The background features a series of concentric, overlapping curved lines in black and grey, creating a sense of motion and depth. A large, solid red oval is centered on the page, containing the main text.

# Alternative Schools Network

Dropout Prevention Webinar: October 2, 2019

Precious Wright, YES Program Manager

Michael Hannan, Program Director

## History

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Established in 1973 to provide a network of support for community-based schools serving dropouts.

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Members of ASN include not-for-profit, independent and self-governing schools and youth & adult education organizations.

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**Vision:**The Alternative Schools Network envisions a global community where every individual has access to equal educational and employment opportunities.

"We have to answer the question of how to help the more than 78,000 dropouts in Chicago who make up one in five of all 16- to 24-year-olds in the city."

**JACK WUEST**  
ASN executive director

## Dropouts given second chance through ASN

A new understanding of the old adage that not everyone learns the same way is behind the work of Alternative Schools Network (ASN), a membership organization of nearly 50 small schools across Chicago that recently celebrated its 30th year of advocating for educational opportunities for young people who left school but want their diploma or GED.

Rosita Alvarez, who graduated from Institute for Latino Progress' alternative high school last year, is a case in point. Alvarez was the 'teacher's pet' at Finkl Academy:

Jack Wuest. First, it ignores the enormous number of youth who have left school without the credentials they need to get work. Second, it obscures the difficulty of reversing a trend that is only likely to grow as the number of young people in this country continues to rise.

"Our schools can and should retain more young people," says Wuest. "But we have to answer the question of how to help the more than 78,000 dropouts in Chicago who make up one in five of all 16- to 24-year-olds in the city, and



Rosita Alvarez, shown with her daughter, graduated from the Institute for Latino Progress in 2003.

Effects of low high school completion rates

Wednesday, 19 July 2017 16:35

## THE COST OF JOBS BY CHIP MITCHELL FOR WBEZ 91.5 CHICAGO FEATURED



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**WBEZ 91.5 CHICAGO**

\*National Dropout Prevention Center

Self-reported  
Reasons for  
Dropping Out:  
"Push" & "Fall"

**Push & "Falling Out" Factors**

Missed too many school days

Thought it would be easier to get GED

Was getting poor grades/failing school

Did not like school

Could not keep up with schoolwork

Thought could not complete course requirements

Could not get along with teachers

Did not feel belonged there

Could not get along with others

Was suspended

Changed schools and did not like new one

Thought would fail competency test

Did not feel safe

Was expelled

Self-reported  
Reasons for  
Dropping Out:  
"Pull"

