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Cover photo: Keona Reeves, CRS
Welcome to the spring edition of Inside YCS. I am grateful to our communications department that works very hard sharing information with all our employees so that we can spread the word regarding the wonderful happenings at YCS. This newsletter is an opportunity to learn about what our children and adult residential programs, our schools and our community-based programs are doing to improve the lives of those we serve. It is important that our employees have ways to feel connected across so many different services.

Spring is a time to enjoy the return of warm weather. I know my mind instinctively turns towards the outdoors, getting in shape, BBQs and all the other fun activities that are associated with the season. Paradoxically for many agencies, like ours, it is also the fourth quarter of the fiscal year – a time when we are very busy wrapping up all the business for 2022-3 and setting new goals for the next fiscal year. We are being very intentional about our goals for this next fiscal year, which will include a large emphasis on employee wellness, engagement, satisfaction, and retention.

This work should not mean we have to forego the joys that the spring season brings. It is a great opportunity for all of us to re-invigorate our lives. The new wellness initiative at YCS is a wonderful place to start. I hope you check in on a Wednesday team meeting for some gentle exercise, conversation about nutrition or managing stress (p. 22 & 23). Join the prayer line Wednesdays at 7:30 or partake in your reflective consultation group which aims at creating a climate in which both you as the helper and our participant’s needs are being considered so that our interventions are more successful.

Now is also the ideal time to partner with the children or older participants and take advantage of allied therapy opportunities, and community-based outings. Gardening is a great form of exercise and a wonderful way to reduce anxiety. Decorating your sites or offices with flowering plants or fragrant herbs also creates a soothing environment. You might want to set up a walking club or plan outings to a local park, botanical garden, or street fair. Many spring and summer events are free and give participants a chance to engage with their community. By factoring in meaningful enjoyment, the "business” side of your workday will be easier to accomplish.

Lastly, I hope you are inspired by the new section of our newsletter, “Leading with Heart” (p. 14-15). I am continually in awe of how deeply many of you care about the people entrusted to YCS and am happy that we can highlight some of these efforts with all of you.

With best wishes for your health and happiness,
# Welcome New Employees

New Employees who have completed 90 days, January—March 2023

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Department/Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brown-Miller, Ahyan</td>
<td>Personal Assistant</td>
<td>DDD - Cavan House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settle, Terrance</td>
<td>Residential Assistant</td>
<td>DCF-PCH IDD Lawnridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorsey, Jamar</td>
<td>Personal Assistant</td>
<td>DDD-Hilltop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spells, Naimah</td>
<td>SRT Behavioral Assist</td>
<td>SRT - N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilliens, David</td>
<td>Residential Assistant</td>
<td>DCF-PCH Davis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stratton, Janay</td>
<td>Residential Assistant</td>
<td>DCF-PCH Coopers Crossing</td>
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<td>Glenn, Cleopatra</td>
<td>Residential Assistant</td>
<td>DCF-PCH BHDD Estell Manor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry, Natasia</td>
<td>Residential Assistant</td>
<td>DCF-PCH Sayre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holmes Jr., Melvin</td>
<td>Residential Assistant</td>
<td>DCF-PCH IDD Cedarbrook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tirado, Daniel A.</td>
<td>Residential Assistant</td>
<td>DCF-PCH Phoenix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowers, Jan</td>
<td>Intern</td>
<td>Exec Administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gaita, Inna</td>
<td>Physical Therapist</td>
<td>DOE-Sawtelle Learning Ctr</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jarvis, Rebekah</td>
<td>Consultant</td>
<td>DCF-RTC Holley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galeta, Inna</td>
<td>Intern</td>
<td>DCF-RTC Holley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamara, Madinatu</td>
<td>Intern</td>
<td>DCF-RTC Holley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odom, Tanzanaya</td>
<td>Personal Assistant</td>
<td>DDD-Greenbrook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polizzi, Joseph</td>
<td>Intern</td>
<td>Treatment Home-Southern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin, Jadae</td>
<td>Personal Assistant</td>
<td>DDD-Apts Supvr Buffalo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peets, Xanidya</td>
<td>Volunteer Training</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Myricks, Patryce C.</td>
<td>Residential Assistant</td>
<td>DCF-PCH Fisher Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamara, Madinatu</td>
<td>Intern</td>
<td>DCF-RTC Holley</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spells, Naimah</td>
<td>SRT Behavioral Assist</td>
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<td>Stratton, Janay</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tirado, Daniel A.</td>
<td>Residential Assistant</td>
<td>DCF-PCH Phoenix</td>
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**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.
YCS welcomes new Chief Financial Officer Dr. Frank C. Bockowski. He brings to the YCS organization an abundance of expertise in both the private and nonprofit corporate sectors including work at the Staten Island Economic Development Corporation as their Comptroller, the Meadowlands Area YMCA as CFO, and Ernst & Young as an Investigative Accountant.

