

# YSD Scoop!



Volume 4 | Issue 4

Newsletter of the Palm Beach County  
Youth Services Department



Youth participate in a fitness jam session led by Digital VibeZ during the 4th Annual Super Summer Spelling Bee.

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## Invitation to Circuit 15 Meeting on Governor's Executive Order 18-81

Youth Services Department Director Tammy K. Fields and Children's Services Council CEO Lisa Williams-Taylor presented at the local meeting for Circuit 15 on Friday, Sept. 28.

The meeting was called in response to the Marjorie Stoneman Douglas tragedy, after which Governor Rick Scott signed Executive Order 18-81. This order guides the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to enhance collaboration with law enforcement offices in each county to improve the coordination of behavioral health



[MYFLFAMILIES.COM](http://MYFLFAMILIES.COM)

services for individuals in need. Six of the DCF's regional managing directors are convening regional meetings to realize the goals of Executive Order 18-81.

## 4th Annual Super Summer Spelling Bee



The Youth Services Department hosted its fourth annual Super Summer Spelling Bee on Thursday, July 12, at Palm Beach Lakes Community High School in West Palm Beach.

More than 300 students in the Summer Camp Scholarship and Summer Food Service programs participated. The spelling bee provides academic activities to encourage the spirit of learning while preventing summer slide.

“The spelling bee is one way that we can prevent summer slide for our campers using a fun and exciting method of learning,” said Geeta Loach-Jacobson, director of the Youth Services Department’s Outreach and Community

Programming Division.

Participating agencies included the Palm Beach County Attorney’s Office, Palm Beach County Community Services Department, Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation, School District of Palm Beach County, Palm Beach Lakes Community High School, Digital Vibez, the Children’s Services Council, the City of West Palm Beach, the Literacy Coalition, United Way of Palm Beach County, Florida Atlantic University, Prime Time Palm Beach County, the Early Learning Coalition, the Palm Beach Post and Florida Power and Light.



“Develop a passion for learning. If you do, you will never cease to grow.”

- Anthony J. D’Angelo

## Youth Services Receives Heart-felt Thanks



Dear Mrs. Geeta and Mrs. Jacqueline,  
Thank you for our scholarships. Our community thinks you all are the best.

Roses are red,  
Violets are blue,  
If it wasn't for the Palm Beach County scholarship  
What would we do?

On behalf of For The Children, we love you and thank you.

The Palm Beach County Youth Services Department’s Summer Camp Scholarship Program (SCSP) awarded 4,248 scholarships during fiscal year 2018. Among those receiving scholarships were youth from For The Children, Inc., and CROS Ministries. As a show of appreciation, they wrote heart-felt letters to the department.

More than 7,000 applications were received and processed by the department. This represents 49 percent more scholarship applications than in 2017, while the number of

scholarships awarded increased by 35 percent.

The SCSP provides full tuition and fees for summer camp for children residing in families with income at or below 150 percent of federal poverty guidelines. The Children’s Services Council of Palm Beach County contributed \$4.5 million dollars of the funding for scholarships. For more information about the program, please visit [pbcgov.com/youthservices/Pages/Summer\\_Camp.aspx](http://pbcgov.com/youthservices/Pages/Summer_Camp.aspx).

Thank you for all of your support! These kids are amazing and are so thankful for you!

- A Counselor, CROS Ministries

Thank you for the time you take out for us. Thank you for caring for our safety. Thank you for being amazing.

- A Camper, CROS Ministries

“Gratitude can transform common days into thanksgiving, turn routine jobs into joy and change ordinary opportunities into blessings.”

- William Arthur Ward

## Youth Services Employee Retreat



The Youth Services Department held its annual Employee Retreat on Aug. 9, at the Clayton E. Hutcheson Agricultural Center. County Administrator Verdenia C. Baker and Assistant County Administrator Todd J. Bonlarron were also present.

During the retreat, staff selected a vision statement and core values to represent the Department.

The retreat was led by Motivational Speaker and Owner of RCultures Rick Caldwell. The theme of the retreat was “Ubuntu.” Ubuntu is a philosophy that claims there is a universal bond of sharing that connects humans.

