



2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

YOUTH ASSOCIATION FOR
ACADEMICS, ATHLETICS,
AND CHARACTER
EDUCATION



Content

MESSAGE	03
ABOUT YAAACE	04
SOCIAL INCLUSION FRAMEWORK	06
LAUNCHED PROGRAMS	06
PUBLICATIONS AND KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION	15
VISITS	18
MEDIA IMPACT	30
NEW AND ONGOING PARTNERSHIPS	33
CONTACT US	35



Message from the Executive Director Dr. Ardavan Eizadirad and Founding Director Devon Jones

It has been a busy year at YAAACE! We were able to secure and move into our new space at 45 Norfinch Drive in the Jane and Finch community. The classrooms have been customized and tailored to suit our needs and reflect the services and programs we continue to offer to students, families, and the larger community in a socio-culturally relevant and trauma-informed manner.

Our programs and services continued to expand after a return to in-person gathering was permitted by the provincial guidelines. We continued to offer our annual March Break camp, the Summer Institute, and the Community School Initiative focusing on academics, athletics, and expanded opportunities. We launched To Wards Peace and Peace Core New Narrative which focus on youth violence prevention and intervention using a community-driven public health approach. We have also entered numerous new partnerships with various stakeholders to strengthen our programs and services and ensure it remains affordable and accessible to the clients, students, and families we serve, predominantly racialized and Black. Lastly, we are doing the preparation work to launch the Centre for Community Safety and Roots of Violence to continue our work that aligns with YAAACE core values rooted in Awareness, Advocacy, Accountability, Action, and Access.

What has been made clear to us through the programs and services we offer are that students, clients, and families, particularly from racialized communities, need holistic supports to overcome the systemic inequities and barriers impacting them and where they live. We will continue to advocate for this! We highly encourage everyone to checkout our updated website (www.yaaace.com) to learn more about other programs and services that may support your needs. We look forward to passionately and collaboratively continuing the serve the community.

With love, respect, and gratitude.

Dr. Ardavan Eizadirad and Devon Jones

About YAAACE



YAAACE is a Black-led, Black-focused, and Black-serving organization providing culturally reflective programs and services to mitigate the opportunity gap for racialized and under-resourced communities.

VISION STATEMENT

Thriving communities free from systemic barriers and inequities.

MISSION STATEMENT

YAAACE uses strength-based approaches to advocate for and create safer communities through programs and services that are accessible and culturally reflective.

CORE VALUES:

Awareness **Accountability**
Advocacy **Action** **Access**

About YAAACE



EQUITY STATEMENT:

YAAACE advocates for creating access to opportunities, programs, and services that are culturally reflective of experiences of marginalized communities. We are committed to equitable treatment and elimination of discrimination in all its forms through our policies and practices.

KEY ISSUES YAAACE IS ADDRESSING:

- Challenging stereotypes and biased narratives about Black families and communities.
- Mitigating the opportunity gap for racialized and under-resourced communities.
- Addressing the risk factors that contribute to the school to prison pipeline
- Advocating for innovative solutions to address the roots of violence.
- Creating and promoting best practices to ensure institutional accountability and transparency in the social service sector.

We Are YAAACE Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3oGUOQBRMQ4>

New Narrative Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dRueeCCONQM>

SOCIAL INCLUSION FRAMEWORK FOR MITIGATING THE OPPORTUNITY GAP

YAAACE uses a Social Inclusion Framework as an operational framework for implementation of its programs and services.





LAUNCHED PROGRAMS

NALE PROGRAM

Start Date: January 31st, 2023.

FREE Numeracy and Literacy support for BIPOC TDSB and TCDSB students in Grades 1 - 12.

Support with homework and school assignments.

Qualified Teachers and University teaching candidates.

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings, and Saturday mornings and afternoons.

Numeracy and Literacy Enrichment (NALE) PROGRAM

YAAACE Youth Association for Academics, Athletics and Character Education

GRADES 1 - 5
Tuesday 4:30pm - 6pm
Thursday 4:30pm - 6pm

GRADES 6 - 8
Wednesday 4:30pm - 6pm
Saturday 10am - 11:30am

GRADES 9-12
Wednesday 6pm - 7:30pm
Saturday 12pm - 2pm

Register at: <https://linktr.ee/yaaace>

45 Norfinch Drive, North York, ON M3N 1W8

YAAACE Social Media: [yaaace_sl](#) (Facebook), [yaaace_sl](#) (Twitter), [yaaace_sl](#) (Instagram)

LAIDLAW

January to March 2023-
Numeracy and Literacy
Enrichment Evening and
Weekend Program

MARCH BREAK CAMP 2023

YAAACE A's for J's

SPOTLIGHT CAMP

YAAACE

GRADE 3 TO GRADE 9

EARLY DROP-OFF 8:30AM
LATE PICK UP 5:00PM

45 NORFINCH DR., NORTH YORK

MAR 13-17

March Break Camp from March 13 to 17 2023-
accommodated 100
students in Grades 3 to 9
with a focus on
academics, athletics,
and expanded
opportunities supported
by Ontario Certified
Teachers and NCCP
certified coaches



WORKREADY JOB SEARCH 101

Looking for your next career opportunity?

