

# *Inside* *YCS*

*A Quarterly Newsletter by and for all YCS Employees*

*October 2021*



## Table of Contents

President's Message	3
New Employees	4-5
Welcome	6
Shout Outs	7
Promotions	8
Moving On	8
In Loving Memory	9
Milestones	10
Deliverables	12
Clinical Rounds Sessions	13
Program Highlights	14-22
Community Partners	23
Agency Updates	24-25



**The 19th Annual YCS Charity Golf Classic** was a resounding success! This year we had a record number of golfers, very generous sponsors, and staff participation. A very special thanks to everyone at YCS who purchased a raffle ticket, donated an auction item, or attended the event.



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# President's Message

It's hard to believe it is already fall and we are heading into the final stretch of 2021. Autumn is such a beautiful season. Someone, anonymously, once described fall as "the time when everything bursts with its last beauty, as if nature had been saving up all year for the grand finale."

I think this aptly describes the changing season at YCS. You have stuck by this amazing agency as we faced many internal challenges, economic instability, and an unprecedented health crisis. And now I can say with confidence that we're entering our season of harvest.



One of our biggest challenges has been making sure each program is fully staffed. Over the past nine months, we have hired and trained 208 new employees and ensured that every residential program has either a program director or house manager. We have also been committed to giving every employee the opportunity to grow personally and professionally on the job with an array of trainings; and as a result, 34 employees have been promoted. Our goal is to provide all our frontline staff with a supportive, collaborative team, so everyone's work experience is more enjoyable.

Thanks to an exceedingly long overdue rate increase from the State, we have begun working towards fairly compensating staff. We have also added a paid holiday, Juneteenth, to our calendar year and turned Columbus Day into a floating holiday to give you more freedom in choosing how to use your time off.

I am happy to report that approximately 75% of our employees are fully vaccinated and non-vaccinated staff is complying with weekly testing. To safeguard the health of all employees going forward, all new hires must be fully vaccinated before coming on board. We still have a way to go, but this gives all of us some peace of mind knowing that the agency is doing everything in its power to make the workplace as safe as possible.

Have you received your YCS Polo shirt yet? This is our gift to you. I hope you can wear it to work with pride knowing that you are valued and a respected member of the YCS Family.

Looking towards the future, we are also planning to expand existing programs and diversify our revenue stream with new business. As the financial health of the agency becomes more robust, we will be able to pass on the benefits to you.

Please stay safe as you enjoy the upcoming holiday season with your friends and family.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tara".

## Looking Ahead!



We will soon be headed into the holiday season, and generous donors have already begun reaching out to the YCS Foundation to sign up to become Secret Santas. Be on the lookout at the end of October, for an email from **Frances Spiegel**, Foundation AVP, with instructions on how to complete the electronic Secret Santa form for the participants in your programs. With your help, we can make holiday wishes come true.

# Meet our New Employees

New Employees April-July 2021

# Welcome!!

<b>AbdulHamid, Arimiyawu</b> PA Burning Bush	<b>Brown, Demira</b> MSW Intern South -Treatment Homes	<b>Doricent, Marie</b> MSW Intern Newark Muller Hall	<b>Iacovelli, Alisa</b> Occupational Therapist Sawtelle Learning Center
<b>Altschuler, Samantha R.</b> RA IRTS Kilbarchan	<b>Brown, Tamioka</b> LPN Kilbarchan	<b>Filosa, Sophia</b> MSW Intern Haddon Heights	<b>Im, Laura</b> Speech Pathology Intern George Washington School
<b>Arencibia, Sandra</b> RA Fisher Hall	<b>Bruney, Paula G.</b> Personal Assistant Absecon	<b>Gagum, Julius</b> PA ECS Haledon	<b>Jackson, Jakim</b> PA Lawn Ridge
<b>Azure, Philomena</b> Supervisor PA Cedarbrook	<b>Butler, Karla N.</b> RA Davis House	<b>Gainer, Wahyidah</b> PA Pearl Street	<b>Johnson, Ajee J.</b> PA Walnut
<b>Baldwin, Maria</b> SRT SRT	<b>Butler, Karla N.</b> RA Newark Muller Hall	<b>Gantner, Jordan E.</b> PA Morris Ave	<b>Johnson, Tahjanay</b> RA Davis House
<b>Bartley-Rogers, Sherene</b> Clinician Davis House	<b>Casserly, Shannon A.</b> Clinician I Voorhees	<b>Garrett, Amanda L.</b> Clinician I Sewell	<b>Jones, Annette</b> PA Cedarbrook
<b>Batts, Ebony</b> PA Buffalo	<b>Collins, Latoyia</b> Residential Assistant SRT	<b>George, Charnessa</b> PA ECS Haledon	<b>Jones, Bret</b> RA Sayre House
<b>Belton, Erik J.</b> RA Fisher Hall	<b>Coradin, Vanessa</b> Psychology Doctoral Intern HMSC	<b>Glover, Quashinda</b> PA Buffalo	<b>Kaprielian, Niree</b> Clinician I Malcolm House
<b>Bethea, Quagee</b> House Manager ECS Haledon	<b>Dailey, Katrice</b> PA Sawtelle Hall	<b>Goode, Al-Jaquan</b> Cook Kilbarchan	<b>Kenney, Nancy G.</b> Chief Financial Officer Administration
<b>Bey, Darryl</b> PA Amwell Road	<b>Daley, Emily</b> Intern (Clinical) Laurie Haven	<b>Goode, Al-Jaquan</b> Cook Kilbarchan	<b>Kessler, Steven</b> Chief Human Resources Officer Human Resources
<b>Boloix-Alarcon, Sophia</b> MSW Intern HMSC (Union City)	<b>David Jr., Lenaris</b> Residential Assistant	<b>Goode, Al-Jaquan</b> Cook Kilbarchan Assessm	<b>Laurich, Christina</b> Clinician I Kilbarchan
<b>Brandt, Dominika</b> TA II Sawtelle Learning Center	<b>Davis, Chanel</b> PA Greenbrook	<b>Graves, Marilyn</b> Clinician I Sicklerville	<b>Lawson, Timothy L.</b> RA Holley Residence
<b>Brewer, Lawrence</b> Residential Assistant Estell Manor	<b>Dawson, Myashia</b> Teacher Parents as Teachers	<b>Hester, Tawanna</b> TA II Sawtelle Learning Center	<b>Lee, Jamir</b> PA ECS Haledon
<b>Brooks, Tristan</b> Clinician I Davis House	<b>Diallo, Aissatou</b> PA ECS Haledon	<b>Hewitt, Emily</b> MSW Intern Cedarbrook	<b>Lewis Jr., Lonnie</b> RA Holley Residence
<b>Brown, Alysha</b> SRT / BA SRT	<b>Dieujuste, Chedlet</b> PA Winslow	<b>Howard, Geraldine</b> RA Laurie Haven	<b>LoBue, Salvatore</b> Clinical Case Manager Fisher Hall

