

**National Football League  
Youth Football Program  
Final Report 2009**

## A letter from our Founder

Dear Joe,

It is a great honor to present to you, the National Youth Football Fund and the National Football League, the 2009 Youth Impact Program in four of our nation's urban cities across the country . The final report of the 2009 Youth Impact Program that follows paints a vivid picture of the way the lives of "at risk" young males were permanently impacted through their participation in football in our YIP program this year.

The 2009 Youth Impact Program overcame formidable challenges of funding and late support to succeed and achieve measurable results, including expansion into two new cities and universities. The inaugural Youth Impact Programs at Rice University in Houston, Texas, and the University of South Florida in Tampa Bay, Florida, achieved community and university success that enabled the young "at risk" minority men to participate in contact football. At the same time, they were exposed to an academic environment at a NCAA University with its respective staff, students and athletes, an experience that connected them to their community and changed their lives. This year the Youth Impact Program also continued its presence in two established programs, at Tulane University in New Orleans for its second year and the University of Southern California in Los Angeles for its fourth year. One of the memorable highlights of the 2009 YIP Program was recognition by the New Orleans Saints of our boys in the Tulane Youth Impact Program, led by Rita LeBlanc, as the entire program participated in and was honored during the New Orleans Saints pre-season game on August 15th.

The 2009 Youth Impact Program raised \$159,296 in private capital in a challenging economic environment, slightly more than the total funding provided by the National Football Youth Fund to implement the four Youth Impact Programs this past summer.

I look forward to discussing the success of the Youth Impact Program and its future movements in more detail. Thank you for your personal efforts and your leadership in making the 2009 Youth Impact Program the success it is today.

Respectfully,



Riki M. Ellison

### *The YIP Mission*

*To make a positive and lasting impact on "at risk" inner city boys nationwide, grow their opportunities to be successful through academics, teamwork and mentoring.*

### *Our Values*

*Achievement  
Success  
Passion  
Integrity  
Respect  
Education*

### *Our Vision*

*To give "at risk" boys a chance to succeed.*

## Executive Summary

The Youth Impact Program is an innovative program that acts as a catalyst to promote positive development 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 football training camp program that promotes character development, enhancement of academic skills, and social interaction activities. This year the YIP program served 471 young men between the ages of 9 and 12. The vast majority of boys (97%) were members of ethnic or racial minorities. The YIP program operates with support from the National Football League (NFL). The program is currently run in partnership with four key University partners across the country.

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:

- Statistically significant improvements in mathematics test scores.
- Statistically significant improvements in the six key traits of writing and writing ability.
- Statistically significant and meaningful gains in mastery of vocabulary.
- 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.
- Overall, the boys showed significant improvement both in terms of their physical fitness (running, push-ups, and sit-ups) and their knowledge and performance of football skills (positions, 3-point stance, and tackling).
- The boys, most of whom had never played organized sports before, were able to effectively play full contact 11-on-11 football by the end of the program.

Media coverage of this year's program was extensive, with three national press releases and numerous print and television news stories about the four YIP programs. The skill of these boys was so great that participants from the Tulane University program were invited to play in front of tens of thousands of fans and a live television audience during a the half-time of a New Orleans Saints Football game. YIP continues to have strong congressional support. On June 10, 2009, four members of Congress authored a letter of support for the Youth Impact 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

## What is the Youth Impact Program (YIP)?

The Youth Impact Program 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 free football summer training camp program that promotes character development, academic skills enhancement, and social interaction. Adult role models 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 youth in inner cities and on native reservations. Major goals of this program are to decrease middle school and high school dropout rates, prevent gang involvement, develop skilled football players for high school programs, and promote a lifelong love of football.

YIP program staff members, including partnering university and local school district personnel, teach a combination of enrichment classes during the summer. Class subjects include reading, math, science, life skills, and football training: providing program participants with the tools to develop a positive outlook on life, a set of 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.

## Why Is There a Need for the Youth Impact Program?

During the formative period of adolescence, most youths are faced with tremendous choices and challenges. Adolescents' environments are profoundly shaped by the presence or absence of several different factors including family resources, community services, and educational and employment opportunities. These environmental challenges are perhaps most difficult 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.

Many of these at-risk teens run away and eventually find themselves locked up in detention centers or living on the streets. Failure in school, in particular, appears to be a major risk factor and a harbinger of the crime, violence, and other disasters that often characterize the experience of minority youths in urban America. A large percentage of the urban schools that these boys attend cannot adequately provide them with the educational tools that they need to survive in the technologically advanced 21st century.

Among those tools are the abilities to read, write, and perform computer operations at ever more rigorous levels of proficiency. Today's world requires individuals who are competent in reading, writing, mathematics, computers, and critical thinking. Never before in this nation's history has literacy been such an important determinant; yet failure in school remains a salient characteristic of inner-city youth.

It should be noted that these problems are well documented, and many intervention strategies have attempted to bring about academic success for America's inner-city children. However, like many other programs aimed at correcting societal problems, most academic remediation efforts are introduced to students who have already failed and, as a result, have limited success.

As the Youth Impact Program addresses these critical literacy needs, it also helps 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.

