

# YSD SCOOP!

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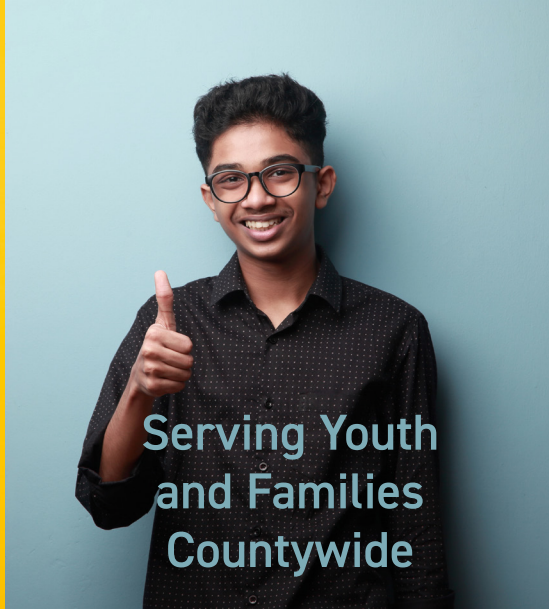
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Serving Youth  
and Families  
Countywide



# YOUTH SERVICES HOSTS 'HOGWARTS-YSD CHAPTER' ANNUAL EMPLOYEE RETREAT

On Thursday, August 4, Palm Beach County Youth Services Department held its fifth annual employee retreat at Clayton Hutcheson Exhibit Hall/Mounts Botanical Garden. This year, the Seeds of Success Cross-Divisional Action Team coordinated the event, including the theme, Harry Potter and the World of Magic, to celebrate and honor the magical work YSD staff has done all year.

The retreat began with the excitement of YSD employees arrival and seating to their sorted Harry Potter house for the day. As the Headmaster of Ceremonies, Tevin Ali, Public Relations Specialist, welcomed all "students" to the event.

Director of Youth Services, Tammy K. Fields, expressed her gratitude to staff for their work and commitment to providing quality service to the youth and families. Following her remarks, the group watched the "YSD Year In Review" video to take in all the outstanding initiatives and work done by the department throughout the year.

Reports were given by the cross-divisional teams. After the reports, Tristan Seupersad was announced as the "Shining Light of the Year," which is the YSD equivalent to 'Employee of the Year.' Tristan's contributions as a Residential Youth Counselor at the Highridge Family Center have positively

impacted the department and community. Tristan's nominator described him "As a team player, Tristan is always open to helping wherever he can. He is always hands-on with the youth residents. A youth resident went on to describe Mr. Tristan as a 'father figure'."

All teams participated in the Mounts Botanical "Horcrux" Scavenger Hunt to find the magically imbued objects hidden throughout the garden.

The retreat then shifted its focus on the "TriWizard Games," a series of competitive games where staff won points for their house. Self-care was practiced after the games, where the Youth Services team were provided smoothies by the Palm Beach County Employee Wellness Program, took care of succulent plants, and painted canvases to take home.

The retreat concluded with a collective staff 'class photo,' and the announcement of the winner of the 'House Cup' which was presented to the team with the most points at the end of the day. "The Seeds of Success team, chaired by Giselle Badillo and Bridget Williams did an incredible job organizing an event filled with learning, fun, and comradery" said Tammy K. Fields.





# YOUTH SERVICES HOSTS 'HOGWARTS-YSD CHAPTER' ANNUAL EMPLOYEE RETREAT (CONT)





# YOUTH SERVICES DEPARTMENT RECEIVES CERTIFICATION IN TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE



The Palm Beach County Youth Services Department is excited to announce they have been certified in the Sanctuary Model of Trauma-Informed Care by the Andrus Sanctuary Institute.

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.

The department has worked towards this certification, building from the certification of the Highridge Family Center in 2019, for the last three years. Staff at all levels embraced this organizational model. The certification symbolizes the Youth Services Department's commitment

to providing a higher level of care, a trauma-sensitive environment for the clients and community served, and a better work environment for employees.

"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.

Implementing the Sanctuary Model of Trauma Informed Care at Youth Services aligns with the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners' strategic priorities and the objectives in the Birth to 22 United for Brighter Futures Youth Master Plan. The implementation of the model also increases measurable levels of hope, safety, trust, emotional intelligence, and problem-solving skills in both staff and clients.

Palm Beach County Youth Services is the fourth government agency in the nation, and first in the State of Florida to receive this certification.



## BIRTH TO 22 HOSTS 2022 RETREAT



On September 7, Birth to 22: United for Brighter Futures hosted its 2022 retreat at Palm Beach State College Public Safety Conference Center. The event brought 40 leaders from local organizations to collaborate on the issues facing youth ages 0 to 22 in Palm Beach County. Participants discussed plans to update the Youth Master Plan with community input and a recognition of changing environment for young people. Four main questions were addressed “Where are we now? What is working? What are the challenges? What are future solutions?”

