

# Youth Ambassadors



## General Information

### Contact Information

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>Nonprofit</b> | Youth Ambassadors   |
| <b>Address</b>   | 7309 High Drive<br>Prairie Village, KS 66208  |
| <b>Phone</b>     | (913) 722-5504  |
| <b>Website</b>   | <a href="http://www.youthambassadorskc.org">www.youthambassadorskc.org</a>            |
| <b>Facebook</b>  | <a href="https://facebook.com/YouthAmbassadorskc">facebook.com/YouthAmbassadorskc</a> |
| <b>Twitter</b>   | <a href="https://twitter.com/YAmbassadorsKC">twitter.com/YAmbassadorsKC</a>           |
| <b>Email</b>     | <a href="mailto:cpaigeoc@sbcglobal.net">cpaigeoc@sbcglobal.net</a>                    |

### At A Glance

#### How to donate, support, and volunteer

Volunteers are always welcome! Throughout the year volunteers hold mock interviews, participate in career day, and join the youth for lunch or on special outings. Cash or check donations can be mailed to 2803 E. 51st, KCMO, 64130. Credit card donations can be made through our website. We are looking for in kind donations of laptops, digital cameras, memory cards, art supplies, office supplies, and printing services.

# Mission & Areas Served

## Statements

### **Mission Statement**

Youth Ambassadors is an educational program designed to empower under-served teenage youth with important life skills, soft job skills, creative expression and adult mentors who will help them become future community leaders willing and able to work for positive change.

### **Background Statement**

- In 2010 Youth Ambassadors partnered with the Argentine Neighborhood Development Association to start their first site in the Argentine district of Kansas City, Kansas. In 2010 we enrolled 20 students.
- In 2011, we became a bi-state initiative when we opened first site in Kansas City, Missouri.
- Currently, we serve approximately 300 underserved, teenage youth a year through two year-round sites in Kansas City, Missouri and one summer site in Kansas City, Kansas.

### **Impact Statement**

In 2017 we empowered over 200 teenagers with soft job and life skills needed to be productive community members. This year we strengthened our leadership program with two advanced life-skills curriculums based on best practices, concentrating on powerful lessons on personal change and resiliency. Under the umbrella of trauma informed care, our Ambassadors are taught how to recognize impediments to academic and personal success, current realities, anger management, crisis resolution, healthy relationships, self-respect and appropriate boundaries. Vital communication and cooperation skills are emphasized and we teach our students how to utilize community assets. With great success we continue to implement two year round programs in Kansas City, Missouri and a summer program in Kansas City, Kansas.

- Our top goal is to capacity build, extending our reach in the Kansas City Metropolitan area.
- Our second goal is to build additional partnerships with existing organizations within our "site" communities. Currently our summer and year round programming in Missouri is held in DeLaSalle Education Center and the Mary L. Kelly Community Center run by the Upper Room. These are exciting partnerships that closely connect us with our education system, and positions Youth Ambassadors in close relation to students during non-school hours when they are most at risk from negative influences. Youth Ambassadors believes the success of any community program lies in its ability to nurture and grow neighborhood alliances. Our program is not here to duplicate existing programs but to compliment and add value to current community building.
- Our third goal is to continue to provide current, evidence based programming. The majority of our Ambassadors indicate high exposure to childhood trauma and great need for specialized programs.

### **Needs Statement**

- Site Sponsors Needed - The cost to run one site per summer or academic year session is \$20,000. This includes all teacher salaries, student stipends, supplies, and programming costs.
- Adopt an Ambassador – Individual Ambassadors can be adopted and given the opportunity to participate in our summer or year-round program program. Sponsorship per youth is \$500 for a summer session and \$1300 for the year.
- Technology Needed - Art supplies, office supplies, Lap top computers, memory cards, and digital cameras for digital documentary and photography classes.

**CEO/Executive Director/Board Chair Statement**

As President of the Board and a Co-Founder of Youth Ambassadors, I am energized daily by the awesome challenge of growing this organization so we can impact the lives of more youth. I have a Masters in Teaching and taught for ten years. For the past twenty years, I have been intricately involved in my family foundation, Forest Foundation, serving under-served youth. This rewarding experience gives me a unique view of how to responsibly allocate the funds of our donors.