Youth Services Department staff were also able to learn more about each other and the value of each member.

**Our Mission**  
What we desire and intend for our youth

Administer programs and initiatives of the Board of County Commissioners to ensure the healthy growth, development, education, and transition of children and youth to young adulthood and the workforce.

**Our Vision**  
What we aim to achieve

Empowering youth and families to realize their full potential and be the driving force of a thriving community.

**Our Values**  
What we stand for

- Diversity and Equity
- Compassion and Empathy
- Open-mindedness
- Commitment
- Respect

## Highridge Family Center Highlights



Therapeutic Intervention Break Room

Staff Appreciation Committee



Sanctuary Model Theme of the Month Bulletin Board

Theme of the Month Decorations

### Therapeutic Intervention Break Room

Highridge Family Center officially opened and implemented the Therapeutic Intervention Break Room (TIB) Room on Aug. 13. This room provides a space for residents to have the opportunity to learn to manage their emotions by using tools such as athletic equipment, musical instruments, a sand tray and other activities.

### West Palm Beach Community Response Team

The West Palm Beach Community Response Team, comprised of two West Palm Beach Police Officers, resumed its weekly group sessions with Highridge Family Center residents on Sept. 4. The residents had an opportunity to learn about law enforcement and how to appropriately interact with them.

### Sanctuary Theme of the Month

The Sanctuary Theme of the Month for September was Growth and Change. Residents created trees that represented their goals for growth and change. Posters and other materials were posted throughout the Center.

### Staff Appreciation Committee

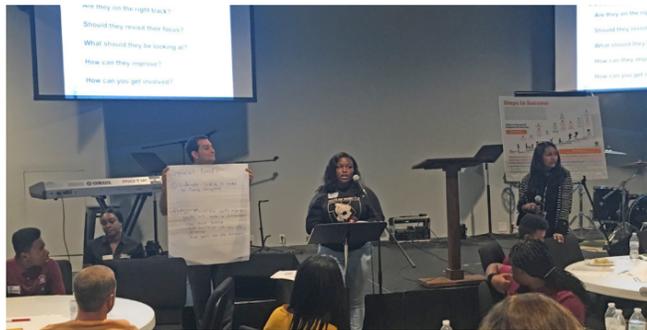
During the summer break and program development, staff implemented a Staff Appreciation Committee. The Committee recognizes staff birthdays and other important events by decorating offices with balloons and other items, as well as having a cake at the end of the month.

“The idea has definitely boosted staff morale,” said Heli Pandini, residential counseling coordinator.

### Sanctuary Model of Trauma Informed Care Year 3 Kick-off

On Sept. 10, Highridge Family Center staff celebrated two years since the implementation of the Sanctuary Model of Trauma Informed Care and the beginning of their final year of preparation for certification. Staff engaged in group discussions related to the Sanctuary Model and how it has impacted their lives, both personally and professionally. Changes in the organizational culture, challenges, successes and future goals were addressed. The Sanctuary Model certification process is a three-year commitment that includes education, training and alignment of clinical practices with trauma theory.

## Continuing the Community Conversation



The Birth to 22: United for Brighter Futures Coalition held a Community Conversation on Wednesday, Sept. 26, hosted by Urban Youth Impact, in collaboration with the Youth Services Department's Outreach & Community Programming Division, United Way of Palm Beach County and Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County.

The voice of children and youth, and the adults who care about them, are vital to implementing the Youth Master Plan, as well as ensuring that a difference is made in our community.

For more information about the Birth to 22 initiative, visit <http://pbcbirthto22.com/>.

## MBK Participates in Dads Take Your Child to School Day



Ike Powell, Youth Services Department senior program specialist and My Brother's Keeper (MBK) Network taskforce leader, participated in the School District of Palm Beach County's "Dads Take Your Child to School Day" on Sept. 26, at K.E. Cunningham/Canal Point Elementary School. Herbert Crawford, community resource liaison and MBK ambassador, along with the school's administration,

staff members and dads, embraced the theme "Man Up." Ike participated as the guest speaker, encouraging men to read frequently with their children and make it fun and interesting, so that they will want to read more, while continually improving literacy skills. The men enjoyed spending time in their child's classroom, as well as reflecting as a group while enjoying a delicious lunch.