Sign up for this FREE virtual workshop designed to help you navigate the job search process!

March 29, 2023 4:00pm-5:00pm ET

Participants must be 18-30 years old.

Register today! Click [here](#) or visit: princestrust.ca/WorkReady-YAAACE

Prince's Trust Canada

HSBC Bank

THE PRINCE OF WALES CHARITABLE FUND

RBC Future Launch

March 29, 2023-
Work Ready
Workshop in
Partnership with
Prince's Trust Fund

April 29 2023- Parent Engagement Day

Over 80 families attended to learn about how they can be advocates for their children and navigate the school system and their policies and practices



A PARENT ENGAGEMENT CONVERSATION SERIES

SESSION #1: LOOKING FORWARD
SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 2023
9:30 - 12:30 P.M.

Parent engagement in the education of children is important. You have the right to participate in policies, practices, and procedures that affect the success of your children and youth. Join us to learn more.

HOST:
 TAMASHA GRANT

PRESENTERS:
 ARDAVAN EIZADIRAD
 DEVON JONES
 LORNA LOOBY-CROSSE
 TESFA MATTIS

FEATURED SPEAKER:
 DAHABO AHMED-OMER
 BLACK NORTH INITIATIVE

TO REGISTER:
[HTTPS://LINKTR.EE/YAAACE](https://linktr.ee/yaaace)



BLACK NORTH

45 Norfinch Drive, North York

PROGRAM

9:45 A.M.
WELCOME AND OPENING
 ARDAVAN EIZADIRAD

10:05 - 10:35
**CONFLICT RESOLUTION:
 RESPONDING VS. REACTING**
 TESFA MATTIS

10:40 - 11:10 A.M.
THE VILLAGE: THE ECOSYSTEM OF HOPE
 DAHABO AHMED-OMER

11:15 - 11:45 A.M.
**ADVOCATING FOR YOUR CHILD
 IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM**
 LORNA LOOBY-CROSSE

11:50 - 12:00 P.M.
CLOSING REMARKS
 DEVON JONES

12:05-12:30 P.M.
LIGHT REFRESHMENTS





May 2023- Relaunch of Small Ball and Developmental League

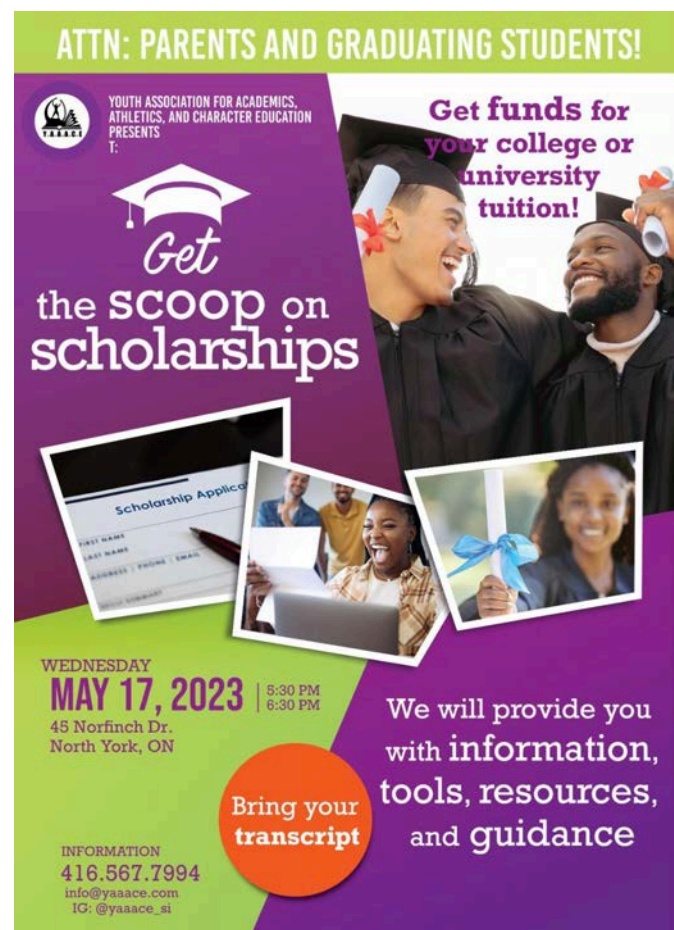
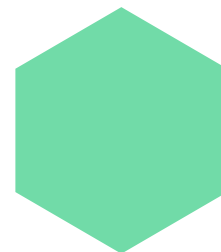


August 2015- TO Wards Peace team created and participated in the Jane and Finch Classic Tournament hosted at the Playground in Oshawa



KO tournament on Saturday August 19

10



June 1st 2023

Focus group held with nine Grade 9 and 10 students

YAAACE is excited to be conducting a research project with Dr. Oyemolade Osibodu (York University) and Dr. Alexandre Cavalcante (University of Toronto) focusing on “Fostering Critical Financial Literacy with Black Youth”.

