



# Summer **YMI CONNECTION** 2013



# YMI CONNECTION Summer 2013

“News, Updates, and Stories from the Young Men’s Initiative”

## At-a-Glance

- NYC DADS Matter Awards 2013
- Mayor’s Youth Leadership Council
- Meet Justin Nettles of NYC Justice Corps!
- Check out these smartphone apps!
- Follow us! We’re on Twitter at @nycyoungmen

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## The Big Picture

*The Big Picture brings you up to speed on the status of the Young Men’s Initiative.*

On June 18th, the Young Men’s Initiative and Mayor Michael Bloomberg hosted the first annual **YMI Summer Barbeque** for program providers, participants, and supporters. The barbeque took place at Gracie Mansion and

was a celebration of the great work that YMI’s providers have been doing to support young men of color. Mayor Bloomberg praised the work of YMI since its launch in 2011, and Deputy Mayor Linda Gibbs in particular congratulated

YMI’s CBO providers, referring to them as the “warriors in this fight”.

Jahmani Hylton, director of the Young Men’s Initiative, thanked those in attendance for all of their hard work and support and for coming “under the YMI tent”. Jahmani also introduced two young men who spoke movingly of their own experiences as YMI program participants: Rajib Gonzalez, a graduate of the CUNY Fatherhood Academy, and Dariel Vasquez, who recently graduated from Thurgood Marshall Academy with a full scholarship to Bard College. In addition, Matthew Searles of the Harlem Neighborhood Opportunity Network performed “Never Stop”, an amazing song he wrote which perfectly captures the mission of the NYC Young Men’s Initiative.



From left: Dariel Vasquez, Deputy Mayor Gibbs, Mayor Bloomberg, Jahmani Hylton & Rajib Gonzalez



As announced in the Spring 2013 issue of YMI Connection, YMI has partnered with ASHOKA Changemakers to launch an online competition, “My Voice, Our City... What

will you do?” The competition is an opportunity for young men a chance to share solutions that will create positive activity in their communities, and strengthen all of NYC.



Competition winners are eligible for up to \$36,000 in prizes!

ASHOKA has selected a panel of judges that will choose the Grand Prize Winner of \$20,000 and 10 finalists. Voting begins early September into mid September, and winners will be announced in late September. Public voting will also take place in September for the three Runners-up, who will each be awarded \$5000 each. To be a part of the public voting, and to learn more about the panel of judges visit:

[www.myvoiceourcity.com](http://www.myvoiceourcity.com)

**On the Ground** *On The Ground brings you updates on our programs—what’s new, what’s expanding, and important milestones.*



Mayor Bloomberg and NYC Fatherhood Services Coordinator Alan S. Farrell with the 2013 NYC DADS Matter Award Winners

This summer was truly one for celebration, as NYC Dads held the third annual **NYC Dads Matter Awards** honoring ten inspiring fathers that have impacted the lives of their families and communities. The honorees were selected by the NYC DADS Matter Selection Committee out of over one hundred and fifty nominations.

NYC Dads is the Mayor’s fatherhood initiative, launched in June 2010 and focuses on encouraging fathers to become more active and engaged in the lives of their children. Over a dozen agencies city-wide have teamed up to explore opportunities to change policies and practices that hinder father involvement and offer programs in areas such as parenting, employment, and education.

At this year’s event, Mayor

Bloomberg spoke of his experience with his own father and reminisced about waiting for his father to come home from work, along with the talks they would have around the dinner table. The Mayor also spoke of his mother, who passed away about two years ago, stating that he feels connected to young men in this way.

Alan S. Farrell, NYC Fatherhood Services Coordinator and an expectant first-time father himself, spoke of the importance of fathers for children, and how the work of NYC Dads is helping to ensure that this can be made a reality for children all around New York City.

To learn more about this initiative and this year’s winners, visit the NYC Dads website <http://www.nyc.gov/html/hra/nycdads/html/features/features.shtml>.



Honoree Frank Medina with his wife and two children at the NYC DADS Matter Awards BBQ

*“The NYC Dads Matter Awards and the Mayor’s Fatherhood Initiative seeks to offer a new narrative around fatherhood in general and black and Latino fathers in particular. One that communicates that many fathers want to be involved in the lives of their children and that continued changes in policy and practice among our city agencies can help reconnect fathers and their families and strengthen our communities, cities and nation.” -Alan S. Farrell*

around the city who serve as an advisory resource for City Hall and provide youth voice on important policy questions. This year’s policy question was: “How does the Discipline Code and Bill of Student Rights and Responsibilities fulfill its stated purpose of creating safe, secure and supportive spaces for all members of the school community?”

