

# YSD Scoop!



Volume 5 | Issue 3

Newsletter of the Palm Beach County  
Youth Services Department



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## Highridge Residents Create Mosaic Tabletop Installation

In partnership with the Norton Museum of Art's afterschool outreach program, residents from the Highridge Family Center were chosen to participate in creating a mosaic tabletop installation.

During the six-week project, the residents met with Norton instructors for two hours on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. The project theme, "Growth and Change" is one of the Sanctuary Institutes' seven commitments and was selected by the participating residents. The theme represents restoring hope, meaning, and purpose.

Once the theme was decided, the

residents used tiles in different shapes, colors, and sizes to create the mosaic, which was placed on the outside patio table where residents have pizza parties on Wednesdays.

The Norton Museum of Art is displaying a photo of the mosaic in the Public Art Perceptions: A Summer Youth Collaborative exhibition in the Maden Community Gallery.

After the exhibition, the framed photograph will be returned to Highridge Family Center to be displayed in the lobby for public viewing.



## 5th Annual Super Summer Spelling Bee



The Youth Services Department hosted its fifth annual Super Summer Spelling Bee on July 10, at Boys & Girls Club of Palm Beach County Florence De George Club in West Palm Beach.

More than 300 students in the Summer Camp Scholarship and Summer Food Service programs participated. The spelling bee provides academic activities to encourage the spirit of learning while preventing summer slide.

“The Spelling Bee encourages our children to learn sight words that prepare them for the next grade in a fun and

exciting way,” said Geeta Loach-Jacobson, Director of the Youth Services Department’s Outreach and Community Programming Division.

Participating agencies included Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners, the Palm Beach County Attorney’s Office, Palm Beach County Community Services Department, the Children’s Services Council, Boys & Girls Club of Palm Beach County, Prime Time Palm Beach County, and Florida Power and Light.



“Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember.  
Involve me and I learn”

- Benjamin Franklin



# Youth Services Receives Heart-felt Thanks



The Palm Beach County Youth Services Department's Summer Camp Scholarship Program (SCSP) awarded 4,492 scholarships during fiscal year 2019. Among those receiving scholarships were youth from CROS Ministries. As a show of appreciation, they wrote heart-felt letters to the department.

The SCSP provides full tuition and fees for summer camp

for children residing in families with income at or below 150 percent of federal poverty guidelines. The Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County contributed \$3.9 million to the program for scholarships.

For more information about the program, please visit [pbcgov.com/youthservices/Pages/Summer\\_Camp.aspx](http://pbcgov.com/youthservices/Pages/Summer_Camp.aspx).

“Thank you so much for giving Kyle & Kara the opportunities to experience a fun and enriching summer. We truly appreciate all that you have done for our family. We are forever grateful.”

**Hi Friends!**

My name is Billy, and I am in the fifth grade. I am a CROS Camper and have attended camp since I was five years old. I would love to share my summer experience with you!

**These are the things that I could have done this summer.**

- Slept in
- Laid around the house
- Chores and more chores

**BUT INSTEAD...**

- I got to
  - Eat lunch and have a snack every day
  - Improve my reading and math skills with Ms. Cheneelle
  - Learn to read books and do projects with the Literacy Coalition
  - Win the Spelling Bee for my class!
  - See and touch snakes at Sandoway Nature Center
  - See Mary Poppins at the Delray Playhouse
  - Go to Lion Country Safari (Boy was R HOT and FUN!)



- Celebrate Christmas in July!
- Paint with Mr. Steve
- Learn to cook
- Practice Marital Arts
- Learn to play games from around the world
- Attend chapel and small group learning about the Superheroes' of the faith

This summer, I was one of 177 kids from K-12th grade who attended CROS Camp in Lake Worth and Boynton Beach. Ms. Emily, CROS Ministries' Camp Director, brought together a team of 22 adults who loved and cared for me every day.

Thanks to CROS Camp, just like I do in school, I was able to come in early to eat breakfast each day too.

Since our camp was a Summer Break Spot site, anyone who needed lunch or a snack could come by for a meal. I once saw a neighborhood friend eating lunch at the picnic table too. On Thursday afternoons, a truck would arrive with food and the older campers filled our backpacks with food for the weekends. I really liked the snacks that came in those bags! My mom loved everything else.

Thanks to your support through prayers and monetary donations, I had a great summer! I appreciate YOU and look forward to next summer's CROS Camp!