<b>Lockhart, Lakesha</b> Behavioral Assistant SRT	<b>Michael, Stephanie</b> MSW Intern HMSC (Essex)	<b>Pritchett, April</b> Intern Non - EE Winslow	<b>Sutton, Samantha</b> Personal Assistant Cedarbrook
<b>Lott, Alaya S.</b> PA Winslow	<b>Miller, Jameece</b> PA Sawtelle Hall	<b>Rene, Ruth</b> RA Sayre House	<b>Taurosa, Carlie</b> Volunteer Laurie Haven
<b>Manns, Jasmine</b> RA Fisher Hall	<b>Minnigan, Felicia</b> PA Amwell Road	<b>Rodker, Jason</b> Training Director (Institute) HMSC (Essex)	<b>Tawiah, Elizabeth</b> PA Buffalo
<b>Manon Jr., Luis F.</b> RA Sicklerville	<b>Mintz, Jonathan</b> Psychology Intern HMSC (Union City)	<b>Ruffo, DezRae</b> RA Haddon Heights	<b>Thomas, Shana M.</b> SRT / BA SRT
<b>Matos, Milagros</b> RA Davis House	<b>Moloney, Gillian</b> Psychology Intern HMSC (Essex)	<b>Sapp, Antwan</b> Clinical Case Manager Sicklerville	<b>Thomas, Tamara</b> PA Lawn Ridge
<b>matthews, Michelle</b> MSW Intern Sayre House	<b>Mora, Alicia</b> RA Voorhees	<b>Selinger, Samuel</b> Psychology Doctoral Intern HMSC (Essex)	<b>Thomas, Tyra</b> Intern Non - EE Sewell
<b>McCurtis, Yarmeka L.</b> RA IRTS Holley Residence	<b>Nussbaum, Bradley</b> Clinician I Hammonton	<b>Shapley, Marisa</b> MSW intern Camden	<b>Thomas, Unika</b> MSW Intern Vineland
<b>McFarland, Belinda</b> RA Holley Residence	<b>Ortiz, Jessica</b> Parent Educator Parents as Teachers	<b>Silverberg, Samantha</b> Psychology Intern HMSC (Essex)	<b>Walker, Elizabeth</b> Clinician I Laurie Haven
<b>McIntyre, Louanna</b> RA Malcolm House	<b>Osunsanya, Oluyinka</b> Medicaid Clerk Accounting	<b>Singh, Melisa</b> Program Director Estell Manor	<b>Whitaker, Davonte</b> SRT/BA SRT
<b>Melendez Jr., Emauel</b> Intern Non Sicklerville	<b>Parks, Tiffany N.</b> PA Morris Ave	<b>Smith, Catressia</b> PA Willingboro	<b>White, Charisma</b> PA Buffalo
<b>Mendoza, Marie A.</b> Case Manager Davis House	<b>Paulino, Henessys</b> Psychology Doctoral Extern HMSC (Union City)	<b>Spearman, Eric</b> PA Camden	<b>Wiley, Alisha</b> PA Winslow
<b>Mendoza, Orbelina</b> Social Work Intern HMSC (Union City)	<b>Phalen, Hannah</b> RA Fisher Hall	<b>Stadler, Amanda</b> Clinician I Kilbarchan	<b>Wilson, Kendricke</b> RA ECS Haledon
<b>Mercado, Micheily</b> Clinical Intern Voorhees	<b>Potts, Payton</b> Clinician I Winslow	<b>Stiff, Linda</b> Clinical Intern Laurie Haven	<b>Works, Brandon R.</b> PA Hammonton

"If you want to be happy ... command your thoughts,  
liberate your energy, and inspire your hopes."

*- Andrew Carnegie*

# Welcome!!



**Nancy G. Kenney** joined the YCS family as Chief Financial Officer in July and is eager to start a new chapter in an illustrious career in finance that spans more than 20 years. Prior to coming to YCS, Nancy was Corporate Controller/Senior Financial Executive at the Riverside Research Institute. She is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) with an M.S. in Accounting from Pace University, Lubin School of Business.

Nancy has chosen to bring her financial expertise to YCS because of her passionate commitment to the education and mental health of children. She believes in the importance of team building, mentoring, and keeping an open-door policy on the job and in life.

In 2016, Ms. Kenney was named Top Female Executive by the National Association of Professional Women and prides herself in her ability to successfully direct an organization's energy through continuous bottom-line improvement and operational effectiveness.



**Steve Kessler**, YCS' new Chief Human Resources Officer, has brought a wealth of talents and passion for helping others to YCS.

As an attorney by background and former Senior Executive in Human Resources, Employee Relations, Ethics and Compliance, Steve takes pride in his creative approach to increase employee engagement and promote an ethical culture.

Experience has taught Steve that being a strong listener and maintaining objectivity are two of the most important qualities for an HR professional. "To create an impactful HR program, it is important to be inquisitive and to learn about the operations and the culture of the organization," explained Steve.

In his new role, Steve looks forward to developing innovative ways to improve the employee experience and recognize the staff for the meaningful work they do every day.



