

YEP VOICES

FALL 2021 NEWSLETTER



EMPOWERING A GENERATION



YOUR SUPPORT CHANGES LIVES



MARYAM, 18
YEP EDUCATES

MARYAM is one of 32 high school equivalency graduates we celebrated this year. She attended our 8-week accelerated program this summer and earned both her HiSET and Customer Service credential. Maryam wants to attend culinary school to become a chef.



SKYLAR, 8
YEP ENRICHES

SKYLAR started coming to YEP this past year with her sister when she needed a safe and fun place to go after school. Since enrolling at YEP, Skylar has started participating in our Afterschool, and Summer Camp programs, and she recently joined the YEP Dance Team.



SHAMARR, 18
YEP MENTORS

SHAMARR has been working with his YEP Youth Advocate, John, since middle school. As the only boy in his family, Shamarr needed the support of a strong male role model. This year, we celebrated Shamarr graduating from high school as a star athlete and enrolling at South Louisiana Community College.



DEBRAN, 20
YEP WORKS

DEBRAN enrolled in YEP Works after his college education was put on pause due to COVID-19, and he wanted to continue working towards his goal of being a teacher. Since earning a workforce credential from YEP in February, Debran worked at YEP's Summer Camp and is now working part-time at Academy.

HURRICANE IDA

YEP'S DISASTER RESPONSE

Your support helps us remain flexible and able to meet the most critical needs of participants and families. Thanks to the generosity of our friends and supporters, YEP was able to respond quickly and efficiently in the wake of Hurricane Ida.

Events like Hurricane Ida exacerbate the challenges young people and their families face and highlight the need for community-based organizations like YEP, who provide families with support and basic resources.

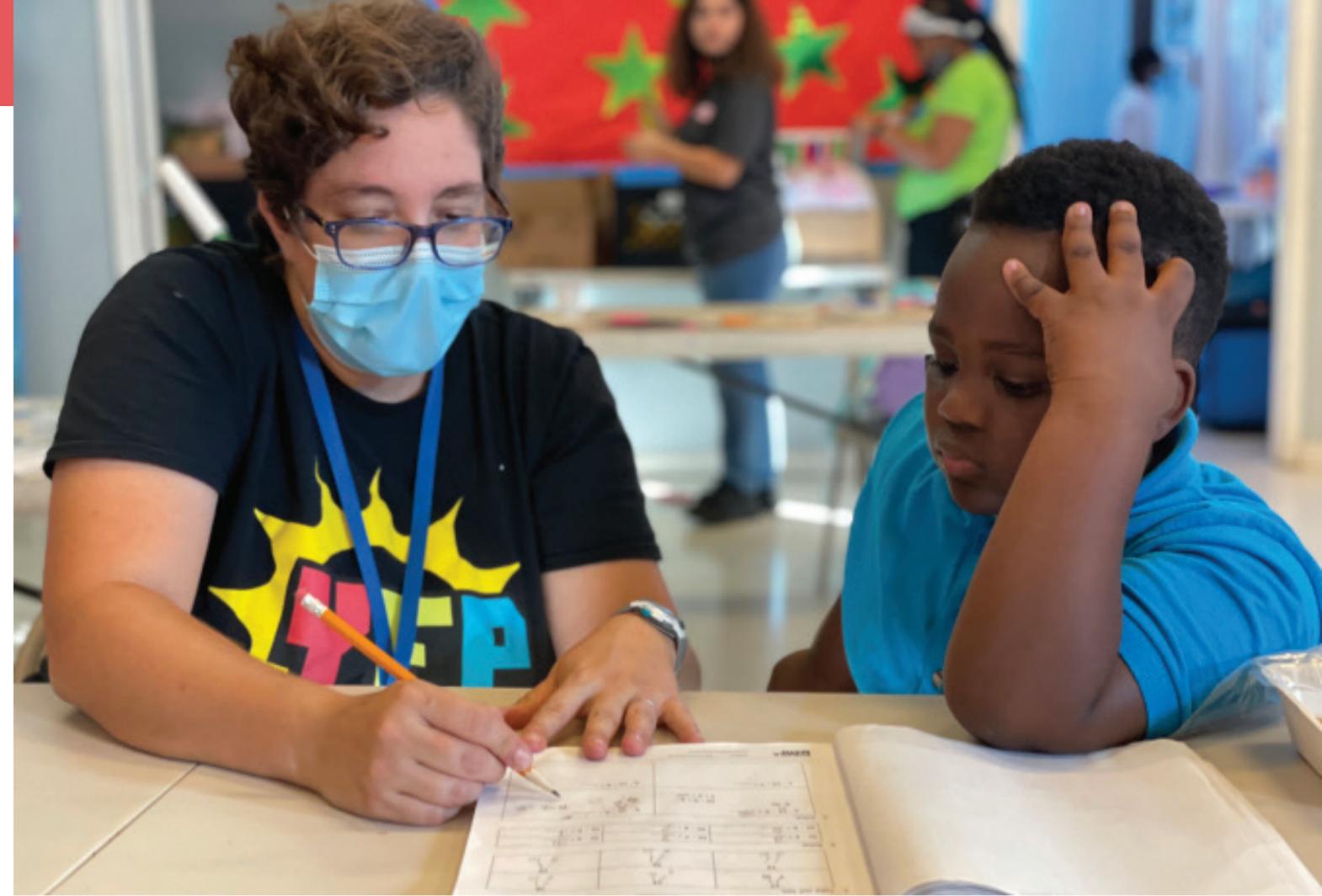
In the two weeks following Hurricane Ida, YEP staff regularly checked in with participants and families to assess needs and offer help. We provided one-on-one youth advocacy, referrals to resources, and direct financial assistance during and after the storm.

