



**National Football League  
Youth Impact Program  
Final Report 2012**



## A Letter From Our Founder

Dear Youth Impact Program Supporter,

We are pleased to present to you a comprehensive overview of the 2012 Youth Impact Program. We are proud to inform you that for the second consecutive year we held a tremendously successful program at Stanford University. We also debuted a new program at one of our nation's Historical Black Colleges, Texas Southern University with success.

At the Stanford program, we enjoyed strong support from the ownership of the winning San Francisco 49ers, Dr. York coupled with 2nd year Head Coach, David Shaw of Stanford's great football program. Additionally we were supported by the winning Houston Texans NFL franchise. These are strong identifiable winning brands, people and teams that drove motivation and desire for our at-risk youth to not only participate in the camps but come away with tangible results that will help change and provide opportunity. It was a fully integrated team and community partnership that included the public school districts, teachers, NCAA student athletes and University staff. This made the Youth Impact Program not only successful but special for the under privileged youth in Houston, East Palo Alto, and East San Jose.

The following report has been written to provide a detailed account of the real impact our camps had on the lives of hundreds of under-served young men through their participation in our program.

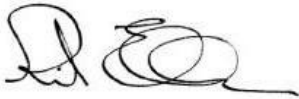
The 2012 Youth Impact Program raised over \$250,000 in support from individual donors, corporate sponsors, grants, and in-kind donations. In addition to the Universities who hosted the camps, key partners for this year's programs included the NFL Youth Football Fund, SMART Technologies, BP Foundation, Microsoft, Wells Fargo, the San Francisco 49ers, Stanford Alumni, and Riddell.

This year, the Youth Impact Program overcame the hurdles inevitably associated with starting a new program at Texas Southern University thanks to strong partnerships and leadership of Representative Shelia Jackson Lee to transcend the lure of football into providing academic, life skills and improving opportunities that are so important for the future success for these participating youth. Both of our programs addressed head on the proper contact and tackling by teaching our young boys correct techniques to help in the prevention of concussions that are an issue that has been widely publicized this past year.

This summer's camps succeeded in providing an authentic NCAA student-athlete campus experience, complete with food and clothing, to 126 under privileged young men. In addition to providing access to these learning Universities within their own communities and relationships with role models and mentors we have given them a stronger sense of self, hope and leadership, which they will carry with them throughout their high school years and their entire lives.

I look forward to discussing the past, current, and future achievements of the Youth Impact Program with all of you in more detail. For now, though, I wanted to thank you for all of your personal efforts and support in helping the 2012 Youth Impact Program meet its goals. We could not have been successful without your support. We resolve to grow this program until we have put in place strong mentors for the at-risk youth of every major urban area in America.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Riki Ellison', with a stylized, cursive script.

Riki Ellison

## Executive Summary

The Youth Impact Program is an innovative program that acts as a catalyst to promote positive development, and encourage an interest in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) fields in low-income, urban-based, at-risk middle school males. Based in the community, YIP builds resiliency by providing minority at-risk boys with a free summer STEM based academic and football training camp program that promotes character development, enhancement of academic skills, and social interaction activities. This year the YIP program served 126 young men between the ages of 10 and 14. All boys (100%) were members of ethnic or racial minorities. The YIP Program operates with support from the National Football League (NFL) and is currently run in partnership with two key university partners: Stanford University, and Texas Southern University.

Overall, the boys showed great growth during the program; moreover, these gains were statistically documented and verified in ongoing YIP evaluation efforts.

Highlights of this year's impacts include:

- The largest ever improvements in mathematics test scores.
- The largest ever improvements in language arts skills.
- Academically, overall this group of boys is now three to five months ahead of peers who did not participate in a reading or other educational program.
- A significant number of "veteran" boys who have attended the camp more than once continue to demonstrate that the YIP program impacts last more than a year.
- Parental reported improvements in attitude, goals, and efforts in school.
- Parental reported improvements in parental and child relationships.
- Parental reported decreases in negative behaviors over the summer.

YIP has clearly made a significant impact to the lives of boys who need a chance at a better life. We are also extremely pleased by this year's media coverage as well as continued strong Congressional support for the program.



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*The NFL Youth Football Fund Mission*

*To use football as a catalyst to promote positive youth development, support youth and high school football nationwide, and ensure the health of football in future generations.*

## Introduction

### Overview of the Youth Impact Program (YIP)

The YIP is an innovative program that acts as a catalyst to promote positive youth development in low-income, urban-based, at-risk middle school males. Over ninety percent of YIP's program participants meet the national guidelines for low income. Based in the community, YIP builds resiliency by providing minority at-risk boys with a STEM based academic and football summer training camp program that promotes character development, academic skills enhancement, and social interaction at no charge to the participant. Adult role models to include teachers and mentors provide camaraderie, guidance, and discipline while introducing these boys to the world of higher education. At the same time, the program provides academic support and guidance counseling to help struggling children build confidence and develop an interest in learning.

YIP is an innovative and collaborative effort that brings together Universities, community leaders, parents, local agencies, and national organizations like the National Football League to make substantial and measurable differences in the lives of the disadvantaged youth in inner cities. Major goals of this program are to decrease middle school and high school dropout rates, prevent gang involvement, promote team building traits, develop skilled football players for high school programs, and promote a lifelong love of football.



*"This camp was one of the best things to ever happen to our son. He has grown so much and I just want to thank [YIP] for everything they have done."*

*– Parent of 2012 YIP participant*

YIP program staff members, including partnering University and local school district personnel, teach a combination of enrichment classes during the summer. Class subjects include STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and football training, providing program participants with the education and tools to develop a positive outlook on life, a set of strong values, and an improved self-image. By the end of the program, participants have built an enhanced resiliency that will serve and protect them well into the future.

