

CYC Fellows Spring Into Success 🌱



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Welcome back to *The Core*, your monthly CYC newsletter! We proudly share our latest news, stories, and events showcasing how our CYC Fellows, staff, volunteers, and supporters embody our core values.



CYC COLLEGE FELLOWS ATTEND 2025 NCAN LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

Our College Fellows had the incredible opportunity to attend and participate in this year's National College Attainment Network (NCAN) Leadership Summit in Washington, D.C. Joined by students and staff from the Crescent Coalition, [Meliah Bell](#) and [David Ledbetter](#)—both attending Howard University—met with the offices of several North Carolina representatives to advocate for stronger support for college students. Their discussions focused on a strengthened Pell Grant, an improved FAFSA process, and the continued availability of the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program.

We extend our sincere thanks to the Equitable Foundation for their continued investment in higher education and for providing valuable experiences that help shape the next generation of changemakers.





CYC SERVE SPREADS POSITIVITY WITH ENCOURAGEMENT BRACELETS

CYC's group of Fellow volunteers, CYC Serve, had a great time connecting during their April service project: Encouragement Bracelets! CYC Serve provides Fellows the opportunity to engage in meaningful volunteer work, respond to local needs, and empower future leaders.

This month, our Serve Fellows came together to create hundreds of colorful bracelets, decorated with beads and words of affirmation. Each bracelet will be distributed to local elementary and middle schools students, providing them a small yet powerful reminder that they are seen, supported, and capable of achieving incredible things.

Stay tuned for more inspiring CYC Serve projects from our amazing Fellows!



Joseph Bessada, Cato Middle College High School' 25



Vance Johnson, East Mecklenburg High School' 25

EXCELLENCE IN ACTION: CYC FELLOWS EARN ACCEPTANCE INTO SUMMER ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

Our CYC Fellows continue to exemplify what it means to embrace excellence and invest in their absolute best! Congratulations to Senior Fellows [Joseph Bessada](#) and [Vance Johnson](#) for earning acceptance into the 2025 Bank of America Student Leaders Program.

Through this prestigious program, Bank of America connects over 300 high school juniors and seniors from nearly 100 communities across the country, helping them gain valuable career skills and experience through paid internships with local nonprofits.

We're so proud of our senior Fellows and the amazing accomplishments they continue to make!



We are proud to announce that six CYC Sophomore Fellows have earned acceptance into the Queen City Scholars Program this summer! This incredible program is one of our valued partners through the [Crescent Coalition](#).

The Queen City Scholars' summer session provides participants with a remarkable opportunity to experience college life firsthand. Students will stay in dorms at Johnson C. Smith University, take classes taught by college faculty, and engage in a wide range of comprehensive college preparation activities—all free of charge.

Congratulations to the following Fellows for earning acceptance into the Queen City Scholars Program: Alondra Linares, Ausann Glaygbe, Autumn Thompson, Candace Carroo, Elsa Connelly, and Santiago Leiva Yepes.

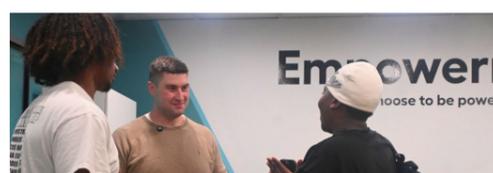


GAME CHANGING TALK: FORMER NFL PLAYER DISCUSSES MENTAL HEALTH WITH JUNIOR FELLOWS

Our Junior Fellows had an incredible experience during Seminar 300, engaging in powerful and thoughtful dialogue with Matt Skura—former Baltimore Raven, motivational speaker, and mental health advocate. Seminar 300 invites guest speakers in the community to connect with our 11th grade Fellows through meaningful conversations that foster self-awareness, confidence, and personal growth.

Throughout the session, Skura shared his journey and valuable advice on overcoming imposter syndrome, prioritizing mental health, and achieving goals through hard work and determination.

A heartfelt thank you to [Matt Skura](#) for stopping by and making a lasting impact on our Fellows through your authenticity and vulnerability.





CYC HOSTS A SHADOW DAY IN PARTNERSHIP WITH BETA DELTA BOULÉ

Carolina Youth Coalition recently hosted the 3rd annual Beta Delta Shadow Day in partnership with the Beta Delta Boulé of Sigma Pi Phi. This impactful day-long event, designed to expose participants to positive Black male role models, foster valuable social capital, and impart career lessons, featured a series of workshops and activities on topics like building an entrepreneurial mindset, exploring careers in cybersecurity, mastering professional dress, and learning golf basics. The experience, which brought together 20 young men from Carolina Youth Coalition and A Males Place, culminated in an fun trip to Top Golf.

"It was a really informative day. I learned a lot about what it takes to start my own business, and it was nice to connect with people who've already been through the process. — James Manago, CYC Senior Fellowenior Fellow

Thank you to Beta Delta for sponsoring this transformative event, and heartfelt appreciation to Benjamin Robinson, Todd Collins, Donnie Johnson, Howard Foard, and all Boulé members who shared their experiences and expertise throughout the day.



Torch Fellow Spotlight: Soliana Teklehaimanot

Soliana Teklehaimanot, a freshman at Butler High School, has been awarded the prestigious Friedland Foundation Scholarship! This \$25,000 scholarship will support her education at any UNC system school of her choice. A special thank you to Dr. Michael Friedland and



the Friedland Foundation for their generous support of student success. Congratulations, Soliana—we're so proud of you!



College Fellow Spotlight: Josephine Griffin

Josephine Griffin, a rising junior at UNC Greensboro, has earned a summer HR internship with Marand Builders. She shares, "I'm grateful for the opportunity to work with a company that gives back to the community and values meaningful impact." Click the picture to connect with Josephine and learn more about her journey!



Alumni Fellow Spotlight: Hazel Whyte

Hazel Whyte, a UNC-Chapel Hill alumna and current Data Analyst Fellow at CYC, has been named a state finalist in the National American Miss Pageant. "This opportunity allows me to grow as a leader and make a meaningful impact in my community," Hazel shares. Click the picture to learn more and support Hazel in reaching her fundraising goal!



CYC HOSTS SHARE CHARLOTTE'S APRIL SHARE-A-LATTE EVENT

CYC was honored to host SHARE Charlotte's monthly Share-A-Latte event at our Southwest Campus—bringing together local changemakers over coffee and impactful conversations with TIAA about bridging the gap between corporations and nonprofits through work, service, and the power of giving back.

A huge thank you to Julie Cross from TIAA and the SHARE Charlotte team — Melissa Hovey, Amanda Wise, Katrina Linda Moffett, and Susan Arrington — as well as all the incredible attendees who helped make the day meaningful. A special thank you to Summit Coffee for fueling the morning with delicious coffee and treats!

Check out more photos from the event [here](#).

Jaela Agee '20/'24
Editor-in-Chief



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