

# *Inside* *YCS*

*A Quarterly Newsletter by and for all YCS Employees*

*May 2022*



*We are Family*

# Family

*means being a part of something very wonderful.  
It means you will always be respected and appreciated  
for who you are no matter what.  
Thank you all  
for being part of our YCS Family*

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*Special thanks to Laurie Levin  
for volunteering to proofread the newsletter.*

Cover Photo: Marisol Rivera, Marilyn Alarcon, Sandra Gonzalez, Donna Patterson, Natayia McCray, Anita Taylor, Mona Buie, William Waller, Courtney Medina, Elizabeth Torres Santiago, and Francia Casado at the Newark Campus office.

# President's Message

Our employee newsletter is a gathering place around which everyone in the company can build trust and come together to share in our professional accomplishments and personal victories. We have worked hard to gain your trust by rebuilding the agency's infrastructure so that your job is easier and you have access to many more benefits. *Inside YCS* has been reporting on all these innovations, and we continue to do so in this issue (See Incentives p. 12 and Agency Updates beginning on page 14).



Like a 100 year old home in need of major renovations and repairs, we have, for the past 3 years, concentrated on replacing aging systems and reinforcing our agency's foundation so it will thrive for the next 100 years.

However, what makes YCS – and this issue so special - is You, the heart of our proverbial home. It starts with our cover story about Newark Campus employees coming together to pray for their colleagues who contracted Covid (p. 8), to the staff at Voorhees and Haddon Heights embracing and supporting Nimit Kaur, an intern who is blind (p. 13), to the very creative, fun – and delicious- Air Fryer contest that reinforced comradery amongst the Northern Region DD staff (p. 15).

The Black History Month MLK Essay and Art Contest (p. 16) was also a success because of You. If it wasn't for the compassionate frontline staff who patiently encouraged the residents to participate, there would be no contest winners or for that matter any of the other wonderful ancillary activities that bring joy to the residents.

Now, through our Gemba Walks (p. 20), we are moving forward to hear all of your voices and continue making YCS a destination workplace –one where everyone can grow, learn and thrive.

With warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name "Lara".

# Meet our New Employees

New Employees, who have completed 90 days  
January-March 2022

# Welcome!!

Armstrong, Deja K. Residential Assistant SRT	Duchard, Tamara Teacher Aide II Sawtelle Learning Center	Montoya, Gabriela Clinician I PRTF - Sawtelle Hall	Slaughter, Wayne J. Coordinator of Residential Service PCH - Estell Manor
Atkins, Dawn SRT / BA SRT	Elliott, Etta C. RA PCH - Vineland	Navah, Tovah Campus Director PCH - Davis House	Solomon, Catherine Program Director CSAP - Winslow
Baker, Blair F. RA SPEC - Voorhees	Fernandez, Jerelyn PA DDD - Pearl Street	Newmark, Edward Clinician I PCH - Davis House	Stone, Julie A. TA II Sawtelle Learning Center
Barry, Elizabeth A. Program Director PCH - Davis House	Fletcher, Jerrod S. RA PCH - Davis House	Odom, Crystal A. RA PCH - Davis House	Telemaque, Kerwin Residential Assistant Supervisor PCH - Sayre House
Bey, Chantay PA DDD - Pearl Street	Harvey, Enethia RA PCH - Davis House	Odunukwe, Chika PA DDD - Pearl Street	Thomas, Lakeesha Intern (Counseling) PCH - Davis House
Bland, Pearlshiya J. SRT Behavioral Assistant SRT	Hawkins, Laura PA PRTF - Cedarbrook	Ohen, Lindsay TA II Sawtelle Learning Center	Thorpe, Steven A. PA DDD - Hilltop
Brown, Lorenzo S. Program Director IRTS - Holley Muller Unit	Hawse, Claudia SRT-Behavioral Assistant SRT	Padilla, Tracey RA PCH - Bright Start	Toro, Santiago Case Manager PRTF - Sawtelle Hall
Brown-Cobb, Syriaaha RA RTC - Kilbarchan	Hurt, Glenn A. RA PCH - Bright Start	Panizzi, Marc Teacher Aide II Sawtelle Learning Center	Trapani, Anthony RA PCH - Estell Manor
Bueno, Stephanie RA RTC - Kilbarchan	Jacques, Shirley RA PCH - Bright Start	Perry, Shavanka PA DDD - Walnut - Northvale	Travis, Tyche PA DDD - Buffalo
Burton, Sydney Teacher Aide II Sawtelle Learning Center	Jenkins, Dineesha PA DDD - Absecon	Peterson, Brianna S. RA PRTF - Lawn Ridge	Twum, Ernest PA DDD - Hilltop
Bush, Chartel D. PA RTF - Camden	Kablansi, Djabia A. Data Analyst Human Resources	Potter, Lynnora PA DDD - Buena Vista	Vigliarolo, Angelique Clinician I PCH - Bright Start
Butler, Kasheim RA RTC - Newark Muller Hall	Kelly-Miller, Maia A. RA SRT	Powell, Dana S. RA PCH - Estell Manor	Williams, Antoine Clinician PCH - Estell Manor
Cartledge Armstrong, Suzzette PA DDD - Hilltop	LaGuerre, Todd RA PCH - Davis House	Raices, Sarah M. RA PCH - Laurie Haven	Williams, Jennine RA PCH - Vineland
Charles, Charelle PA DDD - Morris Ave	Lara Esq., Aileen Administrator Accounting	Rennar, Ashleigh C. Intern PCH - Vineland	Wilmot, Allison TA II Sawtelle Learning Center
Collins, Sade PA DDD - Willingboro	Lussier, Katie-Lynne Intern (Mental Health Counseling) PCH - Malcolm House	Renondeau, Ernst Psychiatric APN PCH - Sayre House	Woodard, BiYonce C. PA DDD - Pearl Street
Daniels, David RA PCH - Sicklerville	McArdle, Kelly Clinical Case Manager RTC - Kilbarchan	Rodker, Jason Volunteer CBP - HMSC - Essex	Woods, Mahasin SRT / BA SRT
Davis, Lacreisha RA PRTF - Lawn Ridge	Mejia, Lidvina Clinician I RTC - Holley Residence	Schellinger, Stacy RA PCH - Estell Manor	Wylie, Paris RA PCH - Fisher Hall
Delmonte, Erick A. Maintenance Worker Maintenance	Mena, Victoria PA DDD - ECS Haledon	Shaw-Majette Jr., Charles PA DDD - Thomas	



