

**Yes I Can Unity Through Music and Education, Inc. (YIC)  
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes  
04/27/2023 - 6:00PM-7:00PM**

**Present:** Bret Lieberman, Kirsten Fitzpatrick, Thomas Dvorak, James Aardahl, Michael Buckholtz, David Holman, Tanya Moore, Brian Altounian

**Absent:** Barry Coffing, Brian Costello, Dan Sheehan, Georgianna Junco-Kelman

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**I. Call to Order & Introductions**

Kirsten Fitzpatrick, Deputy Director, called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

**II. Consent Items**

**A. Approval of Minutes of December 14th Meeting**

M/S/C (B.Altounian/J. Aardahl) To approve meeting minutes for the December 14th meeting as presented. The motion was approved.

**B. Approval of 04/27/2023 Agenda**

M/S/C (B.Altounian/ J. Aardahl) To approve the agenda.

**C. Approval of New Board of Trustees Applicants**

M/S/C (J.Aardahl/M.Buckholtz) To approve the new Board of Trustees applicants, Carol Stevenson, Lisa Pavik, and Stephen Corbin.

**II. Executive Director's Report (Bret Lieberman)**

Bret presented on the COC Spring/Summer/Fall Schedules, COC student badge numbers, enrollment, introduction of the Summer Meltdown Festival Project and the support needed for the Good Karma Music Festival from the board.

#### **IV. Chief Financial Officer Report (Tom Dvorak)**

##### **A. 2023 Q1 Financial Reports**

###### **1. Management Reports (Attached)**

- 2023 Q1 Income Statement
- 2023 Q1 Balance Sheet

##### **B. Earned Revenue Projections for 2023/ FY 2023 Proposed Budget (2023 Budget Overview- Executive Summary)**

Yes I Can Unity Through Music and Education, Inc. (“Company”) maintains a strong financial position at the close of Q1 2023. The Executive Team’s goal for the Company for the remainder of 2023 is continued, robust, and sustained growth. The Company is expected to produce the following 2023 Income Statement Summary:

Projected Non-Grant Revenue (2023): \$1,916,967

Projected Non-Grant Expenses (2023): \$1,112,171

Projected Non-Grant Net Income (2023): \$804,796

Projected Net Profit Margin (2023): 41.98%

Projected 2023 Income Statement Summary with addition of Human Resource Director and Instructional Department Head:

Projected Non-Grant Gross Revenue (2023): \$1,916,967

Projected Non-Grant Expenses (2023): \$1,228,555

Projected Non-Grant Net Income (2023): \$688,412

Projected Profit Margin (2023): 35.91%

##### **C. CPA Status for Annual Filings and 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Financial Review**

The Company retained the firm of Stern Kory Sreden & Morgan to prepare and file its 2022 federal and state tax returns. Pursuant to DDS regulations, within 9 months of the close of its fiscal year, the Company is required to have a Financial Review Report conducted by an independent 3<sup>rd</sup> party, which cannot be the same firm retained to file the 2021 tax returns (i.e. before September 30, 2023).

The Company has interviewed the following firms and received the associated quotes:

Brown Armstrong  
Cost for Review - \$10,500

Pacheco & Associates:  
Cost for Review - \$8,000

The Company has also reached out to Rojas & Associates and Hutchinson & Bloodgood for an estimate.

#### **D. Preparation for 2022 FY 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Financial Review and anticipated 2023 FY 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Audit**

The Finance Department has prepared for the FY 2022 Financial Review and is preparing for the FY 2023 Audit on a daily basis. This preparation includes, but is not limited to, the introduction of more streamlined and efficient processes aimed at better organization and retention of source financial documents and financial reporting.

#### **E. Status on Regional Center/DDS Rate Increases**

##### **North Los Angeles County Regional Center**

Effective 01/01/2023 the DDS increased the Company's rates to: \$205.24/per day.

Effective 07/01/2025 the Company's rates will increase a final time to **a projected** \$317.46/day (at this time, this number is an estimate).

##### **Westside Regional Center**

Effective 04/01/2022 the DDS increased the Company's rate with Westside Regional Center (WRC) from \$92.60/day to \$96.96/day.

Westside Regional Center declined the Company's request to increase these rates after consulting with NLACRC. The Company is investigating the proper means to appeal this denial.

#### **Company Credit Card with City National Bank**

The Company is in the process of applying for a Business Credit Card with City National Bank with a credit limit of \$50,000. The purpose of which is to obtain greater financial flexibility.

