

Young Man with a Plan (YMWAP)



FOUNDED: 2015

CURRENT ORGANIZATION BUDGET: \$441,000

CONTACT: Dr. Jaykyri Simpson,
Executive Director

PHONE: 817.526.4974

EMAIL: jaykyriymwap@gmail.com

WEB: www.youngmanwithaplan.org

Investment Opportunity

Young Man with a Plan seeks an investment of \$1 million over the next two years to increase its impact for Black and Latino males in the City of Boston. This investment will help YMWAP to increase student enrollment, build staff and mentor capacity, introduce 8th grade programming, and establish more college and career partnerships and pipelines for students and alumni. The investment will enable YMWAP to help more youth “in the middle” plan for and access sustainable futures.

In 2014, eight Boston school leaders met. Deeply troubled by achievement gaps and increasing neighborhood violence, they named their most urgent concern: high school males of color “in the middle.” That meeting planted the seed for Young Man with a Plan (YMWAP), a four-year mentoring program for young Black and Latino men, launched in 2015.

YMWAP recruits 9th grade students and delivers over two hours of weekly holistic mentoring through the 12th grade. YMWAP strives to close racial achievement, opportunity, and wealth gaps with research-informed strategies for: connecting youth to caring adults; strengthening youth academic, social-emotional, and financial literacy skills; and engaging students in individualized success planning.

YMWAP is led by dedicated, successful Black males who have transcended significant obstacles to become first-generation college graduates. YMWAP’s village of leaders, school-based mentors, near-peer mentors, and guest educators deliver sustained wraparound support. Through four years of brotherhood, mentoring, and success planning, YMWAP helps young men build the fortitude and imagination to access sustainable and positive futures.

Two-Year Goals

- Increase student and alumni enrollment: add 155 8th grade and high school students, and program graduates
- Achieve 501(c)(3) status: establish YMWAP as an independent nonprofit and grow and develop the Board of Directors
- Build staffing capacity: increase by 3 FTE to support growing enrollment and operations
- Increase mentoring capacity: increase school-based and community mentors

Ways to Invest

FINANCIAL

- \$75,000 to fund one new program staff member
- \$50,000 to establish the Level the Field Fund, supporting emergency needs for high school and college students
- \$20,000 to fund four additional mentor stipends
- \$10,000 to fund student college and career exploration, field trips, internships

IN-KIND

- Laptops for participants and alumni
- Opportunities to expand student exposure through museum passes, gym memberships, movie tickets, for example
- Equipment for music, video, and podcast production
- College care packages for alumni in college

YMWAP'S MODEL

Leadership & Governance

Executive Director Dr. Jaykyri Simpson has deep knowledge and experience in mentoring young men of color. Prior to leading YMWAP, Jaykyri led Project Ochendo at New Mission High School in Boston, where he taught and mentored male students of color, helping them improve academics and access and persist at college. Jaykyri has also served in college coaching, admissions counseling, and retention coordination roles. His doctoral research explored persistence factors of successful Black male college graduates.



“

YMWAP truly altered the trajectory of our students. Over four years they blossomed into confident, focused young men.

SHANNAH VARON,

Former Executive Director, Boston Collegiate Charter School”



YMWAP leaders wake up every day galvanized by studies illuminating Boston's wide racial wealth and life expectancy gaps. YMWAP serves young men "in the middle" who tend to fly under the radar and suffer from low expectations. They benefit greatly from sustained adult guidance. 68% of participating young men are immigrants or children of immigrants. Over 70% are from Dorchester, Roxbury, or Mattapan.

Holistic Mentoring: Young men receive a total of 2+ hours of weekly mentoring inside and outside of school. In the safe haven of YMWAP's weekly group meetings, young men check in with each other and share dinner. Mentors advise them on academics, neighborhood violence, mental health, finances, college/career options, and healthy break-ups.

Highly Skilled Mentors: Each participating school designates a teacher, counselor, or coach who provides mentoring for their boys in the program. Mentors form a supportive cohort, model success, and receive annual professional development on coaching skills, mental health, and career planning.

Success Planning: The success plan is a centerpiece of YMWAP. Beginning in 9th grade, young men identify academic and extracurricular skills and interests, along with possible college and career plans. Over the next three years, they meet with YMWAP mentors to refine goals, make a plan, and go on to pursue diverse paths which have so far included engineering, finance, design, IT, aviation mechanics, and the military.

Partners: YMWAP continuously builds partnerships and social capital to benefit young men: academic enrichment programs at UMass; partnerships with the Boston Police Department and anti-violence programs; employment programs with Boston Private Industry Council; and college and career support from Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology, Bottom Line and Year Up. YMWAP is a 2022 Life Science Cares partner.

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YMWAP has changed the way I view myself and the goals I want to set forth for my life.

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**YMWAP PARTICIPANT,
AGE 18**



Great Humans: YMWAP wants young men to become great human beings, stand-up men of their word who create beauty, change, and healthy productive lives, families, and communities. YMWAP strives to graduate young men with improved academic and social-emotional skills who possess greater self-efficacy and purpose. YMWAP grads are more likely to pursue healthy relationships, be critical thinkers, take care of their mental and physical well-being, and be financially literate and stable.