## To Our Amazing Colleagues

### Shout out to...

my co-workers **Christinia Bell, Yajaira Samayoa, Michele DeFilippo,** and **Erin McCloskey** in the IMS Department for always having a handle on support. It is a pleasure to work with such an amazing group of people that complement each other so well! I'm very grateful for all of you .

everyone in the **Maintenance Crew** who are in high gear - working hard to make much needed repairs at all our residences.

**Amanda Garrett** a dedicated member of CIC. She always brings ideas & feedback to the group! Thanks for all your hard work!

**Payton Potts** for showing passion as a clinician! She is doing great work with her youth and families!

**Aimee Briscoe** for doing amazing work as a clinician at Sayre! We are so lucky to have such a strong clinician on our team!

**Keona Reeves** for doing great as the new CRS at Sayre! She is a strong leader for our youth and staff!

**Kristen Wistuba** on completing her first year with QAPI. Since taking this position, she has worked to learn all YCS DD policies and OOL regulations, and is working toward a certification in DD at Rutgers.

**Matthew Hopkins-** for completing his 10th year with QAPI. Whenever he is asked for data for a grant, RFP, project- he is willing to drop everything to get that data for the person asking and when clinical coverage is needed he willingly offers a lending hand.

**Geraldine Ward, Korey Clark, Yesenia Fulgencio** and all the **Lawn Ridge Staff.** Thank you for all the efforts you made to turn Sawtelle Lawn Ridge into a beautiful home for the young men.

the southern region **Nursing Team** for their compassion, dedication, and resilience with all the new assignment changes in the various program in the region. We appreciate all your hard work.

## Promotions

<b>Alida A.DeRussi</b> Holley Campus Clinical Director	<b>Pfeni Flicker</b> Sayre House Program Director	<b>Tyanna Wilson</b> Cedarbrook Home Sr. PA Supervisor	<b>Shanai K.Hill</b> Cedarbrook Home PA Supervisor	<b>Anne Scherbina</b> Holley RTC Clinican
<b>Keena K.Woolley</b> Haledon ECS House Manager	<b>Darryl Bey</b> Amwell DD Home House Manager	<b>Jennifer MacDermott</b> Vineland Home Program Director	<b>Saundra Y. Walden</b> Echohill DD Home House Manager	<b>Shawn R.Jackson</b> Holley Campus Building Manager
<b>Kylen Robinson</b> Winslow CSAP PA Supervisor	<b>Shantia Pettiford</b> Davis House RA Supervisor	<b>Keyon Murray</b> Holley RTC Case Manager	<i>Congratulations!</i> <i>You inspire us all to move forward &amp; keep working towards our goals.</i>	

# Milestones

## Professional /Personal Accomplishments



**Grethel Quintana-Beyra**, Personal Assistant at the Sawtelle Pearl Home fulfilled her dream of becoming a U.S. citizen March 4, 2022 after immigrating to the United States from Cuba.



**Barbara Michaels**, Director of Communications, recently directed/produced the film *The Lost Children of Bioko Island*. The documentary captures the journey of African diasporans finding their Bubi ancestry. In March, the film was accepted into the Europa Film Festival.

## Weddings



**Pfeni Flicker**, Sayre House PD and **Aimee Briscoe** clinician were both married, respectively, in June and August. The staff and residents had a lot of fun secretly organizing two bridal showers for Pfeni and Aimee. The youth designed cards of well wishes that expressed their appreciation for the clinicians. They also worked hard to decorate the dining area to surprise the brides and shower them with well wishes!

## New Arrivals



Congratulations to **Lisa Sandilands**, Treatment Home clinician on giving birth to a beautiful baby boy named Dean Levi Sandilands on January 10, 2022. Dean weighed 9 lbs. 2 ozs. and was 22 inches long. Both mother and baby are doing fine!

