

A photograph of two hands shaking in a firm grip, set against a background of out-of-focus green and yellow foliage, suggesting a sunny outdoor setting. The hands are positioned on the left side of the frame, with the right hand slightly higher than the left.

ORLEANS SUMMER IMPACT GRANTS

2023 REPORT



YEAH! YOGA

REPORT SUMMARY

THE CHALLENGE

There are 400,000+ people residing in New Orleans. Within that figure, 60% of the population is youth under 24 [The New Orleans Youth Alliance Youth & well-being Dashboard, 2020]. Additionally, 57% of those households are considered ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) or living in poverty [United Way ALICE Report, 2023].

The data unequivocally demonstrates the pressing need to continue and expand youth initiatives in New Orleans.

- National Summer Learning Association research suggests that low-income students can experience significant learning loss (the summer slide) if they don't participate in academically enriching summer programs. Specifically, their reading and math skills can regress by two to three months over the summer break.
- The Brookings Institution study shows that low-income students who lack access to summer learning opportunities may fall further behind their peers, leading to a cumulative achievement gap and further contributing to disparities in academic achievement and long-term educational outcomes.

THE CHALLENGE

CONTINUED

- The U.S. Department of Education reported that the summer slide phenomenon disproportionately affects low-income students who may not have access to resources such as books, educational programs, or enrichment activities during the summer months. This lack of access can exacerbate existing inequalities in education and hinder academic progress.

The evidence clearly indicates that summer learning programs have a positive impact on the community by providing valuable resources, support, and opportunities for the city's young population.

A lack of youth support, especially among youth in poverty, has long-term consequences, including lower graduation rates, lower earnings as an adult, over-incarceration, and physical and mental disabilities [National Institutes of Health, 2019]. It is clear our community must continue to offer opportunities and invest in our youth's well-being.

By dedicating consistent and long-term resources to youth initiatives, our community can unite to build a better future for the next generation. Partnerships with youth summer learning programs across Orleans Parish are a critical component in creating positive change for New Orleans youth and building a strong, equitable community for the future.

REPORT SUMMARY

CALL TO ACTION

The New Orleans Children and Youth Planning Board (CYPB) released the Youth Master Plan (YMP) in 2020 in partnership with the Mayor's Office of Youth and Families and the New Orleans Youth Alliance. The CYPB assists in developing, implementing, and operating services that encourage positive youth development, reduce youth crime, and help curb juvenile delinquency.

The YMP is a comprehensive roadmap for creating and sustaining a positive, youth-development-focused, results-oriented New Orleans that works for all our young people from birth to 24. It is a ten-year, multisector plan for improving the lives of children and youth of New Orleans, developed by young people, parents, educators, community and sector leaders, and other key stakeholders. It establishes ambitious two-year and ten-year targets for improved outcomes across all aspects of young people's lives, supported by 30 interconnected solutions rooted in youth and community wisdom and best practices in positive youth development. It is a roadmap for breaking cycles of disinvestment and disrupting the false narratives that reinforce them. The YMP seeks to ensure the children and youth of New Orleans have lives filled with positive experiences and healthy relationships.

REPORT SUMMARY

CONTINUED

CALL TO ACTION

The Youth Master Plan lays out 30 solutions within six areas and centers on five developmental stages from birth to 24. These six priority areas include:

1. Health and Well-being
2. Youth Voice
3. Learning
4. Economic Stability
5. Safety and Justice
6. Space and Place

The plan is aligned with United Way of Southeast Louisiana's (UWSELA) Blueprint for Prosperity and its mission to eradicate poverty in our communities. United Way and the New Orleans Youth Alliance partnered to create opportunities and investments that would uplift and activate Youth Master Plan priorities and strategies. In 2023, UWSELA allocated \$100,000 in grant funding ranging from \$5,000 to \$8,000 across 13 Orleans youth service organizations to increase education, health, and workforce support over the summer months. The partners designed the grant to prioritize organizations aligned with YMP priorities and serving young people, ages 11 to 24, living below the ALICE Threshold. The proposed outcomes sought to reduce crime and scale summer programs in underserved neighborhoods.

A special thank you to the New Orleans Children and Youth Planning Board and the New Orleans Youth Alliance for their partnership and support.



Cultivating Youth

OUR **SUMMER 2023** PROGRAM PARTNERS

- About F.A.C.E. (About Family and Community Engagement)
- Cultivating Youth
- Electric Girls
- Eternal Seeds
- Friends of the New Orleans Public Library
- Jesus Project Ministries
- PinkNails Girls Mentoring
- Phoenix Communities of NOLA
- Re(ad) TREAT
- The Foundation for Science and Mathematics Education
- Trinity Community Center Summer Leadership Development
- YEAH! YOGA
- The Youth Initiative



External Seeds

IMPACT & RESULTS

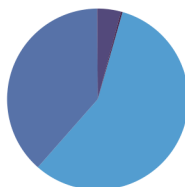
6,633

MEALS PROVIDED



4,539

YOUTH SERVED



● Ages 11- 13: 57.1%
● Ages 14- 17: 38.4%
● Ages 18 - 20: 4.2%
● Ages 21- 24: 0.3%

2,803

PROGRAM HOURS



TYPES OF FUNDED PROGRAMS

- Civic Leadership/Advocacy & Mentorship
- College Prep
- Expressive Arts
- Health and Wellness
- Literacy and Academic Enrichment
- Sports and Recreation
- STEM and Digital Programming
- Workforce Development



Jesus Project Ministries



About F.A.C.E.



