EMPOWERING YOUTH IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ADULTS TO CREATE COMMUNITY CHANGE

YOUTH EMPOWERED SOLUTIONS

2015 ANNUAL REPORT

youthempoweredSolutions.org
“SO WHAT?”

At YES!, we are always asking this question of ourselves and our partners. It’s not enough to bring together a group of youth for a training only to say we’ve trained 200 youth. So What? What has happened as a result of training these youth? We ask because we want to know what will be different because of our actions and involvement. We ask because we are determined to create community change and equity through our partnerships and commitment to making space for youth to have a voice and to take action.

As I reflect on themes from this past year, I’m happy to report that our explicit intentions have resulted in meaningful change. This past year, we placed a major focus on playing a supportive role and lifting up partnering organizations by helping them understand the importance of youth empowerment and building their own capacity to work with youth in ways that support their own missions. We also worked to maintain our deep roots in addressing adolescent health issues through advocacy, equity and social justice. Not surprisingly, 2015 was another year of great success! Thanks to the hard work and contributions of countless individuals, foundations, organizations and agencies, YES! was instrumental in:

- **37 critical changes**
- **18 different states**
- **51 partners/projects**
- **1,571,697 awesome people**

Through our combined partnership work, we continued to foster the spirit of collaboration and increased impact in the social change sector. We asked ourselves, “so what?”, and we were clear in identifying the changes we wanted to see. In the coming year, YES! will continue to embrace the spirit of community change and organizational innovation as we embark on a creating a business plan. YES! will continue to place an emphasis on progress as we become more efficient, provide better services and have greater impact on a national scale.

Bronwyn Lucas,
Co-Founder & YES! Executive Director

Lee Storrow,
YES! Board Chair & Former YES! Youth Staff
MISSION
YES! empowers youth in partnership with adults to create community change.

VISION
YES! envisions communities where the valued standard is empowered youth leaders working alongside adults to create positive change.

Locally, YES! hires high school-aged students who learn how to identify and research problems, develop solutions, gather community support, engage key stakeholders, work with the media, and change local and statewide policies. Nationally, YES! Youth and Adult Staff provide training and technical assistance to youth and adults at other organizations with a focus on policy, systemic, and environmental change.
ABOUT YES!

Young people under the age of 18 make up more than a quarter of the U.S. population, yet their potential as a generation to contribute to a better society is systematically ignored. Our nation is suffering economically, creatively and civilly as a result. Empowering young people to participate in effective youth-adult partnerships is a proven, replicable approach to solving community problems.

YES! has developed a nationally-recognized Youth Empowerment Model of social change through youth empowerment. The YES! Youth Empowerment Model® engages young people in work that challenges them to develop skills, gain critical awareness, and participate in advocacy opportunities that are proven to create change.

This Model propels youth into roles of civic engagement and community leadership throughout their professional careers and personal lives. In fiscal year 2015, a total of 1,169 adults and 1,156 youth were exposed to the YES! Youth Empowerment Model through conferences, panels, webinars, and/or trainings, for a total of 2,325.
YES! utilizes an outcomes framework that measures the impact of policy, systems, and environmental changes by the number of lives that are directly affected.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>316 adults and 431 youth attended a YES! training.</td>
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<tr>
<td>86%</td>
<td>85% of the youth staff identified as female, 15% male.</td>
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<td>70%</td>
<td>100% of the youth staff described working towards policy changes and systemic changes; 38% towards environmental changes.</td>
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<td>&gt;54%</td>
<td>64% of graduated youth staff report continuing to develop skills, increase critical awareness, and take action on issues important to them.</td>
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<td>45% of graduated youth staff are still impacting change.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>747</td>
<td>Number of youth and adults that attended a YES! training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Percentage of participants that learned a new skill from a YES! training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Average time a youth works with YES! before graduating</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Amount of time the YES! organization has existed</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>OFFICES Raleigh, Charlotte, Asheville, Washington D.C.</td>
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Revenue

53.7% Custom Service Revenue $496,417
37.0% Grant Income $341,925
5.4% Corporate & In-Kind Donations $50,074
3.5% Individual Contributions $32,092
0.4% Interest, Awards & Tax Credits $4,064

Total Revenue $924,572

Expenses

80.9% Programs and Services $724,259
11.2% Management and General $99,863
7.9% Fundraising $71,050

Total Expenses $895,172

Our Return on Investment

For every $1 invested in YES!, 2 people are impacted by a changed policy, system, or environment.
OUR YOUTH STAFF

Youth staff, ages 14-19

Te’Azsa Dash: “Working with YES!, I have gained awareness of the problems in my community and how I can partner with others to bring awareness to the issues and develop solutions.”

