GUMBO GLADIATORS

Thanks to all our sponsors, cooking teams and participants that supported our 6th Annual Battle of the Gumbo Gladiators. There were 43 teams that cooked 55 pots of outstanding gumbo. We had a great crowd with over 6,000 attending the event. This year we raised $40,000 for our VYJ programs.

2018 BATTLE OF THE GUMBO GLADIATORS CHAMPIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEAFOOD</th>
<th>LAGNIAPPE</th>
<th>CHICKEN AND SAUSAGE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Team White</td>
<td>Just Under the Law</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Cooking Cousins</td>
<td>Gumbooyah</td>
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<td>3rd</td>
<td>Team Thrifty</td>
<td>NOLA Roux Dats</td>
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</tbody>
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Roux Breakers
Remington Roux Krewe
The Blake @ Bossier City

People’s Choice: Roux Awakening | Best Booth Decoration: Raise the Roux | Best Team Spirit: Centaur Consomme

2018 SPONSORS

GLADIATOR SPONSOR
• Thifty Liquor
• Ross Foote

HOSPITALITY ROOM SPONSOR
• Ross Foote

MEDIA SPONSOR
• The Shreveport Times

TENT SPONSOR
• Encore

GOLD SPOON SPONSOR
• Healthy Blue
• National Mail-it
• Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau

PRINT SPONSOR
• Glazers Distributing

SILVER SPOON SPONSOR - $1,000
• Carter Federal Credit Union
• Community Coffee
• Down Home Meats
• El Dorado Casino and Resort - Shreveport

BRONZE SPOON SPONSOR
• Business First Bank
• Caddo Parish Sheriff’s Office
• Dr. Bruce and Betty Henderson
• Nelson & Hammons
• Nix Sheet Metal, Inc.
• Sarah and Chris Garrett
• Swepco

WOODEN SPOON SPONSOR
• All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church
• Ameriprise – Mark McCrocklin
• N-Style Design- Kyle Turner
• Redfin
• Remington College
• United Healthcare Community Plan

Save the Date: 2019 Gumbo Gladiators will take place on Saturday, March 23rd.
COMMUNITY GARDEN

VYJ strives to provide opportunities for our youth to experience cultural activities, trips, and events which contribute to a well-rounded education, both intellectually and emotionally. As an innovative approach to engage the Tribal Court at Fair Park Leadership Academy, VYJ partnered with John Paul Young, owner of The Levee Restaurant, to teach the concept and value of creating sustainable gardens on the school campus. Mr. Young and VYJ staff member, Nancy Howard, spearheaded the project while actively engaging the students in all areas of their garden from selecting the best location for water drainage which provides optimal growing success, plus digging the trenches, planting fruit trees and vegetables. The forwarding action goal is to take their “crops” and sell them at the local Farmer’s Market. Teachers reported the students are enjoying the activity, as well as the gardening is proving to be very therapeutic for some of the more challenged students. Steps were made to begin a planting season at J.S. Clark involving the students in the 2018-2019 school year. We are excited to watch this project grow into other schools and areas around town, along with utilizing our community service workers to assist with the program.

CLOSE UP TRIP, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Eleven Fair Park Tribal Court students traveled to Washington, D.C. May 6th – 9th for the Close Up Program, a study of our nation’s history. Students learned the history of our country and the way our government works in a fun and engaging manner. They visited historical monuments and museums as well as participated in a mock Congress where they studied controversial issues and argued the pros and cons. Students were empowered to exercise their rights and accept the responsibilities of citizens in a democracy.

They met students from other states and were commended by group leaders for demonstrating exemplary leadership skills. We are so very proud of the students and believe this trip will be one they remember for a lifetime. We believe this experience will motivate the students to be informed and engaged citizens in our community.

We are grateful to the LANO Change Fund, Beaird Foundation, Cook, Yancey, King, and Galloway, St. James Episcopal Church, Ivan Smith Foundation, VYJ staff, parents, school faculty and alumni, and many more individual donors for helping to finance this wonderful opportunity for our students. We are thankful to everyone who assisted in some way, big or small including the donation of snacks for concession sales and luggage for the trip. VYJ board member, Erica Thomas, facilitated a travel etiquette workshop for the students. Sara Lindley, a local flight attendant with American Airlines also facilitated a workshop offering tips for traveling.

Fundraising will begin this summer for next year’s trip. If you are interested in assisting with our fundraising efforts, please contact Shonda Houston-Dotie at shonda.houston@vyjla.org.
TASC UPDATE

Our TASC (Truancy Assessment Service Center) Officers were very busy working with elementary students and their families to strengthen school attendance in Caddo Parish. This school year, we served 1375 children with only 6% of these children requiring court involvement. Many services were put into place to assist families with uniforms, tutoring services, and in-home counseling. We have developed a partnership with Porter’s Cleaners for the upcoming school year which will aid with school uniform drop-off locations. Porter’s has agreed to dry-clean and deliver uniforms to our TASC uniform closet to facilitate distribution to our children and families. We have also formed a partnership with a local medical clinic that will provide health screening and medical exams free of charge for the families in the TASC program.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES...

CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates):
Contact - christie.lamoureux@vyjla.org
Specially trained volunteers serve as officers of the court and “friends” to children in need. These volunteer advocates are assigned by judges to speak on behalf of children who have been placed in foster care due to abuse or neglect. Their primary objective is to ensure that each child is placed in a safe, permanent home.

YOUTH PROGRAMS:
Contact - shonda.houston@vyjla.org

JumpStart (Power of Choice & Stamp Out Shoplifting) – A diversion program providing educational workshops in a support group setting with volunteer facilitators trained to address the needs of at-risk youth.

