

Y.O.U.

YOUTH & OPPORTUNITY UNITED

Annual Report 2016

Expanding Opportunity.
Empowering Youth.

Dear Friends,

Dillon engineered a pinball machine out of recycled materials. Ena concocted an edible bubble through scientific experimentation.

Lorena and Oliver explored concepts of identity, healthy relationships, and gender stereotypes with the support of caring adult role models. In 2016, more than 1,600 youth flourished in our programs—exploring their interests and developing leadership skills and confidence through deepened experiential learning and an expanded continuum of support.

Alongside the growth in our programs, our commitment to shared leadership grew as well. Based on the success of our Community Schools strategy at Chute Middle School and Lincoln Junior High,

we scaled the model to King Arts School—thanks to the support of District 65, United Way, and our amazing parent leaders.

2016 also marked the completion of our Campaign for Youth Opportunity. We were humbled by the overwhelming support and involvement of our community in working toward our vision that every young person should be surrounded by a world of opportunity.

This was a momentous year for Y.O.U., and we could not have realized our full potential without YOU—our volunteers, donors, and community partners. In celebrating our impact and growth in 2016, we are truly celebrating the collective effort of our community.

Thank you for joining us in expanding opportunity and empowering youth!



Sue Brenner
Board President



Seth Green
Executive Director



Y.O.U. in 2016

In 2016, we deepened our experiential programming, completed our Campaign for Youth Opportunity, and provided holistic support to youth and families.

Our youth traveled, imagined, inquired, and created. Over 1,600 young people and their families engaged in transformational experiences and received holistic services.

OUR IMPACT

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL GROWTH: 93% of Y.O.U. youth report greater confidence after participating in Y.O.U. programs (according to pre- and post-surveys of youth).

ACADEMIC GROWTH: 85% of Y.O.U. youth are improving or maintaining their academic achievement (according to teacher evaluations at our partnering schools).