Phoenix Communities of NOLA

SELF-REPORTED OUTCOME HIGHLIGHTS

- 85% of students feel more confident working with power-tools.
- 81% of students feel more confident with public speaking and 98% experienced a reduction in anxiety symptoms.
- 98% of participants experienced a decrease of depression; 89% had an increase in the ability to feel bodily sensations; 88% had an increase in self-esteem; 88% had an increase in optimism; 83% had an increase in distress tolerance.
- 76% of participants reported they had a changed perspective on empathy.
- 100% improvement by older rookies in three categories.
- 96% of the students added advanced coursework to their schedules.
- Neighborhood children read books and hosted their own book discussions each week.
- Increase in youth and adult power sharing.
- 70% increase in participant communication skills, 68% increase decision-making skills, 60% increase in job readiness, and 83% increase skills related to setting and meeting personal goals.
- 95% of students would like to participate in future STEM program, 88% of students are interested in pursuing a STEM career pathway, and 98% of students feel more confident in their STEM knowledge.
- 42 teens signed up for the Teen Tech Center.
- Participants completed an Art Mural in the community.
- Reduction in Juvenile Justice System interactions and a decrease in at-risk behaviors.
- Increase in awareness of professional art career pathways.
- Participation increased by 20% with transportation.

SELF-IDENTIFIED PROGRAM CHALLENGES

- Limited access to enrichment programs.
- Transportation and logistics.
- Safety concerns due to diverse participant backgrounds.
- Territorial and neighborhood conflict zones.
- Lack of solution for conflict resolution.
- Use of tobacco and vapes.
- Lack of barrier-reducing materials for ESL and SPED students.
- Lack of secure facilities.

SELF-IDENTIFIED LESSONS LEARNED

- Develop small group mentoring program.
- Host events outside of the city in a relaxing environment to facilitate meaningful discussions.
- Separate participants by age in the program.
- Significant food resources are necessary.
- Encourage and allow for creativity among participants.
- Students learn and grow at the appropriate rate when they help each other.
- Provide professional development for instructors.
- Use additional structures such as meditation cards to maintain focus on mindfulness activities.



YMP PROGRAM-LEVEL DATA SNAPSHOTS

Self-Reported

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

- **Yeah Yoga:** Covenant House provided staff training to support new and expectant mothers in safe pre/post-natal yoga methods and modifications.
- **About F.A.C.E. Youth:** Students worked with a licensed professional counselor who offered guidance to facilitators on how to steer post-role play discussions. Facilitator's expertise enhanced the participants' self-awareness and emotional insights.

YOUTH VOICE

- **RE(ad) Treat:** Youth trained in program planning, management, and hard and soft skills to grow their ideas into businesses or nonprofits. Skills included creating and managing a budget, building spreadsheets, designing flyers, promoting events, and more.

SPACE AND PLACE

- **The Foundation for Science and Mathematics Education:** Increased transportation opportunities boosted participation by 20%, and 96% of students added advanced courses to their schedule, providing real-time solutions and a safe learning environment.
- **Yeah Yoga:** Strengthened programming at Covenant House and added seven hours per week of classes at Travis Hill during Summer Arts Camp.

YMP PROGRAM-LEVEL DATA SNAPSHOTS

continued

ECONOMIC STABILITY

Workforce Development:

- **Trinity Community Center:** Implemented leadership and job training, further empowering students to navigate their futures with confidence. One notable success of the program expansion was the employment of middle school students as classroom assistants, high school students as counselors in training, and college-age young adults as interns.
- **Jesus Project Ministries:** Introduced a dedicated training segment, Next Level Leadership, tailored to summer participants between the ages of 16 and 19. The unique initiative was integrated into regular workdays like standard staff development activities.
- **Phoenix Communities:** Phoenix Communities of NOLA provided additional opportunities for youth to engage in Culinary Arts, Cosmetology Classes, STEM Programming, and Mardi Gras Indian Cultural Traditions.
- **RE(ad)Treat:** Hired and trained youth interns for the summer and broadened programming to become a weekly recurring event.

Incentives and Pay Equity:

- **Trinity Community Center:** Increased pay for interns, providing an economic boost for program participants aged 18 to 24. Most interns were students of color living below the ALICE Threshold, contributing to the broader goal of addressing economic disparities.
- **The Youth Initiative:** Added two new counselors to the team, enabling an expansion of services to an additional 15 youth in need.
- **Jesus Project Ministries:** Paid wages to the youth participants during the training and provided lunches and snacks for the Friday Seminars.
- **Electric Girls:** Provided compensation for summer instructors, offered professional development, and awarded grant scholarships to students in need.