**Please join us in congratulating Carlene Colston on her promotion to Office of the President and Ombudsperson. Carlene is a familiar face at YCS. In 2014, she started working part-time as an administrative assistant in the training department. Her abilities were quickly recognized, and she soon became a full-time employee. For the past several years, as Learning Management System Administrator, she has managed Relias Learning for all employees. I am sure many of you have been in contact with Carlene when you needed help navigating Relias or have forgotten your password! Employees who were not computer savvy and intimidated by Relias found a friend in Carlene. Carlene's soothing, reassuring voice at the other end of the phone has helped many co-workers successfully complete their training.**

**Carlene said that assisting employees who were intimidated by "e" learning could help them move towards their professional goals. As the new ombudsperson, she is the perfect person to listen to her colleagues' concerns and assist in resolving their issues. She can be reached by cell phone at 973-419-3519, ombud@ycs.org, or you can fill out a confidential form requesting assistance on our website.**



## *To Our Amazing Colleagues*

**Yajaira Samayoa** for continuing to be a ray of light to all! Her kindness, eagerness to help, and ability to pick up new skill sets quickly are unmatched! Thank you, Jay, for all you do for the IMS Department

**Tyrah Wesley, Sr**, Supervisor at Sawtelle Camden for doing a great job organizing a fun Hawaiian Paint Night activity for the young men.

**Charisse Marquez** for planning a water play day for the youth at CSAP Hammonton. The children had a great time.

**Widlyne Romain** for organizing a fun day for the children at Sawtelle Hall. They tie dyed clothes and cut out fun shapes from fruit to dip into a chocolate fondue, for a yummy treat.

**Sawtelle North Managers** for surprising Rayletta Garrison with a party to celebrate her birthday and completion of her Master's Degree.

**The Newark Team** for working together to contain the Covid outbreak on the campus.

**Carmeline Paul** on her promotion to Learning Management System Administrator in the Training Dept.

**Yadira Ruiz** for always going the extra mile for our residents and always being available to help with emergency coverage.

**Dr. Michele Lapine** for all her help with DD Northern Region clients. You're amazing!

**Deanna DeStefano, Samantha Litchfield, and Alexandra Dziubek** for all the round-the-clock support that they provide the DD Northern Region Team.

**Kristen Wistuba** for helping Korey and Yesenia become EOC (Environment of Care) rockstars!

**Providencia Zapata** for taking pride in her job as cook for Davis House. The kitchen is always immaculate. She makes sure the children get the foods they like and prepares comforting soup or hot tea for them when they are not feeling well.

**Christinia Bell**, IMS Specialist for her knowledge and assistance with Placement Disruptions in Evolv is invaluable. She is an outstanding co-worker and we are so glad to have her as part of our team.

**Dave Johnson**, CSAP Winslow program director, for always being present for his staff. He is a great listener, and you can always find someone in his office seeking his advice about a personal or work-related concern. For always being concerned about expressing appreciation to his colleagues at CSAP Winslow by organizing a festive birthday party every month and making everyone at the home feel special and appreciated.

# Promotions

*Congratulations* 

*You inspire us all to move forward and keep on working toward our goals.*

Anglade, Nancy Supervisor RA Laurie Haven	Colston, Carlene Executive Assistant Administration	Hawkins, Marquita Supervisor RA Haddon Heights	Nelson, Elizabeth D PA Supervisor Hammonton	Works, Brittany Behavior Analyst Sewell
Barrett, Kiana PLP Case Manager Parent Linking Prog	Easton, Kenya Admin Ass/Lead YDS 21st Century Grant	Houser-Sabin, Samantha A. Supervisor RA Haddon Heights	Paul, Carmeline LMS Administrator Agency Training	Yancey Sr., Lamar Supervisor RA Vineland
Bartley-Rogers, Sherene Clinician I Davis House	Exius, Naomi Benefits Coordinator Human Resources	Lewis, Venitta Senior RA Laurie Haven	Reynolds, Jeffrey N. Supervisor RA Estell Manor	
Brun, Sherly Supervisor RA Malcolm House	Flicker, Pfeni Clinician II Sayre House	McMillan, Tameka SRT Coordinator SRT	Rios, Joanne Program Director Davis House	
Captain, Lissa Associate VP N.R. BHS	Hadden, Shatina PA Supervisor Cedarbrook	Michaels, Barbara Director of Communications Administration	Robles, Cindy PA Supervisor Hammonton	
Clark, Korey Director of DD SVCS N.R.	Hart, Lawrence A. Supervisor RA Kilbarchan	Munyeneh, Gladys LPN Buena Vista	Singh, Melisa Program Director Estell Manor	

Before you become a leader, success is all about growing yourself. After you become a leader, success is about growing others.

*- Jack Welch (CEO, General Electric)*

## Moving On

**It's Hard to Say Goodbye!**

**Wishing our colleagues all the best as they begin their new Journeys!**

After more than 80 years of collective service to the success of YCS, **Dr. Edmund Chaitman**, Psychiatrist at the Holley Center, **Kathleen Grosso**, Chief Human Resources Officer, and **Olimpia Bright**, VP of DD Services in the Northern Region, have recently retired. We are forever grateful to them for their heartfelt support for the well-being of their fellow colleagues and their dedication to providing the individuals served by YCS with the best possible care. They were pioneers who helped pave a path forward for YCS. We wish them many more years of health and happiness as they begin new chapters in their lives.



## The YCS Sawtelle Family mourns the passing of two residents

We offer our sincere condolences to the Sawtelle employees who are grieving the deaths of Daniel Cantor at the Blackwood Home and Thomas Angell at the Emmans Home. Danny, 28, was a member of the Sawtelle Family for 7 years and was remembered by the staff for his gentle, loving nature. Thomas, 69, transitioned from Florida to YCS 7 years ago. The staff recall his appreciative smile, joyful laugh, and ability to communicate kindness despite his inability to speak. The Sawtelle family from the north and south, pulled together to create beautiful memorials to celebrate each man's life with music, scripture readings, and remembrances. At both homes, perennial flowers and trees were planted in the memory of both men.

