

# MBK NEWSLETTER

October 2024

Issue #1.2

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## Quote of the Month

"History is entirely created by the  
person who tells the story." -

Lin-Manuel Miranda



*October 26, 2024, Daniel Bland welcomed School Safety Officers, School Aides, Teacher Assistants, Teachers, Social Workers, School Counselors, Assistant Principals and Principals to Council for Boys and Young Men Facilitator Training at Charles E. Gorton High School.*

## WELCOME MESSAGE

We are excited to share all the wonderful MBK work happening throughout Yonkers Public Schools. Many of you attended the Council for Boys and Young Men Facilitator Training this past Saturday. Based on the feedback, you found it rewarding and effective.

One highlight of the training was when facilitator Daniel Bland discussed the key stages of an adolescent brain's development. We learned about the prefrontal cortex and the impulsive, hormonal changes that adolescents experience. Additionally, we engaged in a discussion about effective, strengths-based methods for managing common group dynamics, as well as preventive measures and interventions designed to address the various behaviors of boys while promoting safe and healthy practices.

As Election Day approaches in just five days, it's important to remember that while our young men may not be able to vote just yet, they can still participate in community-based, hands-on projects that create meaningful change. Please review your OneDrive folder for resources related to suggested activities that can help engage students in considering the needs of their community. Additionally, check out Joyner's Corner on page 5 to learn about one student's impact on his community. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, "You must be the change you wish to see in the world."

- Dr. Baez

# MBK STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



## ISAIAH MINAZ

11th grader  
Yonkers Middle High School

### Question 1: What does MBK mean to me?

My Brothers Keeper (MBK) to me is being part of a supportive community and acting with integrity and compassion, ensuring that I not only care for myself, but also for the people around me. It is a commitment to uplift and support one another, fostering a sense of unity and shared responsibility. MBK helps to celebrate the bonds of trust, love and connection. It also adds satisfaction and happiness to know that I have made a positive difference in someone's life.

### Question 2: How do you see MBK supporting you towards your college goals?

MBK is a powerful support system that can guide me through my college admissions journey with confidence. MBK provides mentorship on how to navigate the college admission process. It also offers workshops and networking to build connections with others and learn more from their experiences. It will also prepare me for interviews, guide me through the financial aid resources, and inform me of college fairs and events.

### Question 3: What advice would you share with younger students who are hesitant to enroll in MBK?

My advice to younger students would be to assure them that they are not alone, and joining MBK would be an excellent opportunity to meet new friends and share experiences. MBK can support you to make your dreams come true with proper guidance, mentorship and training. Every member's achievement (big or small) is celebrated with support and encouragement. "When you win ... we all win!"

*“ I will be consistent in what I stand for, diligent in educating myself and persistent in becoming that which I was destined to become. ”*

**MBK PLEDGE**

# MBK EDUCATOR SPOTLIGHT



**MR. RYAN JAMES**

Principal of William Boyce  
Thompson School

## Question 1:

**What does My Brother's Keeper mean to you?**

My Brother's Keeper is a way to pay it forward. In my career, I have had male educators mentor and guide me along this journey, and this has contributed to my overall success as a leader. It's my job as an MBK leader to pay that forward.

## Question 2:

**Tell us about a mentor who played an influential role in your life.**

Former Yonkers Superintendent Dr. Edwin M. Quezada was a mentor in my life who helped shape who I am as a school leader. Dr. Quezada believed in me when many did not. As a young person, he encouraged me to educate myself and further my higher education. Dr. Quezada relentlessly pushed me and encouraged me to be an upstanding citizen and to find time to contribute to my community. These important lessons are woven into the fabric of my life.