As an educator I know the importance of a strong education. In YA, Ambassadors are taught to view themselves from their strengths that are inherent. They are taught to view education and knowledge as empowerment tools that can enhance self-worth and increase self-efficacy. I am excited to have the privilege to watch this happen before my own eyes. One of our most exciting outcomes from our 2014-15 academic year program is that 96% of our students of age to be employed in the community were hired in jobs outside of Youth Ambassadors. Our youth are becoming productive members of society.

Youth Ambassadors is growing steadily. We are able to annually open new programs and empower more youth. This success, however, has led to some new challenges. As we grow, we need additional funding for operations and support staff. To address these new challenges, we are finding new ways to creatively fundraise.

**Service Categories**

Youth Development-Citizenship

Secondary & High Schools

Arts Education

**Areas of Service**

**Areas Served**

**Areas**

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KS - Wyandotte County

KS - Wyandotte County Urban Core

MO - Jackson County

MO - Jackson County Urban Core

# Programs

## Programs

### Missouri Year-Round Youth Ambassadors

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Description</b>                  | Through educational and creative programming YA provides a comprehensive summer and year-round program where students receive instruction in negotiating and navigating the education system, individualized tutoring, instruction in life skills, including business etiquette, anger management, crisis resolution, academic and career goal setting, time management, smart choices, healthy relationships, and recognition of impediments to success. They build resiliency through therapeutic art and journal writing. And they showcase life as a teenager and their surrounding neighborhoods through self-produced documentaries and books. Our teens build on their knowledge of what happens on the streets and learn how they can stand for positive change. They learn their voice counts. Our program is also designed to provide a "first job" experience. Through receipt of a paycheck our youth learn banking skills and fiscal responsibility, work place parameters, and personal accountability.             |
| <b>Category</b>                     | Education, General/Other Educational Programs   |
| <b>Population Served</b>            | Adolescents Only (13-19 years), ,   |
| <b>Short-Term Success</b>           | All of our Ambassadors will leave our program empowered with soft job skills necessary to attain and keep their first job, with stronger education navigating skills, and with exposure to valuable mentors and resources in their communities that can help them succeed at school, in the work place and at home. Our Ambassadors leave with a resume, financial knowledge, and interview practice. During the hours of the day when youth are most at risk our Ambassadors meet and form trusting relationships with mentors in a safe, nurturing environment. Through video development and photography they explore important community issues, through art they explore personal feelings and through vital journal writings they learn to use their voices. Every Ambassador has access to a weekly academic tutor and counselor outside of their school environment. Each Ambassador writes, uses technology, and practices public speaking daily - hence reducing the inevitable academic slide during non-school hours. |
| <b>Long- Term Success</b>           | Ultimately we would like our youth of Missouri to be equipped with the life and job skills necessary to be productive members of society, to take ownership and pride in their community, and to be positive role models and mentors to the generations that follow. Youth Ambassadors works to enhance our Ambassadors' self-worth and increase their self-efficacy in their academic and psycho-social arenas. We are in the beginning stages of tracking school grades, school attendance rates, graduation rates and secondary education and/or employment rates, all of which, if increased, would be the ultimate result from this program.   |
| <b>Program Success Monitored By</b> | Youth Ambassadors tracks weekly attendance in our program, Ambassadors lost to other outside employment, and school attendance, grades and graduation rates as our hard outcomes. We use surveys, the ACE test, our academic counselor notes, and student self-reporting as tools.  |

## **Examples of Program Success**

In six months since tracking attendance rates 50% of Ambassadors' transcripts show perfect school attendance. We have 90% attendance in our program, 98% of Ambassadors have resumes and have completed mock interviews. All ambassadors have received financial education which has resulted in 50% of Ambassadors opening new bank accounts with direct deposit. 90% of Ambassadors report feeling better equipped for employment beyond Youth Ambassadors. 100% of Ambassadors write daily, have been exposed to new technology, and have practiced countless hours of public speaking. Many Ambassadors have sought outside counseling. Danielle, age 15, came with her eyes averted and shoulders slumped. In her first writing she admitted a family member had sexually abused her when she was young, and she hated school because she couldn't read or write. Her family accepted language testing. Danielle tested at the first grade level. We brought in a professional and had Danielle tutored every day.

