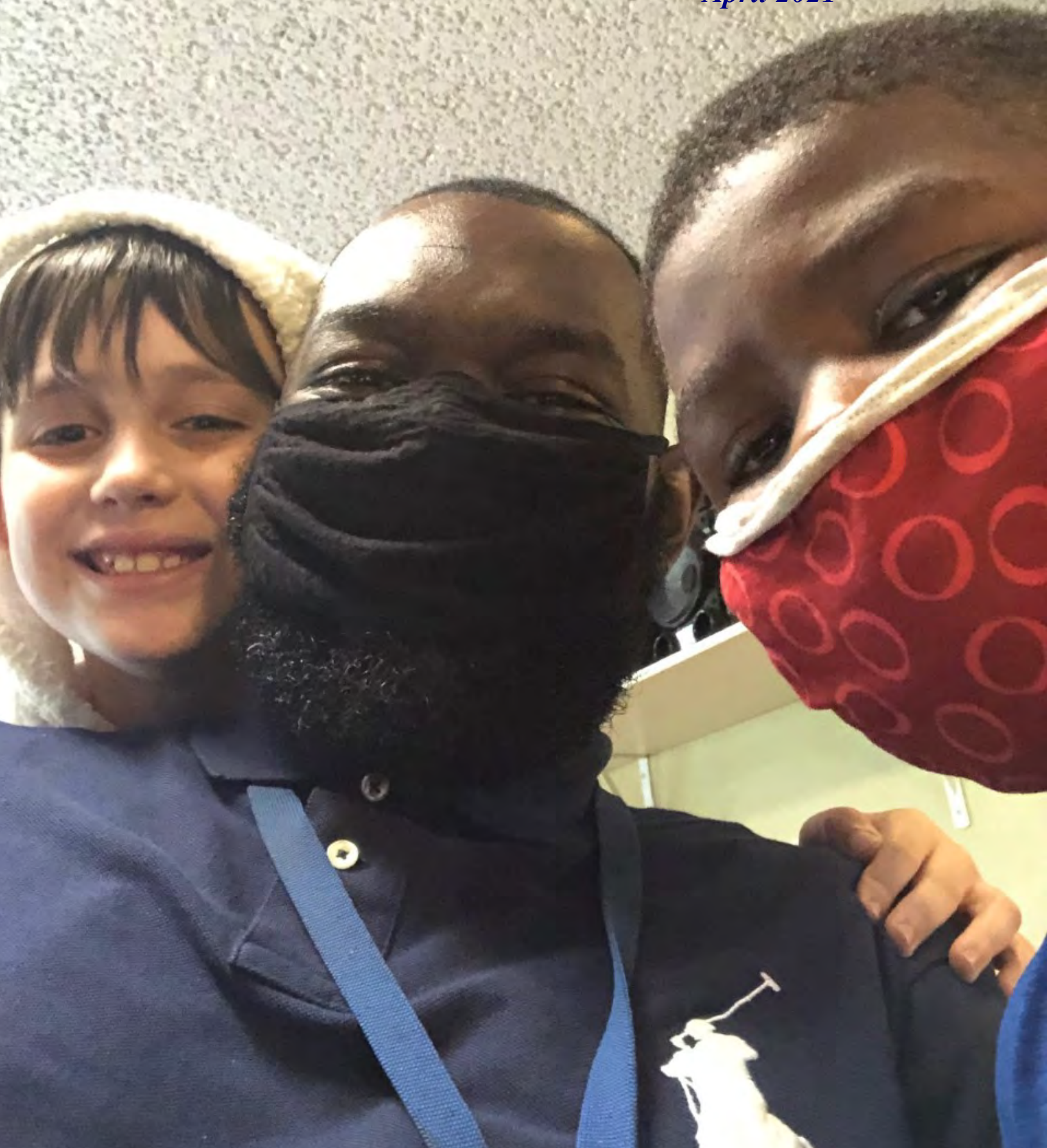


Inside *YCS*

*A Quarterly Newsletter by and for all YCS Employees
April 2021*



Spring Forward

Table of Contents

President's Message	3
New Employees	4-5
Shout Outs	6-7
Promotions	8
Milestones	8
Deliverables	9
Mentoring	10
Program Accomplishments	11-15
Awards	16
Thank You Letter	17
Agency Updates	18-24
Interns	25
Thoughts To Ponder	26
Just For Fun	27



Inside YCS

is produced by YCS with headquarters at
284 Broadway Newark, NJ 07104
www.ycs.org

President/CEO
Tara Augustine

Editor
Janis Nicolosi-Endo

Designer
Barbara Michaels

© 2021 YCS Inc.
All rights reserved.

May not be reproduced without the
written permission of YCS.

Contact
Janis Nicolosi-Endo 201-678-1312
or jnendo@ycs.org.

President's Message

I hope this first edition of Inside YCS for 2021 offers a glimmer of light at the end of the proverbial tunnel that we have all lived through this past year. In an open letter to all Holley employees, Mechelle Copeland - with honesty and eloquence – expresses her gratitude for the team's shared struggles. (p14) Mechelle's sentiments reflect the thoughts of so many of our colleagues and fills me with pride to be able to work alongside every one of you. Because of your perseverance and selfless dedication to the care for the individuals in your programs, YCS has continued to fulfill its mission.

We chose the theme "Spring Forward" because, despite the challenges we have faced battling this virus, the agency has worked hard over the past year to improve operations and lay a new foundation to enhance the work experience for everyone at YCS. The fruits of these labors are just beginning to blossom. The CCADAC has had a major impact on helping YCS become more responsive to the needs of our staff. As a result of an employee survey, the committee has launched multiple campaigns to foster cultural awareness, gender equality, tolerance and more (p19).

UKG Timekeeping system is running smoothly and our newest IT upgrade, Office 365, has just been rolled out. See tips from IT on how to take advantage of cloud-based storage feature (p22).

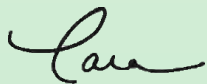
One of my goals since coming to YCS was to ensure that every new employee was mentored for the first 90 days. Although the mentoring initiative could not get fully off the ground, due to Covid, there is already positive proof that it is working. Meet Dehkeylah Mayo, as she explains what mentoring has meant to her. (P10). Kudos to all the co-workers and managers who have been so supportive of her.

We have also added a new section of the newsletter to highlight the contributions of our interns who have played a critical role in providing support to our residential programs over the past year (p25).

Lastly, I want to thank our nurses Deanna DeStefano and Kyle Wdzieczkowski for diligently keeping us abreast of the latest Covid updates, making it easy for us to get tested on the job, and get the vaccinated. They continue to go above and beyond to assist staff in getting the vaccine (p18).

If we take the simple steps necessary to stay safe and get vaccinated, I know we can defeat this virus and once again be free to enjoy each other's company at social gatherings. Doesn't a YCS BBQ party sound like fun?

As restrictions across the state are easing, I look forward to getting on the road and meeting you all in person. See you soon!



Tara Augustine

Looking Ahead!

As the result of generous grants for pet therapy from the PSEG Foundation, private foundations, and individual donors, we look forward in 2021 to providing canine therapy for individuals in our residences. We would like to thank every program who expressed an interest for their clients to be part of the program. It is currently being developed and we will share more details with you as soon as they are formalized.

Meet our New Employees

Welcome!!