Sincerely,

ONE BLESSED CROS Camper!



*Thank you Ms. Emily*



# Youth Services Employee Retreat



The Youth Services Department held its annual Employee Retreat on August 8, at FPL’s Manatee Lagoon Center. Assistant County Administrator Todd J. Bonlarron and Senior Assistant County Attorney Helene Hvizd was also present.

During the retreat, Tammy K. Fields unveiled the Department’s new Mission Statement.

The day embodied this year’s theme of “Growing Together” as staff laughed, smiled and formed friendships during activities like community meetings, a drumming circle, group jeopardy and more.

Thank you to all of the staff for making the retreat such a memorable experience.



## Our Mission

What we desire and intend for our youth

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Growing brighter futures by providing quality service, education, and access to resources and opportunities.

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## Our Vision

What we aim to achieve

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Empowering youth and families to realize their full potential and be the driving force of a thriving community.

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## Our Values

What we stand for

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-  Diversity and Equity
-  Compassion and Empathy
-  Open-mindedness
-  Commitment
-  Respect

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# Highridge Spirit Week



During July 22 - 25, Highridge Family Center employees hosted a spirit week for the residents. The staff and the residents were both encouraged to dress according to the theme for the day. Throughout the week, staff hosted various activities for the residents that promoted components of the Sanctuary Model themes of Social Responsibility, Emotional intelligence, Commitment to Non-Violence, Open Communication, Social Learning and Democracy.

The residents participated in an art form of therapy in which they were able to tie-dye an article of clothing from home, create stress balls, make book marks with their coping plans listed, and utilize chalk to draw numerous

Sanctuary themes on the sidewalk. The residents also created and decorated flower pots to plant seeds. Each day after breakfast, the residents began their day with a community meeting and mindfulness music.

To wrap up the festivities for spirit week, residents celebrated with ice cream, and trophies were given to residents who displayed the most commitments throughout the week.

A special thank you to Keisha Dorian, Residential Nurse Manager, for coordinating the spirit week activities.

For more information about the Highridge Family Center program, visit [http://discover.pbcgov.org/youthservices/Pages/Counseling\\_Highridge.aspx](http://discover.pbcgov.org/youthservices/Pages/Counseling_Highridge.aspx).

*“Never give up on a dream just because of the time it will take to accomplish it. The time will pass anyway.”*

*-Earl Nightingale*



# New Student Orientation



The 2019-2020 training year began on August 5, with New Student Orientation. Officer Rodney Archer from the West Palm Beach Police Department provided a talk on

the community response team, and Dr. Amanda Terrell made a surprise visit from maternity leave with special guest, baby Cameron Archer.

## FCSSBMB Public Forum



The Florida Council on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys (FCSSBMB) conducted a public forum on July 23, at the Belle Glade City Commission Chambers and their full council meeting on July 24, in West Palm Beach.

Ike Powell III, Senior Program Specialist and My Brother's Keeper of Palm Beach County Task Force Leader along with

several public officials and community leaders attended the events. Through community dialogue, discussion panels, field experts, and research the Council gathered input as well as presented summary findings information that focused on criminal justice and community relations, physical and mental health for black males, employment and economic development opportunities for black males.

The Mission of the (FCSSBMB) is to research and propose measures that improve conditions affecting black men and boys.



# Matchmaker Conference



The 13th annual Palm Beach Partners Business Matchmaker Conference and Expo took place on September 20 at the Raymond F. Kravis Center for the Performing Arts in West Palm Beach. Ike Powell III, Senior Program Specialist, moderated the “Interns Insight” panel as the opening plenary session.

The special guest panelists provided insight into their experiences by sharing personal perspectives on how they

align skills gained through their internships with career preparation and other employment opportunities. The panelists detailed the role and benefits of internships while responding to questions from the audience.

This opportunity was made possible through the collaboration between the County’s Office of Equal Business Opportunity and the Youth Services Department.

# Congressional Round-table Discussion



On August 28, Tammy K. Fields, Palm Beach County Youth Services Department Director, attended a Congressional Round-table discussion addressing youth mental health

and suicide in Florida. The discussion was hosted by Congressman Alcee L. Hastings and held at Keiser University’s Flagship Campus in West Palm Beach.



## CBA Spotlight: Milagro Center



### 1. What is your mission?

Milagro Center is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to ensure the social and academic success of underserved children and youth through Cultural Arts, Living Values, Academic Support, and Mentoring.