### **Don't Be Shy!!!**

We are always excited to celebrate and share with our colleagues any special life events, and personal or professional accomplishments you have achieved. Please email us at [info@ycs.org](mailto:info@ycs.org).



# *Milestone Work Anniversaries*

Starting with this issue of Inside YCS, we will acknowledge the milestone anniversaries of all employees beginning with their fifth year of service and in five-year increments thereafter. The pride and joy of any organization are its workers, and we are fortunate to acknowledge all of you as our treasured co-workers on your work anniversary.

*Day in and day out, you continue to shine.  
Your devotion and dedication to our mission is a rare gift.. Thank You!*



**James E. Albright**  
Maintenance Department



**America Guevara (Fisher Hall)**  
**Shawn Lee (Laurie Haven)**



**Randell White (Holley IRTS)**  
**Kamachee Mandhar (Newark Campus)**  
**Stacey A. Rosado (Laurie Haven)**  
**Katia C. Smith (Treatment Homes—South)**



**William Toth**  
**(Sawtelle Learning Center)**



**Dosty Enrico (NFP)**  
**Urshala D. Herald (Holley Campus)**  
**Driss Ouhdou (Camden)**  
**David Ogboroge (Sawtelle Hall)**  
**Nashemma N. Johnson (Kilbarchan Campus)**  
**Gerard Cooney (Kilbarchan Campus)**



**Verraina Freeman (21st Century)**  
**Darrell Harvey Jr. (Blackwood)**  
**Myesha M. Eutsey (Hilltop)**  
**LaShayna Malone (Pamela)**

# Message from the Chaplain

Dear Colleagues,

The news has been saturated with heartbreaking images and stories of the plight the Ukrainian people in their homeland. It is difficult to imagine the anguish our colleagues and clients from Ukraine, Russia and other the Eastern European countries are feeling right now. This is most certainly a very difficult and emotional time for them, and I hope we can extend a little extra kindness and understanding to lighten their burden while they are working.

No matter what your ethnic background, the current world-wide crisis comes just as we are emerging from the two-year roller-coaster ride of the pandemic. Some of you may still have unprocessed anxiety, grief and loss that is now exacerbated by this international crisis. If you or an individual in your program is struggling right now and need to talk to someone, please reach out me, William Waller - [wwaller@ycs.org](mailto:wwaller@ycs.org) or Dayna Zatina Egan, Psy.D. [dzegan@ycs.org](mailto:dzegan@ycs.org)

With deepest respect,  
William "Bill" Waller  
Agency Chaplain

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## A member of the YCS family brings humanitarian aid to the Ukranian border

On March 20th, Sveltana Iyer, program director at Holley Center, made the perilous journey to the Polish border to assist family members who escaped the war in Ukraine. With the help of her sister, she brought suitcases filled with humanitarian aid to those still trapped in her homeland. During their six-day stay, Sveltana succeeded in securing an apartment in Poland for 10 family members who are now refugees, and assisting her 75 year-old uncle, his daughter, and 3 year-old grandson in filing all the paperwork necessary for them to return with her to the United States.



Sveltana worries every day for family members who are still in Ukraine - including one cousin who risks his life every day as a volunteer to deliver food, medical supplies, and clothing to Ukrainians trapped in the capital of Kyiv and nearby towns devastated by the conflict. The horrific stories that she heard during her trip are unspeakable, and she worries about the long-term psychological effects this invasion will have on the entire population. Right now, she is focused on assisting the family members that she left behind to relocate to the United States.

*We would like to extend our sincere thoughts and prayers for the safety of Svetlana's family and wish her well as she moves on to devote all her energies to helping them.*

Sveltana has set up a paypal account to accept donations with Generosity Network at <https://www.paypal.com/pools/c/8Jhrp0DAn7> She will be able to get all donations directly to Ukraine.



The Spirituality Committee will soon launch a weekly **Call-in Prayer Line** conducted by Chaplain Bill. Look for details in your email.



## Newark Campus Staff Rally to Support their Two Colleagues

On March 16, 2021, two days after testing positive for Covid, **Elizabeth Torres Santiago**, the Newark campus housekeeping supervisor, began gasping for air. Her oxygen level was so low the doctors in the emergency room told her she needed to be intubated. They gave her a few minutes to notify her loved ones. Elizabeth made two phone calls - the first was to her son Roberto and the second to Marilyn Alarcon, the Newark Campus receptionist. "I asked Marilyn to tell everybody I love you all and I want you to pray for me," recalled Elizabeth. After working at the same site for 22 years, her co-workers became her second family.



**Elizabeth Torres Santiago**      **Francica Casado**

Eight days later, **Francica Casado**, the housekeeper for Davis House, also became ill. For a year, Francica and Elizabeth worked side-by-side to protect the children and staff on the Newark campus. If an area had been contaminated they bravely took on the task of thoroughly disinfecting it. They both knew they tried their best.

When Francica became ill, she quarantined in her bedroom for a month. "Some days I was so weak, I thought I was not going to make it," said Francica. The additional stress of not being able to see her two young children was also psychologically very difficult.

