Inside YCS

A NEWSLETTER BY AND FOR ALL YCS EMPLOYEES

APPRECIATE

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PRESIDENT/CEO

TARA AUGUSTINE

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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ART DIRECTION

BARBARA MAY

INSIDE YCS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

President's Message	3
Welcome New Employees	4
Work Anniversaries	5
Promotions	5
Shoutouts	6-8
Moving On	9
Birthdays	10
Highlights	11-16
Employee Snapshot	16
Agency Updates	17-18
Managers Meeting Bulletin	19-20





President's Message

Dear Colleagues,

I must give a shout out of "Congratulations" to all our employees! Over the past two months, there has been an abundance of exciting and encouraging progress across the agency because of your efforts. To name a few highlights: many new residential admissions (which means many of our homes are running at full capacity); a flurry of exciting new allied therapy sessions - including music therapy, urban dance classes, and art therapy groups; and increased enrollment at both our special education schools. I am delighted to share that our newest program, the Passaic County Service Coordination Unit, has begun serving over 1000 families with young children in just the first few months of operation! We also have been invited back to the Bergen PAC to display the artwork and talent of those we serve -and from what I have heard, the Blossoms committee is off to a strong start coordinating creative projects and performances throughout our programs.



Tara Augustine

While these are all amazing accomplishments, I am also keenly aware there are many stressors. Not only internally with many upcoming site visits, but I also know many of us are concerned about recent threats of budget cuts to social service agencies across State and Federal lines. We are doing our best to advocate for all our participants and programs, and I encourage you to also use your voices to speak out for what matters to you, and on behalf of those who benefit from our services. Meanwhile, we must focus on what is under our control, show up fully for those we serve, and do our best to focus on the positive.

National Employee Appreciation Day is on March 7th. Let's take this opportunity to celebrate everyone on our teams. I look forward to hearing the unique ways we say thank you, and how our employees feel about the positivity and gratitude. I sincerely hope that we can make every day one in which we recognize and support our colleagues. When we cultivate the "habit" of appreciation in our programs, the rippling effect will spread throughout the agency, to our program participant, into our communities and beyond.

With my deepest appreciation,

Tara

Welcome New Employees

New Employees and Interns who completed 90 days by February 23, 2025

Anderson, Kaja	Douglas III, Wilton L.	Javier, Genette J.	Pascarella, Catherine N.	Thompson Jr., Bruce
SRT Behavioral Assist	Internal Auditor	Service Coordinator	Teacher Aide	Residential Assistant
SRT - N	Accounting & Finance	CBP – Passaic Svc Coord U	DOE-Sawtelle Learning Ctr	DCF-PCH Vineland
Barbosa, Jennifer	Eglow, Jordan B.	Ladolcetta, Dina	Patel, Mohammad	Vargas, Lisney
Clinician Fee for Svc	Teacher Assistant	Lead Service Coordinator	Service Coordinator	Service Coordinator
CBP-HMSC Essex	DOE-Sawtelle Learning Ctr	CBP-Passaic Svc Coord U	CBP – Passaic Svc Coord U	CBP – Passaic Svc Coord U
Champagne, Sharajhen	Garrafa, Genesis	Larkins, Kyle	Singletary, Ireahamnh	Young, Shalik
Teacher Aide DOE-Sawtelle Learning Ctr Clarke, Gabrielle	Service Coordinator CBP – Passaic Svc Coord U	Residential Assistant DCF-PCH IDD Lawnridge	Personal Assistant DDD-Apts Supvr Buffalo	Teacher Aide DOE-George Washington
Residential Assistant DCF-IRTS Holley Muller	Harris, Mark P. DDD - Davinchi Personal Assistant	Montoya, Michelle Teacher Aide DOE-Sawtelle Learning Ctr	Stephan, Robert Consultant NonEE DCF-RTC Holley	
Clark, Bridgette A.	Henriquez, Sasha	Ojoye, Olawunmi	Stephan, Robert	
Service Coordinator	Program Director	Personal Assistant	Consultant NonEE	
CBP – Passaic Svc Coord U	DCF-PCH Sicklerville	DDD-Davinchi	DCF-RTC Holley	
Dellamonica, Kara	Hunter, Renee	Partap, Asha	Tahhan, Dana	
Consultant NonEE	Teacher Aide	Personal Assistant	Lead Service Coordinator	
DOE-Sawtelle Learning Ctr	DOE-Sawtelle Learning Ctr	DDD-Greenbrook	CBP-Passaic Svc Coord U	

