDGE FAMILY CENTER CELEBRATES THEIR 2023 PROGRAM GRADUATES

On Thursday, May 25, 2023, Youth Services Highridge Family Center celebrated the graduation of 10 students from their program. Family was present to support the students on their special day.

Congratulations to all our Highridge Family Center graduates!





# KUDOS TO FORMER STUDENT-TECH INTERN

Kudos to former Student Tech Intern Joseph Balesano on his new role as 'Performance Auditor' with the State of Connecticut Auditors of Public Accounts.

Joe is currently working on an audit of the private providers of special education in the State of Connecticut. Joe finds this a very interesting topic because of the rising costs of private provider tuition in recent years. His team will provide recommendations to the Connecticut General Assembly on resolving this issue.

Good morning Tammy!

Hope everything is going well for you and the whole YSD team! Just wanted to reach out and thank you again for everything you did for me the past couple years. I am more than a month in to my new position as a Performance Auditor I and I am enjoying it a lot! I am currently working on an audit of the private providers of special education in the State of Connecticut. It is a very interesting topic because of the rising costs of private provider tuition in the recent years. My team will be providing recommendations to the Connecticut General Assembly on how to resolve this issue.

I would not be in the position I would be in today without you and the opportunities that YSD provided me. The experience with the Sanctuary Certification and the other improvement projects gave me a foundation to succeed as a Performance Auditor.

P.S. I still wear my GYGO and Walktober shirts because YSD taught me the importance of mental health awareness and self-care!

Hope you have a great weekend!

**Joseph Balesano**

Performance Auditor I  
State of Connecticut  
Auditors of Public Accounts  
165 Capitol Ave | Hartford | CT | 06106



## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TECHNICIAN FIRST GRADUATING CLASS

We celebrate the first graduating Seniors (40 total from 3 schools) to complete the Behavioral Health Technician Program in The School District of Palm Beach County. This curriculum (brand new this school year) was designed to provide high school students with the learning and experience necessary for them to pass the Behavioral Health Technician Certification given by the Florida Certification Board. Upon graduation, the students can begin working in an entry-level position while they work toward the 1,500 field hours required for the full Behavioral Health Technician certification.

The Behavioral Health Technician program is the first of its kind to be offered in secondary curriculum state-wide. Developed in partnership with BeWellPBC and the School District of Palm Beach County's Choice and Career Options and Behavioral and Mental Health Departments, and included Palm Beach County Youth Services Department, CareerSource Palm Beach County, United Way of Palm Beach County, and several other partners.





# COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR AWARDS YSD STAFF FOR COVID RELATED WORK

On May 17, 2023, several current and former YSD employees received recognition for their work during the COVID-19 Pandemic at a special recognition ceremony held by Palm Beach County Administrator Verdenia Baker at the Governmental Center in West Palm Beach. Administrator Baker recognized the following YSD staff members and initiatives:

## Equity & Diversity Program

Dr. Danniella Jones, Psychologist, led efforts to provide resources and tools to assist multidisciplinary professionals and outreach to youth, families, and various community organizations after the murder of George Floyd, in the summer of 2020, as the COVID-19 pandemic was fresh worldwide. Dr. Jones offers professional presentations and workshops to various community members on multiple platforms to discuss the disparity and microaggression following Mr. Floyd's death. The

tremendous positive response to the program resulted in a platform that is able to function as a proactive intervention in the advancement of equality and education on socioeconomic disparities.

## RTFC Division Multi-Program Transformation

Within eight days of the COVID-19 pandemic declaration, Dr. Shayna Ginsburg, Chief of Clinical Services at YSD's Education & Training Center, and Dr. Amanda Terrell, Chief of Clinical Services at Highridge Family Center, transitioned all outpatient and residential services to virtual platforms. The Chiefs' unwavering determination and dedication to reinstating these crucial therapeutic services to the youth and families in Palm Beach County undergoing trauma associated with the pandemic. This transition allowed Youth Services Department's Residential Treatment and Family Counseling (RTFC) phone therapy sessions to be



implemented quickly. Research done by the Chiefs allowed for the development of Telepsychology Best Practices, followed by the Basics of Telemental Health and multiple Zoom trainings, so the clinicians of RTFC could provide competent and ethical mental health services to our clients.