### **How Does the Youth Impact Program Work?**

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

*Everything we do here is hard work, but it's great because it's improving the fundamentals of the way I learn in school and the way I play football.*

*Leonard, Age 13*

characterized by drug use, unprotected sexual behavior, dropping out of school, delinquency, gang membership, and violence.

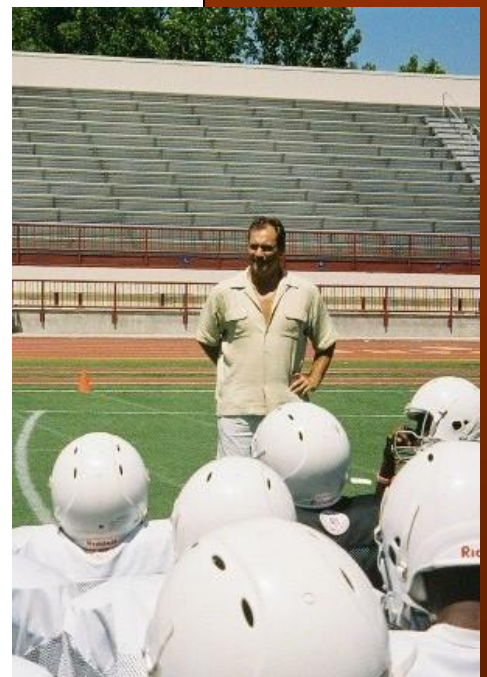
The key finding in resilience research and in the YIP program is the power of caring individuals to tip the scales from risk-taking to resilience. Mentors and teachers can provide and model protective factors to buffer risk and enable positive development. This is done by meeting basic needs for safety, 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. For more information on the logic and theory behind YIP, see the logic model in Appendix A.

### **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 they learned 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 is 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. In 2008, YIP partnered with Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana, in an attempt to replicate and expand the YIP program. In that year, the program served 257 at-risk youth. During the past year YIP has continued its expansion, partnering with Rice University and the University of South Florida, and now has four active programs serving nearly 500 at-risk youth.





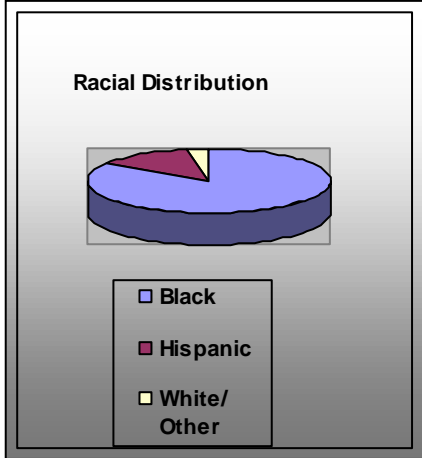
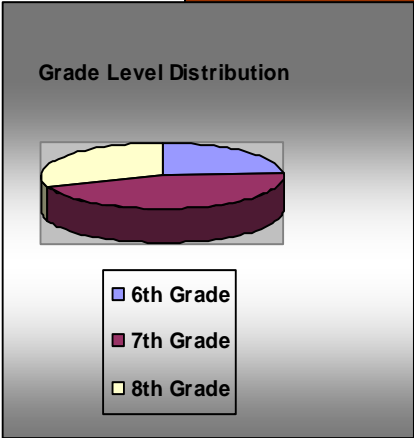
# The YIP Boys

In the summer of 2009, the YIP program served 471 young men between the ages of 9 and 12. Eighty-eight of these boys participated in the program at Rice University, 107 participated in the program at the University of South Florida (USF), 128 participated in the program at Tulane University, and 148 participated in the program at the University of Southern California (USC).

Students who participated in YIP attended one of the partnering middle school and had to be transitioning into the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, or 8<sup>th</sup> grade (due to NCAA rules, 8<sup>th</sup> graders proceeding to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade cannot participate). The largest groups of boys were those preparing for the 7<sup>th</sup> grade (46%), followed by those preparing for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade (30%), and just over 24% of the students were preparing for the 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

The vast majority of boys (97%) were members of ethnic or racial minorities. The majority were African-American (84%) and Hispanic (13%) youth. The remaining approximately 3% came from all other racial groups, including Caucasian and Asian.

Boys were selected for the program most often because they attended one of the program's 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 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 lead by highly trained staff who genuinely care about the boys that they are helping.

### Staffing & Staff Training

The funds granted to program sites were used primarily to secure the highly skilled staff who 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, YIP was able to retain many of its staff from previous years who brought their experience to the program. In addition to receiving assistance from experienced and skilled staff, all program staff attended pre-camp training retreats. Additional trainings also were conducted to focus on the use of the academic curriculum, the academic teaching strategies, and the materials for the classroom sessions. 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 effective discipline.

### Football Training and Development

YIP's program design allows the participants to benefit from University athletic departments, student athletes, alumni, and facilities. The football training program component is comprised of team meetings, fundamental skill development, training by position, physical conditioning, and live game play. Each coach and mentor incorporates life skills and discipline in each session in the classroom, on-field, and during all other activities. Discipline

*The curriculum was very well written. Students enjoyed learning through the lessons they could relate to through sports as well as their own life lessons. 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,  
Rice YIP teacher  
with 28 years of  
experience in  
education*

and character development are important elements in teaching the young men personal responsibility for their actions in the classroom, as 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 Skill 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 lasting 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 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 worked with a group focused on 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.