Students worked hard during the school year interviewing principals, teachers, guidance counselors, school safety

agents, and their peers to provide a number of recommendations to City Hall, the Department of Education, and NYPD.

The group faced detailed questions from Mayor Bloomberg, but answered with grace and maturity that was beyond their

years. Their graduation took place in June Congratulations to the second cohort of the MYLC, and see you next year!

**Brianna Young from Queens Gateway to Health Sciences Secondary School introducing the policy question for this year’s MYLC cohort is shown below**

On June 17th, the second cohort of the **Mayor’s Youth Leadership Council (MYLC)** presented the results of their year of policy research and analysis to high-level City officials, including Mayor Bloomberg, Deputy Mayor Linda Gibbs, NYPD Chief of Community Affairs Thomas Chan, and Deputy CEO of the Office of Safety and Youth Development at the Department of Education Anthony Orzo.

The MYLC is composed of twenty high school students from



## One on One *One on One highlights a participant in one of the Young Men's Initiative programs throughout NYC*

**Name:** Justin Nettles

**YMI Program:** Harlem Justice Corps



**YMI:** Can you explain a little bit about Justice Corps, and what it means to you?

**Justin:** Harlem Justice Corps is the only place I am happy. I have a lot of respect here.

When I come here the staff is very respectful; they are concerned and do not judge you. They help you in any way they can; with housing, education, other types of training. I feel comfortable around people that have been through the same things as me, and that are trying to do something with their lives.

**YMI:** What are some of the important skills you will take with you from this program?

**Justin:** Harlem Justice Corps helps you build your responsibility and work ethic. It gets you prepared to wake up for a 9 to 5 job, Monday through Friday. At the end of the program you will be more motivated. I now use proper speech, and my interview skills are superior.

**YMI:** How has participating in Justice Corps impacted your life?

**Justin:** This program has helped me build my resume. My resume looks like I bought it off somebody. It helped me become more social, and also helped me look at life in a different view. It made me realize that being a convicted felon does not hold any weight. I appreciate

that this program allows me to give back to the community and the people that do not have much.

**YMI:** What are your plans for the future?

**Justin:** Right now, I am focusing on just becoming a construction worker. In about three or four months I want to start a trade school, called APEX, to become a pipefitter.

**YMI:** Would you encourage other young men to participate?

**Justin:** Yes, I would.

**YMI:** What would you say to those young men?

**Justin:** This program is an opportunity of a lifetime. I think the program is really good for people that have been living the street life, and do not have good work ethic. I would highly recommend it. It was a once in a lifetime program for me because it helped me learn things that I never knew. You come to Harlem Justice Corps to obtain more resources. You get the support that you actually need.

## In The Spotlight

### Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH)

#### *Teen Accessible Clinics*

**YMI:** Could you please explain the purpose of the teen accessible clinics, and when they started?

**DOHMH:** Every year approximately 17,000 NYC teens age -19 become pregnant, and 87% of these pregnancies are unintended. In addition, teens have high rates of sexually transmitted infections which are often asymptomatic, and if left untreated can cause serious complications. While adolescents have the right to access confidential sexual and reproductive health services without parental consent in New York State, many

*In the Spotlight highlights an agency or provider working with the City to accomplish the goals of the Young Men's Initiative*

teens and adults are not aware of this right and/or do not know that confidential teen-friendly services are available. The purpose of teen accessible clinics is prevent unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections by removing barriers to sexual and reproductive health care for teens, and assuring that teens have easy access to confidential, high quality services including onsite availability of all contraceptive methods. The NYC Health Department efforts to assure teen accessible clinics started in the South Bronx in 2006.

**YMI:** What makes a clinic "teen accessible"?

**DOHMH:** As of 2013, clinics must meet the core criteria that are outlined in the [Best Practices in Sexual and Reproductive Health Care for Adolescents](#), a document that can be found online. The Best Practices reflect current evidence, guidelines, and input from experts in the field. They have been endorsed by various organizations, including the New York State Department of Health, the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation, and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

There is also a designation in the Teens in New York City guide that a clinic can meet "gold star status", which means that services are available regardless of the teen's ability to pay, and that confidentiality is assured in the registration and billing process.