## Highridge Family Center Intensive Outpatient Program

Instead of closing its doors to families or limiting services to only telehealth during the COVID-19 pandemic, Highridge Family Center altered its programming to become an Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP), supporting families feeling uncomfortable or unsafe leaving their children alone.

Highridge clients typically have increased needs for supervision and educational support. The center was able to alter the program and conversion to the IOP, which was the first time in more than 20 years the program changed its five-day residential structure.

As new guidelines and research became available regarding COVID-19 on a daily basis, Highridge Family Center staff Majorie Auguste, Victim Advocate, Jeffrey Sinclair, Residential Youth Counselor, Vynteria Davis, Juvenile Residence Technician, and Andrea Morales, Juvenile Residence Technician, became responsive to altering the program to enhance safety and security.





# TURN ON THE LIGHT CONFERENCE

The Youth Services Department was a sponsor of the 18th Annual Turn on the Light National Conference for the Wellbeing of Children and Families. The conference was hosted by The Children's Healing Institute at the Palm Beach County Convention Center. Several Youth Services Department team members attended the conference on April 27, 2023, and provided an exhibitor table with resources for the community.

The keynote address was provided by Diena "Rainey" Nave, clinical trauma therapist, advocate, and biker who survived a lifetime of being trafficked. Dr. Danniella Jones and Dr. Emily Deming from the Education & Training Center provided two workshops at the conference. Dr. Jones presented "Using Inclusive Language to Create Equitable Spaces," during which she explained the relationship between social norms, bias, and language and provided strategies that promote inclusivity through language. Dr. Deming presented "Utilizing Trauma-Informed Strategies for Managing Disruptive Behaviors," during which she discussed strategies to increase positive behaviors and manage problem behaviors using PCIT skills.

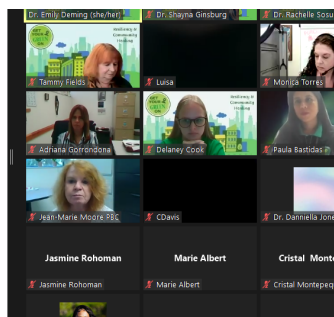


## EDUCATION & TRAINING CENTER PRESENTATIONS

### TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR COPING

Steps for Coping with Anxiety and Depression

Emily Deming, Ph.D.  
Postdoctoral Fellow  
Education and Training Center



During the third quarter of FY23, Ed Center presented several Lunch & Learns to the community during May, in honor of Mental Health Awareness Month, whose goals are to fight stigma, provide support, educate the public, and advocate for policies that support people with mental health concerns and their families.

These well-attended presentations included Child Abuse Prevention (Allie Picardi, MS), Using Inclusive Language to Create Equitable Spaces (Danniella Jones, PsyD), Take Control of Your Coping: Steps for Coping with Anxiety & Depression (Emily Deming, PhD), and Body Esteem: Ways to Boost Your Child's Self-Esteem (Megan O'Connor-Szuma).

Then to kick off Pride month in June, dedicated to the celebration and commemoration of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) pride, Ed Center offered a Lunch & Learn on Creating a Safe Space for Everyone: LGBTQ+ Informed and Affirming Skills (Emily Deming, PhD).

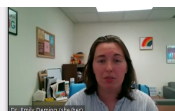
These presentations offered the community information on important topics and spread the word about the great services provided by YSD.

### Using Inclusive Language to Create Equitable Spaces

Danniella Jones, Psy.D.  
Licensed Psychologist

### Creating a Safe Space for Everyone: LGBTQ+ Informed and Affirming Skills

Emily Deming, Ph.D.  
Postdoctoral Fellow





# SOIL COLLECTION HENRY SIMMONS

The Palm Beach County Community Remembrance Project Coalition gathered on June 3, 2023, to collect soil from the site where Henry Simmons was taken 100 years ago from his home and killed by a racial terror lynching. Mr. Simmons was mis-identified for the crime of killing a police officer. The soil collected will be dried and placed in a jar for display at the Equal Justice Initiative Legacy Museum in Montgomery, Alabama, along with soil collected from the sites of numerous racial terror lynchings across the United States. Youth Services Director, Tammy Fields, said, "It is so important that our young people learn the history in order to consciously choose to not repeat it."



