



Los Angeles County
Department of Public Health
Youth Advisory Council
2019





About the Youth Advisory Council

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Youth Advisory Council is a newly formed group of youth brought together to increase youth involvement within the Department. The Council is part of the Department's new Positive Youth Development Initiative that aims to promote positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities that build on strengths and empower next-generation changemakers to reach their full potential.



The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Youth Advisory Council will serve as a channel through which young people gain work experience, acquire new skills, develop a greater sense of empowerment and membership, and forge meaningful connections through civic engagement. Council members will work directly with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health to advise and make appropriate recommendations regarding health issues of special interest to youths within the Los Angeles County, and help guide the work of the Department.



The 2019 Youth Advisory Council includes 15 youth ages 16-22 residing all throughout Los Angeles County. Council members are each placed within a Service Planning Area from which they reside to engage in regional efforts to address the wellbeing of their communities. The Youth Advisory Council meets monthly, where they all come together to receive leadership training, build relationships, and work in partnership with Department leadership. Members of the council serve for one term (February 2019 to December 2019) with an option to serve a second term. There will be eleven official Youth Advisory Council meetings during the 2019 term, held monthly on select Saturdays.

Our mission as the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Youth Advisory Council is to promote the well-being, and advocate in the best interests of all youth in Los Angeles County. As a youth advisory council, we will collaborate with DPH leadership to identify wide scale health issues plaguing the community to improve the welfare of LA County youth.



Destiny Piña

Service Planning Area 1

Placement Location: Antelope Valley
Public Health Center

Destiny Pina is a senior at Antelope Valley High School in Lancaster, CA. She started her community service in junior high as an anti-bullying team member. In this role, she traveled to elementary schools as a mentor to teach students how to prevent bullying. Destiny served as president of freshman senate and vice president of sophomore senate, she learned what it entails to lead, talk in large groups of people and be responsible. As treasurer of ASB (Associated Student Body), she was in charge of finance for school activities and functions. Destiny is Vice President of the Forever Friends club where she advocates for the best interests of its members, the special education students at AV High School. In addition to her school and extracurricular activities, Destiny is also employed with the City of Lancaster, providing after school daycare to elementary school children.

While on the Youth Advisory Council, Destiny hopes to gain more confidence and grow as a leader. Destiny aspires to be the voice that represents the local youth by creating a safer environment, providing resources to those who are troubled or in need, and raising awareness of bullying. Her future plans include attending California State University Northridge next school year to study Public Health Administration. In Destiny’s free time, she enjoys playing soccer. She is encouraged every day to stand with integrity by Abraham Lincoln’s quote, “I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true. I am not bound to succeed, but I am bound to live up to what light I have.”



Crystal Parra

Service Planning Area 2

Placement Location: Zev Yaroslavsky
Family Support Center

Crystal Alexandra Parra is a junior at Vaughn International Studies Academy in Pacoima, CA. Crystal plays on the varsity softball team at her school. She takes pride in being a student athlete and interacting with different teammates. Aside from sports, she likes to wok on school projects, and getting involved in different community outreaches and social advocacy efforts in her neighborhood. Crystal also enjoys donating blood to Providence Holy Cross Hospital to help people who will are in need. Crystal has also volunteered at a local elementary school as an assistant coach for 4th- and 5th-grade cheerleader athletes to help them perform in local school competitions.

One of Crystal’s most rewarding experience thus far has been getting through the challenges of her third year of high school. Another proud accomplishment has been successfully passing her driving test, which has allowed her to drive her brothers and herself to school everyday. Crystal is exploring her future career goals but has interests in working with the FBI detective or the equine industry to work with horses. Crystal hopes that being part of the Youth Advisory Council will help her gain more leadership skills and discover different ways to help make her community a better and safer place.



Aaron-John Lee

Service Planning Area 3

Placement Location: Monrovia Public Health Center

Aaron John Lee (“AJ”) is a Junior at Eagle Rock Jr./Sr. High School, in Eagle Rock. Aaron has a strong passion for playing tennis and serving his community. One of Aaron’s major accomplishments has been starting a Team HBV chapter at his school that aims to improve knowledge about Hepatitis B and the disease’s prevalence. This chapter is one of numerous in high schools across California, which are sponsored by The Asian Liver Center in Stanford — an organization dedicated to the prevention of Hepatitis B in Asian countries. Seeing the impact this organization has on many individuals has inspired Aaron to feel that he can make a positive change in anyone’s life.

