

Inside YCS

A NEWSLETTER
BY AND FOR ALL YCS EMPLOYEES



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PRESIDENT/CEO
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INSIDE YCS

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President's Message

Dear Colleagues,

New Jersey is especially beautiful in the month of May and lives up to the name "Garden State." After a long winter, I hope you can all join me in breathing a collective sigh of relief and take time to enjoy all the wonders nature has given us. Despite some harsh weather, coupled with various daunting circumstances of multiple, simultaneous audits, YCS' leadership team could never have surmounted these challenges alone without your support. Every program's team rallied and proudly represented YCS' core values and mission.



Tara Augustine

Your teams' ability to step up and embrace responsibility in these critical moments exemplifies the exceptional character of our employees. Your passion for your work and compassion for every participant or student has never wavered. And as a result, we have successfully completed every site visit at our residences, schools, and community programs.

My message for this issue of Inside YCS is simply and sincerely a heartfelt "Thank You!" I would also like to wish you all a very happy Mother's Day. Whether you are celebrating with loved ones or caring for the participants in our residences who are unable to be with family, I hope you can fully enjoy the day.

Sincerely,

Tara

Upcoming Events

Blossoms Art Exhibit



Annual Charity Golf Classic

Save the Date

*Annual
Charity
Golf Classic*



MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2025
EDGEWOOD COUNTRY CLUB

Welcome New Employees

New Employees and Interns who completed 90 days by April 27, 2025

Aguilar, Angela G. Service Coordinator CBP – Passaic Svc Coord U	Evans, Jamil C. Residential Assistant DCF-PCH Sicklerville	James, Deborah A. Nurse RN Home Visitor CBP-NFP Essex	Nicol, Estherline J. Program Director DCF-PCH IDD Sawtelle Hall	Scaglione, Daniella Intern – UnPaid DOE-George Washington
Allen, JahQueena Residential Assistant DDD – Echohill	Friedrich, Andrew E. Intern – UnPaid DOE-George Washington	Johnson, Laquaisha D. Program Director DCF-GH1 IDD Wood Haven	Ortiz, Kiara Service Coordinator CBP – Passaic Svc Coord U	Smith, Geneva A. Intern – UnPaid DCF – PCH IDD Camden
Atkinson, Anita Residential Assistant DCF-PCH Davis	Gerardino, Edward Personal Assistant DDD-Emmans	LoSardo, Sofia M Intern – UnPaid DCF – PCH Malcolm House	Rease Sr., Tyriq B. Residential Assistant DCF-PCH Vineland	Thomas III, Ronald E. Personal Assistant DDD – EmergCapacity Haledon
Buckley, Alexandra Intern – UnPaid DCF-RTC Kilbarchan	Goff, Ja'Keia A. Residential Assistant DCF-PCH Davis	Makus, Helen Intern – UnPaid Communications & PR	Richards, Marcielle Case Manager DCR-RTC Kilbarchan	Watson, Dyheim Residential Assistant DCF-CSAP Hammonton
Coleman, Kaijah Personal Assistant DDD-Apts Supvr Buffalo	Grande, Sara Intern – UnPaid DCF-PCH Coopers Crossing	McKinnon, Adayshia B. Teacher Aide DOE-Sawtelle Learning Ctr	Salamida, Dametrii Teacher Aide DOE-Sawtelle Learning Ctr	
Echevarria, Maya Clinician DCF-IRTS Holley Muller	Hunter-Ali, Angela Teacher Aide DOE-Sawtelle Learning Ctr	Menjivar, Annette Service Coordinator CBP – Passaic Svc Coord U	Salvary, Eric Residential Assistant DCF-PCH Fisher Hall	

Promotions

Congratulations!!!

*Your dedication and hard work have truly paid off.
Wishing you all the best in this new chapter of your career.*

Kenja Harris, Shift Supervisor, DCF-IRTS Holley Muller

Zachary Cavalcante, Program Director, DCF-PCH Vineland

Work Anniversaries

Congratulations!!!