Birth to 22 plans to continue hosting annual conversations

with community members about their needs. Based on the most recent community conversation earlier this year, the top 3 resource needs expressed were mental health, the economy/housing, and education, including resources for afterschool programs and post-secondary education.

Learn more about the Birth to 22 Alliance at: <http://pbcbirthto22.com/>.

To stay connected with Birth to 22 and their upcoming events and initiatives, follow them on their Facebook and Instagram pages @Birthto22.





# YSD HOLDS EIGHTH ANNUAL SUPER SUMMER SPELLING BEE

Palm Beach County Youth Services Department hosted its Eighth Annual Super Summer Spelling Bee on July 14, 2022. The competition was held virtually, with 172 campers from 33 Summer Camp Scholarship Program sites participating.

The spelling bee is for students enrolled in the Summer Camp Scholarship Program's participating camps and provides academic activities to encourage the spirit of learning while preventing summer slide. Using Kahoot!, a virtual learning-based platform, campers' spelling skills were tested in a fun and interactive way, allowing spellers to compete with campers throughout the county.

"The Super Summer Spelling Bee provides an exciting opportunity for our camps to participate in a county-wide activity together and win prizes. The competitive spirit is high and it encourages campers to prepare and practice their spelling words in the weeks leading up to the big

event," said Valerie Messineo, Palm Beach County Youth Services Department Senior Program Specialist. "We love this event because it allows camps to integrate education in a fun way while supporting our campers academically."

Among the winners were campers from Bethel Evangelical Church, City of Greenacres, Digital Vibez, Boys & Girls Clubs, Village of Palm Springs, Acts of Kindness, Destiny Fulfilled, The Quest, and Preparing Tomorrow's Leaders Today summer camps.

Partnering agencies include the County Attorney's Office, City of West Palm Beach, Palm Beach County Library System, Palm Beach County Public Affairs, Palm Beach County Literacy Coalition, Prime Time Palm Beach County, Friends of Youth Services and Palm Beach County, Inc., and Florida Power & Light.



K – 2nd		
1st Place	Neil S. Hirsh Boys & Girls Club	Jadah
2nd Place	Neil S. Hirsh Boys & Girls Club	Natalya
3rd Place	Preparing Tomorrow's Leaders	Robert
3rd – 5th		
1st Place	Digital Vibez	Sean
2nd Place	Neil S. Hirsh Boys & Girls Club	Andres
3rd Place	Neil S. Hirsh Boys & Girls Club	Neysa
6th – 8th		
1st Place	Bethel Evangelical Church	Sanai
2nd Place	Bethel Evangelical Church	Alexzander
3rd Place	Preparing Tomorrow's Leaders	Jamiriah
9th – 12th		
1st Place	Preparing Tomorrow's Leaders	Jay'Shawn
2nd Place	Bethel Evangelical Church	Valerie
3rd Place	City of Greenacres	Amelia





# BACK TO SCHOOL PBC! BASH

July 30th, 2022, was the Annual 'Back to School PBC' Event. The event ensures Palm Beach County students are ready for the upcoming school year by providing families with essential school supplies.

This year Youth Services represented at all three Back to School PBC locations at the Palm Beach County Convention

Center, Village Academy in Delray, and Palm Beach State College in Belle Glade.

Team members Tammy Fields, Tevin Ali, Jennifer Boquin, Bridget Williams, Jin Ma, Tamika Kramer, Ike Powell, Jacqueline Burke, Katia Cavale, Brian Thornton, and Barbara Wheeler, represented as volunteers throughout the county.



## YOUTH SERVICES eKPI WORKSHOP



On July 12, 2022, the Youth Services Department attended a workshop titled "How are you connected to Palm Beach County's Strategic Priorities and KPIs?" The workshop was facilitated by Marcela Millett, Performance Analyst for Palm Beach County.

The workshop delved into the importance of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and their significance in the work of the Youth Services Department

and Palm Beach County.

The workshop also went over a step-by-step guide to the county eKPI portal and covered how to input eKPI data into the portal. Due dates and best practices when using the portal were also discussed.

The workshop concluded with an interactive Q&A.



# WEST PALM BEACH COMMUNITY REMEMBRANCE PROJECT PROCLAMATION

On August 8, 2022, the City of West Palm Beach recognized the Palm Beach County Community Remembrance Project and its purpose of working with the Equal Justice Initiative of Montgomery, Alabama, to memorialize respectfully documented victims of racial violence and to foster meaningful and respectful education and dialogue about race and injustice. Tammy Fields, Director of Palm Beach County Youth Services, attended the tribute. You can follow the work of the Palm Beach County Community Remembrance Project at [PBCRemembrance.org](https://PBCRemembrance.org).

