

EarthWorks Program Spotlight & CACFP Resource!

1 message

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EarthWorks Program Spotlight & CACFP Resource! December 2018



Spotlight

Ashley Fantigrossi, EarthWorks Program Director at the Center for Youth

Ashley Fantigrossi, EarthWorks Program Director at the [Center for Youth](#), as always had a passion for educating communities about social issues, but it was not until she got the opportunity to join EarthWorks that it became the focus of her career. For several years, her career focused on working with technology startups to deliver locally-sourced innovations. Ashley stated, "This privilege allowed me to work with entities such as the United Nations, whose passion and focus ultimately inspired me to enter this field."

Ashley believes that "so much of our ability to make an impact comes down to our willingness to try." During her time with EarthWorks, she has seen students of all ages connect and be inspired in ways that they would not have been able to before.

The experience of working with EarthWorks has given her "the deepest respect for those whose daily mission is to engage and improve our future by working to educate youth, foster their development, and provide for the wellness of our communities at-large." Ashley added that the work they do is truly transformative in building a future of greater equity.

Now, as EarthWorks Program Director at The Center for Youth, Ashley is able to cultivate innovative change through experiential education. Their programs "challenge and empower students to develop healthy, lasting bonds with their environment, motivate scientific inquiry, encourage exploration of the natural world, and inspire positive change in our community." The vehicle for all of this the school-based and community programs where students and families can practice survival skills under the guidance of their Learning Guides.



When asked about the importance of afterschool, summer, and expanded learning, Ashley discussed how the connection youth make with nature in EarthWorks is crucial, as technology remains a part of our daily lives. In her view, “this is not an adversarial relationship with technology, but a component of wellness.”

Ashley added that, “research has shown that youth who are connected with nature are healthier, happier, and smarter than those who are not.” EarthWorks programs specifically target these needs by incorporating elements of nature and survival skills into every program. Ashley urges that we must maintain these connections to protect ourselves just as we would make time for physical activity to keep our bodies healthy.

When asked what her favorite part of her job is, Ashley stated, “Without a doubt, it is experiencing our programs alongside students. Each group is different, and makes every experience unique.” Ashley is continually inspired by the awe, wonder, and creativity she sees in youth - especially in the forest. She added that, “In those times, you can literally see transformation, see someone come out of their shell, and witness the power of being connected to others and our world.”

CACFP Resource

December Activity

Here’s an activity your program participants can do to celebrate the winter holidays by building a healthy snowman treat! Although it’s the end of the fall semester of the school year, you can still enroll for CACFP anytime during the year. Don’t wait anymore! Learn more about serving reimbursable nutritious snacks and/or meals at AfterschoolMealsNY.org.



Nominate an Outstanding Afterschool Educator!

Each year, PASE honors five outstanding afterschool educators at the annual PASEsetter Awards Benefit. PASEsetter Award Winners are individuals whose commitment, energy, and creativity have had an indelible impact on the children and youth of New York City.

To nominate an individual for a 2019 PASEsetter Award, please **complete this online form** by **Friday, December 14, 2018**.



Who is a PASEsetter?

- A staff person at a youth-serving agency in New York City whose primary work is directly with young people in afterschool, in the evenings, and/or during the summers.
- Nominees must be paid staff, not volunteers, working either full or part-time, and have worked a minimum of three years at their current agency.
- A staff person who attended an afterschool program growing up and who is now working in afterschool will be given special consideration by the selection committee.
- No nominations will be accepted from an agency that has had a PASEsetter Award winner within the last three years.
- Executive Directors are NOT eligible.

Learn more by downloading a [full award description](#).

Interested in advancing in the school-age field?
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Upcoming Events

12/11 and 12/18: Gender, Sexuality, and the Family in Early Childhood Education (NYC)

We know that children are smart and observant. In the world of Disney princesses, Marvel superheroes, and ubiquitous advertising, how do we support children in exploring gender? How do we teach children the skills to stand up for themselves, to examine the world thoughtfully and critically, and to name and shape their own identities? To explore these questions and gain new resources, the New York Early Childhood Professional Development Institute invites you to a series of workshops on "Gender, Sexuality, and the Family in Early Childhood Education." The workshops can be attended as a series of three or individually. Follow this link to [register](#).

