

YLF 2023 HANDBOOK



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Partners for Youth with Disabilities

Dear Youth Leadership Forum Participants,

I am so pleased to welcome you to the Youth Leadership Forum at Emerson College!

We are so excited to share this week with such an incredible group of young people, ready to lead and learn. After months of planning and coordinating, we could not be happier to meet you in person.

PYD's goal is to create a world where young people with disabilities can lead self-determined lives filled with dignity, pride, and purpose. As part of our efforts to create authentic learning experiences, we have invited experts in several fields and self-advocates to inform and enlighten our knowledge. We hope you will gain important knowledge at YLF, and we will work together through workshops, talks and events to achieve this goal. In addition, we hope that all of you enjoy a wonderful week, make new friends, or catch up with new ones, have a lot of fun, and experience first-hand Boston campus life along with our staff, and our volunteers.

I hope this week empowers and inspires you. Each day at PYD we are reminded that, when everyone is included, we all win.

So glad you could be here!

Tere Ramos
Executive Director



Partners for Youth with Disabilities

Dear YLF Participants,

Congratulations on being selected as a Peer Delegate or Peer Leader for the 2023 Youth Leadership Forum. The interview committee was impressed by your thoughtful responses and your eagerness to further develop your leadership skills. PYD, our sponsors, and partner organizations are so excited to welcome our in-person participants at Emerson College on Sunday, June 25, 2023, and our virtual participants on Monday, June 26, 2023.

Partners for Youth with Disabilities is grateful for the funding and support from our sponsors; the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, Department of Mental Health, Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council, and Denny's. The generous funding of our sponsors and their commitment to young people makes the Youth Leadership Forum possible.

The Youth Leadership Forum will provide you with the opportunity to connect with your peers from across the state and hopefully form life-long relationships! You will hear from renowned speakers, participate in workshops about life beyond high school, how to prepare for employment and career paths, and many topics related to independent living.

As you prepare for what might be your first overnight experience on a college campus, please know we chose Emerson College due to their commitment to a fully inclusive and accessible campus for ALL. We recognize that everyone needs different accommodations, and our staff will work closely with you, so you feel respected, comfortable, and able to fully access and enjoy the Youth Leadership Forum.

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Carol Murray
pronouns: she / her
Youth Leadership Manager
978-827-0742 ext.112







Partners for Youth with Disabilities

Fight ableism. Include & empower all.









PYD's goal is to create a world where young people with disabilities will be able to live with dignity and pride in who they are, and to lead self-determined lives filled with purpose. To make this happen, we build the skills and abilities of young people with disabilities, and increase the inclusivity of workplaces, organizations, and communities.



Meet the Staff of PYD. Throughout YLF you will meet many of the staff below!

	<p><u>Tere Ramos</u> Executive Director She, Her, Hers Phone: 617-556-4075 x101 Email: tramos@pyd.org</p>		<p><u>Angela Ortiz</u> Director of Operations She, Her, Hers Phone: 617-556-4075 x100 Email: aortiz@pyd.org</p>
	<p><u>Kristin Humphrey</u> National Disability Mentoring Coalition (NDMC) Director Phone: 617-556-4075 x121 Email: khumphrey@pyd.org</p>		<p><u>Priti Pandya</u> Career Readiness Academy Director She, Her, Hers Phone: 617-556-4075 x139 Email: ppandya@pyd.org</p>

	<u>Lindsay Alperin</u> Youth Services Director She, Her, Hers Phone: 617-556-4075 x125 Email: lalperin@pyd.org		<u>Joanna Dumas</u> Youth Services Lead Administrator She, Her, Hers Phone: 617-556-4075 x127 Email: jdumas@pyd.org
	<u>Bob Peters</u> Director of Administration & Finance He, Him, His Phone: 617-556-4075 x112		<u>Piper Slowinski</u> IT Strategy & Innovation Director She or They Phone: 617-556-4075 x123 Email: pslowinski@pyd.org
	<u>Chris Carpenter</u> Administration & Finance Manager Phone: 617-556-4075 x124		<u>Aberash T. Gessese</u> Accounting Specialist Phone: 617-556-4075 x116
	<u>Deep Chinappa</u> Creative Youth Development Manager He, Him, His Phone: 617-556-4075 x120 Email: dchinappa@pyd.org		<u>Becca Cronin</u> Career Readiness Program Manager Phone: 617-556-4075 x131 Email: rcronin@pyd.org

	<p><u>Jordan "Jordy" Lome</u> Match Support Manager They, Them, Theirs Phone: 617-556-4075 x119 Email: jlome@pyd.org</p>		<p><u>Courtney Brown</u> Community Outreach Manager She, Her, Hers Phone: 617-556-4075 x147 Email: cbrown@pyd.org</p>
	<p><u>Carol Murray</u> Youth Leadership Manager She, Her, Hers Phone: 617-556-4075 x150 Email: cmurray@pyd.org</p>		<p><u>Lisa Jennings</u> Youth Leadership Program Administrator she/her/hers Partners for Youth with Disabilities Email: ljennings@pyd.org</p>
	<p><u>Dan Bradley</u> Inclusion Communities Manager He, Him, His Phone: 617-556-4075 x146 Email: dbradley@pyd.org</p>		<p><u>Nicole Homerin</u> Inclusion Communities Manager She, Her, Hers Phone: 617-556-4075 x126 Email: nhomerin@pyd.org</p>
	<p><u>Antonela Prifti</u> Assistant Manager of Youth Outreach & Enrollment Phone: 617-556-4075 x122 Email: aprifti@pyd.org</p>		<p><u>Micah Luen</u> Volunteer Coordinator They, Them, Theirs Phone: 617-556-4075 x136 Email: mluen@pyd.org</p>