Aali - Raheem, Sahliyah X. Residential Assistant , Sicklerville	Brooks, Daniel Personal Assistant II , Echohill	Dougherty, Rachel Sayre House	Lakhman, Gabriela Speech Language Specialist , Sawtelle Learning Center
Acosta, Claudia PA , Greenbrook	Brown, Diamond M. LPN , Buena Vista	Elam, Aeisha Personal Assistant , Cedarbrook	Lampkin, Keyonnah PA , Lawn Ridge
Adamson, Wyceir RA , Fisher Hall	Chaperon, Esmeralda E. PA , Lawn Ridge	Fenter, Zakeema RA , Sayre House	Langston, Ashley Residential Assistant , Voorhees
Adetunji, Oloruntosin M. PA , Pamela Drive	Chesney, Brandon HR Manager , Human Resources	Gabbidon, Faith A. PA , Buffalo	Lawrence, Dayshawna PA , Walnut - Northvale
Agunyo, Komla PA , Sawtelle Hall	Cloney, Sharon RA , Malcolm House	Gibbs, Devon Clinician , Winslow	Lawson, Djanyra Personal Assistant , Absecon
Antoine, Irva RA , Malcolm House	Cohen, Arianne R. Clinician I , Estell Manor	Gonzales, Luis A. PA , Thomas	Lee, Tyrone Residential Assistant , Estell Manor
Arroyo, Tina RA , Holley	Concepcion, Brianna Personal Assistant , Echohill	Graves, Jihana PA , Buffalo	Leonardo, Cristal TA II , Sawtelle Learning Center
Bacon, Asionna Residential Assistant , Sayre House	Coward, Kajuana A. Residential Assistant , Voorhees	Harrison, Sierra PA, Winslow	Makovec, Caileen Clinician I , Kilbarchan
Barrios, Johnny PJD Coordinator , School Based Youth	Craig, Simone Residential Assistant , Voorhees	Hay, Aliyah PA , Lawn Ridge	Manning, Diamond D. PA , Emmans Road
Blackmon, Tiffany Residential Assistant , Voorhees	Davis, Crystal Residential Assistant , Voorhees	Hernandez, Mary Mental Health Specialist , School Based Youth	Mauriello, Anthony SRT / BA , SRT
Blackson, Vonyette A. Personal Assistant , Cedarbrook	Davis, Crystal Residential Assistant , Voorhees	Howard, Shakoya PA , Hilltop	Michael, Marcus Residential Assistant , Estell Manor
Boyer, Ayanna Personal Assistant , Cedarbrook	Davis, Rahfee PA , Lawn Ridge	Janey, Leslie R. Personal Assistant II , Buena Vista	Mitchell, Tracy M. Clinician I , Lawn Ridge
Bracy, LaShonta Personal Assistant II , Buena Vista	Davis, Tyliera Residential Assistant , Sicklerville	Jones, Cecelia PA , Lawn Ridge	Moultrie, Patrice Residential Assistant , Estell Manor
Brisbon, Kenyatta AP Clerk , Accounting	Dirocie, Francheska Behaviorist , Lawn Ridge	Kanneh, Theresa SRT/BA , SRT	Munyenah, Oboteh Residential Assistant , Sicklerville
Briscoe, Aimee Clinician I , Sayre House	Dobson, Edward SRT / BA , SRT	Kondrla, Natalie Sewell	Nelson, Elizabeth D. Personal Assistant , Hammonton

Parekh, Sheetal HR Generalist , Human Resources	Robinson, Brianna Residential Assistant , Sayre House	Smith, Christopher G. Personal Assistant , Toledo	Wadley, Jeanean Personal Assistant , Absecon
Parks, Nakiah RA , Holley Residence	Rollins, David Residential Assistant Supervisor , Estell Manor	Smith, Katrina Personal Assistant , Hammonton	Walker, Damani TEMP Employee , Human Resources
Patterson, Donna Medicaid Clerk , Accounting	Rowe, Eartha PA , Lawn Ridge	Smith, Tanasia Residential Assistant , Voorhees	Walker, Teniell RA , Davis House
Paul, Carmeline Training Clerk , Agency Training	Ruocco, Amanda TA II , Sawtelle Learning Center	Solomon, Israel PA , West Orange	Watkins, Tamiya Personal Assistant , Sewell
Perry, Kyla Personal Assistant , Sewell	Santiago, Erasheena Residential Assistant , Estell Manor	St. Fleur, Marie C. PA , Burning Bush	Williams, Damitra Residential Assistant , Vineland
Proctor, Leslie Personal Assistant , Willingboro	Scott, Devon Residential Assistant , Vineland	Stang, Sonja Clinician I , Haddon Heights	Williams, Demetrius SRT Behavioral Assistant , SRT
Reaves, Tatiana Personal Assistant , Hammonton	Severe, Lee RA , SRT	Thomas, Parrish Residential Assistant , Sicklerville	Willis, Christopher Personal Assistant Supervisor , Blackwood
Reed, Dutil Personal Assistant , Blackwood	Shivers, Gabrielle RA , Laurie Haven	Tunde, Bashiru PA , Pamela Drive	Wilson, Diamond Personal Assistant , Absecon
Riede, Hannah RA , Malcolm House	Slaney, Elijah Residential Assistant , Vineland	Vandyke Yeboah, Augustina O. PA , Pamela Drive	Wilson, Tyanna Personal Assistant , Cedarbrook

Y C S' Pledge to You

We will make sure every employee is...

Prepared with all the knowledge needed to fulfill their work responsibilities.

Equipped with ongoing training and tools to be successful at their work.

Supported with guidance and direction from supervising staff for your professional growth.

Shout Outs! To Our Amazing Colleagues

BIG SHOUT OUT to **Lauren Marks, BCBA & Devon Gibbs, Clinician** who along with Winslow's program director, Dave Johnson have created an "Appreciation Station" for the staff in their home. Each time a staff is recognized for their hard work their name goes on the board. At the end of the months all the names go in a hat & the lucky winner gets a gift card!!!

Mr. Brandon Chesney and Mr. Thomas Johnson It is wonderful that they are now present at Somerdale! They are very professional, responsive and kind. From the way in which they showed respect for me and my confidentiality, I became aware of some ways I wanted to improve my own professional department. I had some compliance work that was really burdensome. I mentioned it to Thomas. He researched the issue and showed me a way to maintain compliance while significantly reducing my administrative burden.

Sawtelle Morris would like to shout out **Erica Porter and Karimot Mustapha** for going above and beyond for our consumers. Both ladies are excellent and diligent with transporting our consumers to and from medical appointments. Also providing reassurance and letting the consumers know it's okay to go to the doctors even when you're not feeling sick.

Sawtelle Morris would also like to shout out **SRT staff Dehkeylah Mayo** for assisting our consumers with virtual day program. Thank You Dehkeylah!!!!

Welcome to QAPI **Kristen Wistuba**. Kristin has been working at YCS for 9 years, first as a clinician and clinical case manager and most recently as a Program Director. Kristen will join QAPI in the coming weeks. We also wish the best of luck to **Rebecca Pera** in her new endeavor.

Sawtelle Learning Center nurse, leadership and staff for all their assistance with their Covid-19 test clinic.

Barbara Chase and Kareemah Major, interns at Voorhees Residential Facility, **Timothy Manning and Todd Fleming, interns** at Davis House and **Morganne Schafle, intern** with QAPI for facilitating the CCADAC Focus Groups at YCS. We are so appreciative of their willingness to take on this project and their time and efforts to make this initiative a reality.

When **Sherica Bekom-Lamar, SRT** for Sawtelle DD was assigned to the Amwell home, she noticed that information had to be updated in many of the medical binders, communications logs etc. Being the Committed, Compassionate and Caring employee, "she is" Sherica began to create and update the binders without even being asked. Then she worked closely with the new house manager to prepare for an internal audit. Result: the home was graded 98%. Thank you for your hard work and dedication to the clients and your co-workers.

We want to acknowledge **clinician, Chris Bertino**, for his relentless efforts and ongoing dedication to help the youth in Southern Region Treatment Homes reunite with their families. For the past 8 months, Chris has assisted an 11 year old boy who had been in out of home place for 2 years reach all his treatment goals so he could achieve his ultimate goal of returning home to his mom.