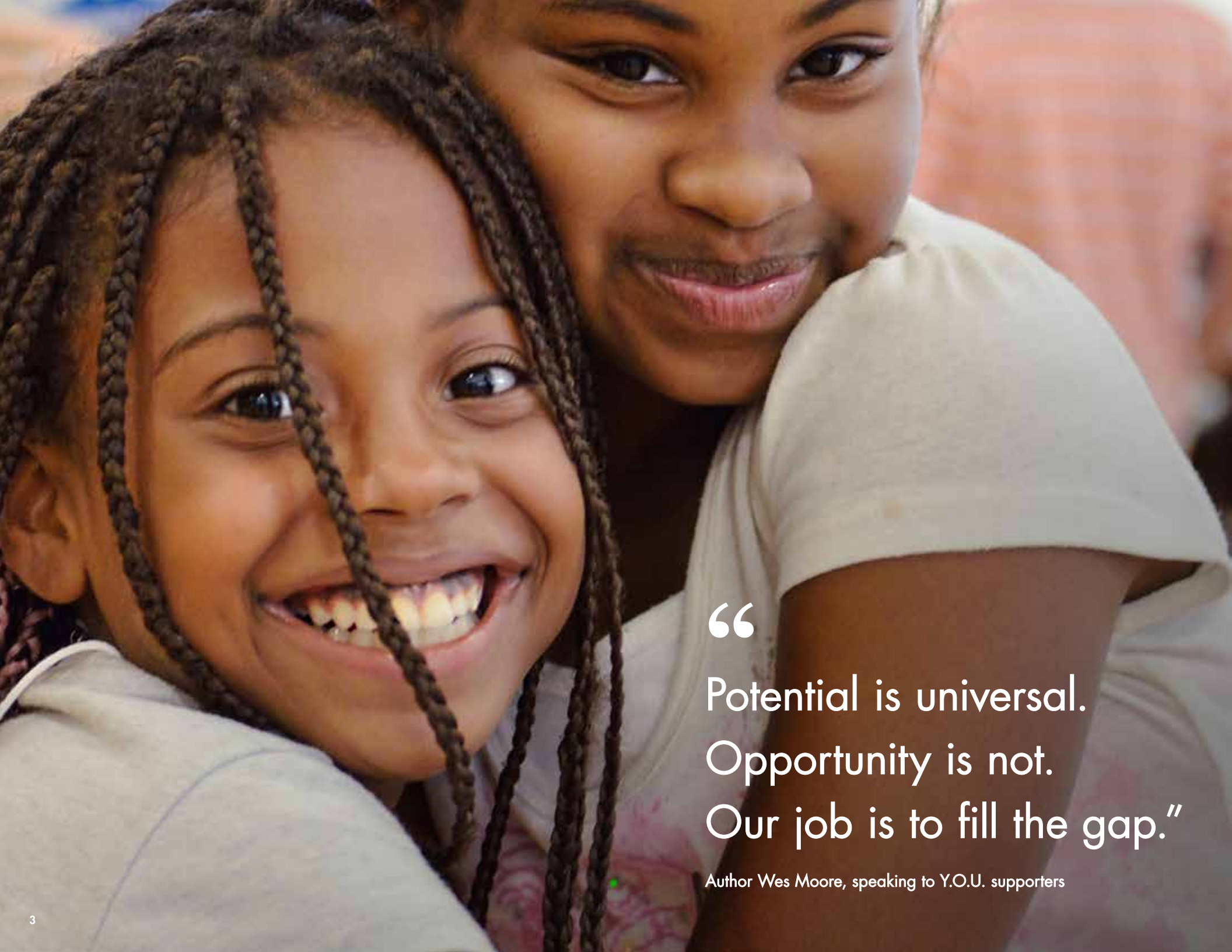
1,600+

YOUTH SERVED

4,000+

FAMILY MEMBERS REACHED





“
Potential is universal.
Opportunity is not.
Our job is to fill the gap.”

Author Wes Moore, speaking to Y.O.U. supporters

Advancing Youth Success

Y.O.U. works with families, schools, and the community to ensure that youth's out-of-school hours are filled with growth, learning, and exploration.

Through our **Out-of-School Time programs**, we aim to holistically support youth development in four areas: skills and knowledge, self-regulation, mindsets, and values. To support these child development areas, we provide academic supports and immersive, experiential activities that promote youth's emotional well-being, aspiration setting, and civic engagement.

Over the last year, we expanded our project-based learning model to encourage youth-driven inquiry and experimentation as a cornerstone of our programs. We also launched a new set of literacy supports to foster a love of reading.

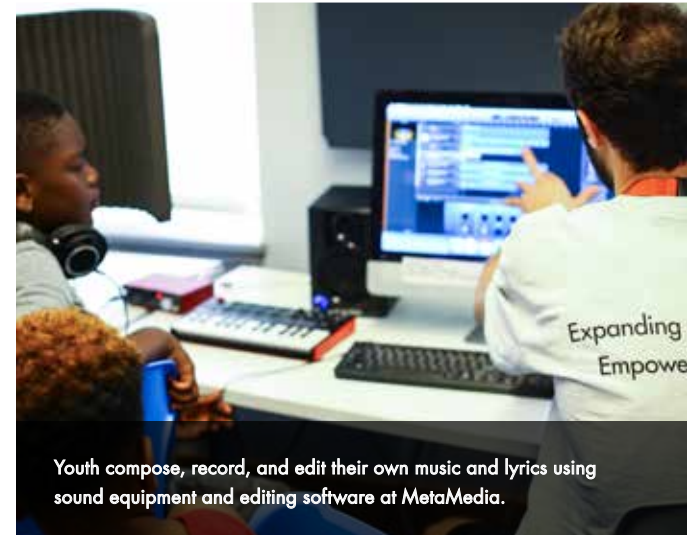
“

My sons have made so much progress since joining Y.O.U. three years ago, now being able to better express themselves and to make positive decisions.”

—Amanda, mother of two Y.O.U. middle schoolers



Youth explore new hobbies and interests, like cooking, baking, and nutrition in our out-of-school programs.



Youth compose, record, and edit their own music and lyrics using sound equipment and editing software at MetaMedia.



Youth learn about exercise, mindfulness, and healthy choices through recreation electives like this yoga workshop.

Academic Enrichment

Y.O.U. provides activities that support students in their current academic work and spark curiosity and aspiration-building for their futures.

Our programs immerse youth in academic inquiry—giving them the tools to become self-directed, lifelong learners.