20 YEARS

Dale L. Billiard, Residential Assistant, DCF-IRTS Kilbarchan

15 YEARS

Tavonne L. Webb, Residential Assistant, DCF-RTC Kilbarchan

10 Years

Erin McCloskey, CIO Office of Operation, Exec Administration

Jennifer M. Stratton, VP Operations, Regional Admin

Michelle Simpson, Nurse RN, HealthSvc-ResidentNurse-N

Sean Lewis, Personal Assistant, DDD-Forest

5 Years

Gregory Allen-Jackson, Shift Supervisor, DCF-CSAP Hammonton

Tyriq Kidd, Personal Assistant, DDD-Absecon

Shoutouts

To All Our Amazing Employees!

- ★ **Elizabeth Barry** continues to do a great job with her ongoing support and leadership! Liz is a great listener and always makes time to talk with her staff and the youth! We are so lucky to be part of her team!
- ★ As a clinical leader in the agency, **Lissa Captain** is always advocating for her clinicians and youth! Lissa is a strong leader and we are lucky to work alongside her!
- ★ **Jada Carter** has shown leadership skills at Coopers Crossing that have helped the youth blossom! Jada is hard working in her role as RA, and always volunteers to help additionally as well. Jada is going to continue to be such a strong RA and advocate at Woodhaven! Thank you Jada for all you do!
- ★ Congratulations **Zachary Cavalcante** on your promotion to Program Director at Vineland!! You have been such an incredible clinician and clinical support at Sicklerville, and will continue to do such great work at your new program! We are so happy for you!
- ★ **Aimee Ciaravino** has shown exemplary leadership at Sayre House. She is a great role model for leadership in the agency!
- ★ **Aisha Faulkner** has done a great job at Coopers Crossing improving deliverables! Keep up the good work!
- ★ **Isabella Festa** from Vineland is doing amazing, not only as the clinician, but helping in various ways at the program!! She always goes above and beyond in all that she does!
- ★ Shout out to **Hannah Girard** for consistently having over 100% compliance on nursing groups!!
- ★ **Haddon Heights** had a huge jump in allied services and deliverables this past month, from 39% to 106%!! Awesome job!!!
- ★ Shout out **Tamar Hampton** at Coopers for setting up awesome allied activities for the youth! With the youth enrolled in soccer, they are learning about commitment, teamwork, and sportsmanship (while having fun!!). Great job Tamar!
- ★ **Sasha Henriquez** has continued to show her dedication and strong leadership at Sicklerville!
- ★ Shout out to **Sayre House** for consistently having over 100% compliance in Nursing and Community Meeting/Prevocational life skills groups!!
- ★ Awesome job **Sicklerville Staff** for your continued efforts!! Deliverables and services provided have increased in all areas due to your hard work and dedication!!

Shoutouts

To All Our Amazing Employees!

- ★ **Dina Sundberg** and her team have been such a help with implementing new processes quickly and efficiently to improve processes in ECR! We appreciate all of your hard work!
- ★ **Daisy Vandervort** is such an incredible RA at Coopers Crossing. She is always willing to help on any shift, and cares so much about the Coopers Crossing youth! We are so lucky to have her on our team!
- ★ Big thank you and appreciation shout out to **Brad Vetterly** for all that he does!! Everyone in the region is so lucky to be led by such a strong, smart, positive, and fun leader!
- ★ **Vineland House** is doing an awesome job with almost all deliverables over 99%! We appreciate all of the hard work our staff do!!
- ★ Shout out to **Jessica Waters** from Woodhaven for being such an incredible leader, helper, and support in so many ways! Not only does Jessica excel at her position as a Supervisor, but she is always willing to help any way she can- from helping set up things at Woodhaven, to covering Coopers Crossing, we appreciate all of her dedication!!