## JUNETEENTH PROCLAMATION

On June 6, 2023, at the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners meeting, Commissioner Michael Barnett presented a proclamation approved by the Board of County Commissioners declaring June 19th as Juneteenth Day, commemorating the emancipation of enslaved African Americans.



## AACY PROCLAMATION



On June 6, 2023, at the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners meeting, Vice-Mayor Maria Sachs presented a proclamation approved by the Board of County Commissioners declaring June 6th as American Association of Caringiving Youth (AACY) Day recognizing the incredible work of Dr. Connie Siskowski and AACY supporting young people who have the responsibility for caring for a family member.

PBC Youth Services Department supports AACY with funding each year to further their work with this often forgotten population of young people.



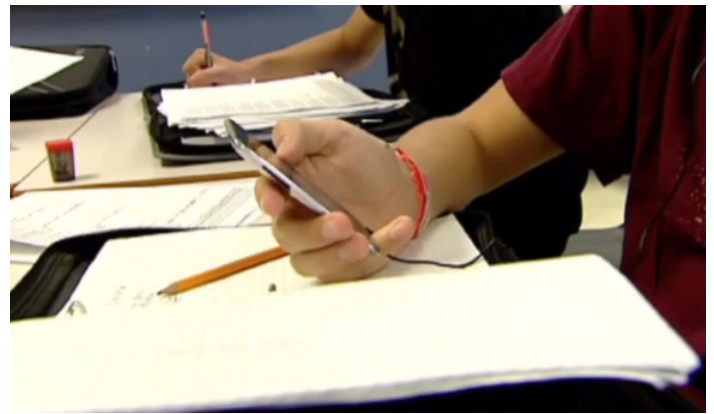
# CHANNEL 5 NEWS: SOCIAL MEDIA LAWS

On May 5, 2023, Tammy K. Fields, Director of Youth Services, provided commentary on a WPTV News Segment titled: New bill that bans Florida students from using social media at school.

A bill signed by Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis changes the way kids use their cell phones in school. HB 379, formally titled "Technology In K-12 Public Schools," requires social media safety be taught to older students, and also prohibits students from using social media while on school district internet access. The law requires social media safety lessons for middle and high school students. Topics would include mental health, security, human trafficking, and cyberbullying.

"The main thing we hear from students that they experience online is the bullying aspects," said Tammy Fields. Fields said that while there are some positive uses for social media, she sees the problems it can cause everyday. "I don't think kids, and some adults, understand how long something is going to be on the internet. Once it's there, it's always there," Fields said.

The new law would only ban students from accessing social media while using school district internet, but they cannot use their phones during instructional time, unless a teacher gives them permission as part of the lesson. "It makes sense that kids are not on their phones while they're in the classroom. The only caution I have would be that the phone is still accessible in the event of an emergency." Fields said.



## NATIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA DAY 2023

On June 30, 2023, Youth Services Public Relations Specialist, Tevin Ali, presented for the second year a Social Media & Branding Workshop for Small Businesses titled: Leveraging Your Online Presence for the Office of Equal Business Opportunity of Palm Beach County. Attendees learned about online + personal branding components and strategies for using social media to deepen their digital footprint.





# SPECIAL NEEDS SHELTER TRAINING

In April, the Youth Services Department underwent the 'Overview of the Special Needs Shelter' training in preparation of an activation during hurricane season.

The training was led by Keith Wall, Senior Planner of Palm Beach County's Division of Emergency Management. The training topics included: Shelter Activation Shelter Setup, Virtual Shelter Tour, Tour de

Stuff, Daily Operations, and Demobilization.

Staff was also briefed on the expectations of running the shelter in regards to where and when to report during the time of an activation.

Further trainings will be conducted.

Palm Beach County

## Overview of the Special Needs Shelter



Together, Emergencies Are Managed

# KEEPING YOU SAFE CDT PRESENTATION

On June 8, 2023, Katia Cavale, Chief of Community Based-Services presented at The Public Safety Cross-Departmental Team (CDT) meeting on how Palm Beach County is keeping us safe. The CDT showcase presentation was given to the Board of County Commissioners at the 2022's Annual Strategic Planning Workshop, which provided updates, data, and plans for the upcoming year on the

subject at hand. Public Safety CDT goals are the following:

1. Enhance public awareness through safety education.
2. Prepare for, respond to, and recover from all emergencies.
3. Ensure the overall safety of our community.
4. Improve the overall health and well-being of our community.



# SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM). On Tuesday, April 4, 2023, Youth Services Department Staff wore teal in support of Sexual Assault Awareness.





# ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS DAY

YSD celebrated Administrative Professional's Day on April 26, 2023. Administrative Professionals Day highlights the importance and dedication of administrative support professionals. Thank you to all our admin staff at YSD for all you do.



# NURSES APPRECIATION WEEK

On May 18, 2023, the Residential Treatment and Family Counseling (RTFC) division celebrated Nurses Week. We honor the hard work and dedication of all the nurses around the world who work tirelessly to provide care and comfort to patients in need. Thank you for all that our YSD nurses and you do!





# CSC, YSD, AND SCHOOL DISTRICT TEAM UP TO HELP STUDENTS AVOID SUMMER SLIDE

Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County and The Palm Beach County School District teamed up to provide a laptop to students attending a County-sponsored summer camp. Children's Services Council board member Alexandria Ayala, who also is a member of the Palm Beach County School Board, worked with the school district's IT staff to ensure laptops were available for students to avoid the summer educational slide. Valerie Messineo, Youth Services Department Senior Program Specialist, worked with summer camps to facilitate the program. The Council and the county fund camp scholarships for eligible children to ensure they have a safe, fun, engaging place to spend their time during the summer. Last year, more than 3,600 children benefited from the scholarships.

Because of this year's agreement between CSC, the school district and the county, thousands of students now have access to laptops over the summer to continue their studies and avoid losing knowledge they gained during the school year. <https://www.cscpbcc.org/news/council-update-csc-school-district-county-team-help-students-avoid-summer-slide>

## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS (NASW) CONFERENCE



The Youth Services Department was a sponsor of the Annual National Association of Social Workers Conference. This year's theme was 'Social Work Breaks Barriers That Prevent People and Communities from Thriving.'

Katia Cavalie, Chief of Community Based Clinical Services, attended the 3-day conference and hosted a resource table for the attendees.

## HIGHRIDGE ICE CREAM CELEBRATION

For the end of the 2022 -2023 school year, Highridge residents/ employees celebrated with an Ice Cream Extravaganza during lunch.





# STUDENT-TECH DEVELOPS YSD WORD SEARCH

Kudos to Youth Services Department Student Tech Public Relations Intern, Freddy DuBois, who developed a YSD Word Search for the department to use at community events and various YSD functions.

The word search features words that follow the YSD brand and encompass different initiatives the department provides and is involved in with the community.

## Youth Services Word Search



F	T	F	A	M	I	L	Y	A	S	A	S	M
U	S	C	H	O	L	A	R	S	H	I	P	E
T	N	Z	S	E	L	F	C	A	R	E	M	N
U	S	U	W	G	N	S	D	Y	Z	R	A	T
R	I	A	F	S	P	O	R	T	S	I	C	A
E	H	R	Y	U	Y	O	U	T	H	A	R	L



## 2ND ANNUAL JUNETEENTH THINK TANK

On Sunday, June 18, 2023, Youth Services staff shared about the free resources Youth Services offers to the community at the 2nd Annual Juneteenth Think Tank held at Pompey Park, in Delray Beach. The event included Juneteenth cultural education, a talent show, a community resource showcase, and more.





## RE-ENTRY SIMULATION

Stacey King, Family Violence Intervention Program Coordinator, and Katia Cavalie, Chief of Community Based Clinical Services, attended a Re-Entry Simulation event on April 5, 2023. The event was hosted in collaboration of the United States Attorney's Office, PBC Criminal Commission, PBC Public Safety Department Re-entry, and the City of Riviera Beach.

The Reentry Simulation simulates the struggles and challenges faced by individuals who are transitioning from incarceration back into society. It allows participants to gain an understanding of the significant obstacles faced by men and women attempting to navigate the system upon their release from incarceration and returning home to their communities.



