

# Tompkins County Youth Services Department

Quarter 1 Newsletter, April 2019



## A Message from Kate Shanks-Booth, New Director of Youth Services

Greetings and Happy Spring!

So far, the month of March has been pretty good to me, more hours of daylight, and an awesome new job as the Director of Youth Services for Tompkins County. However, the jury is still out on my March Madness bracket. I'll follow up in a later post to tell you how that turns out for me.

Based on that, it probably is not a far stretch for you to believe that I love the sport of basketball. As a former athlete, I honestly believe that most all the important life lessons I have learned were on the court. As I have gotten older, it has also been a way for me to connect two other passions of mine; helping youth and leadership development.

My personal hero, Pat Summitt, sadly passed away in 2016 after being diagnosed with early onset Alzheimer's. For those of you who do not know her, Pat Summitt was the Head Coach of the Tennessee Lady Volunteers Basketball team for 38 years. During her tenure, she accumulated a team record of 1,098-208; won eight national championships; made an unprecedented 31 appearances in the NCAA tournament; and had a 100% graduation rate among players who completed their eligibility at Tennessee. While her professional accolades are impressive, it was her leadership style that initially ignited my interest in her. In her book, *Sum It Up*, she said, "Leadership is really a form of temporary authority that others grant you, and they only follow you if they find you consistently credible. It's all about perception—and if teammates find you the least bit inconsistent, moody, unpredictable, indecisive, or emotionally unreliable, then they balk and the whole team is destabilized." Later she went on to say that, even frankly being a successful head coach was not enough because "players don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."

The big take away for me was that, you can only be a leader if people choose to

follow you. They will likely only choose to follow you if your action and your words line up consistently. Furthermore, it does not matter how consistent you are, if your team does not feel like you are invested in them, they still will not follow you. These are the principles that guide my own leadership style, both on and off the court. However, they seem especially pertinent as I am moving into a significant role where I get the opportunity to impact the lives of youth in Tompkins County. Please know that I do not think sports are the only way to help youth or teach leadership development, but for my own journey they were key.

As the Director of Youth Services for Tompkins County, I will work with our department's amazing staff to support a variety of programs that both help develop and support our local youth, making sure access to those programs is open to everyone. We will continue to work with our local partners to find creative solutions for the youth focused issues in our community, by providing training and support to them as they work on the frontlines. The staff of the Tompkins County Youth Services Department, and our local partner agencies are some of the most dedicated, passionate, and committed individuals to youth, that I have ever had the pleasure to work with. I am truly looking forward to the future and the exciting things ahead for the youth in Tompkins County.

Sincerely,

Kate  
kshanks@tompkins-co.org

## Results Based Accountability Spotlight: Child Development Council TP3

*The Child Development Council's Teen Pregnancy/Parenting Program (TP3) is a confidential and comprehensive teen pregnancy and parenting support program designed to meet individual needs, regardless of income. Their population focus is on young people ages 14-21 who are pregnant or parenting.*

This program supports TCYSD's Achieving Youth Results Goal of: **"Children will grow up within safe environments."** The measures indicating that they are reaching this goal are identified by the number of youth they serve, the percentage of parents avoiding foster care placement for their children, and by the percentage of children who are meeting their developmental milestones as measured by the Ages and Stages Assessment.

With over 50 youth parents served in 2018, TP3 maintained a 100% headline in number of families avoiding foster care placement and 86% of children meeting developmental milestones. They achieved these high marks by being actively engaged in whole-family early intervention services, supporting parents through social service referrals or hotlines, and integrating child development education into all elements of their programming.

With a national trend of reduced teen pregnancy rates in general, TP3 is now able to focus more on intensive case management, provide more wrap around services, and support their clients through

long term programming. Keep up the good work, TP3!