AN EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION


At Y.O.U., youth learn by doing. This year, we launched an enhanced project-based learning model which emphasizes youth-driven exploration alongside staff support and encouragement. For example, in Mission to Mars (a partnership with the Museum of Science and Industry), youth learned astronomy, biology, and engineering concepts through hands-on projects like building a scale model of the solar system. These activities challenge youth to take ownership of their learning by applying topics to their own lives and interests.

SUPPORT AND STRIVE

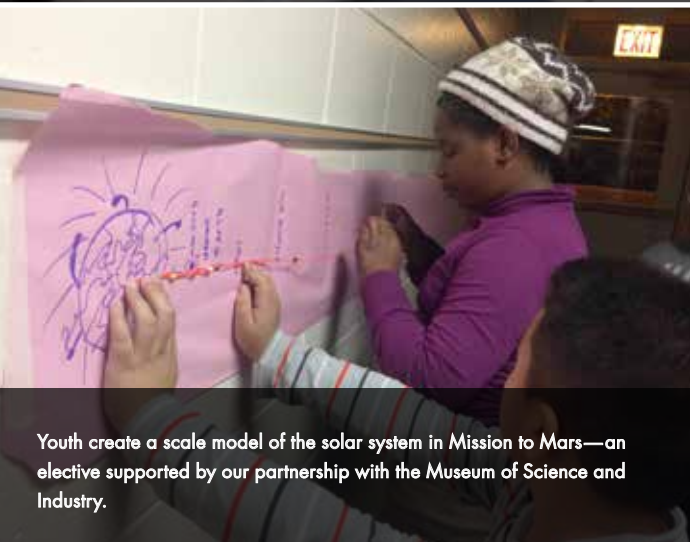
All youth have unlimited potential, and our goal is to help them realize it. Within our programs, youth are exposed to new opportunities, career paths, and role models as they begin to explore their interests and build aspirations for their futures. For example, this year, elementary school youth interviewed Northwestern University student athletes about what it takes to succeed in college. High schoolers visited companies such as Threadless and Magnetar to learn from business leaders and then developed their own business ideas.

90%

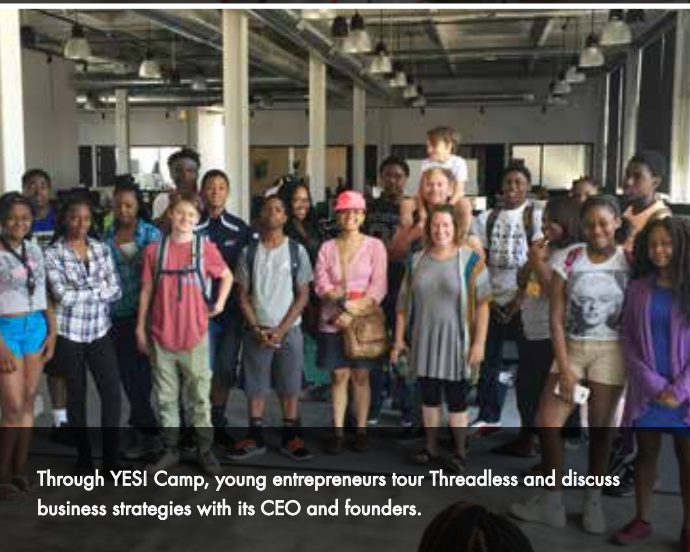
9 in 10 Y.O.U. youth are improving or maintaining their academic motivation.



