Annual Conference Award Recipient Spotlights!
May 2019

Spotlight
Network for Youth Success School's Out, Make it Count! 2019 Annual Conference Award Recipients

The Network for Youth Success is holding its first awards ceremony during our School’s Out, Make it Count! 2019 Annual Conference this weekend in Saratoga Springs. The awards ceremony seeks to acknowledge the outstanding passion and dedication of those both working in and supporting the afterschool, summer, and expanded learning field. Our interviews highlight just some of the amazing work done by the award recipients.

The Quality Leadership Award

Robert Monahan of the Greater Ridgewood Youth Council has been working in the afterschool, summer, and expanded learning field for nearly four decades. He has been involved in youth programming since 1972 and told us he has, “always been a service minded person, a community activist of sorts.” Currently, Robert is the President of the Greater Ridgewood Youth Council, “an organization that serves 3,200 young people and their families on a daily basis.” The Greater Ridgewood Youth Council resides in three different schools and hosts a range of afterschool programs, summer programs, and youth internships. When asked what his favorite part of his job is, Robert responded, “As an old goat, the best part of my mission is to mentor young, energetic, passionate staff to reach for the stars. With 550 overall staff, amazing things happen every single day.”
Kim Haynes began working in the afterschool field in 2007. She told us, “I chose this career because it was a passion of mine since I was able to work my first summer youth job at the age of thirteen….I love working with the youth in helping them find their passion.” Currently, Kim is a Program Director at New York Edge. She is responsible for overseeing the day to day operation of the program, 17 staff members, and 140 students. Kim believes that afterschool is, “bridging the gap by helping each child first acknowledging their self-image of who they are, which will help captivate their self-esteem.” Kim says her favorite part of her job is, “knowing that each and every day that I have given everyone involved a piece of my passion allowing them to not only know the vision but see it too; it also makes me happy to see each child and or families share their experiences about my program.”

The Exemplary Award of Professionalism

Dr. Anna Morgan-Mullane is the Vice President of Mental Health Services at Children of Promise. Dr. Morgan-Mullane has been working in the afterschool and summer program setting for 10 years. Dr. Morgan-Mullane stated that she decided to pursue a career in this field because she “felt excited about the idea of transitioning into an environment that offered creative and innovative therapeutic outlets for children and families impacted by the criminal justice systems.” She had a desire to work in partnership with children and families, “in a setting that offered a supportive and safe space for healing that might have previously felt stigmatizing to receive.” In her current role, Dr. Morgan-Mullane and other staff developed a mental health team in an effort to infuse mental health practices, training, and interventions into the activities for children during their afterschool and summer camp hours. She added that “this included training all program staff on anti-oppressive trauma-informed interventions and behavioral practices.” Dr. Morgan-Mullane told us that her favorite part of her job is, “waking up every morning knowing I'm going to a place that has become more than a job, it's become a way of life. A life I'm deeply proud of because of the team members and families who teach me so much on a daily basis.”
Chelsea Martin began working in the afterschool, summer, and expanded learning field in 2010 when she was assigned as the Program Aide at the Native America Community Services. Chelsea admitted that originally she did not expect a career to blossom in this field. However, Chelsea found that she thoroughly enjoyed working with youth. Chelsea added, “In the years to follow, I increased my knowledge of the field and my years of experience lead me to new aspirations.” Currently, Chelsea is the Assistant Coordinator and is second in command. While changes may have altered her status, her dedication and commitment to the program never did. Chelsea is as invested in youth as when she first discovered her passion of this work. Chelsea finds the benefits of afterschool to be endless, adding, “Students get academic support during afterschool, summer, and expanded learning time along with enrichment activities that allow them to be exposed to things that they may not have thought to try. These programs provide support for students and their families, helping them become confident individuals in and out of school.” When asked what her favorite part of her job is Chelsea replied, “planning and organizing.” She finds that planning ensures safety and that it is her job to keep information organized so that youth are safe.

The Program Award of Excellence and Innovation

Children of Promise is based in New York City and their mission is to embrace children of incarcerated parents and empower them to break the cycle of intergenerational involvement in the criminal justice system. Dr. Mullane, Vice President of the Mental Health Clinic, wrote her dissertation and developed the therapeutic model to address the unique needs of this population. Sharon Content, President & Founder of CPNYC, created the co-location model and worked with the Department of Health to create a special waiver so that both the mental health clinicians and the afterschool counselors are informed of each child’s family status, court history, and therapy needs. The children and families access the mental health clinic through enrollment in the afterschool program and summer camp. The children participate in programming Monday through Saturday and receive formalized instruction in STEM learning, literacy, physical education, and enrichment through field trips to museums, libraries, and parks. The certified counselors and volunteers, who include retired teachers, also support homework and school work through their Saturday Resource Clinic. Over the last ten years, Children of Promise, NYC has developed the gold standard of care that directly addresses the trauma and needs of children experiencing parental incarceration. They address these needs through their structured, certified afterschool program.