### **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

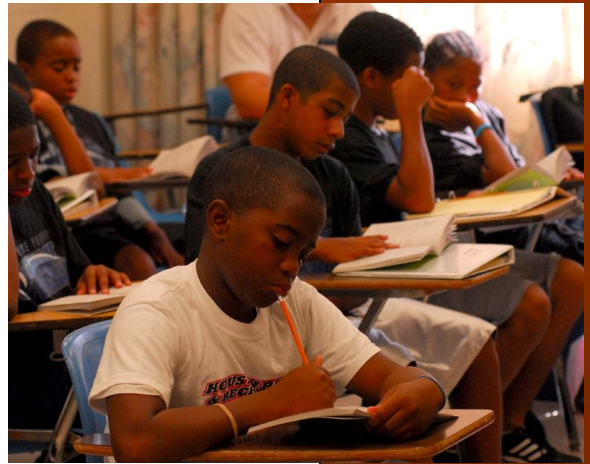


thinking in their own words. Opportunities to verbalize their thoughts and strategies give the students the chance to clarify their thinking and gain insights from others.

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. In 2009, the 13 daily lessons covered 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.

**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 was the Writer’s Workshop, which allowed the boys an opportunity to write about connections they made to the selected novels from happenings in their own lives. Through Writer’s Workshop and the lessons that preceded each Writer’s Workshop period, the boys improved their writing skills in the Six Traits of Writing: Ideas; Organization; Voice; Word Choice; Sentence Fluency; and Conventions.

During each lesson, staff worked 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 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 to get positive one-on-one time with the teacher and mentors. The teacher and mentors can genuinely get to know the boys, which allows 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.

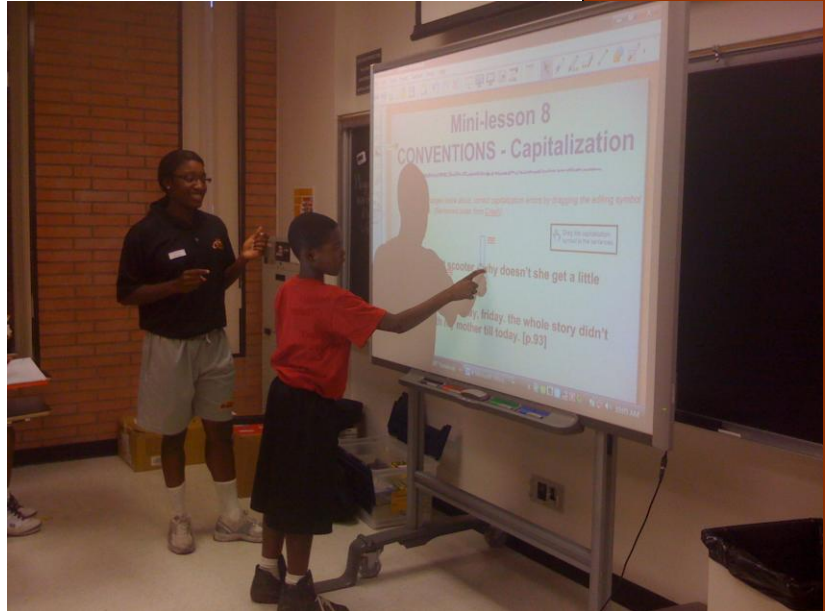
**Meals, Nutrition, and Health:** The daily cafeteria-style, all-you-can-eat meals provided on campus are a significant motivator for participants and allow YIP to directly address problems with malnutrition, inconsistent meals, and discipline. Throughout camp, the boys are educated by staff professionals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

*The entire team inspired me for the past five weeks. It is not just about yourself, it's about the team. Football is not just a one man sport; it takes a team to win, as well as it takes a team to lose.*

*Bishmee, age 13*

## Improvements to the 2009 Program

**Smart Boards:** The implementation of the Smart Tech Smart Board Technology at the University of Southern California program was an instant success. The students were immediately engaged and excited to participate. The YIP USC teaching staff, who also teach in the Los Angeles Unified School District, were stunned at the increase in voluntary participation and the excitement that were created by the use of this technology. The fact that this technology gave students an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge in mathematics and language arts in front of the class instilled confidence and created a positive learning environment where student success could be celebrated.



The Smart Boards were also used during Writer's Workshops at USC this year, and it is intended that the technology will be expanded to all YIP sites in 2010. This technology in the YIP classroom had an incredible impact on the student experience during the academic instruction. It was easy for instructors to use after only a few hours of training, enabling them to be productive with their class. In addition, the content from the YIP curriculum has now been established, creating a library of electronic resources that can be reused, modified and/or improved upon for future camps.

Since the camps, the SMART company (makers of the technology) has made a commitment to donate a SMART Board interactive whiteboard to each middle school that YIP worked with. SMART will also work with the schools to ensure that the teachers receive additional professional development once the interactive whiteboard arrives. This includes a donation of a SMART board to the USC YIP program. SMART is now committed to supporting all the YIP camp sites over the next few years and helping to grow the program into a sustainable organization.