Employee Snapshot



Lorenzo Brown

Program Director, Muller IRTS at Holley Center

Milestones

Professional Accomplishments



We're proud to share that Tara has been named to ROI-NJ's 2025 Women in Business Influencer list, honoring New Jersey's most impactful and visionary leaders.

It is so encouraging to everyone in the YCS Family, when all of Tara's efforts and unwavering commitment to advancing YCS' mission is acknowledged by industry leaders.

Led by longtime industry veteran Tom Hughes and a dedicated team of editors and business professionals, Return On Information – New Jersey (ROI-NJ) delivers real-time news and in-depth features, both online and in print, to New Jersey's diverse business community and fosters meaningful connections among key influencers. You can see Tara's listing here: [ROI-NJ: Women in Business 2025 – Tara Augustine](#)



Milestones

Professional Accomplishments



Esther Edwards was recognized at a special event meant to bring together community members, speakers and guests to reflect, connect and celebrate culture, held by The Rhema Life Center in Maywood and The Jamaica Organization of New Jersey. The Making A Difference Award recognized Ms. Edwards for her 43 years of dedication and service to youth from all walks of life in America and abroad.



Congratulations **Ebenezer Abuchion** for becoming a Youth and Young Adult Lead (North America) at World Liberation Ministries.

Congratulations **Myesha Eutsey**, an intern from Hilltop, on graduating from Delaware State University! Eutsey is receiving a Masters of Social Work after completing a 11 month long Advanced Standing program, with a 4.0 GPA. We wish her best of luck the next part of her journey.

Congratulations **Taneja Oliver**, also an intern from Hilltop, on graduating from Rutgers University in Newark, NJ! Oliver is receiving a Bachelor's of Arts and Science in Criminal Justice, with a Minor in Psychology. Wishing them all the best as they continue in their career or education.

Clinical Rounds



PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT
FOR CLINICIANS

The YCS Clinical CARE Rounds (Collaborative Assistance and Restorative Education) program offers monthly specialized training for mental health clinicians on advanced therapies like trauma-informed care, play therapy, and EMDR. Each session enhances clinical skills, improves client outcomes, and fosters collaborative learning.

**PLAY-BASED ENGAGEMENT,
RAPPORT BUILDING,
AND ASSESSMENT
TECHNIQUES FOR CHILDREN**

With Crystal Zelman, LCSW, CCLS, RPT-S
June 27, 10:00-12:00pm
Online Training

Play therapy is a therapeutic approach that uses play as a means for children to express emotions, process experiences, and develop coping skills in a safe and supportive environment. Through techniques such as storytelling, role-playing, and the use of toys, art, and sand trays, clinicians help communicate thoughts and feelings that may be difficult to verbalize. This training will provide strategies to engage children in developmentally appropriate ways, fostering emotional regulation, problem-solving, and self-expression. By integrating play-based interventions, therapists can support children in processing trauma, managing behavioral challenges, and building resilience in a way that feels natural and empowering.

Questions? Contact your clinical supervisor for additional information!

Condolences

Annie Leacock



YCS Lost an Employee but Gained a New Angel

Annie Leacock, Ms. Annie, a former employee of Phoenix joined YCS March 7th, 1994, as an employee of Davis House/Annex. We will remember and honor her not only as a dedicated coworker but a true friend. Ms. Annie was more than just an employee, she was a source of support, kindness, and provided a sense of calm to both her coworkers and the clients in her care. Her professionalism, work ethics, and warmth touched everyone she worked with. Ms. Annie took pride in her work and motivated others to be at the top of their game. She was most proud of her daughter, she was proud of her 31 years of service to YCS, she was proud of the connections she made, and she was proud of the positive impact she had on the youths.

We at Phoenix will remember her dedication, her team spirit, her laughter, her fight, her poise, and her commitment to the team.

Rest in peace, Ms. Annie. You will never be forgotten.