	<p><u>Aaron Rawley</u> Outreach Specialist He, Him, His Phone: 617-556-4075 x143 Email: arawley@pyd.org</p>		<p><u>Athena Zeiter</u> Program Specialist She, Her, Hers Phone: 617-556-4075 x118 Email: azeiter@pyd.org</p>
	<p><u>Susannah Woodford</u> Program Specialist She or They Phone: 617-556-4075 x141 Email: swoodford@pyd.org</p>		<p><u>Matthew Jameson</u> AmeriCorps Mentoring Advocate He, Him, His Phone: 617-556-4075 x145 Email: mjameson@pyd.org</p>
	<p><u>Rachel Rubin</u> Career Readiness Program Coordinator She, Her, Hers Phone: 617-556-4075 x144 Email: rrubin@pyd.org</p>		<p><u>Sadye Bobbette</u> Career Readiness Program Coordinator She, Her, Hers Phone: 617-556-4075 x149 Email: sbobbette@pyd.org</p>
	<p><u>McCoy Sikes</u> Pre-Employment Program Coordinator He, Him, His Phone: 617-556-4075 x128 Email: msikes@pyd.org</p>		<p><u>Sayvion Jones</u> Career Immersion Program Coordinator He, Him, His Phone: 617-556-4075 x135 Email: sjones@pyd.org</p>

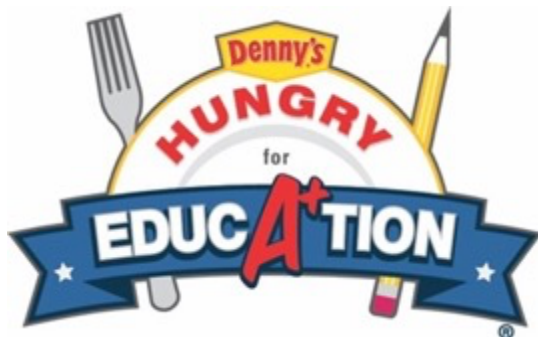
	<p>Ryan Kell Program Specialist He, Him, His Phone: 617-556-4075 x133 Email: rkell@pyd.org</p>		<p>Jules Lilienfeld Pre-Employment Program Specialist She, Her, Hers Phone: 617-556-4075 x148 Email: jlilienfeld@pyd.org</p>
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SPONSOR PAGE

Partners for Youth with Disabilities (www.pyd.org) is proud to organize and host the 2023 Massachusetts Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) in partnership with the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health, the Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council, Denny's, and numerous partner agencies across the state.



**Creating Opportunities For
Independent Living And Work**



***The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission
600 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02111-1704***

June 25, 2023

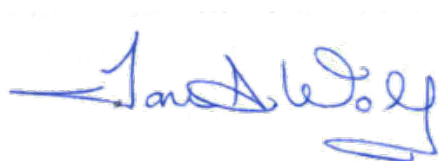
Dear YLF Participant,

I'm excited to welcome you to the 2023 Youth Leadership Forum, the first in-person event since the COVID-19 Pandemic changed everything. We at the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission congratulate all of you for participating in this wonderful opportunity. During the next three days, you'll live, work, and socialize with your peers to create a powerful voice that you can use to strengthen our community. YLF offers you the ability to learn about employment possibilities, financial literacy, how to become an advocate, build life-long relationships, and grow as an individual.

MRC takes enormous pride in sponsoring this year's Forum. We are investing in each one of you. You are the future business, education, advocacy, and government leaders. This event may be the first time you have spent time away from your family or slept in a room that wasn't yours. While it's normal to feel wary, don't feel worried. Friends surround you—other delegates excited to create and engage in a community. Take advantage of the opportunities and experiences provided to you because of the Forum. Your collective voice of youth with disabilities and their peers will help shape the future of Massachusetts and the nation.

Congratulations on being a part of this one-of-a-kind event, and enjoy YLF!

Toni Wolf, MRC Commissioner





MAURA HEALEY
GOVERNOR

KIM DRISCOLL
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

*Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council*

*108 Myrtle Street, Suite 202
Quincy, Massachusetts 02171*

REBECCA FILMORE
ACTING CHAIRPERSON

DANIEL M. SHANNON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

June 2023

Dear Youth Leadership Forum Participant,

Welcome to the 2023 Youth Leadership Forum!

The Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council is a proud co-sponsor of the annual Youth Leadership Forum (YLF.) Our mission is to provide opportunities for people with disabilities to lead successful lives in their communities. The Council has championed the development of independent living and self-advocacy skills over many years. Your participation in YLF is an essential step in heading down the path toward a fulfilling and productive life in your adult years.

After 3 years online, we are so excited that YLF is taking place in person this year! Organizers have worked hard to hold this multi-day event with a mix of informative workshops, presentations and social activities. Over the next few days, you will connect with peers, presenters, YLF partner organizations and others who can help you in the months and years ahead. YLF is not just a one-time learning event, it is a permanent supportive community. You are joining a select group of recognized leaders in disability advocacy in Massachusetts and across the country who have participated in YLF in the past.

Make the most of your YLF experience and most importantly, have fun!

PS: One last thing... please complete and provide comments on the evaluation forms you receive during YLF and later this summer. Your honest feedback is important to us and will help with planning for successful future events.



(617) 770-7676 (Voice)
www.mass.gov/mddc



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
1000 WASHINGTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02118
(617) 727-5608

MAURA T. HEALEY
GOVERNOR

KATE WALSH
SECRETARY

KIMBERLEY DRISCOLL
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

JANE F. RYDER
COMMISSIONER

Dear Peer Leaders and Delegates,

Welcome to the Youth Leadership Forum!

My name is Jane Ryder, and I am the Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services (DDS). I also know this agency as a family member, as my brother, Mark, receives DDS services. Over my 25-year career with DDS, I have had the privilege of meeting many dedicated advocates, staff, and legislators, but few can match the enthusiasm and passion of self-advocates like you.