## COMMUNITY EDUCATIONAL FAIR

On Saturday, April 22, 2023, Jin Ma, Planner I, and Toni Summerville, Licensed Therapist of YSD's Community Events Team, participated at the Community Educational Fair hosted in collaboration with The Salvation Army of PBC and Palm Beach State College TRIO Educational Opportunity Center.



## PATH TO COLLEGE ED FEST

Congratulations to Path to College for another successful EdFest held on Thursday, May 4, 2023, at Florida Atlantic University (FAU). Congratulations to Nirvanie Oudhram and all the finalists on their presentations. Ms. Oudhram presented "Ban Guns, Not Books." And finally, congratulations to Education Champion Dr. James Capp and all the Education Champion finalists, including YSD Director Tammy Fields.



## MIGRANT FAMILY INVOLVEMENT DAY 2023

On May 6, 2023, YSD represented at the 2023 Migrant Family Involvement Day hosted by the Florida Migrant Education Program.

Our fantastic staff shared information about YSD programs and resources with families and students.



When: **May 06, 2023**  
Time: **11:00 am-2:00 pm**  
Where: **Loxahatchee Groves Park**  
**13901 Southern Blvd, Loxahatchee Groves, FL**





## FLITE CENTER WEST PALM BEACH MIXER

Tammy K Fields, Director of Youth Services Department, attended the FLITE Center WPB mixer on May 2, 2023, and received a tour of the new apartments that serve as an Emergency Landing Space for human trafficking survivors.

*May Mingle & Mixer*

*Join FLITE Center WPB for an inspiring evening of mingling and viewing the newly launched Emergency*

## EARLY LEARNING COALITION (ELC) EMPOWER 23 CHILDCARE CONFERENCE

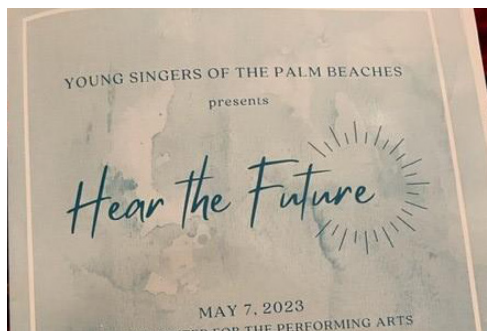
On Saturday, May 6, 2023, Palm Beach County Youth Services Staff Aisha Futch, Administrative Tech I, Bridget Williams, Procurement Specialist, and Tevin Ali, Public Relations Specialist, represented at the 'Empower 23' Conference hosted by the Early Learning Coalition of Palm Beach County. The Empower 23 conference is an annual conference for families and childcare providers.



## YOUNG SINGERS 'HEAR THE FUTURE'

The Young Singers of the Palm Beaches performed "Hear the Future" at the Kravis Center on May 7, 2023.

Tammy K. Fields, Director of Youth Services Department, attended the concert.



## MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS RESOURCE FAIR

On Saturday, May 20, 2023, Youth Services staff Rachel Clemons, Licensed Therapist, and Brian Thornton, Juvenile Residence Technician, represented at the City of South Bay Health and Wellness Fair held at Tanner Park.





# GCC RESPONDING TO GIRLS MENTAL HEALTH



## RESPONDING TO GIRLS' MENTAL HEALTH FOR PBC PARENTS

Hear from local experts  
& recognize signs of  
mental health concerns



On May 23, 2023, the Girls Coordinating Council hosted a webinar in partnership with the Hanley Foundation for Palm Beach County parents.

Responding to Girls Mental Health focused on current mental health trends for girls and young women and helping parents recognize the signs of mental health concerns and how to promote mental health and

wellbeing. Attendees also heard from local community agencies on the services and resources available for girls and young women, including Palm Beach County Youth Services, Palm Beach County Victim Services and Sexual Assault Response Team, Center for Child Counseling and Pace Center for Girls.

# MENTAL WELLNESS STRATEGIES FROM CROSS-DEPARTMENTAL TEAM

As part of Palm Beach County's ongoing efforts during Mental Health Awareness Month this past May, the Substance Use and Behavior Disorders Cross-Departmental Team (CDT) presented at the monthly Feed Your Mind lunch and learn held by the Office of Financial Management & Budget Department Strategic Planning & Performance Management Division.

