



LEAP Newsletter

Summer 2018

Donate Today: www.leapforkids.org



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

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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.



Regina Winters & Jay Bovilsky Scholarship Awards



The Bovilsky Family & Awardees



The Winters Family, Roz Meyer & Awardees



LEAP Counselors Cheer for Awardees

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 Rudzavice-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!

How I give to LEAP: Have a Facebook birthday fundraiser like Randi Mezzy!

When LEAP reached out to thank Randi Mezzy for having a Facebook birthday fundraiser for LEAP, she replied, "I was delighted to do it and I was so gratified by the response from my friends. I was part of the knitting group from summer of 2017 and was really impressed by what I saw at LEAP. I hope to help more in the future..You may want to tell your supporters about this. Facebook contacted me and said it would donate \$5 to get the fundraiser started. As a result, friends from all over, who would never have donated to LEAP, did so! Friends from Louisiana, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, etc. So your supporters can do the same thing and it's effortless." Thank you Randi!

Let us know if we can help you have your own Facebook fundraiser for LEAP.

Read-In on the New Haven Green: Lots of Literacy!

The Read-In on the Green took place on July 13th, a sunny day filled with reading and joy. Over 50 volunteers read their favorite books to groups of LEAP kids scattered across the green in a sea of orange and blue; there were 500 kids and 100 counselors in total! Mayor Toni Harp kicked off the festivities by welcoming everyone to the event. Remarks followed from U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal, State Senator Martin Looney, State Representatives Gary Winfield, Toni Walker, Pat Dillon and Al Paolillo, and past State Senator Joe Crisco. Thank you to everyone who shared their love of reading!



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 Lehrman 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!



Emiya Pearse, LEAP Junior Counselor

Creating A New Haven For Our Children

Leadership, Education, and Athletics in Partnership, Inc.

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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.