



YOUTH ENRICHMENT SERVICES

July 2021

Stay connected with YES and get the scoop on our students & staff!

YES' Village is Making a Difference this Summer

After 14 months of the COVID lockdown, it was no secret that everyone - students, parents, and stakeholders - needed a win. COVID-19 had drained the energy and excitement out of most of us. The preparation for this unknown summer required significant innovation and creativity. When the news came that YES would host 100 students through Partner4Work, it became evident that we needed our partners, funders, stakeholders, and community groups (i.e. our village) to work with us.



This newsletter comes three weeks into what we believe to be one of our best summers yet. We believe this because so many people in our network have contributed to students' successful learning and working experiences. We have a number of veteran teachers facilitating courses on a range of topics from Culinary Arts to African American History. Whole Foods donated funds for our Female Wellness and Empowerment Initiative. Casey Dill, manager of our local Whole Foods, donates fruit on a weekly basis to include in student lunches. The University of Pittsburgh provided interns through the School of Public Health's Bridging the Gaps program. Even our landlord let us use empty space in the office building in order to accommodate students. One of the really exciting opportunities is that the Rivers Club is providing weekly wellness and nutrition programs, that include lunch for students. Additionally, our over 24 traditional partners are working with our students in a summer work capacity. On top of all of this, we received the good news that the RK Mellon Foundation awarded YES a grant that will allow us to continue our high level activity throughout the coming year.

It is with a lot of excitement, appreciation, and thanks for the work of our village to ensure our students have a fun, engaging, exciting, and rewarding learning experience this summer.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dennis Jones'.

Dr. Jones



Round Three: Camp FeWi

The old adage “three times is a charm” is proving true for Camp FeWi, our Female Empowerment and Wellness program. With sisterhood, selfcare, mental health, and wellness at the program’s core, Camp FeWi is winning this summer and is just what many of our young ladies need coming out of a global pandemic. So far, our young ladies have been practicing self care through journaling, painting, planting and jamming to their summer playlist. They have engaged in a variety of physical activities by exploring non traditional sports, their favorite being golf at First Tee of Pittsburgh. This upcoming week, they received the opportunity to connect with Gateway Health’s nutritionist to learn more about the basics and importance of a healthy diet. They will continue to gain knowledge of different sports, careers available in sports, sisterhood, and self-care.

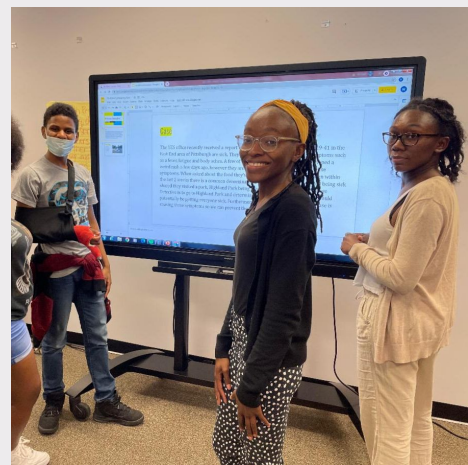


Prioritizing Wellness: WellCare Wednesdays

YES is prioritizing students’ wellbeing through its WellCare and Wellness Wednesday sessions, creating opportunities for diverse and comprehensive emphasis on wellness, social bonding, and cultural connection. WellCare sessions are conceptualized into 2 hour long programs that target social, financial, mental, and physical wellness. Each Wednesday is gendered and is meant to offer a unique experience that enhances or teaches a new life skill. Students use this time to develop peer relationships, connect with staff, express their skills, and reboot for the rest of the week. Thus far, students have engaged in a range of sessions from jewelry making to entrepreneurial car workshops. Stay tuned for more wellness fun!

Pitt Interns Bridging the Gap

YES is thankful for its three year partnership with the University of Pittsburgh’s Bridging the Gaps (BTGs) Program, a summer opportunity that connects graduate students from medical, dental, public health, and social work schools with community organizations. YES is fortunate to work closely with two awesome interns pursuing advanced degrees in public health and supporting our summer scholars. Wendeline, a Pennsylvania native, is teaching students about epidemiology and useful life skills. By the program’s end, students will develop an intervention plan to



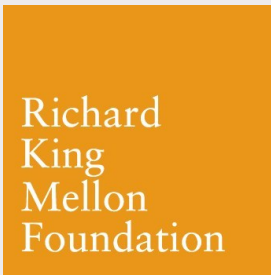
prevent a simulated health outbreak crisis. Imani, a New York native, is gardening with young people and helping them plant, grow, and harvest crops. Her emphasis on environmental justice is of particular relevance and importance. Both Wedneline and Imani have been valuable assets to YES and will continue their impactful work throughout the summer. To learn more about the BTGs Program, click [here](#).



Students Learn about Latin American Culture from Venezuelan Professor

While the pandemic brought about challenges and despair, it has also opened new doors for innovation, creativity, and virtual connection. YES has taken advantage of the virtual affordances and partnered with Dr. Rosa Lopez de D'Amico, an esteemed international professor, scholar, activist, and physical health practitioner from Venezuela. She joins YES as a summer instructor of Latin American

Culture. Through her course, Dr. D'Amico, provides first hand insight into Latin American Culture, food practices, and artwork, among others, and explores the largely misunderstood Afro movement in Latin America. Her larger course goal is to improve students' cultural awareness and to invite students into an unknown world full of life, culture, and rich history.



YES Wins RK Mellon Grant

YES is pleased to announce its partnership with RK Mellon to provide youth with programs and services that increase participants' employability and college readiness; create pathways to college and careers; and strengthen participants' internal motivation to sustain positive behavioral changes. YES is grateful for the opportunity to expand its services and to continue creating supportive environments conducive for youths' academic and personal development and economic mobility. To learn more, click [here](#).

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