### 2. What does your organization do?

For the last 22 years, Milagro Center's uniquely integrated programs have focused on empowering these economically-disadvantaged and academically at-risk youth and their families to succeed, both in school and in life, having a resounding positive influence on our Delray Beach, Florida community. Milagro Center carries out its mission by providing afterschool, summer camp, and ARTreach programs to disadvantaged and academically at-risk children and teens in grades K-12. Our STARS (grades K-5), Junior Teen Leadership (grades 6-8), and Teen Leadership (grades 9-12) programs concentrate on five inter-related diverse and socially inclusive program components:

- Cultural Arts Instruction (including art, musical instruments, dance, digital technology, theatre, voice)
- Living Values Education endorsed by the United Nations
- Academic Support and Tutoring
- Mentoring
- Career Development (for teens)

This unique and effective model allows Milagro Center's children and teens to develop new skills, build self-esteem, and thrive socially and academically. Milagro Center truly changes the course of these deserving children's lives from repeating the recurring cycle of

poverty to becoming self-sufficient and productive members of our community.

### 3. What key programs does your organization offer?

- The organization has most certainly grown in scope and impact since its inception 22 years ago and today we are proud to be a nationally-accredited, licensed, and highly recognized and awarded nonprofit organization offering five decidedly-successful programs:
- "STARS" (the core afterschool/out-of-school-time program for elementary school-age children, grades K-5, serving up to 50 children annually), an apt and fitting acronym for "Standing Together Achieving Recognition and Success"
- Junior Teen Leadership (serving 40+ youth annually, grades 6-9),
- Teen Leadership (serving 40+ youth annually, grades 9-12),
- ARTreach (providing an art gallery experience for more than 300 children annually from local community schools and centers),
- Mentoring Miracles (serving the children in our STARS, Junior Teen Leadership, and Teen Leadership programs).

### 4. How does your agency benefit the community?

Milagro Center helps economically-challenged, academically at-risk children and teens from one of the most underserved communities in southern Palm Beach County break out of the cycle of poverty and become productive citizens. Our greatest success is that 100% of the children and teens at Milagro Center have successfully advanced to the next grade for the past seven years... with 100% high school graduation.



Milagro Center is a safe home away from home for many of our underserved and academically at-risk junior teens. Our Jr Teen Center is welcoming and provides a sense of belonging where students are encouraged to learn. The Milagro Jr Teen program provides educational and enrichment activities to enhance student's overall academic skills and abilities, while improving student's self-confidence. In addition to academic support, Milagro Center provides a supervised environment that helps reduce risky behaviors among teens. Our structured programs are especially beneficial to middle school students who are at risk for dropping out of school. Milagro Center services provides added support through mentoring in an effort to further improve student's self-esteem, while providing emotional support to our teens. The agency benefits the community by providing a structured learning environment where teens are able to be themselves. Additionally, the benefit to Milagro parents is tremendous as they are thrilled that their teens are embracing academic sessions in a safe place where they can excel and grow academically and socially. Milagro Center's programs continue to benefit the community by providing academic resources and training to help teens stay in school therefore lowering teen dropout rates, improving student's social emotional learning through our program intervention services, increasing student's overall academic skills, preparing students for college and careers, keeping teens safe, off the streets and most importantly out of the juvenile justice system. Overall, Milagro Center is providing teens with the necessary tools and resources they need to be successful today and in the future while creating positive changes in the community.

#### 5. What is your agency's focus for 2020?

2019 is a year of expansion and enhancement for Milagro Center's Teen Program services. We are expanding and enhancing our services to accommodate increased growth while providing quality programming. This year, we are focused on ensuring that our students get promoted to the next grade level, graduate from high school, attain increased knowledge in our core program sessions, improve self-esteem and ensure our teens pursue a post-secondary education or career after high

school. We continue to achieve these goals through expanded academic and mentoring support, successful partnerships with our local schools, improved parent engagements meetings and behavioral intervention. Based on our report card tracking, over 95% of our 8th grade students are on track to graduate from middle school and attend high school next year. Many students have demonstrated improved self-esteem and several are scheduled to achieve promotion to the next grade level in 2020. This is an exciting time for Milagro Center's Junior Teen Leadership Program as our students are embracing the scheduled daily sessions, and sharing their positive experiences at Milagro with friends in the community resulting in increased referrals for enrollment this year.