Sherene Bartley-Butler, LCSW
Newark Campus Director

Oluseyi Odeyingbo

We offer our sincerest, to Olushola Odeyingbo on the passing of his sister Oluseyi Odeyingbo on April 22, 2025.

Happy Birthday!!

April Birthdays

Aaron E. Ruiz	Carene Petrie	Jalen Harper	Marsha Escalliere	Susan L. Ayler
Affe Ann Hunte	Charda T. Tabb	Juan C. Fajardo	Max J. Brown	Susie Brown
Akee K. Davis	Claudia G. Chavez	Juanita N. Holt	Morgan S. Boyer	Tameka McMillan
Alexus Muse	Crystal F. Manson	Kabirah Manns	Nicole Dudley	Tamika L. Young
Alfred Smith	Daniel Hobbs	Kaijah Coleman	Nikita Shell	Thomas W. Hoffler Jr.
Alicia S. Brown	David K. Thompson	Kaitlyn Gomez	Olawunmi Ojoye	Tiffani Walton
Alicia Stephenson	Delexus Greer	Karen Metzger	Olushola O. Odeyingbo	Tiffany A. Diaz
Amanda Gonzalez	Denise Barnette	Kellie Fitzpatrick	Rayterri Stephens	Tiffany M. Butts
America Guevara	Devin R. Turner	Kendricke Wilson	Richelle Jones	Tkemia Brunson
Anastaycea B. Stroman-Mayhue	Diamond Brown	Keri Diamond	Ronald Clark	Tracy R. Jernigan
Anita Taylor	Edward Newmark	Keyonnah Lampkin	Sandra Gonzalez	Tristen A. Dreher
April Wright	Elena H. Chereque	Kiera Leake	Sarah Takyi	Wadirah Ragsdale
Asante Dyer	Elijah Glenn	Kristine Bersch	Sasha Henriquez	Walter Hendricks III
Ashlea M. Emberger	Empira McDade	Kyle Wdzieczkowski	Seby George	Willette Isaac
Ashley Gledhill	Genesis Garrafa	La Toya M. Pope	Shahadah McQueen	Yaahmera Williams
Babatunde A. Afolabi	Gerard Francois	Laura Hawkins	Shamees Sanders	Zenaida Caraballo I
Bridget G. Nichols	Gloria Y. Anthony	Laurie Levin	Shamika Hinton	Zeniyah Cobb
Bridget Rivers	Guerdy Pierre	Lori M. Younger	Sharon L. Marshall	
Butler M. Blevins Jr.	Hannah Girard	Louella Favor	Sharon Mckay	
Candace Jones	Hing-Shung Chan	Mariana Coyotecatl	Shauna Houston	



HAPPY
Birthday



Highlights

CREW Game Night



Youth and staff from the Holley Center played boardgames with SRT North CREW Members. The games played were Chess, Checkers, Uno, Sorry, and Connect Four.

Lawn Ridge Events



Big Shoutout to the Newark Kawboyz Motorcycle Club for providing lunch and spending time with our young men.



Big shoutout to Orange Police Department & Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Incorporated for attending Lawn Ridge's Autism Family Fun Day.



Lawn Ridge Staff Appreciation was a success at Dave & Buster's 🎉

Highlights

Easter Celebrations



Holley Center



Buffalo House



Sayre House



Vineland

New Bike at GW School



George Washington School received a new exercise bike and student Sincere loves to go on it.

Highlights

Sawtelle Learning Center Spirit Week



Sports Day



Decades Day



Tie Dye Day

SLC had spirit week this week and the staff had a blast with it.

Agency Updates

BJ's Corporate Discount Program

New Club Card Membership for you employees is now only **\$15** (normally \$60)!

New Club Card+ Membership for you employees is now only **\$40** (normally \$120)!

Simply click the link that makes enrolling in a new membership a breeze!

www.bjs.com/memberships-cf

Other option to Join as a New or Existing Member ...

