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Spotlight on Abbi and Cara, Remembering our Friend Amy, Brochure Cover Art Contest, and More!

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Network Newsletter | February 7, 2024

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Spotlight: Meet Cara and Abbi

The New York State Network For Youth Success has welcomed two new members to our team.

Abigael Rice

Abbi previously worked for Impact Earth, a commercial and residential food waste hauler in Rochester, NY as their Environmental Education Manager. In this role, Abbi taught all ages on sustainability topics that include composting, zero waste living, and recycling. She also managed the food waste schools program which introduces composting into the lunchroom and teaches students the benefits of compost through hands-on and lecture based education.

Abbi Completed her Master's Degree in Environmental Anthropology at the University of Saskatchewan. Her research brought her to Northern B.C. to study the effects that development has on First Nations' access to the land. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in both Cultural Anthropology and Fine Arts with a Minor in Museum Studies from SUNY Brockport.



Cara Sherwood

Cara oversees the Networks' annual conference, Empower Youth Success; coordinates Network events; and provides supplemental support for Wayne MOST. Cara has decades of experience in event planning, most recently coming from the food & beverage industry. She started her career in the energy efficiency sector with Lockheed Martin and then CLEAResult before

transitioning to work for a traveling events company focusing on youth birthday parties. Past experience also includes Associate Producer of The Enchanted City Steampunk Festival and Mini Maker Faire held in Troy.

Cara has volunteered for the Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership Organization (HOBY NYE) for over 20 years. She held the Leadership Seminar Chairperson position for two years organizing their three-day conference for high school sophomores. Additionally, she has served as Director of Facilities, Director of Staffing, and held a number of other committee and volunteer roles over the years. She earned a Bachelor's Degree in Anthropology with Minors in Medical Anthropology and Spanish from SUNY Potsdam.



Program Spotlight

Want to be featured on Facebook or our enews?

Fill out the personal/program form to tell us about the great things you or your program are doing.

Personal Spotlight | Program Spotlight

Remembering Amy Huff



On January 25th, we lost a dear friend, passionate advocate, and dedicated afterschool professional.

Amy Huff devoted her life to working with children in the Buffalo community. Amy was most passionate about positive youth development. She spent 18 years dedicated to students in her capacity as both Academic Achievement Director and Director of Youth Services. Oftentimes, Amy impacted student achievement by integrating cultural, physical, social and emotional activities with academics. Through her job at Native American Community Services, Amy won thousands, if not more, in grant funding through her exceptional grant writing abilities and passion for her work. Despite her success in this area, which gave hundreds of students the chance to succeed, Amy was best known for her compassion and willingness to give her all to those in need.

Most recently, Amy joined Northwest Buffalo Community Center at the Native American Magnet School. She was thrilled and excited to be there. She was already familiar with many of the staff and the students at the school, and they all loved having her back working in the building.

Amy attended Buffalo State in the 1990s and was inducted into the Rugby Hall of Fame. She was a dedicated mother to two boys and coached her son and his teammates on the West Side Black Hawks Street Hockey team. She enjoyed swimming and was an ardent sports fan. Her very competitive nature showed every time she engaged in sports. She was an avid Bandits, Bills, and Bison's Fan.

Amy was an active member of the Afterschool Network of Western New York (ASNWNYS) and the New York State Network for Youth Success (NYSNYS). She was in the inaugural cohort of the Network for Youth Success' Power of 3:00 Ambassadors as well as a School-Age Care Credentialed professional, advisor, and endorser.

"The first time I met Amy, I knew immediately that she put her entire heart into youth work. She genuinely cared about the Buffalo community, the children and families, and her colleagues and friends in the field. It is hard to imagine our work in Western NY without Amy, but her passion and commitment to us all will not soon be forgotten. Amy was a fierce advocate, and she will be greatly missed." - Kelly McMahon, NYSNYS

"My friend Amy taught me that 'there is no death, only a change of worlds.' Well, the world of the After School Network of WNY, and the communities it serves are a little dimmer now without the light that our beloved sister Amy Huff brought to spaces. For 10+ years, Amy and I were colleagues who spent many moments creating a safe space to teach and learn about our cultures from each other. She was a patient and pleasant presence full of wisdom to share. She could be trusted with my inquisitive nature, blunt asks, and partner with me in rants about how important teaching ALL children about ALL cultures was vital. Vital to creating a safe and united space for the present and the future. She was the first Native educator that many of our children and team members ever got to meet and she proudly exuded her culture 360 days a year to spark learning in those she worked with. She gave her all to us all, now she lives in the hearts of not just her family but also in her colleagues, former coworkers, and students. Thank you for being exactly who you were, Amy." - JoAnna Rozier-Johnson, United Way of Buffalo & Erie County