#### 6. How do the funds received from Palm Beach County enhance the services your agency provides?

The funds from Palm Beach County have allowed us to fulfill our strategic goal of opening a dedicated middle school program. We are excited about having a dedicated Middle School Program as this gives us an opportunity to make a vast difference in the lives of these vulnerable middle school teens. The funds from Palm Beach County have helped us to successfully expand our academic tutoring services and implement new program services such as our Girls Go Build program, Technology, My Life my Choice, Young Engineers and Career Exploration sessions. We are pleased to have the opportunity to offer these educational sessions that have been incorporated into the curriculum and outcomes have been positive so far. Based on report cards, our Junior teens are consistently being promoted to the next grade level, and we are happy to share that 95% of our students plan to go to college. Thanks to the Palm Beach County for helping us achieve our goal to open the only dedicated middle school center in southern Palm Beach County. In the coming year, we will also be receiving a new grant for our high school program, so we are extremely excited.

For more information visit [www.milagrocenter.org](http://www.milagrocenter.org).

### Meet Jayden

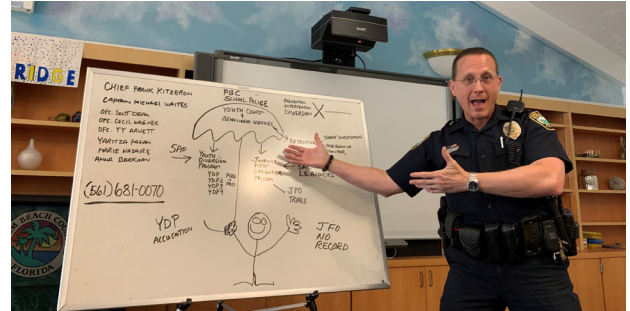
When Mr. Cuthbert assumed the role of Program Director of the Jr Teen Leadership Program a few months ago, he noticed that Jayden was always quiet and kept to himself. Jayden always wore headphones and often spent his time drawing so he never really socialized with the other students. In a weekly group session with the boys this month, Mr. Cuthbert discussed topics like known knowns, unknown knowns, and surprisingly the topic the students enjoyed the most was unknown unknowns. It was during this discussion Jayden came alive, and immediately became fully engaged in the group discussions and offered a perspective that was wise beyond his years. In the weeks following, Jayden came out of his shell and was opening up and connecting with the other students in the

program. This was a complete turnaround for Jayden due to intervention by the Program Director who was able to identify and address the concern, one Jayden never verbalized.

This success story is significant because it demonstrates our commitment to ensuring the success of our students not only academically but socially. It is especially important to note that Jayden is one of the many middle school students who struggle with social emotional concerns. Our social emotional learning service is expanding to accommodate the many students with this concern, and we are dedicated to improving social emotional learning concerns among teens.



## Diversions Program Training



On August 21, the Education and Training Center facilitated a training on diversion programs. The Family Violence Intervention Program (FVIP) team Stacey King, Stephanie Jones, and Tiffany Phillips, and Officers Dean and Wagner

from Youth Court provided informative presentations to staff and trainees who provide clinical services to youth and families involved in these diversion programs.

## Back to School Bash



The Youth Services Department participated in the Back to School Bash on July 27.

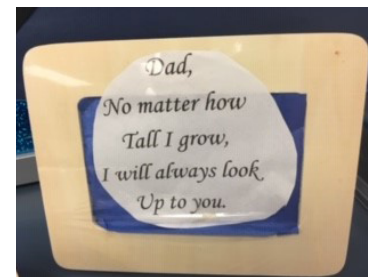
The event was held at four locations throughout the County, including the Palm Beach County Convention Center in West Palm Beach, Village Academy in Delray Beach, West Technical Education Center in Belle Glade, and Jupiter Community Center in Jupiter.

Started 25 years ago by five local nonprofits, the bash has expanded to serve 17,000 children throughout Palm Beach County, with the generous support and organization from the Palm Beach County Office of Community Revitalization. For the fifth year, Youth Services has contributed hygiene kits for middle and high school students.

The event's purpose is to prepare children with the necessary school supplies to help them learn, be successful and confident during the new school year and beyond.



## Dads Take Your Child to School Day



Katherine E. Cunningham Canal Point Elementary School participated in “Dads Take Your Child to School Day” on September 26.