To learn more about TCYSD's Achieving Youth Results and to see other funded program's report cards, please visit our website at:

<http://tompkinscountyny.gov/youth/AYR>

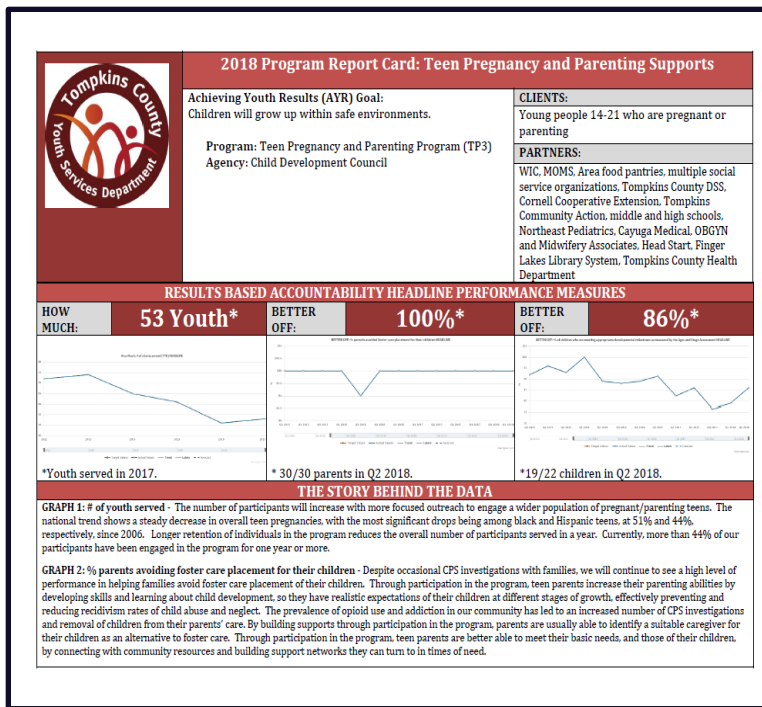
## Meet Kate Shanks-Booth, Director of Tompkins County Youth Services



The Youth Services Department is excited to welcome its new Director, Kate Shanks-Booth. Kate will lead the department as we continue to provide backbone services throughout the community. The following interview provides a little background on Kate, and the skills she will bring to our department!

### Can you give me some background on your career? I.e. what led you to this position?

I have over 15 years' experience in non-profit leadership, with a large portion of that time working with youth. Most recently, I was the Executive Director of the Women's Opportunity Centers in Ithaca, NY and Syracuse, NY. It was a wonderful opportunity, allowing me to make connections with several of the non-profits that the Youth Services Department deals with. I am beyond excited to work alongside the staff of the Youth Services department to make a difference in the lives of our local youth.



**Does a particular time in your career stand out as the current career highlight?**

Yes, it's wonderful to be back working with youth. It is truly a blessing to have a job where I can actually do what I love. Not so many people get that opportunity, and I am grateful for this opportunity.

**What inspires you about your new position?**

The opportunity to work with the Youth Services' staff, as there is so much experience and knowledge in this department to learn from. In addition, the ability to work with local municipalities, other county agencies to create positive change and impact for our local youth.

**What unique talent do you feel you bring to the youth services department?**

I am very much a relationship-based person, it impacts my professional leadership and management styles, and my personal connections with people. I believe in community, collaboration, and working with others to build lasting and fundamental changes to systems. I think that working with diverse people and groups, a talent if you would like to call it that, is one of the most important things I bring to the Youth Services Department.

**Do you have any hobbies and interests outside of work that you'd like to share?**

I love to be with family and friends, as time allows. I love being outside with my dogs, reading books, being on the water, hiking, basketball, and seriously enjoy time at the driving range.

**What else do you want others to know about you?**

I have lived locally for the last eight years, and I love that Tompkins County is my home. I look forward to meeting new people and working with them to make a positive difference in the lives of our local youth.

**2019 Pitch Program**

*Pitch Program Awardees*

On the afternoon of March 13, 2019 Tompkins County Youth Services hosted our second annual Pitch Program, in support of Achieving Youth Results. During a fast paced, tightly scheduled program, 10 community organizations "pitched" their innovative requests to a panel of community judges for funding to advance at least one of the Achieving Youth Results goals. Prior to the Pitch Program event, selected applicants were paired with a Community Coach with funding expertise to hone and practice their pitch.