"I first met Amy at a SAC Credential Endorser training many years ago. In the five hours I spent training with her, I learned many things about her. I quickly picked up on her dedication to the out of school time field. She had a true desire to create safe, empowering, and engaging spaces for children. She was knowledgeable about best practices. And, she was funny. Over the years, I continued to see her dedication to the field and the children and families she served. She was honest, open minded, reflective, and always willing to voice her opinion. As an endorser she provided our future SAC Directors with knowledge of best practice, guidance on how to overcome obstacles, and most importantly, the understanding of their value as a childcare professional." - Erin Broderick, NYSNYS

"Amy Huff has been a close colleague of mine for the past 20 years. News of her death has been devastating to her family, friends, co-workers, staff, school parents and especially the children. Amy will be remembered as a wonderful friend, a truly dedicated professional and most importantly, a person who truly made a difference in the lives of the children in her care." - Sean McCrossan, NWBCC

"Whenever I saw Amy, she was always warm, caring, and interested in others. I often thought, 'those are amazing qualities for a person who works with youth.' I know she was passionate about her work and the people she worked with. I am always going to carry her in my heart." - Timothy Fowler, NYSNYS

"Amy was our beloved friend who dedicated her life's work to supporting youth. She will be missed, but her legacy lives on through the lives of the youth and families which she had a profound and life changing impact on." - Nekia Kemp, Buffalo PAL & ASNWNYS

"I have always known Amy to go above and beyond for those she cared about. She had such a deep rooted passion for working with children and youth. She influenced everyone she touched. She will be deeply missed and adored." - Sara Rickan, NYSNYS

"Amy was a joy to see and work with. She always had a kind word to share whenever I had the pleasure of meeting with her, and even whenever she sent an email. She was a steadfast advocate for youth and her community, unafraid to stand up for what she believed in. Nya:wëh Amy. You will be very missed." - Allie Lidie, NYSNYS

Action Alert: Tell Your State Representative to Support Afterschool

As the New York State budget season continues, New York legislators in the Assembly and the State Senate are deciding the issue areas to prioritize in the final budget. Thanks to the efforts of passionate afterschool advocates, legislators and the Governor are paying attention to afterschool and the important role these programs play for New York's youth and families.

Governor Hochul's Executive Budget Proposal included an additional investment of \$12.8 million to state afterschool programs. Meanwhile, legislators are discussing steps toward universal afterschool in New York.

Momentum is building in Albany to support afterschool, and we need to ensure our voices are part of the conversation.

Join the Network and afterschool advocates to ask for major investments to ensure the afterschool system has the resources and infrastructure to best serve youth and families. Our asks include an additional:

1. \$119 million toward a new and improved afterschool program grant to ensure program viability and to sustain current student capacity for a total of \$219 million.
2. \$5 million dedicated line item toward school-age child care quality support through the NYS Network for Youth Success.
3. \$3 million through CCDBG professional development allocation to expand the Educational Incentive Program.

Click here to see the Network's full Executive Budget Proposal Analysis.

Click here to send a letter to your representative about the importance of supporting afterschool this budget season.

Reminder: Submit Your Artwork for the Brochure Cover Art Contest



Do you have aspiring artists in your program?

The Network is seeking submissions from afterschool participants to design the art for our Empower Youth Success 2024 conference brochure.

We invite all individuals participating in New York State afterschool programs to submit artwork depicting **What Afterschool Means to Me**.

All artwork must be submitted by **February 14, 2024**.

- 8.5 x 11 (w/ 0.5" white margin on all sides)
- **Portrait style**
- PDF files
- Up to 10 MB

We can't wait to see what afterschool means to you!

Submit Your Artwork Here

The program that submits the selected cover art will receive a \$100 Amazon gift card. All artwork submitted may be used in other Network for Youth Success marketing. *Children will only be identified by first name and last initial, grade, the program they attend, and city.* The winner will be notified by February 28, 2024.

Afterschool Activities

Check out these activities from Moonshot to try in your program.

- **3D Printing by Hand**: Students will explore how 3D printers work. Then, working in pairs, they will use the same methods used by 3D printers to create a 3D model of an object. This comes with a video for educators and a complete lesson plan.
- **Experiment with Parachutes**: In this aerodynamics science project, kids test whether the size of the parachute is important for slowing down the speed of the fall. They make a series of parachutes from small to large and test how quickly they fall from the same height.
- **Marble Run Kit & Caboodle Activity**: Don't be misled by the word "kit" in the title! This activity plan uses easy to find materials to make a marble run (think marble roller coaster!). The "kit" is a complete lesson plan and video.
- **12 Great Ideas for Engineers Week**: These quick, easy to implement, and fun activities highlight design process and engineering principles. Materials are easy to find at the grocery store or in the afterschool setting.