## *The City of West Palm Beach.* TRIBUTE

**Whereas**, a diverse group of community-minded West Palm Beach and Palm Beach County residents formed the Palm Beach County Community Remembrance Project Coalition ("Coalition") for the purpose of working with the Equal Justice Initiative of Montgomery, Alabama to memorialize respectfully documented victims of racial violence and to foster meaningful and respectful education and dialogue about race and justice; and

**Whereas**, on the morning of June 7<sup>th</sup>, 1923, Henry Simmons, an innocent Black male, was abducted from his West Palm Beach home and separated from his wife, Edith Simmons, by a mob of white males seeking vigilante retribution for the fatal shooting of a white Town of Palm Beach Police Officer, and Mr. Simmons was transported to the Town of Palm Beach where he was beaten and hung by his neck until dead from a tree located near the intersection of South County Road and Barton Avenue and The Episcopal Church of Bethesda-by-the-Sea; and

**Whereas**, the Coalition's collaborative work includes three very important projects—Soil Collection, Historical Marker placement, and the erection of a Memorial commemorating the June 7<sup>th</sup>, 1923 racial terror lynching of Henry Simmons in West Palm Beach and the Town of Palm Beach and the September 27<sup>th</sup>, 1956 racial terror lynching of Samuel Nelson in Delray Beach, FL; and

**Whereas**, West Palm Beach is a diverse community, and the Coalition invites and welcomes people of all race, color, religion, disability, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or genetic information to participate in all the Coalition's projects; and

**Whereas**, the Coalition is providing comprehensive, multi-faceted education and community engagement throughout West Palm Beach and Palm Beach County and the Coalition is seeking to solidify its role in to educate a new generation of leadership located in Montgomery Alabama which commemorates the racial terror lynchings of Mr. Henry Simmons and Mr. Samuel Nelson who are among more than 4,000 documented victims of unjust racial terror lynchings known to have occurred in the United States between 1877-1950.

**Now, Therefore**, I, Keith A. Jarvis, Mayor of the City of West Palm Beach, do hereby Pay Tribute to:

The Palm Beach County



## EDUCATION AND TRAINING CENTER UPDATES



A few updates from the Youth Services Department Education and Training Center:

The graduating doctoral psychology cohort of 2021-2022 completed their clinical placement on July 28, 2022.

Ed Center held its New Student Orientation for the 2022-2023 doctoral psychology cohort from August 1-4, 2022.

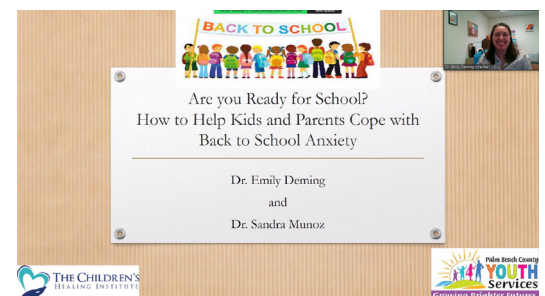


## THE 'CHI PODCAST'

Transitions back into school can be difficult. Problems can be amplified, especially when academic difficulties, bullying, and anxiety are present. Dr. Emily Deming, postdoctoral fellow at the Youth Services Education & Training Center, talks with Dr. Sandra Muñoz from the Children's Healing Institute on ways to support children and families with the upcoming transition into the school year, such as skills and therapy services.

Check out the podcast segment here:

<https://www.buzzsprout.com/943387/11058136>





# A STORY OF 'RACISM' BY LYDIA LEWIS

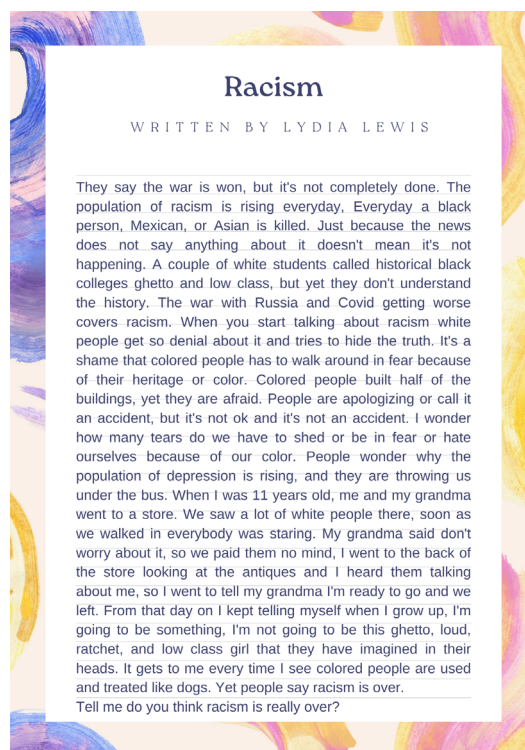
Lydia is a 14-year-old African American female residing in Belle Glade with her family. After seven therapy sessions with Jacqueline Burke (Jackie), Licensed Therapist at Youth Services, Lydia shared that she had written a story. She stated, "It's about racism." Jacqueline asked Lydia if she would mind reading it to her. Without hesitation, Lydia gladly read the story titled 'Racism.' "The story was profound and brought me chills" said Jackie. Jackie asked Lydia what made her write such a powerful story.