### **Risk Factors of YIP Youth**

We have known for several years about the importance of the formative period of adolescence that the boys in this program are in. It is a time when adolescents are profoundly shaped by the presence or absence of several different factors, including family resources, community services, and educational and educational development opportunities. This is particularly true for minority boys living in urban poverty. Long-term developmental studies have shown that children, especially those living in inner cities, have a harder time coping with the stresses of high-risk environments, are more likely to abuse drugs and alcohol, are more likely to engage in criminal activity, are more sexually promiscuous, and are more likely to attempt suicide.

The YIP program attempts to target participants that are among the highest risk group possible. As reported in prior YIP reports, YIP has conducted an extensive assessment of the risk factors that the YIP youth have in their lives and how this compares to the larger population. Results of this assessment confirmed that there were significantly more risk factors for youth participating in the YIP camps as compared to most children their age, and that the YIP program serves a high-risk population. Significant risk factor baseline differences were found in many areas including:

- Coping skills;
- Conflict resolution skills;
- Empathy for others;
- Communication skills;
- Positive relationships with peers;
- Social support resources from peers;
- Having friends who get into a lot of trouble;
- Academic performance;
- Problem/ antisocial/ criminal behaviors;
- Exposure to and use of alcohol and other drugs;
- Positive relationship with parents.

*"Last summer [my son] kept getting into trouble with his friends. This summer was much better as [YIP] kept him busy in a good way"*

*-Parent of 2012 YIP participant*

## The Youth Impact Program Model

At its core YIP works by developing resiliency in boys and giving them the opportunity to experience success. Resilience has been described as the capacity of all individuals to transform and change, no matter what the risks. It is an innate “self-righting mechanism.” Resilience skills include the ability to form relationships, to problem-solve, to develop a sense of identity, and to plan and hope. Research has demonstrated that a capacity for resilience is an important reason why some adolescents successfully navigate risky social settings while others who are similarly situated adopt dangerous lifestyles characterized by drug use, unprotected sexual behavior, dropping out of school, delinquency, gang membership, and violence.

The key finding in resilience research and in the YIP program is the power of caring individuals to tip the scales from risk-taking to resilience. Mentors and teachers can provide and model protective factors to buffer risk and enable positive development. This is done by meeting basic needs for safety, love, belonging, respect, power, accomplishment, learning, and ultimately, meaning. Further, research has documented specific factors that facilitate resilience, including caring relationships, positive and high expectations, and opportunities to participate and contribute. All of these are key aspects of the YIP experience.

In addition to building resiliency YIP enhances the critical STEM academic skills via a summer education experience that helps the youth increase their level of functioning when most children are losing academic skills over the summer period. This summer education experience has been proven to increase skill and positive attitudes towards these fundamental educational components and helps the youth experience academic success in the following school year.



Finally YIP has been proven to help to fill the gap in athletic development and enjoyment of sports that has been created by cuts in middle and junior high school football programs across the country. The Youth Impact Program is helping to rebuild youth tackle football as an effective feeder system for high school programs in the communities we serve, and at the same time helping to ensure the health of football in future generations.



## History of the Youth Impact Program

In 2003, Riki Ellison, a ten-year veteran of the National Football League (NFL) and three-time Super Bowl Champion, had a vision to provide America's at-risk inner-city youth with a positive, life-changing experience. Building on the inherent allure and character-building qualities of football, he developed a combined academic and athletic program that was implemented at T.C. Williams High School in Alexandria, Virginia. Program developers were immediately impressed by the draw that this program had for boys and its ability to create a positive and exciting atmosphere where the youths could learn the lessons of discipline, perseverance, self-respect, and teamwork that organized football has to teach.

While this program was successful and had demonstrated benefits, Mr. Ellison and others realized that what was most needed was a preventive program that would seek to make changes in youth while there was still time to make a significant difference in their chances for long-term personal and academic success. It was determined that a program like this could have the greatest impact by targeting middle school students, who are at an important transition period in their lives.

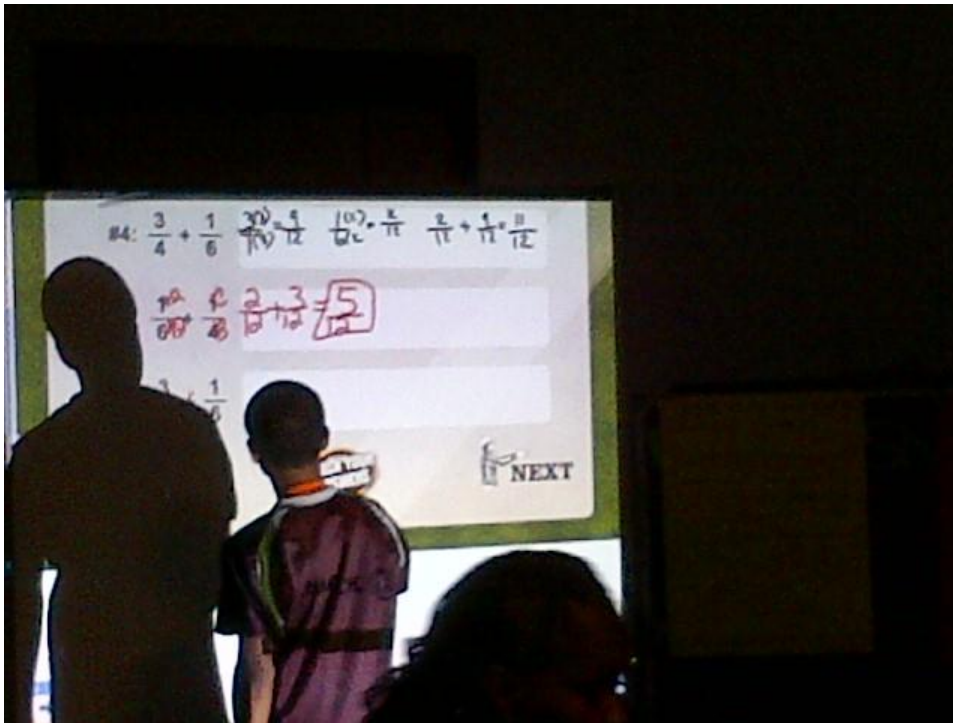
To help create and implement such a program, Mr. Ellison turned to his collegiate alma mater, the University of Southern California (USC). The University of Southern California was an ideal choice because of its rich tradition of football success, its location and reputation in a high-need urban setting (Los Angeles), and its experience with highly effective social service community-based programs. In late 2005, Riki Ellison shared his vision of a preventive football and academic program with key USC faculty and staff. This idea was embraced and enhanced by USC, resulting in a collaborative partnership and the creation of the Youth Impact Program.