Dads spent time in classrooms encouraging their child and mentoring students. Ike Powell III, Senior Program Specialist served as the guest speaker sharing information about the Palm Beach County Youth Services Department and the significant positive effects of mentoring including

academic performance and overall behavior.

In addition to better school attendance and a better chance of going on to higher education, mentored youth maintain better attitudes toward school.

The school Principal, Dr. Hibler, also encouraged participants to spend time with their child and visit the school throughout the year.

## The Promise of Adolescence Publication



The National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine recently published a Consensus Study Report: The Promise of Adolescence Realizing Opportunity for All Youth. The book reflects years of research and testimony from experts including Palm Beach County Youth Services Department Director Tammy K. Fields who was invited to present on Birth to 22,

Future Leaders and the benefits of adolescent insolvent and empowerment.

For more information, visit [www.nationalacademies.org](http://www.nationalacademies.org).

### Acknowledgments

This report would not have been possible without the contributions of many people. First, we thank the sponsors of this study: the Funders for Adolescent Science Translation, including the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Bezos Family Foundation, the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, the Ford Foundation, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, the Raikes Foundation, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and the National Public Education Support Fund.

Special thanks go to the members of the study committee, who dedicated extensive time, thought, and energy to the project. Thanks are also due to Tammy Chang (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor) who contributed her time and expertise throughout the report process, as well as Natalie Slopen (University of Maryland, College Park), who served as a liaison between our study committee and the Committee on Applying Neurobiological and Socio-behavioral Sciences from Prenatal through Early Childhood Development: A Health Equity Approach. We also extend our gratitude to Nat Kendall-Taylor, Marisa Gerstein Pineau, and Daniel Busso from the Frameworks Institute for their insights on communicating about adolescence.

In addition to its own research and deliberations, the committee received input from several outside sources, whose willingness to share their perspectives and experiences was essential to the committee's work. We thank Linda Burton (Duke University), Tammy Fields (Palm Beach County Youth Services Department), Andrew J. Fuligni (University of California, Los Angeles), Seema Gajwani (Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia), Roberto G. Gonzales (Harvard School of Education), Phil Hammack (University of California, Santa Cruz), Cheri Hoffman

*“As a society, we bear a collective obligation to unleash the creativity of the adolescent brain while cushioning adolescents from experiences that could endanger their future well-being.”*

*- Richard Bonnie*



## CHS Anniversary



On September 26, the Children’s Home Society of Florida Visitation Center celebrated its one year anniversary.

The Visitation Center aims to provide quality and more

regular visitation to children removed from their parents and involved in the child welfare system. On average, 70 families are served monthly with approximately 400 visits a month.

## Youth Services Department Interns



The Youth Services Department extends our gratitude to those individuals that learned and worked alongside our staff this summer. We hope that the skills you’ve acquired

within our department will aid in each of your future successes.

## SEL Summer Institute Event



The Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Summer Institute event was held on July 31 and August 1.

Among the more than 600 attendees was Palm Beach County Youth Services Department Director Tammy K.

Fields along with Dr. Seth Bernstein, Karen Pittman and Suzette Harvey. The SEL initiative aims to build better social and emotional fitness by uniting in and out of school time to support social and emotional skills.



## Welcome Back to School



Senior Program Specialist and My Brother's Keeper (MBK) Task Force Leader Ike Powell III along with other community leaders welcomed students back to school at Village Academy and Carver Middle School on August 12, in Delray Beach. In collaboration with MBK partnerships and milestones, a call to action was made to 100 men



to welcome students during various Back to School Day events.

The students at Village Academy enjoyed a very special guest appearance and encouraging remarks by tennis sensation Coco Gauff.

## Hurricane Dorian Special Needs Shelter



Tammy K. Fields, Youth Services Department Director and Special Needs Shelter Manager, coordinated efforts at the South Florida Fairgrounds in preparation for the arrival of Hurricane Dorian in September.

Youth Services Department and Community Services Department staff assisted with set-up, registrations, checking in clients, serving food, making arrangements for clients to go home, as well as breakdown. Youth Services Department mental health team provided crisis intervention and counseling services.



Staff collaborated with doctors and nurses, with the goal of providing a safe shelter environment for geriatric, adult, and youth occupants, as well as staff and volunteers.