## Green Futures Summer Internships



Palm Beach County Environmental Resources Management (ERM) Department, in collaboration with the Youth Services Department, celebrated its second year of the Green Futures Summer Internship/Mentoring Program. Ike Powell, Youth Services senior program specialist, worked closely with ERM to identify candidates for the program. Nine young adults, ages 17 to 22, were selected and completed the four week paid internship. For many of

the participants, this was their first bona fide job. Interns were exposed to real scientific fieldwork by conducting educational programs, enhancing beach/dune habitats, monitoring coral reefs, planting mangroves in the Lake Worth Lagoon Estuary, conducting mosquito control inspections, assessing native plant communities in natural areas and engineer surveying.

*This internship has been very mind blowing. The things that I have done here never in a million years I would have thought that I would have done. Goes to say, 'Never Say Never' This internship has taken me out of my comfort zone which was my reasoning to be here. I have learned so much throughout the four weeks here. I am very lucky for securing this internship. When I become a political figure I will use what I have learned to make a positive impact on the world. Thank you, Mrs. Samantha Corr.*  
- Intern

*"Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life!"*  
- Confucius

## CBA Spotlight: Compass



### 1. What is your mission?

Compass aims to diminish stereotypes by challenging long-standing misconceptions about the character of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. We accomplish this by emboldening our youth, promoting pride in our community, and acting as an educator, advocate, health service provider, and focal point for community organizing. As good neighbors, effective partners, and respected participants in our civic responsibilities, Compass promotes awareness of the caring nature of our diverse community.

### 2. What does your organization do?

Compass is the largest LGBTQ community center in Florida and the Southeast United States and one of the largest and most respected of its kind in the nation. More than 25,000 people utilize its 14,000 square foot facility, and more than 17,000 referrals are fielded by more than 12,000 volunteer hours graciously contributed by hundreds of community-centered individuals each year.

Compass provides social-emotional support programming, education, health services, cultural competency trainings, community organizing, on-site mental health services and empowerment programming to LGBTQ youth, adults, and families.

### 3. What key programs does your organization offer?

- A weekly social-support group for LGBTQ youth and their allies ages 12-18 on Wednesdays and Fridays from 5 to 7 p.m. at Compass.

- A weekly social-emotional support group for transgender youth ages 12-18 on Fridays from 5 to 7 p.m. at Compass.

- The No Shade, All Tea Therapy support for LGBTQ youth ages 10-18 will begin in November. If you are interested in participating, contact Amanda Canete at [amanda@compassglcc.com](mailto:amanda@compassglcc.com).

- The Compass Mentor Program connects our youth with upstanding community members. Mentors and their mentees participate in field trips, trainings, and arts and culture events.

- PFLAG (Parents, Friends, and Families of Lesbians and Gays) social-support group meets at Compass on the 2nd Wednesday of the month from 5-7pm and the 4th Thursday from 6:30-8:30pm.

### 4. How does your agency benefit the community?

Compass is the only direct service provider for the LGBTQ community in the County. Compass provides cultural competency trainings to the community at large to educate and diminish stereotypes and long-standing misconceptions of the LGBTQ community, and offers many opportunities for LGBTQ people of all ages and their allies to come together for educational, memorial, and celebratory activities, reducing isolation and increasing a sense of community and understanding.

Compass also offers personal case management to residents of Palm Beach County living with HIV/AIDS who fall below certain income parameters. Caring

staff assist these clients in navigating their medical appointments and act as advocates in helping them access other resources they need, through Compass and our partner agencies. This help assists clients in adhering to their medical plans, and improves their health outcomes.

Many people who come to Compass for support groups, social activities or just to use our free computer lab, report that knowing Compass is here in their community makes them feel safer and more accepted.