Holley nurses, leadership and staff for all their assistance with the Holley Covid-19 test clinics.

Welcome back to **Ms. Venitta** who was greatly missed whilst away.

A tremendous shout out to the **Muller IRTS team** for handling a crisis situation with calm and grace!

Ruthie Harper, Fran Spiegel, and Cathy Tronlone for their help with the refreshment set up and role of hospitality ambassadors of our Hackensack Covid clinics.

Andrew Beckford for his role of time keeper and observation area supervisor of our Hackensack Covid-19 vaccine clinics.

Dina Lindor, Cathy Cromelin, Samantha Litchfield and Michelle Simpson for all your help with our Hackensack Covid-19 vaccine clinics.

Newark nurses, leadership and staff for all their assistance with the Newark Covid-19 test clinics.

Thank you to **Yakima Allen, Chawnte Lewis, Dawn Jones, Ashley Gledhill, and Casey Burns** for all the all assistance with the 3 vaccine clinics!

Thank you to **on-call nurses Anne Bakalian and LaShawn Burden White** for helping out at Sayre, while we looked for a new nurse!

Melvina Brown Sawtelle Buffalo, Yanique Reid Sawtelle Walnut, Rosalee Howard Sawtelle Hilltop, Ayesha Williams Sawtelle Greenbrook. All have been covering additional shifts to ensure ratios are maintained.

Hoping **Lisa Guariglia** heels quickly from her broken foot!

Jacky Maddi for baking such delicious cupcakes for our Hackensack Covid-19 vaccine clinic.

Laurie Haven nurses, leadership and staff for all their assistance with the Laurie Haven covid-19 test clinics.

Northern region nursing for all their ongoing rock star help with pandemic related incidents, concerns and increased responsibilities.

NR Sawtelle Residence Managers and leadership for all their assistance with the Sawtelle Residence covid-19 test clinics.

Thank you to **Maria Wallace, Casey Burns and Devon Bermudez** for assisting the sites without nurses.



Promotions

Ababon, Pia PAT Supervisor Parents As Teachers	Colston, Carlene LMS Administrator Agency Training	Garrison, Rayletta VP of Sawtelle Residences NR Regional Admin-DDD North	Murillo, Jorge Montanez Parent-Child Services Coordinator YCS Institute/HMS Clinics
Arthur, Prince Teacher Assistant Sawtelle Learning Center	Dunn, Samantha Clinician II RTC - Holley Residence	Molfetas, Nicole L. Clinical Case Manager RTC - Kilbarchan	Williams, Shamaine L. HR Director Human Resources

Milestones



Professional Accomplishments

Rayletta Garrison received her Master of Science in Psychology from Purdue University Global with a 3.92 GPA.



New Arrivals

Carina Navarro gave birth to little boy named Ethan Gil-Navarro on 2/5/2021!

Brad Vetterly welcomed a little boy named Leo, born on February 15 at 9:51am, weighing, 9lbs 4 oz .



Weddings

Yolanda Nickels, GWS Teacher Aide, happily announced her recent engagement!! She is excitedly planning her September, 2022 wedding. Congratulations!!

Moving On

Since joining the HR Department of YCS in 2006, **Vaneza Calderon** has been a valuable and well respected member of our team. As the Director of HR, Vaneza was appreciated by her co-workers and the employees of YCS. The work and contribution, including the extended hours of dedication, are greatly honored. We will miss her professionalism, empathy and strength and wish her all the best in her future endeavors. ~ Kathy Grosso

Retirements

This past January, **Norma Sylvestri**, YCS' Facilities Director, retired from YCS after 36 years. As one of the pillars YCS has been built upon, Norma worked tirelessly, side by side, with the administrative leadership to expand services to thousands of families for more than 3 decades. "Her dedication and devotion to the agency, her colleagues and the children who have grown up within YCS' family has been second to none," said Laura Maier, YCS CFO. The many colleagues who have worked beside her on the Newark campus and beyond will be forever grateful for her friendship, determination and compassion. While Norma will be terribly missed, we wish her all the best on the new journey that she is about to embark.

Deliverables

I would like to extend my appreciation to the **Sawtelle Learning Center staff** for your commitment and dedication to your students. During a time of uncertainty and anxiety, you have provided a sense of normalcy and stability that your students so desperately need. When most districts and teachers are concerned about a return to in person instruction, you have been putting your own fears aside and have been welcoming your students into the classroom since September! A huge thank you from your students, families, me, and the rest of your YCS family. ~ Jessica Shea-Brown, COO

Youth Residential

Hammonton – over 100% for nursing and BCBA hours, 95% of shift notes completed
Davis – 447% of Allied Services
Sayre – 90% of shift notes
Fisher Hall – Clinical Services, Nursing, Allies, Case Management all over 95% (case management 695%)
Haddon Heights – Allied 90%, Shifts notes 100%
Holley – Clinical (141%), Psychiatric (95%), Case Management (226%) and Nursing (149%) all well above average
KB IRTS – Case Management 368%
KB RTC – Clinical Services 108%, Case Management 162%, shift notes 95%
Laurie Haven – Allied 164%, Psychiatric 136%, Case Management 122%, Nursing 106%
Malcolm – Case Management 126%, shift notes 94%
Muller ITRS – Clinical Services 100%, Psychiatric 116%, Case Management 475%, shift notes 99%
Newark Muller – 136% Psychiatric Services – 91% clinical services, 128% nursing
KB Spec – Clinical Services 173%, Case Management 469%
Sicklerville – 99% nursing, 92% shift notes
Voorhees – shift notes 93%
Camden – BCBA services 100%, 104% shift notes
Sewell – BCBA services 115%, 96% of shift notes
Cedarbrook – BCBA services 102%
Holley PRTF – BCBA services 111%, shift notes 104%, psychiatric services 138%, clinical services 105%

Treatment Homes North 93% of clinical services

Institute

NFP Morris – 92% of home visits completed
NFP Essex – 97% of home visits completed
Outpatient – Aryadne Valadao, Social Work Intern, 102% productivity; Melissa D'Amelio, Early Childhood Clinician, 96%

Adult Residential

Amwell – 91% of shift notes
Blackwood – 96% shift notes, 150% case management, 100% BSPs and monthly summaries
Buena Vista – 400% monthly meeting, 388% case management notes, 100% of shift notes
Burning Bush – 138% case management notes, 100% monthly summaries
Emmans 91% of shift notes
Morris – 91% shift notes, 113% case management notes, 100% monthlies, 400% community meetings
Pamela – 100% BSP compliance
Pearl – 99% shift notes, 100% monthly summaries
Greenbrook 98% shift notes, 100% BSPs in compliance
Hill Top 90% shift notes, 100% BSP compliance
Toledo 100% shift notes, 250% case management notes, 167% BSP compliance, 100% of monthly summaries
Tidewater 97% shift notes, 563% case management notes, 100% BSP compliance and monthly summaries, 200% community meetings
Walnut 99% Shift notes, 100% case management notes, 100% BSP compliance and monthly summaries
West Orange 100% BSP compliance and monthly summaries
Absecon 90% shift notes, 113% case management notes, 100% BSP compliance and monthly summaries, 400% community meetings
Buffalo 100% shift notes, 400% community meetings
Thomas 95% shift notes
Echo Hill 96% shift notes, 275% case management notes, 100% BSP compliance, 300% community meetings



At the start of 2020, YCS began to implement a mentoring initiative for new employees. Cedarbrook home was chosen as the pilot program in the southern region, but due to the health and safety concerns brought on by the pandemic the initiative was temporarily suspended; however, the southern region mentoring team has restarted at Cedarbrook home and the project will soon be expanding to new employees in more programs.

