Neighborhood Talks

by Mahogany Villars, Seattle LINC Project Manager, and Brenda Miyake

Washington - Building Leaders of Change (WA-BLOC) receives Key Leader Award at NeighborhoodTALKS.

Pictured L-R: Dwane Chappelle, City of Seattle Director of the Department of Education and Early Learning & LINC Steering Committee Member, Jerrell Davis, WA-BLOC Team, Laura Wright, WA-BLOC Director, Jordan Butler, WA-BLOC Team, Michael Passian, PEACE Coalition Coordinator, and Mahogany Villars, CCYJ Project Manager.



Every year, close to 60,000 people die

due to violence, according to Ali Rowhani-Rahbar, with Harborview's Injury Prevention & Research Center. Appearing in a video presented at a community gathering in SE Seattle, Rowhani-Rahbar said, "Violence is the number one cause of death for African-American and Latino men in the United States. To solve a problem of that magnitude, people

from all sectors need to be working together."

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The event, co-sponsored by CCYJ and the SE Seattle PEACE Coalition, was "Episode 1" of "NeighborhoodTALKS," a series of community conversations bringing

together people from all sectors to ask questions, share and discuss solutions in the communities affected the most by violence.

The event was co-organized by CCYJ's Mahogany Villars, Project Manager for Seattle Leadership, Intervention and Change (LINC) "I realized there were a lot of conversations about child safety happening without parents at the table," said Villars.

"The conversations were also happening in silos (doctors only, schools staff only, government only, etc.). In my role here at CCYJ, I have been fortunate to have capacity to work with a phenomenal group of stakeholders and partners via the Seattle Steering Committee Early Intervention and Prevention Workgroup to make this happen."

About 100 people who attended the event heard the testimony of Kathei McCoy, a mother who lost her son to gun violence. In sharing her story, McCoy said, "Will I care only about me, or will I go help a mother whose son is in detention or doing drugs? I didn't want my son reduced to a hashtag. When I decided that every black boy was my son, not her son or his son, then I began to love them past their mistakes and look at their gifts," Ms. McCoy said, adding, "It's only a tragedy if you don't do anything with it."

Many organizations are working together to promote systems change. At the event WA-BLOC was presented with an award for the positive change they are making in the Seattle community.

For more information about NeighborhoodTALKS, contact Mahogany Villars at mvillars@ccyj.org.





Barbie Hull Photography

Changing the Game

As we hunker down this winter, we at CCYJ are working hard and staying focused on Changing the Game for children and youth in our child welfare and youth justice system.

Laurel Simonsen has been promoted to Managing Attorney, leading our Lawyers Fostering Independence (LFI) program. She is joined by Grete Schultz, our new staff attorney for LFI. We are also happy to welcome Alisha Evans-Goldie as the Social Worker for the Family Advocacy Center (FAC) and Vince Vaielua as Youth LINC's Project Coordinator for Suburban King County Coordinating Council on Gangs (SKCCCG).

Changing the Game is the theme for our 2018 Maleng Breakfast fundraiser, coming up on March 14th. It's also the overarching mission of what we continue to do every day—to improve the outcomes and lives for our children and youth by changing the systems that serve them. A few examples:

The 14th Annual **Becca Conference** held in October brought 325 attendees from schools, juvenile court, and other professionals to review the latest research, programs and practices focusing on Changing the Game for students;

Our 3rd annual conference on **Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC)** drew a multidisciplinary audience from around the state to strengthen our coordinated efforts to Change the Game and address the response to trafficking of children and youth;

Project Respect continues its outreach, growing to eleven task forces across Washington. We are compiling information for a statewide database that will contribute to the sharing of resources for a collaborative, victim-centered and effective response to CSEC; and

Our **eQuality** team is developing a comprehensive response, piloting a statewide protocol for safe and affirming care in Spokane and King counties, to Change the Game and help ensure positive experiences for LGBTQ youth in the systems.

Changes are also taking place within the offices of CCYJ. Hickory Gateless has accepted an executive position with the Mockingbird Society, and MeLisa Carson is now a CPS Investigator with the Muckleshoot Tribe. Hickory and MeLisa will be missed and we wish them both great success in their new positions. I'm sure we'll be partnering with them in the near future.