You represent the next generation of self-advocate leaders. Your excitement, creativity, and powerful voice will lead us into a brighter and more accessible and inclusive future for all people.

Enjoy your time at the Youth Leadership Forum. I look forward to seeing the ways that you will bring positive change to disability policy and services in our future!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jane F. Ryder".

Commissioner Jane F. Ryder

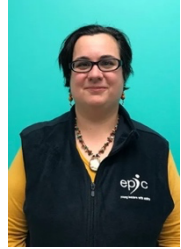


COLLABORATING PARTNERS

Partners for Youth with Disabilities, along with our supporting partners present the 2023 Youth Leadership Forum! We are grateful for our collaboration with Easterseals, Boston Center for Independent Living, Perkins School for the Blind and EPIC.



**OUR PARTNER STAFF CAPTAINS FOR
YLF 2023**

COHORT 1 Easter Seals	Desiree Forte dforte@eastersealsma.org	
	Desiree Forte dforte@eastersealsma.org Patrick Remy premy@eastersealsma.org	
COHORT 2 Boston Center for Independent Living	Mindy Duggan duggan@bostoncil.org	
	Sylvie Rosenkalt srosenkalt@bostoncil.org	
	Maximo Pimentel mpimentel@bostoncil.org	

COHORT 3 EPIC & STAVROS	Krystal Linn klinn@epicleaders.org	
	Dorothy Whitfield dwhitfield@epicleaders.org	
	Dominic Mondon-Poirier dmondon-poirier@stavros.org	
COHORT 4 PYD	Deep Chinappa	

YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM 2023 EMERSON COLLEGE

The Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) is a conference for youth and young adults with disabilities which provides an opportunity to build leadership skills and leave better prepared for future employment, higher education and independent living. Participants will attend and engage in both small and large group discussions and workshops on topics such as: self-advocacy, disability pride, assistive technology, independent living, employment skills, career exploration, higher education, legislative advocacy, the Disability Rights Movement, and community participation.

YLF 2023 will be an exciting year as PYD returns to **in-person** programming! The Forum will be held at Emerson College from Sunday, June 25 through Thursday, June 29, 2023. In order to increase accessibility for all youth in MA, the Forum will offer two options for participation:

- In-person full participation where participants will experience living and studying on a college campus, and two off-campus learning opportunities for youth to apply their learning, and experience some of the many cultural sites Boston has to offer.
- Partial virtual access, which will provide access to keynote speakers, panels, and select virtual workshop sessions.

Delegates

Delegates are youth with a disability who are between the ages of 16-22, and are either in their last two years of high school or are attending a transition program. Delegates must want to develop self-advocacy and leadership skills, begin to plan career goals, and build a network of supports and friends.

Peer Leaders

Peer Leaders are young adults with a disability between the ages of 18-25 who are currently out of high school and are working and/or taking college classes. Peer Leaders will assist in planning YLF activities, facilitate small group discussions, and group projects. Peer Leaders will be matched with a small cohort within the dormitory housing to provide mentoring and support to delegates.

YLF PARTICIPANT EXPECTATIONS

Partners for Youth with Disabilities (PYD) seeks to create a SAFE and INCLUSIVE environment where everyone is treated equitably and each member of our community is valued for their culture, race, ethnicities, abilities, religions, spiritualities, socio-economic statuses, gender identities, ages, and sexual orientations and identities.

All participants should be able to participate and express themselves without fear of discrimination, violence, or abuse of any kind. **No participant or staff should experience discrimination while participating in our programs.**

We encourage and train all participants to speak out, intervene, and/or report any language or actions of a discriminatory nature, and ensure that lead staff will react swiftly if this does occur. Further, we will not shy away from healthy conversations on these topics should they come up during the week of YLF.

We recognize that all individuals require different accommodations. We encourage all participants to advocate for their individual needs so you can access all learning, and engage fully in YLF.

Workshops are designed using the principles of Universal Design for Learning to ensure all participants can equally access, use and understand learning content. PYD staff and collaborating partners are working hard to create accessible content through consideration of a variety of learning modalities and disabilities. At YLF you will learn about self-advocacy, the ability to speak up on your behalf effectively – Whether at school, work, community, or family.

CONTRACT FOR PEER DELEGATES AND PEER LEADERS

As a YLF Peer Delegate or Peer Leader I agree to –

- Maintain respectful language and actions towards all YLF participants, including delegates, peer leaders, presenters, facilitators, staff captains, staff and Emerson College event staff.
- Address people with correct names and pronouns. If you make a mistake, apologize.
- Respect confidentiality and create a safe space for all participants and staff.
- Do not record (audio or video), or share personal information presented by other delegates, peer leaders or staff. What is said here stays here, what is learned here leaves here. Details should remain confidential.
- Arrive to designated spaces and meetings on time.
- Participate, stay engaged and take breaks as needed.
- Use “One Mic” Avoid interrupting and talking over others.
- Watch my talking time “Share the Air”
- Speak from your own experiences using “I” statements.
- Challenge ideas and arguments not people.
- Maintain a respectful attitude towards all YLF participants, including delegates, peer leaders, presenters, facilitators, staff captains, staff and Emerson College event staff.
- Not use cell phones, text messaging, or electronic devices during workshop sessions, unless for assistive technology.

As a YLF RESIDENT at Emerson College I understand that I must:

- Adhere to the policies of Emerson College
 - [Campus Access and Security](#)
 - [Residential Living](#)
- Understand there will be opportunities every day for off-campus activities (Boston Commons, Public Gardens, Fenway Park, State House, etc.) and time to relax outside with friends.
- Understand I must be with YLF Staff for all off-site activities to ensure the safety of all participants during YLF.
- Understand ALL YLF participants are to remain in the residence hall after evening activities (no later than 11:00 PM) until 8:00 AM the next morning unless otherwise directed.
- Be respectful of the noise level in the residence hall, and observe quiet hours between 11:00 pm and 8:00 am
- Understand and accept that NO alcohol or recreational drugs are allowed (regardless of age) during YLF and NO smoking is allowed at YLF.