Message from Southern Region Mentoring Team

We believe, the mentoring program is very beneficial for new employees because they get a sense of belonging when they know they have a support system that they can reach out to when things get overwhelming on the job; feel uncomfortable with their position; or are having issues with another staff or the Administration.

One important message we want to convey to new staff is that we are not the house managers. We are solely here to help and support you become successful in your position, and to assist you with any issues that you may have while also supporting the house manager.

Our advice to new employees is to take advantage of the resources that are given to you and utilize the mentor that is assigned to you. It is definitely a good support system to have in the agency. Our hope is that we will have better staff retention and happier, more successful employees.

Rachelle Muckley, Densie Washington, Aaron Clark
Mentoring Team

In the northern region, SRT supervisors have been shadowing new SRT employees. As restrictions across New Jersey begin to be lifted, the mentoring project will soon be expanding to new employees in more programs.



Dehkaylah Mayo Tameka McMillan

Tameka McMillan has been working at YCS for 10 years, first as a DSP and now as an SRT supervisor and mentor. "I think one of the most important parts of my job is to show new employees by my actions that we are all on the same team...If a bathroom needs to be cleaned or the garbage needs to be taken out, I will do it," explains Tameka. By watching her actions, new employees soon realize that this is all part of the job to make sure that the residents are being cared for properly. Tameka believes that it is also very important for employees to be supportive of each other. As a mentor, Tameka says "I take a new person under my wing and encourage them to ask anything... by answering their questions in a caring way I can build their confidence," said Tameka adding, "Communication is everything - if we [SRT team] cannot be with our mentees physically they know that they can always call us."

My mentor has been so encouraging and knowledgeable. Every day is a new learning experience. She wants me to succeed and is teaching me to understand the children's different behaviors, how to gain their trust and use handle with care.. My mentor has also taught me the importance of teamwork. I think being part of a supportive team has been the most gratifying part of my job.

Dehkaylah Mayo, SRT/DSP
August 2020

Program Accomplishments

Sawtelle Camden Home Wins Holiday Video Contest

All the Sawtelle Homes in the south jumped at the opportunity to make their own holiday video shows for a contest sponsored by YCS DD programs. The youth and staff at the Camden Home pooled their talents and produced their very own holiday musical spectacular. Under the leadership of DSP, a.k.a. DJ **Kevin Jacobs**, the group sang and danced to some original songs and had a ball rehearsing for the video. Kevin has become the most popular staff with the kids since the show, according to house manager, **Driss Ouhdou**.



When **Natan Schneider-Gans**, Program Manager at the Vineland home, found snakes in the basement, he called animal control. But when they told him that the snakes had to be put in a box before they would come pick them up, he called **Brad Vetterly**. With the help of a rake, Brad was able to coax them into a box and all of the residents safely returned home.

Clinical Drop-In Sessions

Every Friday beginning at noon

(most sessions last an hour but may be longer if necessary)



These sessions are open to any clinicians in behavioral health or DD programs who would like assistance with a wide range of concerns including help in processing treatment plans and paperwork issues in Evolv or PerformCare.

Sessions will be led by one of the following senior clinicians: Dayna Zatina Egan, Dave Morgado, Brad Vetterly, Michelle Robbins or Pfeni Fliscker.

Check your "e" calendar for a recurring Zoom invitation.

HMS Clinics Launch New Virtual Children's Play Groups

During virtual counseling sessions, several of the Helen May Strauss HMS clinicians became aware of a need for additional services for children struggling with the stressors of being separated from their friends and loved ones during the Pandemic. Parents requested groups for their children and themselves. As a result, both clinics initiated a total of five "Virtual Children's Play Groups" for children ages 6–11, and a parent support group conducted in Spanish for Union City clients. Each 75 minute session included exercises on mindfulness, team building, and social/communication skills in a playful format. Future groups are being planned in English and Spanish.



New Sawtelle Home Opens in the South

Congratulations to the four young men who have moved into the new YCS Sawtelle Echo Hill Home in Willingboro. With the onset of the Coronavirus in February 2020, renovation plans and preparations to open the home were repeatedly delayed. This did not stop **Dawn Jones, the maintenance crew and her staff** from persistently sticking with the project till they passed all State inspections and received the final OK to open their doors to the 4 anxiously waiting young men on January 28th. We wish them and the staff best of luck in their new comfortable surroundings.

Sicklerville Staff Rally to Support a Youth in Crisis

After a young man in the Sicklerville Home needed to be hospitalized, the staff stood by his side in the emergency room for five days as he waited to be admitted for treatment. Because of the caring support and encouragement he received from the staff, the young man was able to return to the home and is now doing well.

Great Things Happen When We Work as a Team

The Voorhees Home was the last stop for a young man who endured numerous disrupted placements and separation from his biological family for most of his life. With the warm support of his clinical team at the home, he worked hard to meet his treatment goals and regain the stability necessary to follow his wish to reunite with his birth father. The journey to reunification was not an easy road and he faced many road-blocks. With the continued encouragement from his clinical team, he was able to advocate for himself within the legal system, and break through all the barriers. He is now back home with his father and doing well.

Mike Higginbotham, Assistant Director of DCF, Children's System of Care was so moved by this young man's victory, that he recounted his experience and praised the Voorhees Home at a statewide meeting of all agency leaders.



Learning New Skills During Tough Times-

Four young women at the Muller residence on the Newark Campus, who have been studying remotely and quarantining, volunteered to assist in fulfilling a time-sensitive mailing to 250 parents. The young women worked together to collate and sort the materials, stuff and seal the envelopes, and adhere the mailing labels. "The girls took this project very seriously. They worked as a team and were very careful to make sure every envelope was correct before it went off to the post office," said **Kamachee Mandhar**, administrative assistant for the Newark campus. "The girls took pride in their work and enjoyed gaining experience in doing office work." Afterwards, they all celebrated with pizza and home-made brownies.

Building Pride & Confidence Through Community Service

KB staff saw the holidays and colder weather as an opportunity to introduce the residents to charitable activities that would not only fill their time but benefit others in the community. Clinicians, **Emily Kline** and **Nicole Molfetas** introduced the idea of creating holiday cards to encourage seniors at a nursing home who were, like them, also isolating. The youth embraced the project. They drew festive cards, researched messages of hope or looked for jokes to brighten up the seniors' day. Since then, some of the youth have taken an interest in making more cards – including get well cards for staff that were out sick.



Shaquanna
Walker

In the KB IRTS Unit, RA, **Shaquanna Walker**, asked the youth if they would like to help her prepare gift bags for the homeless in Paterson. The teens enthusiastically got on board. They went to nearby Dollar Stores and supermarket to get the items needed to fill 20 bags with gloves, scarves, hats, wash cloths hand sanitizers, toiletries, toothpaste and brushes, snacks and water bottles. On the

day of the event, they made sandwiches to add to the bags. Shaquanna personally funded the project with additional help from YCS. The youth felt empowered - they were the helpers rather than the recipients, according to Shaquanna.





During the Christmas holiday, southern region Treatment Homes partnered with **Kimberly Williams**, a Treatment Home parent and the CEO/Founder of Voice of Encouragement (VOE). VOE blessed each youth in our program with a bag full of gifts - including \$10. Our TH team (**Darryl, Ashia, Brittany and Anitra**) received the gifts from VOE and delivered them to each home.

VOE is a non- profit organization that provides educational workshops, self esteem activities and life skills for girls starting from 8 years of age through adulthood. We are so appreciative and thankful to Ms. Williams, a TH Parent over 10 years, and acknowledge her ongoing support and generosity.

