The end of summer and arrival of the new school year at LEAP bring both joy and reflection. Young adults who have been at LEAP since they were children are heading off to college for the first time. We are proud of what they have accomplished. However for those leaving New Haven, we will miss them as they move on.

But there is always a new generation at LEAP: new young children, new teens, and new counselors, all of whom shape what LEAP is today and how it will be remembered tomorrow.

This past year has had its challenges but together as a community we overcame state budget cuts to reopen our Dwight site. Your support made that possible and we feel great about the improvements we have made in our long-term reading, swimming, camping and gardening programs.

Your support also made possible a new partnership with the Gilder Lehrman Center at Yale which brought young LEAPers to Yale classrooms for instruction from graduate students on African American and Latinx history. It culminated in a visit to Harlem curated by experts on the neighborhood’s history.

As so much changes every year at LEAP, some things stay the same. We have built a lasting community, one in which all of us, including you, are neighbors. Our success relies on hard work, trust, love and perseverance. So, thank you neighbor, for helping to build our community.

Thank You,

Henry Fernandez, Executive Director

LEAP Summer 2018: Activities and Smiles Abound!
LEAP kids got to participate in a broad variety of enrichment classes this summer including swimming, computer coding, gardening, dance, chess, photography, art, guitar, creative writing, cooking, yoga, knitting, tennis, and athletics. They also went camping, visited the Peabody Museum, Yale Art Gallery, and many New Haven parks, and took trips to the Basketball Hall of Fame, Legoland Discovery Center, Mystic Aquarium, El Museum del Barrio, and the Schomburg Library.
On July 20th, LEAP awarded generous college scholarships to several Junior Counselors in memory of two individuals who were incredibly dedicated to LEAP and its mission. The annual Jay Bovilsky Scholarship was awarded to Ramzia Issa (Albertus Magnus College) and Amaal Rahman (Univ. of Hartford) in memory of past LEAP Board member Jay Bovilsky. Jay’s wife, Deborah, and son, Adam, presented the awards in Jay’s memory to each of the recipients. The inaugural Regina Winters Memorial Scholarship, honoring one of LEAP’s most beloved staff members from the 1990’s, was awarded to Darius Martin (Central CT State Univ.), Ramzia Issa, Amaal Rahman, Thelbert Rudzvice-Moye III (SCSU), and Ja’Nyha Snell (Central CT State Univ.), with honorable mention awards presented to Anthony Alston (Albertus Magnus College) and Cesar Calle (Gateway Community College). LEAP Co-Founders Roslyn Meyer and Henry Fernandez presented the awards, highlighting the powerful impact that Regina Winters had on LEAP. Congrats to all the scholarship recipients!

Photos courtesy of Lucy Gellman of The Arts Paper
Summer Programming Partnerships Strengthen LEAP
From learning to harvest honey at Massaro Community Farm to delivering their closing statements at the Connecticut Bar Association’s Summer Law Camp, LEAP children and teens have had incredibly enriching experiences through our partnerships. We thank all of our community partners for their support this summer.
LEAPers navigated New Haven thanks to the CT Department of Transportation, which donated bus passes to over 550 LEAP participants. With the added support of the Appalachian Mountain Club and the Yale Peabody Museum, LEAPers continued to gain new outdoor and science skills on their camping trips. LEAP’s Leaders In Training wrote and performed an original play about violence prevention inspired by Shakespeare with expert guidance from the Elm Shakespeare Company. The Gilder Lehman Center sponsored LEAP’s Summer Humanities at Yale University Program, giving LEAPers the opportunity to visit the Beinecke Library, discuss Hip Hop and Black Culture, and tour Fair Haven and Harlem.

Thank You to Our Recent Grantors
Arconic Foundation • Bank of America Charitable Foundation • Barnes Foundation • Carolyn Foundation • Henry E. Niles Foundation • MFUNd • MGM Resorts International • Quigley Foundation • Sassafras Foundation • TD Charitable Foundation • The Community Fund for Women and Girls • Wells Fargo • William and Jean Graustein

LEAP Junior Counselor Profile: Emiya Pearse
We interviewed Emiya Pearse, who began her LEAP journey at age 10, became a Leader In Training, and moved up to be a Junior Counselor this summer. Emiya is already working toward becoming a Senior Counselor in 2021 when she starts college. Emiya received the “LEAP Values” award at the recent “LEAPys Awards,” given to a counselor who began at LEAP as a child, embodies what it means to be a LEAP counselor, and has the LEAP spirit. In talking with Emiya, it is easy to see why she earned her award.

What do you remember most fondly about being a LEAPer at age 10? I remember the energy of the counselors and the kids—there was always a good vibe here at LEAP. I always liked the LEAP curriculum and the travelling we did.

What things did you find challenging about being a LEAPer? LEAP helped me learn to do things I never thought I could do. I remember my first camping trip. We took a 30-minute hike and then an hour-long hike. I am not a hiker, but the LEAP staff helped me through it.

What have you learned from the kids you work with? Every kid is different and you need to have a lot of patience. They also remind you what being a kid is all about and why it is important to be a mentor for them. You meet that one kid who is like you. In my case I was quiet and shy so I was able to use the skills I learned from my counselors to help kids like me be more outgoing and involved.

What does LEAP mean to you? LEAP is my family; it is the reason I am who I am. It is a second home to me. I wish more people could be a part of LEAP. LEAP showed me what I want to do with my life—help kids and my community. LEAP helped me realize that I am great, and I want to help other kids learn that about themselves.

What is next for you at LEAP? I will continue as a Junior Counselor and then become a Senior Counselor. After that I plan to be a site coordinator and then take over the whole building!
Save The Date for
our Annual LEAP Year Event
Thursday, February 28, 2019

We hope you can join us on Thursday, February 28, 2019 for a wonderful evening of learning and conversation. Choose from over 25 LEAP Year dinners with fascinating guests of honor and generous hosts!

To be a LEAP Year Event Sponsor, please contact Rachel Kline Brown, Director of Development, at (203) 773-0770 or rklinebrown@leapforkids.org.