**Improvements in Curriculum:** In recent Youth Impact Programs, the mathematics component was very limited in scope and at times didn't challenge the students or measure much growth. The mathematics curriculum this year included a reliable and valid pre-test and a post-test that

measured the students' range of knowledge. The curriculum was created and topics were chosen by using feedback provided by credentialed teachers in participating locations and throughout the country with respect to areas that middle school students struggle with during the course of the traditional school year. With this in mind, 13 lessons were created focusing on the following nine topics: integers, fractions, decimals, percents, ratio and proportion, measurement, graphs and charts, data analysis, expressions, and equations. The topics are actually below the middle school grade level standards that students should have mastered during the 5th and 6th grade. However, based on feedback by middle school mathematics teachers, and as reflected in local and nationwide test scores, these topics are typically not mastered in those grades.

The Language Arts Curriculum also underwent significant improvements during this program year. In particular, when constructing the Language Arts Curriculum, an introduction to and discussion of vocabulary was explicitly embedded in whole group instruction prior to breaking out into Literature Circles, and vocabulary was further discussed during this cooperative group time. Additionally, prior to this year, no explicit writing instruction took place throughout the camps, but this year the Writer's Workshop was incorporated into the Language Arts curriculum as an instructional strategy. Through Writer's Workshop and the daily "mini-lessons" presented, students were provided with explicit instruction on the Six Traits of Writing. Pretest and post-test writing samples were evaluated according to a rubric created to assess each student's writing progress in each of the six traits during the first week of camp and again during the final week.

**Great Strides in Evaluation:** After several years of experience, YIP has made significant improvements in evaluating the effectiveness of the program. Participants were given a pretest 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. All YIP staff at the four sites were well-trained in implementing and documenting the evaluation data for analysis by the National Language Arts Director, and as such, this year data was gathered which demonstrates the effectiveness of the teaching strategies implemented in the YIP curriculum. The addition of the vocabulary inventory and the more structured pre/post writing samples were also improvements to previous years' evaluation measures.

We continue to look forward to the day when we can afford to implement the planned year round program which will greatly enhance the impact of this program and allow us to track our players as they progress in playing football in high school, college, and beyond.



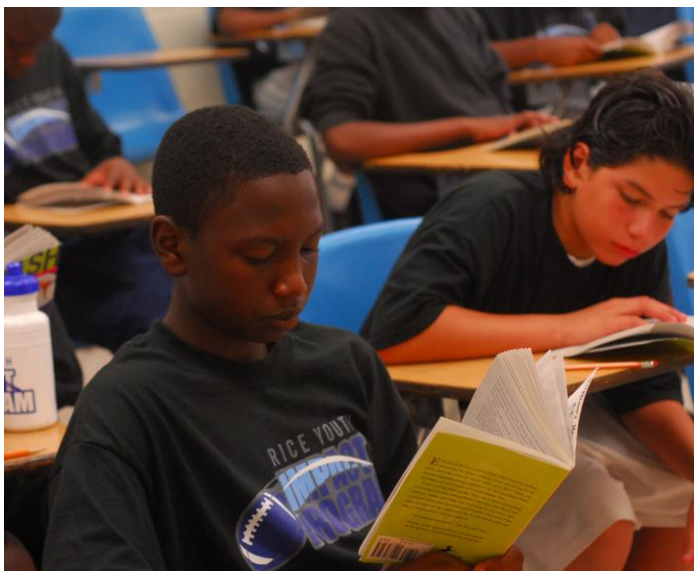
## Rice University



In its first year of its operation, the Rice University Youth Impact Program served 88 at-risk boys, consisting of 13 6th graders, 40 7th graders, and 35 8th graders. In terms of racial distribution, 90% of these youth were African-American, 5% were Hispanic, and 5% were from all other racial groups, including Caucasian and Asian-American. The Rice Youth Impact Program participants were comprised of middle school boys in the Houston Independent School District (Houston ISD). The ethnicity breakdown of the district is 28.5% African-American, 60.3% Hispanic, 8% Caucasian, and 3.2% Asian/Pacific Islander. Nearly 80% are economically disadvantaged, and 30% are considered Limited English Proficiency (LEP).



According to a study by the San Antonio-based Intercultural Development Research Association, nearly 40% of the members of an entering freshman class in Houston do not make it to their senior year. As a group, Hispanics have the highest dropout rate in Texas — some 45%, according to the IDRC report. Hispanics also make up the largest percentage of the state's 4.6 million public school students. The Intercultural Development Research Association noted that about 70% of the 2.7 million Texas students who left school during the group's study period were Hispanic or black. These numbers are rising at an alarming rate, and this problem must be addressed at the middle school level, before the students reach high school.



## University of South Florida



Also in its first year of operation, the University of South Florida Youth Impact Program served 107 at-risk boys, consisting of 32 6th graders, 53 7th graders and 22 8th graders. As at all other sites, the vast majority of these students were minorities, with 80% being African-American, 10% being Hispanic, and 10% being of some other racial group, including Caucasian.