Open Letter to the Staff at the Holley Center

Thank you. As I think back on the past year, I want to acknowledge the perseverance I witnessed while working at the Holley Center Campus. This past year has been challenging for us all. As this unknown coronavirus spread across the country and into our own campus, I will admit I was scared. As our friends and coworkers fell ill with an unknown fate, I was scared and so were you. I still recall the day I spoke with many staff one to one to share the news that a coworker had tested positive. We had all been exposed. The CDC suggested that we wear these paper masks to slow the spread of this disease and to protect ourselves. As I handed out masks and repeated the news over and over, worry and concern reflected in some of your eyes. I thought no one is coming back tomorrow. I am ashamed to say I doubted you. You came back the next day, the day after that and kept coming. Our hearts were heavy with sadness when we lost our beloved Ms. Marcia. As our coworkers continued to fall ill, you still came. Later, when the children tested positive you trusted me to protect us and I thank you.

The collaboration and effortless team work to reconfigure the entire campus in one day to contain and protect everyone was beyond impressive. . Reflecting back on the past year, I have seen commitment and courage every day. The commitment we share to care for our most vulnerable children and courage we showed in spite of fear. To everyone at the Holley Center Campus, thank you. The sense of duty we have to care for our children and coworkers make me beyond proud to work here.

With appreciation and gratitude,
Mechelle Copeland, Site Administrator

Say Cheese!!!

The four young women at the Sawtelle Morris Home are not sitting idle waiting for their day programs to resume. With the women's input, the staff has initiated a number of classes at the home. One popular activity is a cooking class. Most recently, they worked together to bake two cheesecakes from scratch. Everyone enjoyed the dessert after dinner. Cooking together is developing their independent living skills. It has brought the young women closer together and reinforced that this is really their home.



Tesha Bright Joined NJ First lady in a live Facebook broadcast “Ask a Nurse Home Visitor.”

We want to congratulate NFP nurse, Tesha Bright, RN, on her participation in a live discussion hosted by Tammy Murphy. Her warmth, experience and knowledge with guiding first time expectant moms and their babies contributed to the success of the broadcast. It was seen by more than 18,000 viewers on Facebook and shared dozens of times.



Our Ultimate Goal is Always to Reunify a Child with their Family

When a six year old girl was placed at Laurie Haven Home her one wish was to return home to her mother. For over a year, the clinical team supported the young girl and assisted her in reaching her treatment goals. Due to the Covid quarantine, she participated in regular zoom family therapy sessions with her mom. Her mom also received additional individual counseling to provide emotional support and work on issues causing her anxiety over reunification. However, the real struggle began when the team was confronted with obstacles as they attempted to coordinate plans for reunification with multiple systems. “It was a real struggle to get the mom, PerformCare and the CMO all on the same page,” said **Etta Sample**, Site administrator. With persistence, patience and compassion, all issues were resolved and the child has now returned home.

A “Sign” of Compassion

Two weeks after admitting a hearing impaired youth into the YCS Sawtelle Home in Cedar Brook behaviorist **Edward Bonacci** contracted the Coronavirus. While recovering at home, he was concerned about how Vyllette, the slight, precocious, 14 year-old teen, was adjusting to the new environment where she was the youngest of all the residents and the only one with a hearing impairment. So, Bonacci used the two weeks in quarantine to teach himself how to sign the alphabet. “I did it purely to make her feel more comfortable in the home and around myself,” said Mr. Bonacci. The youth, who is very proficient in signing, responded to his sincerity and he soon became her anchor at the home. Whenever she has a problem with another resident or staff, she seeks his help. When her own behavior is in question, she repeatedly ask Bonacci if they were still friends. “Eddie has gained her trust,” says house manager **Tajah Hollingsworth**. The very energetic youth often tells Edward that she is “grown up” and wants to return to her family. They are doing everything they can to help her reach her clinical goals so she can get there.



YCS Hero Award Nominees

The Mental Health Association of New Jersey (MHANJ) invited all agency providers in the state to submit nominees for their Frontline Heroes Tribute Campaign. With so many deserving employees, it was not an easy task. We chose Korey Clark and Boswell Brown to represent all of you. Korey and Boswell epitomize the selfless, compassion, dedication & courage you have all shown throughout this Pandemic.



Boswell Brown has been employed as a maintenance worker with the YCS Education Division for 32 years. He currently works at the YCS George Washington School in Hackensack. The special education school serves students from ages 5-15.

Over his many years with YCS Boswell has always demonstrated a strong work ethic. It was no surprise to anyone that when the pandemic struck, Boswell was front and center offering assistance in any way he could.

As we transitioned to distance learning, Boswell helped to deliver work packets and computers to students throughout many counties!! He was instrumental in the numerous and on-going efforts to modify classrooms to comply with COVID safety precautions; moving furniture, building rolling Plexiglas dividers for the classrooms, measuring classroom space, installing hand-sanitizing stations, portable sinks and so much more.

His efforts were crucial in ensuring that our students continued to receive their weekly meals. He delivered an estimated 9,000 meals to date, regardless of weather conditions or location.

All this was done in addition to his regular job responsibilities and those he assumed when a colleague fell ill. Protecting the school building from flooding and clearing snow and ice were some of the many challenges he dealt with. He continues to assist several other YCS facilities weekly by sanitizing their sites using the Clorox 360 sanitizing equipment.

We could not have made it without him. Thank you, Boswell!!

Ruth Ann Hunt, VP/Principal

As YCS Staffing & Retention Team (SRT) coordinator, **Korey Clark** supervises 46 DSPs in a dozen north Jersey YCS PCHs. Since the start of the Pandemic, he and his team have made many sacrifices and put their own lives on the line to care the children.

Korey's ever present smile and gentle demeanor belie his resolve to do whatever it takes to help a child. When 3 children, ages 6 and 8, became infected with the virus at a YCS PCH before Christmas, Korey was there for them. For children who were already working through the trauma of being separated from loved ones, this was devastating. They did not understand Covid - all they knew was that once again they were being separated from the place they called "home."

"Korey made sure they felt safe," said Etta Sample YCS site administrator. There were days when he sheltered in place with them. Other times, he visited with lunch or treats (often times paying out of his own pocket). He was determined not to let Covid rob them of Christmas and surprised the children with a tree.

"I know when the children are kept busy and feel satisfied, the staff's job is a lot easier and everyone is happier," explained Korey.

When some DSP were stranded during the massive snow storm in February, Korey volunteered to pick them up and bring them home at the end of their shifts.

"I don't think there is a more caring person at YCS than Korey. There is nothing he wouldn't do for a child or a co worker. He has earned the trust and respect of his supervisees because of his sincerity and work ethic," said Jerry Henderson, SRT director.



Thank You!!

A Resident's Gratitude for the Holley Center Staff

Dear YCS

I just wanted to thank you for taking me and helping me get through my tough times. I want to thank the cleaning people and doing hard work and keeping the place clean I truly appreciate it. I also want to thank the nurses to keep us safe and giving care to us. I want to thank all the staff and taking care of us and doing hard work and helping the kids. I hope everyone get good things and wish yall the best of luck. I know how hard it is and caring is so nice. I want to thank you for keeping the building positive and giving us things and being there. Well thank you so much and I hope you all have a good life and I am so grateful to have people like yall to care for me and I will miss this place and how it truly did help and all the people who where there for me and I will miss people and hope you get a good life and God bless you. Thank for Ms. Gloria, Mr. Alfredo, Nurse kim, Nurse Paul, Nurse Edna, and more. I will miss you and Goodbye YCS.

"This is a goodbye letter written by one of our residents who recently left the program. She took the time to recognize and personally thank over 50 staff with personalized letters. This was the letter she wrote for the program and she took the time to recognize and appreciate housekeeping, maintenance and nursing for all they do to take care of the children."