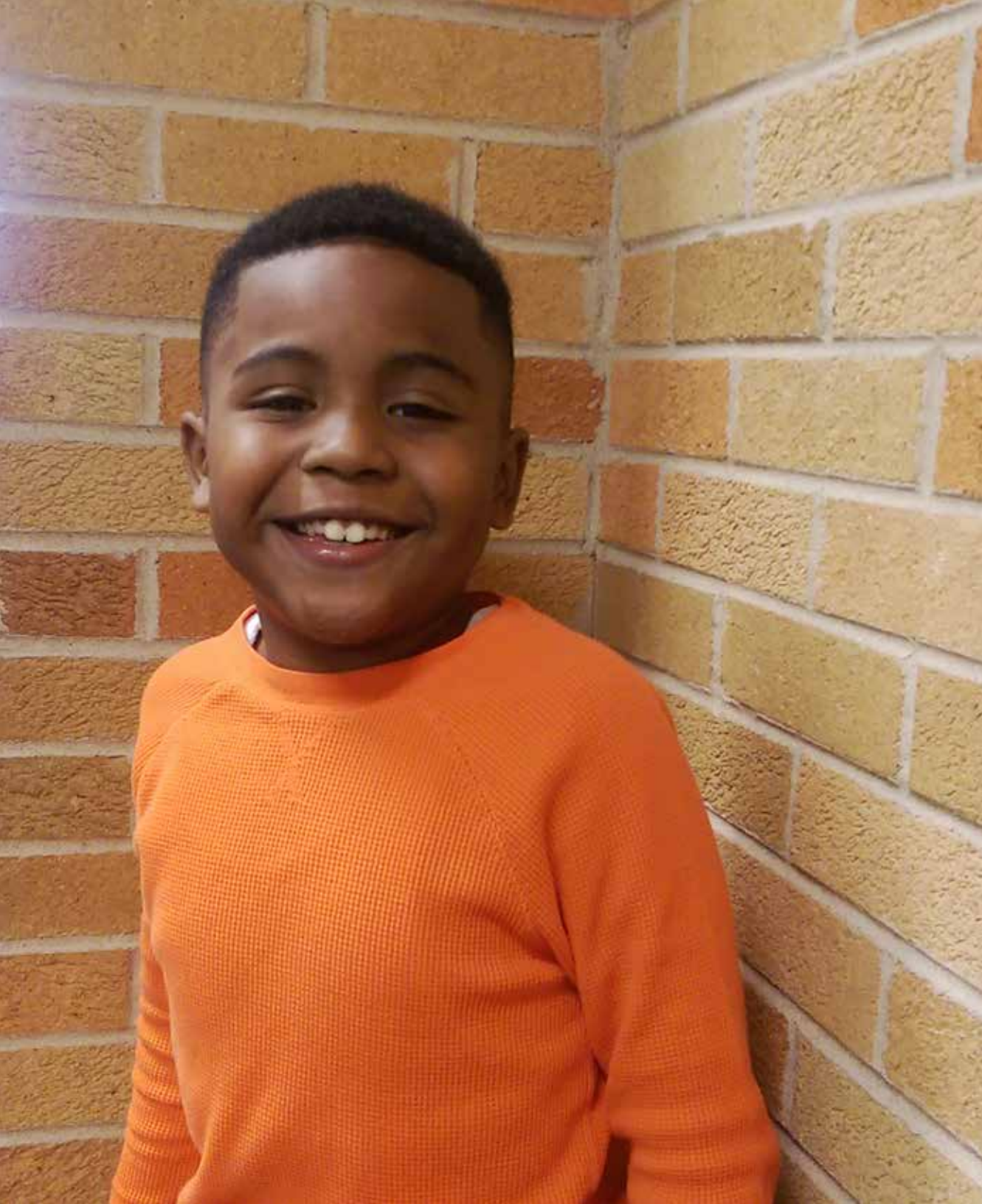
During homework hour, Y.O.U. youth receive individualized academic support from staff and mentors.



Youth create a scale model of the solar system in Mission to Mars—an elective supported by our partnership with the Museum of Science and Industry.



Through YES! Camp, young entrepreneurs tour Threadless and discuss business strategies with its CEO and founders.



Meet Kadyn

Kadyn is an enthusiastic 4th grader at Edison Elementary whose infectious energy and good humor lit up the stage when he showcased his acting talents as part of the Kid Principal videos at this year's Diverse Communities United. As Kid Principal, Kadyn interviewed Northwestern University president Morty Schapiro about what it takes to be a great leader and how to "take the road less traveled" – both academically and in the community. Kadyn loves spending time in Y.O.U., and is unable to choose a favorite part, saying, "I like everything! It's the best."

Meet Cydney

Cydney is a 7th grader at Chute Middle School whose favorite Y.O.U. enrichment group centers around cooking and nutrition. She also finds important mentorship both through Y.O.U. staff and through Y.O.U.'s partnership with Big Brothers Big Sisters. After attending Y.O.U.'s afterschool program, she and other Y.O.U. youth are transported to meet their mentors and share a meal. Cydney explains that her mentor "likes to ask me about school and I ask her about work. I'm learning what it's like to have a job."