With support from the National Football League (NFL), the Youth Impact Program started as a pilot program in the summer of 2006. During the first two years of this pilot program, YIP significantly helped over 250 at-risk middle school boys from neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles. During the 2008-2009 program years YIP also developed programs with Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana, Rice University, the University of South Florida, and Syracuse University. Due to the ongoing economic downturn and budget shortfalls in partnering agencies, in 2010 YIP had to scale back to two active programs.

This year significant continued support was obtained for the program from John Madden and Ronnie Lott, who continued to offer their invaluable guidance and networking. During the 2012 program, YIP co-hosted programs with Stanford University and the Texas Southern University. In total YIP has to date made a difference in the lives of more than 1,500 at-risk youth.



Critical to this success is the partnerships that allow this program to operate and be effective. As the primary sponsor of YIP the National Football League (NFL) Youth Football Fund is the foremost key to the program success. In addition, the local NFL teams which include the San Francisco 49ers, and the Houston Texans. YIP is also fortunate to have the support of the NFL Players Association, and adheres to the goals of the President's Council on Fitness, Sports and Nutrition. For several years YIP has also significantly benefited from the support and involvement of SMART technologies and Halliburton Industries. This year, added in-kind and financial support was also generously given by BP Foundation, Microsoft, Wells Fargo, Riddell as well as the Stanford Alumni and individual sponsors that want to help make a difference in the lives of our at-risk youth.



*"The overall program, I feel was a success. The student athletes have shown academic improvement. They students have expressed the impact this program has made and they have shown it in their actions."*

*– Shanika Singletary YIP teacher*

## The YIP Boys

In the summer of 2012, the YIP program served 126 young men between the ages of 10 and 15. Eighty two of these boys participated in the program at Stanford University, and 44 participated in the program at Texas Southern University.

Students who participated in YIP attended one of the partnering middle schools and had to be transitioning into the 6th, 7th, or 8th grade (due to NCAA rules, 8th graders proceeding to the 9th grade cannot participate). As in past years nearly all boys were members of ethnic or racial minorities, comprised primarily of African-American, and Hispanic youth.

Boys were selected for the program because they attended one of the programs partnering schools, all of which are in high-need and high-risk areas. In addition, the boys had to be recommended for the program by a school counselor and a teacher, meet the federal low-income guidelines, or have parents who did not graduate from a four-year college. Finally, boys selected had to make a commitment to attend the program throughout the duration of camp and to participate in follow-up activities.



## YIP Program Activities

At each campus, students receive intensive and high-level football training, together with more than 40 hours of STEM-aligned, curriculum-based academic instruction in which teachers focus on three core subjects: language arts, mathematics, and life skills. The classroom curriculum is football-themed, which helps to increase motivation and performance by making learning relevant to the boys' lives. All activities are led by highly trained staffs that genuinely care about the boys they are helping.

### Staffing & Staff Training

The funds granted to program camps were used primarily to secure the highly skilled staffs that are critical to the success of these programs. With the NFL/YIP funding, sites were able to recruit and support:

- Certified teachers;
- College student mentors;
- Head coaches and assistant coaches;
- College football players as field coaches and mentors;
- Program managers and curriculum specialists.

Having staff members who are skilled as teachers, coaches, and mentors is extremely important. Fortunately, at Stanford, YIP was able to retain most of its staff from last year, who brought their experience to the program. The program was staffed by a strong mix of football student-athletes, local public school teachers, athletics staff members, and interns. The program did not simply rely on the existing skills of the experienced staff, but also required all YIP teachers and mentors to attend pre-camp training. These sessions focused on getting acquainted with SMART white board technology and understanding proper implementation of the YIP curricula, as well as mastering the on-field learning aspects of the camp. As noted above, all staff were either high school coaches, college coaches, collegiate players, or certificated teachers. The staff also received practical training. Coaches were instructed on how to properly teach all game fundamentals and how to creatively and effectively apply life skill messages and discipline and to tackle without causing concussions to team mates.

*The curriculum was very well written and the students enjoyed learning. Through sports they could relate to the lessons as well as their own lives. I was surprised to see how many boys would read through paragraphs of "CRASH" and make comments like "Miss, that's wrong to treat people like that". These tough boys had true empathy for the underdog.*

*– Diana Murphy,  
YIP teacher with  
28 years of  
experience in  
education*

## Football Training and Development

YIP's program design allows participants to benefit from University athletic departments, student athletes, alumni, and facilities. The football training program component is comprised of team meetings, fundamental skills development, training by position, physical conditioning, and live game play. Each coach and mentor incorporates life skills and discipline into each session in the classroom, on the field, and during all other activities. Discipline and character development are important elements in teaching the young men personal responsibility for their actions in the classroom and on the field.