In 2018, we welcome back Leila Curtis, our **Becca Task Force** manager during the Models for Change years. Leila will be returning to Becca Task Force work, piloting our "Girls Court" model, and developing a CCYJ response to children and youth involved in both the juvenile justice and child welfare system. And we are grateful to have the passion and experience of Scott Boling, who is our new Development/Accounting Coordinator.

Bev Falgione has joined us as our new Development Director. Bev brings a depth of experience working both the non-profit and corporate side of philanthropy, fundraising and communications. She has hit the ground running, leading our fundraising efforts for the 2018 Norm Maleng Advocate for Youth Award Breakfast, coming up on March 14th at the Downtown Sheraton Hotel. I hope you join me, the staff, CCYJ Board of Directors, and this year's Breakfast Co-Chairs, Erin and Greg Coomer, as we honor the Governor's Blue Ribbon Commission on the Delivery of Children and Families (see announcement).

In the meantime, please enjoy reading about all the exciting work being done by our fantastic CCYJ team. Thanks to your continued support, we are seeing results in juvenile justice and child welfare that, ten years ago, we would have thought impossible. Together, with our partners, we are using evidence-based research, training, and shared education, and we are Changing the Game for ALL kids in Washington state.

Justice Bobbe J. Bridge, ret. Founding President/CEO

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A **NEW** DEPARTMENT

TO BETTER SERVE CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES



Justice Bobbe Bridge (ret.) (left) looks on as Gov. Jay Inslee signs bill to create the new Washington State Department of Children, Youth and Families. Pictured right are BRC co-chairs, Rep. Ruth Kagi and Judge Anne Levinson (ret.). (*Official Governor's Office Photo)

by Brenda Miyake

It is a understatement to say that CCYJ is thrilled about the recent creation of the Washington Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF). "This has been a long time coming," says Justice Bridge (ret.). When we talk about "Changing the Game" to improve the lives of children and youth in 2018 and beyond, it is through the promise of this cabinet-level department.

On July 6th, 2017, Governor Jay Inslee signed HB 1661, creating the first state agency to oversee services pertaining to children, youth and families—services which are now offered through the state Department of Social and Health Services and the Department of Early Learning (DEL). These include all programs from the Children's Administration in DSHS such as Child Protective Services, the Family Assessment Response program and adoption support, as well as all DEL services, including the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program for preschoolers and Working Connections Child Care.

The creation of the new Department follows the recommendations of the bipartisan Blue Ribbon Commission on the Delivery of Services to Children and Families (BRC) convened by the Governor in February 2016 to recommend a state agency that focuses on preventing harm to children and youth. The Commission was led by Judge Anne Levinson (ret.) and State Representative, Ruth Kagi, both of whom will be accepting the CCYJ Norm Maleng Youth Advocate Award on behalf of the Blue Ribbon Commission at our Breakfast fundraiser on March 14th, 2018.



The Board of Directors of CCYJ is excited to announce the 2018 honoree for the *Norm Maleng Advocate for Youth Award Breakfast*: the Governor's **Blue Ribbon Commission (BRC) on the Delivery of Services to Children and Families.**

The 16-member bi-partisan **Governor's Blue Ribbon Commission** was charged with developing the framework for a state agency focused solely on children and families. The BRC's insights and recommendations resulted in the 2017 Governor's request legislation which was passed with overwhelming margins in both houses, creating the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) and significantly reforming how the state provides services.

"This really is revolutionary," said Justice Bobbe Bridge (ret.), Founding President and CEO of CCYJ. "Many in this field have been working 20 – 30 years to create this kind of integrated, research-based service model." Adds Bridge, "The BRC pulled together experts, heard from families and advocates across the state, reviewed the

latest research, evaluated data about outcomes for children and youth currently in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, and made a compelling case to the legislature that as a state we could do so much better. This is the kind of system change that is the cornerstone of CCYI's mission."

