



September 2025
Newsletter

Mentoring
Community Service
After School Programs

NEW YORK, NEW YORK!

What a great time we had in New York at the beginning of August! We went to the 9/11 Museum, Statue of Liberty, China Town, Time Square, had pizza in Brookland, and we even had a chance to visit the rats in the subway. On the way home, we spent a couple of hours at the Baltimore Harbor. Thank you to everyone who helped to make this possible!



[Click here for more pictures](#)

PROGRAMS

Let's start with our 2025-26 Programs. After the youth have dinner and take care of their chores, below are the after-school programs we have for them this school season.

NOT LEFT BEHIND BY CHOICES. This is a continuing program from 2024-25. At Saving Our Youth VA, our focus is providing resources to help underserved youth achieve their goals and face the future with confidence and hope. This project helps our youth understand the importance of exploring entrepreneurship as an option. They learn how systemic barriers of employment have affected them and how entrepreneurship might be an option.

WRITING IS FUNDAMENTAL. This is also a continuing program. Everyone knows that reading is fundamental, but writing is indeed fundamental also. The ability to write well is critical for research papers, essays, and presentations. Strong writing skills not only improve your academic performance but also enhance your ability to articulate complex ideas. Our students started writing a short novel last year and will finish it this year. This process should help the students increase their knowledge of proper grammar, punctuation, spelling, vocabulary, clarity, brevity, engagement, and proofreading.

CITY BUILDERS – At Saving Our Youth, we provide a place to express creativity, help youth learn a multitude of skills, and, most of all, connect with community members. The City Builders Projects include Sewing; Lyrics & Beat, a program designed and curated by Zenobia Bey, Executive Director of Community 50/50, with creative expression; Improv - psychological studies have shown that improvisation generally boosts creativity and confidence. Taught by our VCU Student Improvisors, each improv exercise will have a “point of concentration” that clarifies the objective.

RESURGENCE

On Wednesdays we take the youth to St. Giles Presbyterial Church where they participate in the youth programs, after we have dinner. There they are a part of Discipleship Class for youth grades 6-12. It teaches a diverse group of youth how to apply scriptural truth to life with studies to help prepare them for the issues they face each day. But it's not all work, it's a lot of fun as well.

CTW – College, Trade, Work Our future is in the hands of our youth, as they are the ones we must depend on to take us into our golden years with hope for the future. Whether they aspire to go to college, trade schools or straight to work when they graduate, we help them with guidance and education to maneuver through the process.

MENTORSHIP. Did you know that students who have mentors are 55% more likely to go to college? 46% less likely than their peers to start using illegal drugs? 52% less likely than their peers to skip school? Mentoring reduces “depression symptoms” and increases “social acceptance, academic attitudes and grades. Our mentorship program is a structured system of creating trusting relationships that brings our youth together with individuals who offer guidance, support and encouragement aimed at developing their competence and character.



We believe in giving back and we stress that importance to the youth. Giving back is a powerful and essential act that not only helps others but also strengthens the social fabric of society.

We continue to be a part of a Faith Leaders, RPD, and Community Leaders Collaboration to help the communities better. We created a space where we could help people with situations now, rather than respond to things after bad things happen. We transitioned to working with community members doing check-ins directly to their family and friends, rather than having others do it, and we call it “Shield For My Brother”. Being a Shield For Your Brother, means helping to shield them from bad things. Nobody can stop all bad things from happening, but you can certainly help to shield people from things getting worse when bad things happen. Being proactive saves lives.



<https://www.teamforgod.com/join-walk>

COMMUNITY REFRIGERATOR

The fridge is a free resource for the community, it sits in our parking lot. Those who can afford to help are encouraged to bring items to stock the fridge for neighbors in need. Some neighbors bring fruit and vegetables from their gardens. But there’s so much need in the community that it’s hard to keep it stocked. So, if you are able to help, we encourage you to do so and thank you in advance.





SAVING OUR YOUTH GALA

Save the date - December 6th Saving Our Youth Gala.
Guzman Community Center at The Faison Center,
5200 Fitzhugh Ave, Richmond, VA 23230.

TEAM - Keep an eye out for Relationship Building Dates. We will continue the community walks and also set up tables at events, churches, and community organizations to sign up people to become “Shield For My Brother” participants. We will also be looking to set up prayer tables when we can.

PERSONAL MESSAGES FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Why is there an attack on museums?

They both ensure that the brutal reality of slavery is not forgotten. They ensure that history is remembered. That’s what museums are supposed to do. People should continue to be able to see the shackles, beatings, auction blocks, slave cabins, and yes, we should be able to feel the emotional weight of slavery. Yes, they should continue to display political and cultural systems that supported slavery, such as Jim Crow.

But then they should also show the gains that have been made, and they do! Without minimizing the horrors of slavery, they both honor the resilience and progress of African Americans by celebrating our achievements. They have exhibits highlight achievements in politics, science, business, civil rights, culture, music, sports, literature, and other leadership in today’s world. Exhibits show how formerly enslaved people built schools, churches, and businesses, and how they shaped American democracy despite segregation and racism. With the Black History Museum, you might be crying on the bottom floors but by the time you get up to the top floor you are, smiling, laughing and celebrating.

If all you want to do is go in those museums and see negativity, then that’s what you are going to see, but if you go in there and open your eyes and mind to see the beauty of it all, you will see that both museums show African American gains while not whitewashing the past. I hope that they will be able to continue their journey of telling our true history.



We need your support now more than ever, and everything helps!
Here are some ways you can support us.



FINANCIAL DONATION: Your contribution, no matter the size, will make a meaningful impact and help us continue our vital work. Every dollar brings us closer to our goal and we deeply appreciate your generosity. Thank you for considering a donation today. Your donations are tax deductible. Please click below to donate. <https://www.savingouryouthva.org/donate>



FOOD: Our biggest program expense is food. On Tuesday and Thursdays, the youth come to the center directly from school so we have to supply dinner for them. One simple yet impactful way you can help is by cooking a meal or ordering a meal from a restaurant to feed the youth and mentors on one of those days.



Perhaps you're someone who likes to cook, or cook out. Please consider having a dinner or cook out in our honor, inviting your family and friends to come and hear about this organization you are supporting. The Executive Director and a Board Member will be there to share our story.

Thank you!