

Creating Messaging with Youth

Kawanza Billy

Program Manager -The Black Swan Academy

Forum for Children's Well -Being: Promoting Cognitive, Affective, and
Behavioral Health for Children and Youth

The Black Swan Academy

Mission: The Black Swan Academy empowers black youth in underserved communities through civic leadership and engagement, giving them a comprehensive set of tools needed to succeed in life and become active social catalyst in their communities.

Vision: We creating a pipeline of Black youth leaders that are committed to improving self, as well as their communities.



Youth Voice, Youth Choice !!!

- Youth-Centered: the holistic approach that encompasses the whole being of a young person including their developmental issues, educational, family background, the source of their influence, etc. It is providing services for young people that meets their needs and circumstances
- Youth-Led: youth lead planning, decision-making, facilitation, reflection and evaluation on issues that matter to them, using actions they want to use. Through youth/adult partnerships, adults can act in supportive, engaging ways.



WHO WE ARE

PRIDE

PURPOSE

POWER

OUTCOMES

- We have supported **80 black youth** in middle and high school to gain skills in advocacy, organizing and public policy.
- Nearly **900 high school and middle school youth** joined our Summit, a half day experience where youth learn from leaders, **explore careers from all sectors through hands-on workshops**, and learn social advocacy.
- Provided **32 youth** with small scholarships and awards.
- **Reached 8,500 community** members through community service projects and outreach efforts and;
- Supported and led advocacy campaigns that produced more **funding for mental health professionals in schools**, affordable housing, community violence interrupters and legislation that reduces suspensions, prevents childhood lead exposure and decreases the voting age to 16.





LOVE US DON'T HARM US: 2018-2020

BLACK YOUTH AGENDA

OUR PROCESS IN 10

1. Issue Identification at Youth Agenda Workshop
2. Post-Workshop Survey and Direct Participatory Survey
3. Community Mapping and Research
4. Forming Black Youth Agenda
5. Creating One Pager and Social Media Graphics
6. Power Mapping
7. Base-Building and Mobilizing
8. Planning and Implementing Direct Actions
9. Advocacy Week
10. Evaluation and Repeat

[2019 Agenda One Pagers](#)



INVEST IN MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT. WHY?!

- Over 30% of black girls and over 40% of latina girls identified feeling sad or hopeless for an extended amount of time.
- Over 800 youth of color attempted suicide within the 12 month period of 2017.
- There are twice the amount of school resource offices in schools than social workers.
- 100% of school expulsions are of black youth and nearly 100% of school based arrests are of youth of color.



WE ARE CALLING ON LEADERS TO:

INVEST in the mental and social emotional health of youth of color, especially those impacted by violence, abuse or other form of trauma.

- Increase the number of mental health professionals in schools and within community.
- Fund training for educators and adults interacting with youth in public facilities on social/emotional learning, trauma informed care, de-escalation techniques, restorative approaches.

INVEST in the mental health and well being of youth of color, especially those impacted by violence, abuse or other forms of trauma, DIVEST in the policing and criminalization of bodies, trauma and adolescent behavior

- Increase the number of mental health professionals in schools and within communities
- Adopt the model of violence interrupters in schools
- Mandate training for educators and adults interacting with youth in public facilities on social/emotional learning, trauma informed care, de-escalation techniques, restorative justice approaches.



BSA
Instagram







QUESTION?!

Kawanza Billy
Program Manager

The Black Swan Academy

K.billy@blackswanacademy.org