“I am excited to be a part of this new chapter at YCS and look forward to helping YCS become more financially stable,” says Dr. Bockowski. Frank, as he prefers to be called, has a Doctor of Philosophy - PhD in Accounting from The University of Sheffield, an MBA in Accounting from Baruch College, and a BS in Actuarial Science from NYU Stern School of Business. He spends his free time volunteering in the fire department with his two children. They are “explorer” members while he is a Lieutenant firefighter, captain of the high angle rescue team, diver, and EMT. In 2021, his community honored him with the EMS Provider of the Year award and top EMT in District for his dedicated service during the pandemic.

TINA DEVICO-PRICE, SR. VP OF BUSINESS AFFAIRS

We would like to welcome Tina DeVico-Price, new Senior Vice President of Business Affairs to the YCS Family. Her responsibilities at YCS include overseeing the maintenance of facilities, purchasing, food services, building grant applications and monitoring, and management of the transportation department.

Tina has more than 20 years of experience working in the clinical and healthcare industry. Most recently, she was a Director of Partnership Operations and Regional Director of Operations at Wellpath, a Medical and Mental Healthcare agency offering a full range of services to individuals in corrections. Previously, she worked as Director of Quality Management for PerformCare in Robbinsville.

“Over the past three years, YCS has been earnestly invested in improving and enhancing the physical environments of some of our facilities. I am confident that under the able leadership of Tina, with the support of the facilities and finance departments, we will robustly continue to ensure that every residence and program meets the highest standards,” Tara Augustine.

Tina earned a Master of Arts Degree in counselor education from Kean University and Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology and Bachelor of Science Degree in administration of justice from Rutgers University.

Outside of work, Tina is an active mom of two girls and her multiple pets.
Promotions

Congratulations! You inspire us all to move forward & keep working towards our goals.

Bartley-Rogers, Sherene, Program Director, DCF-PCH Phoenix
Casey, Emily, Clinician, DCF-PCH BHDD Estell Manor
Hadden, Shatina, Shift Supervisor, DCF-PCH BHDD Estell Manor
Liggins, Tanasha, Shift Supervisor, DDD-Greenbrook
Malone, LaShayna, House Manager, DDD-Pamela
Perry, Shavanka, Shift Supervisor, DDD-Walnut
Sundberg, Dina, IMS Director, Info Management Systems
Ware, Shamyra S., Shift Supervisor, DCF-CSAP Hammonton

Milestones

PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Congratulations to Denisha Givens on earning a Master’s Degree in Human Behavior and Organizational Psychology!!

Congratulations to Yakima Daniels, behaviorist in the Southern Region who has earned a Master’s in Arts with a concentration in Special Education. She has completed her 1500 hours of supervision and will be preparing to sit for the BCBA exam. Go Yakima!!!

Congratulations to Eddie Bonnaci, southern region BCBA, who has been accepted into a Doctorate program in Trauma Informed Care at Liberty University.