## State Street Youth Ambassadors

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Description</b>                  | Through educational and creative programming YA provides a comprehensive summer program where students receive instruction in negotiating and navigating the education system, individualized tutoring, instruction in life skills, including business etiquette, anger management, crisis resolution, academic and career goal setting, time management, smart choices, healthy relationships, and recognition of impediments to success. They build resiliency through therapeutic art and journal writing. And they showcase life as a teenager and their surrounding neighborhoods through self-produced documentaries and books. Our teens build on their knowledge of what happens on the streets and learn how they can stand for positive change. They learn their voice counts. Our program is also designed to provide a "first job" experience. Through receipt of a paycheck our youth learn banking skills and fiscal responsibility, work place parameters, and personal accountability. |
| <b>Category</b>                     | Education, General/Other Educational Delivery  |
| <b>Population Served</b>            | Adolescents Only (13-19 years), ,  |
| <b>Short-Term Success</b>           | All of our Ambassadors will leave our program empowered with soft job skills necessary to attain and keep their first job and with exposure to valuable mentors and resources in their communities that can help them succeed at school, in the work place and at home. Our Ambassadors leave with a resume, financial knowledge, and interview practice. During the hours of the day when youth are most at risk our Ambassadors meet and form trusting relationships with mentors in a safe, nurturing environment. Through video development and photography they explore important community issues, through art they explore personal feelings and through vital journal writings they learn to use their voices. Each Ambassador writes, uses technology, and practices public speaking daily - hence reducing the inevitable academic slide during non-school hours.  |
| <b>Long- Term Success</b>           | Ultimately we would like our youth in Kansas to be equipped with the life and job skills necessary to be productive members of society, to take ownership and pride in their community, and to be positive role models and mentors to the generations that follow. Youth Ambassadors works to enhance our Ambassadors' self-worth and increase their self-efficacy in their academic and psycho-social arenas. We are tracking high school graduation and employment rates.  |
| <b>Program Success Monitored By</b> | Youth Ambassadors tracks weekly attendance in our program, Ambassadors lost to successful outside employment, and high school graduation rates as our hard outcomes. We use surveys, the ACE test, counselor notes, and student self-reporting as tools.   |

## Examples of Program Success

We have 90% program attendance, 98% of Ambassadors have resumes and have completed mock interviews. All ambassadors have received financial literacy education. 90% of Ambassadors report feeling better equipped for employment beyond Youth Ambassadors. 100% of Ambassadors write daily, are exposed to new technology, and practice countless hours of public speaking. Many Ambassadors have sought outside counseling. Over the summer Regina excelled and hid her secret. In writing class Ambassadors learn they have a voice, and with trust, release. One day Regina referred to herself as "a broken little bird." When asked to continue she opened up. She admitted that anger was eating her up, and she was afraid she'd lose control. For years she witnessed her father horribly abuse her mother. No one knew what she saw. With our help, Regina admitted to her mother what she saw and has started to heal with professional help.

## CEO Comments

Daily I work with children living right next door in conditions we would rather not think about, rather not see. When we are faced with the reality many of our neighbors confront daily, it is tempting to don our blinders, so we can go about our days in a manner that is comfortable.

But children? Kansas City children numb to the violence in their homes and on the streets or children who rely on school lunches for their next meal? These amazing, resilient children are our Ambassadors. This summer 200 of our Ambassadors were given the ACEs survey. 100% of our youth report childhood trauma exposure, >30% in the highest category of exposure. This rate we cannot ignore.

When someone experiences high rates of trauma in childhood, they often feel "less than" or that they somehow don't measure up to others. Societal stigmas cause us to bottle up our emotions and not deal with our experiences appropriately. One of the strengths of our Youth Ambassadors' curriculum, and what sets it apart from other programs, is our "trauma informed" care that provides a platform where our youth trust enough to find their own voice.