Caroline Le: “Being a part of the YES! staff provides me so many opportunities to network and speak out about the ideas we are tackling inside the office. I get to share my opinions with adults who want to listen to me, which is a comforting change.”

Hannah Klaus: “I have been provided with the knowledge and skills to be an advocate and create change independently, with other youth staff, or on my own outside of YES! My ideas and perspectives are valued and included in decision making processes.”

James Kanyotu: “YES! adult staff help me to feel empowered by being open to my opinion and being unbiased and fair in their feedback, always treating me and my ideas with respect, and making the way for me to realize my full potential in the work that I do.”

Flannery Rokeby-Jackson: “I am able to see the change I help create with my own eyes in my community. It helps me realize that I am a part of a driving force of change.”

100% of youth staff felt they had opportunities to take action and learn new skills with YES!
OUR YOUTH GRADUATES
Youth graduates, ages 19-21

Tiffany Jones: “YES! instilled in me a thirst for justice that has been confirmed for me time and time again as I have ventured out into the world. I am able to recognize my own privilege, analyze how to use that privilege to advocate for others, and determine how to empower others.”

Tyshaun Johnson: “Working for YES! opened my eyes to the struggles of different groups and now I am pursuing a career in politics in order to affect community change”

Jhana Parikh: “I feel like my time at YES! puts me at a significant advantage over my peers because of my ability to empower myself and the extensive work experience I gained before going to college.”

OUR BOARD

Left to Right: Meka Sales (Past Chair), Heather Jones, Jamie Hayes, Bronwyn Lucas, Julia Pierson, Alex Chu (Secretary), Sally Migliore (Vice Chair), Anne Thornhill, Lee Storrow (Chair)
Not pictured: Thomas Cornwell (Treasurer), Katie Hagan, Saleem Hussaini, Jon Levin, Rebecca Reeve
North Carolina:

Albemarle Commission
Alexander YMCA
Bertie County Schools
Boys and Girls Club of Nash and Edgecombe County
Carolina Healthcare Systems
Conservation Fund
Cumberland County Schools
El Pueblo
Gaston County Schools
Macon County Health Department
Madison County Health Department
Mecklenburg County Health Department
NC Council Of Churches
NC Folklife Institute
NC Pediatric Society (Voices for Healthy Kids)
NC Rural and Economic Development Center
NC School Community Health Alliance
Orange/Person County Health Department
Rutherford County United Way
Roanoke Valley Community Health Initiative
Teach for America of Eastern NC
Thomasville City Schools
UNC Chapel Hill
UNC Greensboro
Other States:

Alabama: Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments
Georgia: Georgia Department of Public Health, Georgia State University
Kentucky: Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky
Louisiana: Rapides Foundation
Maryland: Horizon Foundation
New York: Montefiore Health Systems
Ohio: Lima Ohio Family YMCA
South Carolina: Eat Smart Move More South Carolina
Texas: Project Vida, Southeast United Dairy Council, Texas Health Institute
Wisconsin: Richland County Health Department

National:

American Heart Association
American Public Health Association
M+R Strategic Services
National African American Tobacco Prevention Network (NAATPN)
Pew Charitable Trusts
SAMHSA
School Based Health Alliance
OUR FOUNDATION & CORPORATE PARTNERS

Foundation Partners:
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation
Duke Energy Foundation
Appalachian Foodshed Project
Mead Family Foundation
Seeds of Fire Fund - The Highlander Center
United Way of Asheville and Buncombe County

Corporate Partners:
Allstate Foundation - Lucas Agency Inc.
Amaya Painting Inc.
Amazon Smile
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina
Boomerang Transport
Enterprise Holdings
Goodshop
JLL Community Connections
JustGive
Moonlight Pizza
Next Tier Concepts
Verizon Foundation
Williams Sonoma
Wines for Humanity
Your Cause LLC
OUR INDIVIDUAL DONORS

YES! Visionaries ($1000+):
Alex Chu
Mary Beth Loucks-Sorrell
Maureen O’Connor
Jacob and Christine Rokeby-Jackson
Meka Sales

YES! Partners ($500 - $999):
Dr. Alice Ammerman and
Tom Keyserling
Jonathan Levin
Robin Temple
Anne Thornhill