**Team Meetings:** At daily team meetings, coaches and mentors diagram and review their football plays with the team and explain the role and expectations of each player's position. If applicable, coaches and mentors will watch an instructional football film with their team. Coaches and mentors teach the fundamentals of football and review their game plan with their team.

**On-Field Training and Fundamental Skills Development:** On-field training includes: physical conditioning; applying newly learned fundamentals to live drills; playing full contact football games (both 8-man and 11 on 11); developing and improving current football skills; focusing on offensive positions and skill development; focusing on defensive positions and skill development; teaching basic football fundamentals; teaching teamwork concepts; and building self-esteem and confidence. All basic football fundamentals, such as tackling and blocking, are taught and reviewed at every practice. This structured and controlled environment enables the players to learn at their individual comfort levels. The program provides the participants with step-by-step instruction for every team position.

All practices are broken down into instructional segments that last 15 to 30 minutes. Each position is taught at an upbeat tempo that holds the players' interest throughout the entire practice. Every practice ends with a review of

*"I was really surprised by how much better [my son] has done in school so far this year. It seems like the program really helped him especially in math class."*

*– Parent of 2012 YIP participant*

skills, and the players get to scrimmage and play full contact football games every day.

**Position Meetings:** In addition to mixed peer groups, coaches and mentors each work with a group training for a specific position (QB, RB, WR/TE, OL, DL, LB, CB/S) as a way to focus more intensely on the specific skills needed for that position.

### **STEM Focus**

Students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields provide the workforce for vital military, government and industry jobs, as well as supplying the great thinkers needed to maintain U.S. leadership in technology and innovation. However, there is a serious shortage of young people entering STEM fields today. This fact, coupled with the high-tech workforce needs of the 21st century and the lagging test scores indicating a lack of STEM proficiency among the next generation of explorers, poses a bleak picture of an America left behind.

In 2009, President Obama set an ambitious goal: to move U.S. students from the middle to the top of the pack in math and science achievement over the next decade. One of the major emphases of STEM efforts is to increase the participation and retention of historically underrepresented K-12 youth in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics, or STEM. The YIP program has proven to be uniquely capable of attracting and building the academic interest and capabilities of underrepresented youth in a way that other programs cannot match. This is accomplished by allowing the youth to build basic math skills, experience classroom success, and build an appreciation of science and technology by relying on the lure of organized football.

### **YIP Math Program**

The Youth Impact Math Program emphasizes the application of mathematics to real-world situations. Number skills and mathematical concepts are not presented in isolation, but are linked to sports and situations and contexts that are relevant to the participants' everyday lives.

Each lesson includes time for whole-group instruction as well as small-group, partner, or individual activities. These activities balance teacher-directed instruction with opportunities for open-ended, hands-on exploration and ongoing practice. Students are encouraged to explain and discuss their mathematical thinking in their own words. Opportunities to verbalize their thoughts and strategies give the students the chance to clarify their thinking and gain insights from others.



The math curriculum consists of 13 daily lessons and five math labs. A pre-test is administered at the beginning of camp and a post-test at its conclusion. The 13 daily lessons cover the following areas: integers, fractions, decimals, percents, ratio and proportion, measurement, graphs and charts, data analysis, expressions, and equations. The math labs consisted of extension activities that strengthened these skills and utilized the concepts inside and outside the classroom. The calendar of lessons and activities was tailored to each camp's duration.

Each camp day, the delivery of the math curriculum was broken down into the following format:

- Locker Room (Instruction), 15-20 Minutes. The coach introduced concepts, stated objectives, discussed new vocabulary, explained relevancy, probed for prior knowledge, and illustrated the concepts in a step-by-step manner, regularly checking for understanding and providing immediate feedback, with the assistance of the mentors.
- Practice Field (Guided Practice), 15-20 Minutes. This segment immediately followed the instruction phase and created an opportunity for students to test their knowledge and discover questions or ideas they might have. Mentors and other staff were available to help assess understanding and determine if additional instruction was necessary.
- Game Day (Extension), 20-25 Minutes. This segment gave the students an opportunity to apply the concepts they had just learned in relation to football and other recreational sports. Students were arranged in groups of five to six, with mentors and staff available to answer questions.
- Team Meeting (Assessment), 3-5 Minutes. This aspect of the model began on the third day of the camp and continued each day thereafter. It consisted of addressing a variety of problems and questions to determine if objectives from the previous day had been met.

### Language Arts Program

The YIP Language Arts curriculum is far different from that of the traditional middle school classroom. It allows participants to see themselves as lifelong readers who read for pleasure. The most important piece of this curriculum is the introduction of young adult novels that middle school boys find interesting and engaging because the books are directly linked to the sport of football. The YIP Language Arts curriculum is comprised of 15 lessons that carry a coherent theme throughout the daily activities of Literature Circles and Writer's Workshops.



*"We [my son and I] are getting along better this year, he listens better to me and shows me more respect"*

*– Parent of 2012 YIP participant*

**Literature Circles:** The YIP curriculum places reading responsibility in the hands of the boys, who are grouped in teams of four or five to work together in Literature Circles. Responsibilities are rotated daily for each of the Literature Circle roles throughout the reading and discussion of the selected novel. There are five traditional roles, which are named with football-related positions for YIP purposes and vocabulary. This renaming “gives a nod” to the interests of our young men, thereby allowing more meaningful curriculum connections.

- Linebacker = Vocabulary Enricher, whose job is to be on the lookout for at least two especially important words in the day’s reading.
- Center = Connector, whose job is to find connections between the book and the world outside.
- Quarterback = Character Captain, whose job is to think about and discuss specific personality traits of the character(s) within the book.
- Running Back = Literary Luminary, whose job is to choose at least two sections of the chapter(s) each day to read out loud to the team.
- Tackle = Artful Adventurer, whose job it is to create and share an artistic representation of something from the reading of the day’s chapters.