In addition to the Team HBV Chapter, Aaron is involved with Nature Club, Key Club, and Tennis club. Aaron feels great passion for all the efforts he’s involved in, but his greatest dedication is to the Tennis Club. He has been playing tennis since he was five years old and continues to develop his game to improve himself and his team. Currently, he is the top Singles player and captain at Eagle Rock High. His goal for the team is to always motivate them to be better than themselves yesterday. Aaron greatly believes in Malcolm X’s quote: “The future belongs to those who prepare for it today.” Aaron believes preparing today allows you to control the future, and is determined to make a change in his community today to make the future brighter for everyone else.



Alyssa DeLaTorre

Service Planning Area 3

Placement Location: Monrovia Public Health Center

Alyssa DeLaTorre is a senior at San Marino High School in San Marino, CA. Alyssa plans to attend Pasadena Community College for two years then transfer to major in psychology and pursue a minor in dance. One of Alyssa’s major accomplishments to date has been becoming a student/ peer counselor at her school. In this role, she provides support to students who prefer speaking to a peer rather than an adult counselor. Alysa has also been a participant in a self-defense class for young females and had the distinct privilege of being chosen by Peace Over Violence (non-profit organization) for an exclusive interview by Spectrum for Teen Dating Violence Awareness month.

Alyssa would like to become a psychologist to help teens and adults manage and overcome difficult life circumstances. Alyssa also loves to sing and dance as her hobbies. She feels dance and music allows her to express herself more efficiently and wants to become a dance teacher to show others the art of dance. Alyssa is also very passionate about Disney, specifically Disneyland. This is a place Alyssa can be herself and enjoy her free time. As part of the Youth Advisory Council, Alyssa hopes to learn more about the field of public health and apply her knowledge in daily life and to help her community. She also wishes to make many new friendships along in the process.



Janne Manansala

Service Planning Area 4

Placement Location: Central Public Health Center

Janne Manansala is a freshman at West Los Angeles College, in Culver City, CA. She is currently taking general education courses needed to transfer to a California State University. Janne would like to follow in the steps of her sister and become a Registered Nurse and make a difference in people's lives. Janne aspires to graduate college with a Bachelor's degree in Nursing, and the further her education with a Master's degree. She is passionate about helping others, learning new things, and maintaining healthy relationships with her family and important people in her life.

One of Janne's most recent accomplishments was graduating from Los Angeles Senior High School. Another recent accomplishment for Janne includes adopting healthier eating habits and losing fifteen pounds. At risk of being overweight, Janne's commitment to her workout plan, and eating better, has paid off and she looks forward to continuing living a healthier lifestyle.

As a member of the Youth Advisory Council, Janne hopes to gain leadership skills, a better understanding of the community she lives in, and how to help people with ongoing issues in their community. Janne wants to make a positive change that will impact many lives and come up with solutions to the issues many communities face.



Rebeka Gallardo

Service Planning Area 4

Placement Location: Central Public Health Center

Rebeka Gallardo is a senior at North Hollywood Zoo Magnet High School in Griffith Park. She is an advocate for indigenous rights, environmental conservation, and is passionate about making a positive change for the world. Rebeka participates in multiple communities including the indigenous community, LGBTQ+ community, and scientific community. Her hobbies include learning indigenous languages, volunteering in environmental clean-ups, and reading non-fiction scientific books.

Rebeka interns at the Los Angeles Zoo where she works one-on-one with the keepers and animals, providing enrichment and maintaining clean animal exhibits. She has been fortunate enough to fly to the Galapagos Islands and Quito, Ecuador where she studied the various cultures and native wildlife. Rebeka has also participated in United American Indian Involvement (UAI) events including the United National Indian Tribal Youth (UNITY) conference that recently took place in San Diego, CA. UNITY is a conference where thousands of indigenous youth gather together to develop leadership skills and discuss the national issues affecting indigenous lives where youth can then take home their experience to create solutions within their own smaller communities.

As part of the Youth Advisory Council, Rebeka hopes to further develop her public speaking skills and create new networks where she can learn to direct her passions. The Department of Public Health Youth Advisory Council is an opportunity for Rebeka to continue pursuing her passion to make the world better one day at a time.



Cynthia Gonzalez-Ramos

Service Planning Area 6

Placement Location: Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Public Health

Cynthia Gonzalez is a junior attending King Drew Magnet High School Of Medicine and Science in Willowbrook. She is actively involved in her community and dedicated to helping others. She has worked with MO4Paws, a non-profit organization that helps animals get rescued; Progress for Progress (P4P), a program that teaches young adults about careers in the medical field; Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA), a program that promotes career opportunities in the health care industry. Additionally, Cynthia has taken advantage of the specialty programs offered by King/Drew which include Career Technical Education (CTE) courses and the Health Careers program. Cynthia's participation in these organizations and programs provided a solid foundation for leadership skills, time management skills, and technical proficiency skills. She is constantly seeking opportunities to get involved in her community and is currently a volunteer at the Avalon Villa Care Center, a facility for senior citizens.