**PYD staff will support reasonable off-campus item requests, as needed. **

I understand and accept the ground rules and guidelines. I understand that I may be sent home, at any time for failure to comply with these ground rules and guidelines.

Peer Delegate Signature:

Date:

Peer Leader Signature:

Date:

PEER LEADERS

“For we are leaders of inclusiveness and community, of love, equity, and justice.”

Judith Heumann

If you have been chosen to be a Peer Leader, you have demonstrated maturity and a desire to use your leadership voice to help others. Being a Peer Leader is a valuable way to gain work experience, develop your interpersonal skills as well as strengthen your communication and leadership capacities, all within a supported learning environment.

Peer Leaders will receive additional information about required online training being held on **Thursday, June 22nd from 4pm to 6pm.**

Peer Leaders will **arrive at Emerson College by 1:00 on Sunday, June 25, 2023** and participate in an ON-SITE orientation as well.

All Peer Leaders must participate in all of the Peer Leader training sessions, and must remain on site for the entire YLF program. Peer Leaders will receive a stipend for \$500 within 4 weeks after the completion of the YLF.

We recognize that as Peer Leaders you are older and more accustomed to your independence than our YLF delegates. However, it is critically important to understand that Peer Leaders serve as role models, and are being paid to support YLF throughout all programming. Therefore, any exploration of off-site activities in Boston must be scheduled before your arrival to YLF or after YLF concludes.

- Peer Leaders will assist in the planning and implementation of YLF workshops and activities, develop their facilitation skills by leading small groups and mentor delegates in a variety of ways.
- Peer Leaders will be assigned a small cohort of delegates within the residence halls similar to a “Resident Assistant or RA” in college. Peer Leaders will assist delegates to navigate dorm life, understand and follow the rules, help to resolve problems, and make sure everyone feels a sense of belonging.
- Peer Leaders are required to know at all times the location of the Delegates assigned to their Small Groups and assist in safe transitions between the dorms, the dining hall, the Bordy Theatre, and workshop sessions.
- Peer Leaders must remain with their assigned group during all Large Group sessions (Events held in the Bordy Theatre).

- If a Delegate is not acting appropriately or engaged in YLF activities, it is the Peer Leader's responsibility to work with the Delegate and resolve the issue. If issues arise with colleagues, delegates, or anyone during the YLF program that you are unable to resolve, please discuss the issues immediately with your assigned **Staff Captains**. If additional assistance is needed, please contact:

Youth Leadership Manager: Carol Murray

Partners for Youth with Disabilities
89 South Street, Suite 103
Boston MA 02111-2752
978-827-0742 ext.112

- Peer Leaders will be involved in introducing YLF speakers and activities in collaboration with their assigned Staff Captains, and will be assigned specific parts of the YLF schedule to introduce.

I understand and accept the ground rules and guidelines. I understand that I may be sent home, at any time for failure to comply with these ground rules and guidelines.




Peer Leader Signature:

Date:

Massachusetts Youth Leadership Forum 2023

"For we are the leaders of inclusiveness and community, of love, equity and justice."

Judith Heumann

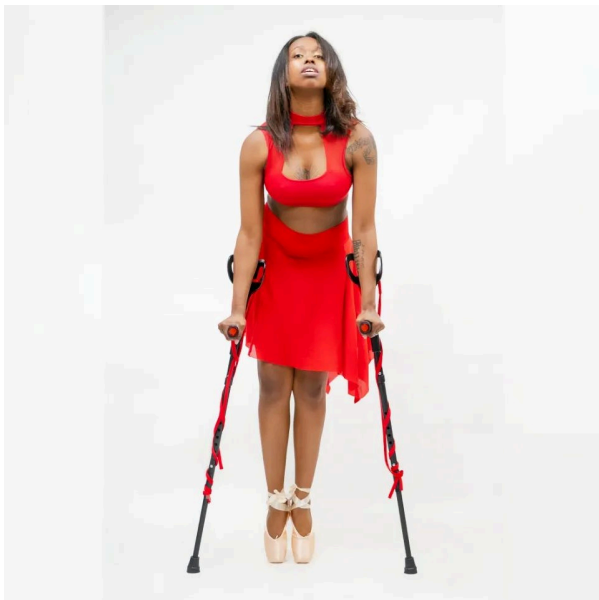
	SUN 6/25	MON 6/26	TUES 6/27	WED 6/28	THUR 6/29
9:00		Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
10:00		Keynote Speaker	Keynote Speaker	Keynote Speaker	Keynote Speaker
11:30		Workshops	Career Mentor Mixer	Workshops	Closing Ceremony Resource Fair
12:45	Peer Leader Arrival	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	Residence Hall Check Out
2:00	Peer Leader Orientation	Workshops	Workshops	STATE HOUSE  Tour	Lunch Pick Up
3:30	Delegate Arrival	The Mobility Center Workshop	Chill Time	Arts / Wellness Workshops	
4:45	Chill Time	Chill Time	DINNER	Chill Time	
6:00	DINNER	DINNER	FENWAY PARK Red Sox vs. Marlins	DINNER	
7:00	Chill Time	Chill Time		Chill Time	
8:00	ORIENTATION & SOCIAL EVENTS	SOCIAL EVENTS		SOCIAL EVENTS	

LEADERSHIP CAREER EDUCATION INDEPENDENT LIVING
 ADVOCACY DISABILITY RIGHTS COMMUNITY
 COLLABORATION RELATIONSHIPS NETWORKS
 CONFIDENCE

MEET OUR KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Tatyana McFadden is considered the fastest woman in the world. She has 20 Paralympic medals (including eight gold medals), 24 World Major Marathon wins including four consecutive Grand Slams (first place in Boston, Chicago, NYC and London marathons in the same year) and has broken five world records in track and field.

