A NOTE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Erin Upchurch, MSSA, LISW-S

Our mission is centered on providing a safe haven for our young people; and as one might imagine, a pandemic, becomes an invitation to get creative and do things differently. Although the point of contact shifted from in-person to online, our team remained steadfast in our commitment to promote safer spaces, affirmation, belonging, and community for LGBTQIA+ youth and young adults.

Virtually, our attendance exceeded 4,000 “visits”. We trained over 2,000 community members and professionals, connected over 40 young people to wraparound case management and housing services; and supported youth and their families with food, household supplies, and personal care items.

One thing that remained clear is the necessity of KYC and the absolute need for our programs and services within our communities. As 2021 unfolds, we look forward to new opportunities; including the KYC Community Wellness Initiative - an expansion of our programming with a focus on the emerging mental health and wellness needs of the youth we serve. For the first time in KYC’s history, we are hiring a community based outpatient therapist to do this necessary, and potentially life-saving, work!

Young people are the heartbeat of the KYC. They have a vision for the world that includes all people. They stand for intersectional identities, representative leadership; and the importance of having access to community and for basic needs to be met. Our future leaders stand for racial justice and equity, safer spaces, being affirmed, and knowing that they belong.

We remain grateful for our community of donors, volunteers, supporters, parents, and caregivers. It is our collective charge to create and sustain safe(r) experiences for our young people.

The work of KYC is the work of love. #Ittakesavillage to stand with and for our young people. Thank you for standing with us.

In love and community,

Erin
SAFER AND AFFIRMING LGBTQIA+ SPACES

The Drop-in Center at KYC is open weekdays for youth ages 12 - 20 as a safer and affirming space for LGBTQIA+ youth and their allies. Our Programming primarily focuses on social activities/discussions, leadership development, life-skills, mutual support, as well as, health and wellness education.

At the center, youth have access to Community Based Wellness programs offered by KYC, which include a food pantry, mental health services, and housing assistance.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, which closed in-person activities at KYC, the Center was open for 55 days.

During that time we served:

201 unique youth
with 1,444 visits

PANDEMIC RESPONSE

KYC quickly pivoted our Drop-in Center programs to digital spaces, continuing to create safer and affirming places for LGBTQIA+ young people to connect during the COVID-19 pandemic.

KYC created a Discord chat server, where 2,394 youth across Ohio gathered for discussions, games, and other creative programming.

We also saw 1,614 young people engage with us through “check-ins” on Instagram, and our affinity groups were able to continue to meet through Zoom.

We also provide peer-to-peer connection and mentorship opportunities through affinity-based groups. Our most popular groups include Genderscope, for trans and nonbinary youth, and QPOC for queer and trans youth of color.

Plus, for the first time ever, we partnered with the Mental Health & Recovery Board of Union County to expand our Drop-in Center programming to Union County, Ohio, providing safer spaces for LGBTQIA+ youth, and their families!

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Our Community Education & Professional Development programs aims to cultivate affirming spaces outside of the Drop-in Center.

We provide professional development workshops, consultation, advocacy, and support to youth-serving professionals, school staff, and organizations with an interest in learning more about gender and sexuality, youth experiences, and best practices for affirming LGBTQIA+ youth and adults. We now also offer CEU’s!
MISSION:
To Serve and Support LGBTQIA+ young people.

VALUES:
KYC is informed by the practices of restorative and transformational justice, intersectionality, anti-oppression, racial justice, and trauma informed/healing engaged care.

We are committed to providing supportive and collaborative services that acknowledge that people are the experts in their own lives.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP
The KYC Community Advisory Board (CAB) is a group of leaders, ages 12-24, working together to help inform KYC programming and special events; advocate for LGBTQIA+ youth in the community; and provide a youth voice in the ongoing leadership and development of KYC.

64% of youth participants are between the ages of 15 - 18

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
KYC works closely with groups like Equality Ohio to advocate for LGBTQIA+ state legislation. In 2020, KYC joined a coalition of organizations supporting SB 50 which would protect youth against so-called conversion therapy. We also stand ready to fight against anti-trans bills that continue to be introduced in Ohio’s state legislature.
Improving Lives

NEW in 2020: Our Community Based Wellness program improves the lives of transitional-aged LGBTQIA+ youth, 16 - 24, identifying the health conditions and environmental factors in a young person’s life that are associated with barriers to wellness.

We provide coordinated, direct access to wraparound services through partnerships with organizations such as the Buckeye Region Anti Violence Organization (BRAVO) and more.