Agency Updates

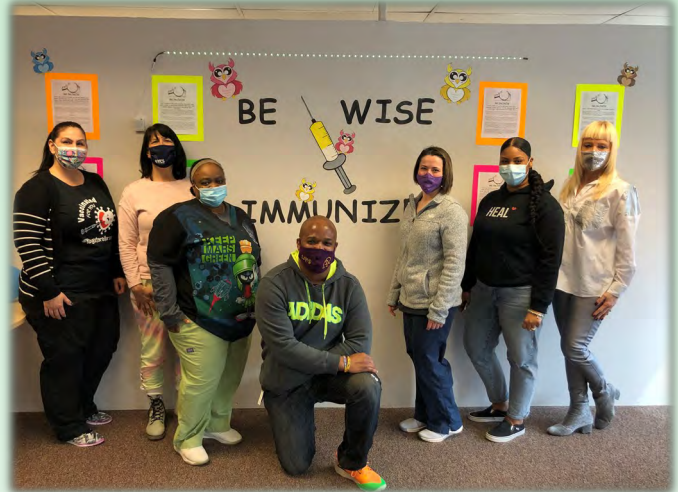
Update from Nursing:

One step closer to safely engaging in social settings and activities

With the enormous support of the nursing staff and CVS Pharmacy, 386 employees and 88 clients have been fully vaccinated. We can also report that every nurse in the southern region has been immunized, and some Sawtelle Homes have achieved 100% immunization of their residents.

While many people continue to wait for a chance to receive the vaccine, YCS was privileged to be among the first groups to be selected by the State for the vaccine.

Anyone over the age of 16 is able to receive the vaccine. If you have not received the vaccine yet, please contact your local pharmacy or go online to find a vaccine center near you.



UKG Update



As you all know, on January 10th we launched the new UKG timekeeping program across the agency. We appreciate everyone's support in helping us successfully implement this new system, and we thank you for your patience and understanding as the UKG timekeeping team worked hard to address all your questions in its first few weeks. Now, as we begin month 4, I hope you have all become comfortable using UKG and are enjoying an enhanced work experience.

We realize that there will be times when you do have questions, so the UKG team has developed a Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) sheet. It is now posted on ycseonline.org. The document has "hyperlinked" subjects that allow users to press "Control" on their keyboard and then click the hyperlinked heading with their mouse to automatically take the user to the subject of their question.

Training manuals for staff will be available on My YCS as of 4/1/2021.

Remember we are here to help you. Our goal is to make your timekeeping experience as stress free as possible. Please do not hesitate to contact us at timekeeping@ycs.org. ~ Erin McCloskey, CIO

Coming Soon!

Manager Trainings: Managers should have received/discussed a checklist with their supervisors in the month of March. The checklist will help identify areas of need and allow for the UKG team to develop a customized 1:1 training for you!

New Manager Trainings: All newly hired managers will receive a training on UKG by the training department to ensure that they are prepared to manage their sites and staff!

Report from the CCADAC

CCADAC Events Sub-Committee

In February, **Barbara Michaels**, Chairperson of the Events Sub-Committee, spearheaded the Black History Month Biography Series which featured 23 videos, each narrated by YCS employees. The video biographies were shared on social media nearly every day during Black History Month. Staff participation was amazing and fueled the success of this initiative. All of the videos can be viewed on the YCS YouTube channel.



Barbara Michaels

CCADAC Focus Group Results

During February and March, the CCADAC hosted a series of Focus Groups for YCS employees to provide feedback on diversity, equity and inclusion in YCS. Responses from the focus groups reinforced the need to continue to improve our communication efforts throughout the agency, work on hiring practices and promote a workplace where everyone feel safe to express themselves.

According to **Yvonne Montemurro**, CCADAC co-chair, the overall responses were very positive as to the diversity, inclusiveness of the agency and opportunities for growth within the organization. The valuable insights gained from the focus group responses will assist the CCADAC to develop initiatives that will foster a safer and more inclusive work environment at YCS.

The Cultural Competence and Diversity Advisory Committee is looking for volunteers to be part of focus groups events and/or initiatives. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Yvonne Montemurro (ymontemurro@ycs.org) or Mike Baguidy (pbaguidy@ycs.org)

Update from Maintenance Facility Upgrades



This winter the YCS maintenance crew has been busy upgrading three residences: the Sawtelle Lawn Ridge Home's kitchen was completely renovated; Malcolm House flooring on the first floor (kitchen, family room, living room) was replaced, and Holley Center reception area and front office got new flooring. "This spring, our next project is to lay down new flooring in the reception area and entrance ways at the Newark Headquarters building," says **Louis Mangual**, maintenance director. Remember if your site needs repairs, you can reach out to us at repair@ycs.org.



Update on Reflective Supervision Roll Out

I am excited to report that we are six months into our reflective supervision roll-out here at YCS. Child development specialist, Rebecca Parlakian, describes reflection as “stepping back from immediate experience to sort through thoughts and feelings about what one is observing and doing with children and families.” It is so hard to find the space in our busy schedules to reflect in this way, but it is paramount that we do it, and this foundational concept is what is motivating this supervision transformation here at YCS.

We are slowly working towards getting all supervisors trained; so if you are in a supervising role and haven't yet received the training, be on the lookout for an invitation soon! If you have already received the training, be prepared to get started with your monthly reflective groups, as an additional support in rolling out this new approach to supervision.

We also have a number of other exciting updates happening throughout the agency:

- ◆ Clinical Rounds has been revamped. Some months we will have case conferencing opportunities and others we will have planned trainings. The agenda is set through June. Please reach out if you want to be added to the clinical rounds email distribution.
- ◆ Clinician drop-in hours—Every Friday from 12:00pm-2:00pm are for any clinician who has questions or needs additional support. This is required for new clinicians as they onboard, but also is ongoing optional opportunity for any clinician when they would like additional support.
- ◆ We are working on providing a number of additional trainings throughout the agency, in trauma informed care and self-regulation practices. Please reach out if you would like to bring these trainings to your site.
- ◆ Consultation—I am always available for any case specific consultation or needed support. Please don't hesitate to reach out if there is any support that would be helpful.

~ Dayna Zatina Egan,
VP of Practice Integration
dzegan@ycs.org

Regular, collaborative, and reflective supervision is key to helping all of us feel supported and successful in our various roles here at YCS. This is true regardless of your job title...we all need support and a safe space to honor the hard and important work that we do every day for New Jersey's most vulnerable populations.

News from the Parent Satisfaction Committee

Parents/Caregivers with participants in all residential programs will soon be able to reach out to a Parent Navigator if they are looking for the additional support from a fellow parent who has been in their shoes and understands their concerns and anxieties. The Parent Navigators are volunteers on the parent satisfaction committee whose children have “graduated” from a YCS residence.

This spring, the Parent Satisfaction Committee will send out letters to introduce the parent navigators to every parent along with information on how they can be contacted.

The Parent Navigators are Dianna Chipkin for all adult DD residences and TaNisha Barrows for all DCF children’s behavioral health homes. All Program Managers will receive a copy of the introductory letter and Parent Navigator bio. Please note: the navigators are strictly a support for parents; any program related issues will be forwarded to the YCS ombudsperson.

William Waller
PSC Chair

Ombudsperson Form is Live!

<https://www.ycs.org/index.php/ombudsperson/>

Several individuals have already reached out to our ombudsperson, Gina Castro, and in every instance, their concerns were addressed by leadership, and rectified quickly to everyone’s satisfaction.

As a reminder, the ombuds process is to provide a neutral, confidential place for all staff to advocate for any disconcerting situation that is preventing the best possible care for the children, adults and families we are serving.