**"Pull Factors"**

Was Pregnant

Had to support family

To care for a member of the family

Became a father/mother of a baby

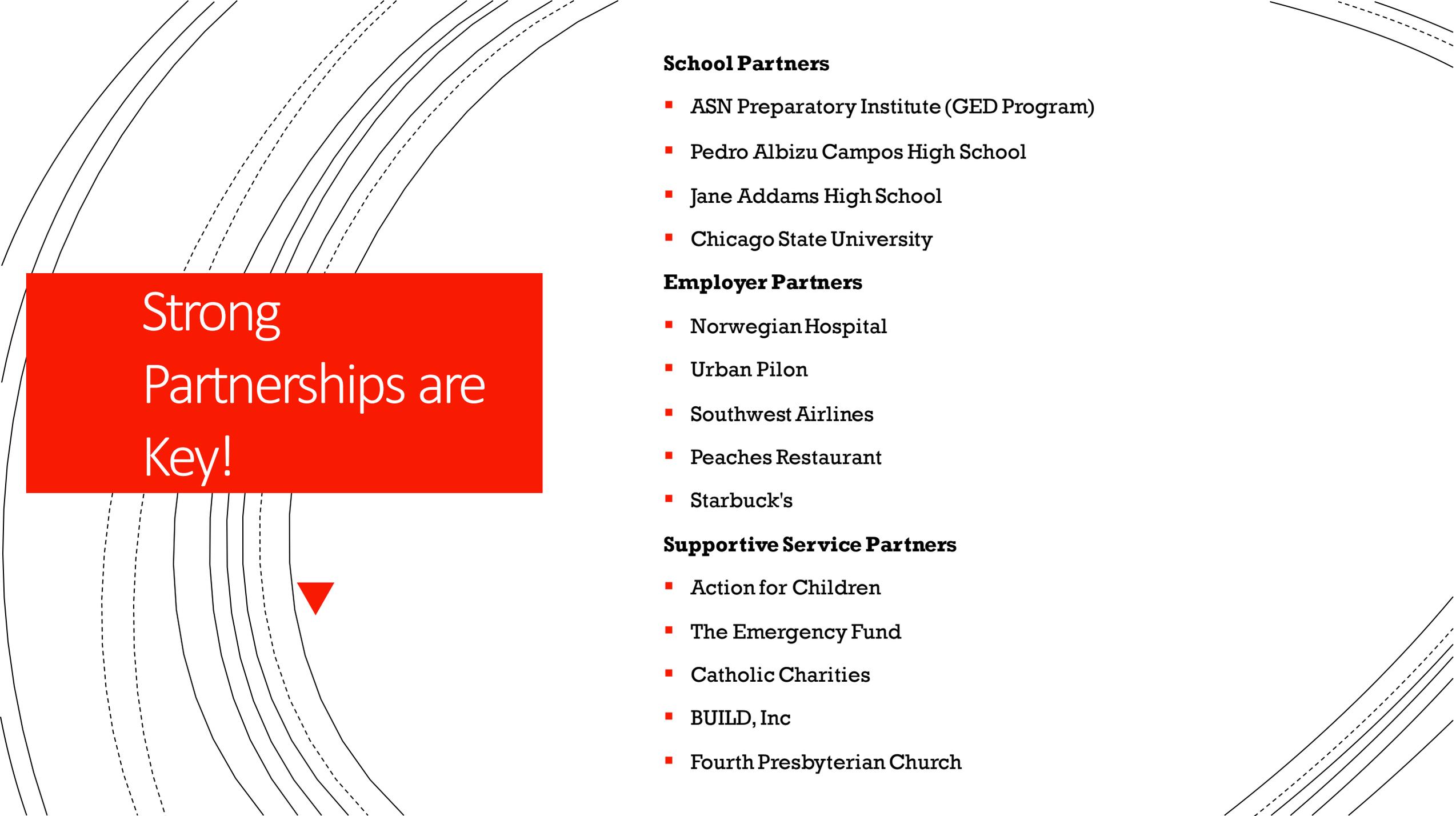
Married or planned to get married

Got a job

Could not work at same time

# Small Alternative Schools Best Practices

- **Small School Populations (100-425 total students)**
- **Smaller class sizes (20 students or less)**
- **Smaller Teacher:Student Ratios (Strong tutoring/academic support options)**
- **Skilled Teachers- Engage successfully with disconnected youth**
- **Small programs (100 to 200 students)**
- **Performance-based goals and outcomes**
- **Strong, experienced leadership and teaching staff**
- **Positive peer culture with a family atmosphere of cooperative support**
- **High standards for student learning**
- **Small teams of students supported by full-time paid mentors/career coaches**
- **Comprehensive technology learning center**
- **Less punitive system for behavioral issues: Peace Rooms**



Strong  
Partnerships are  
Key!

### **School Partners**

- ASN Preparatory Institute (GED Program)
- Pedro Albizu Campos High School
- Jane Addams High School
- Chicago State University

### **Employer Partners**

- Norwegian Hospital
- Urban Pilon
- Southwest Airlines
- Peaches Restaurant
- Starbuck's

### **Supportive Service Partners**

- Action for Children
- The Emergency Fund
- Catholic Charities
- BUILD, Inc
- Fourth Presbyterian Church

## Youth Scholars, Skills, and Services (YS3)

- **Keith Thomas, Director**
- **Serves approximately 215 youth in care (formerly called foster youth) in 15 schools**
- **Each youth has a mentor, receives tutoring, has the opportunity for paid after school programming (ACE)**
- **Metrics: Attendance, Enrollment, Graduation, Documentation (case notes, etc)**
- **Highlights: College tour, graduation luncheon, after school opportunities, possible funding to extend services past graduation**

- **WIOA funded program serving out of school youth as they re-enroll in school**
- **11 member schools host the program**
- **Work-based Learning (WBL), mentoring, tutoring, and additional services to ensure youth successfully complete high school and transition into post-secondary school or career opportunities**
- **Home visits, alternative contacts, social media correspondence, and follow-up services 1 year post-exit**