This project investigates perspectives of Black youth on financial literacy through learning about various social issues. The study will contribute knowledge to research in financial literacy and mathematics education as well as educational studies of race and racism.

Thanks for hosting our youth for a series of learning sessions filled with fun activities, brave conversations, and food. We look forward to the evidence-based research that comes from this.



July 15
Parent and Youth Engagement Session #2
Focus on trades and employment pathways



WWW.YAAACE.COM

**W.Y.S.D. Agenda
July 15, 2023**

10:00 -10:25 AM	Student/Parents/ Trade/Workplace Experts Arrival
10:30 AM	Welcome /opening Remarks Land acknowledgement
10:40	-Introduction of Featured Speaker -Joseph Williams
10:50 AM	Introduction to the Link-Up and Learn sessions
11:00:	Link-Up and Learn (Carousel)#1
11:20	Link-Up and Learn (carousel)#2
11:45	Link-Up and Learn (Carousel)#3
12:05	Link-Up and Learn (Carousel)#4
12:20	Closing

Catered Caribbean Lunch

<https://yaaace.com/>

PICTURE YOURSELF IN
THE FUTURE YOU BUILD

WORLD
YOUTH
SKILLS
DAY

10:00 a.m.
to
12:30 p.m.
45 NORFINCH DR.

YOUTH ASSOCIATION FOR
ACADEMICS, ATHLETICS AND
CHARACTER EDUCATION

JULY 15, 2023

**PICTURE YOURSELF IN
THE FUTURE YOU BUILD**

**WORLD
YOUTH
SKILLS
DAY**

STARTS AT 10AM

FEATURING
Experts & guest speakers
from various skilled trades

LEARN
What is involved in acquiring
specialized knowledge and
skills for successful careers

GREENWIN BuildingUp Community Benefits.ca Neighbourhood Developing Careers UNIFOR NABET 700-M IUPAT BOLT

45 NORFINCH DR, NORTH YORK

October 2023 Start of YAAACE Robotics Program for Fall 2023



GET YOUR KIDS CODING!

Start date: Monday, Oct 2, 2023
Time: 4pm - 6pm
Location: 45 Norfinch (Rm 127)
Duration: 10 weeks

FREE REGISTRATION

YAAACE is looking for 10 participants from grades 4 - 8

#ENGAGE416

YAAACE

FIRST

October to December 2023 Numeracy and Literacy Enrichment Evening and Weekend Program



NALE PROGRAM

Start Date: October 23, 2023.

FREE Numeracy and Literacy tutoring for struggling TDSB and TCDSB students in Grades 3 through 12.

Curriculum based lessons, and support with homework and school assignments.

Qualified Teachers and University teaching candidates.

Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings, and Saturday afternoons.

Register at: <https://linktr.ee/yaaace>

Numeracy and Literacy Enrichment (NALE) PROGRAM

Youth Association for Academics, Athletics and Character Education

Saturday

Gr. 3	12pm - 2pm
Gr. 4	12pm - 2pm
Gr. 5	2pm - 4pm
Gr. 6	2pm - 4pm
Gr. 10 - 12	12pm - 2pm

Monday

Gr. 8	6pm - 8pm
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Wednesday

Gr. 9	6pm - 8pm
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Thursday

Gr. 7	6pm - 8pm
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45 Norfinch Drive, North York, ON M3N 1W8

October 2023 YAAACE Certified as a Canada Basketball Verified Program



CANADA BASKETBALL

ONTARIO BASKETBALL

Congratulations YAAACE!

We are happy to announce you have successfully completed all requirements of the Canada Basketball Verification Program and are officially accepted as a Verified organization. We applaud your commitment to creating a safe and inclusive basketball environment for your participants.

As a Verified organization, you have demonstrated your dedication to the Verification Program's three pillars of success: Safe Sport & EDI, Technical Skills, and Governance & Administration. Meeting the standards of each pillar has aligned your association with best practices for organizational development. This alignment will help enhance the basketball opportunities you provide to all members.

We recognize the strong commitment you have made to this program and to the greater Canadian basketball community.

Sincerely,

Canada Basketball



BNi HOMEOWNERSHIP BRIDGING PROGRAM

MONDAY NOVEMBER 13

6:30 - 7:30 PM

INFORMATION SESSION

An Affordable Homeownership Option that Enables Black Families to Thrive

The Homeownership Bridge Program (HBP) helps working black families like yours become homeowners, empowering you to build security, stability, equity, and the opportunity to make life better for yourselves, your children, and generations to come.