YMWAP centers student voices and addresses topics critical to young men, including systemic racism, the school-to-prison pipeline, safe sex, respecting women, and gang violence. YMWAP helps build knowledge and connect dots; for example, a discussion of Boston's housing crisis leads to learning about redlining, gentrification, the current real estate market, credit scores, compound interest, cost of living, careers, and salaries.

YMWAP brings together Black and Latino males from every Boston neighborhood and many cultures. Belonging and respect are core YMWAP values. The organization always confronts racism, colorism, homophobia, and misogyny; typically, it is students who immediately check it. “YMWAP is an opportunity to grow with my fellow brothers. It’s a place where we all feel connected and safe because we have each other’s backs” says a current participant.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

YMWAP was seed funded by the Charles Hayden Foundation, which continues to generously support the program. Over the last six years, YMWAP has expanded its funding partners to include a growing number of respected foundations as well as government funders, including City of Boston, the BPD Shannon Grant Program, and the Suffolk County DA’s Office.

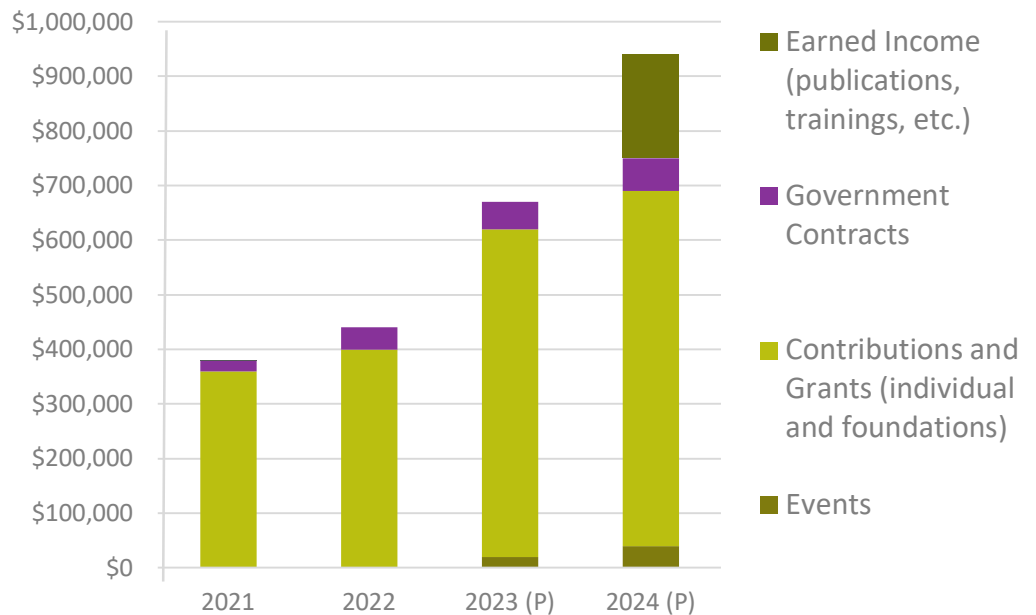
Key Investors

- BOSTON FOUNDATION
- CHARLES HAYDEN FOUNDATION
- CUMMINGS FOUNDATION
- EDVESTORS
- LIFE SCIENCE CARES

Partners

- BENJAMIN FRANKLIN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
- BOSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT
- BOSTON PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL
- BOTTOM LINE
- YEAR UP

Revenue by Source



Success Stories

A 2018 graduate started 9th grade with below-average grades and graduated high school with honors, an achievement he attributes to YMWAP's sustained mentoring and coaching. He is now a senior at UMass Dartmouth studying civil engineering. "My mentors were people I could trust who helped me in high school and even in college. I 100% believe that anyone who wants to change their life and move forward should join this group!"

A 2020 graduate was not a top student academically, but a great kid and a highly motivated worker. Following high school graduation, he attended Year Up, gaining college credit, business skills, and an internship. He is now employed in IT at Harvard.



PROGRAM PERFORMANCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH

Below is a summary of the key measures YMWAP tracks to demonstrate progress, create internal accountability, capture lessons learned, and adjust strategy as necessary.

	FY 2022	FY 2023 (P)	FY 2024 (P)
PROGRAM PERFORMANCE			
Students served in grades 8-12	90	120	190
Alumni supported	115	125	160
Mentors and guest educators engaged	12	16	20
ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH/CAPACITY-BUILDING			
Number of staff (FTEs)	3	4.5	6
Board members	5	7	8
Number of funding partners	9	14	18
Total revenue	\$441,000	\$670,00	\$940,000

SOCIAL IMPACT

Young Black and Latino men in Boston deserve the opportunity to grow, gain confidence, aspire to and access sustainable futures. Many lack the knowledge, resources, and support necessary to guide them on their path towards college and careers. Below are indicators that YMWAP will track to ensure that they have the necessary tools to become great human beings who create healthy and positive lives, families, and communities.

Below is the summary of the social impact that YMWAP aspires to have in the next two years.

INDICATOR	2022	2024
Students reporting improved social-emotional skills	90%	98%
Students completing individualized Success Plan	90%	100%
Students making academic gains	70%	80%
Number of college and career access partners	3	6