The mission of New York Edge is to help bridge the opportunity gap among underserved students by providing programs designed to improve academic performance, health and wellness, self-confidence, character and attitudes for success in life. Over the past three years Michael Roche, the After School Program Director at Middle School 51 (MS 51), has greatly expanded the afterschool
program activity offerings. A robotics program was started, in which students have excelled to the point that the robotics team competed and won first place at the First Lego League Qualifier in 2016. Their jazz band recently performed at the Penn Club in Manhattan’s theater district where they had an opportunity to play two songs at a New York Edge benefit. In collaboration with Principal Mele, Michael has developed a new leadership initiative, Virtual Enterprise, for the afterschool participants at MS51. Virtual Enterprise is a simulated business created and run by the students under the guidance of a teacher. The program empowers students to perform the activities and handle the responsibilities involved in starting and operating a business. College readiness initiatives are also offered through college campus tours and collaborating with school staff to open a college office for all families to receive information. Additionally, in recognition of the school’s large Latino population and in response to parents’ expressed need, NYE MS 51 is providing Saturday workshops for families to help them become more confident and proficient in speaking English. This commitment to providing youth and families with innovative programs and opportunities has increased New York Edge’s ability to positively impact the students children.

The Champion Award

Superman said, “There is a superhero in all of us; we just need the courage to put on the cape.” A native of Buffalo and advocate for education and afterschool programming in Western New York, Assemblywoman Crystal Peoples-Stokes has responded to the call to serve courageously. A woman of her word, she has consistently voted and pushed resources to support the needs of the students served by the After-School Network of Western New York. She is a leader with a servant’s heart. Not only does she show up to create policy and voice her opinion as a political advocate for our region, she shows up to show her face when called to be present for our students. She has shown students and program providers that they are a priority of hers. A superhero and champion for afterschool, Assemblywoman Peoples-Stokes, has taken the time to not only show up to events for children, but she stays to participate and share a moment with her youngest constituents whenever her schedule permits her to enter the room. She is a courageous leader who reminds others that children must be a priority of our state. Assemblymember Crystal Peoples-Stokes told us, “It is an honor and a privilege to have been nominated for and to receive the New York State Afterschool Champion. Programs such as those of the After-School Network of Western New York, and others all across the state, are such a critical component of children’s education, development and well-being. Afterschool programs provide a safe and stimulating environment for the enrichment of our children and help to keep families working.”

Understanding the true value of high-quality supports and programming for children and families in his district, Assembly Member Pichardo heard the voices of parents and students when funding for Advantage After School was being threatened. The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families
(CHCF) serves 450 students in afterschool programs at two schools in Assemblymember Pichardo's district, 210 of those students' seats are primarily funded through state Advantage funding. When CHCF staff, parents, and students alerted the Assemblymember to an ongoing attempt to cut this funding in the Executive Budget, and the dire need for the Assembly and Senate to fully restore this funding in the FY19 budget to avoid an end to these valuable programs, Pichardo stepped up in support and defense. CHCF was grateful to work directly with the Assembly Member's office to coordinate a press conference to bring attention to the pending cut. As a result of a joint effort with organizational partners, community parents, and students, and leaders like Assemblymember Pichardo, the Assembly and Senate fully restored the funding for FY19. CHCF immensely thanks Assemblymember Pichardo for his ongoing support.

How to Talk About Quality Improvement with External Stakeholders

One of the many great benefits of going through a quality improvement process with a tool like the Quality Self-Assessment (QSA) Tool is the ability to increase communication and relationships with stakeholders. While some stakeholders, such as participants, families, staff, and partners may be intimately involved in the improvement process, others aren't necessarily contributing to the self-assessment but still benefit from hearing about your process and results. These may include funders, board members, evaluators, and more. So, what can you share with these stakeholders without compromising the low-stakes aspect of self-assessment?

- At the start, let them know your program is participating in a quality improvement process to recognize the great work already being done and to incorporate best-practices into areas that could be further improved.
- Share how you plan to communicate with them throughout the process, whether that will be through standing meetings or reports, site visits, newsletters, or other methods.
- Once you've completed the self-assessment portion, communicate your program's areas of strength - highlight some of those 3s and 4s you're particularly proud of! Then, pick one area you plan to improve to share. An area that you could use help with from external stakeholders, be that funding, partnerships, resources, volunteer time, etc. may be particularly helpful to highlight. Be sure to phrase it positively and communicate your vision for what the program will look like with this area improved rather than sharing a lot of detail on what's not going well currently.
- After the improvements have been made, celebrate! Share your successes and let everyone know how great your program is! Then remind your stakeholders that quality improvement is an ongoing process, and you will continue to self-assess and implement improvement plans to maintain quality.
You know your external stakeholders best, so carefully consider how they should be involved in your quality improvement process and adjust your communications accordingly. Just be sure to communicate your great work to deepen your relationship and their understanding of your program.