12/13: Afterschool Webinar: Applying for the New York Life Foundation's Grants

The New York Life Foundation will make 26 grants to afterschool, summer, and expanded learning programs serving youth through their *Aim High* local grant program. Join the Afterschool Alliance for this webinar to learn more about the funding opportunity, eligibility requirements, and expectations. The speakers will be Marlyn Torres, Senior Program Officer at the New York Life Foundation, and Dan Gilbert, the administrator of the grant application and review process. Review the application beforehand and have your questions ready, and hear tips on submitting a strong application. [Click here](#) to register.

12/11: Supervisors Series: Effective Administrative Systems for Supervisors (NYC)

This session will focus on rationale and strategies for establishing and enforcing policies and procedures that work for successful program operations. Participants will review communication strategies with stakeholders (staff, parents, youth, school, CBO, etc.) on these systems. Participants will explore how time management and delegation can also support successful program administrative systems. Follow [this link](#) to register.

1/8 – 4/23: Supporting Youth Development through STEM

Increase your skills using positive youth development practices to engage youth in meaningful STEM learning experiences. This ACRES series includes 3 modules: Developing STEM Identities and Making Career Connections, Giving Youth Voice and Choice, and Exploring Youth Understanding in STEM. The group will meet for a lesson and coaching session for each module at 10 AM - 12 PM on Tuesdays from January 8 to April 23, 2019. [Use this link](#) for specific dates and to register.

1/23: Advocacy Day, Albany, NY

The Network for Youth Success will be hosting our Annual Advocacy Day on January 23, 2019! Program providers, students, parents, and other supporters of afterschool, summer, and expanded learning programs are encouraged to join us in Albany, NY to meet New York State Assemblymembers and Senators to advocate for New York's children and families. [Click here to register!](#)

1/28: Community Schools Advocacy Day,

Join the New York State Community Schools Network as they host their 4th annual statewide advocacy day in Albany on Monday January 28, 2019. The event is to advocate for the New York State Community Schools Network's FY20 Budget Priorities and inform the state legislature on the community schools strategy by highlighting local efforts and stories of impact across the state. Registration can be found [here](#).

3/5-3/18: National AfterSchool Association Convention, New York, New York

Join our community for four days of networking, learning, and inspiration. For more information, follow [this link](#).

3/12-3/14: Challenging Behavior in Preschool Children Train-the-Trainer, Hartford, CT

This train-the-trainer session is designed specifically for professionals working with teachers to better support preschool children with challenging behavior. During this professional development experience, trainers will participate in an intensive, interactive session delving more deeply into the understanding of, prevention of and planned responses to challenging behaviors in young children. It highlights the Devereux Center for Resilient Children DVD resource, Facing the Challenge, as well as the best-selling book by Barbara Kaiser and Judy Sklar-Rasminsky, Challenging Behavior in Young Children, 4th Edition. This session is a MUST for trainers who want to enhance their training sessions on the difficult and important topic of working with children with challenging behaviors. Click [here](#) to register. (Registration closes March 1st).

3/16: Terra Science and Engineering Fair

Whether you want to explore Cassini's adventures around Saturn, test water quality in a local creek, or design an app to prep for your next exam, the Terra Northeast Regional Science & Engineering Fair (TNRSEF) enables you to ask questions and find answers! Students in grades 6-12 can come to SUNY Geneseo in March to celebrate all s/he has learned and perhaps even earn an award. More information can be found [here](#).

School's Out, Make it Count!

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5/10-5/11: Network for Youth Success Annual Conference, Saratoga Springs

Save the Date! Back by popular demand for one more year in Saratoga Springs! Click [here](#) for more information!

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