### In Loving Memory of

**Daniel Cantor**

**Justin Michael Tompkins**

**Thomas Angell**

#### A Poem for TOMMY

Tommy has not left us, for his spirit is all around us to console us in this time of sadness. But do not be saddened, for Tommy is in heaven, a beautiful place full of angels, and Tommy is one, no longer living in pain. Tommy, you will be missed, yet living in our hearts with love, MELTED into MEMORIES.

Yesenia



## YCS Mourns the Passing of our Colleague Justin Michael Tompkins



Justin Tompkins was a trusted and well-respected Residential Assistant at YCS for 10 years. He worked at the Cedarbrook and CSAP homes, before transitioning to an on-call position at Laurie Haven. On August 24th, Justin, passed away. "Everyone at Laurie Haven loved Justin," said his co-worker, Venitta Lewis. "He had a real heart for the kids, and he got along well with all the staff. They knew when he came to work – he was down to business." We extend our heartfelt condolences to all the staff at YCS who knew Justin and mourn his passing.



# Milestones

**Laurie Levin** celebrating 30 years!!

**Marilyn Comacho** celebrating 20 years!!

**Melvina Brown** celebrating 10 years!!



## *Professional Accomplishments*

**Rosalee Howard** received her Masters in Social Work

**Maite Lasaga-Ayala** successfully defended her dissertation in Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology.

**Leslie Lester** endorsed as Infant Mental Health Clinical Mentor by NJIMH

**Myashi Dawson** became a Certified Parent Educator

**Edward Bonacci** received a Masters in Special Education with a focus on ABA

**William Waller** earned a Doctorate of Ministry and Public Theology from Drew University-School of Divinity



*Congratulations on fulfilling your dream to further your education  
and pursue your goals to be of service to others.*



## *New Arrivals*

**Pia Ababon, PAT**, gave birth to little girl on July 1,  
weighing 6lbs, 11oz



## *Weddings*

**Melissa D'Amelio**, happily announced her  
engagement!! She is excitedly planning her  
May, 2022 wedding. Congratulations!!

## *Congratulations to the 5 VAX Raffle Winners*

In a heartfelt effort to encourage YCS employees to get vaccinated and protect their health as well as the health of everyone in the YCS Family, YCS sponsored a raffle contest and a chance to win \$1,000 for all employees who were fully vaccinated. More than 220 entered. On July 17th, there was a live drawing and the winners were

**Jessica Shea-Brown, Tameka N. Rogers, Lesley B. Heredia, Robert B. Schmos, David A. Ogboroye**



*Go Blue!*

*Thanks to the NY Giants Football Association for donating 600 tickets to YCS employees for upcoming NY Giants Football Games!*

The Giants organization provided YCS with the tickets to raffle off to employees who are fully vaccinated as a way of saying thank you to YCS staff for all their efforts to protect the clients during the pandemic, and to incentivize employees who are not vaccinated to receive the vaccine and celebrate at the game with their guest, according to Allison Stangeby, VP of Community & Corporate Relations for the NY Football Giants. 300 employees will win two tickets to games on October 24th against the Carolina Panthers and November 7th against the Las Vegas Raiders.

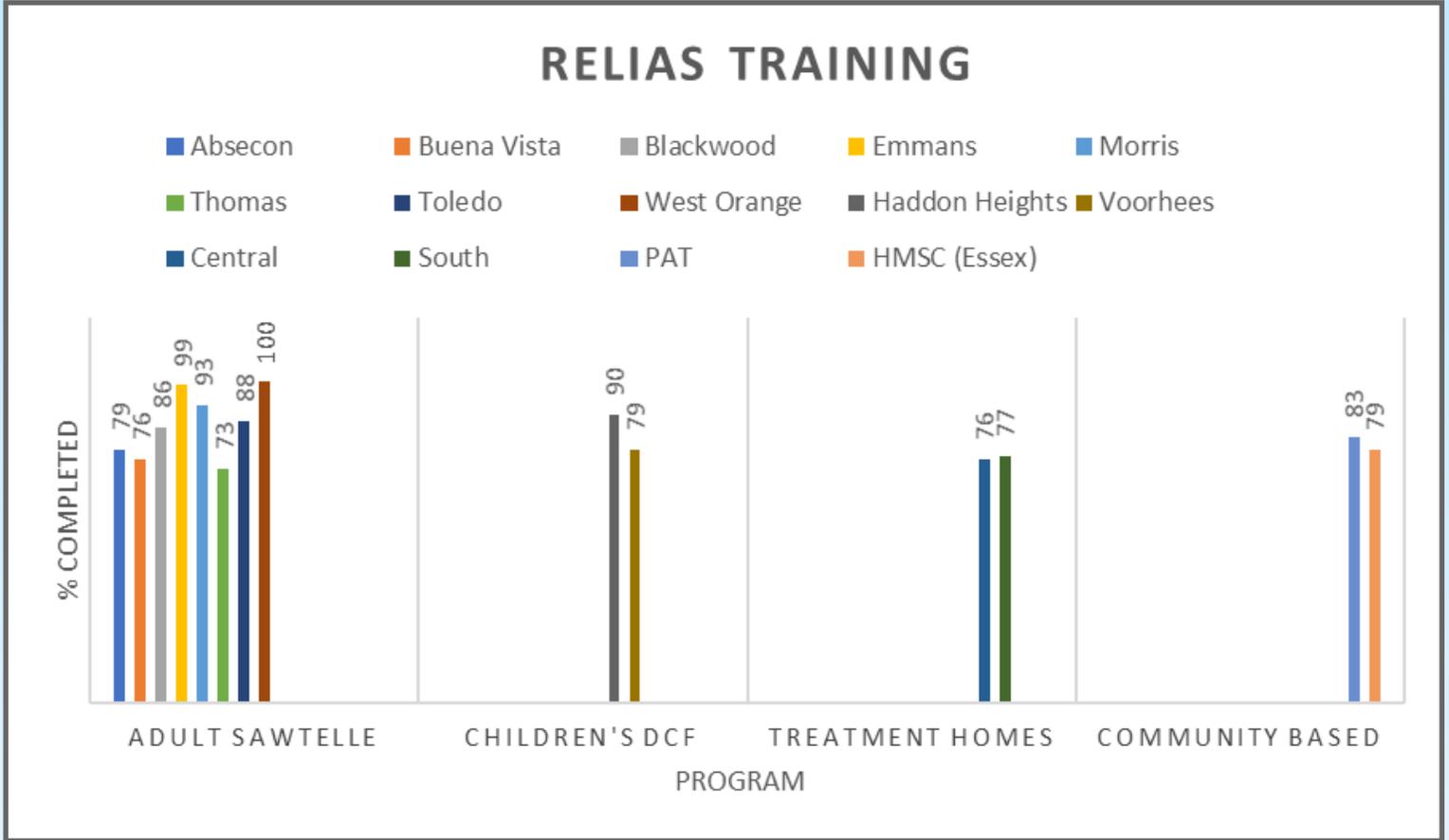
### *Message from the Communications Department*



There is only one thing we like more than getting photos, messages and shout outs about all the interesting activities happening at your programs, and that is sharing these moments with all our colleagues in the newsletter!!!