In January 2021 Women's Running Magazine selected Tatyana one of 24 "Power Women of the Year". In 2020, she worked both in front of and behind the camera as a producer and star of "Rising Phoenix", the Netflix original drama that tells the story of the Paralympic Movement through the lives of 9 Paralympic athletes. The film was released in August 2020 to critical acclaim, including the receipt of two Emmys.



Ellice Patterson is the Founder and Executive and Artistic Director of Abilities Dance, a Boston-based dance company that welcomes artists across the nation with and without disabilities. Abilities Dance Boston disrupts antiquated ableist beliefs and disseminates the value of intersectional disability rights through dance and art overall.

<https://www.abilitiesdanceboston.org/thevision>



Kelsey Tainsh

By the age of 15, Kelsey Tainsh had survived two bouts with cancer and a life-changing stroke. She has spent the past 15 years learning how to cope with the daily challenges of accepting her new “normal.” At 32, armed with her quirky sense of humor, engaging stories and relevant message, Kelsey helps youth gain the perspective needed to overcome any challenge. You can learn more about Kelsey at www.kelseytainsh.com/

Amir Harper is a 17-year-old musician, producer, and humanitarian who happens to be autistic. Despite the challenges he faces, his unique perspective and experiences have fostered a profound sense of empathy and a strong desire to improve the world around him. Amir constantly seeks opportunities to make a positive impact, whether it involves volunteering for local charities, advocating for important causes, or providing support to friends in need. He firmly believes in the value that each individual brings to the world and strives to promote inclusivity and acceptance in society, enabling everyone to thrive.



Through his music and advocacy work, Amir aims to inspire others to pursue their passions and make meaningful change. He acknowledges that his journey as an autistic person is distinctive, but he firmly believes that every person possesses the capacity to make a positive impact, regardless of their circumstances or challenges.

EMERSON COLLEGE
120 Boylston St, Boston, MA 02116

Directions by Car

From I-95, US 1, or Route 3

Follow signs to Boston via Interstate 93. Take Exit 26 (Storrow Drive/Cambridge) and proceed to the Copley/Back Bay exit (on the left). At the end of the exit ramp, turn left at the traffic signal onto Beacon Street, and then make a quick right onto Arlington Street. Follow Arlington Street alongside the Boston Public Garden to the fifth traffic light and turn left onto Stuart Street.

From I-90 (Massachusetts Turnpike)

Take Exit 22 (Prudential/Copley Square). Stay in the right lane for Copley Square (it comes up quickly!) and go straight onto Stuart Street when you come above ground.

Directions by Rail

From South Station

Boston's South Station is served by Amtrak and [MBTA Commuter Rails](#) originating from the west and south of Boston. Once inside the station, look for signs to the subway (the T). Take the Red Line inbound to Park Street Station and transfer to the Green Line heading toward Boylston Station.

From North Station

Boston's North Station is served by Amtrak and [MBTA Commuter Rails](#) originating from the north and west of Boston. Once inside the station, look for signs to the subway (the T). Take the Green Line inbound to Boylston Street Station.

From Back Bay Station

Back Bay Station services [MBTA Commuter Rails](#) originating southwest of Boston. Once inside the station, look for signs to the subway (the T). Take the Orange Line inbound to Chinatown Station.

PARKING

Although Emerson does not have parking facilities on campus, there are a number of nearby garages.

- Boston Common Garage: 0 Charles Street, Boston, MA 02116
- Ritz-Carlton Garage: 10 Avery Street, Boston, MA 02111
- 200 Stuart Street Garage: 200 Stuart Street, Boston, MA 02116
- Motor Mart Garage: 201 Stuart Street, Boston, MA 02116

DROP OFF / PICK UP PROCEDURES

Street parking is very limited. We have requested spots from the City of Boston for families to drop off youth at Piano Row, 148 Boylston Street. There are also two spots reserved for disability parking, but these are always open to the general public and not “reservable.” Therefore, we are requesting a staggered schedule for ARRIVAL and DEPARTURE from Emerson Campus.

During check in, parents/ guardians must submit documentation of who is allowed to pick-up their youth at the end of the week.

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

Peer Leaders should arrive at Emerson Campus at 1:00pm on Sunday, June 25, 2023.

Peer Delegates

- Last Names A - G 4:00 pm
- Last Names H-N 4:45 pm
- Last Names O-Z 5:15 pm

If you are planning to carpool to Emerson with other families, please ensure that the adult dropping off the participant knows where the medications are and all of the details of the administration schedule to expedite check-in.

PICK UP PROCEDURES

All participants must check out of their residence halls no later than 2:00PM

We have requested spots from the City of Boston for families to pick up youth at Piano Row, 148 Boylston Street.

- Last Names A - G 1:30 pm
- Last Names H-N 1:45 pm
- Last Names O-Z 2:00 pm
- Peer Leaders 2:30 pm

If you are carpooling, please ensure that the adult that will be doing the pick-up is the person listed on the pick-up form. If, after submitting the Pick-Up form, the person or people collecting a participant has changed, please email Carol Murray, cmurray@pyd.org and note that we will check photo ID before releasing anyone.

EMERSON COLLEGE
120 Boylston St, Boston, MA 02116

Emerson College, selected as the host of The Youth Leadership Forum, is a welcoming and inclusive community that is easily accessible by public transportation. Emerson's location, a vertical campus in the heart of Boston offers youth participants access to many important historical and cultural sites. The campus, particularly our residence hall, dining hall, Bordy Theatre, and our designated classroom spaces are modern, fully ADA accessible and reserved for only YLF participants. All YLF participants will be living on the same floor and supporting staff (Full time nursing staff, PYD staff, Partner Organization Staff, and PCAs). No other students will be sharing the floor in our residence hall (Piano Row).

