



Erie County Youth Bureau
810 East Ferry Street
Buffalo, NY 14211

Youth Bureau Chronicle

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Erie County Youth Board:

- Liza Acanfora
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- Kendall Bazinet
- Kelli Blakeley
- David Caywood
- Bill Conrad
- Paul Denning
- Susan Lumadue
- Juliana Norton
- Mitchell Nowakowski
- Kathleen O'Brien
- Mike Randall
- Brian Rochford
- Ryan Taughrin
- Carolynn Welch

Garden Provides Opportunities at Erie County Youth Detention

A collaborative project between the Erie County Youth Bureau and Grassroots Gardens of Buffalo has yielded a garden at the 810 East Ferry Street site that is said to boost staff and resident morale while providing both healthy eating and useful learning material to participating youth.

Approximately 25 residents at one time participate in cultivating the garden, with a number of healthy food items grown and eaten. Lettuce, cucumbers, mixed greens, tomatoes, cabbage, kale and jalapenos are just some of the produce grown in the garden, which has three beds of soil.

Lauren Miller, who is a literacy teacher at the Youth Detention Center, helps organize the garden project, taking students from her class to the garden for periods of time. In addition to manual labor and planting of food, residents also learn to research specific points of gardening, including required sunlight and water amounts. Miller said youths have shown a great enthusiasm for the garden. "They get excited and are always asking, 'Can we go outside and work on (the garden)?'" said Miller. "I love seeing how enthusiastic they are." Once crops are harvested, they are utilized by kitchen staff for meals, and are snacked on by residents and staff throughout the course of class days.

The overall garden initiative was started within the last five years. Grassroots Gardens is a non-profit organization that has donated topsoil to local community gardens, including five yards of topsoil to Erie County Youth Detention. Youth Bureau staff helped wheel soil into the garden area, where residents then got the harvest process rolling. Ben Hilligas, who serves as Youth Bureau Director, said the garden promotes a fun learning opportunity for youth. "We're committed to



this garden. It's a really cool opportunity for kids to interact with staff, and it's great for the morale of staff and residents," said Hilligas. "It also promotes healthy eating. "

Hilligas added that a number of outside programs are planned at the garden site, including arts as well as social and emotional well-being.

Deputy Commissioner of Youth Services Gary Damon Jr. described the Youth Detention

garden as "a place where residents from many backgrounds and neighborhoods can come together for a shared purpose and be at peace." -Steve Dlugosz, Special Assistant to Management, ECDSS

Compass House Provides A Safe & Caring Place for Youth in Need



Do you know youth in need of somewhere to go for emergency shelter, food, clothing and case management assistance? Compass House is here. Compass House, a 501(c)(3) non-profit agency serving Erie County, is comprised of a 13-bed Emergency Shelter for youth ages 12 to 17, and a Resource Center serving youth ages 14 to 24. Both locations offer a staff dedicated to making a difference in the lives of runaway, homeless, and at-risk youth in Western New York.

Services provided include shelter, warm meals, case management, family, group, and individual counseling, independent

living assistance, workforce development, referrals, and advocacy in the community. All services are provided on a free, confidential, and voluntary basis.

Compass House is partnered with the National Safe Place Program to provide safe transport around the clock for youth in need of the services we offer. Local Safe Place locations include Tops Markets, YMCA locations, Boys & Girls Clubs, all NFTA buses, Gay & Lesbian Youth Services, and more. All locations are marked by the yellow sign pictured below. Staff members of Safe Place locations are trained to connect youth in need directly to Compass House.



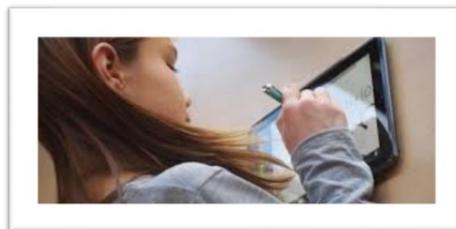
Take the case of a client, Alex, who struggled with unhealthy decisions. With the support of her Case Manager, Alex learned how to establish healthy coping mechanisms, build her sense of independence and self-worth, and reduce her anxieties about being alone. At the end of her stay at Compass House, Alex was able to be placed in transitional housing where she continues to build the skills necessary to make healthy choices and maintain positive relationships with people on whom she can count.

If you or someone you know may be in need of Compass House's services, please call the 24-Hour Helpline at (716) 886-0935. For more information about services, volunteering, Safe Place, or donations, please feel free to contact Courtney Clark at (716) 886-1351 or courtneycc Clark@yahoo.com.