**Writer’s Workshop:** An important part of the Language Arts Program is the Writer’s Workshop, which allows the boys an opportunity to write about connections they make to the selected novels from happenings in their own lives. Through Writer’s Workshop and the lessons that precede each Writer’s Workshop period, the boys improve their writing skills in the Six Traits of Writing: Ideas, Organization, Voice, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, and Conventions.

During each lesson, staff members work with the boys to pay close attention to the basic writing skills of:

- vocabulary and word meanings;
- clear and concise writing (both prose and poetry);
- correct use of grammar;
- correct use of punctuation; and
- correct use of capitalization.

### **Other YIP Activities**

**Mentoring:** All teachers and mentors are selected from participating middle schools and the local universities, respectively. This allows them to develop long-term relationships with the boys even after the four-week camp, as well as

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*“Every kid dreams of being a star athlete. We are trying to impress upon the young boys that being that star is step 500 and they are at step 1. They have to concentrate on academics life skills and teamwork and realize how valuable that is before they can step on the field to succeed as an athlete.”*

*Syracuse University, Senior Associate Athletics Director Henry Wildhack*

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through post-program follow-up in which the teachers and mentors can evaluate the boys' academic performance throughout the year and offer tutoring/mentoring services to foster success in all aspects of the boys' lives. The low teacher-to-student ratio helps the boys get positive one-on-one time with the teacher and mentors. The teacher and mentors can genuinely get to know the boys, which allow them to better identify areas where the boys need help.

**Character Development:** Throughout camp, various community leaders, including current and former NFL players, discuss character ethics. Many of the conversations are centered on good sportsmanship, academic excellence, anger management, and conflict resolution. Character development is reinforced throughout the entire camp: the boys are being placed in an environment that expects them to abide by a code of conduct. Discipline is always a positive aspect of the camp, as behavior is compared to what is expected of collegiate-level student athletes. The youths respect this and respond well to the structure.

**Meals, Nutrition, and Health:** The daily cafeteria-style, all-you-can-eat meals provided on campus are a significant motivator for participants and allow YIP to directly address problems with malnutrition, inconsistent meals, and discipline. Throughout camp, the boys are educated by staff professionals on how to live a healthy lifestyle and make good food choices. Coaches and mentors eat with the participants to model and encourage healthy eating habits.

**Smart Boards:** The 2012 YIP Program continued the integration of Smart Tech Smart Board Technology into the YIP program format. This technology helps students become engaged and excited about the learning process. In the past we have found that the use of the Smart Boards dramatically increases voluntary participation by the boys and creates excitement around their use of a new technology. The technology gives students an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge in mathematics and language arts in front of the class, instills confidence, and creates a positive learning environment where student success can be celebrated.

SMART TECH's participation and in-kind support of the program for the past four years has been vital to YIP's integrating, promoting and strategizing the programs. This year SMART TECH donated interactive whiteboards to each participating university, which included SMART Response units. SMART Response was used for the pre and post camp assessment and in some cases was donated to the local middle school Teachers for this use in the classroom this fall. SMART through YIP coordinator and Chief Academic Officer Mick



Adkisson has generously donated over \$100,000 worth of boards, training, and time over the past few years.

**Program Evaluation:** YIP continually seeks to make improvements in evaluating the effectiveness of the program. This includes the use of standardized and reliable evaluation instruments for assessing math and vocabulary impacts. Participants are given a pre-test at the beginning of camp and a post-test was administered at the conclusion of camp for all major areas of interest. Assessment instruments were aligned with the curriculum and were based on topics and standards students have or will be instructed in during the course of the regular school year.

For the Mathematics Program, the evaluation covered such topics as operations with integers, fractions, decimals, percents, ratio and proportion, measurement, graphs and charts, data analysis, expressions, and equations.

For the Language Arts Program, concrete outcome indicators were identified within each curriculum (vocabulary drawn from selected novels and growth in writing skills) which were tested at the start of camp and at its finish.

**Parent Focus Group:** For the first time the YIP evaluation sought to better understand the participation and impact of YIP from the perspective of the parent. To accomplish this, randomly selected parents were contacted to see if they would be willing to participate in a virtual focus group. A final group of eight parents - five mothers and three fathers participated in the focus group which was held by means of a conference call process.

Parents were allowed to take the discussion in the direction they wanted to, but were formally asked to discuss and answer the following questions:

- How and why did your son end up participating in YIP?
- How do you think participation in the YIP camp affected your son?
- How was this summer different than last summer for your son?
  - How was this different than when not in YIP?
- Are things different at school or with grades or school work this year?
  - If so how?
- Are things different at home because of YIP?
  - If so how?

*"I wish my son  
could be in this  
camp every year"*

*Parent of 2012  
YIP participant*

## Stanford University

In its second year the YIP at the University of Stanford served 82 at-risk boys. The boys who participated were chosen from middle schools in underprivileged communities including East Palo Alto and East San Jose. The middle schools chosen with help from the San Francisco 49ers, the FLY Program (Fresh Lifelines for Youth) and the district offices of Senator Dianne Feinstein included the 49ers Academy, Willow Oaks, Luther Burbank, and Clyde L. Fischer.

A recent survey of developmental assets among Palo Alto youth indicate that 18 percent of fifth-graders are considered "vulnerable or at risk." That number jumps to 32 percent of middle-school students and 47 percent of high school students.

Given that Founder Riki Ellison played for the San Francisco, 49ers winning three super bowls in the 1980's with their iconic teams, this program was the result of especially strong partnerships. The Stanford YIP has the support of the San Francisco, 49ers Academy and includes Stanford Athletic Director Bob Bowsby, Stanford Head Coach, David Shaw, San Francisco, 49ers Head Coach, Jim Harbaugh, and other representatives from the 49ers.

