YCC July Newsletter: Celebrating Community and Inclusion

Building skills for life.

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July 2024

Welcome to July at YCC: *Celebrating Community and Inclusion*

As we enter July, we're excited to highlight our ongoing commitment to community and inclusion at YCC. This month's newsletter captures the spirit of empowerment through programs like the Summer Conservation Program and the recent success of our annual golf fundraiser. We also reflect on significant events such as our Gun Violence Prevention Initiative Member and Family gathering and YouthBuild's inspiring visit to the CLC Advanced Technology Center. Join us as we commemorate Disability Pride Month by honoring diversity, resilience, and the spirit of unity within our community.

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Spotlight on Neveah: Construction Member and Artist Extraordinaire

This past June, we had the pleasure of celebrating the artistic talents of one of our own, Neveah, a dedicated member of YCC's construction team. Neveah's artwork was featured in an impressive show at the Waukegan Public Library. The YCC staff took a field trip to support her and were amazed by the creativity and skill displayed in her pieces. Neveah's work beautifully blends her technical construction expertise with her artistic vision, making her an invaluable asset to our community. We are incredibly proud of her achievements and look forward to seeing more of her inspiring work in the future!

Donors

Proud Member of The CorpsNetwork

Youth Conservation Corps Receives $800,000 Grant to Launch Conservation Career Pathway Program

YCC is thrilled to announce it has been awarded an $800,000 grant from The Corps Network to develop a groundbreaking career pathway program in Urban and Community Forestry. This three-year grant will enable YCC to provide vital training and career opportunities for local youth, focusing on urban forestry, green infrastructure, and climate resilience. Be on the lookout for updates as this program is developed over the next several months.

Northwestern Medicine Lake Forest Hospital

Support from Northwestern Medicine Lake Forest Hospital

Youth Conservation Corps is delighted to announce that Northwestern Medicine Lake Forest Hospital and its Community Benefit Grant Program have awarded YCC a generous grant of $40,000. This grant will support our ongoing conservation efforts and community programs and underscores NMLFH's commitment to enhancing environmental stewardship and youth development in our community. We are excited for this new partnership, which will benefit the entire Lake County community.

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Empowering Through Digital Literacy: Partnership with ConnectLakeCounty

We are thrilled to announce the successful completion of our 8-week digital literacy program in partnership with ConnectLakeCounty. Led by their dedicated on-site facilitator, Taylor, the program provided YCC members with essential digital skills that are crucial in today's technology-driven world. The participants not only gained valuable knowledge but also received brand-new laptops to continue their learning journey at home. This initiative has empowered our members, opening up new opportunities for personal and professional growth. A big thank you to Taylor and ConnectLakeCounty for making this program a resounding success!

Program Updates

Building Career Readiness: Mock Interview Day Success

Our recent Mock Interview Day was a fantastic opportunity for YCC members to hone their career readiness skills. Volunteers from AbbVie, Waukegan Park District, Mariani, and North Shore Trust and Savings dedicated their time to conduct both 1:1 and group interview simulations. This hands-on experience allowed our members to practice and improve their interview techniques in a supportive environment.

The day concluded with a debrief session, where volunteers and participants came together to share valuable observations and advice. We are grateful to our amazing volunteers for their commitment to empowering our members and helping them prepare for future career opportunities.

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Gun Violence Prevention Initiative Member and Family Event: Addressing Community Violence

YCC hosted a meaningful event on 06/11/2024, bringing together members and their families to discuss the root causes of gun violence in our community. The event aimed to introduce families to YCC's programs and goals, emphasizing creating a safer environment, especially for youth. Highlights included discussions on community violence and strategies to mitigate its impact, such as enhancing youth motivation, providing affordable housing, and expanding programs for suspended students. On 06/27/2024, the event expanded to include three officers from the Waukegan Police Department, fostering open dialogue on community safety and police integrity. Participants agreed on the importance of regular meetings to drive positive change.

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Summer Conservation Program Kicks Off in June

The 50th anniversary year of Summer Conservation Program is in full swing, with 30 enthusiastic members hard at work across five locations within the Lake County Forest Preserves. Since starting in June, the teams have been diligently making improvements to the preserves, enhancing everyone's access to these beautiful green spaces. Summer Conservation crew members are not only contributing to the environment but also gaining valuable skills and experience in conservation work. This program is a cornerstone of YCC's mission, fostering a love for nature and a commitment to preserving our local environment for future generations. We are proud of the dedication and hard work shown by our Summer Conservation team and look forward to seeing the positive impact of their efforts.

Breaking New Ground: Construction Team Begins New Home in Zion

Despite some initial weather delays, our dedicated YCC Construction team has officially broken ground on a new home in Zion. This exciting project will see our construction members building the house from the ground up, providing them with invaluable hands-on experience and skill development. More importantly, their hard work will result in a beautiful new home for a family in need.

This endeavor reflects our commitment to fostering practical skills while making a positive impact in our community. We look forward to watching this project take shape and celebrating the completion of another home built with dedication and care.

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YouthBuild Visits CLC Advanced Technology Center

Preparing YCC's YouthBuild members for the workforce is a core part of our mission. Recently, our members visited the College of Lake County's Advanced Technology Center (ATC), renowned for producing job-ready candidates in Lake County. They explored labs focused on Automation, Robotics, Mechatronics, and Welding Fabrication Technology. Highlights included observing a welding robot used in auto manufacturing and trying out a welding simulator, even joined by our Placement & Alumni Manager, Jennifer Cooper. Special thanks to Dr. Richard Ammon and the ATC staff for showcasing exciting career opportunities in manufacturing.

Annual Golf Outing Fundraiser: A Day of Fun and Generosity

Our annual golf outing fundraiser was a smashing success, held at the picturesque Thunderhawk Golf Course in Zion, a beautiful property of the Lake County Forest Preserve. Sponsored by Walgreens Boots Alliance, the event brought together golf enthusiasts and supporters of YCC for a day of fun and philanthropy. Thanks to the generosity of our participants and sponsors, we raised significant funds to support our Summer Conservation Program. This vital program provides hands-on conservation experience to our members, fostering a deep appreciation for nature and environmental stewardship. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributed to making this event a memorable and impactful one.

Staff and Member Updates

Sadaf Surani, YCC's Data and Grants Manager, welcomed baby boy Azaan Notta this spring. Welcome to the YCC family, Azzan!

YCC alumna Heaven Ragin recently joined the office staff at Grainger, one of YCC's most supportive partners. Way to go, Heaven!

Steven Panos, Construction Team, attended the YouthBuild Midwest Convention in Madison, WI, where he met YouthBuild USA CEO John Valverde. Steven brought back a lot of great ideas to implement at YCC!

Be on the lookout for a profile of Mr. Fred Williams in the August edition of Forest & Bluff Magazine!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Build, Brews, Bears celebrates YCC's YouthBuild Waukegan program.Young people who have not thrived in school and do not have skills in growing and well-paid professions come to YCC as YouthBuild members.This national program teaches members subjects need to gain their GED, and skills in construction.Young adults thrive with the wrap-around programs YCC provides as they build stackable, portable credentials and our graduates thrive in the world of work with our full year follow-up support and placement services.

MORE INFORMATION

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