The team strives to work together to promote effective education, prevention, and treatment for substance use and mental health disorders in accordance with the strategic priorities approved by the Board of County Commissioners. The focus of this Feed Your Mind presentation was to

provide information to county employees about the wide variety of supportive services available in the county and how to access those services in a time of need. Youth Services, in conjunction with Victim Services, Libraries, Parks and Recreation, Palm Tran, Community Services, the Medical Examiner's Office, Fire Rescue and the Employee Assistance program, described what outreach and services each individual department provides, highlighting the variety of resources available in our community for all Palm Beach County residents, not just employees of Palm Beach County.





## ANNUAL HAITIAN HERITAGE FESTIVALS

On Friday, May 19, 2023, Youth Services staff Jacqueline Burke, Licensed Therapist, and Rachel Clemons, Licensed Therapist, represented at the 13th Annual Haitian Heritage Festival held at Howard Park in Lake Worth Beach. Youth Services shared resources about the department at the event.

On Saturday, May 27, 2023, Youth Services represented with a resource table at the Haitian Heritage Celebration held at Sara Sims Park in Boynton Beach. Beatriz Ayala, Licensed Therapist, and Javona Wilson, Program Coordinator, shared about the department's resources at the event. Palm Beach County Commissioner Mack Bernard was also present at the event.



## WISDOM OF TRAUMA MOVIE SCREENING

On Thursday, June 8, 2023, Tammy Fields, Director of Youth Services, attended a showing, "The Wisdom of Trauma," hosted by the Center for Child Counseling, a YSD-funded community-based agency.



## COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOL MIXER

Ike Powell, Director of Outreach and Community Programming, attended the Communities In Schools (CIS) spring mixer held on June 15, 2023, at the Boynton Beach Intracoastal Park Clubhouse. The mixer provided the opportunity for the community and all stakeholders to meet the agency's board members, and leadership team, including board members, staff, and partners, while learning about CIS and their incredible 35-year partnership with the School District of Palm Beach County.

Communities In Schools is a Community-Based Agency (CBA) that receives funding from the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners through its Youth Services Department.



Communities  
In Schools

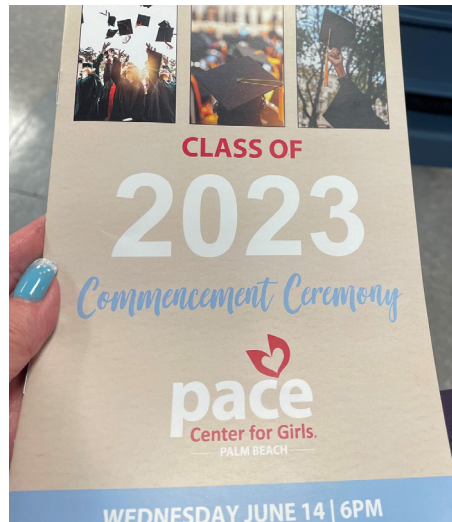
Palm Beach County



## PACE CENTER FOR GIRLS GRADUATION

On Wednesday, June 14, 2023, Ike Powell, Director of Outreach and Community Programming and Tammy Fields, Director of Youth Services Department, attended the graduation ceremony for the seniors at the Pace Center for Girls, a community-based agency supported by the Youth Services Department.

Congratulations to all the grads!



## SCHOLAR CAREER COACHING LUNCHEON



On Sunday, June 11, 2023, Ike Powell, Director of Outreach and Community Programming, Kathleen Alexis, Grant Compliance Specialist II, and Tammy Fields, Director of Youth Services, attended the 10th Anniversary Luncheon and Awards Ceremony for Scholar Career Coaching.

Congratulations to Lynn Gassant and all the 2023 graduates!

## ADVANCING THE MISSION

On May 31, 2023, Tammy Fields, Director of Youth Services Department, Geeta Loach-Jacobson, Outgoing Director of Outreach and Community Programming, and Ike Powell, Incoming Director of Outreach and Community Programming, represented YSD at the Advancing The Mission (ATM) III session held at the Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County. The session opened with special recognition for Geeta's efforts and contributions, serving over the past few years as a co-chair for the Birth to 22 Alliance Racial Equity Core Team.

