

MILWAUKEE CHRISTIAN CENTER

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM – YEAR END REPORT – 2022

Milwaukee Christian Center's (MCC) Youth Development Program (YDP) served 175 youth in after-school/evening and summer programming, averaging 13 youth per day. These numbers represent a 30% increase in overall enrollment and double average daily attendance from the previous year. While still below pre-pandemic attendance numbers, there has been a steady growth in youth engagement throughout the past year.

YDP is a 40 week afterschool and 8 week summer program, for youth, ages 6-18, delivered at Kosciuszko Community Center. Typical program hours are 2:30-6:30pm during the school year and 8:00am-5:00pm during the summer, Monday through Friday. Additional activities take place during weekend hours including athletic tournaments and community improvement/civic engagement events. YDP address the need for quality academic and social development during out-of-school time through purposeful academic enrichment and social development activities, ongoing family involvement, formal youth leadership opportunities, and a commitment to rooting programming in the needs and strengths of youth participants and their communities.

A sample of specific projects/programs offered by YDP during 2020 include:

Growing Connections: Collaborative program with UW-Extension that includes urban agriculture, community engagement, youth leadership, and exposure to the arts. This program expanded its presence in the community gardens located on 5th and Becher including installation of 8 raised beds. This project allowed MCC to employ six high school age youth over the course of the summer to maintain the garden and support neighborhood clean-up/beautification efforts.

Community Art Leaders (formerly Youth Artists United): Program for high school age students who train under leadership of partner artist Tia Richardson and complete a full-scale mural. This year youth completed a mural on the outside of Nutricion y Bienestar on 17th & Greenfield, in collaboration with Clarke Square Neighborhood Initiative and Muskego Way Forward. Additional collaborative support was offered by Milwaukee County's Credible Messengers, 414 Life, and Milwaukee Police Department – District 2.

Community Leadership: In summer 2022 YDP hosted more than 18 youth employees through Earn and Learn and internal funding. Youth were engaged with business and community leaders along the Lincoln Ave corridor, supported food pantry operations, maintained garden beds, and support day camp activities for elementary age students. Youth conducted neighborhood and park clean-ups and supported the annual National Night Out event.

Outcomes

Enrollment: YDP enrolled 175 youth in programming during 2022, a 30% increase from the previous year. Our planned outcome for 2022 was to enroll 200 youth. New staffing dynamics have limited the capacity of YDP. Since 2020, MCC has raised entry level Youth Workers wages by 2.50/hour and created a Lead Youth Worker position at an additional cost of 4.50/hour. These changes have allowed the program to maintain and attract staff, but also put a lower cap on overall staff hours and therefore potential enrollment. MCC has raised significant additional funding but continues to see the costs associated with providing living wages for youth program staff as future challenge. Potential

opportunities to meet this challenge are being explored including employing high school students in support roles, partnering with work-study programs to subsidize staffing costs, and looking at responsible ways to expand volunteer roles within programming.

Enrollment in educational enrichment activities was 155 youth, exceeding the 125 youth goal by 24%. Education support has been offered one-on-one and in small groups throughout the year. Additional education enrichment has been offered in partnership with SHARP Literacy and the Milwaukee Public Library.

Enrollment in social development activities was 175 youth, a 30% increase from the previous year and slightly short of the 200 youth goal for the reasons described above.

Data Source: Enrollment forms and daily attendance sheets; CAYEN database.

Daily Average Attendance: YDP's daily average attendance was 26 youth per day. A 50% increase from 2021. In the pre-pandemic months of 2020 YDP daily average attendance was 55 youth per day. The pandemic drastically affected daily attendance numbers, including spacing attendance out between days to meet in small group sizes and ensure all youth still engage in programming at least twice weekly. The road back to pre-pandemic attendance levels has been long and is complicated by challenges in staffing outlined above. **Data Source:** Daily attendance sheets; UNCOM database.

Youth Leadership: 35 youth participated in Youth Leadership activities during 2022, exceeding the 30 youth goal. Youth leadership activities include 9 youth co-leading the completion of the a community mural with artist Tia Richardson, 8 youth leading park and community clean-ups weekly, and a group of 18 youth working in the neighborhood garden in collaboration with UW-Extension. **Data Source:** Enrollment forms and daily attendance sheets; UNCOM database.

Community and Family Events: 138 youth and family members engaged in community and family events. These events primarily consisted of bi-monthly family nights including a art activities, Halloween and Holiday parties, and program celebrations. **Data Source:** Event attendance sheets

Summary

MCC's Youth Development Program engaged youth in quality programming that supports healthy, safe communities. Going forward into the 2023 program year, YDP is committed to exploring how best to utilize its capacity to support young people, including:

1. Continuing to work with UW-Division of Extension to engage youth in the development of an agriculture and wellness space at Kohl Farm in addition to further development of the 5th and Becher community gardens.
2. Exploring partnerships that make additional hands-on learning opportunities available to young people
3. Exploring internal and partner capacity to deliver high quality programming with the current focus from age 6-18; Potentially exploring a shift toward additional age-specific programming