Social Development and Emotional Support

Across our programs, youth participate in activities that foster their social and emotional growth.

Youth develop skills to build and maintain positive relationships, cope with social challenges, feel in control of their emotions, and believe in themselves.

MAKING HEALTHY CHOICES

This year, youth explored numerous aspects of healthy living – from learning how to cook nutritious meals and grow their own fruits and vegetables to discussing concepts such as healthy relationships, stereotypes, and identity. At Evanston Township High School, Y.O.U. also partnered with the school-based Health Center to deliver a full day of health education through workshops focused on consent, communication, contraception, and STI prevention.

DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Because youth are the next generation of leaders and change-makers in our community, we are committed to providing them with the tools they need to make a lasting impact. This year, youth developed their leadership skills by sewing quilts that were donated to hospitalized children, interviewing community leaders and activists, and creating a proposal for sustainable community development in Evanston that they presented to Mayor Tisdahl.



Through Y.O.U.'s project-based learning model, youth develop their leadership and teamwork skills as they work together to create solutions to problems they have identified in their community.



Y.O.U. electives provide youth with opportunities for self-expression and reflection, supporting their social and emotional growth.



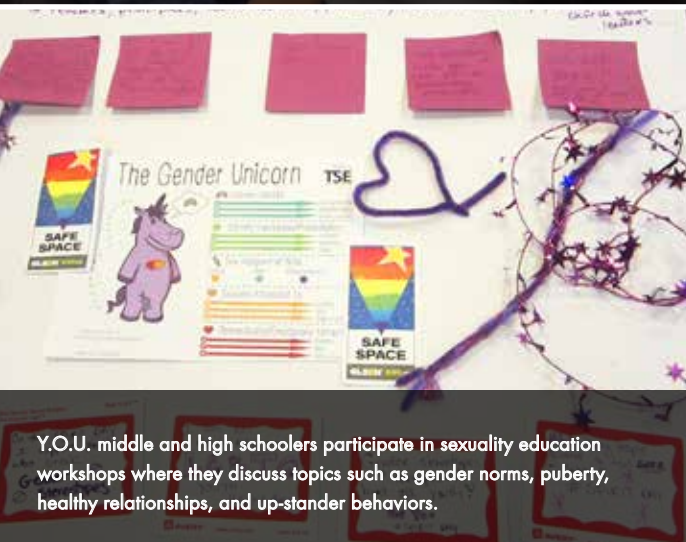
Youth in the Chicago Neighborhood Project explore diverse Chicago neighborhoods—such as Pilsen—and learn from community leaders and artists.

95%

More than 9 in 10 Y.O.U. youth are improving or maintaining their ability to set goals for their future.



During a Family Night at Chute, Y.O.U.'s clinical staff led art therapy exercises with youth and families to encourage mindfulness and alleviate stress.



Y.O.U. middle and high schoolers participate in sexuality education workshops where they discuss topics such as gender norms, puberty, healthy relationships, and up-stander behaviors.



Our clinical staff provide therapeutic support and case management in English, Spanish, and Arabic to ensure language access for families and caregivers.

Building Youth Resilience

Our **Clinical and Outreach Team** provides trauma-informed individual and group services that are directly integrated into our Out-of-School Time programs, as well as family counseling, case management, and 24/7 housing crisis intervention to support youth's resilience.