That is where true healing and change begins. It's about sharing their truth and finding out that they are not alone in their circumstances. It's about having compassion for each other, and what's most difficult, finding compassion for yourself. To me that is how you start to build the resilience necessary to combat the effects of ACE's. Youth Ambassadors combines building resiliency with the teaching of important life and soft job skills. Through this combination, our children become better equipped to tackle their daily challenges and excel. They find it in them to graduate high school, and either go to college or find sustainable employment.

# Leadership & Staff

## Executive Director/CEO

|                           |                        |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Executive Director</b> | Mrs. Paige O'Connor    |
| <b>Term Start</b>         | June 2010              |
| <b>Email</b>              | cpaigeoc@sbcglobal.net |
| <b>Compensation</b>       | \$0 - \$50,000         |
| <b>Experience</b>         |                        |

## Senior Staff

Mrs. Tiffany Lynch

**Title** Director of Development

Mrs. Jenni Jones

**Title** Director of Community Outreach

Mrs. Mallory Gobet

**Title** Director of Programs

## Staff

|                              |      |
|------------------------------|------|
| <b>Paid Full-Time Staff</b>  | 3    |
| <b>Paid Part- Time Staff</b> | 19   |
| <b>Volunteers</b>            | 116  |
| <b>Retention Rate</b>        | 100% |
| <b>Paid Contractors</b>      | 0    |

## Formal Evaluations

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>CEO Formal Evaluation</b>                         | Yes       |
| <b>CEO/Executive Formal Evaluation Frequency</b>     | Annually  |
| <b>Senior Management Formal Evaluation</b>           | Yes       |
| <b>Senior Management Formal Evaluation Frequency</b> | Annually  |
| <b>NonManagement Formal Evaluation</b>               | Yes       |
| <b>Non Management Formal Evaluation Frequency</b>    | Quarterly |

## Plans & Policies

|  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| <b>Organization Has a Fundraising Plan</b> | Yes               |
| <b>Organization Has a Strategic Plan</b>   | Yes               |
| <b>Management Succession Plan</b>          | Under Development |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <b>Organization Policy and Procedures</b> | Yes |
| <b>Nondiscrimination Policy</b>           | Yes |
| <b>Whistleblower Policy</b>               | Yes |
| <b>Document Destruction Policy</b>        | Yes |

## Collaborations

Currently YA collaborates with the UMKC Sociology Department for YA curriculum guidance, teacher enrichment and work opportunities for UMKC Masters level students. We offer Rockhurst University's communication students opportunities to do specialized teaching projects and Avila University uses our documentaries as teaching tools in their teaching methods curriculum. The Argentine Neighborhood Development Association, the State Street Project, the Upper Room, and DeLaSalle Education Center collaborate with YA to provide programming in their communities. Youth Ambassadors collaborates with the Youth Volunteer Corps of Greater Kansas City to give our youth volunteer opportunities. YA has had a valuable partnership with VML. Together we have published two books. We have a wonderful relationship with the Jewish Federation of Greater KC and were chosen to sponsor one of their interns with their Leadership Tomorrow program. We partnered with the Kansas City Chamber of Commerce's Resiliency KC initiative and KCPT's ReDream and Take Note initiatives.

## Government Licenses

**Is your organization licensed by the government?** No

# Board & Governance

## Board Chair

|                            |                       |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Board Chair</b>         | Ms. Tiffany Lynch     |
| <b>Company Affiliation</b> | The Forest Foundation |
| <b>Term</b>                | June 2010 to May 2019 |
| <b>Email</b>               | gtlynch@aol.com       |

## Board Members

| <b>Name</b>          | <b>Affiliation</b>  |
|----------------------|---|
| Mrs. JoMarie Andrews | Community Volunteer   |
| Dr. Cass Butler      | Regional Director - Midwest, Webster University                   |
| Mr. Dan Cosgrove     | Jeffrey Byrne & Associates, Hiccup Productions                    |
| Mr. Brandon Haverty  |   |
| Ms. Jenni Jones      | Community Volunteer   |
| Ms. Lisa Krigsten    | Dentons US LLP  |
| Mr. Peter Long       |   |
| Mrs. Tiffany Lynch   | The Forest Foundation   |
| Ms. Susanne Mitko    | Lee's Summit School District                                      |
| Mrs. Paige O'Connor  | Community Volunteer   |
| Mr. Vincente Perez   | University of Chicago   |
| Ms. Carrie Robinson  | Alvin H. Michael Robinson Photography, Robinson Family Foundation |
| Mr. Irv Robinson     |   |
| Mrs. Angela Tucker   | Johnson County Libraries  |