Cynthia's future goals include helping her community by informing her peers on nutrition, mental health, and healthier lifestyles. Cynthia wants to encourage teens to share their opinions and become involved in social issues. Aside from her community service, Cynthia enjoys singing, cooking, baking, watching her favorite television programs, and playing competitive Badminton. While on the Youth Advisory Council, she hopes to strengthen her leadership and networking skills.



Xiomara Gonzalez-Ramos

Service Planning Area 6

Placement Location: Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Public Health

Xiomara Gonzalez is a Junior at King Drew Magnet High School Of Medicine and Science in Willowbrook. Xiomara has a passion for helping her community in many ways, much like her twin sister and fellow YAC member, Cynthia. Xiomara has been various programs, including CTE (Careers Technical Program) and HOSA (Health Occupation Students of America), and as a volunteer for a non-profit organization called MO4PAWS that helps with animal adoptions. She is currently in another program call P4P (Progress for Progress) which helps the students get to create a project that helps the community, her project was helping the elderly community. During her spare time, she also volunteers at a nursing home, and at the VA where she helps patients by transporting them to appointments.

Xiomara has realized the impact she can have through her service-learning projects. Her motivation to take on larger projects and more powerful campaigns has increased, and she is continually proposing and planning events, conferences, and activities. As part of the Youth Advisory Council, Xiomara hopes to acquire new skills, grow as a leader and adequately develop service-learning and education assets. Serving on the Council is an experience that she is honored to have. She is thrilled to collaborate with an astonishing organization and insightful members. In addition to her service, she enjoys expressing creativity through singing, cooking, baking and doing good in school. He personal mission statement is: " To help the community around us and to treat everyone with equal respect. "



Jennifer Gomez

Service Planning Area 6

Placement Location: Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Public Health

Jennifer Gomez is a junior at King/Drew Magnet High School of Medicine and Science located in Willowbrook. She is actively involved in a Planned Parenthood program where she provides education on sexual health to young adults. Jennifer is an adventurous individual, as she enjoys exploring, participating, and discovering new and unique experiences. This has enabled her to participate in several volunteering opportunities which often involve assisting animals or people within her community. Some of the organizations that she has been actively involved in include the Midnight Mission in Skid Row Downtown, Los Angeles, Stray Cat Alliance in Jefferson Park, and MO4PAWS. Jennifer is proud to have received a scholarship from The Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) - a non-profit organization that promotes international education and exchange, to study abroad in Ferrara, Italy.

Jennifer aspires to become a resource for her community. One of her goals includes helping to tackle health and social issues that plague youth culture, such as bullying and the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases amongst the teens. At King/Drew, she is involved in a variety of clubs such as School Site Council, the Principal's Council, MESA, and Planned Parenthood. Jennifer successfully balances the responsibilities of her academic obligations, volunteer work, and extracurricular activities. She enjoys playing badminton, binge watching her favorite TV shows, hiking, and reading. Jennifer's greatest joy is giving back to her community!



Fabiola Nuñez

Service Planning Area 6

Placement Location: Ruth Temple Public Health Center

Fabiola Nunez is a Junior at Piera Barbaglia Shaheen Health Services Academy in Los Angeles. She has a huge passion for animals, and spends most of her time playing with her dog or practicing make-up. Fabiola has many goals and believes that challenging yourself is the biggest route to success. Fabiola plans to attend a university like UCLA, where she would like to pursue a career as a veterinarian and help reduce the number of homeless animals.

Fabiola's biggest supporter has been her school counselor, who has encouraged her to step out of her comfort zone and be more involved in school activities by joining many clubs. She is currently involved in ASB, Rise, and the Newspaper club. Her biggest accomplishment took place in her ASB class, where she successfully organized a Halloween school event her first year in ASB. Another of Fabiola's accomplishments was winning second place in her karate tournament. The experience taught her about her ability to push through challenges and continuously improve on her weaknesses. Fabiola's counselor also encouraged her to have more involvement outside of her school, which is why she decided to join the Youth Advisory Council. Fabiola hopes to gain more knowledge about the kind of problems her community often faces and make a positive impact.