We are pleased to announce the winners of this year's Pitch Program:

- Cornell Cooperative Extension Rural Youth Services: Our Side of the Mountain program
- Enfield Community Council: Teen Nights Out
- Ithaca Children's Garden: Diversity & Inclusion Focus Group
- Ithaca Youth Bureau: Swim & Ride
- It's Talktime, Dryden!: Big Red Barn festival
- Lansing Rural Youth Services: Fishing Derby
- Multicultural Resource Center: Transformative Movement Builders
- Southworth Library: Family Yoga Program
- Town of Dryden Recreation Dept: Shelving Project



*Pitch Program Judges*

Visit our [website](#) to learn more about the Pitch Program and Achieving Youth Results.

## Meet Emma Hewitt, CSEC Project Assistant

The Youth Services Department is excited to welcome Emma Hewitt on board as the CSEC Project Assistant. Get to know a little about her here!

### **Can you give me some background on your career? I.e. what led you to this position?**

I'm delighted to be working with Youth Services, to support the Safe Harbour/ Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) campaign this year. Most of my career I've worked with nonprofits and small businesses to produce and promote special events and campaigns.

It all started when the GrassRoots Festival showed up in my hometown in North Carolina when I was a teenager. I volunteered the first couple of years, kept showing up, and eventually they offered me a position coordinating the artist relations and stage production. I did that for several years, while pursuing a degree in International Studies with a focus on human rights and social justice issues. After graduation, they convinced me to move down to Miami and co-direct the first Virginia Key GrassRoots Music festival down there. During the summers I helped coordinate volunteers here at the GrassRoots Festival in Trumansburg, did a stint as the Programming Director of the Ithaca Festival, and consulted for other festivals and events.

With a desire to "get off the road", I took a job with Renovus Solar for a few years helping coordinate project scheduling and then manage their marketing department.

I loved being more anchored here in Ithaca and engaging with the community about the environmental issues I care about. All the while, I'd had in the back of my mind that I wanted to go back to school and continue on the path I began in undergrad, so decided to enroll in a Masters of Peace and Conflict Studies program. I'm now in my final semester of that program and working to pivot my career more directly towards supporting violence prevention, harm reduction, trauma recovery, and social transformation.

I'm in the midst of writing my thesis on trauma-informed care as a praxis for peacebuilding when supporting populations who have experienced sexual and gender-based violence in the context of armed conflict. I am grateful for this opportunity with Youth Services to support important work being done in our county to ensure children are able to flourish and be protected from harm.

### **What inspires you about your new position?**

While CSEC is certainly a heavy topic, I am inspired to engage with Youth Services and New York State's Safe Harbour Program in their valiant efforts to put an end to it in our community and state. From what I gather, many people are blissfully ignorant of CSEC's existence and occurrence here and lack the awareness to notice and effectively respond to the signs. With this position I'll be helping Youth Services, in partnership with the Advocacy Center, to identify diverse groups who engage with youth and through training and awareness building could become effective allies in preventing and halting CSEC. I believe in this work as a critical piece of ensuring that

our community and society are safe and supportive for everyone, particularly those most vulnerable.

### **Do you have any hobbies and interests outside of work that you'd like to share?**

I like to stay busy! When I'm not studying, working at Youth Services, organizing this year's Take Back the Night as an intern at the Advocacy Center, volunteering as the Communications and Events Coordinator with Ithaca Welcomes Refugees, bartending at The Watershed, or DJing as part of the group Spirit Posse, I like to do yoga, cook dinner for my friends, hike, and float on the lake in the summertime.

### **Youth Employment Resource Team (YERT)**

Join a group of youth-employment focused agencies who meet monthly to share best practices and resources to support youth taking steps to join the workforce. Hosted by County Youth Services in partnership with the Tompkins County Workforce Development Board.

Contact Shannon Alvord, Coordinator of Community Youth Services, for more details: [salvord@tompkins-co.org](mailto:salvord@tompkins-co.org)

## Upcoming Events

The **Community Coalition for Healthy Youth and Friends of Newman** host their **seventh annual Youth Adult Golf Event on Saturday June 8th.**



Anyone is welcome to bring a team of two to the event; one member must be a youth of 16 years old or younger. This is a non-competitive event meant to interest youth in a lifelong sport to avoid dangerous activities such as drugs, smoking, and alcohol.

