

# YOUTH IMPROVEMENT SERVICES



## ANNUAL REPORT 2020

---

Email: [info@youthimprovement.org](mailto:info@youthimprovement.org)

Website: [www.youthimprovement.org](http://www.youthimprovement.org)

**MS Address:**

460 Briarwood Drive  
Suite 400  
Jackson, MS 39206

**FL Address:**

11901 4th St N  
Unit 9104  
St. Petersburg, FL 33716



# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Board Chair

**Tamara Vickers**

Administrative Professional

### Treasurer

**TeAndra Walton**

Business Owner

### Secretary

**Othneal Wilson**

Education Management Professional

### Board Member

**Andrew Breland**

Licensed Professional Counselor



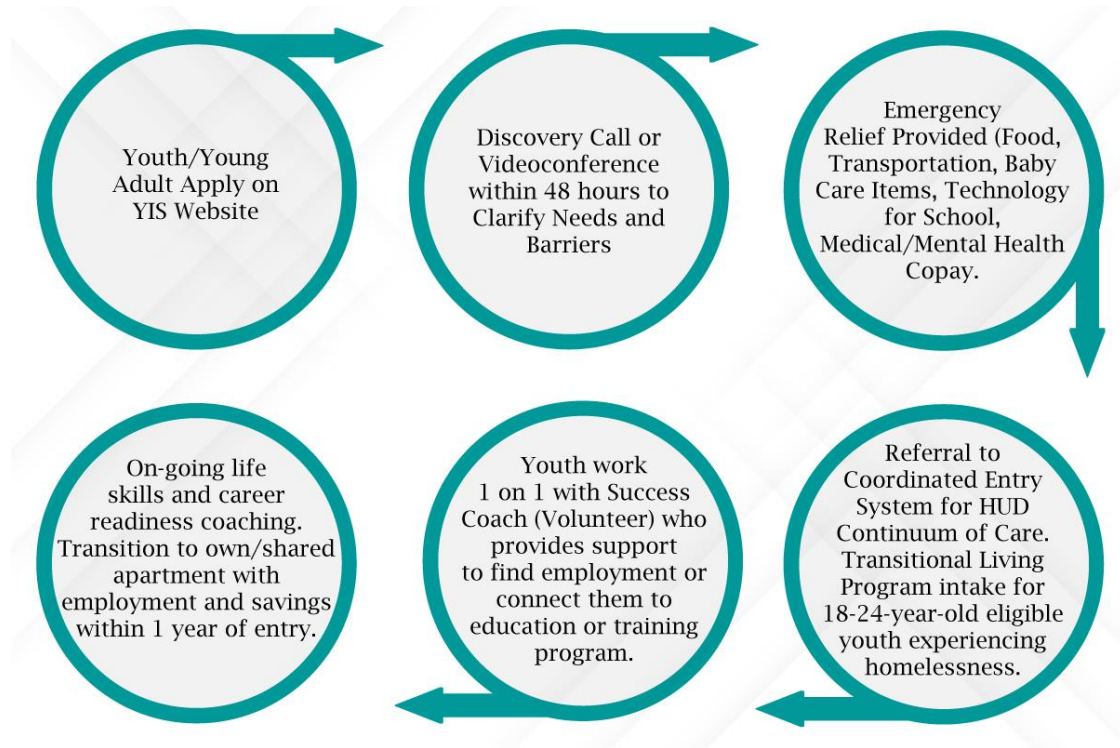
**Deroll Barrett, Executive Director**

Thank you for being a part of our journey in 2020! The work of helping youth and young adults to exit homelessness is only possible with the enthusiastic support of our donors, partners, volunteers, and dedicated Board of Directors. We use positive youth engagement strategies to teach program participants independent living skills and employability skills that will result in self-sufficiency. We are celebrating 2 years of changing lives! It is exciting to see youth secure their own apartment, gain employment, practice good money management and gain additional education or training. We look forward to your continued partnership and support.

*We envision communities where youth homelessness is brief, rare, and nonrecurring.*

**Our mission is to empower youth to develop the skills, resources and resilience needed to live independently.**

## COORDINATED SERVICE MODEL



## COMMUNITY IMPACT

Donors and sponsors made it possible for us to change lives positively by responding to the needs of youth and young adults during the COVID-19 pandemic. We assist all youth; however, we focus on 18- to 24-year-old LGBTQ and BIPOC youth, since they disproportionately experience homelessness, poverty and marginalization.



**281**

**Nights of Safe and Stable  
Housing Provided**



**3,155**

**Meals Provided**



**119**

**Modules of Independent Living  
and Financial Literacy Activities  
Completed by Youth**

## STORIES FROM THE FIELD

Helping young people to attain independence and self-sufficiency requires constant reinforcement of personal agency and problem-solving skills. Youth participants engage in leadership training, financial literacy activities and pursue employment opportunities. We take pride in how youth have turned their lives around, with the help of everyone involved in supporting this important community effort.

“Youth Improvement Services has been phenomenal in helping me achieve stability and self-sufficiency as a young Jacksonian. Working with this program, I have been provided with housing. I was directed to a workforce training program that landed me a job and I am currently employed.”  
Mel (Jackson, MS)

“I want to thank Youth Improvement Services for helping me to find safe and secure housing during the coronavirus pandemic. They helped me to feel better about the steps I need to take to improve my future. I am really grateful for what they have done for me.” Petra (Tampa Bay, FL)

“I am 19 years old and I lost everything when I came out as transgender. I have been living on the streets and sleeping in abandoned houses for about 4 months after the pandemic started. A Counselor told me about Youth Improvement Services. They helped me with a room, and I am now in a 2-year housing program.” Mjay (Jackson, MS)

“Thank you so much for everything you’re doing to help me. It’s nice to know someone cares.”  
Marcellus (Tampa Bay, FL)



**YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS OR HOUSING INSTABILITY CAN LEARN NEW SKILLS AND EARN A \$5 CREDIT TOWARDS A GIFT CARD FOR EACH ACTIVITY COMPLETED**

Visit the Programs section on our website at [www.youthimprovement.org](http://www.youthimprovement.org)



# THANK YOU TO DONORS, SPONSORS, PARTNERS

We believe in the value of local impact and our donors can be assured that gifts and charitable donations are used only as designated. Our work began in Jackson, MS in 2018 and we are proud of our Mississippi roots. Our impact was extended to the Tampa Bay area in Florida in 2020 and the life changing work continues earnestly in both communities. Our Board of Directors and staff ensure their fiduciary duties are observed and this has helped us to maintain sound financial health. We are grateful for all donations. We also appreciate being grantee partners of the organizations that made life-changing and heroic contributions to empower youth experiencing homelessness and other difficult life circumstances.

You too can make a difference with a charitable donation through our website at [www.youthimprovement.org](http://www.youthimprovement.org).



## NEXT STEPS AND HOW YOU CAN HELP

We would like to start a Host Home Program. Caring and affirming adults, with suitable accommodation in their home or other property can sign up to help with housing and food for up to 6 months, while youth participants work to secure permanent housing and stable employment.

Please visit our website to learn more about our programs or to make a charitable donation to assist youth to exit homelessness and achieve self-sufficiency.