# Deliverables

For this newsletter, the Deliverables Report will focus on the successful completion of Relias trainings. Congratulations to all the programs who have excelled in supporting their staff in fulfilling at least 70% of training.



**Congratulations to ALL our residential facilities for the great care they have taken to maintain the physical environment at the homes. QAPI audit score averaged over 95%**

### Promising Path to Success Quiz Winners

**Spring Quiz**  
 Nicole Ciencen, Malcolm House  
 Monik Snoer, Sayre House

**Summer Quiz**  
 Michelle Matthews  
 intern at Sayre House

## Clinical Rounds Sessions

YCS is offering monthly Clinical Rounds sessions to support clinicians by providing a safe space to discuss their concerns and participate in interesting trainings.

“We know that the important work being done by our clinicians can be taxing. These sessions are designed to help staff refuel and recharge,” said Tara Augustine.



### YCS Clinical Rounds Schedule July 2021-June 2022

2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month: 10:00am-11:30am

Month	Date	Topic	Facilitator
July	7/14/2021	LGBTQ Clinical considerations—Part II <i>Q &amp; A and Follow-up</i>	Jen Faasse, LPC Montclair State University- CAECMH
August	8/11/2021	Case Conference	Dayna Egan, Psy.D.
September	9/8/2021	Relationship Based Clinical Work	Dayna Egan, Psy.D.
October	10/13/2021	Case Conference	Dayna Egan, Psy.D.
November	11/10/2021	Sand Tray Therapy	Jason Rodker, Psy.D.
December	12/8/2021	Case Conference	Dayna Egan, Psy.D.
January	1/12/2022	Current Understandings of Autism Spectrum Disorder and Approaches for Intervention	Gerry Costa, Ph.D. Montclair State University- CAECMH
February	2/9/2022	Case Conference	Dayna Egan, Psy.D.
March	3/9/2022	Group Therapy	Sara Mendez Emma, LCSW and Blair Biersbach, LCSW Jewish Family Services Metrowest
April	4/13/2022	Case Conference	Dayna Egan, Psy.D.
May	5/11/2022	Multicultural Clinical Considerations	Melany Rivera Maldonado, Ph.D. The New School
June	6/8/2022	Case Conference	Dayna Egan, Psy.D.

# Highlights

## NFP Graduation

Congratulations to the 36 mothers who graduated from the **NFP program** this summer. Shout out to all the nurses who lovingly guided the moms for over two years in the midst of the pandemic.



YCS Proud! **Tara Augustine**, received the Todd Ouida Children's Hero Award at its Annual Professional Conference: "Resilience and the Human Spirit." Tara was recognized for her significant contributions and dedication to infant, child, and family mental health by Andrea Ouida, co-founder of the Todd Ouida Children's Foundation. "Tara's commitment to invest in the 1,100 YCS staff members who care for the children has had an immediate and positive impact on the lives of the children." In her acceptance speech, Tara said "The Ouidas embody the spirit of resiliency that all of us in children's mental health have worked so hard to promote."



Everyone had a great time at the Sawtelle South Luau BBQ last month! With grass skirts and hula hoops on hand, Sawtelle residents and staff from all the southern region group homes enjoyed dancing, eating, and being together at the Hawaiian themed party in Willingboro.

**Congratulations to all the participants and winners of  
the 1st YCS Green Thumb Garden Contest!**

**YCS Green Thumb Contest Winners**

**Most Interesting Garden Winner**

**Holley Center - special shout out to Julianna Edwards**

**Most Interesting Planter**

**Haddon Heights - special shout out to Sonja Stang**

**Best Overall Design**

**Vineland - special shout out to Mary Lorito**



### Staff finds creative ways to celebrate Easter

Whether the Easter Bunny came to visit or children colored eggs, hunted for treats or had a special holiday dinner, Easter was a fun time around the agency. Older residents participated in themed art projects, and at Malcolm House the interns filled plastic eggs with affirmative messages and hid them around the home for the residents to find. Thanks to everyone who helped create holiday memories during this continuing health crisis.

For Pride Month, **Haddon Heights** hosted its very first "Drag" Fashion Show. Our self-esteem theme included "Colors of the Rainbow; Comfy/Cozy; & Slay the Runway," which each corresponded to discussions on how we present our identities authentically and with confidence. Of course, the clients had a blast strutting their stuff that night, but I think everyone had just as much fun decorating, making rainbow treats and the after-show dance party! Sonja Stang, LSW



When the children walked into the renovated recreation room at the **Holley Center** for the first time, it felt like Christmas morning. There was so much joy and excitement as they roamed from station to station around the room. Every stop was just like opening a new gift. A special thanks to the YCS Foundation for working alongside the maintenance department to create such a beautiful environment for the children to explore and enjoy.

## Connecting with Students at Eastside High during COVID

Due to a number of logistical problems, classes were completely remote at Eastside High for 18 months. During this time, the **YCS School-Based Youth Services (SBYS) 21st Century, Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (PJD) programs, and Parent Linking Program (PLP)**, have worked hard to keep students engaged in learning, extracurricular activities and virtual counseling. With the support of the administration, the YCS team identified students who were in danger of failing and encouraged them to participate in virtual tutoring sessions in math, chemistry, physics or English. Staff got creative and offered a variety of enriching activities, with online cooking classes, weight training, art classes and video editing. They held a virtual conference with a motivational speaker, contests, and raffles and a Mother's Day event.