Stanford is recognized as one of the world's leading institutions. The university was designed to prepare students "for personal success and direct usefulness in life and to promote the public welfare by exercising an influence on behalf of humanity and civilization." The students have opportunities to participate in a remarkable range of activities, from academic courses taught by renowned professors and opportunities for research, independent study and public service to an extraordinary range of extracurricular activities.



## Texas Southern University

In its first year the YIP program at the Texas Southern University located in Houston, Texas served 44 at-risk youth. Texas Southern University and the surrounding community are deeply connected. Research programs are completed for surrounding industries, and current students and alumni keep the Houston community alive with their innovative ideas and outreach programs. Texas Southern University is home to more than 9,500 students in more than 300 undergraduate and graduate academic programs. It is the leading public research university in the vibrant international city of Houston

The Houston Independent School District, with more than 202,000 students and encompassing 301 square miles within greater Houston, is the seventh-largest public-school system in the nation and the largest in Texas. The Houston Unified School District has very high dropout rates for older students with more than twice the number of students in elementary school (107,508) as they have in high school (47,704).

Texas Southern University in its first year had amazing success due to the variety of stakeholders in the program. Some of the highlights of the camp included a visit to the Houston Texans' practice facilities, a visit to the Houston Astros' Minute Maid Park, and visits to the camp itself from Representative Shelia Jackson Lee.



## YIP Impacts and Outcomes

### Football Skills and Physical Fitness

This year, with the reduction of YIP to two programs there were not resources for a detailed assessment of the football skills and physical fitness training provided to the youth. This training is based on the basic elements necessary to succeed as a high school or collegiate football player and in past years has shown significant improvements in physical conditioning and in the football related skills and knowledge of the youth. However, the most impressive and important outcome continues to be that these boys, most of whom had never played organized football sports before and could not even put on their gear at the beginning of the program, can now play full contact 11-on-11 organized football games. As we have reported in the past several of our alumni are now excelling at the high school level and are being identified by college recruiters, some are playing collegiate football and we even have one player that attended a YIP camp playing in the NFL.

It is hard to overstate the impact that these programs will have on high school football programs in these communities, where lack of traditional football programs for this age group has severely impacted the quality of athletes available for their high school programs. YIP is now serving as a feeder program for these schools and ensuring the health of football for future generations.



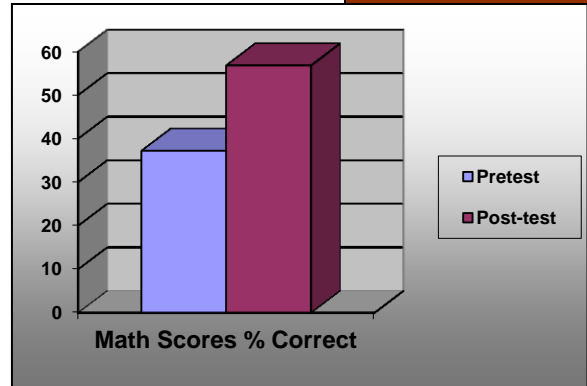
*["My son] is working real hard to be on the football team at school, keeping his grades up, and wants to be a star player."*

*– Parent of 2012 YIP participant*

**Mathematics Program**

To evaluate the mathematics program, participants were given a pre-test at the beginning of camp and a post-test at the conclusion of camp. The pre-test and post-test covered such topics as operations with integers, fractions, decimals, percents, ratio and proportion, measurement, graphs and charts, data analysis, expressions, and equations. An overall total score for each student was developed that demonstrated his level of knowledge. As discussed earlier, the topics in the curriculum and on the test are actually below middle school grade-level standards and should have been mastered during the 5th and 6th grades. As such, the evaluation tools were appropriate for all age levels, and the results reflect the reality of the educational achievement of this highly at-risk group of boys.

For analytical purposes all mathematic test scores were converted into percentages of the number of questions answered correctly. As such boys' scores could fall between 0 and 100% for each student. On average, the boys had a (mean) pre-test score of 37.2% of answers correct and a post-test score of 56.8% of answers correct



**This represents a 19.6% improvement in test scores, an improvement that is statistically significant and demonstrates meaningful change** (see statistical analysis results below). This is the largest change ever seen in the YIP program and demonstrates the ever increasing effectiveness and refinement of the YIP program.

**Paired Samples Test**

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Math pre-test Math post-test	21.62069	14.07590	1.84826	25.32176	17.91962	11.698	57	.000

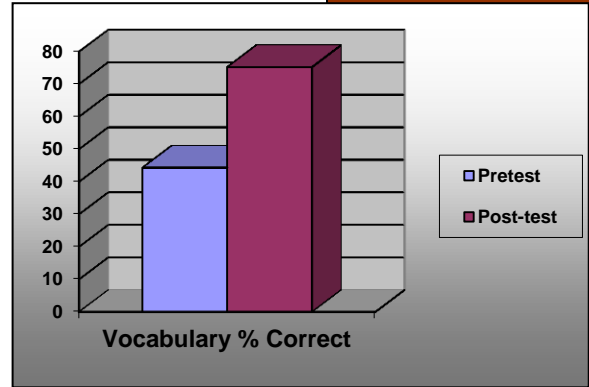
These results are even more impressive when you take into consideration that on average, all students lose approximately 2.6 months of grade level equivalency in mathematical computation ability over the summer months. This loss is due to the fact that students are very unlikely to practice math skills outside the formal classroom setting during the summer. When compared with peers not participating in the YIP summer camp, these students are much

farther ahead than they would otherwise have been, scoring possibly 30% higher than their peers would have.