**YMI:** How many teens has this served since it started?

**DOHMH:** Since 2007, over 300,000 Teens in New York City print guides have been distributed, and since the launch of the Teen website in October 2011, there have been over 5,000 hits to the *(continued on Page 7)*

**MYMI**

MYMI is our list of ways that young people can interact directly with YMI through volunteer opportunities, events, apps, etc.

**Smartphone Apps You Should Try!**

- **Quote™**: Stay motivated and inspired with daily inspirational quotes
- **LinkedIn**: Build and expand your professional network
- **New York Times**: Stay informed on current NYC and world issues
- **NYC Water**: Find out more about NYC water and look out for upcoming events!
- **Teens in NYC**: Teen Protection Plus is an informative app where teens can obtain access to resources which will allow them to practice safe sex.



The Teens in NYC app can be downloaded at the Apple iTunes store or at [nyc.gov/digital](http://nyc.gov/digital)

**Who to Follow! (On Twitter)**

- **Mayor Michael Bloomberg**  
@MikeBloomberg
- **City of New York**  
@nycgov
- **NYC Department of Youth and Community Development**  
@NYCYouth
- **NYC DADS**  
@AlanSFarell
- **Shawn Dove**  
@DoveSoars
- **Richard Buery**  
@RichardBueryCAS
- **Tweet at us!**  
**@NYCyoungmen**  
**#NYCyoungmen**

**YMI in the News**

YMI in the news contains links to articles and other mentions of YMI in the media

- *Mayor Bloomberg Announces Online Competition Soliciting Ideas From Young Men To Reduce Racial And Ethnic Disparities* Kansas City TV, May 28, 2013  
<http://tinyurl.com/kzbumusf>
- *New York City Graduation Rate Remains Steady* New York Times, June 17  
<http://tinyurl.com/lmueczr>
- *The Fight for Black Men* The Daily Beast, June 19, 2013  
<http://tinyurl.com/kjcomkb>
- *WABC: "Here and Now" discusses fatherhood* – June 16, 2013  
<http://tinyurl.com/mqty3m9>
- *Detroit Free Press: "Guest commentary: Help our youth go from failing to fulfilling their dreams" by Tonya Allen and Maisha E. Simmons* - June 21,

2013

<http://tinyurl.com/lkkjezx>

- *Leyvan Jones receives Dad Matters Award from Mayor Bloomberg* News 12 Bronx, June 16 2013  
<http://tinyurl.com/o599hze>

**Who is Oscar Grant? Visit <http://fruitvale.herokuapp.com/pages/commit> to learn more.**



## Check It Out

*Check It Out* includes links to articles and resources of interest to our partners and allies

### Mayor Bloomberg's Commencement Speech at Stanford

<http://www.mikebloomberg.com/index.cfm?objectid=526B55A4-C29C-7CA2-F5764C57A3CAB7DB>

### Sesame Street and the Osborne Association's Little Children BIG challenges: Incarceration

<http://www.today.com/video/today/52228286#52228286>

### LA Sentinel: "Project Fatherhood Helps Men Throughout Los Angeles" by Shannen Hill – June 20, 2013

[http://www.lasentinel.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=11339:project-fatherhood-helps-men-](http://www.lasentinel.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=11339:project-fatherhood-helps-men-)

[throughout-los-angeles&catid=80:local&Itemid=170](http://www.throughout-los-angeles.com/catid=80:local&Itemid=170)

### CBS News: "NBA's Etan Thomas Leads Fatherhood Movement" by Stephen Smith – June 16, 2013

[http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-201\\_162-57589153/nbas-etan-thomas-leads-fatherhood-movement/](http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-201_162-57589153/nbas-etan-thomas-leads-fatherhood-movement/)

Former NBA player Etan Thomas released a book called "Fatherhood: Rising to The Ultimate Challenge" and has become a leading figure in improving fatherhood in the U.S.

### Ebony Magazine's Saving Our Sons Series

<http://www.ebony.com>

Starting in May 2013, Ebony magazine will be running a four-part series over four months on factors affecting the lives of black boys in

the United States. The series will cover education barriers, mental health services, fatherhood and father absence, among many other issues related to the Young Men's Initiative.