Meanwhile, Elizabeth's condition worsened and she was placed in a medically induced coma to ease the discomfort from a tracheotomy. Upon hearing this news from Elizabeth's daughter, Marilyn approached our Chaplain Bill Waller about conducting daily prayer sessions open to all employees. Almost every day the staff gathered for prayers. When Francica returned to work, she joined the group and offered prayers in Spanish. Their prayers were answered.



Two months after being admitted into the hospital Elizabeth was released to a rehabilitation facility where she continued to slowly regain her health. It was seven more months until she could return to work in January 2022.

Elizabeth and Francica are so happy to be back on the job. "I began to feel better when I could see the children again. We love the children 100% and we'd do anything for them...Whatever we do here is for the kids," exclaimed Elizabeth. Their work and the renewed relationship they have with all their colleagues gives them a sense of purpose and a reason to fight through the anxiety and depression that are residuals from the virus. "This is our family here and we are all much closer," echoed Francica.

When asked what they learned from this experience, Elizabeth and Francica said, "Live with love –show people how much you care."

# *Achieving Excellence*

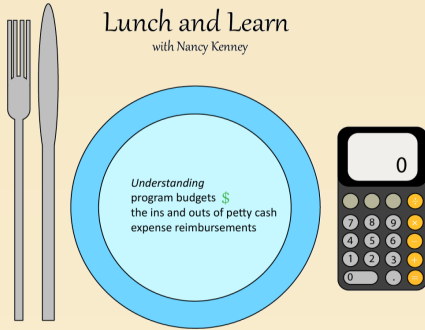
*Congratulations to all youth PCH-IDD, CSAP, and PCH BH/DD programs for successfully completing their Office of Licensing inspections!*

OOL inspections are always very challenging and require attention to a myriad of program details and comprehensive reports. They can be a test for even the most experienced program managers. We are proud of everyone's dedication through this process, particularly for our new program directors inaugural experience! Everyone tackled this critically important task professionally and competently, and successfully met or exceeded OOL comprehensive inspection requirements.



*The strength of every team is the individual contributions of the interdisciplinary team.  
Thanks to all supporting staff for insuring the success of your licensing inspections.*

# New Trainings & Learning Opportunities



Let's face it, understanding how a budget works and successfully implementing it can be intimidating. With sincere concern for all the staff who must manage all the financial pieces that go into operating their programs successfully, Nancy Kenney, CFO, began a Lunch and Learn series in March. In addition to the original three recorded workshops on program budgeting, there are now additional trainings on employee expense reimbursements, and the new travel reimbursement form.

Coming Soon!!! Virtual Lunch and Learn workshops on procedures for petty cash submissions and reimbursements. Check your email for details.

## *You don't want to miss this!*

The Clinical Rounds Series continues with  
***Multi Cultural Clinical Considerations***  
presented by  
**Dr. Melany Rivera Maldonado**  
Assistant Professor of Psychology  
New School of Social Research

**May 11th**  
**10:00 - 11:30 AM**

The discussion will focus on creating opportunities to understand different worldviews in an effort to develop and adapt collaborative therapeutic approaches with the communities we work with.

**Promising Path to Success**  
**Save the Date: Next Virtual Workshop is Wed., May 25, from 1:00 - 2:30**  
Learn how to incorporate the 3 core components of Nurtured Heart into your work.

*Speak to your program administrator, if you would like to attend.*

**Reminder:** Preventing Workplace Harassment Training is offered on Zoom every Tuesday from 9:15am - 10:15am and the second Tuesday of every month from 5:30pm - 6:30pm. This mandatory training is designed to raise awareness, foster respect, and keep all our employees safe. To request an on-site training for your staff, contact Yvonne Monetmurro or Patrick "Mike" Baguidy.

**Do you have ideas on how trainings for new Program Directors & House Managers can be improved or streamlined?**

Keep on the lookout for an invitation from our president, Tara Augustine, to participate in this important discussion.

Zoom Lunch and Learn Workshops and Training for New Safety Officers have all been recorded and can now be viewed on Sharepoint.

We are always telling you how important YCS training are.  
Now, we want to hear from you!  
How has a specific learning experience benefitted you on the job and/or in your personal life?  
Send your thoughts to [info@ycs.org](mailto:info@ycs.org)  
You may be featured in our next issue of ***Inside YCS.***

"Learning experiences are like journeys. The journey starts where the learning is now, and ends where the learner is more successful." –Julie Dirksen

# New Employee Incentives

*Exciting opportunities to earn more money, fulfill training requirements, develop your leadership skills, and more*

**Direct Care Staff who work weekends at the residences receive an additional \$2.00 an hour.**

The weekends are an important time at our residences. Many of the clients remain at the sites and they need to be kept safe and meaningfully engaged. We acknowledge how busy our residential settings can be on the weekends and are now providing an incentive for those who are willing to give it their all through the weekend at YCS.

Effective March 11th, we instituted a PLUS \$2 per hour on hours worked in our residential settings between Friday 6:00 pm- Monday 7:00 am. As long as you are swiped in, UKG will auto code those hours worked in order to receive your plus \$2 on top of your hourly rate.