The location is a busy urban area and therefore supervision and safety is a top priority. **All participants, regardless of age must be accompanied by YLF staff at all times.** Please refer to Peer Delegate and Peer Leader Signed Contract under Participant Expectations.

EMERSON COLLEGE
120 Boylston St, Boston, MA 02116
Click here for [**CAMPUS MAP and TOUR**](#)



PIANO ROW
Your Residence Hall

This 14-story building located at 150 Boylston Street houses 558 students in double occupancy rooms within four and six-person suites that share a bathroom, common living space, and a kitchenette (sink only). Accommodations for single room occupancy can be requested, but not guaranteed.

The specific set up of each location varies, but all allow for privacy when changing, showering or using the restroom. Participants will have the opportunity to share their rooming preferences in a survey available before YLF. However, these preferences, while considered, cannot be guaranteed.



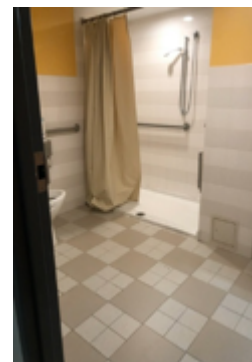
Bathrooms are ADA accessible.

Bedding and linens will be provided.

Residents share lounges with kitchenettes on alternate floors and a centralized laundry facility.

All participants for the Youth Leadership Forum will be housed on the same floor, and the floor will be exclusively YLF participants and staff. There will be two nurses on staff, also housed in Piano Row.

Accessible restrooms are available for wheelchair users.



Gender neutral restrooms are available in Piano Row Residence Hall, Walker Dining Hall, and Little Building. **At this time the Bordy Theatre does NOT provide gender neutral restrooms.**

WALKER BUILDING, DINING HALL
120 Boylston St.
Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner



Your meals will be served at the dining hall on the first floor of the Walker Building, which is right next to Piano Row. You can access the dining hall without leaving Piano Row by taking a specific elevator. The dining hall is accessible by elevators, and includes a ramp and seating for users of wheelchairs. There is also a designated space for those that prefer less sensory stimulation.

Food options include Gluten Free, Dairy Free, and Vegan options. We will make every effort to ensure that dietary restrictions and allergies are honored at every meal. Please complete the health history fully and accurately so that we have the most up-to-date information. The medical team will also discuss all dietary needs in detail during check in.

BORDY THEATRE
216 Tremont St, Boston, MA 02116



Each day after breakfast the group will transition together to the Bordy Theatre. The theater will be our space for all our large group gatherings: Orientation, Keynote Speakers, Career Mentor Mixer, Resource Fair, and Social Events.

You will have the opportunity to hear from renowned keynote speakers each morning, participate in a Career Mentor Mixer on

Tuesday with professionals from various careers, and have the opportunity to ask questions and get resources from a variety of agencies throughout the state of Massachusetts at Thursday's Resource Fair. In the evenings we will gather together for various social events each night.

LITTLE BUILDING
80 Boylston St, Boston, MA 02116

Every morning after a presentation at the Bordy Theatre, we will transition together to The Little Building (LB). This building is a 13-story residence hall that also has classrooms.

You will have your smaller workshops sessions in this building each day. All classroom workshops will be on the same floor, right next to each other. One classroom will be designated as a Wellness area so that if you need a quiet space/break, you will have easy access as it will be right next to your workshop classrooms.



OUTDOOR GREEN SPACES



There will be a series of workshop opportunities in the afternoon that focus on the Arts (movement, visual arts, music, drama etc.) Some of these workshops may be offered outside within the green spaces located directly across from Emerson College.



Youth will have the opportunity each day to be outside and explore the Boston Commons, and the Public Gardens, located across from Emerson College's campus. Youth must be accompanied by staff at all times (See Peer Leader and Peer Delegate Contract).

EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

The goal of YLF is to provide all participants with a sense of belonging and the skills and empowerment to become leaders in their community. YLF offers participants the information and skills in self-advocacy, disability pride, assistive technology, independent living, employment skills, career exploration, higher education, legislative advocacy, the Disability Rights Movement, and community participation.

Participants have access to a lot of information! It is essential that learners are afforded the opportunity to process that information in different ways, and be able to apply and practice the learning to real world situations.

Experiential Learning is the process of **learn by doing**. By engaging learners in hands-on experiences and reflection, they are better able to connect theories and knowledge learned in the classroom to real-world situations.

On Monday, there will be a workshop offered by The Mobility Center for ALL participants. This workshop will support youth in **learning, applying and practicing** travel skills. Participants will have the option to practice MBTA travel to an off-site trip (e.g., State House) during their week at YLF.



On Tuesday participants will travel by an ADA Charter Bus to Fenway Park to see the Boston Red Sox play the Florida Marlins. Game time: 7:10pm



On Wednesday, all participants will receive a tour, and have the opportunity to meet with **Senator Robyn Kennedy**, Chair of Joint Committee on Children, Families, and Persons with Disabilities), **Rep. Denise Garlick**, Chair of the MA Commission on the Status of Persons with Disabilities, and **Rep. Sean Garballey**, the lead on countless disabilities bills...he was the lead sponsor of the first in the nation, higher education bill that directly impacts our youth.

COMMUNICATIONS AND INTERNET

YLF is designed to be an immersive, transformative experience and phone calls and text messages multiple times a day are discouraged: this often increases homesickness and may create a disinterest in the activities at YLF.

We know sending your young person away may be daunting, and we promise that if there is something families need to know, we will reach out to you straight away. If there is an emergency or a participant is ill or injured, YLF staff will reach out to the person(s) listed on youth's contact forms.

Wifi will be available at YLF. Participants are able to have their cell phones with them, but we remind you that PYD is not responsible for any loss or damage.