**Upcoming Events**

**5/13: Coaching As Supervision, Olean, NY**
Free workshop for afterschool, summer, and expanded learning time professionals! Supervisors and directors will explore techniques that support staff growth and development in this workshop. Building on positive youth development approaches, participants will learn what staff need to be dependable, independent adults in the workplace, and what leadership needs to do to get them there. Emphasis in this workshop will be on practicing coaching and peer learning techniques. [Click here](#) to register.

**5/14: The QSA Tool and How to Use It, Olean, NY**
Free workshop for afterschool, summer, and expanded learning professionals! Learn how to reflect on your practice and program with the Quality Self-Assessment (QSA) tool, 3rd Edition. This workshop will introduce participants to the tool, including how to use it to promote continuous quality improvement. This session will include engaging activities to model key parts of the process. [Click here](#) to register.

**5/20: Making Service Part of Your Afterschool Program Culture**
This webinar will be approximately 30 minutes long and will feature at least one of the 96 tools from the Beyond the Bell Toolkit. The featured tool will be available for free download from the [Beyond the Bell website](#) following the webinar. Follow [this link](#) to register.

**6/1: Smart Coos’ National Bilingual Bee & Biliteracy Competition, Brooklyn, NY**
Register for Smart Coos’ First Annual National Bilingual Bee & Biliteracy Competition! This event aims to bring 250+ bilingual student participants, ages 6-15, together. The competition will assess children's proficiency in English along with one of these languages: Mandarin Chinese, French, Spanish, or Haitian Creole. If there are students who would like to participate or educators who would like to volunteer/judge, please email Mirta at mirta@smartcoos.com
6/9: STEM Teacher Expo, Teachers College, New York, NY
STEMteachersNYC's Annual STEM Teacher Expo, a teacher-led forum exploring the future of STEM Education in NYC and beyond. Drawing from their member network, the event will include live demos and displays, an interactive unconference, and presentations from teachers and practitioners working in the field today. Click here to register.

6/12 & 6/19: Building Your Bounce Professional Development Learning Series
This two part train-the-trainer webinar experience provides participants with a copy of the Building Your Bounce Professional Development Learning Series, a three-part digital training tool that includes recorded videos that cover topics including, "Examining Our Own Risk and Protective Factors," "What Resilience Means to Me," and "Introduction to the Devereux Adult Resilience Survey - 23 Questions That Can Change the Way You Look at Life." Trainers and coaches will learn to use this innovative, digital tool to promote adult wellness in a variety of settings, including staff meetings, in-service trainings and parent workshops. Join Nefertiti and learn how you can create an overall culture of resilience. Register here. (Registration closes June 5).

6/30: School-Age Care Credential Informational Meeting, Poughkeepsie, NY
The New York State School-Age Care Credential has been developed to promote quality services to children and families by providing specific standards, training, and evaluation of school-age staff members and providers based on their ability to meet the unique needs of this age group. It is an opportunity for adults working with school-age children to gain professional recognition for demonstrating competence in their on-the-job skills. Come to an informational meeting on Tuesday, July 30 from 5:00 - 6:00 pm to learn about the credential and the credential process as well as meet the instructor/advisor, Arlene Rider. For more information or to enroll contact Darla Fulmer at (845) 473-4141 ext. 216 or dfulmer@childcaredutchess.org.

7/1-8/9: STEM Summer Institute 2019, Teachers College, New York, NY
The STEMteachersNYC STEM Institute brings together educators from around the country for innovative, hands-on, and teacher-led professional development in STEM. Choose from over a dozen workshops in biology, physics, chemistry, computer science, elementary STEM, and more. Work side by side with active classroom teachers and revolutionize the way you teach science using a student-centered active learning approach, shown to increase classroom engagement and understanding of key science concepts. Click here to register and learn more.

8/4-8/10: Mindfulness Training for Educators, Lake Placid, NY
This weeklong program set in the idyllic environment of a lakeside retreat in the Adirondacks explores teaching for the 21st century. Participants will learn mindfulness practices, meditation, the neuroscience of learning, the nature of mind, and how to cultivate their inner resources. Each day will include experiential learning, as well as a cognitive element – and afternoons will be free to enjoy the many outdoor activities available to us, or to simply relax and read a book. Learn how mindfulness might benefit you in your role as an educator, and re-connect with the ideals that brought you into this field from the start! Click here for more information and how to register.

11/8: Regional Network Symposium, Rochester, NY
SAVE THE DATE! Our Regional Network Symposium will be November 8 at the Holiday Inn in downtown Rochester! Look out for more information here and on our website.
11/9: Rochester Training Institute, Rochester, NY
SAVE THE DATE! Our Training Institute will be November 9 at the Holiday Inn in downtown Rochester! Look out for more information here and on our website.

Our 2020 Annual Conference will be in Troy for 2020! Save the date now! Look for more information here and on our website as we get closer to the date!

Follow Us!

Remove my name from all future mass email communications.

Address postal inquiries to:
New York State Network for Youth Success, Inc.
415 River Street
Troy, NY 12180

Powered By Blackbaud eTapestry™