YES! Advocates ($100 - $499):
Carolyn Aaronson, Dr. Kelly Brownell, Mike & Betty Buskirk, Karen Caldwell, Charles Collini,
Tom Cornwell, Charles and Shelley Dairaghi, Jacob and Marcelline Dairaghi, Jeanne Dairaghi,
Jana Dean, Mark Dessauer, Deborah Dinkmeyer, Dylan Ellerbee, Roxanne Elliott, James Fain,
Ingrid Friesen, Jennifer Gierisch, Angela Gilmore, Bob and Diane Glenn, Brian Gulette,
Patricia Haddix, Susan Hall, Bo Hargrove, Susan Hartley, Jamie and Jason Hayes,
Justin and Robin Hayes, Sherry Heuser, Emily Gruelle Hickey, Aidil Ortiz Hill, Andrew Hill,
Saleem Hussaini, Christine Jackson, Najmi Jarwala, Delmonte and Jacqueline Jefferson,
Joretha Johnson, Dr. David Jolly, Darrell Kimbrell, Cindy Kleiner, Meri Kotlas,
Christine Laucher, Bob and Cathie Lockhart, Emily Lockhart, Grant Lockhart, Bronwyn Lucas,
Diana Manee, Bernard and Kathy McNamee, Paul and Deborah Meisner, Sally Migliore,
Ashley Miles, Michelle Petit, Carmen Procida, Ilene Procida, Parrish Ravelli, Kim Reese,
Rebecca Reeve, Len and Christa Rossicone, Girard Salak, Stephen Schewel,
Sheryl Scott, Noah Scribner, Pam Silberman, Robin Smith, Betty Spears,
Katie Spears, Alan Spears, Michael and Janice Spears,
Ann Houston Staples, Lee Storrow, Ryan Sullivan,
Connie Thames, Fiorella Valladares, Dane Vertefeuille,
Thomas and Frances Vitaglione,
Bob and Mary Warner, Peyton Williams
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

County Health Rankings and Roadmaps:
The Foundation recognizes YES! as an effective implementation program in the “County Health Rankings and Roadmaps” for its Youth Empowerment Model, stating “Youth empowerment programs help prepare children and youth to be active members of their communities and society as a whole. Programs teach children to work well with peers and can include job skill development and placement; mentoring; intensive case management; writing and communication skills services.”

North Carolina Medical Journal

Youth Empowerment to Achieve Patient Engagement: YES! youth staff Hannah Klaus wrote an article that was published in the North Carolina Medical Journal. Her article, titled “Youth Empowerment to Achieve Patient Engagement” discussed the importance of systematically engaging youth in order to reach a level of patient engagement where the experience of care is improved, patient health is improved and health care costs are lowered.
President's Council on Fitness, Sports and Nutrition

2015 Community Leadership Award Winner: YES! was nominated for this award by the North Carolina Center for Health and Wellness for its work in Real Food and Active Living. In 2015, YES! worked on local efforts like the Universal Breakfast within Charlotte Mecklenburg County Schools, on the #Eat2Win Campaign for Youth Sports Nutrition, and with the Second Chance Breakfast in Asheville City Schools.

Highlander Center

Seeds of Fire Award Winner: YES! was awarded a Seeds of Fire grant to promote intergenerational leadership and organizing. The Highlander Center serves as a catalyst for grassroots organizing and movement building in the South, and works with organizations like YES!, that fight for justice, equality and sustainability.

Greater Asheville Area

40 Under 40 Winner: YES! adult staff Diana Manee was selected as a 40 under 40 winner for demonstrating excellence in her career and dedication to her community. Through Diana’s work with her youth staff on equitable access to public transportation, breakfast in schools and fresh fruits and vegetables in corner stores, Diana is transforming the perception and inclusion of young people in community decision making processes.
Statewide Youth Network

YES! partnered with the North Carolina Alliance of YMCAs to empower teams of youth to take action around healthy eating and active living policies in their local communities, and to join a network of youth who advocated for statewide healthy policies. Eight youth teams from across North Carolina received mini-grants for local projects including community gardens, healthy corner store initiatives, and pedestrian infrastructure improvements that allowed for more physical activity and important access to healthy food.

SO WHAT? This partnership resulted in 7 systems, environment and policy changes that impacted 222,452 people. A few examples include:

Robinhood Road YMCA: YES! partnered with the Robinhood Road YMCA to advocate for and create a community garden. The garden is used for...
programming for nearly 7000 YMCA members, and in the most recent growing season, the YMCA was able to donate over 200 lbs. of food to the community.

**IMPACT:** 7,167 members

**Durham HUB Farm:** Youth from the Durham HUB Farm advocated for and secured $65,000 from Durham City Representatives to use to improve sidewalks around the HUB farm that would increase access to the garden for students and community members.

**IMPACT:** 187,035 Durham citizens

**National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth:** Youth in Greensboro created a Youth Homelessness Task Force to address hunger in homeless children and youth. This Youth Taskforce renovated a blighted area into a community garden.