Youth and families will be able to scan a QR-Code to access important campus locations, the daily schedule, resources, complete online surveys about sessions, and share highlights from the day. Once youth are within their session, we discourage the usage of cell phones throughout the scheduled programming until the close of each session, where they can use their phones to complete a quick "exit ticket" evaluation about the session.

SOCIAL MEDIA

We encourage everyone to follow PYD on Facebook and Instagram and to tag YLF 2023 in posts. We do ask that those choosing to post on social media think carefully about the values of PYD and our work to support the dignity of our participants. We ask that you seek to promote acceptance and inclusion when posting on social media.

YLF will post photos on our social media pages of all participants that we have permission to share while honoring those who have not granted permission to share their picture, and will do our best to include photos of every participant by the end of the week.

HEALTH and WELLNESS

MEDICAL FORMS must be submitted prior to arrival at Emerson College.
[Link also sent to your email.](#)

CHECK IN PROCEDURES FOR MEDICATIONS

All participants (Peer Leaders, Peer Delegates) are required to check in prescription and OTC medications to be taken during the program with the medical team. Medications must be in their original container or in a pharmacy-prepared dose packet. Medications that do not meet this requirement will be refused.

During check in, the medical team will go over all of the medications provided to ensure that they understand the administration schedule and details. Medication will remain under lock with the medical team (Bayada) and administered at the appropriate time.

PYD is able to reasonably accommodate different forms of administration including taking pills with applesauce or mixed in a beverage. Please inform PYD staff ahead of time if you will need a different form of medication administration.

VACCINATION POLICIES

A participant's Immunization records are to be submitted in the medical form. If participant is requesting exemption/waiver that should be indicated on the medical waiver.

[Emerson's Immunization Policy](#)

[Emerson's Covid Policy](#) (updated 5/15/2023)

YLF COVID POLICY

The health and wellness of our YLF participants and staff remain our highest priority. We take into account national and local data, as well as information from the CDC, the Boston Board of Health, and local board of health. Scientific data collected thus far demonstrates that communities with higher vaccination rates have fewer and milder cases of COVID-19. As a result, the Youth Leadership Forum, at Emerson College has the following vaccination policies for Summer 2023.

Vaccination Information

The Youth Leadership Forum *strongly recommends* all participants are fully up to date with COVID vaccinations. This includes the bivalent booster, given after September 2022. Research and data continue to show that COVID vaccines reduce the severity of symptoms, which is especially important for those individuals who can be considered a high-risk population with compromised immune systems.

****Note: YLF continues to require all other vaccinations to be up-to-date for participants, especially TDAP and Meningococcal.***

- YLF is a *mask-friendly* environment. Individuals are welcome to wear a mask during YLF, although they are not required.
- Youth will be strongly encouraged to wear a mask in a few select environments; Examples include while on public transportation. Participants must be comfortable wearing a mask during these times, regardless of vaccination status.

COVID TESTING

YLF 2023 will be requiring all participants to take a rapid test prior to checking in for the safety of all involved in YLF 2023. A rapid test will be provided for this purpose. Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 within 10 days of the start of YLF will be asked to withdraw their registration.

Showering and Hygiene

All participants are expected to shower regularly and maintain a basic level of personal hygiene. Personal Care Attendants will support youth but if a participant requires 1:1 care throughout the program, please indicate that on the medical forms.

Handwashing

All participants must wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds as often as possible, but particularly:

- Before and after preparing food (if applicable)
- Before and after eating
- Before touching their face
- Before and after using shared equipment
- After using the bathroom
- After blowing their nose, coughing or sneezing
- After handling their mask

Hand sanitizer is a suitable alternative to hand washing if the sanitizer contains at least 60% alcohol. PYD will ensure there is sufficient supplies of water, soap, paper towels and hand sanitizer during YLF but participants are welcome and encouraged to bring their own if it meets CDC standards.

ANIMALS

Except for service animals protected under the ADA, no participant or staff member is permitted to bring any animal or pet to any YLF program.

HEALTH DISMISSAL POLICY

If, during the week, a participant presents with symptoms of a contagious illness, the participant may be dismissed from YLF. Some of the most common contagious symptoms are listed below. PYD staff, in consultation with on-site medical staff (Bayada Nurses) and volunteers, will assess the symptoms and make the determination if a participant is to be dismissed. See family notification policies. Symptoms may include:

- Fever of 100.4 or higher
- Persistent or new cough
- New shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Muscle or body aches
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea

PARENT NOTIFICATION

Families will be notified by phone/email by **YLF Staff** if their young person presents with mild symptoms of illness that persists for over 12 hours.

Notifications will occur if after 12 hours from onset,

- if there is no improvement
- if the participant presents to the medical volunteer team with moderate symptoms of illness that require observation
- if the participant presents to the medical volunteer with severe symptoms of illness that the medical volunteer believes require further medical attention before seeking further medical attention,
- if the participant tests positive for COVID 19 or at any other time for symptoms of illness as deemed necessary by the medical volunteer.
- For young people with medical conditions, the Program Director will call parents earlier if concerning symptoms are presented: parents should be sure to communicate these symptoms to the Medical Volunteer Team.

In addition, parents will be notified by phone/email by the Program Director if their young person presents with any symptoms of injury that require more than basic first aid intervention. We will not contact parents for mild cuts, scrapes, bruises or any other minor injury that is easily treated by a medical volunteer that then allows the participant to quickly rejoin the activity or that does not require treatment nor interferes with participation in the activity.

If families of Peer Leaders or Peer Delegates are notified that their participant needs to be picked up, they are expected to collect their participant from YLF within 6 hours. If you are unable to pick your youth up, you are expected to designate an emergency contact in the area who can collect the participant within the time frame. Participants will not be permitted to return to YLF unless cleared by a doctor.