### 5. What is your agency's focus for 2018?

This year, Compass' focus has been on sharing the stories of our community members and expanding our outreach to more demographic groups. A new group for elder LGBTQ community members, Coffee Clatch, began this spring, and has grown with every monthly meeting. Elders and youth have been brought together through The Legacy Project, in which several youth each

interviewed an elder to learn about their life and experiences with coming out and living as an LGBTQ person, and take what they learn to create a digital story about that person. The final products were presented as part of a stage performance at Palm Beach Dramaworks on October 30th.

### 6. How do the funds received from Palm Beach County enhance the services your agency provides?

Funds received from the County have enabled transgender youth and their families to receive education, resources, family coaching, and social support through our weekly transgender youth group. Compass was able to train 480 individuals in the past year through our cultural competency training. Funding also allowed Compass to offer individual and group therapy for LGBTQ youth.

For more information about Compass, please visit [www.compassglcc.com](http://www.compassglcc.com).

## Meet Mars

*Prior to joining the Youth Group at Compass, I had no idea that I could become a thriving and successful person as a transgender individual. Last year, I reached out to Compass for a sense of community and belonging, and to join friends who had already been attending the Compass Youth Group for support.*

*Through my interactions with other LGBTQ teenagers, Youth Group staff and mentors, it became clear that embracing the most authentic version of myself, was not only a possibility, but a necessity! Subconsciously, I had forced myself to ignore who I really was simply because it was the easiest option; however, the more I attended Youth Group, the more I realized that denial was no longer my destiny. If I allowed denial to continue, my peace of mind, and my sense of self, would be sacrificed.*

*Once I allowed myself to accept who I truly was, I began the monumental process of transitioning from female to*

*male. I feared the potential rejection that happens when a person comes out. The support I received from people at Compass, and the resources they helped me find, made this process much less daunting. Today, I could not imagine going through this horrifying experience on my own. Compass has been and continues to be my primary resource for social and emotional support.*

*While I am incredibly lucky to have a biological family that has completely supported my transition, Compass has provided me with a second family; a family that loves me unconditionally and accepts every aspect of my being without question, conflict or condition. I am part of a community as well; a community which has helped me explore the experience of being a proud trans man firsthand.*

*With Gratitude,  
Mars*

## Boys to Men Mentoring Session



Gary Blake, Belle Glade Youth Empowerment Center (YEC) director, and Ike Powell, Youth Services senior program specialist, conducted a mentoring session with a group of boys at the Belle Glade YEC on July 11. The session

provided the opportunity for the boys to ask questions and get feedback on the key skills required for college and career readiness.

## Vice Mayor Mack Bernard Visits Lake Worth Youth Empowerment Center



Vice Mayor Mack Bernard visited the Lake Worth Youth Empowerment Center (YEC) on July 19. Vice Mayor Bernard met with the youth and listened to their suggestions

regarding community improvements. Ike Powell, Youth Services senior program specialist was in attendance to support the meeting.

## Back to School Bash



(l-r) Ruth Moguillansky, Office of Community Revitalization principal planner; Maria Bond, Friends of Foster Children executive director; Ike Powell, Youth Services Department senior program specialist; Reggie Hayes, Youth Services Department planner; Houston Tate, Office of Community Revitalization director; and Nigel Johnson, Youth Services family counselor.

The Youth Services Department proudly participated in the Putting Kids First Community Back to School Bash on Saturday, Aug. 4.

The event was held at five locations throughout the County, including John I Leonard High School in Greenacres, Village Academy in Delray Beach, Tanner Park in South Bay, Pahokee High School in Pahokee, and Jupiter Community Center in Jupiter.

Started over 20 years ago by five local nonprofits, the bash

has expanded to serve 17,000 children throughout Palm Beach County, with the generous support and organization from the Palm Beach County Office of Community Revitalization. For the third year, Youth Services has contributed hygiene kits for middle and high school students.

The event's purpose is to prepare children with the necessary school supplies to help them learn, be successful and confident during the new school year and beyond.

## Future Leaders United for Change Updates



### Future Leaders (Remix) the Ultimate Youth Council

Future Leaders United for Change spent the summer months planning and looking at opportunities to learn and grow, better and stronger. The Council has been revamped to be better aligned with opportunities and embedded in the Birth to 22: United for Brighter Futures Youth Master Plan (YMP). The initiative has been structured to support the youths' voices in their communities, and the issues and concerns that they care about the most by building a road map for youth leaders with youth leaders.