Promotions

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

Jahmani K. Dean-Bailey, Shift Supervisor, DDD-Walnut

Sharon Mckay, Shift Supervisor, DDD-Apts Supvr Buffalo

Jakim Jackson, Shift Supervisor, DCF-PCH Davis

Work Anniversaries

Congratulations!!!

25 YEARS

Corvino, Caroline O., Advanced Practice Nurse, HealthSvc PsychPrescrib-N Magazine, James C., Asst Program Director, Kilbarchan Waller III, William E., Vice President, Treatment Homes

20 YEARS

Wdzieczkowski, Kyle, Nurse RN, HealthSvc-ResidentNurse-S

5 YEARS

Ragsdale, Wadirah, Personal Assistant, Absecon

Shoutouts

To All Our Amazing Employees!

Shout out to the **YCS Behavioral Health Clinical Team**! For our behavioral health DCF programs, we saw improvements in two assessments, which demonstrate better mood/feelings and increased hope after treatment in the YCS programs. The improvement exceeded the goals set by the agency.

Dina Sundberg for assisting the Parent Satisfaction committee in getting email addresses of parents.

Shout out to **School Based Youth Services Team**! They have been able to service 209 students this month.

 Thank you to Michele DiFilippo for your positive energy! I look forward to our check-ins, even on the busiest of payroll weeks.

Thank you to **Christinia Bell** for always being an integral part of the IMS Team – your attention to detail is highly appreciated! You are always my go-to for a second set of eyes in the systems!

Welcome and thank you to Amina Krakallah for hitting the ground running over the past few months! You are a very welcomed addition to our team!

Yajaira Samayoa wears many hats at YCS and wears them well! IMS and Treatment Homes are so lucky to share your talents!

Shout out to Laura Maier in the Finance Department who works behind the scenes to make sure that our program contracts with the State are accurate, complete and up to date. Her efforts and attention to detail help make sure that we get funding for our programs so we can continue to serve the youth and adults in our care.

Lisa Guariglia, Sharon Marshall and Kyle Wdzieczkowski thank you for assisting with nursing coverage at Vineland while we recruit for a a nurse.

Cardett Russell, Tori Ann Peart, Willy Del Orbe and **Latoya Pope**, thank you for your dedication and hard work in making sure KB Campus contractual compliance is met consistently.

Michelle Simpson, thank you for your efforts and creativeness with Fisher Hall nursing groups.

Shoutouts





Shoutouts

To All Our Amazing Employees!

Natasia Terry- Has been doing an excellent job as CRS and being a great support for kids and staff.

Emily Miller- Goes above and beyond as a case manager and for being a great support for our kids and families.



Aimee Ciaravino - Displaying strong leadership to the Sayre program, always looking to improve already great deliverables and outcomes for youth.

Tahjanay Johnson- Is always willing to help and is always looking to improve the lives of the kids at Davis.



Phoenix Clinician - Jasmine Woodyard for her consistency with always meeting clinical deliverables and her dedication to the Phoenix team.

Lawn Ridge Clinician - Shaylah Counts for meeting program's deliverable three consecutive months and being a fierce advocate for the Lawn Ridge clients.

Bright Start Clinician - Candace Thom-Rogers for being dedicated to her clients and meeting January's clinical deliverable.



Keona Lane - Bright Start RA Supervisor - For doing an amazing job at Bright Start and motivating the RA's to stay on task.

T Phoenix RA Supervisor - **John Brooks** - For going above and beyond for the Phoenix team.

Phoenix RA Supervisor -Paul Albright - For going above and beyond for the Phoenix team.



