



# NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends,

We're all looking forward to Spring and our kids' final push for a successful school year. Many of you have seen the headlines on **post-Covid chronic absenteeism** among students across the country and in Boston. To be chronically absent means **missing more than 10% of school days**. A [recent publication](#) showed that **over 45% of Boston's low-income students were chronically absent in 2023**. In comparison, *only a handful (< 5%) of YMWAP's students have struggled with absenteeism.*

We believe YMWAP's sustained holistic mentoring and "**love language of accountability**" is key to low absenteeism among the students we serve. Our approach is to **maintain deep connections** with families and schools, while constantly communicating the importance of education. In the 8 schools we serve, YMWAP's school-based mentors monitor **student attendance, academics, and social-emotional wellness**. We center **family engagement**, and communicate and convene frequently with parents to **ensure the wellbeing of their children** and consistent messaging that helps them progress.

At YMWAP, we believe that **education is critical to a sustainable future**, and we express that belief early and often, **beginning with our 8th graders**. In exposing students to college and career choices and to successful program alumni, **we make the explicit connection between doing well at school and having a good life**. As just one example, our recent **Men of Color Career Night** (below) is an annual event where men share their career and life journeys and *inspire youth to make a solid plan, reach higher, and work harder.*



As always, thank you for being part of our village.

**Dr. Jay Simpson**

Executive Director, Young Man with a Plan

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Check out YMWAP's newest video  
featuring the voices of the young men we serve!



## MEN OF COLOR CAREER NIGHT

Our young men don't have much understanding of the myriad careers out there, and that is why our annual Men of Color Career Night is so valuable and popular!

Held for the first time in our new space (upstairs and downstairs), the event brought together twenty professional men with 30 high school students.

They networked and shared dinner. Then the young men rotated through several career stations, learning about fields that included recruiting, marketing, law enforcement, engineering, data analysis, education, law, business and entrepreneurship.

Eddy Chrispin, Deputy Superintendent of the Boston Police Academy and the former President Of Massachusetts Association of Minority Law Enforcement Officers (MAMLEO), who attended the event, remarked:

**“YMWAP has created a safe and nurturing space where program participants are thriving and growing to be the best versions of themselves.”**



### **FAMILY ENGAGEMENT NIGHT**



Staying closely connected with families is a top priority for YMWAP as we strive to serve the whole young man.

We recently held this year's second Family Engagement Night, where family members were able to tour our expanded facility, meet staff, share dinner, and learn more about YMWAP's holistic mentoring curriculum and our upcoming events.

Parents were also able to have 1:1 discussions with mentors regarding their sons' goals and challenges.

One parent texted after the event:

***“I wanted to thank the team at Y.M.W.A.P for having the really informative family engagement night. I really appreciate the time & energy you guys put into the program and into the young men who participate!”***

### **WELCOME ELO DENEUS, YMWAP's New Assistant Director of Development!**

We're growing our fundraising team!

In March, YMWAP hired Elo Deneus as Assistant Director of Development. Elo will apply his business and development experience to build YMWAP's organizational sustainability.

Elo was drawn to YMWAP because of his own positive high school experience with the mentoring organization, The Workforce Youth Program in Cambridge, which provided him with the college and work readiness and skills to navigate the challenges of young adulthood.

Prior to joining YMWAP, Elo was the Development Manager at Mystic River Watershed Association overseeing corporate engagement and relationships. He also has worked in sales and recruiting.

Elo received his B.S. in Business Administration from Bryant University, where he played football.



#### **Our Contact Information**

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