Boys & Girls Club of Buffalo Members Picking Up S.T.E.A.M.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Buffalo (BGCB) is developing a STEAM program entitled Picking-up STEAM. Picking-up STEAM will provide exposure to STEAM careers to minority and disadvantaged children with a focus on the important role that academic achievement plays in pursuing a career in these fields. Children will acquire the problem-solving, thinking and communication skills necessary to compete globally.

With the prevention of summer learning loss a focus, BGCB has gathered a variety of resources that will allow Clubhouses to implement fun, hands-on STEAM ac-



tivities for our summer programs. These include STEAM related applications for use on mobile tablets and in learning centers. These applications will provide a variety of STEAM skills including basic physics and engineering principles, math and science.

Members, with access to the Mobile iPad Tablet Labs, are engaging STEAM learning through programs such as **Educreations** which allows kids to watch videos about **Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math**. Students can also interact with the videos through a paint-like application. **Khan Academy** allows members to receive explicit instructions on how to complete certain math problems. Science lessons and questions are also on this app. **5 Dice** is a game which requires youth to use their critical thinking and math skills to solve the given task and many other apps.

Concerned Ecumenical Ministry: STAR Kids Extended School Day Program



Concerned Ecumenical Ministry provides many services for at-risk youth and their families. One such program is the STAR Kids Program, which takes place at Buffalo Public School #6 and services students in grades 3-8.

The program strives to promote student growth in both academic and social aspects by providing academic support and a variety of enrichment activities for each student. Programs like drill, basketball team, and STAR Senate promote student

leadership, team work, and social skills, and other activities like art, theater, and inspirational dance give students the opportunity to try things that they may not have the opportunity to do outside of the STAR Kids program.

As Lilah Harris, a 5th grade student in the program put it, “The STAR Kids Program lets me try new things and helps me when I need them”.

The STAR Kids staff is comprised of Youth Workers – staff of various ages and backgrounds that work directly with the students – and certified teachers from the school day. Each member of the staff strives to promote positive relationships with the students in the program and to provide a safe environment in which students feel wanted.



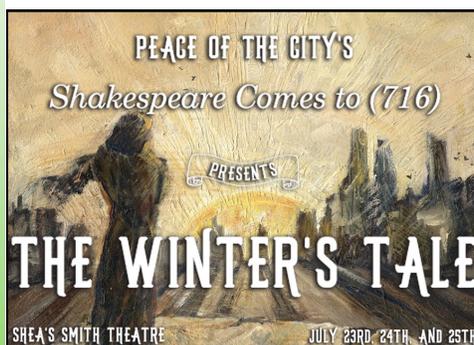
Peace of the City Ministries: Shakespeare Comes to (716)

Shakespeare Comes to (716), a twelve-week spring and summer theater program, brings together all of the passions of Peace Of The City.

This city-wide arts program “closes the gap” for Buffalo Public School students as they master a Shakespeare script and full production. They study, rewrite, critique, memorize, articulate and perform plays that still speak to the heart today.

Basic job skills such as punctuality, hard work, discipline and teamwork rule the day. Powerful life skills are learned and absorbed through this process. Youth learn how to work collaboratively and

take direction. They also develop a greater understanding for what it means to embody another’s story – which is the foundation of empathy.



Kayla Bowden, a 6th year Shakespearean, exclaims that, “Every good quality I have is because of Peace of the City.”

Peace of the City Ministries would love to have you in their audience. Performances will take place at Shea’s Smith Theatre, located at 660 Main Street, Buffalo, NY 14202 from July 23-25th.

For more information, please visit www.peaceofthecity.org or check them out on Facebook at www.facebook.com/PeaceOfTheCity.

Erie County Youth Bureau

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Buffalo, NY 14211

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ECYB Mission: “To serve youth and families through asset development and advocacy, prevention, and intervention programs that strengthen families and communities.”

[www2.erie.gov/
socialservices](http://www2.erie.gov/socialservices) or search
“Erie County Youth Bureau”

To find out more information on the agencies mentioned in this edition, please contact them or visit their website using the information listed below:

- **Boys & Girls Club of Buffalo**

282 Babcock Street, Buffalo, NY 14210
& several clubs all across Erie County!
716-825-1016
www.bgcbuffalo.org

- **Concerned Ecumenical Ministry**

286 Lafayette Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14213
716-882-2442
www.cembuffalo.org

- **Compass House**

370 Linwood Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14209
716-886-0935
www.compasshouse.org

- **Peace of the City Ministries**

301 14th Street, Buffalo, NY 14213
716-828-8683
www.peaceofthecity.org