Teen Court – A program designed to offer non-violent, first-time juvenile offenders the opportunity to be judged by a jury of their peers, accept responsibility for their actions, and make restitution for their offenses.

GEMS & GENTS Mentoring – A program that brings together young people with trained facilitators and adult mentors who assist with their educational, relational, and emotional development through group sessions, recreational activities, community service, and one-on-one mentoring.

Leadership Academy is a program of GEMS & GENTS, to provide a safe and supportive environment, whereby students are encouraged to improve their academic achievement, develop life skills, and embrace the servant leadership model for giving back to their school and community. Students are paired with one-on-one mentors who serve as leadership role models.

Conflict Resolution – A collaborative effort between VYJ and the Caddo Parish School Board, designed to address the dynamics that lead to violent behavior, with the goal of preventing future school fight violations.

Facts of Life Program – A character development curriculum. This program is designed to provide adjudicated juvenile offenders from the age of 12-16 with a method of decision making. This program shows participants what is required for a rewarding quality of life and at the same time providing participants with a set of guidelines for making choices by which a good life can be obtained and maintained.

COURT PROGRAMS:
Contact - sandra.samuel@vyjla.org

FIN S (Families in Need of Services): – Programs for families on the verge of crisis due to the ungovernable behavior of a child. The primary goal of FIN S is to secure appropriate services to remedy the family’s dysfunction.

Truancy FIN S: – Specialized FIN S officers work with the Caddo Parish school system, children and their families to identify the root cause of excessive unexcused absences and secure appropriate services to remedy the cause.

Contact - shannon.wyche@vyjla.org

TASC: – The purpose of TASC is to provide early identification and assessment of truant children in grades K-5 and the prompt delivery of coordinated interventions to prevent continued unexcused school absences.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS
Volunteers for Youth Justice
a community caring for children in crisis

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION

Julie Nix
VYJ Volunteer of the Year

Dave McCart
VYJ CASA Volunteer of the Year

Cathy Howell
VYJ GEMS Mentor of the Year

Tim McDearmont
Gumbo Gladiators Volunteer of the Year

Nya-Simone Caldwell
VYJ Teen Court Volunteer of the Year

Senae Hall
VYJ Teen Court Volunteer of the Year

Dr. Matthew Mitchell
VYJ Hero of the Year

Susan East
Fundraiser of the Year

Thanks to you,
Volunteers for Youth Justice raised over
$15,000!!

205 non profits
Participated in Give for Good Together the community raised
$1,873,488

☐ Yes, I want to help give hope!
Amount: ☐ $25 ☐ $50 ☐ $100 ☐ Other
☐ Please bill my credit card: ☐ Visa ☐ MC ☐ Discover
Acct#:__________ Exp:_______ CVC#:_________
Name as it appears on card:_________

Mail to:
Volunteers for Youth Justice
900 Jordan St., Ste. 102
Shreveport, LA 71101

Return Address:

---------------------------------------------------------------------
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Please return this form with your donation. Your donation is tax deductible as allowed by law, and you will receive a receipt.

Thank You!

ONLINE DONATIONS MAY BE MADE AT: https://www.vyjla.org/donate-today/
CASA
The CASA program is excited to report that 2018 has been an eventful year so far. From January to May, new volunteers have been sworn in, and are actively advocating for the best interest of the children they are serving.

Pictured Left:
Leslie Nallin, Stewart Thompson, Valerie Thompson

Pictured Right:
Kenny Sanders, Kristi Coleman

The month of April is Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month and the CASA program held 4 Light of Hope ceremonies. These ceremonies honored the memory of the 26 children that lost their lives in Louisiana due to abuse or neglect. CASA is appreciative to the partners, collaborating agencies, and volunteers that helped to make these special ceremonies successful.

VYJ ended the month of April with its 1st annual CASA Superhero Run fundraiser. This fundraiser had an amazing 1st year with 13 sponsors, 278 participants, 31 volunteers, and raised almost $8,000.00.

CASA values and appreciates the volunteers that diligently invest in the lives of foster children. Currently, 365 children are being served by the CASA program with 70 children on the waiting list. If you are interested in volunteering, visit the website at www.vyjla.org and sign up to be the voice of a children in the courtroom.
MISSION

The mission of Volunteers for Youth Justice is to provide a community caring for children, youth, and families in crisis.

2017-2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kathy Mitton, President
Sarah Garrett, Vice President
Deanna Beaubouef, Secretary
Jason Berard, Treasurer
Betty Henderson
Erica Thomas
Gary Bazer
Lizbeth Rosado
Phillip Martinez
Pamela Moser
Steve Prator
D. Logan Schroeder
Carlos Prudhomme
Diane Atkins
Senae Hall
Felicia Hamilton
Laurie McGehee
Clifton Tate

GET INVOLVED

• VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:
  Become a CASA volunteer – advocate for children in the foster care system
  Become a Mentor – provide leadership skills for youth in our local schools
  Guest Speaker – present information to our youth for our diversion classes
  Board of Directors – serve as a volunteer Board member to help guide our organization
  Battle of the Gumbo Gladiators – join the planning committee for our annual fundraiser

• DONATE – VYJ will use these funds to support and expand our programs and services.

• ADVOCATE – support VYJ’s mission by encouraging someone to donate or volunteer, “Liking” our Facebook Page, shopping through Amazon Smile.org, or by shopping at Kroger through the Kroger Community Rewards program.

CONTACT INFORMATION: 318-425-4413  www.vyjla.org