"Our folks at Emergency Information Center did a great job answering questions and promoting calm. I was fortunate to see the team assigned to the Special Needs Shelter in action from Friday to Wednesday. I appreciate all the care and compassion you showed to our residents with special needs. The teamwork was amazing. I commend you all," said Tammy K. Fields in an email to staff after the Hurricane.

# Water Reclamation Tour



July 10-11, youth from Highridge Family Center experienced the Water Reclamation Tour. As part of Dr. Twila Taylor’s participation in the County’s yearlong Leadership EXperience Program, her team “In It To Win It” (#IITWI), created and executed a tour for County leaders and some of the Highridge youth. The Southern Region Water Reclamation Plant (SRWRP) is the most technologically advanced and greenest plant in the south with 169 solar panels. Participants learned how Palm Beach County is reclaiming our water, fertilizing and irrigating our communities, and providing our youth with “pipelines” to future employment opportunities. The tour was both educational and fun, especially when the gloved participants handled the “sludge” that had been through the cleansing and detoxifying process. This “organic play-doh” surprised participants and all laughed as they received Poop emoji stress balls as a giveaway.

The Leadership EXperience Program focuses on higher-level leadership skill building that includes experiential activities and opportunities to broaden knowledge and

networks within the County. Twila’s team included Anthony “Beau” Deutsch, Plant Superintendent with Water Utilities Department; Scott Cantor, Assistant Director of Land Development with Department of Engineering and Public Works; and Eric Rein, Golf Facility Manager with Parks and Recreation Department. The team’s mentors were: Lisa De La Rionda, Director of Public Affairs; Leilani Yan, Manager of Recruitment and Selection for Human Resources; Sara Burnam, Director of Fleet Management; and Uriah McCalla, Director of Maintenance for Airports. Thus far, the Leadership EXperience has fostered creative leadership; team building to include a shared vision of leadership for Palm Beach County; increased awareness of County Departments; increased connectivity and relationship building with both teammates and mentors; and an overall heightened awareness of the incredible services that Palm Beach County has to offer. Twila will forever value the relationships she has developed over the course of her involvement with the Leadership EXperience. As a culmination of Dr. Taylor’s 16 years of leadership experience as the Chief of Residential Services for Highridge, combined with higher-level leadership skills she acquired through the Leadership EXperience, she was recently promoted to Director of Residential Treatment and Family Counseling Division with the Youth Services Department.



## Social Media Strides



This quarter, we reach 1,000 followers on Instagram. Thank you to those who have helped share the inspiring stories of the Youth Services Department. Remember! If you



have content to share, reach out to our Communication Specialist, Erin Baker by email [ebaker@pbcgov.org](mailto:ebaker@pbcgov.org).





Palm Beach State College Gardens Campus Provost, Dr. Tunjarnika Coleman-Ferrell welcomed, over 40 agencies supporting Palm Beach County youth to learn more about PBSC, tour the campus and promote new opportunities.



On July 20, Filise Jules, LMHC represented the Youth Services Department at the Peaceful Practices Project 360 sponsored by Healthier Delray Beach.



Family Violence Intervention Program Court Case Advisors, Tiffany Phillips and Stephanie Jones were joined by Palm Beach County Mayor Mack Bernard at the Northwest Community Health & Wellness Fair on July 27.



On August 13, Clara Hessing, Lashonda Stevens-Lacey, Kimberly Perez, and Danielle Tuanda joined Youth Services Department Director Tammy K. Fields for this quarter's "Tea with Tammy."



Youth Services Department's Communications Specialist attended the Palm Beach County United Way Kick-off Breakfast on September 17. Among the Speakers was United Way of Palm Beach County CEO and President Dr. Laurie George.



On September 24, Dr. Loren Berry from Education & Training Center presented a training on "Trauma-Informed Care for Homeless and At-risk Populations" for the Homeless and Housing Alliance.

# Employee Spotlight: Aaron Maharaj

At YSD, we view our employees as one of our greatest strengths. This quarter, we're featuring Aaron Maharaj, Financial Analyst III at the Youth Services Department. As part of the Finance, Contracting and Administrative Services (FCA) Division, Aaron is responsible for supervising human resources assignments, payroll processing, and various types of procurement requests, contract fiscal payments, travel requests and asset tracking for the Department.