**Impact:** 2,000 youth in Guilford County

**William G. White, Jr. YMCA:** The Winston-Salem based YMCA purchased bee hives for the Farm at the Children’s Home to increase garden production, and sell the produce every Tuesday and Wednesday with all proceeds benefitting the Children's Home.

**Impact:** 6,155 YMCA community members

“The Alliance of YMCAs invested its funding in youth advocacy to engage young people in the important work of shaping our communities’ environments to support healthy food and physical activity access for all. The dividends we are seeing not only have created community change but have built the interest and skill of the youth to be civically engaged for a lifetime.”

Sherée Vodicka, Executive Director, NC Alliance of YMCAs
Georgia Statewide Youth Summit

YES! partnered with the Georgia Department of Public Health to effectively address teen tobacco use and obesity. Some Georgia school districts were still allowing tobacco use and were promoting unhealthy food options on school campuses. In October 2014, YES! and Georgia DPH hosted a Statewide Youth Summit for more than 300 high school students and 50 adult advisors to promote changes within the school districts that incorporated youth-adult input and focused on tobacco and food options. YES! led separate sessions for adults and youth, along with mock school board and city council presentations. All of the information focused on the skills and knowledge about the health topics, critical awareness about creating effective change, and community action planning.

SO WHAT? 95% of youth who were trained at the Summit learned new skills, and youth from the Lowndes School District were successful in advocating for the passage of a new 100% tobacco-free schools policy in their district. The Irwin County School District also adopted a model tobacco free schools policy due to advocacy efforts from youth in the Valdosta Health District.
Youth Empowerment Framework for Foundation Grantees

The Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky and YES! worked closely together to provide consulting and technical assistance to The Foundation’s grantees in order to apply the YES! Youth Empowerment Model framework to their funded efforts.

**SO WHAT?** As a result, grantees have created space for youth within their county health coalition, have hired youth coordinators, and have launched a formal youth council to assist and drive their work.

Established Youth Councils for School Based Health Centers

YES! worked with youth and adults in Bronx, NY to advocate for the creation of 5 new school-based youth councils connected to the Montefiore Health Center. All 5 groups of youth/advisors presented proposals to their principals, and received approvals to proceed. Later in the year, those youth advocated for state policy that would protect block grant funding for school based health centers.

**SO WHAT?** This partnership resulted in 1 policy and 1 systems change, impacting nearly 164,000 people.
**Town of Mooresville**

YES! worked with the North Carolina Town of Mooresville to establish a Mayor’s Youth Council and to build a youth voice in local government. The Council gathered information and made a specific ask of the community to develop a new park and community center in a much needed area. As a result, the Town Council prioritized their request and passed a community-bond to fund the work. The Council also worked closely with the Parks Department, ensuring that the new community park is built equitably for use by youth.

**IMPACT:** 21,932 citizens in Mooresville, N.C.

**El Pueblo**

YES! partnered with grassroots nonprofit El Pueblo to design and implement a comprehensive strategic plan that shifted their internal systems of operations for
the inclusion of youth in decision making roles. The organization also modified the bylaws for the board of directors to allow for more meaningful participation from youth on their board.

**IMPACT:** 33 youth and adult board/staff

### Institute for Emerging Issues

The Institute for Emerging Issues, a statewide public policy think-tank, has used the YES! Youth Empowerment Model to help shape their program of work on the North Carolina Civic Health Index, and now include a focus on youth civic engagement in their presentations to municipal groups across North Carolina.

**IMPACT:** 150 municipal leaders

### North Carolina Institute of Medicine

The North Carolina Institute of Medicine invited YES! youth staff, Hannah Klaus, to sit on the Patient and Family Engagement Task Force. This was the first youth task force member in the Institute’s history.

**IMPACT:** 38 Task Force Members

### Mecklenburg Youth Advisory Council

YES! partnered with the Mecklenburg County Health Department and the Carolina’s Healthcare System to create a Youth Advisory Council for the Healthy Weight Healthy Child Initiative. Mecklenburg County Youth Advisory Council recruited 15 youth to serve on the council, in addition to the 150 adults who already serve on the coalition.

**IMPACT:** 165 adults and youth on the Healthy Weight Healthy Child Coalition

### North Carolina Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiative

The statewide Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiative (TPPI) has developed a grant requirement for coalitions to have youth participation in their community advisory councils. TPPI also partnered with YES! to train their adult leader grantee groups throughout the state on implementing the YES! Youth Empowerment Model within their work.

**IMPACT:** 56 Counties

### Madison County Health Department

The Madison County Health Ambassadors initiative was established in partnership with YES!. The Health Ambassador team of three students and one adult work in partnership with the Madison County Health Consortium and Child Health Committee to make Madison a healthier place to live.

**IMPACT:** 20 youth and adults
Here's to another great year!
Thanks for your support!