Retreat Welcome Message from Chairs

Thank you for your interest in the 2012 Pennsylvania Youth Retreat. This retreat was planned by a steering committee comprised of youth who were or are in substitute care, and IL professionals. We are excited to present this week-long opportunity for you to meet new friends, experience new things, and Take Over-Change Lives and Advance Your Independent Memories.

Please read over the information in this brochure and your registration packet carefully. We tried to bring you as many choices as possible. Whether it’s hip hop dance, stained glass or participating in a fashion show, there’s something at the Youth Retreat for everybody!

We look forward to seeing you at Pitt UPJ in August where we will all…Take Over!

Sincerely,

Braheem Farmer
Southeast YAB Member
Co-Chair

Tiffany Thornton
Lead Coach
Valley Youth House
Philadelphia Achieving Independence Center
Co-Chair

Justin Lee
Practice Improvement Specialist
University of Pittsburgh, School of Social Work
PA Child Welfare Resource Center
Co-Chair
What is the Youth Retreat?
The Youth Retreat is a week-long experience where youth from Independent Living Programs from all over Pennsylvania live on a college campus and participate in group discussions, fun activities, sports/games, and hear special guest speakers. Youth and IL staff from around the state plan the Youth Retreat. That means everything about the retreat was designed for youth by youth.

Where is the Youth Retreat?
The Youth Retreat is held at the University of Pittsburgh, Johnstown (UPJ.) UPJ has great facilities, outdoor volleyball court, pool, and dorm suites. Youth will live with a roommate for the week and have a private bathroom shared by another pair of roommates in the dorm suite.

What should I expect?
Youth should expect a fun week that is very, very busy. This is not a vacation or camp. You will be pushed to learn new things, participate in activities, and meet new people. Check out the rest of this brochure for more information.

Why should I come to the Youth Retreat?
Why not? If you're looking to have fun, learn new things, meet new people, and work hard, then this is the event for you! Check out the Retreat page on the Youth Advisory Board website to see videos of past Youth Retreats – www.independentlivingpa.org/retreat.htm
Keynote Speaker - Kevin Y. Brown

At an early age, Kevin Y. Brown was fascinated with being an individual that stood out from the crowd. Growing up seventeen years in the notorious California foster care system automatically placed Kevin in a category in which he was not willing to remain. Challenging the status quo and being curious about the world, Kevin made the decision to take control of his life in order to create a positive self identity.

He graduated at the top of his high school class and was accepted to over twenty-seven colleges and universities. After choosing Clark Atlanta University, Kevin continued the momentum by participating in many extracurricular collegiate activities, including playing on the men's basketball team, designing and selling his own clothing line, and studying abroad in London, England.

In addition to leadership roles and achieving a debt-free college education, Kevin was a host for the MtvU college channel, the recipient of the prestigious Malcolm X Exceptional Courage Scholarship and the Les Brown Heart of Determination and Perseverance Award.

Today, Kevin continues to travel extensively connecting and empowering audiences through his programs using his motto Interact, Teach, Empower.

Kevin holds two Bachelor's degrees from Clark Atlanta University (magna cum laude) with focuses in Fashion Design/Merchandising and Business Administration (free of college debt – a promise he made to himself as a freshman). He is also a member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc.

Kevin has served as an advisor on Congressional bills for changes in the national foster care system and has been commended on his effort to overcome life’s challenges in the United States House of Representatives by the iconic civil rights leader and Congressman John Lewis.

For more information, please visit: http://www.kevbrown1.com/
Special Evening Events

Tuesday August 14, 2012
Tournaments, Open Gym and Pool Party

Wednesday August 15, 2012
Dance and Movie Night

Thursday August 16, 2012
Banquet, Talent and Fashion Show

Special Thanks to the following Steering Committee Members:

Retreat Chairs:
Braheem Farmer, Tiffany Thornton, Justin Lee

Subcommittee Chairs:
Activity/Special Events - Katy Skiles, Elyse Coldren
Curriculum - Robin English, Larkin Silverman
Operations - Jamire Watson-Simms, Brandie Gilbert

Steering Committee Members:

Ahmad Bouie
Al Milliner
Ashlee Grant
Barbara Huggins
Brant Duda
Ciarra Carnes
Cindy Gore
Chris Nobles
David Derbes
DelVaughn Mccarrel
Glenn Smith
Hope Tressler
Janice Reindel

Jennifer Kerr
Jennifer Lewis
Jennifer Stein
John Crawford
Kayla Meier
Kevin Jackson
Mariann Lillibridge
Marissa Kubler
Olivia Green
Pam Lessman
Rachel Singer
Tatiana Jarvis
College Experience

Youth will experience life on a college campus for a week including the excitement of living in a dorm, managing roommate issues, and utilizing campus facilities. This experience has motivated other youth to pursue college and reach their full potential.

Rules and Expectations

1. Attend the retreat with a great attitude and a willingness to participate.
2. Carefully read registration materials and ask questions if you don’t understand.
3. Show respect for others and their property and privacy.
4. Attend all peer group sessions, activities and special events.
5. Be attentive to speakers and listen politely, please turn off cell phones during presentations.
6. Follow your retreat schedule at all times, get to peer group sessions, activities and events early.
7. Be courteous to others in peer group buildings and residence halls.
8. Remember that we are guests of the University of Pittsburgh – please respect others on campus.
9. When in doubt, direct questions to your staff or the Retreat Steering Committee members.
The Youth Retreat Steering Committee is made up of youth who were or who are in substitute care, representatives from the Office of Children, Youth and Families at the Department of Public Welfare, staff at the University of Pittsburgh, School of Social Work's Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center, and county and provider Independent Living programs.

**Statewide Partners**

[Logos of the respective organizations]