



*Belief in the power of supportive relationships  
guides our work at STAY.*

January 2019

Dear Friend:

It's our fifth year at STAY Connected, where we help young people thrive in the years from 15 to 25 years old. We empower them to find pathways that give them hope and lead to stable adult lives.

Relationships matter. Healthy relationships help children grow to have stable, healthy, and fulfilling lives. Please join us in seeing that youth in South Bellevue have a chance for healthy relationships with caring adults in their neighborhood. STAY Connected is building that community.

**Emil Davis** shines with light and inspiration. He joined us at Newport Heights Elementary, and last June, he graduated from Interlake High School. Along the way, Emil attended outdoor camps, first as a beloved camper and then as a counselor and leader. He forged lasting connections, particularly at Camp Huston, that shaped his decisions through his teen years. Seeing him now, navigating independent living, work, and adulthood, fills us with pride and his peers with hope. Emil's strengths—a positive attitude and an ability to problem solve—serve him well and inspire everyone in his life.

**Kenneth Washington** caught the spirit of outdoors at a Sound View work party. With encouragement from camp director Kurt Sample, Kenneth earned a lifeguard certification and worked through the summer at Sound View. Now he works as a lifeguard at the YMCA in Newcastle. He balances work with earning credits to graduate on time. With his family, a brother and a sister, he struggles toward housing stability. The positive experiences of building camp relationships and outdoor experiences have helped Kenneth tackle these challenges with hope.

### **We never know whose lives we affect**

STAY Connected cultivates hope in these special young people throughout the pivotal young-adult years. Through growth and challenge, exploration and hardship, young people learn to strive toward who they want to be. STAY Connected supports and nurtures our members throughout that growing maturity. We nurture with tangible items, such as cell phones (so we can always be in touch), bus passes, food, camps, clothing, etc. We add the relational labor of coaching them to stay on track for graduation. We help with transcripts, tutoring, college applications, financial aid paperwork, and individual discussions to map next steps. Above all, STAY Connected encourages youth to see possibilities—even in times of hardship—to have hope for their future and to believe that they can create that future.

An interconnected system of people who see greatness beyond the surface makes all this possible. Like all young men, Emil and Kenneth's journey will define their dreams and make them reality if they have supportive relationships. Any young person setting out on their



---

*I've watched Emil mature into his own sense of self from the time he was a camper.*

*I fondly remember him singing in a camp talent show. The standing ovation he received affirmed that people very much appreciate his gifts.*

*One such gift is his sincerity. Emil always asks how he can help people, particularly his campers. His authenticity and his commitment to caring for others shines through in all that he does.*

**Bill Tubbs**  
Executive Director  
Camp Huston

---

## **STAY CONNECTED™**

A community supporting  
teens & young adults

### **BOARD MEMBERS:**

Marian Peiffer,  
President  
Alison Uppendahl, Vice  
President/Secretary  
Lisa Snyder-Stone,  
Treasurer

### **COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS:**

Marci Hennes  
Jeanne Bartlemay  
Ruth Richlen  
Angelica Zackery  
Elizabeth Torres  
Timothy & Kathy Peiffer  
Kevin Torres  
Mergim Xhemaili

Giovanna Torres,  
Case Worker  
Michela Dimond,  
Administrative Assistant

Contact Us or Volunteer  
6800 132nd Place SE, Unit E408  
Newcastle, WA 98059  
425-445-9879

stayconnectedcommunity  
@gmail.com

**Learn more & Donate at:**  
[www.StayConnected  
Community.org](http://www.StayConnectedCommunity.org)

**You can also find us on**  
**Amazon Smile**  
**Benevity (Microsoft Giving)**

**Tax deductible – 501(c)(3)**

Newsletter prepared by  
Marian Peiffer & Michela Dimond

## Member Updates



In June, Emil Davis, Anna Cornwell, and Robin Lyons-Santiago graduated

from high school.

### Giovanna Torres

graduated with a Master's in Social Work from the University of Washington.

Adell Jeffers has worked in construction nearly a year. His boss considers him indispensable.



Elana Ronda attended Washington Business Week at Seattle University. She was greeted by Elen Trenth, Business Week leader and alum, who is now in nursing school at the University of Washington.

Kenneth Washington, Serena Beauchamp, and Emil Davis all worked at camp this past summer and were leaders for younger STAY members and others in their camp communities.



Kenneth works as a lifeguard at the Coal Creek YMCA.

### Other milestones we are celebrating:

Angela Walker started nursing school.

JB Riziki earned his GED credential and started Bellevue College.

Joel Torres, Adell, and JB passed their knowledge tests for the driver's permit.

Joel is back at Seattle Central studying Math.

Tristan Skinner continues his work on a degree in Computer Science at Everett Community College.

own hits bumps. The network at STAY Connected helps them sort those out. Our members know they have many lifelines only a phone call away.

We also teach through adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and resilience workshops an understanding of the impact that ACEs have on the adult lives of children who experience trauma. Our workshops are for members of our community—both young adults who are connected to STAY and mature adult supporters from our neighborhoods—to learn together how ACEs change lives and how we can help recover from trauma through the power of collective reflection and hope.

Giovanna Torres, who uses her professional social-work training with STAY, led our last workshop for STAY Connected youth members, after an earlier workshop for adult STAY community members.

“ACEs, a well-researched concept, pose a serious public health risk because the experiences get stored at an early age and manifest themselves throughout every developmental phase. Childhood trauma increases the likelihood of disease, disability, social problems, health risk behaviors, social, emotional, and cognitive impairment, as well as reduced life expectancy. Research tells us that *if we share the details of ACEs with those truly affected*—our members—there is hope for recovery. In April we engaged 15 of our young-adult members in our first youth ACEs workshop. Our presentation included ‘Antidotes for Balance’—strategies to help alleviate the impacts of childhood trauma. Members brainstormed ways to care for their physical, social-emotional, and mental selves while engaging in discussions about intergenerational trauma. Most importantly, our members had space to process their experiences, shared or unshared. Together, they found hope of healing.”

STAY continues educating, supporting, and strengthening hope within our community. Positive community connections provide protection against the long term impact of housing instability, insufficient food, trauma, difficult family situations, and limited enrichment experiences which often persist for generations. Even with negative experiences, young men like Emil and Kenneth show us that with hope, resiliency can build in the face of adversity.

STAY needs your donations to continue our community education outreach and relationship development with young people. These efforts help our young members build hope and resiliency. Our youth members also continue to need concrete supports for basic needs and enrichments so they can thrive.

### Please give generously today to support youth with relationships and enrichment that build success:

- \$500 provides a one-week experience at camp including a sleeping bag, camp supplies & transportation.
- \$250 provides a basic cell phone for one year, which keeps us connected to our young members.
- \$200 buys clothes for a teenager and a guided shopping trip to help them learn to shop for value.
- \$40 provides a movie & simple meal for a youth member and a friend—a connection to healthy relationships.

Donate by mail or online at [StayConnectedCommunity.org](http://StayConnectedCommunity.org)

Many thanks from all of us—adults and youth—at STAY Connected for your support and your donation.

With Sincerity,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marian Peiffer".

Marian Peiffer, President

---

*STAY has given my daughter the opportunities that I couldn't. She is confident and knows her worth. If she wants something bad enough, STAY is there to support her drive for success.*

*I am forever thankful.*

Jennifer Ronda  
 STAY Connected Parent