



# African American/Black Student Success Advisory Group

March 15, 2023

# Agenda

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- Gavel In, Welcome, Roll Call
- OEDI Director Welcome and Updates
- Grantee Presentation - *Washington County*
- Grantee Presentation - *African Youth Community Organization (AYCO)*
- Break
- For the Good of the Order
- AABSS Plan Retreat Debrief
- Community Announcements & Updates
- Adjourn



# OEDI Director Welcome & Updates

Laura Lien, OEDI Director



# Grantee Presentation

Washington County



# CAIRO SPACE PROGRAM

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**CAIRO**

Center for African Immigrants and Refugees of Organization





## Vision

### Vision & Mission

We envision a more just and equitable society in which children, youth, and families live in sustained, supportive communities, which reinforce the cultural wealth and lived experience of the family.



## Mission

We advocate for and act to increase equity and social justice through programs, services, community organizing and collaborative leadership that create equitable opportunities for African refugees and immigrant children, youth and families to thrive.

# Values

## Community Driven

We encourage community inputs and participation. Our Services are informed by and with the voice of the community in mind. We will be flexible with our delivery and responsive to our changing community demands and issues.

## Social Sustainability

We strive to ensure that our systems, structures; and those of partnerships actively support the capacity of communities to be their own advocates. Our approach is best captured by a quote from César Chávez: “Once social change begins, it cannot be reversed. You cannot un-educate the person who has learned to read. You cannot humiliate the person who feels pride. And you cannot oppress the people who are not afraid anymore.”

## Cultural Wealth, Diversity & Inclusion

We have a grounded confidence in our ability to inform through our cultural wealth and lived experiences. We promote the preservation of our own cultural identity cognizant of the diversity in the society within which we operate and live in. We treat each other fairly. We listen to and act on the opinions of others.

## Unbreakable Resilience

We believe in our community’s ability to withstand and recover from past adverse experiences. We draw upon our individual, and collective competencies to cope with, adapt to, and develop from the demands, challenges and changes encountered in our past and current lives.

## Collective Responsibility

We believe that the CAIRO causes and the issues we address should be held by the whole, not just our staff or community members. Our advocacy and service delivery is firmly rooted in our belief that it takes a village to raise the child.

# Principles

**Culturally Informed** services and staff members who reflect the community served, with lived experiences of the issues CAIRO seeks to address..

**Data-Driven** service advocacy, program designs and decisions through community based Participatory Action Research (PAR), community assessments and leadership council.

**2Gen** approach to program delivery that ensures engagement and capacity building for members of the community.

**A Growth Mindset** through the application of steady and strong **cultural wealth model**:



### Resistant

Challenge inequity and / or subordination



### Linguistic

Communicate through different languages or styles



### Navigational

Manoeuvre social institutions



### Social

Social networks and/or community resources.



### Familial

cultural and/or family knowledge and histories



### Aspirational

aspiration and/or hope despite challenges.

# Strategic Priority Areas

## EQUITABLE EDUCATION

Addressing opportunity gaps for children's academic success and community excellence through family engagement and empowerment



## HEALTH EQUITY

Eliminating health disparities through empowering children, youth, and families to attain their full health potential



Building a path to success through literacy and capacity building for sustainable employment and entrepreneurship development



Community organizing and social advocacy (COSA) is part and parcel of all priority areas.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



# Equitable Education Goals

Build family well-being by intentionally and simultaneously working with children and the adults in their lives together.

Multitier system of support.

Affinity Spaces for African immigrant students.

Extra instruction for struggling students (Tutoring)

Staff Ready to support students and families (K-12 Social support Specialist Peer support specialist training for SPACE staff )

STEAM Program (Students Engaging with professionals who look like them)

Increased graduation rate of African Immigrant students in diaspora 70.6% to 80%



# Partnerships

- ❖ United Way of the Columbia-Willamette
- ❖ BIPOC STEAM Washington County Coalition (multiple partners)
- ❖ Airways Science for Kids
- ❖ YMCA
- ❖ Tualatin Aquatic Centre
- ❖ Multnomah County Libraries
- ❖ Trimet
- ❖ Juvenile Department
- ❖ Coalition Against Student Expulsion (CASE)
- ❖ Washington County Department of Health and Human Services
- ❖ Early Learning Division/DELIC





# Successes

- ❖ Stronger connection between families and schools.
- ❖ Customized services to meet the needs of students and families.
- ❖ Reaching out to students in trouble.
- ❖ Connecting families to services they need.
- ❖ Successful summer programming.
- ❖ Expanding to Hillsboro School District during school year 2021-2022. Almost 80 students registered into our program
- ❖ Continued parent engagement and home visits.
- ❖ Successful students summit
- ❖ More than double our staff.
- ❖ Blending resources to meet the needs of students and families.