YMP PROGRAM-LEVEL DATA SNAPSHOTS

continued

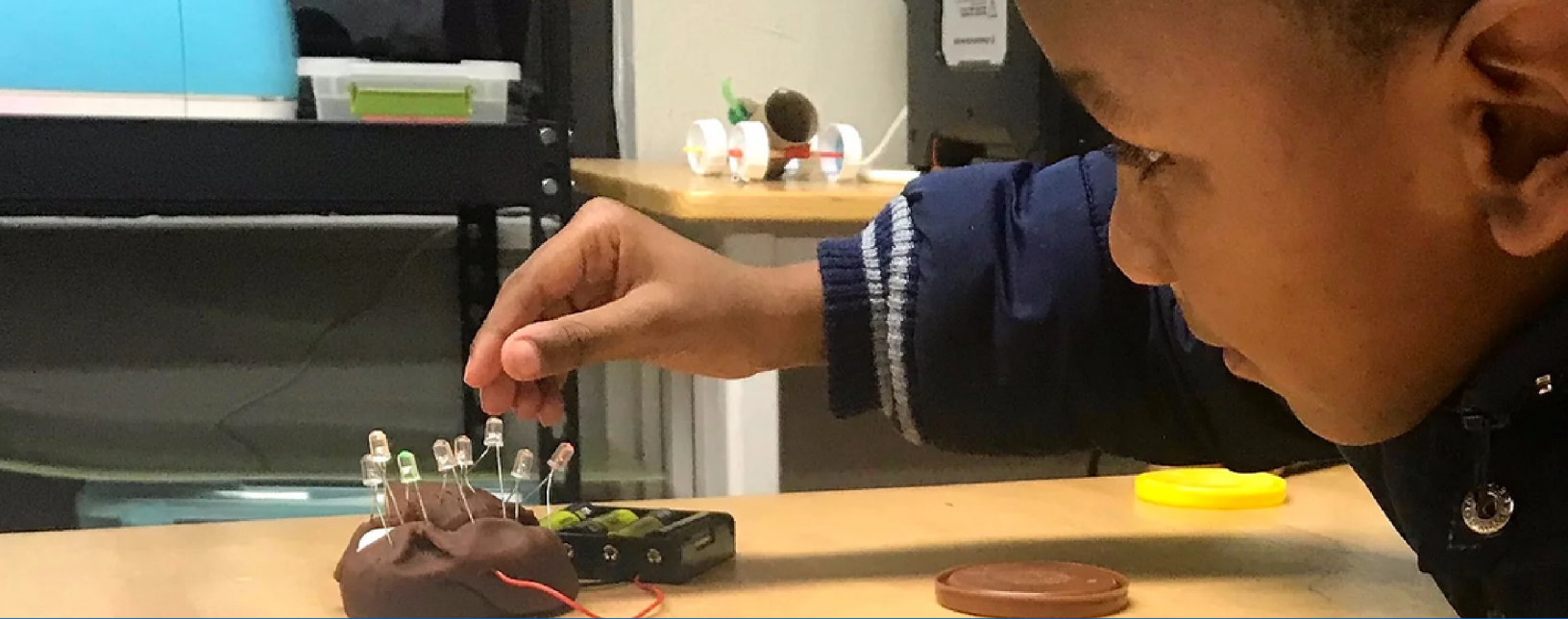
SAFETY AND JUSTICE

- **The Youth Initiative:** Funding allows for intervention in a concerning situation involving illegal firearms and demonstrated the critical role the program plays in promoting a safer environment for participants and our community.

LEARNING

- **The Foundation for Science and Mathematics Education:** Added transportation services, resulting in 20% increase in participation and enrollment of 96% of students in advanced courses. The curriculum offered cultural lessons, fostering connections among students.
- **Eternal Seeds:** Utilized grant funding to hire teaching artists and six teaching assistants to ensure students received adequate support in classroom work and creative projects.
- **Friends of the New Orleans Library:** Purchased supplies for hands-on programs, including Lego robotics, pasta making with Chef Maya, and science experiments for older teens.





Trinity Community Center Summer Leadership Development

TESTIMONIAL

“With the grant funding, we significantly enhanced and expanded our program's activities. One of the key accomplishments was the addition of two new counselors to our team, which allowed us to extend our services to 15 more youth in need. This increase in staffing capacity greatly improved our ability to provide individualized support and guidance to a wider range of participants.

Thanks to the increased resources, we were able to identify and intervene in a concerning situation involving illegal firearms. Through our efforts, we successfully removed two illegal guns from the streets that were in the possession of a teenager. This accomplishment demonstrates the critical role our program plays in promoting a safer environment for our participants and the broader community.

Overall, the grant funding played a pivotal role in enabling us to make a significant difference in the lives of the youth we serve. It allowed us to expand our reach, offer impactful experiences, and contribute to the safety of our community by addressing critical issues. We are grateful for your support and look forward to building on these successes in the future.”

- The Youth Initiative

ORLEANS PARISH

SUMMER IMPACT GRANTS

2023 REPORT



1924 **YEARS** 2024
United Way of Southeast Louisiana

United Way of Southeast Louisiana

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