Lydia shared that she is tired of racism and wrote the story on a day as she reflected on the world around her. She stated, "I am thinking, feeling

first, and then acting so I won't get into trouble." Lydia shared that she learned how to cope in different situations during therapy sessions. She also learned that she could express her feelings through writing, so she decided to write how she felt on that particular day.

Lydia attends Glades Central Community High School and will attend the 10th grade in Fall of 2022. Lydia experienced many adversities but is resilient through her many strengths, and family support remains a beautiful, smart, intelligent, and caring person. Lydia shared her future goal is to become a teacher or a pediatrician due to her love for children.

\*This poem was shared with the permission of the client.



## SUPERVISOR APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM



Congratulations to our very own Bridget Williams, Procurement Specialist, for completing the 2022 Palm Beach County Supervisor's Apprenticeship Program!

As part of the PBC Academy of EXcellence and in keeping with our organizational value of "Creative Leadership," the purpose of The Supervisor's Apprenticeship® is to provide general and introductory leadership skill

development for high-performing, non-management employees within Palm Beach County who are interested in pursuing a supervisory/management position.

The target audience for this program is high-performing, non-management employees sponsored by their leadership teams for additional development opportunities.

## HIGHRIDGE ART CLASSES

Once again, Norton Art classes have resumed at Highridge Family Center! Residents learned about expressing themselves through nature and still-life drawings this past semester. Their artist teacher, Ari Kijanka, brought his expertise, passion, and encourages every participant to explore their creative side through various mediums. Each week the residents look forward to this relaxing and therapeutic activity, and as an added touch, Mr. Ari sets the tone with background music the residents enjoy.

NORTON MUSEUM OF ART  
Afterschool Arts Outreach

### October Art Lessons: Highridge Family Center

All art classes come with a short lesson plan and supplies. You are welcome to alter projects according to your student's needs. If you have any questions or need additional guidance, please contact Teaching Artist, Ari Kijanka [kijanka@norton.org](mailto:kijanka@norton.org)

Week 1: (8/31 @3pm-5pm)



Welcome Back to Afterschool Arts Outreach

Description: Welcome students back giving expectations of the class, materials, and following up with a "Make your own Sketchbook" project

Materials: Paper, Tape, Masking Tape, Markers, Pencils, Pens, Rubber bands, Stapler

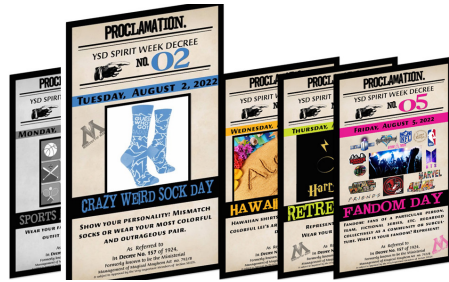


# YOUTH SERVICES CELEBRATES 'SPIRIT WEEK'

From Aug 1 to Aug 5, 2022, Youth Services Department hosted a 'Spirit Week' for employees to participate in during the week of the YSD Annual Retreat. Throughout the week, staff dressed in various fashions based on the day's theme. The themes were as follows:

- Sports Jersey Day
- Crazy Sock Day
- Hawaii Garb Attire
- Retreat "The Wizarding World of Harry Potter"
- Fandom Day

YSD enjoyed participating in spirit week to celebrate all the hard work done year-round.



## HIGHRIDGE FAMILY CENTER HOSTS INDOOR PICNIC

For the end of the 2021 -2022 school year, Highridge Family Center employees celebrated National Hot Dog day and National Lollipop day by hosting an indoor picnic on July 20, 2022. The dining team made various assortments of hot dogs accompanied by French fries and baked beans. After lunch, the residents and staff made root beer floats with sprinkles, Oreos, and gummy candies, with whipped cream and a cherry on top!

Residents and staff engaged in a competitive game of Jeopardy. The Highridge staff provided residents support by ensuring that they encouraged residents to demonstrate social responsibility, emotional intelligence, and democracy. The winners received mini wireless speakers and jumbo lollipops. The residents competed in a speed round of a Hot Dog Word Search.

The winners received mini gummy hot dogs. Highridge Administration would like to say a special thank you to the Highridge staff for another fantastic school year, and they are excited for the upcoming school year.