# BSS Collaborative Partnership

- CAIRO, United Way of the Columbia-Willamette & Washington County partnered from the inception of the BSS grant fund.
- United Way and Washington County (Early Learning Washington County) were initial grant respondents and sought out CAIRO and Beaverton School District as lead implementing partners
- Early Learning Washington County (ELWC) continues to aid in financial management, project planning and program expansion
- Collaborative actively seeks ways to integrate other streams of work and build out services and supports to the Black Student & Family Population in Washington County
  - Future expansion of CAIRO preschool sites
  - STEAM/STEM Early Learning
  - Seek geographic expansion of SPACE model
  - Home visiting & Perinatal support to Black/African population



# Grantee Presentation

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African Youth Community Organization (AYCO)



# UPLIFT PROGRAM

# **What is UPLIFT?**

**UPLIFT is a program that provides support and mentorship to youth while promoting their cultural identity and leadership skills.**

# Purpose

## **Our Purpose**

- **Engage and connect** with students throughout elementary, middle, high school, and college.
- **Identify and help** students achieve their educational goals.
- **Facilitate** integration and economic self-sufficiency.



# UPLIFT Programs

- Academic Support
- Athletic Programs
- Summer Programs
- Girls Group
- Environmental Education
- Refugee Support
- Youth Violence Prevention
- Special needs children Support

# Staff Cultural Navigators

- **Ahmed Ali**-High school
- **Safiya Mohamed**-High school
- **Aisha Awo**-High school
- **Abdinasir Sido**-High school
- **Nabil Abdullahi** - High school
- **Abdul Sheikh**-Refugee support
- **Sumayah Mohamed**-High school
- **Fahiima Ali** - Middle school
- **Siyat Hefow** -Middle school
- **Ifrah Abdi**- Middle school
- **Amina Awo**-Elementary school
- **Amina Mohamed**-Elementary school
- **Najmo Nur**-Students with special needs
- **Keynan Abdi** - Youth Violence Prevention
- **Nuradin Abdirahman**-College/University

# Academic support

- AYCO UPLIFT youth participate in academic support, athletics, and culturally specific mentorship programs
- Leadership development and cultural identity strengthening are incorporated in all activities
- Cultural Navigators serve as a bridge between youth, schools, and parents
- Cultural Navigators ensure that youth and families receive the best possible support in navigating complex educational systems

# Academic support

## **Scholarship program:**

- AYCO Scholarship Program started in summer 2021
- Goal: Change the lives and futures of immigrant youth served by AYCO
- 9 students were awarded scholarships to pursue college degrees
- Scholarships were made possible through generous donations from 2 community members

# Environment Education Program

**AYCO's goal** is to connect youth development and programs that connect students to the natural world.

**Field trips** are offered to keep youth engaged and learning outside of the classroom, and aim to increase knowledge and provide outdoor experiences like hiking, camping, and studying environmental science and ecosystems.















# Refugee Support

- Program description: Helps refugee students aged 15-24 who have lived in the US for less than 5 years
- Focuses on social integration and academic support
- Challenges: Language barrier and culture shock
- Successes: Students like Yusuf Mussa and Salma Yusuf have overcome academic roadblocks and improved their grades
- Goals: Enroll more refugee students in the program
- Helping students overcome challenges of adjusting to a new culture and thriving academically

# Athletics Program

AYCO facilitates basketball and soccer programs

Program promotes team building, sportsmanship, and transferable life skills

Coaches and program coordinators encourage these values in youth participants



# Girl's Program

- Girls Group is a year-round program that supports middle and high school students through college
- Focuses on empowering young women to achieve emotional and economic self-sufficiency and high school graduation
- Addresses long-term systemic, racial, economic, and academic inequities
- Offers youth-led activities, a safe space for exploring identities, and positive relationships with peers and mentors
- Led by a strong and passionate leadership team and staff





# Special Needs Children Support

AYCO Health care and Disability services is funded by the Portland Children Levy to support new immigrant families access health care and disability services.

However, there is a **stigma in the Somali community** about disabilities, making it hard to work with them. Parents often think having a disabled child reflects poorly on them and hide their child from the community. Our community workers aim to change this perception by providing resources and safe spaces for disabled children to feel included and accepted in the community.

# Youth Environmental & Workforce Development Program

The YEWD Program aims to support youth through various career exploration opportunities and professional development.

Youth will learn leadership and self-advocacy skills.

They will be exposed to growing industries such as environmental and tech sectors, healthcare, and more.

# Funders



HERBERT A. TEMPLETON  
FOUNDATION





# Break

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# For the Good of the Order

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# AABSS Plan Retreat Debrief

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# Community Announcements & Updates