### **Certificate of Deposit**

In the near future, the Company plans to obtain a \$100,000 Certificate of Deposit, 90 Day Maturity, 4.25% Annual Interest Rate. The purpose of which is to increase the rate of return on retained earnings.

## **V. Deputy Director Report (Kirsten Fitzpatrick)**

### **A. Program Services Updates and Student Enrollment (CIT, PIP, & SMFP)**

YIC currently has (60) students enrolled in the North Los Angeles County Regional Center (NLACRC) funded YIC Program (core program). (31) of these students are currently participating in the NLACRC funded Paid Internship Program (PIP). (2) students were terminated from the YIC Program after the Q4 2022 reporting period due to no contact/no attendance. (1) new Cohort #5 student started early on 03/01/2023. (2) students are currently updating their resumes to apply for internship positions in VFX and Audio Design with YIC's industry partner Company3.

YIC currently has (6) students enrolled in the Westside Regional Center (WRC) funded YIC Program. (2) of these students are currently participating in the WRC funded Paid Internship Program (PIP). (1) new Cohort #5 student started early on 03/01/2023. (1) student is currently interviewing with a major production studio (through a referral through YIC's industry partner GEI) for a marketing position and has just been asked to participate in her third interview with the company.

YIC currently has (12) students in the process of enrolling in YIC's Summer Meltdown Festival Project (SMFP funded through a grant by the California Department of Developmental Services (DSS)).

**IMPACT:** YIC currently serves 66 individuals with I/DD in YIC's 055 program. Of these 66 participants, 23 students have successfully completed all of YIC's career skills training modules. The vast majority of students not yet in PIP are still completing their college/trade school programs and have expressed they are not yet ready to commit to an internship due to their schooling schedules. Employment data includes "for now" jobs students have secured while participating in the YIC Program and internships and career-based jobs (CIE) in fields students are pursuing based on their career path of interest.

**Cohort #1 Data** (Started 07/2019): 77% secured job; 77% secured internship; 31% CIE.

**Cohort #2 Data** (Started 07/2020): 34% secured job; 80% secured internship; 34% CIE.

**Cohort #3 Data** (Started 07/2021): 33% secured job; 72% secured internship; 6% CIE.

**Cohort #4 Data** (Started 07/2022): 42% secured job; 35% secured internship; 0% CIE.

**Average for all Cohorts** (2019-Current): 40% secured job; 60% secured internship; 9% CIE.

**\*Important Note: The COVID-19 pandemic began 03/2020, only 8 months after Cohort #1 began their training with YIC.**

There are 9 new students referred to the YIC Program who are currently on a waitlist for the next cohort, Cohort #5, that will begin on 07/01/2023. Based on historical referral data, YIC expects 20-25 students referred to the YIC Program for Cohort #5 between both NLACRC and WRC referrals. (2) Cohort #5 students have been enrolled early due to their assessed urgent needs and both have already begun services with YIC on 03/01/2023.

## **B. 2023 HIPAA Risk Assessment Status/Report**

All risk areas identified in YIC's 2022 HIPAA Risk Assessment have been resolved. YIC is scheduled to conduct another HIPAA Risk Assessment in 2023.

## **C. YIC Staffing Report**

During the Q1 2023 reporting period, YIC hired (2) additional Program Counselors for the YIC (055) Program. The YIC (055) Program is fully staffed and there are no direct service positions open at this time. (1) Instructional Support staff member provided YIC with a Notice of Resignation informing YIC that this staff member will be resigning effective 04/07/2023 to pursue an employment opportunity in Florida.

For the DDS grant funded Summer Meltdown Festival Project (SMFP), during the Q1 2023 reporting period YIC hired (2) FT Instructional Support Staff, (2) PT Instructional Support Staff, and (1) FT Instructor. SMFP is fully staffed and there are no direct service positions open at this time.

Turnover rate for Q1 2023: >1%

## **D. SMFP Program and Vendorization Status**

YIC is currently working with the North Los Angeles County Regional Center (NLACRC) and Westside Regional Center (WRC) to vendorize the Summer Meltdown Festival Project (SMFP) at the Regional Center's next Open Proposal Period (OPP) Cycle October 2023 under either

Adaptive Skills Training (605) or Creative Arts Program (094). YIC has been in direct contact with Evelyn McOmie, Community Services Director at NLACRC and with Lidenira Amador, Quality Assurance Specialist and Jill Hewes, Quality Assurance Specialist/Resource Developer at WRC to gather the necessary information required to pursue vendorization SMFP under the either the (605) or (094) subcodes. Jill Hewes reports she will be reaching out to the DDS for guidance and recommendations. Regional Center vendorization of SMFP will result in securing Regional Center contract funding, which will ensure the program's long-term sustainability.

