



LEAP Newsletter

Summer 2019

Donate Today: www.leapforkids.org



We just finished another wonderful LEAP summer with over 570 children and teens. Some 120 high school and college students served as counselors and instructors. All of this was made possible by the generosity of our donors.

The last few years have been a roller coaster, with state cuts and corresponding LEAP program reductions – followed by support from generous donors, allowing LEAP to rebuild our programs and serve even more kids. We face new challenges, including yet another state budget cut and the new minimum wage law which boosts our costs by several hundred thousand dollars. (It's a wage increase that LEAP families need, and we support it – but it does mean raising more money.)

Overcoming these challenges is worth it because of the amazing success stories—successes like LEAP Junior Counselor and Stiefel and Williams Family scholarship winner Kimberly Sacaza, who came to the US from Honduras at age 10, learned English, carried an A average in high school and starts college in Rhode Island in September. Or the more than 70 volunteers who came out to the New Haven Green to read to LEAP children on a warm overcast July day, proving once again how special our community is.

When we face challenges, again and again LEAP supporters turn out. And when we have successes, they are the fruits of all of us working together to Create A New Haven For Our Children.

Thank You,


Henry Fernandez, Executive Director

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LEAP Summer 2019: 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 much more. They also went camping, received experiential science lessons from our friends at the Peabody Museum, visited the Yale Art Gallery, and explored a variety of parks. LEAPers journeyed to the CT Science Center, NYC, and even Washington, D.C.

LEAP Donors Provide Generous College Scholarships



*Anne Calabresi, Deborah Bovilsky,
Henry Fernandez and Roslyn Meyer*



The recipients with their awards



Tai Richardson, Board member

During the midsummer counselor training/retreat, LEAP awarded college scholarships to several Junior Counselors. LEAP Co-Founder Roslyn Meyer presented the annual Regina Winters Memorial Scholarship, honoring one of LEAP's most beloved staff members from the 1990's, to Naiasia Conley (Southern CT State University) and Kayla Leeper (Howard University). The annual Jay Bovilsky Family Scholarship was presented by Deborah Bovilsky to Kayla Leeper (Howard University) and Kimberly Sacaza (Johnson and Wales University) in memory of past LEAP Board member Jay Bovilsky. A new scholarship, the Stiefel and Williams Family Scholarship, presented by LEAP Co-Founder Anne Calabresi and Executive Director Henry Fernandez, was awarded to Anthony McKnight (Central CT State University) and Kimberly Sacaza (Johnson and Wales University). Congratulations to all the scholarship recipients, and to LEAP's high school graduates, all of whom are off to wonderful colleges and universities!

Leave a LEAP Legacy for New Haven's Youth

Would you consider becoming a part the **LEAP Legacy Society**? By making LEAP a part of your estate plans, you can support LEAP now and in the future. Planned gifts can include leaving LEAP a bequest in your will, making LEAP a beneficiary for your retirement plan or life insurance policy, or donating a portion of your required minimum distribution from your IRA directly to LEAP (if you are over 70 1/2). Make a difference for New Haven's youth for years to come!

For more information or to talk about a planned gift, contact Rachel Kline Brown, LEAP's Director of Development, at (203) 773-0770 or rklinebrown@leapforkids.org. Learn more at www.leapforkids.org/donate-to-leap.

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

The Read-In on the Green took place on July 12th, a sunny day filled with reading and joy. Over 70 volunteers read favorite books to groups of LEAP kids scattered across the green in a sea of orange and blue; there were over 550 kids and 100 counselors! State Senators Martin Looney and Gary Winfield along with Mayor Toni Harp kicked off the event by talking about their passion for reading. Copies of the newly published book *The Night is Yours*, written by our own Abdul-Razak Zachariah, were read and sent home with all campers ages 7-8. The New Haven Public Library's Readmobile and the New Haven Symphony Orchestra's Instrument Petting Zoo were also on site. Thank you to everyone who shared their love of reading!



Summer Programming Partnerships Strengthen LEAP

This summer, our 11-12 year-olds had the opportunity to participate in a Black and Latinx History and Culture Program through a partnership with the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition. Through this partnership, students went on guided tours of the Yale Center for British Art, the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale, the Yale University Art Gallery and on a trip to Hunter College in New York City to explore the intersection between history and art. We are so grateful that this partnership allowed our students to engage their creative intelligences while connecting with the history-based curriculum they explore in the classroom and traversing new parts of New Haven! One of our LEAPers, Tarique, expressed to us why he loved this partnership: “I think it’s important to learn about art and history together so that we can continue what they were doing and maybe change the world one day. I love art and want to explain to more parents and kids that they should come to LEAP to learn about it.” We can’t wait to continue this program in the future!



Thank You to Our Recent Grantors

Avangrid • Bank of America Charitable Foundation • Barnes Foundation • Brzezicki Family Foundation • City of New Haven - Youth Violence Prevention Grant • Cyrus M. Quigley Foundation • Henry E. Niles Foundation • New York Life Foundation • Petit Family Foundation • Sassafras Foundation • Seedlings Foundation • Seymour L. Lustman Memorial Fund • TD Charitable Foundation • Wells Fargo Foundation

For a full list of donors, please see our 2018-2019 Annual Report at www.leapforkids.org (available mid-September).

LEAP Throwbacks: Alumni Return to Train Counselors

This summer, LEAP alumni working as educators returned to LEAP to help train the newest group of LEAP counselors in literacy teaching techniques, different learning styles, and classroom management. Not only did they share their in-depth teaching experience, but they also shared how excited they are to be back!

Holly Jackson (LEAP '93-96) has been teaching in public schools in Los Angeles for 20 years. She got her start as a LEAP counselor and then became a site coordinator. “My work with LEAP helped me discover who I was, how I wanted to impact the lives of kids and families,” she says. “LEAP gave me direction. [It] led me to social work and teaching...It’s been so inspiring to be back.”

Jackson has some advice for current LEAPers. “I’ve been practicing [teaching] strategies for 20 years, and I’m still always finding ways to be better at them,” she says. To be successful, LEAP counselors need to “allow themselves to try different strategies, and be okay if that lesson doesn’t work well. They need to



L-R: Holly Jackson, Anne Calabresi & Niki Sturgis-Nash

problem solve around, “Today wasn’t very good. Why wasn’t it? Because I wasn’t prepared? Or the kids were off? What was it specifically that made me feel like our day was a struggle? Which is a lot of work!”

Niki Sturgis-Nash (LEAP '94-98) has a similar origin story. “I was telling the kids here that I can literally attribute my pursuit of working with

children to the LEAP program,” she says. “My time spent with the kids, I was like—I like this! I want to stay with kids! So I got my Master’s in Education and then I started to teach after that.”

Sturgis-Nash adds: “I believe that LEAP has done a fantastic job creating leaders. I can speak to the people from my time. The jobs that they have, the way that they’re impacting society is fantastic. LEAP for Lifers, you can find them all over the place...I think that this place has left an indelible mark on the city. LEAP is identified as one of the biggest employers for children and young adults [in New Haven]. And that’s huge! When you have that kind of power, you can do amazing things.”

Creating A New Haven For Our Children

Leadership, Education, and Athletics in Partnership, Inc.

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Save The Date for LEAP's Annual LEAP Year Dinners & Reception Thursday, February 27, 2020



We hope you can join us on Thursday, February 27, 2020 for a wonderful evening of learning and conversation.

Choose from over 30 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