“  
*I will lock arms with my brother in unity.*  
”



# MBK EDUCATOR SPOTLIGHT

## CONTINUE.



**MR. RYAN JAMES**

Principal of William Boyce Thompson  
School

### Question 3:

**As the new principal of William Boyce Thompson, what is your vision for your school's MBK program?**

Our MBK chapter at Boyce Thompson School seamlessly supports the school's goals for all students. One of our school goals is to reduce the number of chronically absent students. Through MBK, we can educate our young scholars about the importance of being in school daily. Chapter meetings are an opportunity for our young men to learn how chronic absenteeism impacts student learning. Our brothers could start an MBK Buddy System to hold each other accountable and look out for their buddy daily. It is also a way to grow our chapter when each brother is encouraged to buddy up with a young man who is not yet a member. We can adapt the Yonkers MBK Each One-Reach One high school mentoring program for our school.

Reducing chronic absenteeism will have a profound positive impact to support MBK Milestone 2 - *to ensure our young scholars are reading on grade level by Grade 3*. Our Boyce Thompson school community will focus on our school's data so that we are proactive rather than reactive when it comes to the learning challenges of our scholars. We are focused on engaging our PreK-2 families to meet this goal by targeting chronic absenteeism and offering strategies for families to use to increase vocabulary skills at a young age. This is another opportunity for our MBK brothers to learn leadership skills and responsibility. By expanding the Buddy System to include a Pre-K-2 student who the MBK brother would regularly read to, the young student's vocabulary would increase. This has the potential to dramatically increase the number of young men of color reading proficiently by grade 3.

“  
*I will encourage my brother to achieve his dreams and to never  
compromise his values.*”

**MBK PLEDGE**

# JOYNER'S CORNER



## MR. GREG JOYNER

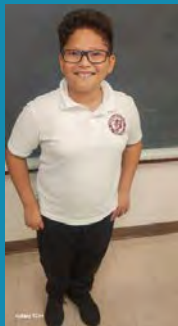
MBK Program Coordinator



Tyler Acosta and Mr. Bryan Boyd of Paideia School 24.

### **Habari Gani Yonkers MBK Family** (Swahili phrase meaning "What's the news?")

Congratulations to all the schools that held their MBK kick-off Empowerment Assemblies and chapter meetings this month, marking the beginning of their school chapters. Some schools started new chapters, while others reopened existing ones, creating fresh opportunities for boys and young men of color. A big thank you to all the school administrators and chapter leaders. This month, our 5th to 8th-grade young princes focused on the concept of Royalty—what it means and how our young men should embody that title with pride. Next month, we will shift our focus to Yonkers MBK's second R: Respect.



**Young & Civic-Minded**

**#MBKALLDAY**



This month, Yonkers MBK, Principal Kim Davis, and Mr. Bryan Boyd want to highlight Paideia School 24's fifth-grade Student Tyler Acosta. He is an active member of MBK who decided he would put his community ahead of himself. In June 2024, at a meeting with Mayor Mike Spano and his MBK Brothers, Tyler asked the mayor to improve the conditions in the park next to Paideia School 24. Specifically, he asked him to repair the broken basketball court so school students can play during recess and neighborhood kids can enjoy the park. Mayor Spano answered the request of his young constituent and repaired the basketball court. When Tyler returned to school and saw it was completed, he was excited and stated, "I'm glad the park is fixed for me and my friends, but also for the community." Tyler is an example for all of us, showing that you are never too young to service your community and improve things. His parents, family, and the Paideia School community are very proud of him and hope he remains civic-minded as he gets older.

“

*I will protect the bond of our brotherhood by showing my brother respect, love and support.* ”

**MBK PLEDGE**

# IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

## MONTHLY CHAPTER LEADER MEETINGS

Thank you to everyone who attended our October MBK Chapter Leader Meeting on Zoom. Our November MBK Chapter Leader Meeting will be held on Monday, November 25, 2024, from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM. We will meet at 1 Larkin Center, 4th Floor Board Room. If you are unable to attend, please send an MBK representative from your school to participate.



## MBK FUTURE CAREER SERIES

High Schools, save the date: on **Thursday, December 5th, from 10:00–1:30**, we will be having our first MBK Future Career Series. The purpose of the Future Career Series is to expose our high school MBK young men to various career pathways through intimate conversations with accomplished leaders about their experiences. More information will be forthcoming.