THE NORM
MALENG YOUTH
ADVOCATE AWARD
BREAKFAST WITH
CCYJ WILL BE
HELD ON MARCH
14TH, 2018 AT THE
SHERATON HOTEL
IN DOWNTOWN
SEATTLE

Accepting CCYJ's honor will be **Blue Ribbon Commission** co-chairs, Judge Anne Levinson (ret.) and Representative Ruth Kagi. "How a government is organized and how it delivers services reflect its priorities," said Judge Levinson. "We felt it was critically important for the state to prioritize the well-being of children, youth and families, align services across agencies so they focus on outcomes, and provide opportunities for parents and youth in every zip code to access needed services before problems escalate."



"For the first time, a cabinet department will assure the needs of children, youth and families are clearly identified and considered by the Governor and legislature," said Rep. Ruth Kagi. "The new department will build on the strong prevention and early childhood education foundation established by the Department of Early Learning, assuring that children most at risk will access high quality early learning opportunities."

The Norm Maleng Youth Advocate Award Breakfast with CCYJ will be held on March 14th, 2018 at the Sheraton Hotel in downtown Seattle Co-chairs of this year's event are Erin and Greg Coomer. For more information about the Breakfast, please contact Bev Falgione at bfalgione@ccyj.org.

eQuality

by Nicholas Oakley, Sr. Project Manager, and Stephen Vanderhoef, eQuality Intern

The eQuality Project team is implementing the multi-site pilot of the **Protocol for Safe & Affirming Care**. In 2016, eQuality partnered with hundreds of professionals, caregivers, and volunteers to develop the Protocol, a guide for ensuring safer and more affirming care for systems-involved LGBTQ youth.

CCYJ's **eQuality Project** is the first statewide effort to help LGBTQ youth in foster care and in the juvenile justice system find the safety and support they need to prevent them from becoming homeless.

Now, the team is establishing the Protocol in three sites: King County Juvenile Court, Spokane County Juvenile Court, and the Spokane office of DSHS Children's Administration. This implementation includes: ongoing

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comprehensive training for professionals; procedural assistance and guidance; monthly webinars for a core team of project leads in each site; process evaluation with a third party consultant; and, most recently, the development and utilization of a data questionnaire for youth regarding sexual orientation and gender identity.

In recognition of eQuality's work and accomplishments, Georgetown University's Center for Juvenile Justice Reform accepted eQuality to its "Supporting the Well-Being of System-Involved LGBTQ Youth Certificate Program." A four-person team from the project, consisting of one representative from eQuality, and one from each of the three pilot sites, attended a week-long program on the

university's campus where they received instruction from national experts on how to shape organization cultures and approaches to support the safety and well-being of LGBTQ youth. This included guidance on how to: develop effective policies, training, and data evaluation efforts; better identify and effectively engage LGBTQ youth and their families; build community capacity to serve this population; and develop comprehensive and multi-faceted strategies and supports that promote positive youth development.

As part of this Executive Certificate Program, the eQuality team will be developing a Capstone Project, focused on applying the skills acquired during the Certificate Program and continuing system improvement efforts in Washington State.

For more information about Project Respect or eQuality, contact Nicholas Oakley, Noakley@ccyj.org or Stephen Vanderhoef, SVanderhoef@ccyj.org.



Hearing the voice of survivors of sexual exploitation trafficking is not just compelling, it's vital. The testimony of one such survivor, Tom Jones, helped bring focus to the harrowing issues of sexual exploitation and trafficking at the third annual CCYJ Project Respect's "Commercially Sexually Exploited Children Task Force (CSEC)"

Conference, held on October 25th at the SeaTac Airport Conference Center.

"My trauma began when I was born," began Jones. "My mom passed away from complications during my childbirth. My dad never let me forget that," said Jones. "This (the guilt), however, was the beginning of the grooming process. My father was my trafficker."

Jones is founder of The H.O.P.E. Project in San Diego, California, a program aimed specifically at providing support to male survivors of sexual abuse, exploitation, and trafficking. He shared his heartwrenching story with close to 100 attendees at CCYJ's CSEC Conference.