Regional Director of Northern DD - Yesenia Fulgencio - for always being supportive and available to her team.



VP Northern Region - Korey Clark - For being the best VP! It is always amazing to see how the clients get excited when he visits their programs or attends an activity with them. Many of the staff share the same excitement as Korey is passionate about the clients and always shows up for his teams.

Moving On

It's Hard to Say Goodbye

For the past 35 years, **Leisa Tomchek** has compassionately guided and supported all the students and families at the Sawtelle Learning Center. As Vice President of YCS Autism Services, Leisa has been a staunch advocate of services for students at Sawtelle and a key advocate on the YCS Human Rights Committee: to ensure individuals with developmental disabilities in our residences get the best care. Thank you for all your years of dedication to YCS' mission. We wish you much happiness as you begin a new chapter in your retirement.

Leisa's Farewell Message

When I came to YCS we were one of two schools providing services to students with autism besides the more clinically oriented/research schools. YCS was committed to developing a program to service those students who in the past wouldn't have received such specialized care. Between our school and our Annex programs we were a powerful force in setting the standard for what local school districts and other private schools should provide in their programs for the autism community.

I have learned so much over my years, including some things I would have preferred not to learn, i.e. managing a budget (LOL!). Mostly I have learned to meet people where they are, students, families, and staff and work with them to rise to their highest potential whether it was teaching a student how to request a favorite toy, a parent how to get a child to sleep through the night or mentoring a staff member. As much as you give in this work you can get more back- keep your eyes open for even the smallest of gains.

I feel proud of my work at the school and feel I am leaving it in great shape and great hands for the future. We have increased our enrollment of younger students and have added many new enhancements for our students including two sensory areas, a new like skills classroom, a walking track, and music therapy. And never forgetting the staff a well-deserved new staff lounge.

I feel truly blessed to have been able to work at YCS where I was able to provide so much for this population of students. They are the ones I will miss the most.

Happy Birthday!!

February Birthdays

	•			
Aaron Hairston	Dawn M. Jones	Katherine Velasquez	Mylyn Dumas	William Heins
Aisha Faulkner	Demira Brown	Katia C. Smith	Nicauris Ubiera	Yajaira Samayoa
Alexis A. Treanor	Dionne D. Perry	Kayla B. Billups	Nicole Ciencin	Yesenia Fulgencio
Andre Snead	Donald E. Jones III	Keanie K. Gaime	Paige Johnston	Yisel Y. Maldonado
Andres Hernandez	Ebony Batts	Keisha Allen	Paul Santiago I	Zakeeyah Lamb
Angela Newman	Erika M. Mero	Kelley D. Williams- Womble	Rafael Hernandez	
Aquita Randall	Ernst Renondeau	Kenneth T. Ford	Ronly C. London	
Barbarha Nelson	Estherline J. Nicol	Keona L. Lane	Sahmir S. Session	
Beth Wecksell	Federick S. Gayle	Keyshaon Robinson	Shakia Hedgespeth	
Bianca Q. Leary	Gabriela Lakhman	Kimberley Zisa	Shannon N. Beachem	
Brent Williams	George O. Sarpong	Krystal Roman	Stacie Bridgeman	
Brittany C. Sotomayor	Harmony C. Pollard	Kylen Robinson	Tania Isley-Robinson	
Brittany Statuto	lajaiyah Barr	LaShayna Malone	Tempestt S. Hutchinson	
Caliegh K. Anderson	Ilissa Kaufman	Laura M. Guerrero	Tia D. Smith	
Cheryl Moore	Ireahamnh Singletary	Lorenzo Joyce Jr.	Tina L. Macken	
Christopher R. Lee	Jacob L. Shambry	Maribette Ramirez	Tinisha Hood	
Clifton Brown	John Brooks Sr.	Mark P. Harris	Tyriq B. Rease Sr.	
Crystal Rose	Jovanna Foster	Michael Bonsu	Tyson Hardnett	
David Huang	Kamaria C. Vaughn	Molly Holt	Valerie Crump	
Dawn Atkins	Katherine Gutierrez	Mujahid Abdul-Hamid	Vanesha Walls	





HAPPY Birthday





Music Therapy



Sawtelle Learning Center



Southern Region

When music therapist, Dana Salerno, walks into a classroom at the Sawtelle Learning Center, the students literally jump out of their seats with joyful enthusiasm. It is a special time for many of the autistic students. According to Sawtelle principal, Caitlin Corlett-Jacoby, Med., the students enjoy music therapy differently. Some students prefer to listen to music; some get involved and sing along, while others like to play instruments. The therapeutic value of music therapy in the group setting is undeniable. In the Southern Region, the music therapy was a project with ChildWIN.