**Language Arts Program**

The impact of the Language Arts Program was assessed by examining Vocabulary Development.

**Vocabulary Development:** To assess Vocabulary Development, students were given a multiple choice test using words appearing in the selected YIP camp texts (Crash and Maniac McGee). Both young adult novels were written by author Jerry Spinelli. Improvements in these indicators not only showed vocabulary development, but also indicated the students’ increased interest in reading and the attention they paid to the readings.



Scores were converted into percentages of correct answers to add in the analysis. As such boys’ scores could fall between 0 and 100% for each student. On average, the boys had a (mean) pre-test score of 44.3% of answers correct and a post-test score of 75.2% of answers correct. This represents a dramatic 30.9% improvement in test scores, an improvement that is statistically significant and demonstrates meaningful change (see statistical analysis results below). As with the Mathematics outcomes this is the largest percentage of change ever seen in a YIP program and is a credit to the teachers, the students and the YIP program.

**Paired Samples Test**

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Vocabulary pre-test Vocabulary post-test	30.47953	20.15547	2.66966	35.82750	25.13157	11.417	56	.000

**Writing Development:** In addition to developing reading ability, the YIP program also sought to develop the writing ability of the youth. For Writing Skills, students were evaluated on each of the Six Traits of Writing — Content, Organization, Voice, Word Choice, Fluency, and Conventions — that were taught through Writers’ Workshop mini-lessons. Pre- and post-test assessments were conducted and scores were converted into percentages for interpretation and

analysis. On average, the boys had a (mean) pre-test score of 50.2% of the maximum score and post-test ratings of 63.8% of the maximum score. This represents a 13.6% improvement in writing ability, an improvement that is statistically significant and demonstrates meaningful change (see statistical analysis results below).

**Paired Samples Test**

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Writing Pre - Writing Post	13.58910	41.74406	5.78886	25.21072	1.96748	2.347	51	.023

Program results are, they are even more impressive when we consider the loss in reading ability that would have occurred over the summer were it not for this program. As a whole, students, regardless of income or other risk factors, are expected to lose reading skills over the summer months. Family income and minority status play a critically important role in predicting the magnitude of summer reading loss. Middle and high-income students actually experience slight gains in reading performance over the summer months. However, low income and otherwise at-risk students experience significant levels of losses in reading comprehension and word recognition over two months. **On average, children from low income families lose nearly three months of grade-level reading equivalency during the summer months each year.** As such, when the gains experienced by this group of boys are compared to peers who did not participate in a reading or other educational program, the overall impact becomes clearer. The boys who were able to participate in YIP summer camps are educationally four or five months ahead of where they would have been without YIP.

*“Since coming to YIP I’ve gained a lot of discipline and respect for other people.”*

*– YIP participant*



### Impacts from the Parents Point of View

During the focus group the parents reached an agreed upon consensus on several issues, and reported many important ideas. Results from this group indicate that parents are strongly supportive of the YIP program and see real and dramatic changes within their children as a result of participation. Of particular note were the findings that:

- Parents were largely unaware of YIP prior to nomination of their child by partner school staff, however parents of returning (2<sup>nd</sup> time) campers were highly aware and interested in having their child participate in the camp a second time.
- Parents wish the program was available for more years and that their child could participate when they were older.
- Parents saw changes in their child in terms of their personal responsibility, goals, and effort in school.
- Parents report that negative behavior, and the number of times their child got into trouble over the summer was significantly less than prior summers.
- Parents report having more pride in their child as a result of the behavior and interpersonal changes they have seen take place during the YIP camp.

### The Lasting Impact of YIP Participation

Prior research has examined outcomes for those boys who have attended camp more than once as compared to first time campers. Consistently this research has found lasting and increased impact due to repeated participation when comparing these two groups. While it is impossible to definitively attribute this difference between groups solely to the YIP program without an experimental design, **the findings strongly suggest that the impacts of YIP participation maintain themselves for at least a year.**

Other YIP Program findings, including the parent focus group, also support this hypothesis -- program participation makes a lasting impact upon youth, not only during program participation but long after participation has ended. At baseline, youths who are attending the program for a second time also report having significantly more friends than first-time attendees; are more confident in their abilities; are willing to work harder to get good grades; have a greater love of football; and have stronger expectations to finish high school and go to college.

**Taken together, these findings paint a clear picture of the positive and long lasting effects of YIP participation.**



### Life Skills and Other Outcomes

Due to the cutback in YIP this year, a formal life skills evaluation was not conducted. However last year's evaluation clearly established a clear picture of the risk factors associated with these youth. This was done by collecting information that was comparable to other national data sets on children of this age. Findings that continue to be relevant include:

**Risk Factors and Resiliency:** Findings clearly demonstrate that the boys who participate in the YIP program are high-risk youth with relatively few supportive structures to build resiliency. Many risk factors (i.e., gangs and drugs in the community, lack of parental involvement, and exposure to violence) are beyond the reach of programs like YIP. Other risk factors and resiliency factors (i.e., positive friendships, caring adults, goals for the future, and academic success) are addressable and become even more important in preventing future problems

**Friendship and Support:** One of the intentional focuses of YIP is to give children without strong adult role models young collegiate athletes they can bond with and aspire to be like. Participation in YIP has been shown to have an immediate effect on increasing the number of friends each boy has, increasing a significant average of 5.77 friends per child. Boys also gain on average 8.83 new adults that they knew from camp that they felt cared about them.

**Belief in a Good Future:** Another major goal of the YIP program is to show the boys a different future that they can achieve and give them the internal

recourses and drive to overcome obstacles and have a better future. Positive pre-test, post-test changes are consistently found across all indicators of self confidence, self esteem, and belief in a better future.