**Youth  
Experiencing  
Success (YES)**

# Compass Counseling

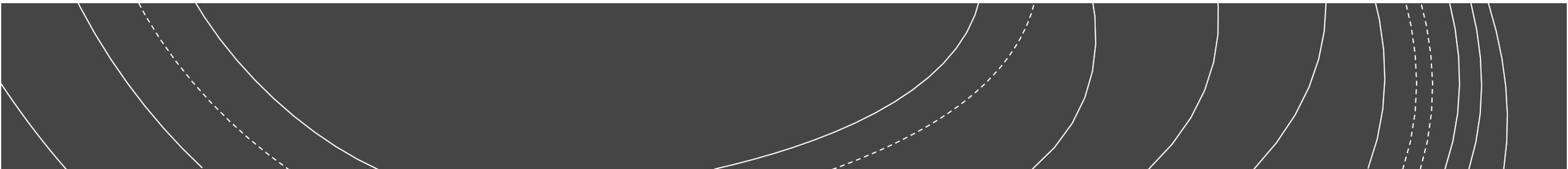


**Keith Harris, Director**

- **Funding from IDHS and DFSS**
- **Serving up to 450 youth in 11 member schools**
- **Goal-focused mentoring program**
- **Additionally: supportive services, and opportunities for activities outside of schools**

- **Project Innovations: 2 schools, 54 served**
  - **STEM-based after school programs**
- **Opportunity Time: 2 schools, 36 served**
  - **Arts-based after school programs**
- **After School Matters: 2 schools, 46 served**
- **21st Century Community Learning Centers: 6 schools, Target served: 600 by the end of the summer**
  - **Out of school time activities to engage youth (cooking, tutoring, etc)**

After School  
Programs,  
Director:  
Michael  
Hannan



## Project Engage and ASNews

- Ongoing teacher training on News Literacy, Journalism and Civics
- Initiative Funding: Opportunity Youth
- United Community Action Team which works with 6 schools to engage and develop youth leaders



- Subsidized employment program for a 13 week employment opportunity
- Currently in 7 schools, supporting 175 youth
- Goal: Subsidized employment leading to unsubsidized
- Youth will have individual case plans to set career/education goals



# Community Youth Employment Program

# Cook County Violence Prevention Program

2 schools, 50 students served during the school year, 50 students served over the summer

Services:  
tutoring, academic enrichment, after school activities, social skill development

Fostering  
Learning  
Program

Fostering Learning Program  
Manager, Robert Manshack

Services 265 youth in care  
each year statewide-capable  
of 333-youth served statewide

Odysseyware is the online  
platform

# Added Chance

- **Contacts:** Larry Fields and David Gutman
- Provides job training and placement services to youth in care
- **Target population:** Youth In Care, ages 16-20
- Able to provide 320 career trainings per year
- Job training, counseling, and employment services
- Located at 1122 N Milwaukee

## Reenrolled Student Project

Program Manager: San Spears

20 schools, 443 youth served

Metrics: attendance, credits, measurable skills gains, grade promotion, post-secondary exposure, additional training



Chicago Bulls vs Indiana Pacers  
November 2, 2018

## Mayor's Mentoring Initiative

- Program Director: Keith Harris
- Serving 1 school with 43 slots
- Peace circles, mentoring, workshops, field trips

# Youth Resilience Project



- **Purpose:** To provide training around self-care, trauma, and resilience to youth, schools, and other organizations.
- **New initiative:** Grief groups

# ASN Prep



- Doris Franklin, Director
- Serves approximately 40 youth ages 17-24
- Located: 700 E Oakwood Blvd (NEIU Carruther's Center)
- 12 week GED Prep Program
- Mentoring and Wraparound Services through YS3 and YES programming



## Other opportunities



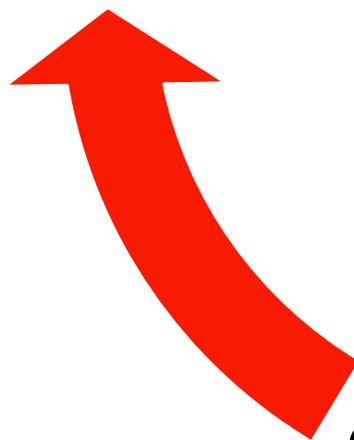
- **Basketball**
- **Bowling**
- **Community Action Teams**
- **Panel Discussions**
- **Prom**

# Three Realms of Prevention

Informing School Practices and Curriculum

Wraparound Services and Support

Career Pathways and Job Readiness



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## Wraparound & Supportive Services