The CREW - DD North Bingo Night





Click to view CREW BINGO NIGHT LIVE!

Valentines Day Celebrations



George Washington School



Pearl Street Paint and Sip



Valentines Day 2025 was a hit with Lawnridge, Phoenix, and Bright Start. Everyone enjoyed pizza, salad, and wings and most importantly, the bags filled with love, candy, and goodies!

Huge thank you to Korey, Sherene, Niema, Yesenia, and the staff that attended



Hilltop Home



Pamela House

Black History Month at Davis House



Every Sunday, children at Davis House gather for a reading group with **Mary Leacock**, residential assistant supervisor. The group was initially started to help some of the children who needed to improve their reading skills. For Black History Month, the children expanded the group reading session with an art project. They combined their research on influential African Americans with the creation of a poster board to share with everyone at the home. All the children got involved and had a great time learning about talented, courageous Black Americans who they had never heard of before, according to Ms. Leacock.

Carmeline's Baby Shower



The Training department surprised **Carmeline Pau**l, LMS Administrator, with a baby shower in East Orange.

Superbowl Party at Lawnridge



Friday Night at the movies



Lawnridge residents and staff went to the movies on a Friday night to see Sonic.

Southern Region3rd Quarterly DD Employee Spotlight



Chanelle Bright-PA Sawtelle Toledo



Gregory Jackson-Allen RA Supervisor Hammonton CSAP



Tarsi Burke-PA Sawtelle Willingboro



Carmen Foster-PA Supervisor Sawtelle Blackwood



Jackie Lebron-PA Sawtelle Echo Hill



T'kemia Brunson-RA Supervisor Sawtelle Camden



Danaisha Brown- RA Supervisor Winslow CSAP





Danelle Cordy-RA Supervisor Sawtelle Cedarbrook



Marjorie Daley-PA Sawtelle Buena Vista

Demira Brown Rayterri Stephens-RA Supervisor Estell Manor

The Southern Region 3rd Quarterly DD Employee Spotlight was held on February 19, 2025. The theme as always is to showcase "Heroes Work Here!" However, with the event falling in the month of February, it added a touch of "Heroes Work Here, with Love and Light"!

DD recognizes the dedication and effort the staff puts towards the consumers. To show gratitude, each Program Director/House Manager gave the quarterly recipients the acknowledgement by shining the spotlight on them, showing their appreciation and giving them their "flowers" for the hard work that they do!

Demesha Headen-Ratliff RA Supervisor Sawtelle Sewell (Not Pictured)

Tyriq Kidd-PA Sawtelle Absecon

Phoenix Staff Appreciation Bowling Night



Phoenix Staff Bowling night as a way of showing staff appreciation for their dedication to the team.



Click to view BOWLING NIGHT LIVE!

Employee Snapshot



Amina Krakallah,

IMS System Analyst, standing in front of some of her paintings that are displayed in her new office in Hackensack.

Agency Updates

Passaic Service Coordination Reaches Over 900 Families

Our Passaic Service Coordination Unit is thriving, now providing essential support to over 900 families! In January and February alone, our dedicated team welcomed 193 new families, guiding them through the development of Individual Family Service Plans (IFSPs) and connecting them to critical developmental services such as speech and physical therapy. An additional 130 families received comprehensive reviews of their children's current IFSPs, ensuring their evolving needs are met. All remaining families received a welcome touchpoint to assess any additional support needs. We are incredibly proud of our team's hard work and remain steadfast in our mission to uplift and empower the families we serve!