The SMFP design and budget was approved by the DDS, and YIC executed the grant agreement with the DDS on 01/23/2023 (DDS Employment Grant #2022-WSSEG-0044). Grant work began immediately after the execution on the grant agreement with the DDS. YIC invoiced the DDS (Invoice 001) on 02/01/2023 for 25% of the grant amount totaling \$105,551.51. The DDS notified all grantees that payment will come from the State Controller's Office (SCO), a separate department from DDS, and that SCO may take between 30 to 60 days to issue the payment.

#### **E. 2023 Strategic Plan Review & Goal Development**

YIC's Strategic Plan is currently being reviewed and goals continue to be developed. YIC directors will present YIC's revised Strategic Plan to the Board prior to YIC's Q2 2023 Board of Trustees meeting to enable the Board to be able to provide YIC directors with feedback and suggestions during YIC's Q2 2023 board meeting.

#### **F. Board of Trustees Onboarding Packet Review**

All board members should have received the YIC Board of Trustees Onboarding Packet prior to this board meeting. Included in the YIC Board of Trustees Onboarding Packet, you will find information about our organization, Board member roles/responsibilities, Board policies, a calendar of upcoming meetings, events and more. We meet quarterly as a Board, and each subcommittee also meets regularly, as outlined in the calendar. Your attendance and participation is necessary for us to continue to grow and develop as an organization. Because we are a working Board, we are thankful in advance for the time you will commit to support the mission of YIC. There may be special projects in addition to our regularly scheduled meetings, and we will draw on your strengths to help us complete projects, plan events, etc. Below you will learn more about the history of YIC, its mission and recent accomplishments.

#### **G. Board of Trustees Committee Descriptions and Review**

**Appreciation Committee:** Creates and distributes certificates of appreciation as appropriate on behalf of Yes I Can Unity Through Music and Education, including (but not limited to) letters of appreciation to donors, sponsors, guest speakers and volunteers, awards/recognition to both

outgoing board members and those who choose to reapply and continue their service through to the next board year. May also be involved in creative planning for ways to acknowledge these groups and individuals in other ways. (workload: low/medium)

Committee Chair: POSITION OPEN

Committee Members: POSITION(S) OPEN

**Blog Committee:** Resource and information page with upcoming events, latest Yes I Can Unity Through Music and Education news, printable materials, testimonials, event recaps, and other helpful materials geared toward our students, their families/caregivers, and our community. Board members are encouraged to contribute as guest bloggers, when applicable. Blog will be attached to our main website and/or a dedicated Tumblr account - if added to our social media sites. (workload: medium)

Committee Chair: POSITION OPEN

Committee Members: POSITION(S) OPEN

\* If Tumblr is the platform decided upon for this purpose, Chair would be the Tumblr Committee Chairperson.

**E-Newsletter Committee:** Gathers dates/times for all events, fundraisers, important information, testimonials, solicitations for sponsors/donors/board members (at the end of each board year) and special announcements for Yes I Can Unity Through Music and Education. Arranges this information into a monthly electronic news format that is distributed to all subscribers - signup is located on website. (workload: medium)

Committee Chair: POSITION OPEN

Committee Members: POSITION(S) OPEN

**Executive Committee/Executive Board:** Meets prior to monthly board meetings. Manages the general operation and maintenance of the organization. Descriptions of each position can be found in the organization's bylaws. (workload: high)

Chair of the Board: OPEN

Vice Chair of the Board: OPEN

President: (Executive Director): Bret Lieberman

Secretary: POSITION OPEN - Kirsten Fitzpatrick (Deputy Director Serving )

(Sample Agenda and Minutes will be provided. Must be able to keep detailed and organized record of all meetings and draft meeting agendas)

Treasurer: (Chief Financial Officer) Tom Dvorak

(Responsible for maintaining accurate and detailed financials, including Profit & Loss Statements as well as financials for each Board meeting.)

**Financial Committee:** Typically composed of all Executive Board members with exception of the Secretary. Ensures that finances are being handled according to California and Federal

nonprofit law and approves emergency expenses. Approves/denies reimbursement expenses as provided to the committee by the Treasurer (Note: Committee members seeking reimbursement for items they've submitted must recuse themselves from voting). Expenses requiring total Board of Trustee approval will be discussed and disseminated to the Board as necessary. Yearly independent financial audit (as required by law) will also be arranged and managed by this committee. (workload: high)

Committee Members: POSITION(S) OPEN

**Fundraising Committee:** Think tank for development and implementation of new fundraising ideas. Manages both passive fundraising endeavors (Amazon Smile, GoodShop, CoinUp App, Network for Good, etc.) as well as other fundraising activities throughout the year, assisting with the Summer Meltdown Festival as well. (workload: low to high – depending on ideas/follow through, number of active committee members.)