Ed Chase, Division Director for Intergovernmental Affairs and Community Engagement, presented information regarding recent immigration legislation and provided updates on other bills and initiatives relative to advancing racial equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging. In addition, attendees shared best practices across participating organizations, and facilitators provided technical assistance as needed.







## CBA Q&A: SCHOLAR CAREER COACHING

**Q What is your mission?**

**A** Our mission is to Coach, Motivate, and Support students through mentoring services and scholarship assistance, with a vision to bridge the education gap for minority students.

**Q What does your organization do?**

**A** Established in December of 2012 as a non-profit organization, Scholar Career Coaching is a college and career readiness mentorship program assisting South Florida high-potential students in Title I high schools.

We coach, motivate, and support ESL students (English as a Second Language) and First-Gen for college and post-high school workforce opportunities.

**Q What key programs does your organization offer?**

**A** Since inception, our primary goal at Scholar CC has been to prepare and inspire students to pursue an education beyond high school. Whether higher education, community college, technical schools, apprenticeships, or the military. We offer the following programs and services:

- Mentorship
- College and Career Readiness

- Scholarships & Student Financial assistance

- College 101 Series for Immigrants' Parents

**Q How does your agency benefit the community?**

**A** Scholar CC has identified the educational and career training requirements necessary to be adaptable and competitive in the job market. As a result, our organization is diligently preparing our young adults for great success in both high school and post-secondary education.

Our agency wants to ensure that students who have completed our mentorship program are exceptionally well-prepared for the rigorous college admissions process and workforce demands.

**Q What is your agency's focus for 2023?**

**A** Our primary focus remains on Coaching, Motivating, and Supporting students through our comprehensive college and career readiness and mentorship programs. Our main objective is to make a more significant impact and push students to pursue an education beyond the high school level, whether in higher education, community college, technical schools, apprenticeships, or the military.

**Q How do the funds received from Palm Beach County enhance the services your agency provides?**

**A** The funding provided by Palm Beach County has played a significant and pivotal role in the success of our organization. Thanks to this generous support, we have been able to enhance our services and provide a more personalized experience for our students. The impact of this funding has been truly remarkable, allowing us to make a greater difference in the lives of those we serve. Scholar CC is extremely grateful for the strong and relationship we have established with the PBC team, and we extend our heartfelt appreciation for their support.

**Q What is your central website?**

**A** [www.scholarcc.org](http://www.scholarcc.org)





# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

## ANDREA MORALES



At YSD, we view our employees as one of our greatest strengths. This quarter, we're featuring Andrea Morales. Andrea is a Juvenile Residence Technician in the Residential Treatment and Family Counseling (RTFC) Division.

In her role, Andrea provides the best care for each individual and their families, while they work towards individual and family goals. She is responsible for assuring Highridge Family Center residents are physically, and emotionally safe while in a classroom setting during school hours, while they are present at the Family Center. Andrea is also the liaison between High Ridge School and High Ridge Family Center.

**Q Where is your hometown?**

**A** I was born in the country of Colombia but came to the US at a very early age. Therefore, my heart and the place I call home is "Stamford, CT." I grew up between Westchester, NY, and Stamford, CT, and attended Central Connecticut State University in the city of New Britain, CT.

**Q What was your first job?**

**A** A server for an assistance Living Facility for the elderly.

**Q What are the three most important skills you need for your job?**

**A** Emotional Intelligence. Being aware of my own feelings while also being able to read the feelings of those in my surroundings. Second would be open communication. Communicating with others constantly, team members, residents, parents, etc., being an active listener, and offering a safe space for everyone. Third, would be patience.

**Q What is your favorite thing about your job at YSD?**

**A** Seeing our residents demonstrate growth and change. I strongly believe in acknowledging baby steps toward individual and family treatment goals.

**Q Is there a memorable moment that you would like to share in relation to your work here, at YSD?**

**A** Acknowledging my own growth and change as I am a member of the Sanctuary Core Team and a Module presenter for YSD.

**Q What hobbies and interests do you have outside of work?**

**A** I love to decorate, party plan, entertain, and host. I love taking pictures and scrapbooking, taking my son to car shows, and going on adventures with him every weekend. Even a car ride can be an adventure as long as we are together.

