

Pacific Yearly Meeting Youth Programs Coordinating Committee Report to Annual Session 2021

SUMMARY

Please share these links with your meeting. We encourage everyone to check the PacYM website for:

- Our regularly updated [intergenerational calendar](#)
- Information and application forms for [grant funding from our Youth Programs Fund](#)
 - YPCC accepts year-round grant applications for youth and intergenerational projects and events, or event attendance assistance.

Spirit's Movement Amongst Us

The Youth Programs Coordinating Committee (YPCC) has focused on returning to center, listening closely to one another and the leadings of Spirit. How are we called to support youth in these challenging times of dramatic change? We have been grounded by the presence of Gail Eastwood and Chamba Cooke as elders this year as we seek unity and way forward. We are grateful for their service, as well as that of the Friends who joined the Youth Programs Coordinator (YPC) Review ad hoc committee. We are also grateful for Rebekah Percy's faithful service as Interim Youth Programs Coordinator from March 2020 until March 2021, when the new YPC, Keenan Lorenzato, was hired.

Results of YPC Review Ad Hoc Committees

Recognizing our last hiring and training process was flawed, the YPCC formed the YPC Review ad hoc subcommittee with membership beyond the YPCC to review our Human Resource process, lessons learned, and focus on what the youth of the yearly meeting need now. The YPC Review team consisted of two parts: Human Resources and Youth. The Human Resources team (Jim Summers, Nancy Mellor, Alvaro Alvarado) focused on hiring, training and supervision practices. They interviewed the last three YPCs, Alyssa Nelson, Javaughn Fernanders and Rebekah Percy, as well as Barbara Babin as YPC Supervisor and Melissa Lovett-Adair as YPCC Clerk. They provided the committee with a detailed review of the experiences of these Friends and recommendations for improvements prior to hiring a new YPC. The Youth team (Rachel Kempf, Dia Farruhk, Nate Secrest, and Elinor Steffy) gathered input from youth and parents about the role of the YPC and provided recommendations. Both of these reports were used to revise the [YPC job description](#) and develop a detailed process for hiring, onboarding and training our next YPC. We also revised and clarified the [YPCC and Supervisor job description](#).

Our New Youth Coordinator!

After a nationwide search and an in-depth interview process, the field was narrowed down to two finalists who were asked to demonstrate skill in written communication and lead an intergenerational activity via zoom for an audience of stakeholders including youth participants. The interview team and YPC Committee reached unity in offering the position to Keenan Lorenzato. Here's a little more information about Keenan at this [link](#) on the PacYM web page.

Update on Youth Programs Fund / Finances

Due to COVID-19, the popular El Salvador Trip and the Quaker Oaks Farm Spring Service Learning Camp were cancelled in both 2020 and 2021, leaving significant funds available for COVID-safe projects and travel, once in-person meetings are possible again. A unique Mutual Aid project was funded this year, with a goal of strengthening local support systems and found great success: the project created a grant providing emergency relief funds for COVID-related struggles, supported out of work young adults in their various service ministries and established two communal gardens in the Los Angeles region. We also approved a grant for a summer 2020 backpacking trip with five Young Adult Friends (YAF) in Desolation Wilderness Park, and a camping trip in the Angeles

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National Forest, where participants embraced their spirituality through daily worship and connecting with nature. A summer 2021 YAF backpacking/camping grant has been approved and all YAFs are invited to reach out to Keenan at youthprogramscoordinator@pacificyearlymeeting.org to join in one of the trips. To see all projects funded since the inception see [YPFundSummary](#).

As part of our ongoing efforts to increase the accessibility of the fund, the committee simplified the website and created an “Idea Box” form to connect potential applicants with Quaker mentors to assist them in developing a proposal. In addition, we have streamlined the short application process for travel expenses, are actively developing a funding request checklist, and are discussing improvements to the full application process for larger projects.