As soon as power was restored to Oretha Castle Haley Blvd., we opened the Youth Center as a cooling and resource center. We provided food, assistance with FEMA and DSNAP applications, and mentoring support. All in-person programs resumed the week of September 13th.



Ida Response Services Offered:

- Paying for transportation to and from home during and after evacuation
- Paying for hotel stays for displaced families who were waiting on FEMA assistance
- Assistance with rent and utilities following loss of work
- Delivery of ice, gasoline, and other basic needs for families who stayed in New Orleans
- Assistance with filing claims and applications for additional resources



FOCUSING ON EDUCATION

GETTING BACK ON TRACK THIS FALL

We don't yet know the extent of how Hurricane Ida will impact school-age children. However, we do know that Ida meant students, parents, and teachers had to reset, yet again.

Even prior to Hurricane Ida, YEP planned to focus our fall efforts on providing individualized academic support to youth who had endured the challenges of virtual learning last year due to COVID-19. We are hiring two Education Coordinators

(one in Orleans Parish and one in St. Charles Parish) who will manage a team of volunteer tutors and provide education advocacy and support to young people.



I feel more relaxed now that I'm back in school. My goal for this year is to keep my grades up and to not be late or miss any more days.

Key'I, 12
(YEP Enriches)



MY STORY

WRITTEN BY ANGEL (YEP EDUCATES)

My name is Angel Ganes. I was born in New Orleans, LA, and I was raised in the St. Thomas Housing Project. I have four wonderful kids. My mom passed away at the age of 58 in 2009, and I lost my dad in 2019 at the age of 74.

My dad had a great spirit and always taught me to be the best. He was well respected and did everything for his family. That's why we looked up to him.

I have three sisters. My brother was killed at the age of 17. When I was little, I always wanted to be a lawyer because I had a passion for law.

My life goals are pretty simple. I just want to accomplish a lot out of life. That's why I work so hard. I always wanted to achieve my high school diploma. I had to stop attending school in the 12th grade when I became a mother and my son became sick.

I always want to be better at everything I do. I want to always be a great role model for my kids. I want my kids to know the struggles of life.

I want to be great, and I want to stay humble. I don't ever want to give up on life. Life is all about what you make it. When you are great, good things will follow you.

Angel earned her high school equivalency diploma with YEP in May 2021 and dedicated it to the memory of her late father. Having cared for him in his final years, Angel became interested in a career in allied health. She is currently pursuing a certification in phlebotomy.

GOOD NEWS

WHAT WE'RE CELEBRATING THIS FALL



WELCOMING BACK VOLUNTEERS

We are finally able to welcome volunteers back to YEP! In our efforts to support young people holistically, we are recruiting volunteer tutors and activity leaders to join us this fall.



DEBT FREE BUILDING OWNERS

Thanks to the generosity of Boysie and Joy Bollinger, YEP paid off the balance on our remaining mortgage in September. We now own 1600, 1604, and 1529 Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard debt-free.



MAKING TRANSPORTATION EASIER IN THE RIVER PARISHES

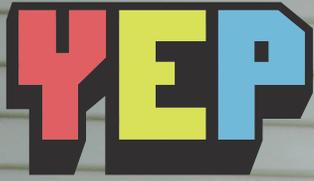
Thanks to the support of the Oscar J. Tolmas Charitable Trust, YEP purchased a 15-passenger van for our team in St. Charles Parish. This van (which luckily did not incur any storm damage) will provide safe transportation for participants and families.



GROWING OUR TEAM

YEP is expanding our programs in response to additional challenges young people have encountered over the past two years. We have several new positions open to qualified individuals. Apply on our website today.





YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

1600 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd.
New Orleans, LA 70113



www.youthempowermentproject.org