Jones chronicled his journey as a victim of sex trafficking from the age of 6 to today, where he works to bring light to the often silent suffering of male survivors. Social stigma, toxic masculinity, and fear keep boys and men from sharing their stories. But Jones said, "if you are a survivor, give your voice. Give the shame back. Don't let it own you. It will set you free." He called for more gender-specific support that is readily accessible, and appealed to audience members to understand the unique challenges for male survivors of sex trafficking.

"Centering survivor voices is critical to learning how to better serve youth who have experienced commercial exploitation," said Nicholas Oakley, CCYJ Program Manager of Project Respect.

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The multidisciplinary team of Washington State professionals who gathered together at the CSEC Conference included the voices of a survivor of sexual exploitation trafficking, a police chief, a doctor, a judge, a prosecutor, an educator, and a state representative—all of whom shared perspectives and strategies for strengthening Washington State's coordinated, collaborative, and victim-centered approach to addressing juvenile sex trafficking.

By engaging hundreds of partners across the state, CCYJ's **Project Respect** ensures that commercially sexually exploited children and

youth in Washington are not criminalized, victimized or traumatized. The Washington State Model Protocol for CSEC, developed by **Project Respect** and its partners, is increasingly recognized nationally as a model for engaging professionals in a trauma-informed response to this vulnerable population.

Additionally, Project Respect has 11 task force groups working across the state taking a census of the resources available to sex trafficking victims and assessing each site's response processes. Project Respect is compiling this information and developing a statewide database of resources.

Shoutouts



Justice Bobbe Bridge (ret.) with Sen. Maria Cantwell at the Women of Valor Award Ceremony

- Congratulations to Justice Bobbe J. Bridge, ret. for being honored as one of eight recipients of Sen. Maria Cantwell's 2017 Women of Valor Awards at a ceremony on Oct. 13, 2017. Fellow honorees included: Kristin Rowe-Finkbeiner, Hyeok Kim, Constance Rice, Faye Sarkowsky, Margaret Walker, Racha Haroun, and Harriet Bullitt.
- In addition, Justice Bridge was presented with the 2017
 Betty Binns Fletcher Leadership and Justice Award from
 the Mother Attorneys Mentoring Association (MAMA)
 at their Eleventh Annual Banquet held on November 1,
 2017, in Seattle. Justice Bridge's friend and colleague,
 Justice Mary Yu, provided introductory remarks. MAMA
 Seattle's Betty Binns Fletcher Leadership and Justice
 Award is given each year to an individual who has paved
 the way to success for, and has served as an inspiration
 to, other women attorneys striving to excel in their legal
 careers while balancing family demands.
- Congratulations to CCYJ Board Member, Judge Anne Levinson (ret.), who was chosen along with Dominique Davis and Nikkita Oliver, as the three "Most Influential Seattleites of 2017," by Seattle Magazine. Judge Levinson was recognized as a reformist for her tireless civic work in women's rights, police reform and juvenile justice. She will be honored by CCYJ at the Norm Maleng Youth Advocate Award Breakfast for her leadership on the Governor's Blue Ribbon Commission.



by Gina Cumbo, Project Director, and Brenda Miyake Last fall, while families across Washington state prepared to start the new school year, posting and sharing pictures of little ones, with big smiles and new backpacks, trotting off to their first day of school, a September news headline belied the reality for many students: "Washington schools 2nd worst in U.S. for chronic absenteeism." (https://www.seattletimes.com/education-lab/high-numbers-of-washington-students-miss-school-which-hinders-learning-for-all/)

A national report revealed that in 28 percent of Washington schools, almost a third of students are missing class and school.

That Washington state ranks second worst in the nation, after Alaska, comes as no surprise to the 300 attendees at CCYJ's annual Becca Conference held in Olympia on Oct. 5 – 6th. Educators, counselors, law enforcement and service providers gathered to network and share information on new models and approaches for tackling truancy in our state.

"We know when kids start to disconnect from school, it's a critical warning sign," said Becca Conference lead and CCYJ Project Director, Gina Cumbo. "Chronic absences can be the start of a path that leads straight to involvement in the juvenile justice system."