He also reviews and prepares the Department budgets, prepares forecasts of revenues or expenses as well as evaluating and issuing financial reports, designing and improving reports, contract fiscal monitoring and payments, prepares special reports, and other projects. Aaron serves as the liaison with finance on payments and payment issues and Office of Financial Management and Budget on budget issues and questions. "My position requires a lot of independent judgment, knowledge of different methods and procedures for financial analysis. I mainly use excel and crystal reports. Lastly, I supervise two Fiscal Specialist II roles and one Procurement Specialist role within the FCA Division," said Aaron.

Recently, Aaron completed the Leadership EXperience. Aaron's team implemented a tour of the Shark Wake Park. Participants learned about the building structure, materials, safety features, programs provided, targeted clients and learned to wake board. The team also proposed a policy on workplace violence using data collected by the County and from the State. They presented their findings and provided a proposed recommendation and policy based on the County's current Mission Statement and Strategic goals.

"Overall, the "EXperience" offered different ways of strategy thinking and broadened my network within the County. Although it was stressful, the challenge and sense of achievement made it worthwhile."

**1. Where is your hometown?**

My home town is located in Trinidad & Tobago

**2. What was your first job?**

My first job was a Collection Specialist at Scotia Bank, in Trinidad.

**3. What are the three most important skills you need for your job?**

Independent judgment, keeping an open mind, being analytical.

**4. What is your favorite thing about your job at YSD?**



Everything. I enjoy my job and enjoy the challenges I encounter each day. My job is never boring and has very little to no down time.

**5. Is there a memorable moment that you would like to share in relation to your work here, at YSD?**

When I was first offered the role, I came for a visit to the office, there was no more than 5 people there. I met Michelle and the first thing she said was "Your office space can be a cubicle or the storage room, pick one." My first thought was, I am coming from a big office filled with glass to a storage room? Well you know what I picked!

**6. What hobbies and interests do you have outside of work?**

My hobbies are diving, fishing, spending time with my wife and son, and it use to be racing and sound systems in cars.

**7. What is the most important lesson you've learned in the last year?**

Personally: Life is too short to worry about what others think and to enjoy every moment of it.

Professionally: Everyone has different personalities, working individually can benefit but working with the personalities as a team can have a greater outcome. The only issue is that not everyone likes to work and share information as a team so this accomplishment can be difficult.

**8. Where would you like to go on a dream vacation?**

I have traveled a lot. The only vacation I enjoy is with my wife and son.

**9. What is your favorite quote?**

*In matters of style, swim with the current; in matters of principle, stand like a rock.* - Thomas Jefferson

**10. Who or what inspires you?**

My dad and his encouragements to be successful.



# Welcome Aboard!



Join us in welcoming our newest team members!

The following Youth Services employees were hired between July 1 and Sept. 30.



Employee	Position	Division
Nancy Volpi	Secretary	ADMIN (GAL)
Abraham Greene	Grant Compliance Specialist II	OCP
Giselle Badillo	Administrative Secretary	ADMIN



## CareerSource Interns

Student	Position	Organization
Kerrine Estime	Intern	CareerSource Palm Beach County
Emely Flores	Intern	CareerSource Palm Beach County

## Promotions



**Tyler Shoens**  
Student Tech  
ADMIN

**Amy Schering**  
Residential Youth Counselor  
RTFC

## Congratulations



Warmest welcome to our new Assistant County Administrator, Dorritt M. Miller. In addition to overseeing the Youth Services Department, Ms. Miller oversees the County departments of Housing & Economic Sustainability, Parks & Recreation, and serves as liaison to the Housing Finance Authority, Westgate/Belvedere Homes CRA, Business Development Board and CareerSource Palm Beach County.

This quarter we said farewell and thank you to Carmen Bersch, Executive Assistant. Carmen celebrated 30 years of service with Palm Beach County. Happy Retirement!



## Share Feedback and Stories!

Do you have feedback on our newsletter or have an awesome story to share? We'd love to hear from you!

Contact Youth Services  
Department Communications  
Specialist Erin Baker  
at [ebaker@pbcgov.org](mailto:ebaker@pbcgov.org).

## Connect with Us!

Like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter and Instagram for more exciting updates!



pbcyouthservices



PBCYSD



PBCYSD

### Youth Services Department Director

Tammy K. Fields

### Director of Finance, Contracting and Administrative Services

Michelle Liska

### Director of Outreach and Community Programming

Geeta Loach-Jacobson

### Director of Residential Treatment and Family Counseling

Dr. Tony Spaniol

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*Editor/Graphics*

Erin Baker



Palm Beach County  
Board of County Commissioners