The University of South Florida YIP program was populated by students who attend schools that are located in Hillsborough County. According to data provided by the Florida Department of Education, three of the seven schools in this area are receiving a "C" or below on the Florida A+ Plan, and five of those seven schools have only met between 60% and 70% of the federally mandated guidelines of the No Child Left Behind Act. Based on this data, 50% of students at four of the seven schools are reading below grade level. In addition, in these same schools less than 50% of the students are at grade level in mathematics.

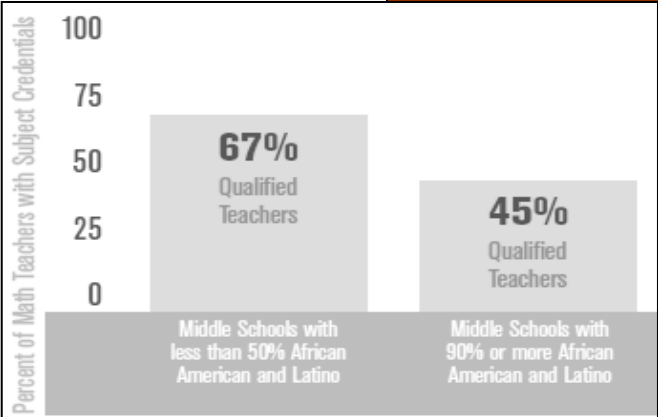


# University of Southern California



The Youth Impact Program at the University of Southern California is YIP's oldest and most experienced program. This year the program celebrated its fourth year of helping needy children. The program served 148 boys, including 15 6th graders, 76 7th graders and 57 8th graders. Almost all of these youth were inner city minorities, with 68% being African-American, 31% being Hispanic, and approximately 1% being of other racial groups, including Caucasian and Asian-American.

Despite having helped over 500 at-risk boys to date, the need in Greater Los Angeles remains high. According to a recent United Way study, only 57% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders in Los Angeles County schools graduate from high school. Over 70% of middle schools serving low-income African American and Latino populations (served by this program) are failing federal education standards. In Los Angeles, students who fail even one middle school class are much more likely to drop out of high school. Less than 50% of students who failed at least one class in grades 6 through 8 graduated from high school within four years, compared to over 66% of students who never failed a class. What is even worse is that nearly half of students don't feel safe at school: 48% of 7th graders report being harassed, pushed, shoved or hit by peers at school, and 13% have carried a weapon onto school property at least once.



In part, these problems are caused or at least exacerbated by the lack of educational resources in Los Angeles. There are severe shortages of qualified teachers for mathematics in Los Angeles middle schools that primarily serve communities of color (see figure above). Further, middle school students are not forming relationships with their teachers or adults at school: 71% of 7th graders report having no high-level or caring relationship with any adults in the school, allowing them to "fall through the cracks."

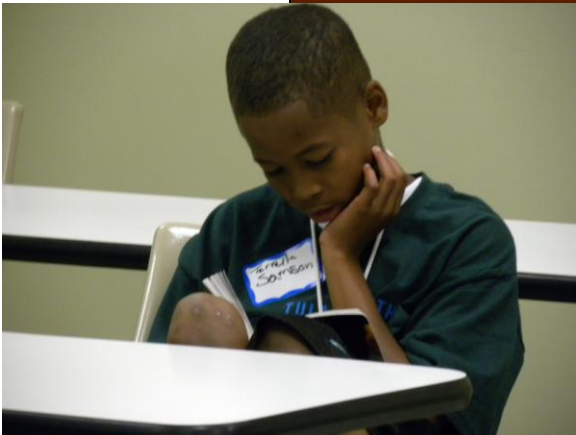
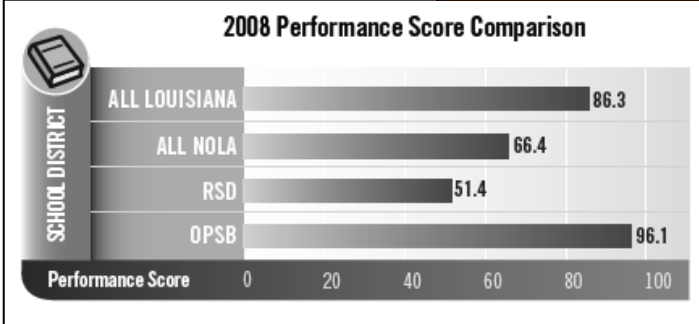


# Tulane University



In its second year of operation, the Tulane University YIP program served 128 at-risk boys, 51 6th graders, 49 7th graders, and 28 8th graders. All of these participants (100%) were African-American.

Having now served nearly 300 boys in New Orleans, YIP is still only beginning to scratch the surface of need. Following Hurricane Katrina, the school system was split in Louisiana, with a state-based takeover of failing schools. Over 100 low-performing New Orleans schools were placed into the state-run Recovery School District (RSD). Higher-performing schools that were not taken over, many of which had some form of selective admissions, were either chartered or continued to be operated by the Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB). Like districts, individual schools now receive a school performance score (SPS) based on student performance on state tests and other indicators. Based on the 2008 State of Public Education Study conducted by the University of Tulane, the performance scores (see chart) of schools in the Orleans Parish School Board District nearly doubled those of the Recovery School District. All participants who attended the Youth Impact Program attend a school within the Recovery School District (RSD).



