

A Place Where Potential Meets Purpose

Imagine growing up in a neighborhood where gunshots are more common than cars backfiring and you're 11 years old and know the difference. Imagine being 12 years old and your 17-year-old uncle whom you look up to is arrested for murder and facing a life sentence. Now, imagine that your mom had you at 16, you don't know your dad, and your family is barely keeping their heads above water.

That, unfortunately is the reality of many of the children and teens growing up in zip code 32209; once labeled as the "Killing Fields of Jacksonville" by the Florida Times Union and holding the dubious distinction of the highest murder rate in the county for the last decade plus.

The MaliVai Washington Youth Foundation offers a solid alternative to the streets and provides structure, compassion and education to youth growing up with challenges and neighborhood rife with violence. MWYF offers a warm, family like environment where youth understand—as member of this organization--that they have no chance BUT to succeed. MWYF also provides the resources that youth need not only to survive—but to thrive--...day in and day out.... from Kindergarten through adulthood.

OUR CHALLENGE

Ten years ago, MWYF embarked on a journey to open a state of the art Youth Center in an impoverished neighborhood in Durkeeville. With a 9200 square foot building opened in 2008, we were confident—at that time—that the building would serve the needs of youth and teens for decades to come. Now, with the success of our after school and summer programs, we have outgrown the Youth Center space and additional space at the adjacent Emmett Reed Center. Further, our fastest growing program is our teen program-serving middle and high school students. Currently, this program is based in two rooms at the Emmett Reed Center and serves 76 students. There is no separate space for middle and high school students, and no space for the unique needs of teens—no workspaces for a strong elective program for them to explore different educational and career opportunities, no space for a teaching kitchen, no place for them to call 'home' where they can relax and socialize with other teens. In short, though we have youth center and some classrooms for teens, we have no dedicated space where they can come together to talk, discuss challenges, learn and grow together.

A SOLUTION

We plan to utilize unoccupied land adjacent to the Emmett Reed Center and across from the current Youth Center and tennis courts to develop a new Teen Center to create an educational and social center for teens as part of our growing Durkeeville. With these expanded facilities, we'll be able to more effectively serve our teens in our current programs while adding additional programs and activities to support our teens and the community at large. We will develop the land (part of the City of Jacksonville Park System, as is our current location) as leasehold improvements.

Our goal is to build an environmentally friendly, intelligent green building with flexibility for multi-use space. The facility will include study rooms, multi-use activity rooms, a game room, multimedia room (including a mix studio and theater) and teaching kitchen, along with administrative offices. (So as not

to be duplicative, we will continue to utilize the Emmett Reed gym and Mal Washington Youth Center tennis courts for recreational activities). The City of Jacksonville has agreed to partner with us once more to help us expand the services we provide and is currently finalizing legislation to amend our current lease to include this footprint.

HOW WILL IT HELP?

Providing this dedicated space for teens will allow us to **nearly double** the number of young people that we currently serve in our programs. In addition to serving more teens, some space at the current Youth Center will be converted to elementary classrooms. We envision a variety of activities to take place in the Teen Center: Our current TnT afterschool leadership program (for 6th-12th grade students), a career and college prep component (for our members and neighborhood students to participate in which will include test preparation, social skills classes, college tours and application assistance and first employment opportunities-including classes on how to successfully get and keep a job). In addition, future plans include hosting Friday and Saturday evening social activities which will be open to the community. We anticipate partnering with other organizations in order to expand the breadth and width of our organization's reach.

WHY NOW?

The personal and emotional price of not developing a Teen Center has never been higher. Dozens of teens have lost their lives in the past year due to violence and the zip code continues to hold the dubious distinction of having the highest homicide rate in Duval County in 2017 (more than double the next highest adjacent zip code) as well as the highest juvenile crime rate and teen pregnancy rate. The need for additional space, programs and resources for this age demographic in this location has never been greater. And our new Teen Center will be a safe haven and offer much-needed support.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

To fund the expansion and renovation project, MWYF's Board of Directors and Staff have launched a **\$5 million** capital campaign. Our goal is to make sure that every young person who enters our program doors, no matter where they are from, has a chance to succeed.

The goal includes all costs associated with the project:

- Construction Costs \$2,225,000 (10,000 x \$225 square foot)
- Architectural Fees \$ 125,000
- Renovation for additional program space \$ 315,000 (1,400 x \$225 square foot)
- FF&E \$ 250,000
- Contingencies \$ 437,250 (15%)
- Promotion Costs \$ 50,000
- Contractor Manager \$ 60,000
- Campaign Support Staff \$ 50,000
- Endowment \$ 1,500,000

TOTAL: \$5,000,000

HOW YOU CAN HELP: AN INVITATION TO JOIN US

We invite you to help make this new haven and resource for teens a reality. Join us in honoring the success of our alumni and supporting the success of current and future teens who live, go to school or visit the 32209 zip code. Your support can not only help change a life...it may save one. Please consider helping us to create a dedicated space and programs for teens in the toughest zip code in Jacksonville. We respectfully request that you consider a campaign gift or pledge to support this goal. Thank you for considering financial support for this project. Together we can serve hope and change lives.

MISSION

Our mission is to develop champions in classrooms, on tennis courts and throughout communities.

VISION

Our vision is that the young people who participate in our programs will be provided with the resources they need to rise to their full potential and become contributing members of society.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

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