If you are salaried, and interested in picking up a weekend shift, you will be entitled to the base rate plus the additional \$2.00 an hour. For more details, please speak to your program manager.

## **New Hires Will Become Eligible for Benefits Much Sooner**

All employees who are hired after July 1, 2022, will be eligible for benefits the first of the month after their hire date. For example, an employee who starts work on July 15th will be eligible for benefits on August 1st. Employees hired in May and June will also have their benefits eligibility date accelerated to July 1. Prior to this change new hires had to wait three months to become eligible for benefits. We hope that this change will help us attract new talent to YCS.

## **Opportunities at YCS to grow professionally, take on more responsibility, and earn a quarterly stipend Are you ready for the challenge?**

I am sure you are very aware of the familiar lament, "I am one person, I can't do everything!" Well, at our residences, there are many jobs to do. To give staff a chance to grow and learn new skills, while easing the burden of the managers, YCS has created the auxiliary positions of Evolv Superuser and Safety Officer.

### **Evolv Superusers have the Power to Help New Hires Succeed**

Only Superusers are approved to provide the new hire training in Evolv. It is a unique privilege and opportunity to guide new employees. The role of the ECR Superuser is open to all eligible staff working in a location that utilizes ECR.

To be eligible as an Evolv Super User an employee must:

- ◆ Have strong computer skills and the ability to use Evolv with limited support
- ◆ Have completed 6 months at their primary location
- ◆ Have an active YCS email address
- ◆ Have a valid driver's license
- ◆ Not have had disciplinary action recorded within the past 12 months
- ◆ Be flexible to schedule trainings at all times, days, and shifts

Dina Sundberg  
IMS System Administrator

### **The ultimate role of a Safety Officer is to ensure that everyone in the workplace remains safe.**

The Safety Officer is responsible for ensuring that regular duties related to the program's environment of care (EOC) and safety are maintained or completed. This includes: completing monthly/quarterly emergency procedure drills and monthly EOC walk throughs to ensure the program is safe and following necessary guidelines and identifying areas at the site that may need repair.

The Safety Officer is open to any eligible Residential Assistant, Personal Assistant, supervisor, or other direct care worker who has completed the 90 day probationary period at the residential program.

Kristen Wistuba,  
Quality Assurance Analyst

**Superusers and Safety Officers can earn up to \$500 quarterly if they complete all assigned tasks. Talk to your Program Manager to learn more.**

# *Intern Spotlight*

## *Meet Nimit Kaur*

In a cover letter applying for an internship at YCS, Nimit Kaur wrote, “Although I am blind... I am deeply passionate about [helping] individuals from various backgrounds and abilities and helping them thrive and reach their full potential.” With courageous honesty she continued, “I will communicate with you clearly and openly if I have any limitations and concerns that might interfere with the goals of the program. I want to provide the best care to the clients and youth...”

True to her word, the Rutgers University graduate student met every challenge she faced to fulfill all work related requirements and began her internship last fall at Haddon Heights and Voorhees homes. With her trusted canine companion Chardonnay by her side, Nimit has been working two days a week at each site - conducting individual and group therapy sessions for the residents.

“Nimit is one of the most motivated students that I’ve ever interviewed for an internship... She was not going to let any obstacles stand in her way,” said Laurie Levin, YCS senior project manager.

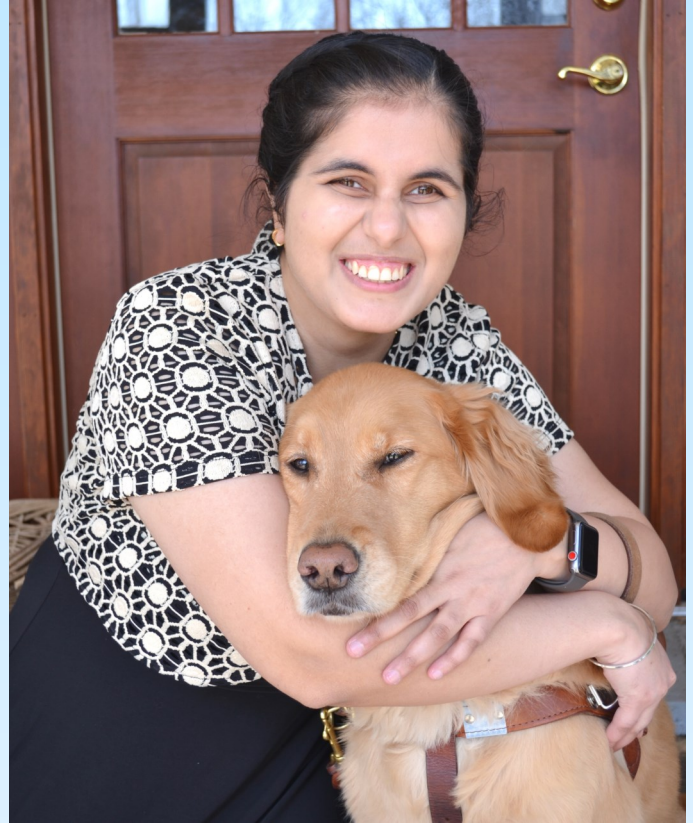
Sonja Stang, Haddon Heights clinician added in an email, “Nimit and Chardonnay have been such a light at Haddon Heights since they arrived on site. Nimit’s professionalism and adaptability to the challenging residential environment has been an amazing inspiration to staff and clients alike... we’ve all grown in our abilities to understand each other and appreciate differences.”