Services Department's version of the "In My Feelings" Challenge. The goal is to create a universal message that demonstrates Palm Beach County is vested in the future of its greatest assets - young people. The Youth Services Department wrote lyrics, created dance moves and teamed up with Digital Vibez for the making of the You SaiD Challenge.

### Get Engaged!

For more information about or to get involved with Future Leaders United for Change, email [YSD-Future-Leaders@pbcgov.org](mailto:YSD-Future-Leaders@pbcgov.org) or call (561) 242-5739.

### You SaiD Challenge

The You SaiD Challenge is the Palm Beach County Youth

## NOBLE Youth Conference



Youth Services' Outreach & Community Programming Division collaborated with Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office Lt. Patricia Brown and the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE) to connect 10 youth with the opportunity to attend the NOBLE 17th Annual Youth Leadership Conference on July 29-August 1, in Hollywood, Fla. The 10 youth that attended the conference are members of the Lake Worth Youth Empowerment Center (YEC).

The NOBLE Youth Program convenes an annual youth

leadership conference in conjunction with NOBLE's annual national training of law enforcement executives. The concept of the annual youth conference was born out of a need to affect change in young people and to enhance community relationships between youth and public safety organizations by increasing awareness, appreciation, and career interest in public safety. In addition, the conference was instituted to educate youth on how to meet challenges and develop leadership skills through an exciting action-oriented curriculum. The conference included a campus tour of Florida Memorial University in Miami Gardens, FL.

## 2018 Talent Showcase



For The Children, Inc., a Youth Services Department grant funded agency, held its annual Talent Showcase on Aug. 3, at Barton Elementary School. Various youth groups showcased their outstanding talents, including dance, step,



hip-hop, spoken word and more. Ike Powell, Youth Services Department senior program specialist, along with other community leaders served on the judges panel.



Youth & Family Counseling Licensed Family Therapist Filise Jules, LMHC, attended the Haitian Heroes Back to School event on July 21.



Dr. Melissa Singh, postdoctoral resident at the Education and Training Center, presented on “Bullying Prevention and Intervention” at the Main Courthouse on July 26.

## 2018 Child Protection Summit



Youth Services Department Director Tammy K. Fields and Children’s Services Council Community Planning and Partnership Lead Marsha Guthrie gave an updated presentation on Birth to 22: United for Brighter Futures

initiative during the Circuit 15 session at the 2018 Child Protection Summit. The summit was held Sept. 5-7 in Orlando, Fla.



Dr. Loren Berry presented a training on “Understanding and Responding to Bullying” at the Treasure Coast Guardians for New Futures (GFNF) Child Summit held at Indian River State College on Sept. 26.



Our Senior Program Specialist and My Brother’s Keeper Task Force Leader Ike Powell welcomed students back to school at Village Academy and Carver Middle School on Aug. 13. A call to action was made to 100 men to welcome students as part of the Back to School Day events.

## Mentor Recruitment Lunch & Learn



Ike Powell, Youth Services Department senior program specialist and My Brother’s Keeper task force leader, and Gary Graham, United Way of Palm Beach County Mentor



Center senior director, conducted a Mentor Recruitment Lunch & Learn for County employees on Sept. 28.



Youth & Family Counseling Licensed Family Therapist Beatriz Ayala, LCSW, gave a presentation in Spanish on How to Prevent Bullying at the Main Library on Aug. 18.



Youth & Family Counseling Licensed Family Therapist Filise Jules, LMHC, attended the Delray Beach Provider Meeting and Village Academy Open House event on Sept. 20.

## Q&A with Clara Hessing

At YSD, we view our employees as one of our greatest strengths. This quarter, we're featuring Clara Hessing, Youth & Family Counseling therapist. As part of the Youth & Family Counseling team, Clara conducts individual, family and group therapy. She develops and implements effective family treatment plans, maintains a caseload which includes preparation and case history as required. Clara also teaches effective parenting skills, prevention and treatment of at-risk youth and their families.