Highridge Family Center is a three-month, Monday through Friday, trauma-informed residential treatment program for Palm Beach County youth. We provide services to families with youth ages 11 through 16 years, who are experiencing problems at home, at school, with friends, and in the community.

For more information on Highridge Family Center, please visit [https://discover.pbcgov.org/youthservices/Pages/Counseling\\_Highridge.aspx](https://discover.pbcgov.org/youthservices/Pages/Counseling_Highridge.aspx).

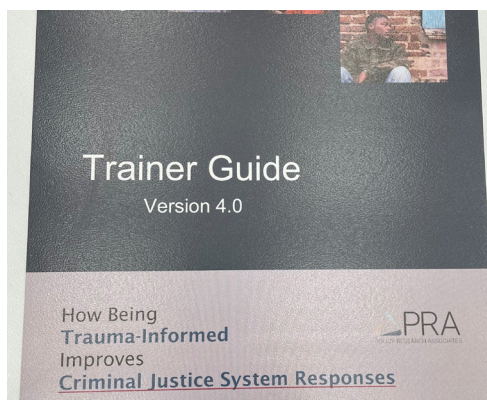




## TRAUMA INFORMED CARE 'TRAIN THE TRAINER'

Tiffany Phillips, Court Case Advisor, and Tammy Fields, Director of the Youth Services Department, attended a two-day "Train the Trainer" session on "How Being Trauma-Informed Improves Criminal Justice Responses."

Both Tiffany and Tammy are now available to provide training in Florida. Congratulations!



## COVENANT VILLAS RESIDENT PRESENTATION

On September 21, 2022, Rachel Clemons, Therapist, and Jacqueline Burke, Therapist, presented an overview of the services offered by Palm Beach County Youth Services to the Covenant Villas residents in Belle Glade. Resources such as free therapy, counseling, and mental health services that Youth Services offers were shared to the group.



## BACK TO SCHOOL BASH RIVIERA BEACH

On August 6, 2022, The City of Riviera Beach Back to School Bash event was held in conjunction with Councilman Douglas Lawson and Sincere 2000 Foundation.

This event helped ensure students were ready for the upcoming school year by providing families with essential school supplies. Youth Services team members Toni Summerville, Deneshia Brown, Javona Bush, and Tammy Fields represented YSD at the event.



## FARM SHARE FOOD DRIVE-THRU

On June 25th, 2022, Palm Beach County Youth Services Department participated in the 'Farm Share Food Drive-Thru' hosted by Florida State Representative Jervonte Edmonds, Mayor of West Palm Beach Keith James, United States Representative Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick, Florida State Senator Bobby Powell Jr., and Palm Beach County Commissioner Mack Bernard. The Youth Services Department Staff shared the department's various resources offered for youth and their families.



STATE REPRESENTATIVE JERVONTE EDMONDS  
PRESENTS

### FARM SHARE FOOD DRIVE-THRU

To help alleviate hunger and malnutrition by recovering fresh and nutritious food and distributing it to those who need it most.

"FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED"

SAT 10AM-1PM | JUNE 25TH | GAINES PARK  
1501 N. AUSTRALIAN AVE, WEST PALM BEACH

HOSTED BY:



# DIGITAL VIBEZ 11TH ANNUAL 'JAMATHON'

Digital Vibez, a Youth Services Department Community Based Agency, empowers youth in diverse and underserved communities through dance, fitness, technology, and the arts. They hosted thousands of Palm Beach County summer camp children in partnership with Prime Time Palm Beach County and Palm Beach County Youth Services, at their 11th Annual KidsFit Jamathon at the South Florida Fairgrounds on July 28, 2022. Palm Beach County Youth Services Director, Tammy Fields attended the 11th Annual Jamathon.

Commissioner Mack Bernard also sponsored a Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners Proclamation for the Kids Fit Jamathon on July 12, 2022.



## ASCENSION 33 PERFORMANCE

Ascension 33's "Breathe: A Summer Dance Production" was held at the Palm Beach County Kravis Center on July 23, 2022. Tammy Fields, Director of Youth Services, attended the recital performance.

Ascension 33, a YSD Summer Camp, provides dance instruction, homework assistance, life skills, and mentoring in an afterschool setting for students ages 5-17. For more information please visit <https://www.ascension33dancestudio.com/>.





## PBSO 5K AWARE AND CARE

On September 17, 2022, Youth Services collaborated and participated in Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office (PBSO) 'Aware and Care 5K' to bring awareness for School & Community Mass Violence and Prevention.

Mass violence is a public health threat to our schools and communities. AWARE & CARE Palm Beach County provides critical information about the warning signs and indicators that could signify a person is in crisis and in need of intervention. Visit [www.awareandcarePBC.com](http://www.awareandcarePBC.com) for more information.



## HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

On September 15, 2022, Katia Cavale, Chief of Community Based Clinical Services for Youth Services, attended the Historical Cultural Tour hosted by PBC Community Services Department.

The Hispanic Cultural Tour celebrated and highlighted the cultural and economic impact and growth of the Hispanic/Latino community in Palm Beach County. Feliz mes de la herencia hispana! (Happy Hispanic Heritage Month!)



## FAU PREPARE FOR THE CAREER FAIR

Katia Cavale, Chief of Community Based Clinical Services for Youth Services, joined Dawn Kesselman from the FAU Career Center and Special Agent Alexis Carpinteri from the FBI-Miami Division to present on 'Prepare for the Government and Social Services Career Fair'. The virtual presentation was put together to help students learn strategies to prepare for networking at the career fair and to best prepare them for success.



## COMMUNITY YOUTH OUTREACH

On September 24, 2022, Youth Services attended the 'Community Youth Outreach Event' hosted by Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Zeta Tau Omega Chapter.

YSD staff members Brian Thornton, Juvenile Residence Technician, and Jennifer Brito, Fiscal Specialist II, shared information about Youth Services' resources offered to youth and their families.







## CBA Q&A: STUDENT ACES (ATHLETICS, COMMUNITY, EDUCATION)

Q

**What is your mission?**

A

The mission statement of Student ACES is to inspire and develop students to become men and women of honor, character and integrity. Aligned with the greater organization mission, the mission of the Student ACES Center, (which is home to the Belle Glade Youth Empowerment Center) is to prepare students in the Glades community to thrive in life through innovative program offerings that focus on academic success, career readiness, college preparation, healthy behaviors, personal development, and character education.

Q

**What does your organization do?**

A

Student ACES provides character and leadership training to middle and high school students throughout South Florida. We teach our core values of trust, respect, sacrifice, worth ethic, positive attitude, and integrity through various programs. Student ACES (ACE) was founded in 2013 by father-daughter team Buck Martinez and Krissy Webb to create an account for the gap in character education in the school system. Understanding that character and leadership are integral to student success, Student ACES supplements students' academic education

with training that focuses on essential character and leadership skills. Since its inception in 2013, the organization has impacted the lives of more than 50,000 students throughout Palm Beach, Miami-Dade and Broward counties. To support the work, Bank of America donated an old bank building in Belle Glade to Student ACES. This building underwent a complete renovation and reopened as the Student ACES Center, or the SAC, in the summer of 2019. At this time, Student ACES also adopted the Belle Glade Youth Empowerment Center. The SAC serves as a safe and nurturing environment that provides positive developmental opportunities, and prevents students from engaging in violence while promoting long-term student success.

Q

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

A

Student ACES offers varying programs across South Florida. The programs are intentionally designed to fit targeted populations and designed to address key learnings specific to those populations. The Student ACES Center in Belle Glade is the only physical location of Student ACES, and the SAC provides wrap-around support to students and highlights programs that are intentionally designed to set the youth of the Glades Region up

for lifelong success. The SAC is open from 2pm – 7pm everyday afterschool and is open to all middle and high school students in the Glades Region.

Other program offerings include:

**Student ACES Flagship Program:** Students from Palm Beach County high schools are nominated to participate in this character education program, offered on six school days throughout the year, supported by Student ACES core values of commanding respect, earning the trust of others, bringing a winning attitude, sacrificing for self and others, possessing a work ethic second to none, doing the right thing, and aspiring to greatness.

Students join peers from across the county to participate in an engaging day of role playing and teambuilding affording them the opportunity to further develop their leadership skills.

**Leadership Workshops:** In partnership with coaches, administrators, and athletic directors, the Student ACES team creates a customized curriculum to support character development opportunities for student-athletes. Participants work together to solve case studies and engage in interactive drills tailored to address the identified obstacles of the team. Examples of focus areas include communication, respect,



# CBA Q&A CONTINUED



sportsmanship, trust, sacrifice, and ethical behavior. Workshops are adaptable and offered to individual schools, universities, teams, camps, training facilities and more.

**Captains Summits:** Designed specifically for current and potential high school sports team captains. The Captains' Summit dives into the roles and responsibilities of a team captain while helping student-athletes understand the expectations of their role and how to achieve success as a team leader.

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

**A** Student ACES strives to create a pathway for young men and women to achieve the highest standards of leadership. All Student ACES' character education programming is driven by their core values:

- commanding respect
- earning the trust of others
- bringing a winning attitude
- sacrificing for self and others
- possessing a work ethic second to none
- doing the right thing
- aspiring to greatness

It is our hope that through instilling these characteristics into the youth of today that they will have the skills to be successful leaders of the next generation.