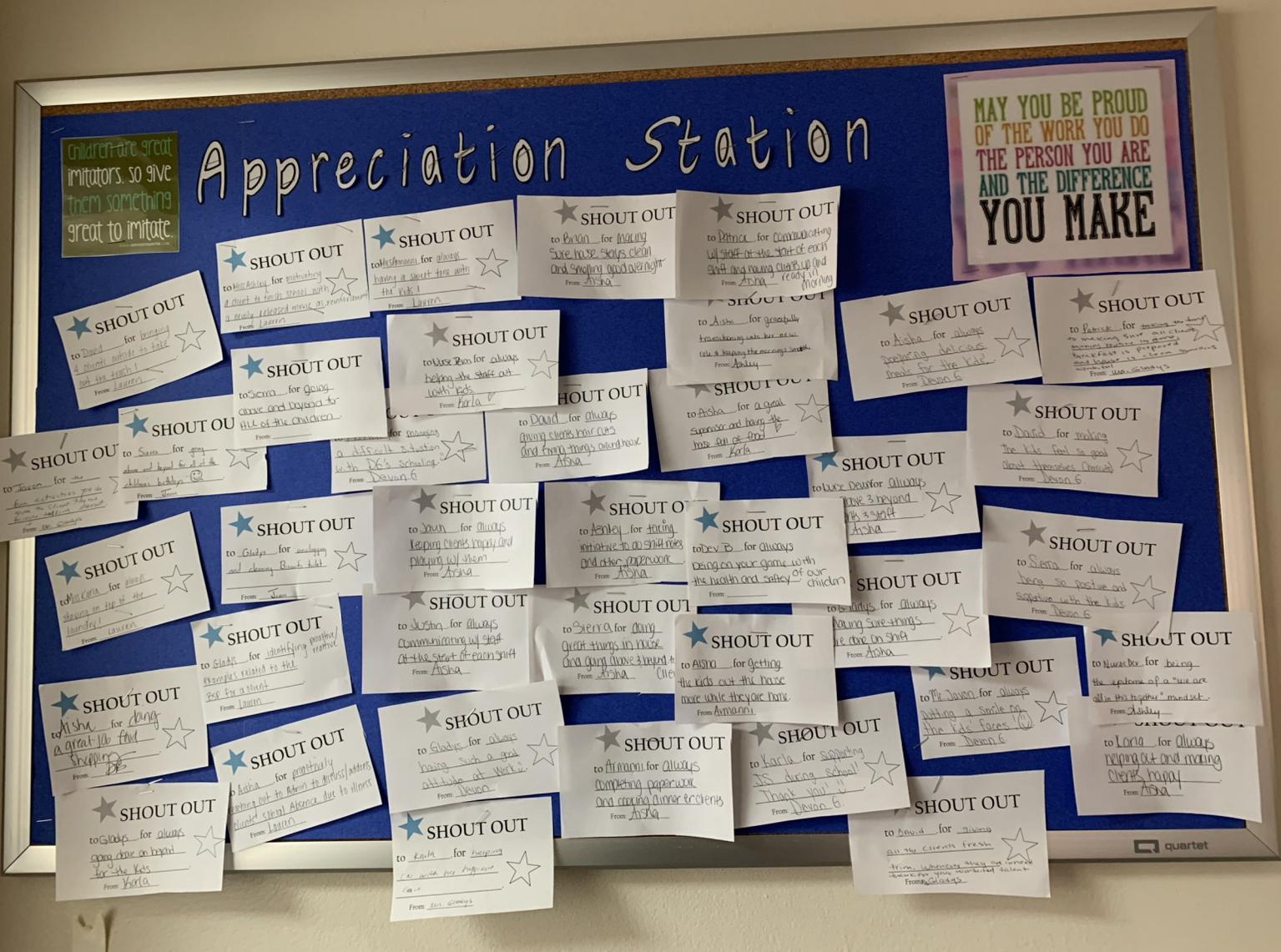
### Students Enjoy School

The **YCS George Washington School** has made some changes to its daily Master Schedule that are focusing on Social Emotional Learning. For example, students recite daily affirmations in class during Morning Meeting and can be heard throughout the day using words of encouragement towards themselves and others. Prudence Kelly, clinician, and Annabelle Gonzalez, assistant principal, have created a unique SEL Jeopardy Game that has also helped the children get in touch with their feelings.

The students have also taken their new skills out into the community and have written letters of encouragement to residents of a nearby nursing home. SEL has been so successful that every classroom has been bestowed the honor of being recognized as “Certified Kind” classroom upon completing a Kindness Challenge which acknowledged students acts of kindness and their efforts!



Would you like to play SEL Jeopardy with the children in your program. Here is the link to get started.  
<https://jeopardylabs.com/play/sel-jeopardy-96>



At the **CSAP Winslow Home**, staff recognize each other for tasks done well on the job by posting notes on the home's Appreciation Station bulletin board. At the end of the month, the employee with the most shout outs receives a gift card. All the other names are placed in a hat and one lucky employee is the recipient of a smaller gift card. The Appreciation Station is the brain child of **Dave Johnson**, program manager and **Lauren Marks**, BCBA. "It has been really motivating because the more times you're recognized the more chances you have to win," says Jacky Maddi, VP.

And there is More....

Lauren created a Behavior Board to display data that shows staff how their efforts in following the behavior plans are having a positive effect on the reduction of problem behaviors at the home. This has given staff more confidence in their job's performance. On the lighter side, Dave and Lauren have created a birthday board for staff & clients. Each month, they choose a day to celebrate everyone whose birthday falls in that month. There is lunch, balloons, treats and more.