- **Childcare Services**
- **Homeless Prevention/Homelessness**
- **Criminal Background/Court Support**
- **Transportation Services**
- **Food Pantry Referrals**
- **Clothing/Professional Clothing**
- **Mental Health/Counseling Referrals**
- **Program Incentives: Gift Cards**
- **Books/Supplies/Equipment**
- **Healthcare Referrals**
- **Teen Parenting Supports**
- **Financial Literacy Education**

## Career Pathways and Job Readiness

- **Meaningful work experiences**
- **Paid and unpaid internships**
- **Paid apprenticeships**
- **After school and summer opportunities**
- **Linkages to workplace experience**
- **Work readiness workshops with immediate payoffs**

## School practices and curriculum

- Provide information and training on the impact of trauma on behavior, health and wellness
- Restorative Justice and Trauma Informed Practices
- Youth Advocacy
- Re-think zero-tolerance practices
- Peace rooms and mindfulness training

# Kila Washington

## Youth Experiencing Success (YES) Career Pathways Success Story



Name: Kila Washington

School: Excel Academy of Englewood

Age: 20

Graduation Date: June 2017

Employer: Peach's Restaurant

Position: Line Cook

Job Retention: 7 Months

Career Pathways: Culinary/Food Services

Kila enrolled into our member school site Excel Academy of Englewood in the Fall of 2016. She had a very unstable and inconsistent education experience, enrolling in and out of at least 10 different high schools. She experienced many personal barriers and a lack of support in Chicago. Her mother and father never finished high school but encouraged her to reach higher goals. Despite many setbacks, Kila always had a passion for learning and was determined to obtain her HS Diploma. She maintained good attendance and grades, succeeding both academically and socially. She became involved in many school activities and special projects including our work-based learning program interning as an office clerk. Not only did she graduate, she was Valedictorian of Class of 2017!

Having a passion for cooking and looking into culinary arts as a career pathway, Kila interviewed and was selected to participate in ASN's culinary program called Mise En Place (Formerly Before the Plate) in April 2018. This culinary initiative is a partnership between ASN and Rome Joy's Catering that includes soft skills and hands-on culinary training for 10 weeks in their catering venue, Parkway Ballroom. Kila did very well in the program, earning her ServSafe Food Sanitation License before completing the program as a recognized superstar in June. She was just one of two participants hired on permanently to work as a line cook at Peach's Restaurant. She is now working full-time and looking to advance her career with more kitchen experience and advanced licenses. She has been given great responsibility at Peach's Restaurant and most recently is very proud of perfecting the dish "Blackened Chicken Alfredo Omelette."

Lisa Maxwell-Thomas, Outreach Coordinator/Recruiter from Pyramid Partnership, Inc, exclaimed at a recent visit to Peach's Restaurant "Kudos to the cook! Very delicious dish with all the right spices!"

Bravo Kila! We are proud of you and wish you continued success!



# Partnership success story: Urban Pilon



## Our Youth Serving Organization Members

- Academy of Scholastic Achievement
- A Safe Haven
- Antonia Pantoja High School - ASPIRA of Illinois
- ASN Preparatory Institute
- Association House High School
- CCA Academy
- Chatham Academy Charter High School
- Community Youth Development Institute
- Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos Puerto Rican High School
- Excel Academy of Englewood
- Harry S. Truman Middle College
- Innovations High School of Arts Integration
- Instituto Justice and Leadership Academy
- Jane Addams High School
- Latino Youth High School
- Lawrence Hall Youth Services
- McKinley Lakeside Leadership Academy
- Olive-Harvey Middle College
- Progressive Leadership Academy
- South Central Community Services, Inc. - Day Treatment Therapeutic Day High School
- Sullivan House Alternative High School
- UCAN Academy
- West Town Academy
- YCCS West
- Youth Connection Leadership Academy

Contact us for more  
information about  
our programs and  
philosophy

## PRECIOUS WRIGHT

- Program Manager, Youth Experiencing Success
- [pwright@asnchicago.org](mailto:pwright@asnchicago.org)
- [www.asnchicago.org](http://www.asnchicago.org) (ASN Website)

## MICHAEL HANNAN

- Program Director
- 21st Century Community Learning Centers
- After School Matters & various out of school time programming
- [mhannan@asnchicago.org](mailto:mhannan@asnchicago.org)