School is often the first line of defense to reach kids who are slipping. Ezra Alem was one of them. Alem, a keynote speaker at the Becca Conference, was a runaway at 12-years-old. Escaping a troubled home life, Alem found school to be a "relief from the stress." Said Alem, "there were people, teachers and others, who cared." Alem now channels his experience at The Mockingbird Society as a Youth Network



Representative, advocating on behalf of other youth experiencing the child welfare system.

What can keep someone on the right path? Having a positive adult relationship, whether it be a teacher, extended family, coach or counselor. Said keynote panelist Clayton Mosher, Professor at WSU Department of Sociology, "If kids are able to establish a *positive* adult relationship, we can move the needle without a lot of work on the juvenile justice side."

School disengagement is a complex issue, and reasons that lead to chronic absenteeism can range from problems with math to domestic abuse. Through CCYJ staff and support, the two-day Becca Conference aims to bridge the gaps and create a community of learning by connecting research, programs, and knowledge to those who are working directly with children and adolescents.

For more information, please contact becca@ccyj.org or Kim Ong, Kong@ccyj.org

Lawyers Fostering Independence

by Laurel Simonsen, LFI Managing Attorney

CCYJ's Lawyers Fostering Independence (LFI) program continues to make enormous strides, providing civil legal aid to more than 200 youth in King and Snohomish counties, already surpassing our busiest year on record (2015). Our program improves outcomes for youth transitioning out of the foster care system by arranging pro bono legal representation on civil legal problems.

Youth and young adults exiting the foster care system are highly vulnerable, many of whom have lived experiences in out-of-home care and who are (or are at risk of becoming) homeless. Matched with pro bono attorneys in the community, these youth are afforded life-altering improvements to help overcome legal issues that have created barriers to their housing, education, and employment goals for their future.

LFI is also pleased to announce the addition of our new staff attorney, Grete Schultz. Grete joined the LFI team to lead the program's expansion efforts in Snohomish County.

Our first expansion event took place on October 13th in partnership with Cocoon House, (a non-profit that helps homeless, at-risk youth in Snohomish County), and volunteers from Amazon's legal team. Grete is now working to establish an advisory committee to help us shape our ongoing presence in Snohomish County, as well as our continued expansion efforts in other counties.

For more information, contact Laurel Simonsen, lsimonsen@ccyj.org, or Grete Schultz, gschultz@ccyj.org

Youth LINC by Anica Stieve, SKCCCG Project Manager

Fear of violence and homelessness, and an ingrained inability to trust can thwart most attempts to reach a youth in crisis. But CCYJ's Youth LINC (Leadership, Intervention and Change) team-based case management model has proven it's possible to engage someone at risk with the right intervention and multi-disciplinary approach.

Youth LINC Teams comprised of case managers, law enforcement officers, probation/parole counselors, service providers, educational representatives, mentors, employment providers, and Street Outreach Workers meet weekly to coordinate comprehensive service provision to gang/group-Involved and justice-impacted young people across King County.

By offering services and plans that are case specific and individualized, and are tailored to each young person's needs and goals, all three LINC intervention teams, facilitated by CCY| LINC Project Managers, are expediting services for young people who have high-potential. The Project leverages existing resources to reduce recidivism and victimization, while simultaneously improving outcomes for young people, families and communities.

Teams are operating and serving the following areas: (1) Renton, Highline and Tukwila school districts; (2) Auburn, Kent, and Federal Way school districts; and (3) Seattle (with emphasis on South Seattle).

Youth LINC is thrilled to welcome Vince Vaielua as Project Coordinator for Suburban King County Coordinating Council on Gangs (SKCCCG). Vince has 15 years of experience as a youth advocate and gang intervention specialist. Before joining CCYJ, Vince founded Project 253, a youth empowerment and community engagement organization, and Tuff Love Intervention, a high-risk youth mentoring program. Vince was also involved in the City of Tacoma's implementation of the Comprehensive Gang Model.

For more information, contact Anica Stieve, astieve@ccyj.org.