Nimit hopes that she has been able to encourage the youth to fight for their own happiness. “I told them that their issues do not define them...They are defined by their individuality and abilities.”

When she was 11, Nimit’s family emigrated from India. She was thrust into an unfamiliar culture and did not know English. “I think I am proof for the children that if I can be successful so can they.”

“Nimit has been a wonderful addition to the Voorhees team,” said Shannon Casserly, clinician. “Her compassion and genuine nature have helped her build rapport with even the most resistant of clients.”

According to Nimit, there is a direct correlation between physical and mental health challenges because in both instances the world isolates people with disabilities. Working with the youth at YCS has strengthened her commitment to pursue a career in advocacy for individuals with disabilities. “Helping agencies need better ways to set people with challenges up for success,” urged Nimit.



# Highlights

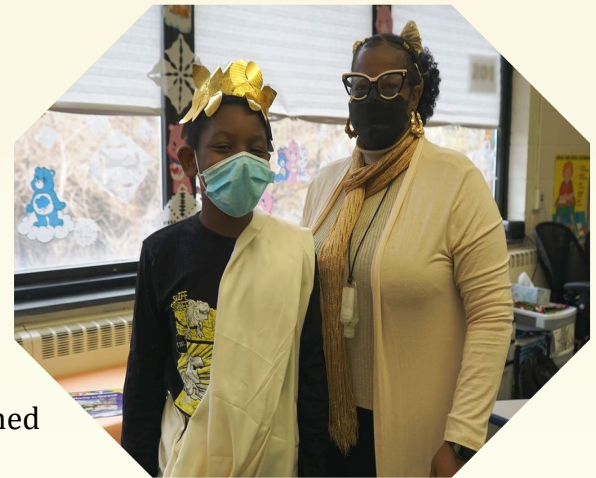


Angie and Joseph Falvo, PA,  
work on a puzzle at Sawtelle Greenbrook.



## GW Students Proudly Take Visitors On a Tour Around the World

Classrooms at George Washington (GW) School were transformed by students and faculty into “cultural centers” representing Greece, Egypt, India, China, and Mexico. Every visitor received a passport that the students validated for entry into the classroom, where the students enthusiastically explained to guests what they had learned about their country.



The students worked for weeks in preparation. Each classroom was beautifully decorated, and one classroom even offered a treat that the children had helped to prepare. They did a fantastic job. Bravo to our students and teachers!

# Sawtelle North DD Airfryer Wars

**The competition was sizzling hot!**

Thanks to a very generous donor, who wanted to make the holidays special for the Sawtelle North DD homes, the YCS Foundation was able to purchase - at the request of the managers - air fryers for every home. The homes then had a great time competing to see who could come up with the most creative and delicious dish.

**and the winners are**

**1st Place**

**Grethel Quintana-Beyra**-*Pearl*

**2nd Place**

**Rosalee Howard**-*Hilltop*

**3rd Place**

**Stanley Cunningham**-*Burning Bush*

**2nd**



**1st**



**3rd**



# The YCS 2020 Black History Month Contest Celebrates the Legacy of Martin Luther King

Congratulations to the staff at our homes who encouraged and supported residents to participate in our annual Black History Month Contest. We asked residents to share their thoughts on the Civil Rights Movement and Martin Luther King's iconic speech "I Have a Dream," and we received many wonderful, thoughtful responses.

## The winners of the 2022 Black History Month Contest are



Category #1 ages 5 - 10  
Essay Winner  
J.W., 9 - Holley Center  
J. W. with Urshala Herald



Category #2 ages 11 - 15  
Essay Winner  
B.B., 14 - Sayre House  
B.B. with Keona Reeves



Category #4 ages 21+  
Essay Winner  
Bethsaida, 21 - Buffalo House  
Bethsaida with Ebony Batts