Together, we can work to address concerns before they become serious or affect your work . Also, let’s continue to “catch” our fellow employees succeeding and share these moments in our newsletter or with a simple personal acknowledgement. We are one team, and to be successful we must support each other to be the best that we can.

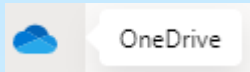


IT Update

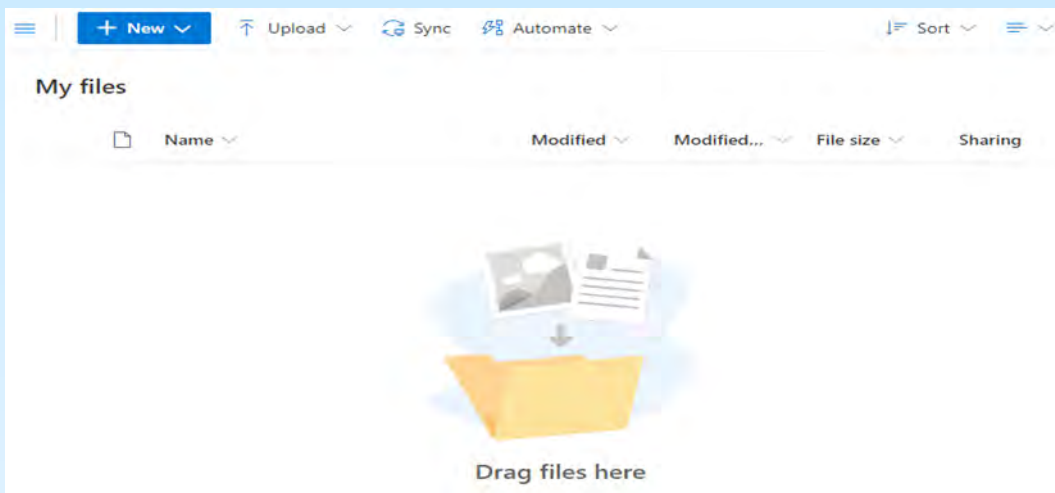
Thank you for your cooperation and patience as we completed our Email Migration from on-premises Exchange to the latest Microsoft Office 365. I would like to point out some of the features of Microsoft Office 365 that give you access to the latest Microsoft tools such as OneDrive to backup all your files to the Microsoft Cloud which will eliminate the need to back up your document onto the USB Flash drive and worry about losing your files. We also have access to the latest Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote, SharePoint and Teams.

Tip of the week:

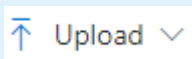
Uploading Files to OneDrive:



Click icon and the **OneDrive** app will launch on a separate tab. You will see the OneDrive **dashboard** as shown below:

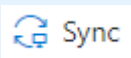


You can now “drag” the files from your local device and put it up in the cloud, or you can hit



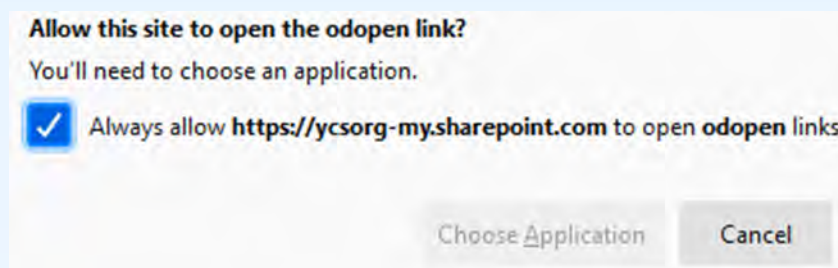
and upload either files or the whole folder.

Synchronizing Files in OneDrive:

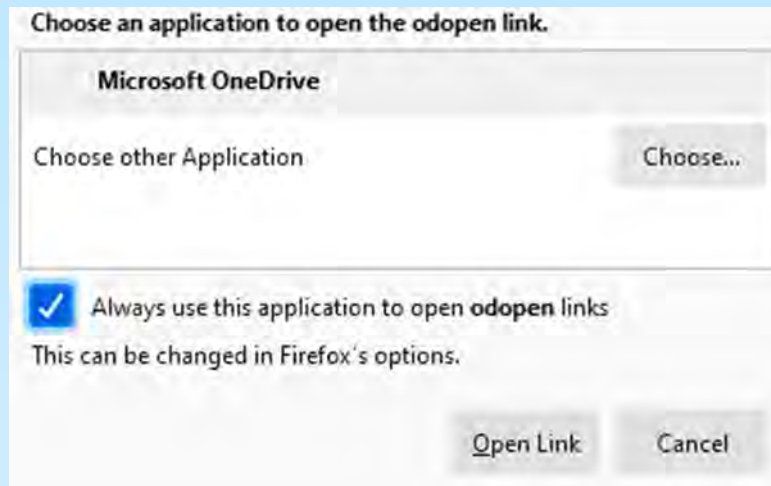


Click the ribbon to start synchronizing your files.

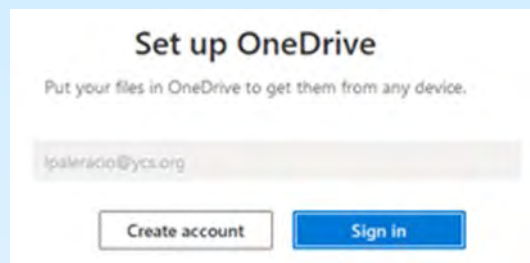
You will be prompted to open Microsoft OneDrive (as show below). Tick the **Always allow...** and click **Choose Application**



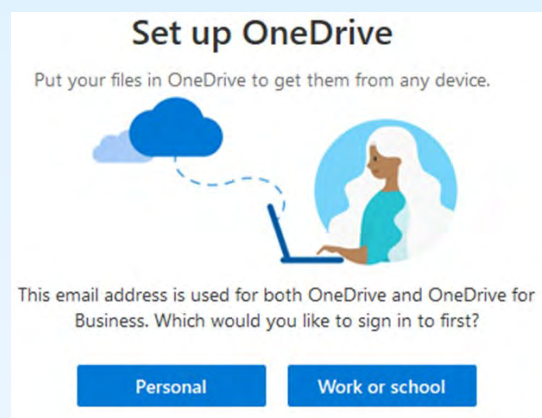
Another window will appear with Microsoft OneDrive as the default application. Tick the **Always use this application...** and click **Open Link**.



Sign in using your email address.



Choose **Work or School** when prompted



Type in your password and click **Sign In**

Foundation Update

YCS Holidays during Covid-19

Our number one priority at the Foundation was to ensure that every client, especially those in our residences and the staff who sheltered in place with the residents, were able to experience a memorable holiday season. We knew how tough this holiday season was for all of you, and we were so fortunate to have donors who were ready, willing, and able to help.

Each wish list was fulfilled and with the help of our co-workers, gifts were picked up and delivered safely.

Donors who were afraid to go shopping embraced Amazon gift-cards. This was a silver lining during the crisis that enabled program administrators to purchase everything from decorations to bean bag chairs for calming stations. And, while the clients were not able to attend in-person holiday events, we were so grateful to sponsors who sent dinners, arts & crafts, board games and more to make the participants and staff feel special.

We all look forward to 2021 holidays both personally and professionally this year and will strive to keep everyone safe, happy, and healthy!!!

Personal Protection Equipment

The need for personal protection equipment became a number one priority very early one in the Covid-19 crisis. Very quickly, the term PPE became part of our everyday vernacular. YCS supporters responded to the "Call for Action" and we had thousands of masks being made across the country!!! We were also so grateful to our fellow employees who also responded. Our co-workers reached out to their families and friends, and their contacts created cottage industries - making masks for our programs. During a time when people felt so "helpless" it was amazing to see so many people willing to help!!! Supporters also were able to do "the impossible" and acquire hand sanitizer, shields, gloves, and disinfectant spray for our programs- anything to keep everyone at YCS safe.