Committee Chair: POSITION OPEN

Committee Members: POSITION(S) OPEN

**Grant Writing Committee:** Actively seeks new grant opportunities throughout the year (each grantor has different deadlines for submission and frequency with which grants can be submitted, i.e., annually, etc) that are appropriate to the structure of our organization. Using each grantor's templates, drafting "ask letters" and drawing from the available list of grantors, writing for grants to fund our administrative costs and/or programs. All information needed to complete grants will be provided. Grant writers simply fill in the blanks and provide information according to the grant they're writing for. Committee members should possess good writing skills, a basic knowledge of our organization (including our mission statement, history, and Board of Trustees), and be available for at least one grant writing meeting per board year. Many grantors require follow up/progress reports, which this committee would also be responsible for, in collaboration with the Appreciation Committee. \*Important Note: This is THE most effective form of fundraising we have aside from corporate sponsorships, Regional Center contracts, the annual Summer Meltdown Festival, and is the source of some of the most easily attainable revenue\*(workload: low to high, depending on the amount of grants you actively seek or choose to write, and the follow-up to these grants, if approved by the grantor.)

Committee Chair: POSITION OPEN

Committee Members: POSITION(S) OPEN (the more, the better!)

**Nominating/Elections Committee:** Scouts for new potential board members that can fill essential/key roles within the Board. Distributes nomination/welcome packet to each potential board member, including list of Board responsibilities, committee descriptions, and Board of Trustees Application. Follows up with any potential board member who may have questions. This committee serves at the initial "vetting" process for Board membership and will decide which candidates are suitable for placement on the slate of potential incoming board members for the



annual Board of Trustees Election, held at the end of each fiscal year. Sends invitations to the election meeting to all candidates that meet the qualifications of Board membership, according to the specific needs of the Board at that time. Any Board member can nominate a person for Board membership, but all applications and outreach are handled by the Nominating Committee. Final slate of candidates must be submitted to the Board no later than 30 days prior to the election meeting. All official correspondence will be in the name of the committee chairperson.

(workload: medium)

Committee Chair: Kirsten Fitzpatrick

Committee Members: POSITION(S)OPEN

**Social Media Committee:** Posts information about all of our events, fundraisers, and other calls to action. Helps disseminate relevant information to the local autistic population and community via social networking. Must be briefed on proper social media etiquette/protocol already established and adopted by the Board of Trustees. (workload: medium/high, lower if we have individuals posting to a dedicated platform - i.e., Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Instagram)

Committee Chair: POSITION OPEN

LinkedIn Committee: POSITION(S) OPEN

Facebook Committee: POSITION(S) OPEN

Instagram Committee: POSITION(S) OPEN

Spanish Facebook Committee: POSITION(S) OPEN

Twitter Committee: POSITION(S) OPEN

Tumblr Committee: POSITION(S) OPEN

YouTube Committee: POSITION(S)OPEN

**Sponsorship/Donations Committee:** Engages in cold calls and other methods to gain high end donors, and both corporate and individual sponsors for the organization. Focus is on networking, building partnerships and other relationships with interested parties, and actively seeking these opportunities within the community. (workload: medium to high)

Committee Chair: Bret Lieberman

Committee Members: POSITION(S)OPEN

**Summer Meltdown Festival Committee:** Responsible for the biggest event of the year for Yes I Can Unity Through Music and Education, and the culmination of the hard work our students have put in all year long. There will be an official meeting for the Meltdown Committee involving all members to decide and plan this event in its entirety. Every Board member is expected to contribute in some way to this event. Will work closely with the sponsorship committee, volunteer committee, and other relevant committees to ensure that the event will continue to grow and be successful. (workload: low to high, depending on level of involvement)

Committee Chair: Bret Lieberman

Committee Members: Kirsten Fitzpatrick, POSITION(S) OPEN

**Volunteer Committee:** Recruits and maintains a database of all persons within the community that are interested in volunteer opportunities within our organization. Uses sites like volunteermatch.com to seek volunteers for projects like the Summer Meltdown Festival and other larger events, and sites like sixdegrees.org to locate potential celebrity volunteers to assist us with our endeavors. Members of this committee must know the key components and mission of Yes I Can Unity Through Music and Education, and be able to articulate them to potential volunteers. Will work closely with the Appreciation Committee to follow up with volunteer recognition. (workload: low to high, depending on number of committee members and needs of the organization)