Daniel Trigo

Service Planning Area 7

Placement Location: Whittier Public Health Center

Daniel Trigo is a senior high school student at the Applied Technology Center (ATC) in Montebello, CA. During the past four years, Daniel has studied in Health-Sciences Career and Technical Education classes and has learned about mental health and how it affects the human body. Part of his work this year includes his major senior Capstone project, where he is researching tobacco addiction among minority populations in hopes to create new ways in teaching about tobacco advertising's subtle messages. His next goal will be to graduate college with a Bachelor's degree in Psychology so that he can practice Clinical Psychology.

Outside of the classroom, he has also participated in other programs that have made an impact in his community in Montebello. He was an Energy Ambassador in the Montebello Unified School District Energy Ambassador Program throughout 2018 and helped consult with Montebello and Bell Gardens residents on reducing energy usage to help the environment. He is also involved in clubs at the ATC, such as his school's chapter National Alliance on Mental Illness, in which he has made efforts to break the stigma of mental health among his peers. Now, he is part of the Youth Advisory Council and hopes to show his community that anyone can make a difference when it comes to supporting each other's health.



Gisselle Gonzalez-Perez

Service Planning Area 7

Placement Location: Whittier Public Health Center

Gisselle Gonzalez-Perez is a striving junior at the Applied Technology Center High School in Montebello, CA. Being ranked at the top five at her school shows how education is paramount in Gisselle's life and strongly lives by Nelson Mandela quote, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." One of her biggest high school goals is to earn an Associate's Degree before she graduates. Gisselle plans on majoring in biology, and continuing her education to earn a Master's Degree in Public Health, and a Medical Degree to become a doctor.

Gisselle is actively involved within her school and community. She has recently been invited for her second time to attend HOSA (Health Occupations Students of America), State Leadership Conference in Sacramento, CA. She helps students in her school live a drug-free life and spreads awareness on the importance of mental health, as President of an organization called Friday Night Live as well as the National Alliance of Mental Illness. Any chance she gets, Gisselle enjoys volunteering at a local organization, Heart of Compassion, where she helps give food to low-income families.

In her free time, Gisselle enjoys visiting different beaches, going on road trips, and off-roading with her family. Gisselle is honored to be part of the Department of Public Health Youth Advisory Council. While being part of the Youth Advisory Council, Gisselle wants to improve the well-being of youth in Los Angeles. Her goal is to create youth-related projects that will impact her community by working alongside Public Health professionals and other youth.



Jayla Williams

Service Planning Area 8

Placement Location: Curtis Tucker
Public Health Center

Jayla Williams is a senior at Inglewood High School in Inglewood, CA. Jayla's passion is drawing creatures in her comics. She was recently accepted to Otis College of Art and Design to major in Animation and Toy design, where she will be able to work towards her goal of becoming an Animator and Mangaka (an anime comic author) and entertain people with her animations or manga (anime comic).

Jayla is actively involved in various school activities and clubs. Jayla participates in the ASB (Active Student Body) to plan fun activities and raise money for senior events. Jayla is also a member of the GSA (Gay Straight Alliance) to help people understand the LGBTQ+ community. Jayla participates on the Robotics Club to help people with school robot competitions. One of Jayla's greatest accomplishments has been creating the Otaku Club, where she serves as President. The Otaku Club focuses efforts on recruiting kids that have been labeled "nerds" and/or "geeks" who are too shy to come together in harmony to enjoy things we have in common, like Anime and games.

Jayla is also active outside of school and helps with the Teen Center and FNL (Friday Night Lights) by getting other youth involved with their programs. Jayla's hobbies are reading graphic novels, traditional novels, drawing anything, making plushies, and being creative. In her role with the Youth Advisory Council, Jayla hopes to gain more leadership skills and learn ways to improve her community.



Roxitzel Perez

Service Planning Area 8

Placement Location: Curtis Tucker
Public Health Center

Roxitzel Perez ("Roxy") is currently a junior at Piera Barbaglia Shaheen Health Services Academy in Los Angeles. Roxy loves reading and would like to be a great writer in the future. Since freshman year, Roxy has focused on advancing her studies by taking college courses outside of school. She has completed college classes in English, Child Development, Criminal Justice, and currently taking a sociology class.

Always a big dreamer, Roxy wants to explore the world. Her curiosity and interest in connecting with people is very important to her. She especially loves to visit big cities, surrounded with lots of people and lights. Her dream is to go to New York and attend New York University. Roxy is very interested in helping society in any way she possibly can. Roxy hopes that being a part of the DPH Youth Advisory will provide her with experience to learn how to effectively engage with others, and different methods to help.