EXPRESSING EMOTION

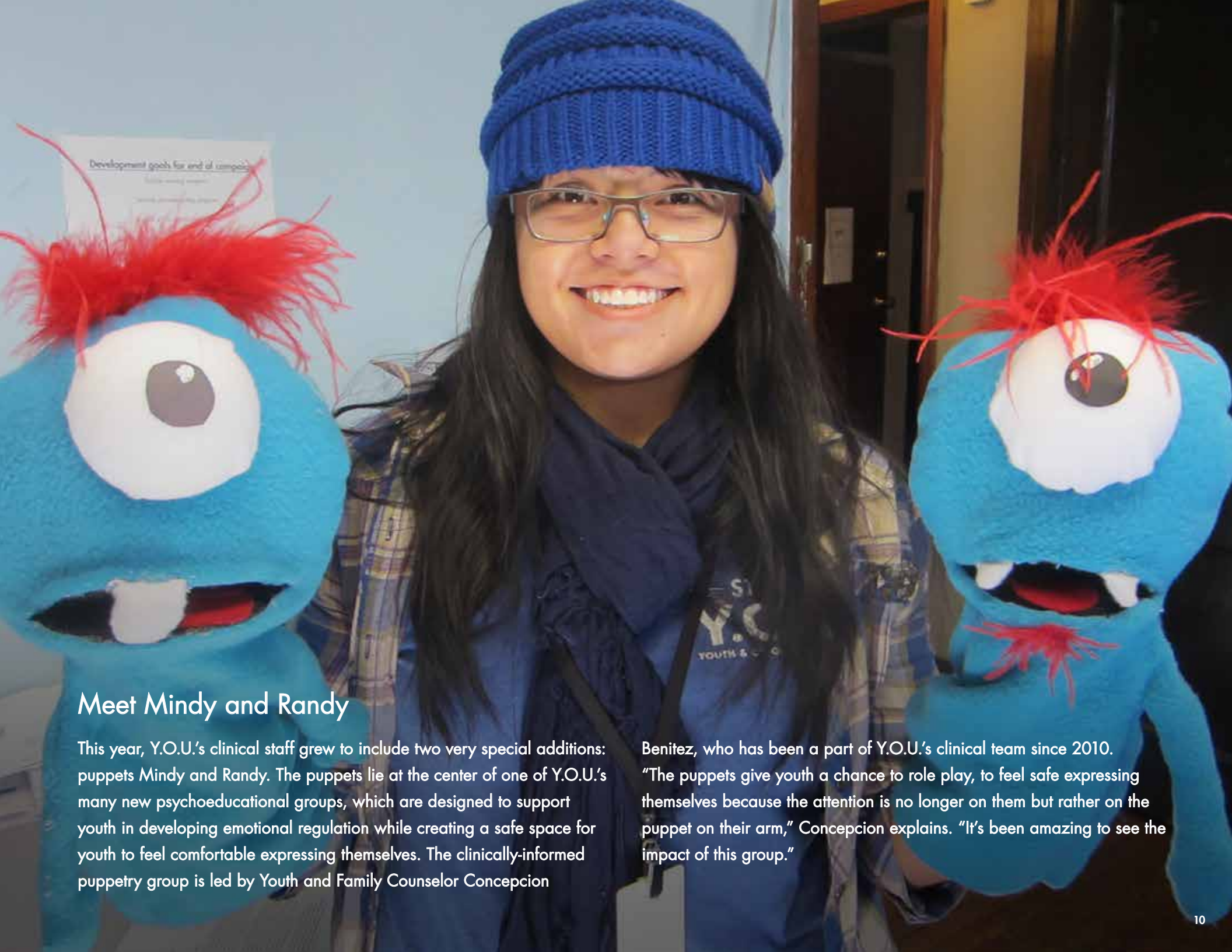
Y.O.U.'s clinicians have developed a number of innovative programs that create a safe, informal environment for youth to engage in trauma-informed and equity-based practices. In 2016, our clinical team led art and culinary psychoeducational groups, skills-based storytelling and puppetry, and even a therapeutic wilderness and team-building group that culminated in a camping and canoeing trip. Such programs allow participants to express themselves without the pressure or stigma that can sometimes accompany formal counseling.

RESPONDING TO EMERGING NEEDS

Our clinical and outreach staff meet youth where they are, delivering integrated, trauma-informed services in our Out-of-School Time programs, and reaching out to disconnected youth wherever they need support through partnerships with local resources such as James B. Moran Center for Youth Advocacy, Curt's Cafe, The Harbour, and School Districts 65, 68, 69, and 202. In 2016, our clinical team responded to the rising number of refugee youth and families living in our service area by expanding the multilingual capabilities of our counseling staff and adapting our clinical services to better address these families' unique needs.

96%

More than 9 in 10 Y.O.U. youth are improving or maintaining their ability to make healthy choices.



Meet Mindy and Randy

This year, Y.O.U.'s clinical staff grew to include two very special additions: puppets Mindy and Randy. The puppets lie at the center of one of Y.O.U.'s many new psychoeducational groups, which are designed to support youth in developing emotional regulation while creating a safe space for youth to feel comfortable expressing themselves. The clinically-informed puppetry group is led by Youth and Family Counselor Concepcion

Benitez, who has been a part of Y.O.U.'s clinical team since 2010. "The puppets give youth a chance to role play, to feel safe expressing themselves because the attention is no longer on them but rather on the puppet on their arm," Concepcion explains. "It's been amazing to see the impact of this group."