## Board Demographics - Ethnicity

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <b>African American/Black</b>          | 2  |
| <b>Asian American/Pacific Islander</b> | 0  |
| <b>Caucasian</b>                       | 11 |
| <b>Hispanic/Latino</b>                 | 1  |
| <b>Native American/American Indian</b> | 0  |
| <b>Other</b>                           | 0  |

## Board Demographics - Gender

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>Male</b>        | 5 |
| <b>Female</b>      | 9 |
| <b>Unspecified</b> | 0 |

## Governance

|  |      |
|--|------|
| <b>Board Term Lengths</b>                          | 3    |
| <b>Board Term Limits</b>                           | 3    |
| <b>Board Meeting Attendance %</b>                  | 95%  |
| <b>Written Board Selection Criteria?</b>           | No   |
| <b>Written Conflict of Interest Policy?</b>        | Yes  |
| <b>Percentage Making Monetary Contributions</b>    | 100% |
| <b>Percentage Making In-Kind Contributions</b>     | 100% |
| <b>Constituency Includes Client Representation</b> | No   |
| <b>Number of Full Board Meetings Annually</b>      | 4    |

### CEO Comments

Daily we work with children living right next door in conditions we would rather not think about, rather not see. When we are faced with the reality many of our neighbors confront daily, it is tempting to don our blinders, so we can go about our days in a manner that is comfortable.

But children? Kansas City children numb to the violence in their homes and on the streets or children who rely on school lunches for their next meal? These amazing, resilient children are our Ambassadors. This summer 175 of our Ambassadors were given the ACEs survey. In the original study of seventeen thousand adult participants 12.5% scored in the highest category. This summer, four times that rate, or 42% of our Ambassadors scored in the highest category. This rate we cannot ignore.

When someone experiences high rates of trauma in childhood, they often feel “less than” or that they somehow don’t measure up to others. Societal stigmas cause us to bottle up our emotions and not deal with our experiences appropriately. One of the strengths of our Youth Ambassadors’ curriculum, and what sets it apart from other programs, is our "trauma informed" care that provides a platform where our youth trust enough to find their own voice.

That is where true healing and change begins. It’s about sharing their truth and finding out that they are not alone in their circumstances. It’s about having compassion for each other, and what’s most difficult, finding compassion for yourself. To me that is how you start to build the resilience necessary to combat the effects of ACE’s. Youth Ambassadors combines building resiliency with the teaching of important life and soft job skills. Through this combination our children become better equipped to tackle their daily challenges and excel.

### Advisory Board Members

| <b>Name</b>                | <b>Affiliation</b>                           |
|----------------------------|--|
| Mrs. Angela Andresen-Smart | Hall Family Foundation                       |
| Mrs. Angela Jewel-Tucker   | Jo. County Library                           |
| Mrs. Ellen Murphy          | TEAM Performance                             |
| Mr. Rory O'Connor          | Grand Construction                           |
| Mr. Steve O'Neil           | The Curry Family Foundation                  |
| Mr. Mike Poor              | The Forest Foundation                        |
| Ms. Beth Rush              | Community Volunteer                          |
| Mr. David Sullivan         | The Forest Foundation                        |
| Mrs. Gwen Wurst            | The Greater Kansas City Community Foundation |

# Financials

## Fiscal Year

|                           |              |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Fiscal Year Start</b>  | Jan 01, 2017 |
| <b>Fiscal Year End</b>    | Dec 31, 2017 |
| <b>Projected Revenue</b>  | \$300,000.00 |
| <b>Projected Expenses</b> | \$280,000.00 |
| <b>Endowment Value</b>    | \$0.00       |
| <b>Spending Policy</b>    | Income Only  |
| <b>Percentage</b>         | 0%           |