Simply call: 1800-313-8887 and reference promo code 100645 by January 31st, 2026

Hours of Operation: Monday – Friday from 9am to 6pm EST

Upcoming Trainings

Safety in the Workplace & Community

Whole Class – **May 22, 9 am – 1 pm**

Register for the class using the following Zoom Link (only 15 spots are available):

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/KRNhrwiUStqMVwvI9rQc5g>

After you register for the training session, a link for the training will be sent to your YCS email.

Workplace violence can be any act of physical violence, threats of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening, disruptive behavior that occurs at the workplace. This course will assist staff how to recognize and evaluate the risks of workplace violence and discuss what employees can do to help prevent it. This course can cover the CARF required training on Preventing Workplace Violence.

Topics include:

- Cost, risk factors and misconceptions of workplace violence
- Environmental designs, administrative controls, prevention procedures
- How to report all incidents including threats and verbal abuse
- How to attempt to diffuse hostile or threatening situations
- How to summon assistance in case of an emergency or hostage situation
- Post-incident procedures, including medical follow-up and the availability of counseling and referral

Trainer: Steven Crimando, MA, CTM

Agency Updates

Upcoming Trainings

Conflict Resolution & Restorative Practices

Part 1 – May 12, 1 pm – 5 pm:

Use the following link to register for Part 1:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom-join?secret=782wS96Q&from=register&meetingRef=xAN1UJuFRS207mJBZVLgbw>

Part 2 – May 21, 1 pm – 5 pm:

Use the following link to register for Part 2:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom-join?secret=782wS96Q&from=register&meetingRef=gLtyQhARTNuBtY782wS96Q>

YCS only has 9 spots available for this training.

Course Description: This will help trainees identify ways they may be contributing to conflict situations, particularly in cross-cultural situations & give them some strategies to adopt at work & in their personal lives.

Topics include:

- Causes of conflict; the role of attitude
- Avoiding the Pygmalion effect
- Leveraging different personalities
- Shared governance
- Managing diversity
- Valuing employee/client/customer differences

Trainees are expected to:

- Recognize how attitudes & actions impact others
- Use effective techniques to manage negative emotions
- Develop coping strategies for dealing with difficult people/situations
- Articulate the four building blocks of cultural competency
- Provide strategies to enhance engagement with clients from a variety of cultures

An action plan will be formulated for implementation & follow-through.

Trainer: John Eric Jacobsen – jjgoodvibrations@gmail.com

This training can offer 5.5 ASWB General Social Work Practice, 2 ASWB Social and Cultural Competence and 7.25 NAADAC CE Credits upon joining the class in full. Participants who are interested in receiving credits should indicate that during registration. Questions regarding CE Credits can be sent to jrunkle@actcessusa.com.

Managers Meeting Bulletin

Summary of Key Points from the April Monthly Cabinet Meeting

Finance Department

Overtime: The cost to the agency for overtime hours is very high. Please try to adjust your schedules so that overtime hours can be avoided whenever possible. The cost of overtime is a contributing factor in determining our ability to give out bonuses and raises.

Human Resources

Performance Management: Employee reviews have to be completed by June 15th. Managers are expected to rate their employees based on performance with their better employees receiving the higher scores. The review process is important in discussing how they're doing and helping with any challenges. It is important that we give accurate and transparent feedback to our staff.

Note: Every employee must sign the completed review. This is the final part of the review process. If you have any questions, please reach out to Djabia Kablansi djabia.kablansi@yccs.org.

IMS

Treatment Plan Progress Notes: This training plan review process has been uploaded to the Secured website on the IMS page. Here is the link: [Monthly Treatment Plan Progress Note.docx](#) It is applicable for the following programs: Specialty Bed Program, PCHs, RTCs, CSAPs, Treatment Homes. If you have any questions reach out to Dina Sundberg or Erin McCloskey.

Geofencing: It is now fully implemented. If an employee tries to punch outside of the geographical boundaries of the site they're scheduled to work, they will not be able to punch. In that case, they will have to manually enter a punch. All manual punches must be approved by their manager.

