



## Young Man with a Plan Newsletter

December 22, 2022

**“The best part of the program is feeling like I was a part of a big family.”**

Dear YMWAP Family,

Wow, what a year! I want to start off by saying THANK YOU to everyone in our village. Your support has made it all possible. We are so grateful for this growth journey we've been on--Social Innovation Forum, hiring two new staff, expanding into middle school, and planning for new larger space, all while helping our young men regain skills, purpose, and momentum lost during Covid.

Launching our 8th grade pilot has been wonderful. We started out meeting in the schools (4 so far) and have evolved to having Wednesday sessions in our Hyde Park space—last week we hosted 31 8th graders. My initial takeaways on our 8<sup>th</sup> graders -- they are: 1) smart, and knowledgeable on a range of topics; 2) yearning for a place to belong; 3) wanting to have fun; and 4) OK with high standards as long as they are consistent.

Our upperclassmen are constantly growing--physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally. While some students still struggle to fully reengage in school, we've also seen true academic breakthroughs as some of our kiddos accomplish their highest GPAs to date.

People ask us what our young men need in their lives. I believe our kids are in dire need of a new ecosystem in which **accountability is a love language** and the following takes place:

- Kids' well-being always comes first. Kids feel valued and are protected, no matter what
- Love and kindness are the norm, respect for everyone the only way
- Learning is student centered and kids know they can achieve if they work hard
- Teachers are highly valued

My wish is that our kids learn healthy love from us and others in their young lives so that as they ascend, they don't settle for less than they deserve. My wish is that they can safely grow old. As older men they can speak about the good lives they created, the college and career options that were offered, the choices they made, and how they rose to meet the inevitable challenges. My wish is also that the world continues to evolve and becomes more welcoming to men of color.



As we reflect on 2022, I am proud and humbled by what we were able to achieve. It bears repeating ... this does not happen without YOU. Respectfully, Jaykyri

Dr. Jaykyri Simpson, Executive Director

[jaykyriymwap@gmail.com](mailto:jaykyriymwap@gmail.com) 817 526- 4974

You can make a gift to YMWAP here:  
<https://e.givesmart.com/events/plc/>