## Taking Care of Business

**David H.**, Kilbarchan resident, is thankful for the opportunity to have his first job through a work program created by Old Navy. When YCS staff told David about the program, he submitted his resume and applied. Afterwards, he had a virtual interview and was hired. After completing orientation, he began working on the sales floor, helping customers, maintaining the front of the store and recovering clothing. “The work environment is an overall great experience,” says David. “It’s my first time in retail. I love it there”. David, who is also attending Lincoln Tech to become an electrician, wants to use his work experience to go into management and sees a future working with the company. “I am very thankful for this position” says David, “being able to reincorporate myself into the world and help others is great.”



**Malcolm Rackley**

**Malcolm Rackley** and **John Figueroa** are two independent and hard-working young men according to Leidy Gomez, House Manager of Sawtelle Thomas House. Malcolm and John found contract work from Employment Horizon. They found their jobs through the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DVR). Malcolm has been working since 2019 and John has been working for 90 days. Because they have community time, they can take care of their own transportation by ordering UBER rides to and from work. They do contract work for Cablevision such as assembling remote controls, testing cable boxes, and packaging them. They also package Tiffany jewelry. “They are doing amazing work,” says Ms. Gomez.

Several children from **Davis House** and **Muller** volunteered to plant flowers, herbs, tomatoes and organic heirloom purple potatoes in planters by the Dominick D’Agosta Garden. In September, the garden yielded about 30 small potatoes that were soon transformed into a tasty potato salad for all the children to enjoy.





### Kindness Rocks

To celebrate Autism Awareness Month, behaviorist **Yakima Bagby** worked with the residents at six Sawtelle homes to paint rocks with uplifting messages to either decorate the homes' front lawns or place in their neighborhoods & nearby parks. Yakima said, "Our consumers were eager to participate and did such a great job at making the rocks as beautiful as could be! While completing the project, I asked what autism meant to them. Their responses were AMAZING. They used words such as: 'Carefree', 'Smart', 'Intelligent', 'Different in a good way' & 'Great Thinkers' just to name a few.



**NR Sawtelle staff** surprised **Rayletta Garrison** with a party to celebrate the completion of her Master's Degree and birthday.

The **Newark Campus staff** pulled together to organize a fun-filled spring break for the children. Every day was a new adventure. They spent a day on the boardwalk at Point Pleasant Beach, hiked in the woods, tested their luck at Dave & Busters, and capped off the week watching a movie under the stars with popcorn and treats. "We wanted to give the kids a break from the stress of remote learning and Covid," said **Bill Waller**.

Teachers at GW School give students a hands-on experience preparing garden containers and planting seeds to celebrate Earth Day.

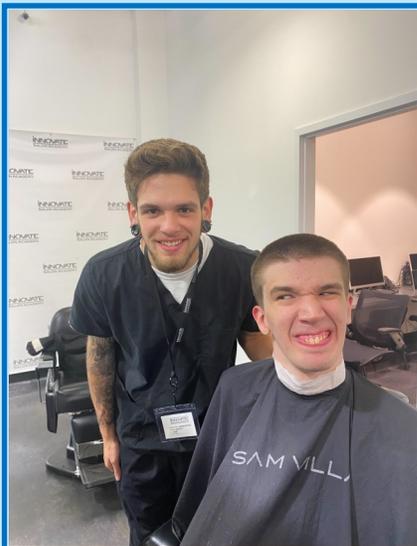




Youth on the Kilbarchan Campus celebrated the start of summer with a talent and art show. Afterwards, the staff and the residents enjoyed a BBQ together.



On the Road! Sawtelle Haledon residents are off to Party City!



**Sawtelle Amwell** residents took a trip to the Innovate Salon Academy to get their hair cut. All the staff gathered to celebrate a resident's birthday and enjoyed a BBQ in the home's backyard during a nice summer day.



**Sawtelle Walnut** Staff shared photos of clients celebrating their birthdays and getting some fresh air and exercise during a hike in Oakland.



**Sawtelle Hall Camp**



# Community Partners

IKEA has been a trusted friend to the children at YCS since 2003 – the year they invited the children at the Holley Center to participate in a fun activity to celebrate the opening of their store in Paramus. Since then, IKEA leadership in both the northern and southern regions of New Jersey, has stepped up to the plate repeatedly to furnish new residential facilities or renovate the furnishings at existing sites. Their employees have often eagerly pitched in to assemble IKEA furniture and decorate the homes - their spirit to volunteer has been inspiring. During the pandemic, IKEA has been an especially supportive partner - donating new bedding, towels and more. When we have asked for their help, they have always responded with kindness and generosity. Please share your gratitude when you shop at IKEA.