## Category #3 ages 16 - 21 There was a tie!



Marcus, 16 Essay Winner-Voorhees  
Marcus with Crystal Davis ,r, and his Mom



Amanda, 17 Art Winner - Malcolm House  
Amanda with Nicole Cencien



## More Highlights

### SBYS Hosted a Tera Party for Women's History Month

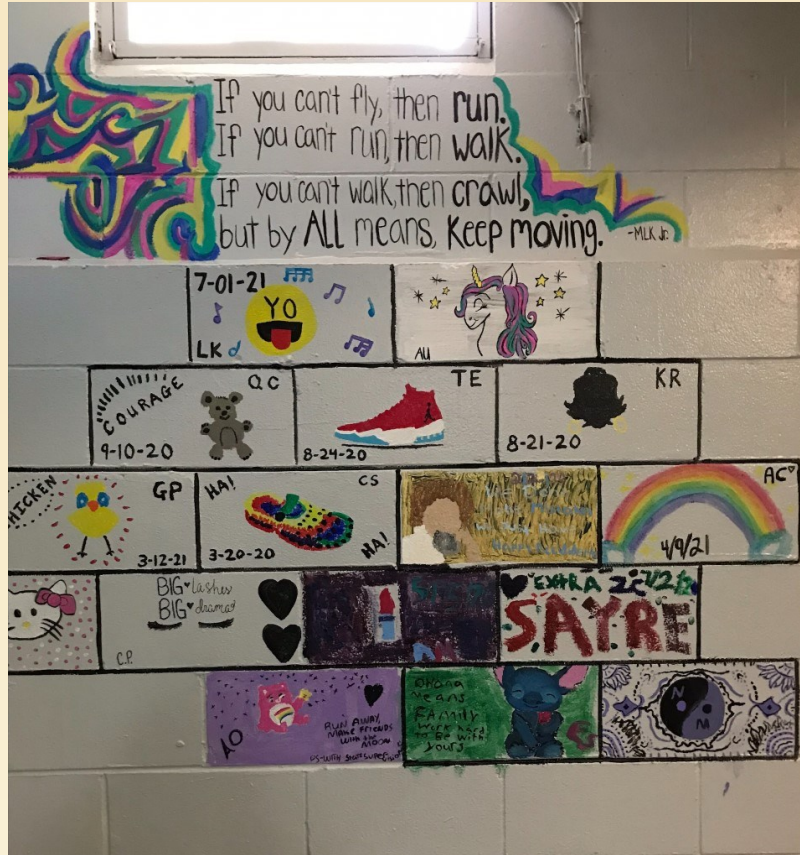
Erica Parks, the YCS SBYS employment specialist, organized a Women's History Month Tea Party for the students. Being a former participant in the SBYS program as a student at Eastside High, Erica has special insight into how to create a meaningful event for the students. "The young women in our program were able to get together, be inspired by some great women in history, and empower one another. It was a very special day," said Erica.



Keeping the children at the Holley Center engaged in new experiences has brought joy to both the residents and staff. Paint Night was a wonderful opportunity to share good feelings, get creative and decorate their rooms.

On one weekend, the residents from Holley Stanton Hall enjoyed hiking on the Mt. Tammany Red Dot Trail in Hardwick Township NJ. It was a wonderful day. "They hiked by a stream and enjoyed the complete freedom of being out in nature," said **Urshala Herald**, RA weekend supervisor.

# Journey Mural



**Sayre House's Journey Mural is growing! When a youth is transitioning out of the program, they are given the opportunity to paint a brick on the Journey Mural to inspire new and current youths entering the program.**



## Youth Redefine the Name of New Spirituality Sessions

In March, Agency Chaplain Bill Waller began running weekly spirituality sessions with the residents from KB IRTS, Malcolm House, Fisher Hall, Davis/Bright Start, and the YCS School Based Youth Services program at Eastside High.

So far, there has been a lot of enthusiasm on the part of the participants and discussions have been both lively and meaningful. ***"I let the young people lead the discussion to where it wants to go, and based on their input we are now calling the groups spiritual mindfulness."***

Topics for the 12 week long pilot program include mindfulness, kindness, tolerance, forgiveness, hope, and joy.

# Agency Updates

## Maintenance & Facilities

In our November 2020, we reported on YCS' plan to strengthen the agency's infrastructure, which included investing in the environment of care in our facilities. Over the past 17 months, our maintenance teams have made great strides in completing critical repairs at some of the homes with the greatest needs. In addition, the new Bright Start program, Lawnridge, and Davis House residences have received major face lifts. YCS has been able to do this with the support of the Finance Department, facilities director Wanda Kavanaugh, and the YCS Foundation. This is just the beginning! YCS' commitment to you has not wavered and with the expertise of our Maintenance Teams plans for more home upgrades are in the works.



## Information Technology



### **Congratulations to Everyone Who Has Helped Increase Employee User Adoption of YCS emails!**

We know that it has not been easy, especially for those employees who have "internet anxiety." Thanks to your patience and gentle persistence, 68.2 % of our employees are now actively using their emails. This is an increase of 15% over the past three months.

**Thanks for your continued support. We're almost there!**

## Nursing

### **The Covid 19 vaccine with its RNA technology results are in at YCS!**

The YCS Health Service team is proud to announce that since the beginning of March '22, there are 0, yes 0, cases of Covid 19 infection among our employees!!!!

This is a tremendous accomplishment for all YCS employees who are fully vaccinated and boosted! With the continued practice of hand washing, masking up, and getting vaccinations, we hope to continue to return to "normal."