Location
45 Norfinch Drive
North York, ON

Presentation by:
Collins Boakye-Yiadom
dreamlegacy.org/http/

Brought to You by:

BLACKNORTH

DREAM Legacy Foundation

For more information: info@yaaace.com

REGISTER LINKTR.EE/YAAACE (OR) USE QR CODE

November 13, 2023
Workshop on Home Ownership
for Black Families with Black
North Initiative and Dream Legacy
Foundation

November 1, 2023- Take Your Kids to Work Day for Grade 9 Students

On November 1, our Grade 9 student-athletes had a valuable opportunity to do their work placement at our YAAACE home base for Take Our Kids to Work Day. This nation-wide initiative provides youth with a first-hand experience of the world of work and allows them to consider future career plans, goals and endeavours. Our youth got a better understanding of the work YAAACE does in community, insight on the various roles and responsibilities that it takes to do the work, and learned the importance of strong work ethic, punctuality and responsibility. We provided our youth with a real-world, hands- on learning experience that goes beyond what they can learn in the classroom. They can see how the skills and knowledge they acquire in school are applied in the workplace. See short video posted on our social media platforms recapping the day: https://www.linkedin.com/posts/yaaace_on-november-1-our-grade-9-student-athletes-activity-7125972919989534721-ceht?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop

November 2023- Provided Input on Opportunities to Improve Outcomes for Emerging Adults who are Justice-Involved

As part of our ongoing work to improve adult correctional services across the province, the Ministry of the Solicitor General, in partnership with Ontario's Advocate for Community Opportunities (ACO), is seeking input on opportunities to improve outcomes for emerging adults (18–25-year-olds) who are justice-involved. For the purposes of these engagements, justice-involved is defined as contact or interaction with the criminal justice system. Given your organization's expertise and the important work you do within your communities, including with supporting emerging adults who are justice involved, the ministry would like to invite you to participate in three upcoming engagement sessions to seek your input. Each session will focus on one of three key themes related to improving outcomes for emerging justice-involved adults.



PUBLICATIONS AND KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION

Here are several publications by YAAACE that showcase the effectiveness of our programs and our efforts to drive policy change aimed at addressing systemic inequities and barriers, especially in racialized and low-income communities. We view research as a crucial tool for advocacy and activism, and we remain committed to leveraging the impact of our programs and services to mobilize knowledge.

- January 2023 - "Team of Caring Educators Delivering a Specialized Math Curriculum for Racialized Youth During COVID-19", Published in Education Journal about the Impact of Our Community School Initiative (CSI).
 - Available at: <https://www.excellenceineducationjournal.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/EEJwinter2023.pdf>
- March 28 2023 - "Systemic violence, institutional apathy and the death of 222 school aged students", Published in School Magazine- Education Action Toronto:
 - Available at: <https://educationactiontoronto.com/articles/systemic-violence-institutional-apathy-and-the-death-of-222-school-aged-students/>



- June 2023- "Preventing the 'School-to-Prison Pipeline': 4 Calls to Action as Schools Plan for Next Year", Published in *The Conversation*.
 - Available at: <https://theconversation.com/preventing-and-addressing-violence-in-schools-4-priorities-as->





JANE-FINCH GROUP UPLIFTS YOUTH THROUGH SPORTS, EDUCATION

ANDREW PALAMARCHUK
apalamarchuk@toronto.com

The Jane and Finch area was like a second home to Ardavan

Eizadirad as a teen. Though he didn't live in the area, he had many friends from the neighbourhood and spent a lot of time there, playing basket-

ball and hanging out. "I was always in Jane and Finch," Eizadirad said, noting he also "lost a lot of friends to gun violence or being incarcer-

ated." In his teens, Eizadirad took part in sports programs run by

See GROUP, page 2

- June 29- Article in Toronto.com and the North York Mirror/Toronto Star.
 - Available at: <https://www.thestar.com/local-toronto-north-york/News/gta/2023/06/30/jane-finch-group-uplifts-youth-through-sports-education.html>
 - https://www.toronto.com/news/north-york/jane-finch-group-uplifts-youth-through-sports-education/article_4e95aa27-2842-5fd6-ab6b-25e7f4906c41.html

- December 3, 2023 - 'Equitable Sentencing Can Mitigate Anti-Black Racism in Canada's Justice System', written by Ardavan Eizadirad and Greg Leslie.
 - Available at: <https://theconversation.com/equitable-sentencing-can-mitigate-anti-black-racism-in-canadas-justice-system-217515>

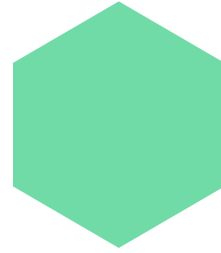
July 2023- Research Project with Dr. Larissa Lam and Zachary Pederson and the Robertson Program from University of Toronto focusing on Playful Math and Inquiry-Based Teaching with students in Grades 3 to 5

<https://wordpress.oise.utoronto.ca/robertson/>

YAAACE is partnering with Dr. Larissa Lam and Zachary Pederson from the Robertson Program at the University of Toronto (<https://wordpress.oise.utoronto.ca/robertson/math/>) to conduct research in July within our Summer Institute program focusing on implementing Playful Math and Inquiry-Based Teaching with Black students in Grades 3 to 5. The students loved the first session as they engaged in various math games. We look forward to the data-driven and evidence-based research that comes from this.

