

CFCR's Mission Moments Newsletter



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Commemorating Juneteenth

Today marks the day that the last enslaved African Americans finally learned that they were free on June 19th, 1865— over two years after slavery was abolished by President Lincoln in 1863. **Today is a day to celebrate freedom, resilience, and justice— it is also a solemn reminder that justice is too often delayed for Black Americans.**

"Justice delayed too long is justice denied"

-Martin Luther King Jr.



At Council, we envision a community that treats all children with fairness, compassion, and respect, and acts to ensure every child experiences equitable opportunity regardless of their race, ethnicity, or background. **Too often, children of color disproportionately face barriers to resources and opportunities due to discriminatory practices perpetuated by implicit biases embedded in our legal, criminal, and education systems.** To help fix this, our work at Council is built on the four pillars of social justice: access, equity, participation, and rights. These pillars guide our efforts to create a more just and equitable world for all children.

There are thousands of children each year in our community that need someone to stand up for them and protect their rights. When they interact with the juvenile justice system, they should be treated with respect and provided holistic support to address the root cause of the issues— not hefty punishments. Our Children’s Defense Team is designed to reach further into the circumstances of a child’s life to focus on the whole child and address educational, health, housing, and family needs. We do this to ensure that these children receive true justice when they need it most so they can return to the community empowered.

We also know the value of ensuring children proactively understand their rights. **Our Children’s Defense Team holds “Know Your Rights” workshops in area schools so students gain a fundamental understanding of the historical context of their constitutional rights.** The workshop also reminds teenagers of their value to the community and encourages them to advocate for themselves.

We do this not only to protect future generations, but to honor those who paved the way for justice in the past. **This Juneteenth, we are reminded that “justice delayed too long is justice denied” and are proud to challenge the systems that delay justice for our children and show up for them when it does.**

Want to learn more about Juneteenth and how to celebrate with your family? Check out these resources:

- [5 Ways to Celebrate Juneteenth with your Family](#) from PBS
- [The Historical Legacy of Juneteenth](#) from the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History & Culture
 - [How to teach Juneteenth to your kids](#) from the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History & Culture
 - The Smithsonian also offers a great [Digital Toolkit](#) to explore and celebrate Juneteenth more in-depth
- [Celebrating Juneteenth and What it Means](#) by UNC Chapel Hill’s Associate Professor Renée Alexander Craft
- [What is Juneteenth?](#) by the History Channel

Council Changemakers

This month we want to spotlight our Advancement Director, Amy Vavra

AMY
vavra

Advancement Director



What led you to Council and how long have you been here?

Although I have worked in philanthropy for ten years, I actually started my career as an attorney. I worked as a juvenile public defender and for the government for a few years before working in fundraising at the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland. I've been at Council for almost 1.5 years, and in a lot of ways, my whole career has been leading up to this role at Council!

Tell us about your role here

As the Director of Advancement, I work every day to make sure Council has the funding it needs to fulfill its important mission! Advancement is a small but mighty team of three. We write grant applications, plan events, and reach out to donors to tell them all about the impact their gifts have. No two days are the same, but we are always motivated by the needs of the children in the community to work hard so all of Council's advocates can make a difference.

What inspires you about Council?

I am so inspired by my coworkers. Seeing the passion they pour into their work motivates me to work harder. If you walk around the hallways of our office, you hear all of these smart and dedicated people advocating for our community's youth.

What do you wish people knew about Council?

We can't do it alone! We rely on the community to be generous with both their time and their funds so that we can do this work. Without donations, Council wouldn't exist and we would lose all of the programs that make our community a safer and more stable place to live and work.

Where are you from or where did you grow up?

I grew up in Cleveland Heights, OH. It was the perfect place to grow up - I have the best memories of riding bikes through all of the parks and going to the lake in the summer.

Outside of work, how do you like to spend your time?

I spend a lot of time with my family: my husband, Brian, and our twin 8-year-old girls, Ada & Evie. We like hanging out in the back yard and going on walks around the neighborhood. I also love spending time with my friends and always make that a priority.

Support Summer



Summer poses unique challenges to the children that we serve and can be a source of stress and uncertainty rather than carefree fun that all children should experience. That is why this June we are seeking to raise \$50,000 to ensure that all children in our community feel safe, secure, and respected. Help us keep summer fun with a donation today:

Support Summer Today

Please contact our Advancement Director Amy Vavra at amyv@cfcrights.org for more information on ways to donate and to get involved.

Get Involved with Council

Spread the Word: Please help us share our mission with your friends and family by forwarding them this newsletter. We are also looking for community members and philanthropists to help accelerate our fundraising efforts. If you're interested in learning how you can get involved, email advancement@cfcrights.org.

Volunteer: We have [multiple opportunities to volunteer](#), most notably with our Custody Advocacy Program (CAP). You do not need to be a lawyer or have legal experience to volunteer. Email volunteer@cfcrights.org for more information.

Give: You can [donate online](#) or by sending a check to: ATTN: Council for Children's Rights, 601 East 5th Street, Suite 510, Charlotte, NC 28202. Email advancement@cfcrights.org with any questions and to learn more.



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