- Where is your hometown?**  
Belle Glade, Florida
- What was your first job?**  
Counselor at the Alpha Program in western Palm Beach County.
- What are the three most important skills you need for your job?**  
*Patience* - the ability to exhibit empathy and concern for the problems and needs of the client and when working with families.  
*Flexibility* - to interact with schools, social service agencies and other professionals in order to provide client-needed services in school, at home and in the community.  
*Humor* - be mindful that humor is good for the soul and also a stress reliever. Humor helps me to remember that every family member is different and progress is made at different times. I value my skills of patience, flexibility and humor.
- What is your favorite thing about your job at YSD?**  
I have the opportunity to make a difference in the life of a child every day I arrive at work.
- Is there a memorable moment that you would like to share in relation to your work here, at YSD?**  
The most memorable moment is when I received recognition for 30 years of services with Palm Beach County. All 30 years servicing families from my office at the Glades Office Blvd in Belle Glade.
- What hobbies and interests do you have outside of work?**

My interest outside of work is to join my sorority sisters of Delta Sigma Theta in mentoring males in our male youth initiative program "EMBODI" – Empowering Males to Build Opportunity for Developing Independence, of which I am the chairperson.

- What is the most important lesson you've learned in the last year?**  
Positive self-management (how to handle stress). I have learned when to hold them and when to fold them. :-)
- Where would you like to go on a dream vacation?**  
Sandals, Jamaica
- What is your favorite quote?**  
"Show respect even to people who don't deserve it; not as a reflection of their character, but as a reflection of yours."
- Who or what inspires you?**  
Grandmothers in the Belle Glade, Pahokee and South Bay areas who raised their children on hard work and prayer – due to age and disabilities, now raising their grandchildren on prayer and more prayer.
- Is there something about you that your fellow coworkers would be surprised to know?**  
I was the first girl to receive the Athlete of the Year trophy at Glades Central High School in 1978, awarded to male athletes in previous years. At present, male and female trophies are awarded each year.

## Well Done!



Dr. Laura Cruz, Education & Training Center psychologist co-authored a book chapter in the refereed textbook "Handbook of Clinical Psychology and Developmental Disabilities: Treatment." The chapter explores the impact that childhood disorders can have on academic success and provides a guide for consultation and intervention practices. Dr. Cruz's research contributions are directly applicable to the therapeutic services we offer to our clients.

## Welcome Aboard!

Join us in welcoming our newest team members!

The following Youth Services employees were hired between July 1 and Sept. 30.

Employee	Position	Division
Lashonda Stevens-Lacey	Senior Secretary	OCP
Reggie Hayes	Planner I	OCP
Berdie Duvelsaint	On-Call Paraprofessional	RTFC

## Student Positions & CareerSource Interns

Employee	Position	Division
Eryan Burrs	CareerSource Intern	OCP
Sarina Larrieux	CareerSource Intern	Administration
Devin Ayaz	CareerSource Intern	Administration
Lorenz Small	Student Clerical	Administration
Teriann Constantino	Student Clerical	OCP

## Promotions

**Tera Rose**  
Juvenile Residence Technician  
RTFC



**Nohemi Medrano**  
Licensed Family Therapist  
RTFC

## Congratulations!



This quarter we said farewell and thank you to Kathy Back, Youth & Family Counseling licensed family therapist. Kathy has celebrated 19 years of service with Palm Beach County.



The Education & Training Center's Dr. Cruz welcomed baby Lilian to the world on September 13.



Youth & Family Counseling's Crystal Gonzalez, licensed family therapist, welcomed baby Stella Olivia to the world on September 4.

## Share Feedback and Stories!

Do you have feedback on our newsletter or have an awesome story to share? We'd love to hear from you!

Contact Youth Services  
Department Communications  
Specialist Rebeca Krogman  
at [rkrogman@pbcgov.org](mailto:rkrogman@pbcgov.org).

## Connect with Us!

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### 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. Tony Spaniol

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Palm Beach County  
Board of County Commissioners