October 27 2023- Start of the YAAACE and Robertson Program "Learning Math through Basketball" Research Project

We started our partnership initiative "Learning Math through Basketball" with the University of Toronto Robertson program. They are implementing the project with our grade 5 basketball team. We introduced the research team to the players and the parents on Wednesday October 25th from 5 to 6:30 pm. They will host learning sessions bi-weekly and tracking the progress as a research project. https://www.linkedin.com/posts/yaaace_yaaace-is-very-excited-to-start-our-research-activity-7123418512684908544-9i_5?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop



July 26 2023-
Programming with our
Research Partner the
Robertson Program at the
University of
Toronto

YAAACE is partnering with Dr. Larisa Lam and Zachary Pederson from the Robertson Program at the University of Toronto (<https://wordpress.oise.utoronto.ca/robertson/math/>) to conduct research within our Summer Institute program focusing on implementing Playful Math and Inquiry-Based Teaching with Black students in Grades 3 to 5. The students loved the three sessions which taught them math concepts through games. We look forward to the data-driven and evidence-based research that comes from this and to continuing our partnership in the fall.





VISITS



January 18 and 19 2023- Partner in Hosting the Canadian Congress on Inclusive Diversity & Workplace Equity - Ardavan presented on the Thursday on Research as Activism



February 17, 2023- Spoke to New Police Recruits in Etobicoke



February 9, 2023- Visit from Tom Rakocovic MPP, Humber River-Black Creek
Tom also visited us in August 2023 to see the Summer Institute.

February 27th

Devon Jones on the SETSI Panel focusing on “Educational Attainment and Black Communities”.

The Founding Director of Youth Association for Academics, Athletics, and Character Education spoke on the panel organized and facilitated by Social Economy through Social Inclusion (SETSI) on the theme of “Educational Attainment and Black Communities” with other panelists with Camesha Cox (Founder of the Reading Partnership) and Shakara Joseph Russell (CEO of JA Nova Scotia).



The conversations were rich and spoke to the importance of needing to address anti-Black racism embedded in institutional and their policies and practices contributing to underachievement of Black student and racialized communities. YAAACE highlighted the efficacy of our annual educational programs as part of the Community School Initiative which includes evening and weekend tutoring, March Break camp, and a 7 week Summer Institute to mitigate the achievement and opportunity gap.

Learn more at: <https://www.communityschoolinitiative.com/>



March 10 2023

Visit from Karen Murray and TDSB Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement and Dr. Carl James

March 9 2023
Visit from Scott McKean and Scerena Officer- City of Toronto and Safe TO



March 21 2023 - Visit from Various Stakeholders & Funders

We were honoured to host a session with various stakeholders to discuss innovative solutions to community safety issues as part of our New Narrative Program funded by Public Safety Canada in alignment with the Federal Framework to Reduce Recidivism. Lookout for the launch of the Centre for Community Safety & Roots of Violence in the near future!

Thanks to our guests for taking time out of their busy schedules to be with us today for such important conversations: Kara Colynuck, Regional Program Advisor, Ontario Region, Public Safety Canada; David Mitchell, Assistant Deputy, Youth Justice Division, Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services; and Amy Calderan, Constituency Office Manager of the Hon. Judy A. Sgro, MP.

March 24th, 2023
Marriott
525 Bay Street, Toronto, ON

Leg-Up Symposium

LEARN Money
EARN Money
GROW Money
UTILIZE Money
PSYCHOLOGY of Money

NEA ONNIM NO SUA A, OHU "He who does not know, can know from learning."

Individual Pass

- Learning and Networking
- 3X meals
- Live Entertainment
- Business Pitch Session
- Digital Art Gallery

\$250 / Person

Brothers Who Care
Premier Finance & Wealth Event brings together Toronto finest Financial Professionals and Industry Leaders from some of the nation's leading Businesses, Financial Services, Real Estate Companies, and Educational Institutions.

Corporate Group Pass

- Professional Development Opportunities
- Industry Specific Breakout Rooms
- Keynote Speakers & Skills Training

\$2,500 / Group

LifeWorks TD Longos YSpace BridgeWellbeing

Eventbrite <https://LEGUPSecureourWealthSymposium.eventbrite.ca> <https://legupwealth.com/symposium/>

March 24th- Leg Up Symposium with Brother Who Care



April 22, 2023- You(th) Conference with Pinball Clemons Foundation hosted at Hotel X

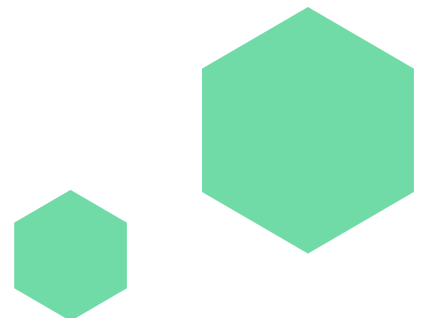


June 1st 2023

Attended media event at Raptors OVO Centre with Masai Ujiri and Justin Trudeau to announce first Friday in June as the annual day against gun violence:

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/trudeau-national-day-against-gun-violence-1.6861618>

As we commemorate the inaugural National Day Against Gun Violence, we want to express our gratitude to the leadership of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Public Safety Minister Marco Mendocinio, Masai Ujiri and the Toronto Raptors. This significant day will be observed on the first Friday of June each year. We had the privilege of attending the announcement with our TO Wards Peace partner, Think 2wice. YAAACE (Youth Association for Academics, Athletics, and Character Education) and Think 2wice, through out community safety initiatives like TO Wards Peace will remain committed to actively combating gun violence in North West Toronto, particularly in the Jane and Finch (Humber River Black Creek Constituency) and Rexdale communities.