BIRTHS

Congratulations to Jessica Johnson at Laurie Haven! She welcomed a baby boy, Tristan, 7 lbs 17oz, on February 25, 2023.
## Work Anniversaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>25 YEARS</th>
<th>20 YEARS</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Congratulations!!!</strong></td>
<td>**Sewell, Colleen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mangual, Luis</strong></td>
<td>**Favor, Louella</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Facilities - North</strong></td>
<td>**Walton, Tamika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dolan, Kim</strong></td>
<td>**Taylor, Anna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HealthSvc-PsychPrescrib-North</strong></td>
<td>**Sewell, Colleen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Frazier, Corey L.</td>
<td>Camden**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Hoggard, Sheila D.</td>
<td>Thomas**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Njoku, Uzoamaka</td>
<td>Buffalo**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Lara, Andrea V.</td>
<td>George Washington**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Reed, Randall</td>
<td>Vineland**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Clay, Jack</td>
<td>Sewell**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Walden, Saundra Y.</td>
<td>Winslow**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Grant, Aaron</td>
<td>Sicklerville**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Tripp, Brian</td>
<td>Winslow**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Obiora, Jeffrey</td>
<td>Sayre**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Williams, Shannon L.</td>
<td>Blackwood**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Maye, Jessica L.</td>
<td>Fisher Hall**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Porter - Wilkes, Racquel M.</td>
<td>Bright Start**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Peoples, Latasha M.</td>
<td>Willingboro**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**White, Tiquan</td>
<td>Holley**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Pierce, Clarence W.</td>
<td>SPEC Kilbarchan**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Eutsey, Myesha M.</td>
<td>Hilltop**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Drain-Mantez, Shameya L.</td>
<td>Willingboro**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Falaise, Andy</td>
<td>Walnut**</td>
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## Congratulations!!!

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 anniversaryes.

Day in and day out, you continue to shine.

Your devotion and dedication to our mission is a rare gift.

Thank you!

## Condolences

We extend our sincerest sympathies to **Tamacsha Thomas** on the loss of her grandmother Lolita (Cherokee) Thomas who passed away peacefully on November 19, 2022.
QAPI wants to thank our intern, Haley Tripoli. She started working with QAPI in September 2022 and will be finishing her internship in April. During the last 7 months, she has been an asset to our department. As a returning student, Haley has offered a unique perspective which includes personal life experience to this position. During her work with QAPI, Haley created both a Client Rights document and Grievance Procedure for developmentally disabled youth. Haley learned about and assisted with the audit process. She completed various data collection tasks. In addition, Haley worked directly in our Sewell program to provide individual and group support to the program participants. We really appreciate everything that Haley has done and wish her the best of luck as she graduates and starts a full-time position at Cooper Hospital.
Employee Awards

Rayletta Garrison, Kylen Robinson and Bianca Dumas are second place winners in the HEALTHY COMMUNITIES Category: Innovative service models integrating social determinants of health and health care, services that strengthen families, and approaches that ensure a healthy environment and other community conditions.

We would like to thank everyone who voted. Your vote counted!!!

The Social Innovations Journal (SIJ) Awards is dedicated to health and social wellness and chronicles social innovations and enterprises addressing the world’s most challenging issues surrounding health and social policy, leadership, human capital, and systems. In collaboration with government, philanthropy, not-for-profits and universities, the Journal bridges formal research and real-life experience. The Innovation Awards is a way to recognize agencies and leaders doing innovative work.

ROI Influencers: Women in Business 2023

Tara Augustine  YCS CEO

Congratulations are in order!  Tara Augustine was recently named one of the top 40 successful New Jersey Women in Business by ROI Influencers.  "Tara is a trailblazer who has demonstrated tremendous courage leading YCS, especially through the difficulty of the pandemic and its aftermath.  She is proof that the state is overflowing with qualified female leaders who are ready, willing and eager to do whatever it takes to lead successfully."