**Teamwork and Empathy.** Findings have demonstrated that the ability to get along with others increases due to YIP participation. The 2011 findings indicated that the YIP experience teaches important lessons about working cooperatively with others as a team. The findings were so dramatic that if they can be replicated with another year of intensive research it would demonstrate that **YIP is one of the most effective resiliency development programs currently in existence!**

**Enjoyment of Football and Future Football Plans:**

Boys who participate in the program, not surprisingly, love football when they begin the YIP program (89.2%) and this remains consistent over time with 89.3% agreeing they loved football when camp ended. What is more interesting is that this “love of football” translates into concrete plans to play organized football in the following year. Plans to play football during the next school year increase from 74.3% to 85.7% during the camp (a statistically significant change).



**The Impact of Regular High-Quality, Free Meals:** We have established from prior years research and from population statistics that for many of the boys in our programs that having a daily, free, nutritional meal is a significant and direct benefit to these boys and their families. In prior years when asked whether “Sometimes there is not enough to eat at my home,” 26.5% indicated that this was at least an occasional problem, and more than 11% indicated that this was a common problem in their household. Often these students’ families have limited access to adequate nutritious foods over the summer when school food programs are not in place. This lack of adequate and nutritious food would have made these boys more likely to suffer from a variety of health, behavioral, and developmental problems.

**Overall Assessment of the YIP Program by the Participants:** There can be no better indicator of the success of the YIP program than the feedback from the students themselves. Nearly all (89.3%) of the boys agree (quite a bit 10.7%, or totally 78.6%) that they enjoyed the YIP camp. **Perhaps more importantly, 92.8% agree (quite a bit or totally) that the YIP camp made them realize that they can do better in life than they expected they could before the camp.** This is a powerful and succinct way of demonstrating the impact of the camp: it

*“I was like.. WOW. . this is really a great program. I wish I could have done something like this when I was a kid.”*

*– Parent of 2012 YIP participant*

helps high-risk youth expect more out of themselves and their lives. It is a benefit it would be hard to overestimate.



*“This camp [has] made me a better person, my attitude and all. I like YIP, thanks you for this camp.”*

*– YIP participant*

### **Congressional Support**

YIP continues to have very strong Congressional support. In addition to the recent Congressional Resolutions (both House and Senate) commending YIP for its achievement, we have also continue to received letters of support for our program from individual members of Congress, including a March 25, 2011 letter of support from U.S. Senator David Vitter.

These resolutions and letters are included in Appendix A. We believe this continued support has a major public policy benefit for football and will continue to advance the image and impact of youth football and youth sports overall.

### **Financial Report**

Financial reporting for this NFL-funded project will come under separate cover.

## Appendix A Congressional Resolutions

IV

110<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

### H. RES. 1413

Acknowledging the accomplishments and goals of the Youth Impact Program.

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 1, 2008

Ms. WATSON (for herself, Mr. CAMPBELL of California, Mrs. BONO MACK, Mr. ROHRBACHER, Mr. SOLIS, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. SCALISE, Mr. MELANCON, Mr. REYES, Mr. ISSA, Ms. HARMAN, Ms. WATERS, and Mr. RICHARDSON) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

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### RESOLUTION

Acknowledging the accomplishments and goals of the Youth Impact Program.

Whereas many at-risk young men in the Nation's inner cities face a challenging and uncertain future;

Whereas the future success of at-risk young men can be greatly enhanced through sustained mentorship;

Whereas effective working partnerships between and within the public and private sectors can have a lasting and positive impact on the future of these young men;

Whereas participation in organized sports has provided a creative and disciplined outlet and a path to a better life for many at-risk males;

110TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION **S. RES. 725**

Acknowledging the accomplishments and goals of the Youth Impact Program.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 9, 2008

Mr. VITTER submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

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**RESOLUTION**

Acknowledging the accomplishments and goals of the Youth Impact Program.

Whereas many at-risk young men in the inner cities of the United States face a challenging and uncertain future;

Whereas the future success of at-risk young men can be greatly enhanced through sustained mentorship;

Whereas effective working partnerships between and within the public and private sectors can have a lasting and positive impact on the future of at-risk young men;

Whereas participation in organized sports has provided a creative and disciplined outlet and a path to a better life for many at-risk young men;

Whereas the Youth Impact Program combines the disciplines of football, mentoring, and academics in partnerships between local National Football League franchises and uni-

## Congressional Letters of Support



March 25, 2011

Friends of the Youth Impact Program

Dear Friends:

I want to thank you for your support for the Youth Impact Program (YIP). It has been my pleasure to work with Riki Ellison and YIP for the last several years.

Riki's vision for reaching inner city at-risk youth and the program that has resulted from that vision is making a difference in a number of cities around the U.S. The fact that the program is supported by the NFL and has a football component motivates young men to want to get involved. Once in the program, these young men learn more than sports. They also learn life skills, health and nutrition, science, engineering, technology, mathematics, and reading literacy.

I was excited when YIP came to Louisiana with a program at Tulane University a few years ago. As I have seen the program in action, I have become even more enthusiastic about the opportunities that it offers. In 2008, I sponsored a resolution in the U.S. Senate acknowledging the goals and accomplishments of the Youth Impact Program. More recently I joined Senators Mary Landrieu, Kirsten Gillibrand, and Charles Schumer in signing a letter to NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell commending the NFL and YIP on the work that has allowed the organization to expand to Syracuse University.

The Youth Impact Program is doing great work to reach at-risk young men because of people who step forward to make YIP possible. With the continued support of caring people, I am confident that there will be opportunities to expand the program so even more youth can be positively impacted in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Vitter". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D" and "V".

United States Senate

Youth Impact Program  
515 King Street, Suite 320  
Alexandria, VA 22314