Telehealth

During this pandemic, YCS clinicians and teachers continued to provide the highest quality of services for hundreds of children and families. When we called upon our community of supporters again for help, they stepped up and donated critical Telehealth equipment that allowed YCS to transition from in-person services to remote delivery in "real time" ensuring the clients care and well-being was uninterrupted. A special thanks to all our clinicians, nurses and teachers who have **always** put the needs of those served at the forefront. Never has this been more apparent than during this health crisis.



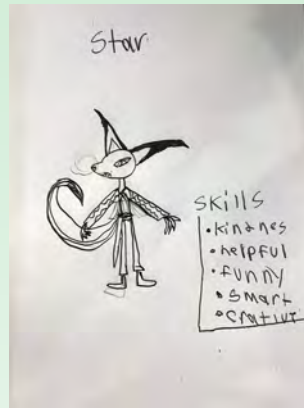
Our community partners, the New York Giants and Campbell's, honor Jean Toussaint with the "Campbell's Champions of Chunky" Award. Watch this video to see NY Giants Super Bowl MVP, David Tyree pay tribute to Jean and announce Campbell's donation to YCS in Jean's name. <https://youtu.be/5imVew5QeG0>

Clinical Comic Book Club



Anne Scherbina

Because art therapy was so beneficial to the young ladies at Malcom House, Program Director, Kristen Wistuba, was looking for more art opportunities for the girls. In response, **Anne Scherbina**, Clinical Intern, applied her experience from DC Comics, to create the Clinical Comic Book Club. Sketchbooks containing fill in frames were given to the girls for them to make their own comic books. Anne would give the ladies a quote or positive affirmation to use as a theme to base their comic book characters on. The activity contains clinical components and helps to build the young women's inner superhero, persona, and self esteem.



I completed my second-year internship at YCS Holley Center April 2018 and was hired as a clinician one month later. Through this internship I was able to grow in a supportive environment, not just from my direct supervisor, but from the entire clinical team at Holley Center. As an intern, I enjoyed that every day was a learning experience. I was able to observe and learn various clinical styles and got exposure to individual, group, and family therapy. Being an intern at Holley Center allowed me to develop and strengthen my personal and clinical skills in order to help me to become a better clinician. ~ **Ashley Cestaro**, LSW, Fisher Hall Clinician

Interns are integral members of the YCS Family who support programs in our residences, community programs and administration. According to **Laurie Levin**, senior project manager, interns play an important role in assisting the programs fulfill the required treatment services for each client.

Approximately 60 interns are working side by side with staff at their assigned programs while generally pursuing clinical Master's in social work-and counseling.

The internship program is presently working with 21 colleges and looks to partner with additional colleges in the near future. "Over next year, we are looking to add internships in other field of study such as behavioral therapy," said Laurie.

Many former interns have gone on to become full time staff once they complete their degrees.

Did You Know?

If you are an employee pursuing an undergraduate or advanced degree, you may qualify to do your internship at YCS. For more information, contact Laurie Levin at llevin@ycs.org

Bartley-Rogers, Sherene
Clinical Intern ,
Newark Muller Hall

Brantley, Nashel
Intern (Counseling) ,
HMSC - Essex

Cavalcante, Zachary
Clinical Intern ,
Voorhees

Fleming, Todd
Clinical Intern ,
Davis House

Gordy-Evans, Aaliyah D.
Clinical Intern ,
Hammonton

Lee, Stephanie
Clinical Intern ,
Estell Manor

Manning, Timothy
Intern (Clinical) ,
Davis House

Pender, Julisa
MSW Intern ,
Vineland

Ricciardi, Constance
Intern (Clinical) ,
Malcolm House

Rosenberg, Julia
Intern (Clinical) ,
Newark Muller Hall

Sapp, Antwan
Clinical Intern ,
Estell Manor

Schafer, Jessica
Intern , Sewell

Smith, Terry Ann
BSW Intern , Vineland

Valadao, Aryadne
MSW Intern , HMSC -
Union City

Valdez, Esterly
Intern (Case Manager) ,
Parent Linking Prog

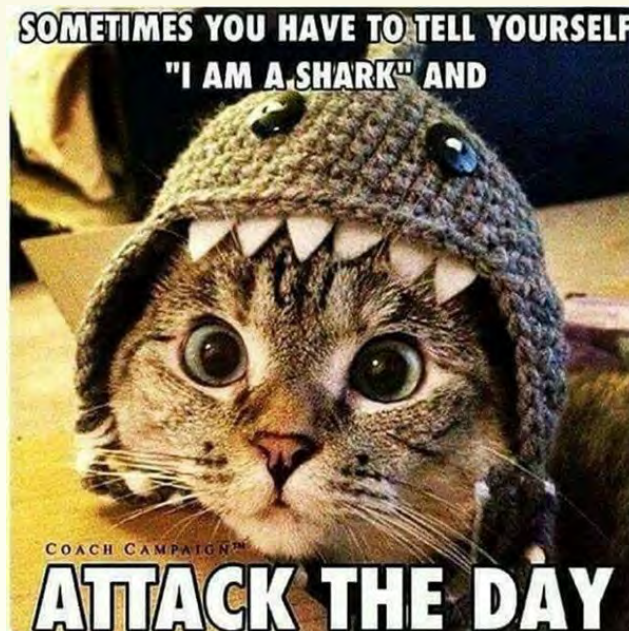
Thoughts to Ponder

"Patience is the key
which solves all
problems."
~Sudanese proverb

Who Said This Quote?

Don't let the sadness from the past and the fear of the future, ruin the happiness of the present. –

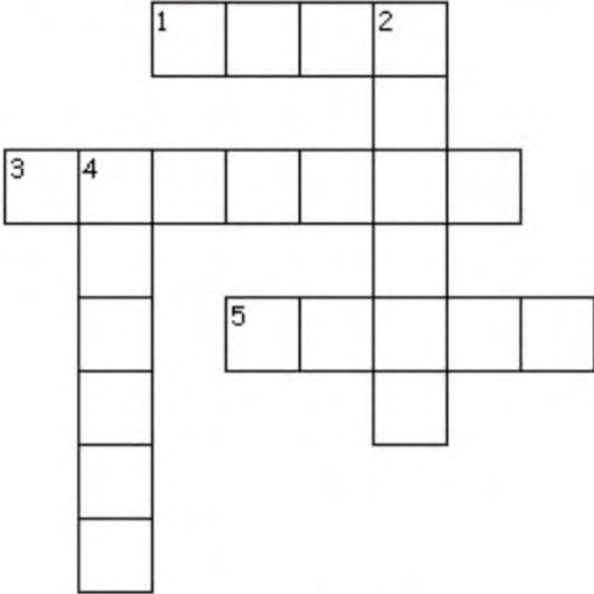
- a. Wiz Khalifa
- b. Ghandi
- c. Tony Robbins



Just for Fun

TRY THIS ACTIVITY!

Spring Crossword



ACROSS

1. HARD WORKING POLLINATORS
3. SPROUTING AT THIS TIME IN ALL SHAPES AND COLORS!
5. MY LEMONADE SWEETENER

DOWN

2. A SEASON OF REJUVENATION
4. THE PART OF SOME PLANTS USED TO COLLECT SUNLIGHT



$$\begin{aligned} \text{Apple} + \text{Apple} + \text{Apple} &= 30 \\ \text{Apple} + \text{Banana} + \text{Banana} &= 18 \\ \text{Banana} - \text{Coconut} &= 2 \\ \text{Coconut} + \text{Apple} + \text{Banana} &= ? \end{aligned}$$