# YIP Impacts and Outcomes



## Football Skills and Physical Fitness

The assessments of the football skills and physical fitness training were based on the basic elements necessary to succeed as a high school or collegiate football player. **The most impressive and important outcome is that these boys who had never played organized football sports before and could not even put on their gear at the beginning of the program can now can play full contact 11-on-11 organized football games.** Their skills were so proficient, that boys from the Tulane program were invited to demonstrate these skills in front of tens of thousands of fans and a live TV audience during the half-time of a New Orleans Saints football game. In addition, it should be noted that several of our alumni are now excelling at the high school level and are being identified by college recruiters as having the potential to reach the NFL.

It is hard to overstate the impact that these programs will have on high school football programs in these communities. The lack of traditional football programs for this age group in these communities 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.

**Overall, the boys themselves showed significant improvements both in terms of their knowledge and performance of football skills and their overall fitness.**

<b>Performance on Football Skills</b>	<b>Average Improvement</b>
How long to get into football position	1.03 seconds faster
How long to get into 3-point stance	1.14 seconds faster
Instructor rated performance on tackling skills	28% improvement

<b>Fitness Indicators</b>	<b>Average Improvement</b>
How long to run a 40-yd. dash	.057 seconds faster
How many push-ups in 60 seconds	3.58 more pushups
How many situps in 60 seconds	4.38 more situps

While the scores above provide an indication of the impact of the program, the true scope of the improvements in the skills and ability of boys who had never played organized football before can only be truly appreciated by watching the boys in action. To demonstrate these amazing transformations we have attached a CD to this report containing video highlights of the boys playing full contact football at some of the YIP programs.

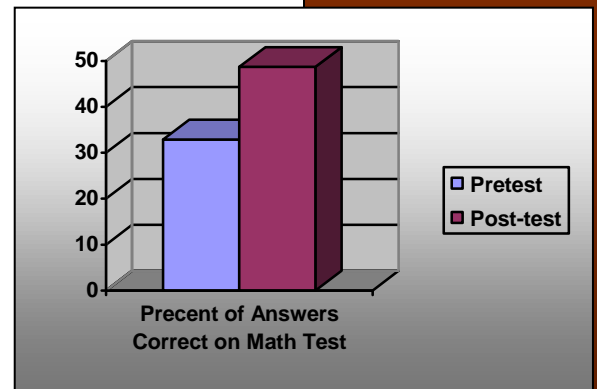
## Mathematics Program

To evaluate the mathematics program, participants were given a pretest at the beginning of camp and a post-test at the conclusion of camp. The pretest 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 their levels 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.

Total raw scores on the tests could fall between 0 and 35 for each student. On average, the boys had a (mean) pretest score of 11.52 and a post-test score of 17.04. **This represents a nearly 16% improvement in test scores, an improvement that is statistically significant and demonstrates meaningful change** (see statistical analysis results below). The vast majority of students (81%) demonstrated some level of positive gain between the pretest and the post-test.

### Statistics for Raw Math Scores

Pretest	N	Valid	428
		Missing	52
	<b>Mean</b>		<b>11.523</b>
Post-test	N	Valid	341
		Missing	139
	<b>Mean</b>		<b>17.037</b>



### ANOVA Results for Pre- and Post-Test Math Scores

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	5768.911	1	5768.911	122.571	.000
Within Groups	36099.558	767	47.066		
Total	41868.469	768			

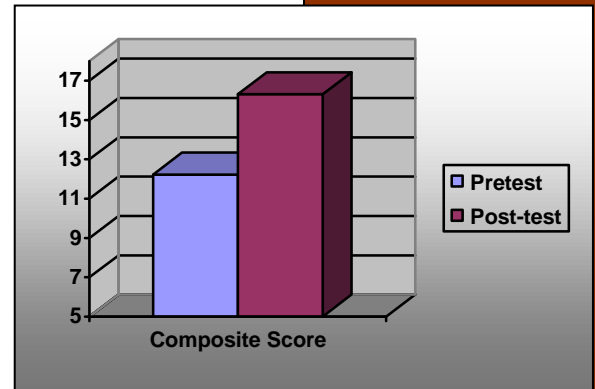
These results are even more impressive when you take into consideration that on average, all students lose approximately 2.6 months of grade level equivalency in mathematical computation ability over the summer months. This loss is due to the fact that students are very unlikely to practice math skills 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% or more higher than their peers would have.

### Language Arts Program

The impact of the Language Arts Program was assessed by examining outcome indicators in two major areas: 1) Writing Skills, and 2) Vocabulary Development.

**Writing Skills:** 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 assessment scores ranged from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest). In addition, an overall composite score (of 30 criteria points) for all writing traits was computed.