**Q What is the most important lesson you've learned in the last year?**

**A** Self-Care is a Must!

**Q Where would you like to go on a dream vacation?**

**A** Greece and Dubai

**Q What is your favorite quote?**

**A** "I've Learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."  
Maya Angelou

**Q Who or what inspires you?**

**A** My family. Most of all my mom, sister, and son!

**Q Is there something about you that your fellow coworkers would be surprised to know?**

**A** I dislike Cooking!!!





# EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER

## JAVONA WILSON



Javona Wilson was awarded this quarter's YSD Employee of the Quarter (January-March 2023) for her hard work, dedication, and service to the Outreach and Community Programming Division's Program Coordinator role. In particular, for her work with YSD's Summer Camp Scholarship programming.

Thank you, Javona, for all you do.





# YSD FAREWELLS

This quarter YSD bid farewell to some of our team members. We wish them all the best in their next steps!

- LaShonda Lacey-Williams, Administrative Assistant, Outreach and Community Programming (OCP) Division
- Tamika Kramer, Grant Compliance Specialist II, Outreach and Community Programming (OCP) Division
- Bridget Williams, Procurement Specialist, Finance, Contracting, and Administrative Services (FCA) Division
- Jennifer Boquin, Fiscal Specialist II, Finance, Contracting, and Administrative Services (FCA) Division
- Geeta-Loach Jacobson, Director, Outreach and Community Programming (OCP) Division




## FAREWELL TO YFC INTERNS

On April 19, 2023, YSD bid farewell to Youth and Family Counseling (YFC) social work interns Brittany Deonarine and Heather Cochran. We wish them all the very best in their next steps.



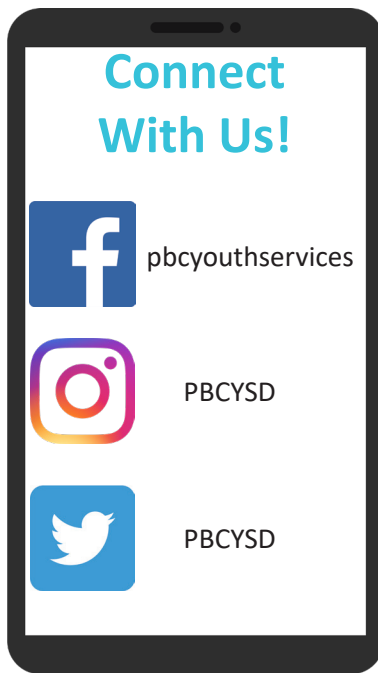


# WELCOME NEW EMPLOYEES



<b>Employee</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Division</b>
Marlene Aboytes	Therapist	RTFC
Zoe Arscott	Student Clerical	OCP
Kevin Braggs	Seasonal Paraprofessional	OCP
Dimitri Carson	Seasonal Paraprofessional	OCP
Noelia Escudero	Administrative Technician	RTFC
Janae Jones	Therapist	RTFC
Cristelina Milan	On Call Paraprofessional	RTFC
Rosaly Nunez	Seasonal Paraprofessional	OCP
Whenchy Poinson	Residential Youth Counselor	RTFC
Farah Rousseau	On Call Paraprofessional	RTFC
Samantha Shields	Contracts/Grants Coordinator	FCA
Takeba Bri Ann White Simeon (Bri)	Seasonal Paraprofessional	OCP





**Youth Services Department Director**

Tammy K. Fields

**Director of Finance, Contracting and Administrative Services**

Michelle Liska

**Director of Outreach and Community Programming**

Ike Powell

**Director of Residential Treatment and Family Counseling**

Dr. Twila Taylor

**Editor-in-Chief & Designer**

Tevin Ali

**Palm Beach County  
Board of County Commissioners**

Gregg K. Weiss, Mayor, Maria Sachs,  
Vice Mayor, Maria G. Marino, Michael A.  
Barnett, Marci Woodward, Sara Baxter,  
Mack Bernard



**County Administrator**  
Verdenia C. Baker

**Assistant County Administrator**  
Dorritt M. Miller