Interested in advancing in the school-age field?
Need the qualifications to become a Site Director?

EARN YOUR SCHOOL-AGE CREDENTIAL TODAY



Network for Youth Success Events



The Network for Youth Success is bringing back our **free** JEDI training sessions on key topics to help afterschool leaders navigate current, complex issues.

Beyond Borders: Confronting Xenophobia Together

February 9, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm | [Register Now](#)

This session counts for OCFS training hours

Embark on a transformative journey with us in "Beyond Borders," a workshop designed to dismantle stereotypes and build bridges of understanding. Engage in meaningful conversations and actionable strategies to tackle xenophobia head-on.

Led by Tibusay Hernandez, this empowering experience fosters inclusivity, empathy, and open dialogue. Through interactive activities, insightful discussions, and shared stories, participants will gain valuable insights into the roots of xenophobia and explore practical ways to promote unity in our diverse world.

Let's come together, challenge biases, and embrace the strength that lies in our differences. It's time to build a world where compassion triumphs over fear.

Visit the Network's [JEDI webpage](#) for more information on our JEDI training series. For a list of all upcoming JEDI training sessions, [click here](#).

Click2Science Workshops

Check out NEW Click2Science Workshop offerings for February and March.

Feb. 13: Exploring a STEM Identity (10am)

Learn techniques to help youth 'try on' roles in order to develop a STEM identity.

[Click here to register.](#)

Feb. 28: Reflecting and Processing STEM Experiences (10 am)

In this training, participants will practice leading an engineering activity in a way that incorporates reflection for STEM learning.

[Click here to register.](#)

Mar. 12: Applying Strategies to Document STEM (6:30 pm)

Apply strategies used to support documentation of STEM concepts in multiple formats, particularly symbols, drawings, models, diagrams, charts, tables, text or non-verbal means.

[Click here to register.](#)

Mar. 26: Giving Youth Control with Project Based Learning (6:30 pm)

Youth should direct their own fun and learning, when it is developmentally appropriate. Learn techniques for engaging youth in decision making, developing projects, and leading their own development in this active workshop.

[Click here to register.](#)

Mar. 9: Solar Eclipse Happening in NYS

NYS is lucky to be in the path of totality for the 2024 Solar Eclipse happening April 8th! Join Abigail Rice, our STEAM Coordinator for an hour long virtual session about the Solar Eclipse. Abbi will share general information about the Solar Eclipse, events and viewing parties in NYS, and activities for students and families to partake in before and during the Eclipse. We hope you leave this session inspired and excited to experience a once in a lifetime view here in NY!

[Click here to register.](#)

Building a Thriving OST Workforce

February 28th, 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM | [Register Now](#)

Over the last 20 years, progress has been made in research, practice, and policies related to program quality. Yet, workforce stability, recruitment, and retention of direct service workers continue to be a challenge. As the professional association for the field, NAA's mission is to create a strong and valued profession; join this webinar to learn about NAA's Thriving OST Workforce Initiative and New York State workforce priorities.



BUILDING A THRIVING OST WORKFORCE

Presented by: Angelica Portillo, Director of Advocacy and Workforce Initiatives, National AfterSchool Association and Trudy Morgan Tetteh, Policy Director, New York State Network for Youth Success

Training Opportunities Available for the 2023-2024 school year!

Encouraging Positive Behavior

Part of working with children is managing behaviors. This training will help participants identify common misbehaviors in afterschool programs and how the environment plays a role. Learn techniques to guide positive behaviors and turn misbehaviors into teachable moments for youth.

Presenter: Alysha Branch or Sara Rickan
OCFS Area(s): 1, 3
Location: Virtual-Live, via Zoom

Date Available

Thursday, February 29, 2024
10:00am - 12:00pm

[Click here](#) to register.

Apr. 17-20: Empower Youth Success Conference 2024 (REGISTRATION IS OPEN!)

You won't want to miss the Network's Empower Youth Success 2024 conference, which will tackle the issues that matter most to you and your organization.



Community School's Conference

Wednesday, April 17 & Thursday, April 18

Add Ons

Community Schools 101 Training (April 17)

Site Visits (April 17)

[Register Here](#)



21st Century Conference

Friday, April 19

Add Ons

School's Out, Make it Count! 2024

[Register Here](#)

School's Out, Make it Count!
School's Out, Make it Count! Friday, April 19 & Saturday, April 20
[Register Here](#)

We are excited to announce the conference partners for this year's Empower Youth Success Conference: SED, Finger Lakes Community Schools, Binghamton University, NYC Technical Assistance Resource Center (NYC TARC), and Change Impact.