Christina Colón, LPC, IMH-E VP of Early Childhood and Community Programming

Aissatou Dialo	Claudia Chavez	Genette Javier	Mariana Coyotecatl
Angela Aguilar	Dana Tahhan	Kareese Steward	Maribette Ramirez
Anna Clark	Dina Ladolcetta	Kelly Butryn	Marlene Lopez
Annette Menjivara	Elizabeth Seebeck	Kiara Ortiz	Mayra De La Rosa
Belinda Gomez	Genesis Garrafa	Lisney Vargas	Mohammad Patel
Busola Oladele	Genesis Serrano	Mariam Salem	Nahji McClan

The Passaic Service Coordination Team

Best Wishes for Upcoming Inspections from QAPI

QAPI wishes Estell Manor, CSAP Winslow, CSAP Hammonton, Sawtelle Sewell, Sawtelle Camden, Sawtelle Cedarbrook, Sawtelle Hall, and Sawtelle Lawnridge good luck as you prepare for your upcoming March annual licensing inspections. If you need anything before, during or after the inspection, please do not hesitate to contact us. Our doors are always open!

Jaime Fox, CQCO; jfox@ycs.org Mathew Hopkins, P&D Analyst; mhopkins@ycs.org Aja Wallace, QA Analyst; aja.wallace@ycs.org Quality Assurance & Program Integrity

Agency Updates

New Faces in ABA Services

ABA Services are provided to all youth in PCH-IDD and CSAP Programs. We have recently welcomed several new Board Certified Behavior Analysts(BCBA's) to our Team.

New Team Members Taylor Healey - full-time at CSAP Hammonton Nicole Dudley - part-time Sawtelle Camden Bianca Flint - part-time Sawtelle Cedar Brook Two BCBA's returned to YCS Charisse Marquez - Sawtelle Sewell Raheem Wise - Sawtelle Lawn Ridge

These 5 new BCBA's round out the ABA Services Department with long standing Team members:

Long Standing Team Members Lauren Marks, BCBA, LBA - CSAP Winslow Yakima Daniels Behaviorist - Adult DD - South Anthony Baskin - Behaviorist - Adult DD- North Grethel Quintara-Beyra - Behaviorist Adult DD - North

Five new BCBA's joined our existing Team of ABA providers in the CSAP, PCH-IDD and adult residential programs. Our Team displays a true understanding of human behavior and has the expertise to explain to staff how to reduce problem behaviors as well as increase independence. This is such an amazing skill set to have! We welcomed several BCBA's back to YCS and I am grateful to have them sharing their expertise with our children, families and staff.

Behaviors is a way of communication. By demonstrating an understanding of that type of communication, we're able to show acceptance and understanding which helps to gain trust. This allows our clients to learn new skills and different ways to express themselves that are more socially appropriate. Jacqueline Maddi, M.Ed., BCBA Vice President of ABA Services

Jacqueline Maddi, M.Ed., BCBA Vice President of ABA Services

Agency-Wide Training Completion Percentages

The overall total training completion rate for the agency currently stands at **76.2%**. In January we were at 67.3%. This is an increase of **8.9%**.

Mike Baguidy VP of Training <u>Click to view</u> <u>FULL REPORT</u>

Managers Meeting Bulletin

Summary of Key Points from the February Monthly Cabinet Meeting "The more we stay informed the better we can work together as a team."

Employment Engagement Survey

The action planning for VP's has been completed. Manager/director have not met with their VP to discuss their program's action plans, please reach out to learn more about the plan for your program.

Training Department

Since last month's meeting, Relias training completions across the agency increased 9% from 67.3% to 76%, and there was an increase of 10 programs (7-17) that completed more than 90% of their training. Congratulations! The agency is trending in the right direction. For the entire report, <u>https://ycsorg-my.sharepoint.com/:p:/g/personal/pbaguidy_ycs_org/EcqQRYa9futKuAbfbejM-</u>

HUBKHX2IJJrT2EuAB0sUKbAmw?CID=896657c0-777b-c6b6-b05c-400d840a292e

For those programs under 50% completed Relias trainings, training staff will directly reach out to them to discuss what they can do to help their employees fulfill the training required.