June 13, 2023- Visit from Counsellor
Shelley Carrol- Don Valley North & Supporter
of TO Wards Peace



July 18 2023

Visit from Member of Parliament Judy Sgro

We were delighted to host the [Member of Parliament for Humber River- Black Creek, Honourable Judy A. Sgro](#), for a visit to our YAAACE Summer Institute on July 18, 2023. Judy and her team have been avid supporters of the YAAACE Summer Institute program which runs annually every summer for 7 weeks from 9 am to 4 pm. This summer, we are serving 150 students in Grades 2 to 8 in the Jane and Finch community. Programming is led by Ontario Certified teachers and coaches supported with youth counsellors. There is a focus on numeracy, literacy, robotics, and athletics. Thanks to the Canada Summer Jobs program and support from Judy's office, we are able to hire many youth from the community as counsellors to support our programming and create employment opportunities within the community.

July 25 2023- Visit from one of Our Partners Sony Music

We (YAAACE - Youth Association for Academics, Athletics and Character Education) were delighted to host a group of guests from Sony Music Entertainment. Sony Music Entertainment Canada have been long time supporters of YAAACE programming. Sony Music as a partner has donated many equipment to help us grow our media team and the quality of content we produce. We have used the cameras, microphones, and other equipment they have provided to grow YAAACE as an organization and connect with the community we serve. We are grateful and in gratitude to Sony Music Canada! Look out for a YAAACE podcast coming out soon in the fall focusing on "Community Safety" issues.



August 2, 2023- Visit from Jason Dawkins- Head Coach at George Brown College & High-Performance Manager with Ontario Basketball Association

We were honored to host Jason Dawkins for a visit at the YAAACE Summer Institute where we discussed how we can collaborate around mentorship of our coaches and their development for the upcoming season with involvement with provincial initiatives. Jason Dawkins is the Head Coach of the George Brown Huskies men's basketball program since 2019. He is involved with various teams at the national and provincial level, capturing six gold medals and one silver with Team Ontario between 2010 to 2017. He is currently Ontario Basketball's Manager of High Performance.



August 14 2023- Visit to University of Waterloo School of Optometry and Vision Science

Our camp participants visited the University of Waterloo School of Optometry and Vision Science. We received vision screenings and full eye examinations performed by licensed optometrists in conjunction with optometry students. The goal of the assessment was to evaluate the eye health status, eye coordination, and the need for glasses. Eyeglasses and sports goggles were provided to students at no cost by @essilor @modernoptical. Without the generous contribution of the sponsors and our partnership with the University of Waterloo, our children would not have this amazing opportunity. Our children learned the importance of eye health and discovered exciting career paths. Together, we're shaping a clearer, brighter future for our children.



August 15 2023- YAAACE Participated in Raptors' Youth Summit

On Tuesday August 15, 2023, the older YAAACE students and some of the counsellors visited Scotiabank Arena for the Raptors Youth Summit. Participants got to share their lived experiences and suggestions for how they can be leaders and improve their communities around 4 themes: civic engagement, crime and law enforcement, community healing, and community support systems. They got to hear from leaders in the City of Toronto and ask them questions. Guests included Mayor Olivia Chow, Hon. Marci Ien (Minister for Women, Gender Equality, and Youth), Stephen Mensah (Executive Director of the Toronto Youth Cabinet), and many others such as singer and songwriter Jully Black who is from the Jane and Finch community. It was an empowering day which aligned with the YAAACE mandate of developing 21st century global citizens who will advocate for themselves and their communities.



Picture with Jully Black
also from the Jane and Finch community

Connecting with Civic Leaders at the Raptors' Youth Summit:



With Marci Ien, Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth of Canada.

August 16 2023-

Visit from Dr. Tanya Sharpe

YAAACE was honoured to host Dr. Tanya Sharpe for a visit where she learned about our violence prevention and intervention programs including the Summer Institute, TO Wards Peace, and New Narrative. Dr. Sharpe is the Director of the [Centre for Research & Innovation for Black Survivors of Homicide Victims \(The CRIB\)](#), a multidisciplinary initiative designed to advance research, policy, and practice for and with Black survivors of homicide victims. Her work and research aligns with the advocacy and knowledge mobilization YAAACE is leading. YAAACE is partnering up with Dr. Tanya Sharpe on numerous research projects in the coming year. As well, Dr. Sharpe will also be one of the members of the multi-sectoral coalition being put together by YAAACE as part of launching the forthcoming Centre for Community Safety & Roots of Violence.