REGISTER TODAY!

Book your Room



Hilton Garden Inn, Troy, NY

Book your room [here](#) or by calling the hotel at 518-272-1700 and reference **group code: NYNYS**. The room block will be open until March 17, 2024, or until it fills up.

<https://www.hilton.com/en/attend-my-event/albtygi-nynys-f382c846-2b52-421e-aa68-f5f39ab367ac/>

Click: Book Room

Click: Edit Stay (Adjust dates and guests to meet your needs)

Update & Book

Additional Accommodations in Troy, NY

[Best Western Plus Franklin Square](#)

[Courtyard by Marriott – Troy/Waterfront](#)

Find other area accommodations [HERE](#).

**All participants are responsible for booking their own hotel lodging and any associated costs.*

Sponsor our annual conference

We're seeking sponsorships to make our annual conference possible and to support our work year-round. As a 501©3 non-profit organization, we rely on fundraising contributions to make our work possible.

Platinum Sponsor - \$1,300.00

Gain high-level exposure as a Platinum sponsor by having a presence throughout the conference! Be shown in sponsored videos and prominently featured in the venue and website.

Gold Sponsor - \$700.00

A *golden* opportunity to get recognition for your business by being advertised both digitally and at the event!

Silver Sponsor - \$375.00

You're in luck! The silver sponsorship is a great way to get your name out there at the event, while supporting NYSNYS.

A LA CARTE SPONSOR OFFERINGS

Opportunity to sponsor a la carte opportunities at a flat cost. Does not require sponsoring at platinum, gold, or silver level and can indeed be stand-alone.

- Room sponsorship: \$500 (per room)
- Lunch sponsorship: \$2,000 (per day)
- Coffee break sponsorship: \$1,000
- Awards ceremony: \$2,500
- Books for audience: \$3,500
- Relaxation station: \$3,000
- Resource table items: \$150
- Professional headshots: \$2,000
- Photobooth: \$2,000 (per day)
- Interactive display: \$500
- Art show: \$2,500
- Attendee Bags: \$5,000

VENDORS

See the [agenda](#) for a schedule of events.

ONE-DAY VENDOR (4/19 OR 4/20)

Available: 10

For profit: \$300

Non-profit: \$150

TWO-DAY VENDOR (4/19 AND 4/20)

Available: 10

For profit: \$500

Non-profit: \$250

Purchase your sponsorship [HERE](#).

Check the Network for Youth Success [events page](#)
anytime for a current listing of upcoming events.

Other Events

Feb. 22: DiscoverE Chats with Change Makers (Thursdays 1pm)

Tune into the DiscoverE monthly series “Chats with Change Makers,” hosted by high school senior Kavya, to meet STEM professionals who are working hard to change the world.

Teachers and parents are invited to tune-in along with their students to meet an engineer and ask questions.

Join on Thursdays at 1pm for LIVE monthly chats!

- [Feb 22](#)
- [Mar 21](#)
- [Apr 25](#)
- [May 23](#)

Mar. 1: LMH SAC Credential Course (NYC ONLY)

**REGISTER NOW!
EARN YOUR SAC CREDENTIALS**

**LIVE VIRTUAL INSTRUCTION
NYS SAC CREDENTIAL COURSE
PART 1 & PART 2**

**BEGINS
MARCH. 05, 2024**

The New York State School Age Care Credential is a comprehensive 2-semester training program geared towards skills development for school age professionals to utilize best practices, and promote high quality care to children and families.

- Earning your SAC Credentials will help you:
- Qualify to be on your SACC License
- Own, build and develop your program
- Enrich your skills
- Better able to meet children's needs

MEETS TUESDAYS WEEKLY:
PART 1 - MARCH 5, 2024 - MAY 21, 2024
PART 2 - BEGINS IN SEPTEMBER 2024

Registration Fee: \$1,300 per semester
 \$50 non-refundable fee due at registration
 EIP Scholarship available - if eligible
 visit: <https://www.ecstp.pdp.albany.edu/>

**USE QR CODE
REGISTER NOW**

**NYS T-TAP Instructor
DIANE SHIRLEY
Professional Development Specialist**

**FOR MORE INFO
Contact: Lavern Mason-Howard
Lmhoward410@gmail.com
646-232-5545**

[Click here](#) for more information and to register.

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Please visit our website at networkforyouthsuccess.org.
Donate to our cause at networkforyouthsuccess.org/donate.

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