The C in ACE is community, it is the center of all they do. Students across all our programs are encouraged to serve their community in various ways. Specifically, at the SAC/YEC in Belle Glade, we celebrate community service through 'Serve Together Tuesday.'

**Q What is your agency's focus for 2022?**

**A** Our focus has been and will always be our students. They will always come first. While we pivot in response to current events, we will always be driven by our mission to inspire students to become men and women of honor, character, and integrity.

From a programming perspective, Phase 2 of The Student ACES Center (The SAC) was finally completed in early summer of this year. As we strive to serve the community of Belle Glade, we continue to identify opportunities to create a best-in-class after-school facility that creates a safe, stable, and nurturing environment for our students while also affording them access to programs, processes, and people that they may not otherwise have access to in their area.

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

**A** The Palm Beach County Youth Services Department funds support the Student ACES Center and the Youth Empowerment Center. The funds are used for the critical support of the center, including utilities and staff salaries. We are so grateful for this funding as it allows us to consistently provide a safe, stable, and nurturing environment for our students. In addition, with county funding, we run our youth internship program, where six students have the opportunity each summer to complete a paid internship. Over the past few years, the students spent their summers working with the City of Belle Glade. This internship opportunity, coupled with intensive workforce development training, provides the students with a unique experience combining a paid job with a sense of civic duty and a chance to learn deeper about the history of Belle Glade while developing their employability skills.

**Q What is the Student ACES Website?**

**A** [www.studentacesforleadership.com](http://www.studentacesforleadership.com)



# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

## VALERIE MESSINEO



At YSD, we view our employees as one of our greatest strengths. This quarter, we're featuring Valerie Messineo. Valerie works as a Senior Program Specialist with the Outreach and Community Programming Division (OCP).

In her role, Valerie oversees the summer programming provided by YSD. This includes the Summer Camp Scholarship Program and the Summer CBAs. She is also heavily involved with Birth to 22 and is a co-chair of the Sanctuary Core Team.

**Q Where is your hometown?**

**A** Loxahatchee, FL

**Q What was your first job?**

**A** Answering phones at Pizza Barn in Loxahatchee.

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

**A** Creativity, compassion and follow through.

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

**A** Being given the freedom to grow the programs that I oversee or participate in. From Summer Camp to Sanctuary, I've been able to try new things, get creative, and receive support from the team.

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

**A** The COVID-19 shutdown occurred shortly after I started with YSD.

Opening feeding sites throughout the county and providing meals was one of my most memorable experiences. I was able to collaborate with other departments and divisions while also being in the community and seeing the impact of our hard work first-hand.

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

**A** My biggest interest is my family; I have a husband, two daughters (Stella, 7, and Zoey, 4), and two dogs (Lily, 9, and Luca, 2 months). Any time that I get to spend with them is my favorite. I also go to CrossFit several times a week for self-care.

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

**A** To take care of myself mentally and physically. I used to take pride in never taking time off of work. Now I see that this is the reason I would burn out. Taking days off for self-care and to recharge makes me a better employee, wife, and mom.

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

**A** Anywhere with good food. I would love to visit Italy or Greece.

**Q What is your favorite quote?**

**A** *In a world where you can be anything, be kind.*

**Q Who or what inspires you?**

**A** Moms! My mom, friends, peers, co-workers... I'm just amazed at everything they can do.





# EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

## TRISTEN SEUPERSAD



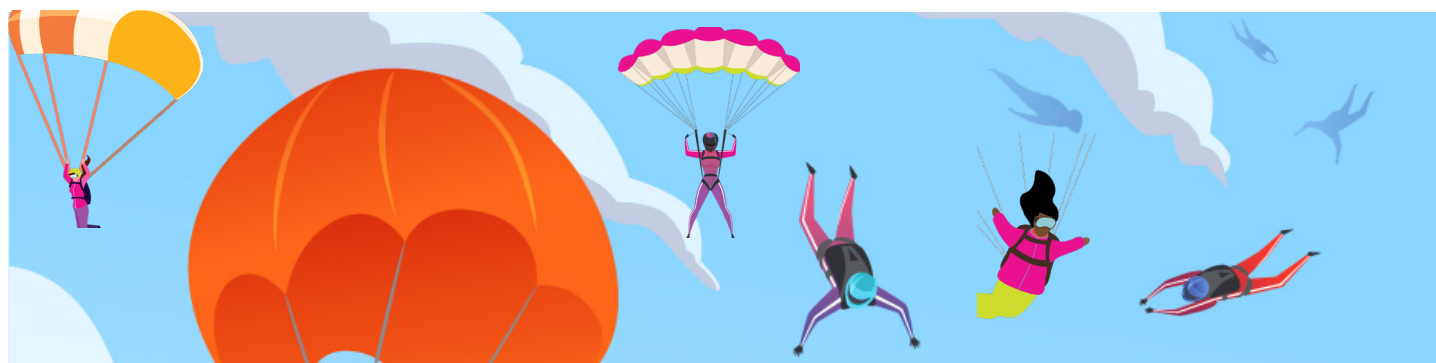
Tristen Seupersad was announced as the "Shining Light of the Year", which is the YSD equivalent to 'Employee of the Year.' Tristen's contributions as a Residential Youth Counselor at the Highridge Family Center have positively impacted the department and community. Tristen's nominator described him:

"As a team player, Tristen is always open to helping wherever he can. He is always hands-on with the youth residents. A youth resident went on to describe Mr. Tristen as a 'father figure'."