Committee Chair: POSITION OPEN

Committee Members: POSITION(S) OPEN

**Technology Committee:** Regularly checks webpage for errors and passes on the information to our website designer. Makes recommendations/reports to the board as appropriate. Publishes information to the main website as applicable. Recommend technology that would be beneficial to the organization, as well as assess current technology utilized to ensure efficiency, accuracy, and HIPAA compliance. (workload: low/medium for committee members, high for chair)

Committee Chair: Kirsten Fitzpatrick

Committee Members: POSITION(S) OPEN

\* Each board member should check the YIC website periodically and report to the Chair if they notice any errors/omissions.

## **H. Marketing Plan Draft Review**

YIC will provide the Board with a draft of YIC's 2023/24 Marketing Plan prior to YIC's Q2 2023 board meeting. YIC directors will collaborate with the board to collect feedback and recommendations regarding the marketing strategies proposed by the YIC directors in YIC's 2023/24 Marketing Plan.

## **I. Disability Service Provider Competitor Data Review**

YIC collected data on three (3) of YIC's main competitors who are providing employment-based services to individuals with disabilities referred from the Regional Centers (see marketing plan). All three of these organizations are also vendored by the North Los Angeles County Regional Center (NLACRC) under the (055), (PIP), and (CIE) subcodes. One organization, Desert Haven Enterprises, is currently in the process of transitioning their sheltered workshop program into a community-based (055) program. None of the organizations publicly provided their placement data (other than Jay Nolan reported placement data on their Uniquely Abled Project program, which only accepts 10 individuals into the program annually). Review of the data revealed that

all three organizations have made very limited marketing efforts, with all three organizations primarily utilizing their website and/or social media platforms to solicit donations, partnerships, sponsorships, etc. One of YIC's competitors, Tierra Del Sol, the organization's website domain was recently purchased by ENOM, INC. (a reseller of domains) located in Europe when the domain was up for renewal. It appears Tierra did not have their domain renewal set up on automatic renewal. As a result, Tierra lost their domain to ENOM and Tierra's website is currently down as a result.

All three competitors primarily place their consumers in minimum wage retail, janitorial, landscaping and food service jobs. Jay Nolan supports individuals participating in a CNC Machining program located on the College of the Canyons campus (aerospace industry) through the Uniquely Abled Project. Tierra Del Sol offers individuals a better variety of program offerings, including Tierra's College to Career Program (post-secondary academic support provided on Community College campuses) and Tierra's Career in the Arts Program (assists artists with disabilities with creating and selling their art).

## **VII. Announcements/Board Input/Agenda Items for the Next Board Meeting**

**SMFP Artists:** B. Lieberman requested assistance from the Board with securing artists to perform at the Good Karma Music & Arts Festival produced by students through the DDS funded Summer Meltdown Festival Project. B. Lieberman informed the Board the YIC students participating in the Summer Meltdown Festival Project have created an artist deck and sponsorship deck for the event with the guidance from the program instructor. B. Lieberman displayed the decks to the Board for their review. J. Aardahl requested more information on The Summer Meltdown Festival name, specifically why it was changed to Good Karma Music & Arts Festival. B. Lieberman informed the Board that the Summer Meltdown name is associated with the program when it was funded through the William S. Hart Union School District and that the name of the event produced from the program is being rebranded to separate the Festival from the high school funded program to the Regional Center funded program serving adults with disabilities. J. Aardahl suggested launching a PR campaign to add production value and made suggestions for the decks. T. Moore suggested adding more background on the Good Karma Festival name and requested to meet with B. Lieberman to develop a story for the decks. T. Moore suggested information about Board members be added to the decks. B. Altounian supported the festival name change and highlighted there is also a negative connotation with the term "meltdown" in relation to autism, and supported the name change to the Good Karma Music and Arts Festival. D. Holman made the recommendation to simplify the artist and sponsorship decks more and stated he felt the current decks have too much information in them. T. Moore recommended YIC Directors reach out to the nonprofit SANKOFLA to inquire about artists donating their time to perform at the Good Karma event, as well as reported she will be

reaching out to Guy Ferrari to curate the food truck village at the event. Both T. Moore and J. Aardahl volunteered to assist with revising the artist and sponsorship decks to ensure all information needed is included in the decks.

**VIII. Adjournment** - Kirsten Fitzpatrick adjourned the meeting at 7:07 p.m.