Shout Outs

Brad Vetterly has been nominated for National Association of Social Workers Social Worker of the Year & National Association of Social Workers Leader of the Year, by his colleagues at YCS. Winners will be announced in the spring. No matter what the outcome Brad is a valued clinician and co-worker in our eyes. Good Luck on your nomination!

Kaliem Brown, KB-IRTS supervisor, is always supportive and attentive during our wellness groups. He welcomes me with kindness, and provides additional information about how the youth are doing that day, as well as updates since our last group. His care and concern for the youth is obvious and inspiring. I know it is hard work, but he does it with so much heart and compassion.

Chris Wallace and Ray Bizi, RAs at Fisher Hall have really been wonderful support during the yoga sessions. It can be particularly challenging at times, but they bring a good attitude and help make the most of our time with the youth.

Zanyjah Riche office administrator and Mercedes Garrido, chef, at the Holley Center offered their time and talents to make sure the Holley Bux Kick-off event was a huge success. We couldn’t have done it without their support!
What is your background and how did you come to YCS?

Prior to working at YCS, I was employed in the medical profession for 18 years providing various services for individuals with developmental disabilities and autism. I started working part-time with YCS in 2015 as a SRT while working full time in the medical field as a patient care tech with Jersey Shore University Medical Center. I worked as an SRT for a couple of years and got to learn the lay of the land from working in different houses. I came across Sayre House and that became my favorite house once I worked there. I eventually moved on to become an on-call residential assistant at Sayre. then to part-time, and finally full-time position.

Can you talk about becoming a CRS?

I was told about the position as the CRS becoming available and was recommended by my peers and the previous CRS. I had no college degree so I was a bit wary on going for it, but my work spoke for itself. Eighteen years in the medical field and 6 years with YCS. I applied and I was then promoted to CRS. It just goes to show that hard work and having a great work ethic does pay off. Sometimes it’s not always about having a degree, but having the experience.

How has your experience been at Sayre House?

I have such a love for the population of Sayre House and want to be a positive influence to the troubled female youth. When starting out, I had challenges with certain clients that I couldn’t reach, but over time I was able to grow and learn over the years with many of the girls about the walls they may put up and how to make a difference in their lives.

I had a situation where a client attempted to commit suicide, and that had to be the scariest time. To walk in on a situation like that, I was taken back but I had to follow protocol and do what I had to make sure this child was okay. Long story short, the youth was okay, and that situation brought me and that client closer. I had a talk with her to let her know “Yes life is hard but life would have been so much harder without you in it”.
Expressing to these kids that they are cared for is such an important task when they have been dealt such a raw hand in life. I would always apologize in proxy to them for what has taken in place in their young lives but tell them don’t allow that trauma to be a crutch. The joy I get when a child discharges is the best part of the job. It makes my heart smile. To know I have helped so many girls become better people is the true reward.

**What advice do you have for new direct care staff?**

What I would say to a new Residential Assistant is with hard work and dedication you can soar in this type of field. Be open-minded and don’t take things personal when it comes to how the kids may respond at first. It takes time for these kids to open up right away. Just don’t give up on them and always be kind to them.

To a new CRS: be confident, firm, and assertive in your position. You wouldn’t have the position if you didn’t know what you’re doing! Be fair to all and be present for your house.

**What are your future goals?**

My future goals and dreams are to keep climbing the ladder at YCS, and to learn and grow more as the company evolves and grows over time.
Intern Corner

Reflections on my Internship at Sawtelle Camden
By BRANDON COLLE
Caldwell University Intern

My name is Brandon Colle, and I am currently a fourth-year graduate student at Caldwell University studying clinical mental health counseling with a specialization in art therapy. I have been interning at Sawtelle Camden since May 2022.

Before I began my internship with YCS, I had prior experience working alongside children with autism in an inclusive preschool setting as a paraprofessional for two years from 2017-2019. That experience made me acknowledge how the expressive arts can be utilized not only with early school-aged children but with people of all ages who are on the autism spectrum.