September 23, 2023
 Community March Against Gun Violence
 The community safety team attended the Community March Against Gun Violence downtown.

October 18, 2023

Spoke to New Police Recruits in Etobicoke
 Tamasha, Efiya, and Brooklyn presented about our community safety initiatives including an overview of our New Narrative and TO Wards Peace programs.





October 25 2023

Devon Jones presented in the House of Common on Importance of Summer Job Programs for Youth

On Wednesday October 25th 2023, YAAACE founding Director Devon Jones and program participant Christopher Emmanuel were invited to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities (HUMA) as part of a panel of witnesses in view of its study of the Canada Summer Jobs Wage Subsidy Program. They presented in Ottawa. You can catch the recording below:

<https://parlvu.parl.gc.ca/Harmony/en/PowerBrowser/PowerBrowserV2/10101/-1/40144?mediaStartTime=20231025165751&mediaEndTime=20231025175739&viewMode=3&globalStreamId=>

October 27, 2023- In Person Visit from Federal Minister Marc Miller, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship & Member of Parliament for Humber River Black Creek Judy Sgro. YAAACE is honored to have hosted Member of Parliament Marc Miller, Federal Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, and local Member of Parliament for Humber River Black Creek Judy Sgro. We were able to share with them the impact of our annual programs using strength-based approaches in education, athletics, employment training, and violence prevention and intervention with a focus on accessibility and culturally reflective service delivery. We had rich discussions about how we can continue to enhance our programming to further support newcomer families and refugees as part of mitigating the opportunity gap and addressing larger systemic inequities in under-resourced communities.



December 13, 2023- Visit from the Department of Justice

YAAACE was honored to host the team from the Program Branch of the Department of Justice (Lisa, Victoria, and Harry). It was a great meeting where we discussed how we can support justice-involved youth through creating access to education, employment, case management, and culturally reflective wraparound supports. More importantly, we discussed how we can work together in partnerships with the school board towards creating prevention programs instead of purely focusing on intervention. We look forward to working together with multiple stakeholders to holistically support youth and families in vulnerable circumstances and create safer communities through effective programs and services.





MEDIA IMPACT



March 2023- We Are YAAACE Video Created and Launched
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lnHZ2dhFE0w>

January 30th, 2023- CTV News Story with Natalie Johnson
<https://review.bellmedia.ca/view/1248278709>

February 17, 2023- Live on Metro Morning with Ismaila Alfa
<https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-193-fresh-air>



NATALIE JOHNSON



ISMAILA ALFA

September 2023- Highlighted in the Newsletter from the Canadian Municipal Network on Crime Prevention

<https://j76.241.myftpupload.com/home/>

CMNCP is a growing network of Canadian communities committed to increasing the use of effective and collaborative crime prevention and community safety strategies. The mission of CMNCP is to build capacity and mobilize Canadian municipalities to prevent and reduce crime and foster community safety and well-being. Over the past 10 years, CMNCP has made important contributions to advancing crime prevention and community safety in Canada. Since its inception in 2006, CMNCP has been fulfilling its mission by successfully increasing membership to represent over 50% of Canada's population as well as consistently communicating its messages across the country to elected officials, municipal employees, crime prevention practitioners, federal and provincial staff, and community members through trainings, workshops, and presentations.