## MBK STUDENT VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

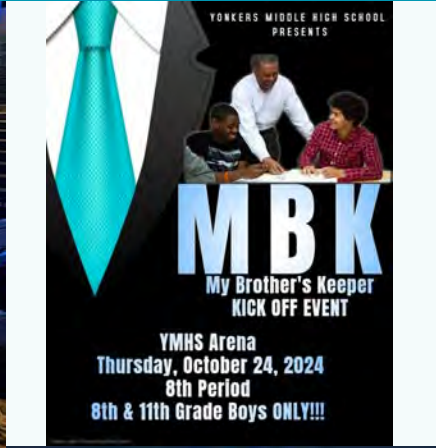
We are looking for MBK students to volunteer at the upcoming School Choice Expo on Saturday, **November 16, 2024, from 9:00 AM to 1:30 PM** at Roosevelt High School – Early College Studies. Their participation would be invaluable in guiding families, helping at booths, and representing MBK in a positive light. If you have a student interested in volunteering, please email Tara McGowan at [tmcgowan@yonkerspublicschools.org](mailto:tmcgowan@yonkerspublicschools.org).

“  
*I commit to becoming a change agent in our community.*  
”

**MBK PLEDGE**



# SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT



Dr. Sandy Hattar, AP Ortiz, and AP Nigel welcomed their eighth and eleventh grade students to Yonkers Middle High School's MBK Kickoff Event.

**#MBKYONKERS**



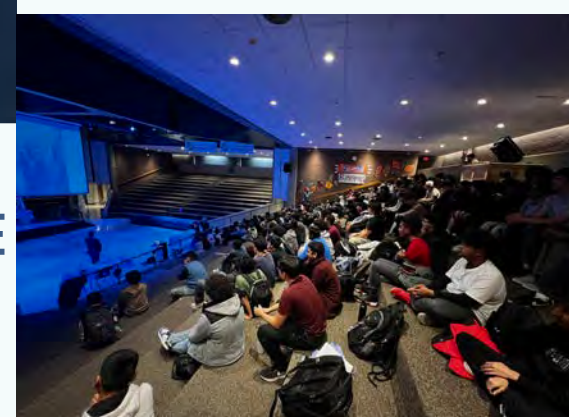
After discussing what MBK offers students, AP Nigel displayed a QR code for them to scan and register to become MBK members of Yonkers Middle High School.

**#YONKERSMAGIC**



**YONKERS MIDDLE  
HIGH SCHOOL**

**#MBKMODELCOMMUNITY**



AP Ortiz shared his Story of Self with his students. AP Ortiz highlighted the fact he was born in the Dominican Republic and moved to New York at the age of 14.

Over 100 8th and 11th grade students filled the Arena for their first MBK event of the year. After students signed up, they were treated to cupcakes and drinks.

“ I commit to becoming a change agent in our community. ”

**MBK PLEDGE**

# SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT



Chancellor Lester W. Young Jr., Superintendent Soler, Principal Scott, and students from the MBK and MSK programs at Barack Obama School for Social Justice.

## NEW YORK STATE BOARD OF REGENTS CHANCELLOR LESTER W. YOUNG JR. VISITS YONKERS



Chancellor Lester W. Young Jr., Superintendent Soler, and students from the MBK and MSK programs at Charles E. Gorton High School.



