



# YOUTH IN POLICING INITIATIVE

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On Wednesday, March 31, 2021 the **DRPS Youth in Policing (YIP) Program** concluded the 2020/2021 Afterschool Winter Initiative with a graduation and awards ceremony to celebrate the 79 YIP students in their collective and individual achievements throughout the program.

The YIP Initiative has been running yearly since 2006, in partnership with Ontario's Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services. The YIP Program Coordinators, Supervising Team Leaders, Team Leaders, Liaison Officers and other members of the Service empowered students to make positive changes in their communities, personal lives, and the lives of others.

Over the course of 16 weeks, the virtual program reached new heights and noteworthy accomplishments such as 25 community organizations participating in the program, 8 DRPS units, 17 guest speakers and the students running 5 major events. In addition, DRPS worked in collaboration with the Durham District School Board and the 68 YIP students spent 110 hours earning a Co-op Education credit along with an Ontario Ministry of Labour Worker Health and Safety certification. Students received an additional 4 certifications: St. John's Ambulance First Aid CPR, C.A.L.M Training, Leadership Training and Diversity and Bias Awareness Training totaling 32.5 hours.

The YIP program began its first-ever **Individual Action Plan (IAP) Mentorship Program** which provided YIP students with access to mentors who are actively invested in their development. Using the motto "Seek wise mentors, they have made the mistakes for you already", YIP ensured all 68 students felt supported through their endeavors during the program and beyond. Through the duration of the program, the YIP Team conducted 180 mentor sessions, and put in over 28 hours to help students work toward various goals, from improving confidence, to starting community initiatives, university applications, and even academic success. The YIP Team put the students first and the results have shown.

To highlight many of these initiatives and other accomplishments that the students achieved, a team of students used their graphic design, tech, and writing skills to capture and share the initiative's incredible events, presentations, and achievements along the way.

The YIP program began its first-ever **Holiday Heroes: Community Grams Initiative**. Holiday Heroes was created for the youth to give back to their community during the holidays in a virtual fashion. Students began by collecting 82 responses from the public through a social media campaign. The youth reached out to 7 retirement homes across Durham Region with 750 residents in need of a kind-hearted holiday messages. The 68 YIP students worked together to create holiday cards for all the retirement home residences. Students created an additional 200 letters for Wounded Warriors Canada who then forwarded the messages to veterans abroad. YIP students also compiled a list of 992 of their closest family and friends who could use some holiday cheer. All 992 people, some from across the world, were sent virtual heartfelt messages which reached: South Korea, Germany, the United States, China, Switzerland, Taiwan, Brazil, Romania, Bangladesh, England, and India. 13 DRPS members participated in creating Holiday Hero Grams.

Students also led a **Coldest Night of the Year (CNOY) Fundraiser**, collectively raising over \$20,500, dollars for the Refuge in Oshawa, breaking all previous fundraising records.

Students designed and led an **I.M.P.A.C.T. (Inspire, Motivate, Persevere, Act, Create and Transcend) Youth Forum**. The objective of the IMPACT Youth Forum was to guide and empower youth to create change and make an IMPACT in their communities. A total of 98 youth virtually attended and engaged with the 4 inspiring guest speakers. Students left the IMPACT forum with new-found inspiration and feeling empowered to emerge as change-makers in their community.

116 youth participated in the **C.A.N. (Community. Advocacy. Networking) Conference**. The objective of the C.A.N Conference was to create opportunities for YIP Students and Alumni beyond the program through professional development workshops, networking with community members, community employers and volunteer organizations, while hearing inspiring words from a keynote speaker. The students left the C.A.N. Conference with tools for success as this Initiative came to an end. 19 DRPS members attended to engage in this event.

One team (of 6 all consisting of 11-12 students and 1 team leader) was tasked with promoting organizations within the Service and they proudly highlighted **Victim Services of Durham Region** creating awareness through sharing with others about the organization, specifically human trafficking, as they learned about the importance of this issue.

Another team was tasked with developing future initiatives, their work will ensure the longevity of the DRPS YIP program. And finally, a student led team created the first-ever **GetUp initiative** where students created 9 videos, shared through social media to showcase the student's talents with the hope of encouraging other students and community members to learn a new talent, while working as a team and building confidence.

140 attendees virtually attended the **YIP Graduation and Award Ceremony** to celebrate the 68 student graduates. Three valedictorians Travis, Sabirah and Brian shared their thoughts about the program and the impact that it has had on them over the past 16 weeks. Travis spoke about his gratitude for being able to "learn about policing beyond the uniform and how YIP was one of the best experiences in his life". Sabirah offered a challenge to all the graduates to "utilize the knowledge, skills and values they developed to embody what it means to truly be a catalyst for positive change within their communities, and now the world". Brian ended the valedictorian speeches with a powerful message that they are "no longer just simple high-schoolers but are now successful members of the Youth in Policing program. We have assets and resources and knowledge that'll continue to enrich our actions with compassion and love for years to come. Although our lives will contain sadness and heartbreak, it will also hold joy, love, and success. So don't look back, and regret, my friends, look forward, and smile."

The night ended with the recognition of students and community members who have gone above and beyond throughout the course of the program. 6 awards were handed out to deserving students.

Congratulations to the 68 graduates from the **2020/2021 DRPS YIP Program Afterschool Winter Initiative**.



A special thank you to the program's guests:

<b>Community Organizations</b>	<b>Guest Speakers</b>	<b>DRPS Units</b>
Ontario Shores	Mayor Dan Carter	Drug Enforcement Unit
Durham District School Board	Police Services Board	Mental Health Unit
Global Leadership Initiatives	Christian Harvey	Homicide Unit
Hebert H. Carnegie Future Aces Foundation	Maria Iannuzziello	Forensics Unit
St. John's Ambulance	Daniel Lewis	Canine Unit
Revera Living	Wali Shah	Biker Enforcement Unit
Rogers TV	Keith Richards	Use of Force Unit
Durham College	Lisa Daughtry	Recruiting Unit
Chartwell	Dan Carter	
Living Livita	Danielle Lambert	
Abbey Manor Living	Sharon Hudson-Alipanoulos	
Oshawa Refuge	Chris Bovey	
One City Peterborough	Stacy Snow	
Wounded Warriors Canada	Dr. Rob Elkington	
City of Oshawa	Rima Dib	
Grandview Kids		
AIESEC		
Carea Community Centre		
Durham Victim Services		
Footprints 4 Autism		
Seneca		
Trades Connect		
Back Door Mission		
Harmony Movement		
Pickwaste		

