Young Man with a Plan FY19 Report

“I learned that I am valued somewhere.”
2019 evaluation response

Young Men
Recruiting was very successful for 9th grade students. 11th grade students stayed engaged as well, regularly attending weekly groups and having an excellent time in NH in March (our largest group ever of 30). We have participants from every Coalition school, as well as Cristo Rey. 84 young men are on the roster, with 72 fully committed. We’ll be doing additional 10th grade recruiting in September.

At weekly groups, young men find a safe haven where they can be authentic and discuss topics including mental health, quality of life, racism, current events, eating well and fitness, relevance of education and school, financial literacy and home ownership, friendship, and healthy relationships. They also practiced mindfulness, attended Men of Color Career Night, worked out, heard from YMWAP alumni about their post-secondary experiences, had BBQs and played laser tag,

We have seen real academic, social, athletic, and mindset breakthroughs in many of our young men. Our young men won Hayden scholarships to attend summer sessions at Syracuse and Juniper Writers at UMass, one is a Noonan scholar, and one is in Harvard Crimson. They are working in hospitals, law firms, community centers, and other firms aligned with their career interests, such as Reebok.

Outcomes and Evaluations
After designing evaluation tools with Julia Gittleman in 2018, Des continued to lead evaluation efforts in 2019. Last year 72% of students improved their GPAs. 100% of students agreed that as a result of participating in the Young Man with a Plan program: “I can make better decisions,” “I have learned how to listen,” and “I enjoy being part of the brotherhood.” 97% agreed that “I feel like I am gaining a sense of purpose;” and 91% agreed that “I have progressed towards my goals” and “I have better relationships with teachers, friends, and family."
A representative subset of open ended responses included:

- The best part of the program is: “I can get stuff off my mind,” “having people I can rely on to help me if I am struggling,” “the sense of family and community,” “breaking bread with my brothers,” “having mentors who back you up and support your goals,” “getting time to talk about things,” and “meeting new people in a chill environment.”

- I come back every week: “to see all my brothers,” “I wanna be around people like me,” “the bond we all built,” “the vibes and life talks,” “advice from Jaykyri and Des,” and “I just love it!”

- I learned: “that I can express myself with people I don’t know,” “I’m able to be successful if I put my mind to it,” “that my problems aren’t that different from others,” “I am my own motivator,” “I control my future,” and “that I love to engage in conversations about life.”

**Mentors**

YMWAP had 8 mentors in FY19. Mentor training was held in November, with four additional brunches for check-in, learning and info sharing. In their evaluations 100% of mentors reported that YMWAP mentor training supported their learning and growth, and sense of brotherhood. Mentors reported that they especially valued the training sessions and discussions addressing mental health issues.

**Funding**

Our FY19 expenses were $302,077. Funding was received from Charles Hayden Foundation; Paul and Edith Babson Foundation; Eastern Bank Foundation; Mary Curtis Trust; and Avison Fund. We received notice in FY19 of two grants for FY20: Cummings Foundation and Foley Hoag Foundation.

**Professional Development**

YMWAP places a high value on professional development, both as a way to build our capacity and to model a commitment to ongoing personal and professional growth. Jaykyri is studying for his doctorate at New England College. For his dissertation he is interviewing recent Black male college graduates to understand what they believe contributed to their persistence and success. Des is enrolled at Fitchburg State to receive his Master’s in Educational Administration. Jaykyri and Des attended COSEBOC in Detroit, and they presented at two conferences in Boston—CT RISE on college readiness in black and Latino males, and Teacher Powered Schools on engaging young men of color in the classroom; both were extremely well received. Jaykyri presented on YMWAP to Hayden trustees in NYC in December and Jaykyri and Des attended the Cummings Foundation reception in June.
Challenges
Boston’s streets are dangerous and some of our young men live in neighborhoods with quite a lot of gun violence. Many young men struggle with depression and anxiety. Social media is an obsession for some students, even seen by some as a career goal to become an influencer or personality/brand. A few of our 12th grade students have failed to progress academically and are not college-ready. We will be discussing other paths for them, including taking them to BFIT for an info session.

2019-20 Plans
Groups start up on September 10th in Dorchester and 12th in Hyde Park. Mentor training is 3pm-8pm October 23 and all day October 24.

Apprentice Mentors: We will hire up to 4 graduates of the Class of 2018 to receive training, assist at groups, and develop/present one workshop each. Apprentice Mentors will receive a $2,500 stipend.

College and Career programming: We will offer students more information on growing career fields in Boston and the educational programs required to access them.

Financial literacy: Isiah Benjamin, who works for Philadelphia Insurance Co, will be presenting a session on financial literacy. He will also share his career journey as an underwriter, college graduate, homeowner and business owner.

THANK YOU
YMWAP is grateful to Boston Prep for providing us with a beautiful office and fiscal agency, and to the Board for supporting us despite the demands of leading schools. We appreciate Tyler Martin for providing financial support and Gio Morales for being our webmaster.

We thank all who support our mission to create a culture of brotherhood, respect and achievement among young men of color in Boston.