There are challenges that come with being an art therapy intern such as keeping the youths interested in the diverse group topics I conduct, as well as being flexible and open-minded with the youths in terms of meeting them where they are at in their individual sessions. The reason why I have a positive connection with the youths from Sawtelle Camden is that each of them is unique in his own way, and I truly do enjoy working with them in being the best support that I can be for them.

The relationship I have with the staff at Sawtelle Camden has been influential as they have accepted me and welcomed me with open arms. My on-site supervisor, Robert Schmus, has supported my growth and has given me immense advice that’s been paramount in working alongside adolescents with autism. His assistance during individual and group sessions has also helped me conceptualize group dynamics and strategize an assortment of important topics to converse with the youths in relation to their general wellness and expressing themselves in a plethora of ways.
Intern Corner

This internship opportunity in particular has influenced my educational experience. I have learned how to conduct intake assessments, improve my interpersonal skills, reaffirm myself on the latest research about autism, and align with different aspects of the neurodivergent lens through the DIR model.

Robert is an autism self-advocate which is one of the main reasons that I wanted to work alongside him to learn more about his unique perspective. In terms of future goals, I want to specialize in working with autistic individuals and hopefully perform arts-based research in the future.

One of the most memorable experiences that I have had at Sawtelle Camden was exploring Adventure Aquarium with the youths as I consider these sensory-related outings an integral part of the youth’s transition to adulthood.

As a whole, my experience being an intern at Sawtelle Camden has been phenomenal in adapting to a new environment like a residential setting and learning from the treatment team who has always been supportive of what I bring to the residency. I look forward to advancing my talents and skills to new possibilities and strive to advocate for the autism population in the South Jersey region.

“Our partnership with Caldwell University has been very beneficial to our Agency. Each year we place their students, who are obtaining their MAs in Clinical Mental Health Counseling with Art Therapy Specialization, into our programs. The Art Therapy component of this degree has made a big difference in the lives of our youth. Amanda Bezold, placed in Malcolm House, has brought her creative spirit and artistic skills to the program, responding wonderfully to the youth and staff. Natalia Gonzalez, placed in Lawn Ridge, has helped one young man out of his shell, displaying his artwork and that of other residents on walls throughout the home. Our Caldwell interns are an amazing asset to our organization, and we appreciate them! ~ Laurie Levin, Senior Project Manager
“Leading with Heart” - the theme of our 2022-23 Annual Report - was inspired by our colleagues. Their endless acts of thoughtfulness and compassion on the job are a daily occurrence that continue to happen - but are often overlooked in the rush of the day. We hope to rectify that by introducing in this issue of Inside YCS a new section called “Leading with Heart.” It highlights some of our co-workers' many contributions on the job.

Seeing a youth successfully transition is one of the rewards of working in residential. You miss them, but you want to see them move on and do well. That’s how we all feel when our kids leave us. There are youth that challenge you as much as they tug on your heart strings, and Mikey B was one of those youth.

I want to share a photo of Mikey B. and myself during a pre-admission medical appointment. It captures everything that is good about this youth. He was so inquisitive, and a pleasure to be around. After an extensive history with YCS – Mikey had been in every unit at the Holley Center, I am happy to say that we have found a facility that will help take this youth to the next step in his developmental journey. During his stay at Muller IRTS, Mikey has taught me a lot and has made me a better clinician and a better leader. He will be missed by me, the staff, and the youth at Holley.

~ Lorenzo S. Brown, LSW Program Director, Muller IRTS at the Holley Center

Danny, a participant at Sawtelle Walnut, really likes ice cream and had been asking for some all week. SRT Jihadah Gasque made Danny’s day with a trip to Dairy.
REQUEST TO VISIT CHURCH FULFILLED

When a young man on the Newark Campus heard that Mr. Korey was taking one of his hommates to church, he asked if he could attend. He said he had never attended a church service and was interested in participating. Mr. Korey sensed his sincerity and welcomed him to attend. It was a special service for Black History Month - there was praise singing and prayers. Both young men enjoyed the service and expressed an interest in returning. “I could see that this young man was seriously interested,” said Korey Clark, Northern Region DD Director. Mr. Clark volunteered his personal time to take the boys to his place of worship and hopes to bring them back again when time permits. “I wish more RAs would take an interest in this. The kids really appreciate it.”