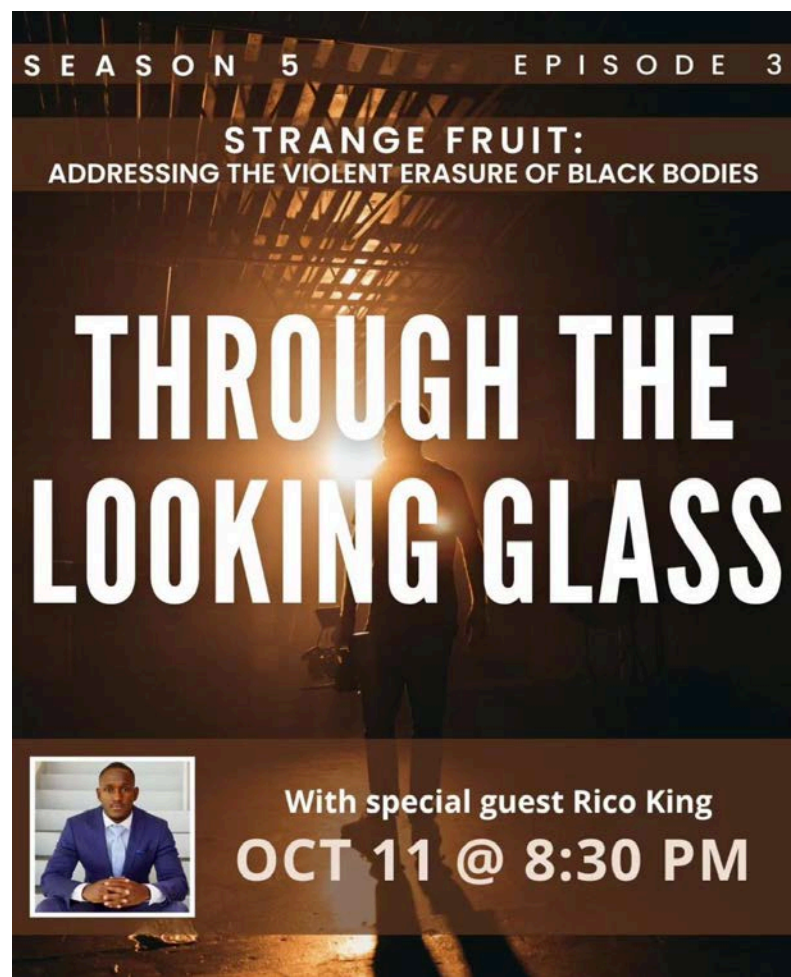


October 11, 2023

The CRIB 30@8:30 Season 5 hosted by Dr. Tanya Sharpe with guest Rico King

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CyOKNXvM3fX/?igshid=MzRIODBiNWFIzA%3D%3D>

Rico King was the special guest on The Crib 30@8:30 Season 5, third episode on October 11, 2023 hosted by Dr. Tanya Sharpe from the [Centre for Research and Innovation for Black Survivors of Homicide Victims \(The CRIB\)](#) on Instagram. The focus of the episode was on the theme of "Addressing the Violence Erasure of Black Bodies".





YOUR COMMUNITY

City News

NEW CENTRE IN JANE AND FINCH TO TACKLE ROOT CAUSES OF YOUTH VIOLENCE



YOUR COMMUNITY

City News

YAW OBENG-MENSAH
VARSITY BASKETBALL PLAYER, YAAACE ALUMNUS



YOUR COMMUNITY

City News

DEJON BRISSETT
TORONTO ARGONAUTS PLAYER, YAAACE ALUMNUS

March 31

CityNews and Greenline TV Segment and Online Article

"Local association in Jane and Finch opening new centre to address roots of youth violence"

<https://toronto.citynews.ca/2023/03/31/jane-finch-yaaace-youth-violence-community-approach/>

approach/

YouTube link to the story (3:26 mins):

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wWaPrHO_qzw&t=10s)

[v=wWaPrHO_qzw&t=10s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wWaPrHO_qzw&t=10s)

"When I was 18, I was a functionally illiterate homeless child who was looking down the barrel of a life sentence. Now I'm finishing up my undergrad and heading to law school."

- YAAACE ALUMNUS

YOUR COMMUNITY

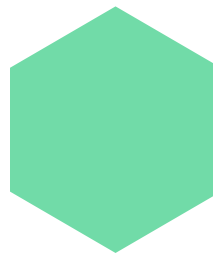
City News

NEW CENTRE IN JANE AND FINCH TO TACKLE ROOT CAUSES OF YOUTH VIOLENCE





NEW AND ONGOING PARTNERSHIPS



THE CENTRE FOR RESEARCH &
INNOVATION FOR BLACK
SURVIVORS OF HOMICIDE VICTIMS



FACTOR-INWENTASH
FACULTY OF SOCIAL WORK
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

YAAACE became a Partner Organization with Dr. Tanya Sharpe and the Centre for Research & Innovation for Black Survivors of Homicide Victims (The CRIB)

June 2023- Grants received from City of Toronto (3 years) in partnership with Kids of Incarcerated Parents (KIP)

<https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/get-involved/community/community-funding/youth-violence-prevention-grant/>

The City of Toronto has awarded the recipients of its second Youth Violence Prevention Grant to support the de-escalation of violence in 23 priority Toronto communities. The Grant will allocate approximately \$2.7 million in annual funding to 13 community organizations and 12 grassroots partners for up to three years. It supports the implementation of programming in communities identified as Neighbourhood Improvement Areas and/or revitalization sites. The approved programming aims to de-escalate violence through effective community engagement approaches and trauma-informed programming. This updated 2023 Grant prioritized investing in intervention and interruption program models that serve justice-involved and/ or gang-associated and gang-involved youth participants, aged 10-29.

July 10 2023- Received \$5000 in funding from Canada Basketball

YAAACE is grateful and honoured to have received \$5000 in funding from Canada Basketball Foundation through the UNIFIED Assist Program for Youth Sport Leadership Development. Also, a huge thanks to Raptors Uprising for being the sponsor of the grant. We look forward to the partnership and working together to support the development of grassroots basketball in Toronto. See below for the press release and learn more about the announcement: <https://www.basketball.ca/news/canada-basketball-foundation-announces-unified-assist-program-grant-recipients-during-globl-jam-jumpstart-legacy-day>





Public Safety
Canada

Sécurité publique
Canada



SONY MUSIC





Youth Association for Academics, Athletics, and Character Education

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