### Urban Prep's Time King Talks Success: The all-Black, all-male high school has a 100% college acceptance rate for the 4th year in a row

<http://www.ebony.com/news-views/enough-urban-preps-time-king-talks-success-450#axzz2XFhWWGSc>

### President Obama's Father's Day Address

<http://thegrio.com/2013/06/16/in-fathers-day-address-obama-wishes-his-dad-had-been-involved-in-his-life/>

### Expanded Success Initiative (ESI) Symposium (June 20, 2013)

#### Goals:

To celebrate the year's accomplishments and share strategies among ESI schools, to foster the sense of ESI as a community of learners that will raise the bar of college readiness and success among Black and Latino young men, and to update schools on budget procedures for next year.



2013 NYC DADS Matter Awards Honoree Leyvan Jones and his children at the awards BBQ

The Young Men's Initiative is on the Web! Connect with us to learn more about our work.

@nycYoungmen nycyoungmen.tumblr.com nyc.gov/youngmen

*The mission of this newsletter is to capture the spirit of the Young Men's Initiative through content that speaks to various stakeholders invested in our work. Each issue will contain program and policy updates, personal stories from our partners and program participants, thought resources and opportunities to get involved. This newsletter is a snapshot of where the Young Men's Initiative is and where it is headed.*



*(continued from Page 4)*

NYC online locator. As of May of this year, we launched the Teens in NYC mobile app, and to date we have had 7,500 downloads.

**YMI:** How has the “Teens in NYC” app assisted in getting NYC teens access to more information?

**DOHMH:** There is a wide provider interest in becoming a Teens in NYC teen-accessible clinic, and being listed in the app. The app allows you to search for a provider by location, service that you are looking for, and birth control method. The app also allows mobile technology users to locate providers at a tap of a button and get directions. You can save the information to your favorites, call for a provider appointment, send the information to a friend via text or email, and share the emails that are embedded in the app via Facebook. There are also short videos on the app featuring teens dealing with real life situations, and going for health care ser-

vices. Both teens and providers have found it really easy to navigate the app.

**YMI:** Is there anything you feel is important that may not have been showcased recently?

**DOHMH:** The app is available both for Android and iPhone. “Teens in NYC” content is available in print for free. Teens can call 311 or text 311NYC to get a direct referral to a provider. The app and all our educational materials stress the importance of dual protection – boys use condoms and girls use hormonal or IUD contraception – to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. We are also working to increase awareness and availability of long-acting reversible contraception – IUDs and implants – as a safe, very effective birth control option for teens. These methods are more than 99% effective at preventing pregnancy. Another project in the Bronx called Bronx Teens Connection is the Health Department’s CDC/ Office of Adolescent Health-funded initiative. The project focuses on providing

comprehensive sexual health education in high schools and community-based settings, and establishing strong linkages between youth-serving institutions/organizations and providers of sexual and reproductive health clinical services. The project also engages community members in these efforts. One part of that community engagement is the development of a Youth Leadership Team to engage and educate other community members, specifically young people, on teen sexual and reproductive health issues and topics.



<http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/living/adolescent-sexual-health.shtml>  
<http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/teen/html/home/home.shtml>

## **BeYond NYC** *Beyond NYC provides information about the reach the Young Men’s Initiative has outside of the city*

**Rumble, Young Man, Rumble** – Open Society Foundations Campaign for Black Male Achievement (July 24-July 26th, 2013 in Louisville, KY) A gathering of leaders from the responsible fatherhood and mentoring fields participate in an ongoing discussion about innovative practices and lessons learned to improve the life outcomes of black men and boys.

<http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/>

**The 100 Black Men of America Annual Conference** (June 5-9, 2013 in New Orleans, LA) The theme for this year’s conference was Optimizing Health & Wellness: Mind, Body and Spirit. Sessions and workshops with speakers and panelists provided insights and the tools to enhance the practice of mentorship and service to African American and urban youth.

<http://www.100blackmen.org/events.aspx>

**The National Partnership for Community Leadership’s Annual International Fatherhood Conference** (June 11-14th, 2013 in Orlando, FL) The focus was to help strengthen families by working with men and fathers. Programs work to build strong families by enabling mothers and fathers to be the best parents they can be. By building strong relationships among family members, children have a greater opportunity to succeed.

<http://www.fatherhoodconference.com/>

**NAACP National Convention “WE SHALL NOT BE MOVED”** (July 13-17th, 2013 in Orlando, FL)

<http://www.naacp.org/pages/convention>

**The Research Alliance for New York City Schools:** Moving the Needle: Exploring Key Levers to Boost College Readiness Among Black and Latino Males in New York City

[http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/research\\_alliance/publications/MovingtheNeedle\\_July2013](http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/research_alliance/publications/MovingtheNeedle_July2013)

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