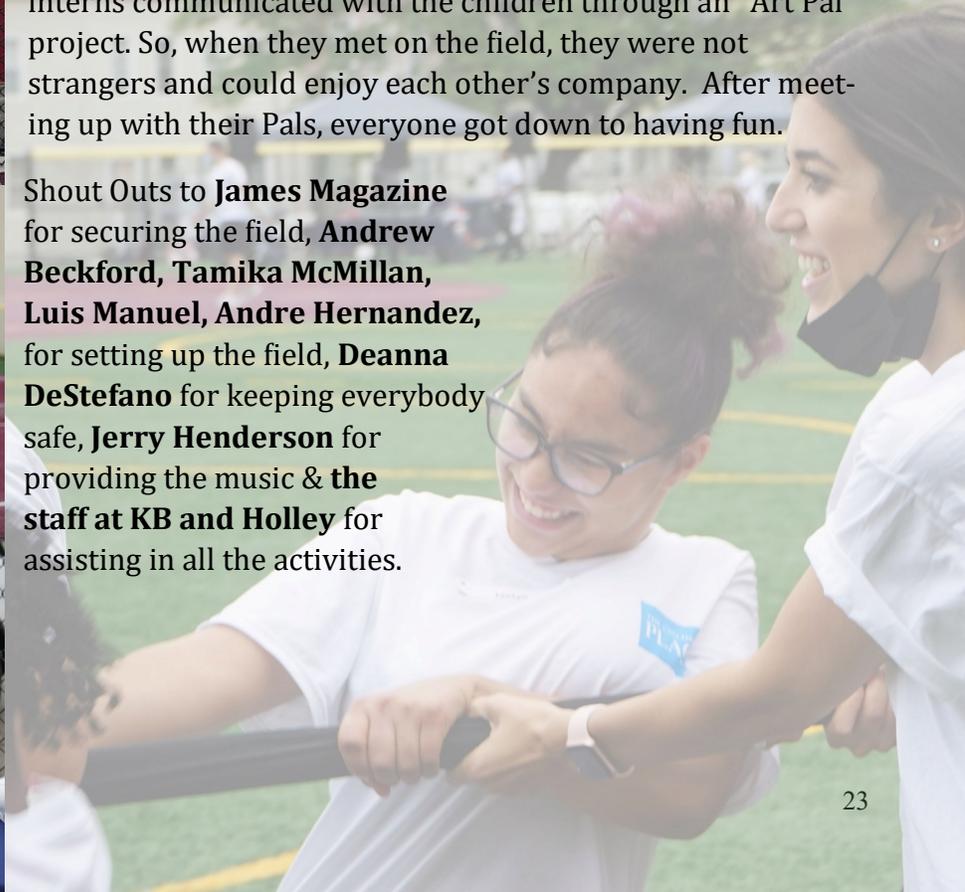


## The Children's Place (TCP) hosts a sports day for children at Holley & KB

Every summer TCP arranges an event for their interns and YCS campers. This year, they decided to prepare for meeting the children by giving the interns and the children a chance to get to know each other a little before the event. TCP interns communicated with the children through an "Art Pal" project. So, when they met on the field, they were not strangers and could enjoy each other's company. After meeting up with their Pals, everyone got down to having fun.



Shout Outs to **James Magazine** for securing the field, **Andrew Beckford, Tamika McMillan, Luis Manuel, Andre Hernandez,** for setting up the field, **Deanna DeStefano** for keeping everybody safe, **Jerry Henderson** for providing the music & **the staff at KB and Holley** for assisting in all the activities.



# Agency Updates

## *Implementation of Governor Murphy's Vaccine Mandate for Congregate Care*

To comply with the Governor's order that every employee who works in a congregate care agency, either be fully vaccinated by September 7th or agree to submit the results of a COVID test weekly, YCS has put the following plan in place.

Unvaccinated employees must submit proof of a negative Covid test every Tuesday to the leadership at their site, before starting work. Nursing has sent out the Spotswood testing schedule and free testing locations throughout NJ. The information is posted at every site. Please use this list as a reference to locate free weekly testing sites.

Employees who do not have proof of a negative Covid test will be able to purchase a rapid test from their supervisor at the site for a fee of \$10. You will be able to work if the test results are negative. The cost of the test is the responsibility of the employee.

If you have any questions, please contact:

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**Deanna DeStefano, RN**  
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## *Great News! YCS Adds an Additional Paid Holiday for Full Time Employees*

YCS will add **Juneteenth** (June 19th) as an official paid holiday for fulltime employees.

Also, Columbus Day will now be changed to a floating holiday. This is not an additional day, but a day you can use any time during the year as a paid holiday. For example, it can be used for a religious holiday or observance, special occasion, etc..

These changes will take effect in 2022 and be reflected in next year's YCS holiday schedule.

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## *There is Still Time to Request a YCS Polo Shirt*

When YCS announced that all Direct Support Professionals would be required to wear a YCS Polo shirt to work beginning September 7th, we immediately heard from many other employees who asked, "What about us?"

YCS' initial decision was to ensure the safety and security of DSPs by clearly identifying them as YCS employees while in the community with the residents. However, in response to the overwhelming requests from other staff, any employee can request one YCS Polo shirt to wear with pride on the job.

**Dawn Jones**, VP of DD Residential Services in the South says feedback has been very positive. "It makes dressing for work much easier for my staff, and they are very appreciative that YCS has covered the cost!"

If you would like a YCS Polo Shirts to show your YCS Pride, please speak to your supervisor. All orders must be placed through your program.

I'd like to thank all my fellow co-workers for your efforts to acquire the skills necessary for our agency to implement the UKG electronic payroll and HR system. With your support, patience, and oftentimes helpful and honest feedback, the UKG Team has reached many of our work goals for 2021. Please know our #1 priority was and still is to make your work experience more satisfying. We are not done yet! With your continued support, we are working even harder to put into place new features to optimize your work experience.

What were our goals?	
Goal	Success Criteria at time of Project
Give employees insight and control of their time.	Empower employees to view/edit their time so they could be accurately compensated for the hours worked. All employees will login to the system and enter/verify their time.
Save time approving employee timecards	Can view timecards easily at any time (No pressing 'Enter'). No printing/signing/sending. Log in from phone/computer and approve.
Increase accountability	Equip managers with realtime information to make decisions. Equip managers with the policies and procedures to increase accountability.
Decrease Errors	Eliminate errors caused by manual calculations and tracking down paper processes. Eliminate "Known rules" that evolved and maintained over time. Example: Clinical staff at Holley being charged to the schools just because.
Eliminate Manual Processes	Improve employees' experiences in scheduling, requesting off, and timekeeping. No paper to get lost, have to track down, or sign/scan/print/send.

**Erin McCloskey and the UKG Team**

## *Training Department News*



### **Check This Out**

You can now get all the latest news from the YCS Training Department on their NEW Instagram page: @ycs\_training.dept

### **Did You Know?**

The Training Department will offer Evening Orientation for New Hires beginning September 14, 2021. The evening Orientation will be held monthly for 3 consecutive evenings.

### **Looking to get ahead in your career?**

The YCS Training Department. is offering soft skills professional workshops to all interested employees. The new series on Teamwork and Teambuilding; Cultivating a Positive Attitude will be conducted in the classroom. You can sign up for each class individually through Relias. Detailed course descriptions and learning objectives are provided in the monthly training announcements and will be posted on the YCS Training Department Instagram page.

## *IT Department News*

### **BE in The Know!**

All YCS employees are required to have an active YCS e mail account. By activating your Microsoft 365 YCS e mail account and logging in every day, you will know firsthand of any important agency updates, training opportunities, contests, access to our newsletter: Inside YCS and much more. If you do not have a YCS email or are having difficulty getting into your e mail, please speak with your supervisor or contact helpdesk@ycs.org