Note: Office of Licensing (OOL) will be visiting the IDD/PCH programs in March. Sometime after March, DDD inspectors will be visiting adult DD homes. It is important that every site completes all their trainings.

IMS Department

Time Punch: All employees are urged to sign in and out of work using their mobile device. The GPS on smartphones is the most accurate way of aligning your time with the scheduled site you were working at. The GPS on laptops and tablets are often unreliable for correctly reporting locations.

Note: Medicaid is auditing our records and comparing information on the timecard with the documentation of the location where employees were scheduled to work.

Managers/directors and CRS who approve timecards for payroll must be able to match the location with where the employee punched.

Group Notes: Any issue you may have had in the past with inputting group notes into Evolv has been resolved, and the system has been upgraded. IMS will send out reports for any outstanding group notes, so that documentation can be finalized.

Deliverable Reporting: For deliverables to be counted in the ECR report, they must be submitted and approved in the deliverables report. All deliverables are posted on the QPS and IMS sites. If you need a link, please contact Erin McCloskey, <u>emccloskey@ycs.org</u>

IT Department

User Adoption Report: Overall, 57 programs have achieved 85% user adoption or above. However, 25 programs are below the 85-percentage mark. YCS employees must log into their computers regularly for IT to maintain our Microsoft 365 license. See full report: <u>YCS Employee Secured Site - Home</u>

Protecting YCS Homes

Be sure that all circuit breakers are clearly labeled and that all staff know where they are, and how to shut off any utility valve. Also, keep a clear path to all utility boxes so that we can avoid any additional problems in an emergency.

Managers Meeting Bulletin

Practice Integration

Intern Roundtable will be held virtually the fast Wednesday of 2/26—1pm Clinical CARE Rounds is the first Thursday of every month starting at 10am If clinicians need extra support or training, please contact Michelle Robbins <u>mrobbins@ycs.org</u>.

Allied Therapies Report

Visual Management Initiative: Congratulations to the DCF programs that have created in-depth Activity Boards at their sites. By posting a full schedule for the month of allied services, community meetings and outings, health, and psycho educational workshops, the staff and participants know what to expect each day. Subject matter may change but the schedules remain firm. It is suggested that the subject matter for each activity be posted on the monthly schedule each week.

If you see that you are not reaching your deliverable goals, please check the input of documentation. This is a challenge with some programs. An updated document guide to help programs accurately record documentation in Evolv will soon be available

Communications Department

The Blossoms Art Exhibit & Show committee has begun meeting and is working on preparing for the exhibit. If you have participants in your program who would like to submit art but have not signed up for the committee yet, there is still time. Please contact communications department at <u>info@ycs.org</u> September 7th is National Employee Appreciation Day. Communications is producing a video with the support of the executive team, and it will be sent out electronically on the 7th to all employees and posted on the YCSEonline rotating banner.

Dates you need to know

Wednesday, March 12, 2025, 5:30pm—Spirituality Mindfulness Ceremony

60 Evergreen Place, 10th floor East Orange, NJ for Coopers Crossing, Cedarbrook, Fisher Hall, Muller IRTS. If you would like the youth from your program to participate in the next round of Spiritual Mindfulness workshops, please email Dr. William Waller <u>wwaller@ycs.org</u>.

Tuesday, May 13th - YCS Blossoms Art Exhibit and Awards Show

BergenPac 30 N Van Brunt St., Englewood, NJ

Monday, September 15th – YCS Golf Charity Classic Edgewood Country Club, Rivervale, NJ

Tara's Wrap-Up

The desire for employee recognition has been reiterated repeatedly in the employee engagement surveys over the past two years. Recognizing staff on National Employee Appreciation Day is a great opportunity to let your staff know that they are valued. It could be a bagel breakfast or some simple expression of appreciation. Executive leadership can also contribute shout outs for the monthly Inside YCS newsletter as an ongoing way to acknowledge employees' efforts.

Read more in the President's Message in this newsletter.