Looking Ahead: Longer-Term Goals

We are beginning to collaborate with Young Adult Friends (YAFs), PacYM and NPYM’s Ministry Committees on a Safe Space policy for YAF and other adult gatherings, to provide guidance for the prevention and response to inappropriate, unwanted sexual behavior or harassment. We hope to have a promotional video for our Youth Programs Fund and how to apply for grant funding ready soon.

Youth Programs Coordinator Report

August 2020-February 2021: Rebekah Percy

COVID-19 has brought a couple of significant shifts in the responsibilities of the position, namely that online programming has dramatically increased my amount of video meetings and social media participation and presence.

In an effort to ease communications, consolidate contact lists and ensure that my reach is as inclusive and broad as possible, I created two listservs: one for parents of younger children and the other for parents of teens in our yearly meeting. Based off of a list that Alyssa created, I’ve maintained regular contact with youth workers from other Yearly Meetings. These connections and conversations have been extremely supportive and helpful in brainstorming events and activities, and figuring out how to best show up for our youth throughout this challenging time. To that end, I’ve organized routine parent support calls and virtual teen hangout spaces in addition to the regularly scheduled events of the year.

I am excited about the possibility of PacYM hiring an administrative assistant. The work of keeping documents and committees organized, and everyone in our community up-to-date is definitely a full-time job that deserves compensation. As we move into the technological era, it’s clear that this communications-based work is necessary in not only maintaining communication among our existing cohort, but also in mindfully expanding and growing our community to include both new and younger people. *Submitted by Rebekah Percy, Interim YPC*

March 2021-June 2021: Keenan Lorenzato

In my short time as YPC I have embarked on a variety of tasks. I came into this role as a member of the Communications Committee, as such the need for the directory to be up and running is more apparent than ever before. As Rebekah stated, an administrative assistant will be gratefully welcomed, as will the database manager. There was a lot to learn stepping into this role. The basics of communication and committee structure is not complicated, but is diverse and thus takes a bit of time to acclimate to. I have enjoyed it but my real excitement is in the return to non pandemic

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times. It's easy to remember the joy of gatherings and fellowship, and to reminisce and get giddy over that happening once again.

Getting up to speed with all the committees took me a little longer than expected as so many Quakers are doing so much! The YM children's program is providing small in-person gatherings after the annual session. The quarterly children's and teen committees have been actively working on programming both virtual and in person, and collaborating together. The teen group has a large number of youth graduating this year and moving up to the YAF ranks. The YAF group is excited to welcome in this next generational wave and planned multiple YAF-packing (backpacking) trips supported by the Youth Programs Fund. All these, and many more things, are in the works as is the transition from zoom back to in person gatherings.

The questions of How do we gather safely? How do we create space for those of us who for whatever reason will remain unvaccinated? How do we enhance our programs and offerings? And What do we do first? All are continually being discerned in this work. While the vaccines have been around they are just now available to youth and so it is just now that restrictions on youth events are lifted. I have crafted a Friendly Responsible Adult (FRAP) training and hope to capture new recruits for youth work and bolster our events beyond the typical quarterly meetings of youth throughout the fall and winter.

While the joy of summer is present now, planning successful events especially with mind to safety takes time. I ask for your support in taking the time to plan these events well, rather than launching headfirst into a return to normalcy. One upcoming challenge is an age bubble in JYM will leave that group with few aged 15-18 who have typically been the leaders of that group. If you know someone that age keep a look out for our events and please encourage them to attend. In the coming months I hope to see the database near completion, streamline youth event coms and registrations, host events and gatherings, and get to know all of you a little better. Looking forward to serving the community in this way,

Keenan

LIST OF YPCC MEMBERS Alby Penney, Alvaro Alvarado, Barbara Babin, Gail Eastwood (Ministry Liaison, ex officio) Keenan Lorenzato (YPC as of March 2021, ex officio) Kiernan Colby, Nancy Mellor, Nathan Secrest, Rebekah Percy, (Interim YPC through March 2021, ex officio) Melissa Lovett-Adair (Clerk)

Submitted by Melissa Lovett-Adair, Clerk