### **Descriptive Statistics for Six Traits of Writing**

PRE_POST		N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pretest	Content	252	1.0	5.0	2.487	1.1883
	Organization	252	1.0	5.0	2.029	1.0832
	Voice	252	1.0	5.0	2.044	1.1186
	Word Choice	252	1.0	5.0	1.953	1.0622
	Fluency	252	1.0	5.0	1.862	1.0486
	Conventions	252	1.0	5.0	1.854	1.0513
	<b>Composite Score</b>	252	6.00	30.00	<b>12.2290</b>	5.04479
Post-test	Content	252	1.0	5.0	3.183	1.1700
	Organization	252	1.0	5.0	2.802	1.2143
	Voice	252	1.0	5.0	2.865	1.2803
	Word Choice	252	1.0	5.0	2.429	1.1426
	Fluency	252	1.0	5.0	2.571	1.2332
	Conventions	252	1.0	5.0	2.464	1.1616
	<b>Composite Score</b>	252	6.00	30.00	<b>16.3134</b>	5.90372
	Valid N (listwise)	252				

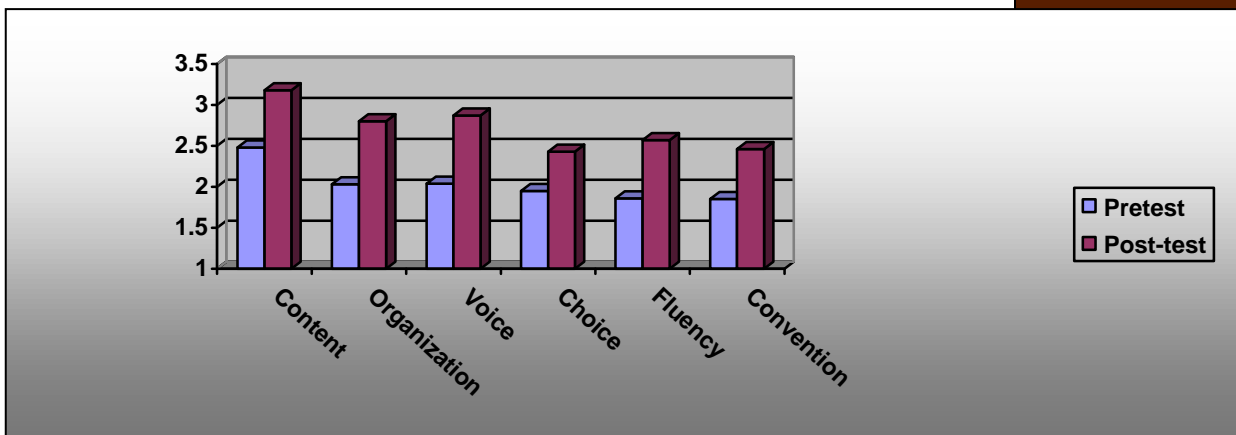


Analysis of 252 students who had completed pre- and post-test data demonstrated statistically significant improvements in all six Traits of Writing and in the overall composite score (see statistical results below). The vast majority of these students demonstrated marked improvements in their writing skills during the camp. The average score improved from 12.2 to 16.3, an improvement of 13.7%.

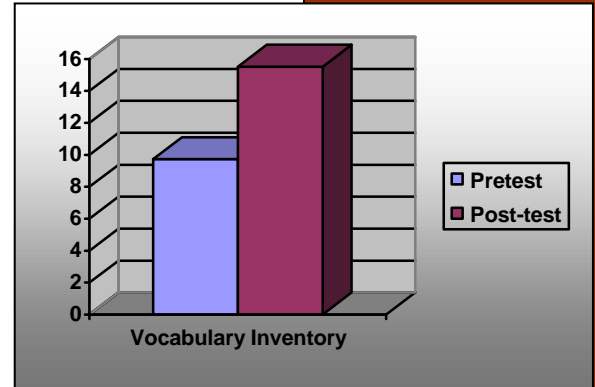
**ANOVA Results for Six Traits and Writing Composite Score**

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Content	Between Groups	61.246	1	61.246	44.046	.000
	Within Groups	700.824	504	1.391		
	Total	762.071	505			
Organization	Between Groups	75.594	1	75.594	57.126	.000
	Within Groups	666.935	504	1.323		
	Total	742.530	505			
Voice	Between Groups	85.203	1	85.203	58.988	.000
	Within Groups	727.986	504	1.444		
	Total	813.189	505			
Word Choice	Between Groups	28.634	1	28.634	23.536	.000
	Within Groups	613.149	504	1.217		
	Total	641.782	505			
Fluency	Between Groups	63.597	1	63.597	48.572	.000
	Within Groups	659.906	504	1.309		
	Total	723.503	505			
Conventions	Between Groups	47.075	1	47.075	38.373	.000
	Within Groups	618.297	504	1.227		
	Total	665.371	505			
Composite Score	Between Groups	2110.297	1	2110.297	70.032	.000
	Within Groups	15187.139	504	30.133		
	Total	17297.435	505			

**Pretest and Post-test Means for Six Verbal Traits**



**Vocabulary Development:** To assess Vocabulary Development, students were given a multiple choice test using 25 words appearing in the selected YIP camp texts (Crash at Rice and USF; Maniac McGee at Tulane; and a combination of both texts based on student choice at USC. Both young adult novels were written by author Jerry Spinelli). The same 25 words appeared on both the pre- and post-tests. Improvements in these indicators not only show vocabulary development, but also indicated the students' increased interest in reading and the attention they paid to the readings.



An analysis was conducted of all the available data, including 417 pretest assessments and 324 post-test assessments. **Results indicate strong, statistically significant and meaningful changes in vocabulary** (see statistical results below). Overall, the average participant gained nearly six (5.78) new words from pre- to post-test, representing an average gain in vocabulary of 23.1%.