The cost is \$50 per team and includes 9 holes of golf with a cart, a hat, a goodie bag, and picnic lunch. All teams receive a prize through a random drawing. This year youth from GIAC and Enfield will be receiving 5 weeks of lessons from Jim Johnston, a PGA golf professional prior to the event to get them primed for the golfing.

Applications can be found at Newman Golf Course in the City of Ithaca or on the Tompkins County Youth Services Web Page. Come on out and have some fun for a worthy cause.

**Lansing Youth Services** hosts their annual **Fishing Derby at Myers Park in Lansing NY on June 15<sup>th</sup> 7:00 AM to 11:00 AM.**

The event is free of charge and all youth get a prize. There is usually great fishing this time of the year and the event also includes a casting contest. Enjoy some fresh fish fry at the end of the event. Just show up, no need to register, all youth must have an adult present. This year there will be fishing poles and tackle you can borrow.



## Opportunities for Involvement

Do you support the mission of investing time, resources and funding in communities to enable all youth to thrive in school, work and life? Are you willing to commit to providing your thoughts, insights, and time to help advise the Youth Services Department? If you answered yes to these questions perhaps membership on either a local youth commission or the TCYSD Youth Board is the right fit for you!

Current vacancies include:

- **Tompkins County Youth Services Board** is in need of representatives from **Caroline, Danby, Tompkins County youth ages 16-21, and 3 At-Large members.** Youth Board members must be 16 or older and committed to advocating on behalf of the youth in Tompkins County.
- **Enfield Community Council:** Meets the last Thursday of the month 6:30 p.m.
- **Lansing Youth Commission:** Meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month 7:00 p.m.
- **The Joint Youth Commission** is looking for volunteers from the **Town of Caroline and Village of Lansing**, they meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month 7:00 p.m.
- **The Dryden Youth Commission:** Meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month 7:00 p.m.

Contact Bridgette Nugent at [bnugent@tompkins-co.org](mailto:bnugent@tompkins-co.org) for more information!

## Youth Worker Training Series

To date we've offered 3 trainings/workshops.

Be sure to check our [web page](#) for more details!



**January:** STEM Workshop at Cornell University

**March:** Growth Mindset with Christine Bainbridge

**March:** Identifying & Supporting survivors of CSEC and Youth Trafficking

### *Upcoming trainings/presentations:*

**April 3:** SAFETalk: Suicide Alertness for Everyone; 2 sessions

**April 25:** High – Ding Spots

**May 1:** DSS Summer Camp Scholarships

**May 7:** Screening of film **Angst** followed by a Q & A session

**May 13:** Surrounded by Bullying: How to identify what is happening to kids and how to help.



## Recent Articles that Caught Our Eye

Here are a few links to interesting research, trends, or program information that may be of interest to those in the youth services world. If you have suggestions on future articles for us to feature, please let us know.

- **[Quick Facts on the Risks of E-Cigarettes for kids, teens and young adults:](#)**

Vaping has become a widespread concern as youth use increases. Visit the Center for Disease Control's fact sheet for more information about their use. Get involved with local risk prevention activities by joining the Community Coalition for Healthy Youth – contact Janice Johnson, Coordinator of Community Youth Services, for more details – [jjohnson@tompkins-co.org](mailto:jjohnson@tompkins-co.org)

- **[“Tech Talk Tuesdays” Blog:](#)**

Follow “Screenagers: Growing Up in the Digital Age” filmmaker Dr. Ruston's blog for weekly topics on managing and decreasing struggles around screen time with your family, including topics such as Screen Addiction, Sleep & Screens, Mental Health, Rule-setting and Monitoring. Topics cover screen use of many varieties, such as smart phones, social media, video games, and more.

- **[May 6th is National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day:](#)**

The purpose of Awareness Day is to highlight the importance of caring for every child's mental health and to reinforce the message that positive

mental health is essential to a child's healthy development. This year's theme is “Suicide Prevention: Strategies that Work” and will focus on the impact of suicide on children, youth, young adults, families and communities. Visit the above webpage to learn about the live webcast they will have on 5/6/19 as well as find suggested activities that can be done locally.