“

*If you cannot see where you are going, ask someone who has been there before.* ”

**J LOREN NORRIS**



# MBK MILESTONES RESOURCE HUB



*Each month, the MBK Milestones Resource Hub highlights articles and videos that are relevant to each of the six MBK Milestones. Our aim is to provide you with valuable information to enhance your professional knowledge and inspire ideas that you can apply in your school.*

## MILESTONE #1: ENTERING SCHOOL READY TO LEARN

[5 Simple Ways To Encourage Brain Development In Your Little One](#)

## MILESTONE #2: READING AT GRADE LEVEL BY THIRD GRADE

['Too much to learn': Schools race to catch up kids' reading](#)

## MILESTONE #3: GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL

[How should U.S. improve opportunity for young men of color?](#)

## MILESTONE #4: COMPLETE POST- SECONDARY EDUCATION OR TRAINING

[The Latino college completion gap is widening compared to white students](#)

## MILESTONE #5: ALL YOUTH OUT OF SCHOOL ARE EMPLOYED

[10 Workforce Development Programs Focused on Black Talent](#)

## MILESTONE #6: ALL YOUTH REMAIN SAFE FROM VIOLENT CRIME

[Practice Profile: Focused Deterrence Strategies](#)

“Today, with confidence and conviction, I affirm that I am My Brother's Keeper!”

**MBK PLEDGE**



# THE COUNCIL FOR BOYS & YOUNG MEN MODEL

Throughout every month, in this section, we will unpack with you various themes and activities from The Council for Boys & Young Men Model. All schools have access to their facilitator activity guides in their schools MBK OneDrive folder.

## ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOL

### Growing Healthy, Going Strong Activity #5's Theme: Bullying

Using role-play and group discussion, boys will focus on the negative impacts of bullying, developing empathy for themselves and others, and identifying ways to interrupt violence. Boys will be encouraged to make important connections between what they hear, what they see, and the emotional impact of both.



## HIGH SCHOOL

### Living a Legacy: A Rite of Passage Activity #4's Theme: Mentors, Role Models & Heroes

Students will demonstrate the interconnectedness of council members. This activity's purpose is to help members recognize the role of mentors, role models and other systems of support in their lives; as well as, it is to challenge myths and messages sent to boys that they are not supposed to ask for help, rely on others for support, or show weakness.

“ I pledge to embrace today as a new day, a new beginning. ”

**MBK PLEDGE**

# MBK RESOURCES

*Links are all underlined*

## PROFESSIONAL ARTICLES & RESOURCES ALIGNED TO BULLYING

[Disparities, Bullying, and Corporal Punishment: The Latest Federal Discipline Data](#)

[Understanding Classroom Bullying Climates: the Role of Student Body Composition, Relationships, and Teaching Quality](#)

[How Parents, Teachers, and Kids Can Take Action to Prevent Bullying](#)



## PROFESSIONAL ARTICLES & RESOURCES ALIGNED TO MENTORING

["It Makes Me Feel like I Can Make a Difference": A Qualitative Exploration of Peer Mentoring with Black and Hispanic High School Students](#)

[Setting Up a Mentoring Program to Encourage Students](#)

[Mentoring for Enhancing Educational Attitudes, Beliefs, and Behaviors](#)



## ANOTHER MBK MODEL COMMUNITY



Did you know that in addition to Yonkers, New York, there is an MBK Model Community less than 27 miles away? Newark, New Jersey, has also been designated as an MBK Model Community, specifically for Milestone 6: Ensuring that all youth remain safe from violent crime. Watch this [video](#) to learn more about our friends in Newark, NJ.



“  
*Diligent in educating myself.*  
”

**MBK PLEDGE**



# MBK SOCIAL MEDIA POST OF THE MONTH



Follow us on Instagram & X under the handle:

MBKYonkers



Lastly, remember to use the #Hashtags:

#YonkersMagic

#MBKYonkers

#MBKModelCommunity



View insights

Boost post



Liked by rcollinsjudon and 29 others

**yonkersmbk** "Your career is what you pay for; your calling is what you are made for." This weekend, school aides, safety officers, teacher assistants, teachers, community partners, & administrators received training in The Council. The Council for Boys and Young Men is a strengths-based group approach to promote boys' safe and healthy development through pre-teen and adolescent years. #MBKModelCommunity #MBKYonkers - Dr. Jason Baez, Executive Director, Yonker's My Brother's Keeper



“ We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools. ”

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.