BLOOD DRIVE DONATION

Staff at Kilbarchan rallied to support a resident on the KB campus who was studying to be a Phlebotomy Technician at Branford Institute – healthcare vocational school in Paterson.

Ledvina Mejía, Carmen Gaston, Jessica Whaley, Garbiel Montoya, and Courtney Medina bravely volunteered on two occasions to have their blood drawn so the resident could earn her certification. Gabriel admits that they were all a little scared but were happy to see the client’s confidence grow with each visit.
On February 10th, YCS Cavan Home, in Somerset New Jersey, was dedicated in memory of Wanda Cavanaugh - dear friend and colleague to many in the YCS Family for more than 20 years. As Vice President of YCS Facilities, Wanda ensured that every home was maintained, safe, and a home-like environment for the residents. Originally a temporary, emergency placement facility for individuals with developmental disabilities (DD) who were in crisis, Cavan House was recently re-designated as a permanent DD home for 4 young adult men. This project was very special to the facilities crew who had worked very closely with Wanda over the years. Their team jumped into high gear to renovate the interior of the home and with the assistance of the YCS Foundation added many personal touches that reflected Wanda’s taste including two of her oil paintings that now hang in the home’s living room.

Guests Participate in a Prayer Led By Rayletta Garrison to begin the Festivities.
One by one, the participants in the second graduating class of mindfulness spirituality eagerly stepped up to receive their certificates from Chaplain, Bill Waller and Tara Augustine. Afterwards, the graduates relaxed and celebrated with dinner and lively conversations. At the end of the meeting, Chaplain Waller reminded all the graduates that they could use the spiritual mindfulness library on the YCS website to continue their spiritual journeys.

The spiritual mindfulness library is available for everyone on the main website: https://www.ycs.org/index.php/spirituality-library/
For the first time since the pandemic, the GW School auditorium was packed with guests ready to cheer on the students at the “GW School Talent Show”.

Jamal "Charlie" McNeill, TA, cheered each student on backstage to calm their nerves and boost their confidence as they waited to perform.

Christajah Lighty, SRT/TA, taught a dance routine and performed with students.

Joe Segro, music teacher and mastermind behind the talent show, worked with the students individually so they could perform a song of their choice.
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY DISCUSSION AT SAYRE

It was one of the most inspiring and moving groups I've experienced at Sayre. Our case manager, Monika Skora gave insight into the history of Women’s Day and it's being celebrated in Europe. She shared about being Polish and this being celebrated in her family. The youth then shared / presented on different women who inspire them in their life. Some shared about family, but most inspiring was that many of them shared about one another. The group was meant to be about 45 minutes to an hour, but ended up lasting 3 hours. The youth and staff all shared ways in which they inspire each other, and how we can inspire ourselves. Some youth shared about how staff members were like family to them, while others shared about looking up to their peers for being authentic and being true to themselves. Pfeni Flicker

NRDD STAFF APPRECIATION

Nurtured Heart trainers, Yvonne Montemurro and Jennifer Stratton, organized a rejuvenating day of insightful fun activities for the Northern Region DD staff. The next Nurtured Heart event will be in May for the Southern Region DD staff, in Somerdale.
RESIDENTS AT YCS SAWTELLE SEWELL CELEBRATING NATIONAL PANCAKE DAY (2/28/23) AND DR. SEUSS BIRTHDAY (3/2/23)

For National pancake day all the youth went to IHOP and ordered a meal.

On Dr. Seuss’ birthday, the youth took turns reading *Green Eggs and Ham* book with the staff and clinician. They also enjoyed a green eggs and ham inspired dinner.