On-Site Health and Wellness Resources

Y.O.U.'s Community Schools initiative has worked alongside School District 69 staff to develop partnerships with numerous physical health and wellness institutions, including Preferred Dentistry Associate's onsite dental clinic. Over 550 youth received on-site dental screenings during the 2015-2016 school year. "Having these services offered right there at my son's school is a great support to my family," said Lincoln Jr. High parent Karen.



Catalyzing Community Hubs

Y.O.U. partners with School Districts 65 and 69 to implement the **Community Schools** model at Chute Middle School in Evanston and at Lincoln Jr. High School in Skokie.

Our Community Schools initiative aims to simultaneously empower parents as leaders and transform schools into hubs of integrated services to support improved student learning, stronger families, and healthier communities. In 2016, our Community Schools provided 1,138 individuals with free, on-site services. Other highlights include:

- Training 24 parent leaders through our seven week parent leadership training program. Graduates of these trainings coordinated and led a collective 42 parent meetings to share information and support with parents facing similar struggles.
- Convening a series of English Language Learner (ELL) family workshops to address topics such as literacy, technology, and promoting positive attitudes in learning. Each workshop had an average attendance of 21 families.
- Partnering with 10+ medical, dental, and physical health and wellness institutions to provide their services on-site within our schools during out-of-school hours.

Building on this success, we are partnering with District 65 to scale our Community Schools model to King Arts School.



In May 2016, Y.O.U. partnered with Lincoln Jr. High's ELL Teaching Team and the Niles Township ELL Parent Center to coordinate a celebration of student achievement in writing and reading.



Upon completion of Y.O.U.'s seven week parent leadership training (a collaboration with COFI), parent leaders receive a graduation certificate and are connected to leadership roles on a parent team or the Community School Action Team.



PLUS (Parent Leaders Uniting Schools) is a group of parent leaders that formed out of Y.O.U.'s parent leadership training at Lincoln Jr. High. In 2016, PLUS planned two international-themed family pot-lucks and numerous parent workshops on topics such as financial planning and college readiness.

76%

Over 7 in 10 parent leaders said they felt a greater sense of belonging in their community after participating in Y.O.U. trainings.

A Community of Partners

Y.O.U. works with more than 50 partners to ensure collective impact and enhance the depth, variety, and reach of our services. Examples include:

THE MARY & LEIGH BLOCK MUSEUM OF ART

Through our partnership with the Block Museum, Y.O.U. high schoolers explore issues of race, class, and gender through the lens of the Block's world-class exhibits. During Family Nights at the Block, youth and families tour new exhibits and share a meal and discussion inspired by youth and community artworks.

NORTHLIGHT THEATRE

Y.O.U. works with Northlight to help youth find their creative voice and utilize theater and playwriting to affect social change. This year, through the Northlight on Campus program, youth from Washington elementary wrote an original play and then performed it for over 800 community members at Y.O.U.'s 10th annual Diverse Communities United event.

OPEN STUDIO PROJECT

Y.O.U. partners with Open Studio to bring art enrichment activities to Y.O.U. youth and families. In 2016, youth explored the creative process as a means for personal growth through painting, sculpture, and watercolor artwork. Open Studio also helped to host a Y.O.U. Family Night where youth showcased their artwork in Open Studio's gallery space and families practiced mindfulness through interactive art projects.

POETRY & POETICS COLLOQUIUM

Y.O.U. partners with Poetry & Poetics to introduce high schoolers to the art of poetry through a series of poetry workshops led by Northwestern students and faculty. Youth build a portfolio of poems that explore their identities and experiences, and then present them on the Northwestern campus and publish them in a limited edition chapbook.

SCIENCE IN SOCIETY

Y.O.U. partners with Science in Society at Northwestern University to provide youth with opportunities for scientific inquiry, real-world experimentation, and mentorship from Northwestern graduate students through weekly Science Clubs. This year, Science in Society also consulted with Y.O.U. staff to develop a hands-on STEM curriculum to be used across our program sites in 2017.