Note: Please be sure you have the correct UKG app downloaded on your mobile phone. It is UKG Pro. This will give the most accurate Geofencing data.

IMPORTANT CHANGE IN STAFF APPROVING THEIR TIMECARDS: An attestation message has been added that requires employees to acknowledge they worked at the site reflected on their timecard at the end of the pay period. This is most applicable for employees who are multiply allocated to work at different sites. It has been implemented to improve operational management, confirming employees are providing services at the locations during that time.

Managers Meeting Bulletin

I.T.

Microsoft 365: Every employee must log into Microsoft at least once every 30 days. This is necessary for us to maintain our license. As of now, 13 programs are not in compliance. You can see the entire report to check your program on the employee secured site.

<https://ycsorg.sharepoint.com/sites/YCSEmployeeSecuredSite/>

Adobe Sign and Adobe Pro: Please send an email request to IT if you're in need of either of PDF software and/or accessing certified e-signatures.

Contacting IT: If you have a problem and need to contact the IT department for help, please send your emails to helpdesk. The whole team will get your request, and it will be processed faster.

Special Announcement

*** New Training **: "Special Education Advocacy Training" facilitated by Laura Siclari, Esq. is scheduled for Friday, May 9th from 10 to 11:30 AM. It is open to all employees. A Teams invite will be sent to Cabinet members Outlook calendar. Everyone interested in this important training is encouraged to attend and share with staff who may also be interested.*

Practice Integration

New date for June clinical rounds.

Virtual presentation Thursday, June 26, 2025—Topic Play Therapy—10am to 12pm. It is open to all. An intern supervisor meeting will directly follow.

Intern Feedback: There is now an intern feedback survey. Please be sure that all your interns fill out this survey at the end of their internship.

Clinical openings: If you have graduating interns that have passed licensing, please note there are 2 openings in the south and 3 openings in the north.

Drop-in clinical sessions: These virtual sessions have resumed and are being held every Friday afternoon. They're open to all clinicians and interns.

Note: Some non-residential clinicians may have fallen off the distribution list. If you are not receiving announcements on upcoming trainings, please contact Michelle Robbins at mrobbins@ycs.org to be added back on the list.

Managers Meeting Bulletin

QAPI

QAPI Participant Grievances:

It is important that management respond to all grievances within one week. Also, please be sure all clients are aware of the grievance process. It is our hope that they can talk openly to the staff and use the grievance process to resolve any issues.

Safety Officers—Spring Inspections

Be sure to inspect the entire perimeter outside of your residence. Look for insect holes, hornets' nest, or yellow jackets. If you see any dangerous "critters", please contact an exterminator.

Note: Bees are not a danger – if you do not bother them. They are good for the environment.

Licensing Citations:

During a recent inspection of PCH/IDD homes, the number of citations rose over the past fiscal year. Please note that one of the CARF's goals on their last visit was for each home to have a reduction in citations. We are trending in the wrong direction. CARF is coming in October. We want to be able to show them that we have remediated all our citations. During the recent inspections, many of them were easily fixable and fixed within a day. This indicates that these citations could have been remediated before licensing visits.

Allied Services

Allied hours are trending upwards, and additional therapies are being implemented.

Note: When documenting your allied therapies, please reflect on how it has impacted the life of the participants. Reminder: chores and homework are not considered allied hours.

Communications

Blossoms Art Exhibit and Awards Show—Tuesday, May 13th from 6-8 pm at the Bergen Pac. It is a great community outing open to all participants and staff and a way to show your support for YCS youth!

We will be forming a Green Thumb committee for sites interested in pursuing gardening activities with the participants. Sign up at info@ycs.org

Note: When you or your team have any questions relating to UKG, Oracle, Payroll etc. Please refer to the training instructions first. If you cannot resolve your problem with the written instructions, please contact the corresponding department for help.

As always thank you for your support in keeping the lines of communication flowing efficiently.