PET THERAPY EXTENDED TO DAVIS HOUSE
The Northern Region Facilities Crew celebrated the completion of renovations at Cavan House and the Phoenix and Bright Start programs with an “Appreciation and Thank You Luncheon” hosted by Tara and the Foundation. The crew under the leadership of Luis Mangual did an amazing job transforming the residences into bright comfortable homelike domiciles for the participants. - A place where they can relax and concentrate on recovery.

**Crew members**

Joe Gayle, Santos Escobar, Federick Gayle, Dennis Johnson, Richard Gutieres, Andres Hernandez, Erick Delmonte, Rafael Hernandez, Larry Ashford, James Albright

**DD VALENTINE’S DAY PARTIES**

Southern Region  
Northern Region
Innovations

Taking Care of Ourselves, Together.

Practice on Teams Every Week
Wednesdays from 12:00-12:15PM

1st Week of the Month - Spinal Health
2nd Week of the Month - Joint Health
3rd Week of the Month - Lung & Heart Health
4th Week of the Month - Guided Meditation
5th Week of the Month - Silent Meditation

Hosted by Caitlyn Yerves
AVP Wellness Engagement & Marketing
Yoga and Meditation Teacher

Wellness Wednesdays
Practices & Discussions for Employee Health & Wellbeing
I n n o v a t i o n s

A big part of our physical and mental wellbeing is connected to our diet, according to Caitlyn Yerves, AVP of Wellness Engagement - that is why she was excited to sign YCS up for an 8-month series of online activities that includes such topics as “Rethink Your Drink,” “Hypertension: Know Your Numbers,” and “Food & Sensory ASD Tips for Caregivers.” Currently, YCS DD house managers in the north are participating in this nutrition-focused research study related by the Center on Nutrition and Disability and Rowan University’s Nutrition Program.

The project follows and utilizes information shared via a social media campaign, created by the Center on Nutrition and Disability and Rowan University’s Nutrition Program. “We are excited to be able to share their resources around nutrition and health that includes cooking demonstration videos, blog posts and infographics,” says Caitlyn.

Read what your colleagues say about the project.

“I personally agreed to participate in the study to learn more about nutrition. I’m able to implement what I have learned so far within my programs as well as my personal life,” LaShayna Malone, Sawtelle Greenbrook and Pamela houses.

“I got involved because I thought it will definitely help my program, since all my females are on special diets. It has been helpful to my program. I’m actually using the recipes they shared on social media for my females.” Tamascha Thomas, Sawtelle Pearl House.

This project is funded by the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities’ Community Innovation Projects, and you can access more of the information here:

The purpose of the Body Positivity group I created was to bring awareness to the youth, help them embrace their differences, and to boost their self-esteem. Being a teenager in this new day and age is tough. Kids aren't trying to be kids, they've been conditioned by the media to grow up quick, to look a certain way, and spend their time copying what's trendy. I wanted the youth to understand that it's okay to go through changes, it's human, and there's ways to embrace those changes in the way you treat your body. The youth responded well to the group, the dialogue was refreshing, and they wanted to know when the next one was taking place.

~ Brown, Keyahfa E., RA
THE CLINICAL ROUNDS SESSION IN JANUARY FEATURED GUEST SPEAKER MICHELE PERKINS. IF YOU MISSED THE MEETING HERE IS A BRIEF SUMMARY OF MICHELE’S PRESENTATION

Through a Sensory Lens: Emotional Expression of Body Based Experiences
January 11, 10-11:30am
Meeting ID: 947 8028 0524
Passcode: hkh=!n98

In Michele Perkins MS, OTR presentation on January 11th “Through a Sensory Lens: Emotional Expression of Body Based Experiences”, she shared the sensory motor foundations to commonly experienced challenges in social emotional development, such as inattention, hyperactivity, anxiety, defiance and emotion dysregulation and present the main Sensori-Emotional personality types highlighted in her model.

The intricate connections between mind and body; sensation and emotion; movement and emotion; and sensation, movement and behavior and relationships brings an opportunity for collaboration between mental health practitioners and occupational therapists. The work being done by Ms. Parkins expands on this research by connecting differences in sensory motor capacities to specific challenges in social emotional development.