## Detailed Financials

### Revenue and Expenses

| <b>Fiscal Year</b>    | <b>2015</b> | <b>2014</b> | <b>2013</b> |
|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Total Revenue</b>  | \$206,396   | \$118,299   | \$119,683   |
| <b>Total Expenses</b> | \$192,147   | \$94,864    | \$74,078    |

### Revenue Sources

| <b>Fiscal Year</b>                              | <b>2015</b> | <b>2014</b> | <b>2013</b> |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Foundation and Corporation Contributions</b> | \$168,533   | \$125,752   | \$79,500    |
| <b>Government Contributions</b>                 | \$0         | \$0         | \$0         |
| <b>Federal</b>                                  | --          | \$0         | \$0         |
| <b>State</b>                                    | --          | \$0         | \$0         |
| <b>Local</b>                                    | --          | \$0         | \$0         |
| <b>Unspecified</b>                              | \$0         | \$0         | \$0         |
| <b>Individual Contributions</b>                 | --          | \$0         | \$13,916    |
| <b>Indirect Public Support</b>                  | \$0         | \$0         | \$0         |
| <b>Earned Revenue</b>                           | \$0         | \$0         | \$0         |
| <b>Investment Income, Net of Losses</b>         | \$0         | \$0         | \$0         |
| <b>Membership Dues</b>                          | \$0         | \$0         | \$0         |
| <b>Special Events</b>                           | \$36,397    | (\$7,453)   | \$0         |
| <b>Revenue In-Kind</b>                          | \$1,400     | \$0         | \$0         |
| <b>Other</b>                                    | \$66        | \$0         | \$26,267    |

## Expense Allocation

| Fiscal Year                             | 2015      | 2014     | 2013     |
|---|-----------|----------|----------|
| Program Expense                         | \$164,814 | \$71,915 | \$71,073 |
| Administration Expense                  | \$21,157  | \$22,949 | \$1,172  |
| Fundraising Expense                     | \$6,176   | \$0      | \$1,833  |
| Payments to Affiliates                  | --        | \$0      | \$0      |
| Total Revenue/Total Expenses            | 1.07      | 1.25     | 1.62     |
| Program Expense/Total Expenses          | 86%       | 76%      | 96%      |
| Fundraising Expense/Contributed Revenue | 3%        | 0%       | 2%       |

## Assets and Liabilities

| Fiscal Year           | 2015      | 2014     | 2013     |
|-----------------------|-----------|----------|----------|
| Total Assets          | \$121,072 | \$72,292 | \$47,374 |
| Current Assets        | \$120,069 | \$71,009 | \$47,374 |
| Long-Term Liabilities | \$0       | \$0      | \$0      |
| Current Liabilities   | \$1,346   | \$1,483  | \$0      |
| Total Net Assets      | \$119,726 | \$70,809 | \$47,374 |

## Short Term Solvency

| Fiscal Year                                       | 2015  | 2014  | 2013 |
|---|-------|-------|------|
| Current Ratio: Current Assets/Current Liabilities | 89.20 | 47.88 | --   |

## Long Term Solvency

| Fiscal Year                        | 2015 | 2014 | 2013 |
|------------------------------------|------|------|------|
| Long-Term Liabilities/Total Assets | 0%   | 0%   | 0%   |

## Top Funding Sources

| Fiscal Year                                   | 2015 | 2014                               | 2013                                |
|---|------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Top Funding Source & Dollar Amount            | --   | Ewing Kauffman Foundation \$40,000 | Robinson Family Foundation \$15,000 |
| Second Highest Funding Source & Dollar Amount | --   | Hall Family Foundation \$10,000    | H&R Block Foundation \$10,000       |
| Third Highest Funding Source & Dollar Amount  | --   | H&R Block Foundation \$10,000      | Hall Family Foundation \$10,000     |

## Capital Campaign

|                                  |        |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| Currently in a Capital Campaign? | No     |
| Goal                             | \$0.00 |

## Foundation Comments

- FY 2015, 2014: Financial data reported using IRS Form 990.
- FY 2013: Financial data reported using audited financial statements.
- Foundation/corporate revenue line item may include contributions from individuals.