Family Advocacy Center by Gina Cumbo, Project Director, and Brenda Miyake

Children placed in foster care often face life-long negative outcomes, such as incarceration, homelessness, and mental illness.

Not only is this devastating for youth, it can be costly to the community and to an already overburdened justice and child welfare system.

"Sometimes, it's a resolvable issue, such as the lack of a protective parenting plan, or a decades old criminal charge, that can block a child or youth from being placed with a family member, and lead to unnecessary placement into foster care," says Gina Cumbo, FAC Project Director.

A multidisciplinary team of an attorney, social worker, and parent ally, pulled together by CCYJ's Family Advocacy Center (FAC), works to overcome these roadblocks and advocates to keep families together by strengthening a caretaker's ability to provide for a child's safety and permanence.

Thanks to a gift from the Washington Research Institute, CCYJ was able to add a second (part-time) attorney to the FAC team, allowing us to expand services to partner with the DSHS Office of Indian Child Welfare in West Seattle. Combined with the tribal partnerships established by Project Respect, we are continuing to make strides in working within Native American communities.

FAC is excited to have onboard Alisha Evans-Goldie. Alisha will be connecting parents and caregivers to services, and helping them navigate the child welfare system. Alisha started



her career at Seattle Children's Home's (SCH) McGraw unit. After five years with SCH, she joined Navos caring for adults with emotional and psychological issues. She then went on to a five year tenure with the State of Washington as a Child and Family Welfare

Service specialist, CPS/Family Assessment Response (FAR) investigator, and Child Health and Education Tracking (CHET) screener before joining the team at CCYJ. Alisha can be reached at AEGoldie@ccyj.org.



by Margaret Terry, Major Gifts Manager

Breakthroughs on adolescent brain science and its impact on child welfare and juvenile justice policy was the topic of CCYJ's first "salon series," attended by 30 key supporters.

Moderated by Dr. Ben Danielson, Medical Director of the Odessa Brown Clinic, the event welcomed Dr. Maya Rosen, Post-Doctoral Fellow with the University of Washington's Stress & Development Laboratory, and Casey Trupin, Program Officer with the Raikes Foundation.

An expert on early brain development and the affects on early life experience of cognition and neural function, Dr. Rosen discussed the drastic biochemical differences measured in adolescents exposed to early stress, including increases in reactivity, response to threat and impulsivity.

The discussion centered around breakthroughs in adolescent brain science and the positive impacts on policies and practices in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. Dr. Rosen said, "For all youth, adolescence is a time of incredible salience and sensitivity offering parents, educators and policymakers a rich opportunity to change behavior and maximize social skills, empathy, and community."

The intimate discussion in the "salon" is part of a broader strategy by CCYJ to connect individuals in the child welfare arena, and to share knowledge that impacts juvenile justice in Washington state. We invite all of our supporters to attend upcoming events, and welcome your suggestions for new topics to explore. For input, please contact Margaret Terry at mterry@ccyj.org.



Happy New Year from the staff at CCYJ!

Our mission is to advance justice for and enhance the lives of children and youth through juvenile justice, child welfare, and related systems reform.

Our vision is that through the work of the Center for Children & Youth Justice, more children and youth will be diverted from entering Washington's juvenile justice system. Those children and youth who are involved in the juvenile justice, child welfare and related systems will maximize their potential to become more successful and productive members of their communities. They will have the support of integrated systems staffed by highly-skilled practitioners, utilizing evidence-based practices, in an environment of fair and unbiased decision making.

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NORM MALENG ADVOCATE FOR YOUTH AWARD BREAKFAST

Honoring the Governor's **Blue Ribbon Commission** (BRC) on the Delivery of Services to Children and Families

Accepting on behalf of the Commission are BRC co-chairs, Judge Anne Levinson (ret.) and Representative Ruth Kagi

Wednesday, March 14th, 2018

Sheraton Hotel in Downtown Seattle • 7:30 – 8:45 AM Event Co-Chairs: Erin and Greg Coomer • ccyj.org

To reserve a sponsorship, serve as a table captain, or join us as a guest, please contact: Scott Boling, Development Assistant 206-696-7503 x15 / sboling@ccyj.org

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