# WELCOME NEW EMPLOYEES



<i><b>Employee</b></i>	<i><b>Position</b></i>	<i><b>Division</b></i>
Rachel Clemons	Licensed Therapist	YFC
Tania Shindo Henderson	Program Evaluator	Admin
Jennifer Brito	Fiscal Specialist II	FCA
Timicka Wright	On-Call Paraprofessional	RTFC
Nicole Escudero	Residential Youth Counselor	RTFC
Frederick Du Bois	Student Tech	FCA
Heather Cochran	Student Intern	YFC
Brittany Deonarine	Student Intern	YFC
Magan Strauss	Doctoral Intern	RTFC
Jasmin Calcote	Doctoral Intern	RTFC
Allie Sherman	Doctoral Intern	RTFC
Megan O'Connor-Szuma	Doctoral Intern	RTFC
Brittany Grimshaw	Practicum Trainee	RTFC





# MEET YOUR COUNTY ADMINISTRATORS

## VERDENIA BAKER & DORRITT MILLER



Verdenia C. Baker, a certified government financial manager, was chosen as the next Palm Beach County Administrator in 2015. She oversees 6,800 positions and balances a \$6 billion budget. Palm Beach County is Florida's third largest county with a population of 1.5 million and growing.

Notably Palm Beach is one of four Florida counties and one of 50 counties nationally achieving the AAA bond rating, critical for financial stability.

Ms. Baker's career with Palm Beach County began as a budget analyst in 1987. She demonstrates the ability to collaborate with strategic partners to enhance the quality of life for residents and businesses.

Dorritt M. Miller, Assistant County Administrator, joined Palm Beach County government in August 2019 following a long and productive career with the City of West Palm Beach where she served as deputy city administrator, assistant city administrator and deputy internal auditor.

Ms. Miller managed a number of key capital projects, most notably the signature \$154 million City Center project consisting of a new city hall, library and photographic centre and museum. She also chaired the city's policy working group. Ms. Miller oversees the county departments of Equal Business Opportunity, Housing & Economic Sustainability, Parks & Recreation and Youth Services, and serves as liaison to the Housing Finance Authority, Westgate/Belvedere Homes CRA, Business Development Board and CareerSource Palm Beach County. Ms. Miller is also an active member of the PBC Community Remembrance Project.





# RETIREMENT PRESENTATION



## Brian McDowell

Brian was a member of the Finance, Contracting, and Administrative Services (FCA) team. Brian served for two years as a Fiscal Specialist II.

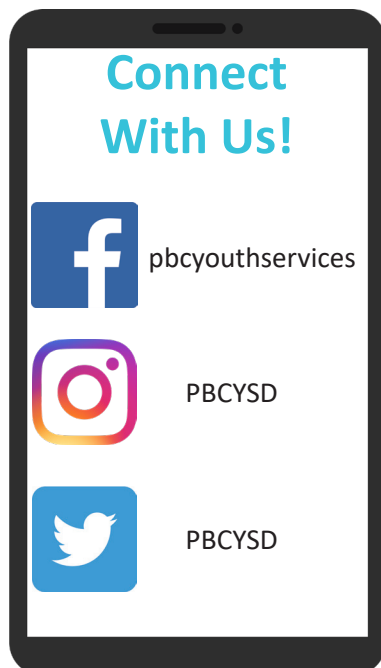
Brian was a joy of a colleague to be around and full of great humor.

We already miss Brian and wish him all the best as he relaxes during his well deserved retirement!

Congratulations Brian!







#### Youth Services Department Director

Tammy K. Fields

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

Michelle Liska

#### Director of Outreach and Community Programming

Geeta Loach-Jacobson

#### Director of Residential Treatment and Family Counseling

Dr. Twila Taylor

#### Editor-in-Chief & Designer

Tevin Ali

#### Palm Beach County

#### Board of County Commissioners

Robert S. Weinroth, Mayor, Gregg K. Weiss,  
Vice Mayor, Maria G. Marino, Dave Kerner,  
Maria Sachs, Melissa McKinlay,  
Mack Bernard



#### County Administrator

Verdenia C. Baker

#### Assistant County Administrator

Dorritt M. Miller