THE TALKING FARM

Y.O.U. works with The Talking Farm to teach youth about gardening, environmental science, food production, and nutrition by helping them care for and harvest their own produce. This year, Talking Farm also helped develop an innovative gardening and entrepreneurship program for Y.O.U. high school students, which will be launched in 2017 at the learning gardens in Y.O.U.'s new headquarters.



Youth explore world-class art exhibits and learn from local artists and community leaders during Family Nights at the Block.



Youth have the chance to write, direct, stage, and perform their own plays and find their creative voice through our partnership with Northlight Theatre.



Youth create sculptures and paintings that explore concepts of identity and personal growth with support from Open Studio's teaching artists.



Youth present their original slam poetry in front of their peers and community members as the culmination of a series of workshops led by Northwestern students and faculty in the Poetry & Poetics Colloquium.



Youth conduct experiments to solve real world scientific problems with the support of Northwestern graduate student mentors from Science in Society.



Youth learn about gardening techniques, nutrition, and environmental science through our partnership with The Talking Farm.

85%

More than 8 in 10 Y.O.U. youth say they have additional interests and hobbies after participating in Y.O.U.

Diverse Communities United

On January 18th 2016, more than 800 Y.O.U. youth, family, and community members gathered at Evanston Township High School to celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s vision and talk about what "taking the road less traveled" meant to them.

The 10th annual youth-led event—which Y.O.U. hosts in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day each year—included 17 performances by more than 100 young people. Youth shared original songs, performed skits, and presented poetry to share their vision for achieving Dr. King's dream in their community.

Ezra—a then-senior at ETHS and now a freshman at Iowa State University—served as the emcee for the performance, and powerfully articulated his vision of Dr. King's legacy: "I dream that our communities show us that our lives matter by working against income disparities and racism in the justice system. I dream that our schools enforce equal disciplinary policies and produce equal graduation rates. I dream that our newscasters report our deaths and our crimes and our losses with empathy."

Y.O.U. bestowed its Annual Diverse Communities Award on Evanston Own It, a coalition of faith and community leaders, for their antiviolence work in the community.

83%

More than 8 in 10 Y.O.U. youth say they feel more connected to their community after participating in Y.O.U.



Financial Report 2016 Fiscal Year

OPERATING REVENUE

Government	2,389,460
United Way	537,500
Contributions	1,165,212
Special Events	332,353
TOTAL	\$4,424,525

OPERATING EXPENSE

Programming	3,360,467
Management	686,044
Outreach & Development	327,112
TOTAL	\$4,373,623
NET SURPLUS	50,902

* The FY16 audit was being conducted at the time of publication; thus, these figures do not represent audited financials.

“

Y.O.U. has helped me realize that all youth are our kids and our responsibility. My values are reflected in Y.O.U.’s important work—to help youth realize their full potential.”

—Lori Laser, Y.O.U. volunteer and supporter

Over 100 youth presented their own interpretations of Dr. King’s legacy at the DCU event through original songs, skits, dances, and poetry.

A Community of Supporters

In 2016, we completed our Campaign for Youth Opportunity, thanks to the incredible generosity of our community!

Over 3,500 community members supported our Campaign through learning, volunteering, and donating. Your support helped us realize our goals of expanding our impact, enhancing our sustainability, and developing a new youth center and headquarters (opening in early 2017). We are grateful to our community for its commitment to our Campaign vision that every child should be surrounded by a world of opportunity.

CAMPAIGN FOR YOUTH OPPORTUNITY CABINET MEMBERS

Chip Brady and Nicki Pearson, *Co-Chairs*

- | | |
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UTURE
HOME
OF



Don Baker Circle for Youth

Named for our visionary Founder and Director Emeritus Don Baker, the Don Baker Circle for Youth is a special giving society established to recognize supporters who make annual fund contributions of \$1,000 or more to Y.O.U.

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Every effort is made to list donors accurately. We sincerely apologize for any omission or errors in spelling.

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\$250,000+

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\$50,000+

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\$1,000+

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COVER PHOTO

Qurshiana Leslie (pictured) graduated from Evanston Township High School in 2016 after participating in Y.O.U. programs since third grade. She now attends Ball State University as a member of the Class of 2020.