## Human Resources

### **YCS Extends the \$500 booster bonus to New Employees**



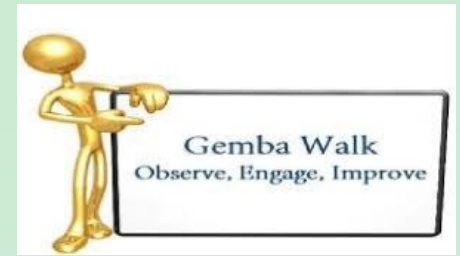
As of May 11, 2022, per the Governor Murphy's mandate, all YCS employees must be vaccinated and boosted when they are eligible for the Booster Vaccine (generally 5 months after vaccination). Following proof of vaccination, employees are eligible to receive a \$500 Booster Bonus. New hires who provide proof of Booster will be eligible to receive the Booster Bonus by at the conclusion of their 90-day introductory period. Please call HR if you have any questions.

## More Agency Updates

Now that the specter of pandemic is behind us, the executive leadership has been enthusiastically engaged in getting out into the field and learning firsthand about the day to day activities at the residences. Steven Kessler, Chief Human Resources Officer and Nancy Kenney, Chief Financial Officer, share their insights after visiting the Kilbarchan Campus, Laurie Haven, and the Sawtelle Haledon ECS.

*“By getting out into the field, I feel much more connected to my colleagues, the organization, and our mission. Seeing, hearing, and experiencing, the challenges that employees face on the job, at their sites, is really helpful. It has been personally rewarding to be able to immediately address some of the programs’ needs and identify other projects that are more long term. These visits are also the only way we will know if many of the programs and policies that we have implemented are helpful to the staff. I am very appreciative of the staff’s openness and willingness to engage in honest dialogue. It also felt very good for me to step out of my corporate role and meet the clients. They were all wonderful.” Steve*

*After working remotely for most of last year, it has been great to be able to visit the residences, meet the teams, and put names and faces together. These Gemba Walks have given employees an opportunity to talk to us in their “homes,” and share their experiences, tell us what impacts them the most, and what could be done differently. As a result, we are making every effort to address their needs and concerns. For example, after listening to my colleagues express their concerns about budgeting, employee reimbursements, and petty cash, the finance department has created “Lunch and Learn” sessions on these topics. Our goal is to make YCS processes as easy as possible so staff can freely devote their time to addressing the needs of the clients. Nancy*



You may have heard folks at YCS refer to the site visits as “Gemba Walks.” This term, adapted from the Japanese work Gembutsu, means the “Real Thing” or “Real Place” where all the work happens and senior management “walks” to observe, engage and assist.

### Performance Reviews Your Key to Success at YCS



**By now, all employees should have met with their supervisors to discuss their performance goals for the last quarter of this fiscal year. In June, you will have the opportunity to evaluate your progress and begin work on setting new goals. If you have not had a performance review meeting yet, please reach out to your supervisor.**

### REMINDER

If you have a work related concern and don’t know who to talk to, you can reach out to our Ombudsperson Carlene Colston by phone 973-419-3519 or email: [ombud@ycs.org](mailto:ombud@ycs.org)

### Did you know...



YCS has increased travel reimbursement from \$.31 to \$.58 per mile. Talk to your program manager for all the details or visit “Lunch and Learn” folder on Sharepoint for the recorded training.


### What are you waiting for? It’s a WIN/WIN

If there is anyone in your circle who you think would be a great addition to the YCS Family, please refer them to HR, and if they are hired & complete the 90 introductory period, you will earn \$500.

EMPLOYEE REFERRAL BONUS PROGRAM			
You refer a friend	YCS hires your friend	Your friend works 90 days	YOU COLLECT \$500

# News from the YCS Foundation

Over the past year, the YCS Foundation team has been reaching out in search of financial support for Trauma-Informed Allied Therapies for the residents in our group homes. In March, we were elated to secure grants from various funders to begin a pilot program that offers Trauma-Informed Yoga. The program was launched in April at the Holley Campus. The classes take place weekly in small groups and is offered to the children on all 4 units on the campus. We are happy to report that the yoga sessions have been very popular with the children. When one child was asked how he enjoyed the classes, he replied, "Yoga smooths my mind."



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*20th Emerald Anniversary*

*Charity Golf Classic*

**MONDAY, JULY 25, 2022**

*Edgewood Country Club in River Vale, New Jersey*

**"IN GOLF, AS IN LIFE, IT IS THE FOLLOW THROUGH THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE."**



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**Charity Golf Classic**  
**Monday, July 25, 2022**  
**EDGEWOOD COUNTRY CLUB**

**50/50 Raffle**

**\$10 Tickets**



**Buy Online Now**  
**at [YCS.ORG](http://YCS.ORG)**

# It's time to start planning for the 2nd Annual Green Thumb Competition!



**Spring is in the air & nature has begun to gift us with her beauty**

We've got 44 homes with lots of garden space to transform into flower, herb and vegetable gardens.

This is a great Allied Therapy activity and a way to enjoy the outdoors, get some exercise, create tranquil gardens & experience the joy of eating what you have grown.

**The time to get started is now!**

Check your e mails for garden tips or share your garden secrets with us.

At the end of the summer, we will announce 4 winners.

**More details to follow!!!**

**Did the Time Just Fly By  
Before You Could Submit  
News about Your Program?**

**Start Now!**

**Send in your photos, shout outs and  
program highlights as they happen**

**to**

**[info@ycs.org](mailto:info@ycs.org)**