SAFETY

EMERSON CAMPUS SECURITY

Emerson's security policies are designed to ensure the personal safety of all members of the Emerson community, and to protect the personal property of all the College and of individual community members.

When you drop off participants there will be a registration area for youth and a family meeting area. YLF staff will assist participants as they get checked in and assigned their dorm. **NO VISITORS are allowed beyond the lobby and family meeting area (Emerson Residence Policy)**

Participants and YLF staff will be provided an ID and key card for their week at Emerson College.

ALL visitors must be registered with Emerson College prior to entering residence halls, dining halls, theatres, classroom spaces. Any visitors (ex. presenters at YLF) will be registered AND must show a photo identification prior to entrance into any campus buildings.

If family members would like to access the end of the **YLF Resource Fair on the final day, prior to picking up your participant, you must let Carol Murray, PYD Youth Leadership Manager know so we can submit your name to Campus Security for entrance into the Bordy Theatre. **(More information will be provided).***

Specific to Summer Programs at Emerson College

- No visitors are allowed past the lobby area of the dorm.
- Each building is locked has a security detail from 7am - 11pm
- Access to the building after those hours is by using your Emerson ID
- Guests should be informed that they should not let anyone follow them into the building even if they say that they are with Emerson.
- Conference staff will be at our registration desk daily from 9a-11p
- Emerson Police (parking support for accessibility drop off / pick up)

ABUSE ALLEGATIONS & PROCEDURES

PYD operates under the mandated reporting rules set forth by each state. These rules require all staff to act as mandated reporters in the case of abuse allegations. PYD is committed to following all legal procedures if there is an allegation, and is not required to inform the parent/guardian before making a report.

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

Emerson College and PYD have a zero-tolerance policy for the use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs during YLF. This includes the use of vaping devices and any participant caught with any of these substances will be dismissed from the program.

WEAPONS

No person should bring any weapon to Emerson College and YLF. Weapon is understood as any item used, designed to be used or intended for use (a) in causing death or injury to any person, or (b) for the purpose of threatening or intimidating any person. If any participant is found to have brought a weapon per the above definition to Emerson, they will be dismissed from the program.

Click [here](#) more information about Emerson College's Policies

DISMISSAL POLICY

PYD staff will work diligently to try to retain participants for the entirety of the program and will contact parents/guardians for strategies to prevent a dismissal if appropriate. However, if, after implementing strategies and working with the participant and their family where appropriate, there is no improvement then the participant will be asked to leave and, where appropriate, the family will be contacted to pick up the participant at the event venue. Examples of dismissal include:

- Adherence to the Peer Delegate and Peer Leader Contract is critically important. We want to ensure that all participants are safe at all times. All participants must remain on campus, or with staff for any off-site excursions. **If youth fail to follow this policy, they may be asked to leave The Youth Leadership Forum.**
- Contagious Illness
- Violence towards themselves or others

GETTING READY

Step 1: MAKE SURE YOU HAVE COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED ALL FORMS by Monday, JUNE 12th

- ☐ Medical Form
- ☐ Consent Forms
- ☐ Verify Link for CORI checks for youth over 18 years of age.

Step 2: ATTEND THE OPTIONAL VIRTUAL MEET AND GREETINGS

PYD will host a virtual welcome call for all **Peer Leaders** on:

MONDAY JUNE 12th FROM 7:00-7:45PM

Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6201742333?pwd=ZGVPSmxZZzliZlNUMlErYUlkRE8vQT09>

Meeting ID: 620 174 2333

Passcode: 12345

PYD will host a virtual welcome call for **all families** to have the opportunity to 'meet' up, ask questions and/or share concerns on:

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14 FROM 6:00 – 6:45PM

Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6201742333?pwd=ZGVPSmxZZzliZlNUMlErYUlkRE8vQT09>

Meeting ID: 620 174 2333

Passcode: 12345

PYD will host a virtual welcome call for **all Participants** on:

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21 FROM 7:00-7:45PM

Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6201742333?pwd=ZGVPSmxZZzliZlNUMlErYUlkRE8vQT09>

Meeting ID: 620 174 2333

Passcode: 12345

SUGGESTED PACKING LIST

MEDICATIONS

If you will be taking medications during your program, you are required to check them in with the YLF medical staff.

1. Medications must be sent in the original pharmacy bottle with the person's correct name and correct instructions on the bottle's label.
2. At the start of YLF, participants 18+, parent/guardians must report to the health desk at registration to check in all prescription medications, and report any over the counter medications with the YLF nursing staff.

Please refer to more detailed information regarding medications (prescriptions and over the counter medications) provided in your On-line Medical Form.

CLOTHING

Keep in mind that indoor spaces will have air conditioning, but you will also enjoy outdoor activities.

5 changes of t-shirts and 5 shorts/skirts/pants that can get dirty
2 casual shirts or tops
Your favorite outfit for the Dance
Sweatshirt
Light jacket or windbreaker
Rain Gear
Sleepwear
7 sets of underwear
5 pairs of socks
Casual shoes
1 pair of sneakers
1 pair of sandals

TOILETRIES

Towel, face cloths
Shower caddy
Soap, shampoo, deodorant and personal hygiene items
Toothbrush and toothpaste
Comb, brush, hair dryer
Extra contact lenses or glasses
Sunscreen lotion, SPF-15 or higher
Bug Repellent

MISCELLANEOUS

Masks, recommended to be worn for travel on MBTA

Sunglasses

Hat or sun visor

Reusable Water bottle, with the participant's name on it

Phone and equipment chargers

LAUNDRY

Laundry services are available.

POCKET MONEY

All necessities are covered by YLF during the week. However, if a participant wishes to purchase souvenirs at a specific off-campus trip, they should bring their own money to do this.

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

Emerson and PYD are not responsible for any personal equipment that is lost, stolen, or damaged.