YOUTH COURT

INITIATIVE

**Youth Court Initiative Fundraising Plan**

For additional information, please contact us at info@youthcourt.org and go to www.youthcourt.org

**Background**

In April 2023, the Board of Directors for Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) approved a proposed $525,000 budget for our Youth Court Initiative (YCI). The origin of this funding stems from the $100 million awarded to the District from the ESSER III (ARPA) federal legislation, which is required to be completely spent by September 30, 2024.

**About Youth Court Initiative**

The funds allocated will allow YCI to install a minimum of 10 youth courts at four PPS schools and fund an associated research study on the effectiveness of youth courts. Though this is the largest ever budget allocation for launching a youth court in the Commonwealth, this level of funding required our staff to reduce compensation expectations and cut our overall plan in some areas. No previous launch of the youth court has the breadth of our plan or the research component.

Launch Plan. YCI will soon obtain approval for our research plan, and that will kick off launching our program with five courts in 6th and 9th grades at Westinghouse Academy, the first of four schools. Subsequently, we’ll launch at Obama Academy (2-3 courts beginning mid-November), Brashear (2 courts early January) and CAPA (1-2 courts mid-January). YCI Coordinators will train students and manage our program at each school.

Research. We’ve chosen Westinghouse Academy as our research site. We’re led by two accomplished researchers at Widener University and West Chester University. YCI is set to launch youth court by surveying students and teachers about their attitudes toward policing and justice, and we’ll follow up by surveying the students at the end of the year. Our goal with research to develop a process evaluation report (PER), with which will be required to show to foundations, research organizations and potential donors to support multi-year funding to expand our youth courts throughout the District and continue with a more comprehensive research plan.

Short-Term. The short-term goals of our youth court are to give students some agency in the school disciplinary system and build their interpersonal skills. In addition, we should start seeing positive impact on school attendance and reduction in student infractions. Our training will also teach them about issues plaguing our justice system.

Long-term. Over several years, our belief is that youth court can reduce the school suspension-to-prison pipeline and improve academics and the overall climate for learning in the schools. PPS asked us to make our program sustainable for years to come, and for that, we need the PER, obtain additional funding, and establish best practices.

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**Fundraising Needs**

YCI is seeking $125,000 to support our plan. This will enable us to:

▪ Extend our work through the summer of 2024;

▪ Assure our research objectives (including the Process Evaluation Report) are achieved; ▪ Support modest fundraising expenses including launching a 501(c)(3);

▪ Fund items restricted by federal legislation; and

▪ Pay our team on time.

The last point is important. There is a lengthy reimbursement wait time involved with the ESSER funding.

**Founders Circle**

Our goal is to raise $125,000 by the end of November, with an **immediate need for $20,000**. The YCI wants to honor our earliest contributors by permanently recognizing them in the Founders’ Circle. Members of our Founders Circle will have their names listed on our website and in our marketing materials. Additional benefits and recognition (details being worked out) will be reserved for those who contribute at the Platinum, Gold, and Silver levels:

| **Fundraising Levels** |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Platinum**  | $10,000 and above |  |
| **Gold**  | $5,000 - $9,999 |  |
| **Silver**  | $2,000 - $4,999 |  |

We are currently seeking a Platinum-level sponsor for naming rights for the PBA Youth Court Award, which will become an annual award starting on October 20, 2023. Accompanying this will be recognition in PBA publications and in the press.

**Donations**

Donations greater than $1000 can be made by a check written out to Youth Court Initiative and sent to our fiscal sponsor (address below). Smaller and recurring donations can also be sent online (follow the QR code or the website to the right 🢧) : **The Pittsburgh Contingency, Inc.**

**1716 Nevada Street**

**Pittsburgh, PA 15218-2328**

If mailing, please send your contact information along with your donation. Donation Receipts shall be mailed or emailed, as you specify. The Pittsburgh Contingency, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) with an EIN: 45-5398705.

Thank you for supporting Youth Court Initiative

**Donate now by**

**following this code: or at this website:**

**youthcourt.org/donate**

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