In her Sensori-Emotional Engagement Model she outlined these connections and presented a play based intervention framework to enhance both sensory motor and social emotional capacities in early childhood. Lastly, an assessment tool that is in development was shared that can be used to help determine the presence of body based underpinnings to common social emotional challenges.
Agency Updates

Clinical CARE Rounds

May 10
10-11:30am
Zoom *
Presentation: The Importance of Supporting Systems when Working with LGBTQ+ Clients
Jennifer Faasse, LPC
Montclair State University-CAECMH

June 14
10am-2pm
E. Orange
Didactic: TBD
Case Presentation: Boundary and Role Review
Amanda Garrett MSM, LSW
and Michelle Robbins, LCSW

* Zoom meeting ID: 838 0325 7344
Password: k5nG*U=#

Internship Roundtable

This meeting is at 12PM on the 4th Wednesday of each month, and is required for interns to attend.

Microsoft Teams Meeting
Meeting ID: 286 038 578 628
Passcode: mWysJe
Many of you have taken advantage of the Employee Referral Bonus Program which provides $500 for the referral of a candidate, the details of which are below. Thank you for your referrals.

Now, if you refer a clinician candidate who is hired you will receive a **$2000 referral bonus** subject to the terms of the Program. Open roles can be viewed at https://recruiting.ultipro.com/YOU1000YOUTH.

Please reach out to your connections and recommend that they apply for open positions at YCS.

If you have any questions about the Employee Referral Bonus Program or have any other recruiting questions, please contact the Talent Acquisition Team at TalentAcquisition@ycs.org.

Thank you for all your help!

Program details: When your referral finds a position they are interested in, have them fill out the online application noting they found out about the role from you. Also, please complete the attached referral form and send it to Talent Acquisition. A YCS recruiter will reach out to the referral about the position to which they applied. You will receive the referral bonus, subject to tax and other standard withholdings if your referral is hired and works for YCS for at least 90 days. Employees will not be eligible for a referral bonus if they are involved in any way in the hiring process for the referral.

Steven Kessler, Chief Human Resources Officer
COVID VACCINATION AND TESTING REQUIREMENTS RESCINDED

On April 3, 2023, Governor Murphy signed an executive order rescinding the COVID vaccination and testing requirements for congregate care settings.

Accordingly, going forward new hires do not need to provide proof of vaccination and unvaccinated employees do not need to provide weekly test results. Also, current employees do not need to receive any additional vaccinations.

SAFETY MONTH CONTEST WINNERS

In December QAPI asked that Program Directors and House Managers facilitate their programs participation in Safety Month by conducting an activity to reinforce the topic of safety. They were asked to submit their activity for a little friendly competition.

The results are in and the three programs that were found to have displayed the most effort in their presentation and creativity are the following:

1st Place - Sewell
Submission: Safety and sanitation in the kitchen by preparing a charcuterie board together.

2nd Place - Sayre
Submission: Safety "stations" where clients moved through multiple activities that discussed various situations involving safety.

3rd Place - Kilbarchan Campus
Submission: Stress management and the use of art as a tool to manage stress.

There is a little surprise coming your way.

Thanks,
Haley Tripoli
MSW Candidate, 2023 - Rutgers University
QAPI - Quality Assurance Intern

Carmen Gaston
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!!!
Upcoming Events

Save the Date

Annual Charity Golf Classic

Monday, September 18, 2023
Edgewood Country Club

Charity Golf Classic
Monday, September 18, 2023
Edgewood Country Club

50/50 Raffle

$10 Tickets
YCS BLOSSOMS ART EXHIBIT MAY 1-30TH

AWARDS SHOW MAY 15, 6-8PM

16th Annual

YCS BLOSSOMS
Art Exhibition

Unlocking the world of our children’s imagination

May 1–30, 2023
Sandy Bennett Art Gallery