KYC also offers housing opportunities that center and serve homeless and housing insecure/vulnerable LGBTQIA+ young adults ages 18-24. Our programs included Rapid Re-Housing and Supportive Co-Housing, plus additional opportunities through a partnership with Huckleberry House.

PANDEMIC RESPONSE

KYC continued to support youth with housing and wellness needs throughout the pandemic, utilizing tele-health and social distancing best practices. Through contactless pick-up and drop-off methods, youth had access to care packages containing food, hygiene products, and clothing.

Supportive School Communities

As a member of the National Association of GSA Networks, KYC is the state hub for Ohio GSA (Genders & Sexualities Alliance) Network. We provide technical and resource support to GSAs throughout the state, empowering and training youth leaders and staff advocates in communities that lack support.

Racial Justice

KYC celebrates the multiple identities that LGBTQIA+ youth hold. We are committed to advocacy for racial justice and equity; and visibility through participation in events such as the National GSA Network Day for Racial Justice. KYC also provides anti-racism training opportunities through an intersectional lens within our Community Education and Professional Development Programs.
**FINANCIALS**

**Revenue**
- Grants (Government) $296,871
- Direct Contributions $259,276
- Grants (Private/Foundation) $213,318
- Grants (Corporate) $75,820
- KYC Event Income $36,723
- 3rd Party Fundraising $28,646
- Earned Income $19,537

**Total Revenue** $930,191
**Total Expenses** $839,785
**Net Income** $90,406

**KYC UNITY CIRCLE SUPPORTERS**

The KYC Unity Circle is our BRAND NEW recurring donor program. Supporters of the Unity Circle are directly contributing to the longevity of KYC and our mission to serve and support LGBTQIA+ young people. KYC can do more, and plan ahead for the future more successfully with the security of knowing that YOUR generous gift is coming every month to support our young people.

All Unity Circle supporters receive a monthly e-newsletter, swag, and special recognition at our annual fall fundraiser!

Sign-up to become a Unity Circle supporter at: kycohio.org/unitycircle

**Thank you to our founding Unity Circle Supporters!**

- Michele Abounader
- Sierra Austin
- Kimberly Bullinger
- Vanessa Copley
- Paul Feeney
- Brent Fisher
- James H. Sanders, III
- Robert Hardin-Leeth
- Bill Hedrick
- Sydney Horn
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- Randall L Bennett
- Alexandra L Ratie
- Shelby Lackey
- Robert Leis
- Lynlee Lybrook
- Anne McDaniel
- Adam Pulskamp
- Tracie Santos
- Laura Vermilya

**THANK YOU TO OUR 2020 COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND SPONSORS!**

Support from businesses, organizations, and major supporters help us connect vital services to LGBTQIA+ youth in our community!

- [Equitas Health](#)
- [BIG Lots! Foundation](#)
- [Nationwide](#)
- [Alliance Data](#)
- [Tom W. Davis](#)
2021 Staff

Erin Upchurch, MSSA, LISW - S (She/Her)  Executive Director
Karen Hewitt, MA Ed. (Ze/Hir, She/Her)  Deputy Director
Cole Campos, MSW, LSW (They/Them)  Community Wellness Practitioner
Mitchell Corson (He/Him)  Community Engagement Coordinator
Sydnee Crews (She/Her)  Ohio GSA Network Coordinator
Amanda Erickson (She/Her)  Director of Education & Outreach
Liam Gallagher (They/Them, He/Him)  Director of Center Based Programs
Jennifer Kuhn (She/Her)  Director of Community Partnerships & External Relations
Leo Perdomo Blanco (They/Them)  Program Support Coordinator
Shantelle D. Rogers, BSW, LSW (She/Her)  Director of Community Based Wellness
James Westfall (He/Him)  Director of Operations & Facilities Management

2021 Board of Directors

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Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools

Rob Leis (He/Him)  Vice President
Member-at-Large

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College of Social Work, OSU

Brent Fisher (They/Them)  Treasurer
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Sydney Mlakar (She/Her)  Member-at-Large

Michelle Umali (She/Her)  EY

Storm Woods (She/Her)  Batelle

Contact Us!
Youth ages 12 - 20, can drop-in to KYC Tuesday - Thursday 3:30pm - 7pm, Friday 3:30pm - 8pm

Visit Us
Kaleidoscope Youth Center
603 East Town St.
Columbus, OH 43215

Mail Us
Kaleidoscope Youth Center
PO Box 8104
Columbus, OH 43201

Call Us
614-294-5437 (10am - 6pm)

Email Us
info@kycohio.org

Follow Us
@KYCOhio