#### Descriptive Statistics for Vocabulary Inventory

PRE_POST		N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pretest	Vocabulary inventory	417	0	22	9.73	4.183
	Valid N (listwise)	417				
Post-test	Vocabulary inventory	324	1	25	15.51	6.335
	Valid N (listwise)	324				

#### ANOVA Results for Vocabulary Inventory

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6088.328	1	6088.328	222.292	.000
Within Groups	20240.404	739	27.389		
Total	26328.731	740			

As impressive as the Language Arts 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.

### **Life Skills and Other Outcomes**

**Life Skills:** This year's assessment of Life Skills was not as successful as planned. Miscommunication between the YIP national program staff and the local programs resulted in most sites believing that data collection around Life Skills was optional, and as such this data was not collected in any regular manner. Improving the evaluation of the impact of Life Skills is a major objective for the next programmatic year. However, we know from research done in previous years the impact that YIP summer camps have had on participants. We know from this research that there is a far greater percentage of these boys who now have positive role models in their lives. We also know of the intentional mentoring and bonding that the boys experience with staff and the increased self-confidence that this program is intended to produce. Indeed, when asked what they liked about the program, most boys express their appreciation of the teaching and coaching staff and report that they feel that YIP staff provided more support than their regular school classrooms.

**The Impact of Regular High-Quality, Free Meals:** We also know, based on existing data and past research, that hunger and food insecurity is a real problem for the boys in our programs and that having a daily free nutritional meal was a significant and direct benefit to many of these boys and their families. Our estimates are that half of these students' families have limited access to adequate nutritious foods over the summer when school feeding 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.



## Summary of Press Coverage

This year's YIP program used a team approach to communications and media relations. Mike Terrill, Media Coordinator, handled national YIP media relations. Each school also conducted its own outreach to local media and coordinated with the NFL teams in their area on a continuing basis.

Media coverage of the 2009 YIP program was extensive. A national news release was delivered during the first week of the opening of the sessions and carried by media outlets throughout the nation. This release included information on the NFL office in New York. Local television and print media in all areas visited the YIP campuses, and in-depth local stories were presented to millions of potential viewers and readers. Full video versions of these new stories can be found on the accompanying CD.

Each of the schools also conducted their own local releases and promoted the programs in their respective communities and websites. The national YIP office in Virginia is the repository for YIP photos, video coverage, and news releases. This office uses material sent to keep the website updated, located at [www.youthimpactprogram.org](http://www.youthimpactprogram.org). Some of the specific highlights of this year's media coverage include:

- On June 29, 2009, a press release, "USF Begins 'At Risk' Youth Program to Better the Community of Tampa," was distributed.
- On June 29, 2009, a press release, " USC Embeds the 'At Risk' Youth Program to Better the Community of Los Angeles," was distributed.
- On June 29, 2009, a press release, "Rice University Begins 'At Risk' Youth Program to Better the Community of Houston," was distributed.
- On July 9, 2009, ABC Network affiliate Southern California ABC7 News aired a story about the USC program and the NFL's sponsorship of it. This video can be found at <http://abclocal.go.com/kabc/video?id=6908012>.
- On July 11, 2009, the *Houston Chronicle* carried an article by columnist Richard Justice on the YIP program bearing the headline, "Sports camp also teaches life lessons."
- On July 12, 2009, the PRISM Press Group covered USF's Youth Impact Program with a glowing story that can be found at <http://prismpressgroup.org/?p=5588>.
- On July 12, 2009, local television station WTSP, Connect 10 News, Tampa, aired a story about the USF YIP program. This video can be found at <http://video.aol.co.uk/video-detail/usf-football-helps-educate/1708221484>.



*We are actually learning how to cooperate and become a leader.*

*British Dabney,  
Age 12*

*July 15, 2009  
ABC News  
Houston, Texas*

- On July 15, 2009, ABC Network Texas affiliate ABC13 News aired a story about the Rice program and the NFL's sponsorship of the program. This video can be found at <http://abclocal.go.com/ktrk/video?id=6916891>.
- On July 19, 2009, the Houston Texans football team website HoustonTexans.com posted a discussion of the YIP program in its online diary of rookie player James Casey.
- On August 4, 2009, the PRNewswire/ USNewswire carried a story about the 2009 YIP program and how persons can donate to the program.
- On August 14, 2009, the YIP program was featured as part of the halftime entertainment for the NFL Cincinnati Bengals vs. New Orleans Saints game.
- On August 17, 2009, the PRNewswire/ USNewswire carried a story about the honoring of Tulane YIP participants during a New Orleans Saints NFL game. This story can be found at <http://www.d210.tv/13276/the-new-orleans-saints-make-dreams-come-true-for-young-at-risk-boys/>



### **Congressional Support**

YIP is fortunate to have strong continued congressional support for our program. On June 10, 2009, four members of Congress authored a letter of support for the Youth Impact Program. The letter was written by Representative Diane E. Watson and signed by Representative Sheila Jackson Lee, Representative Kathy Castor, and Representative Anh Cao. This letter is included in Appendix B. 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.

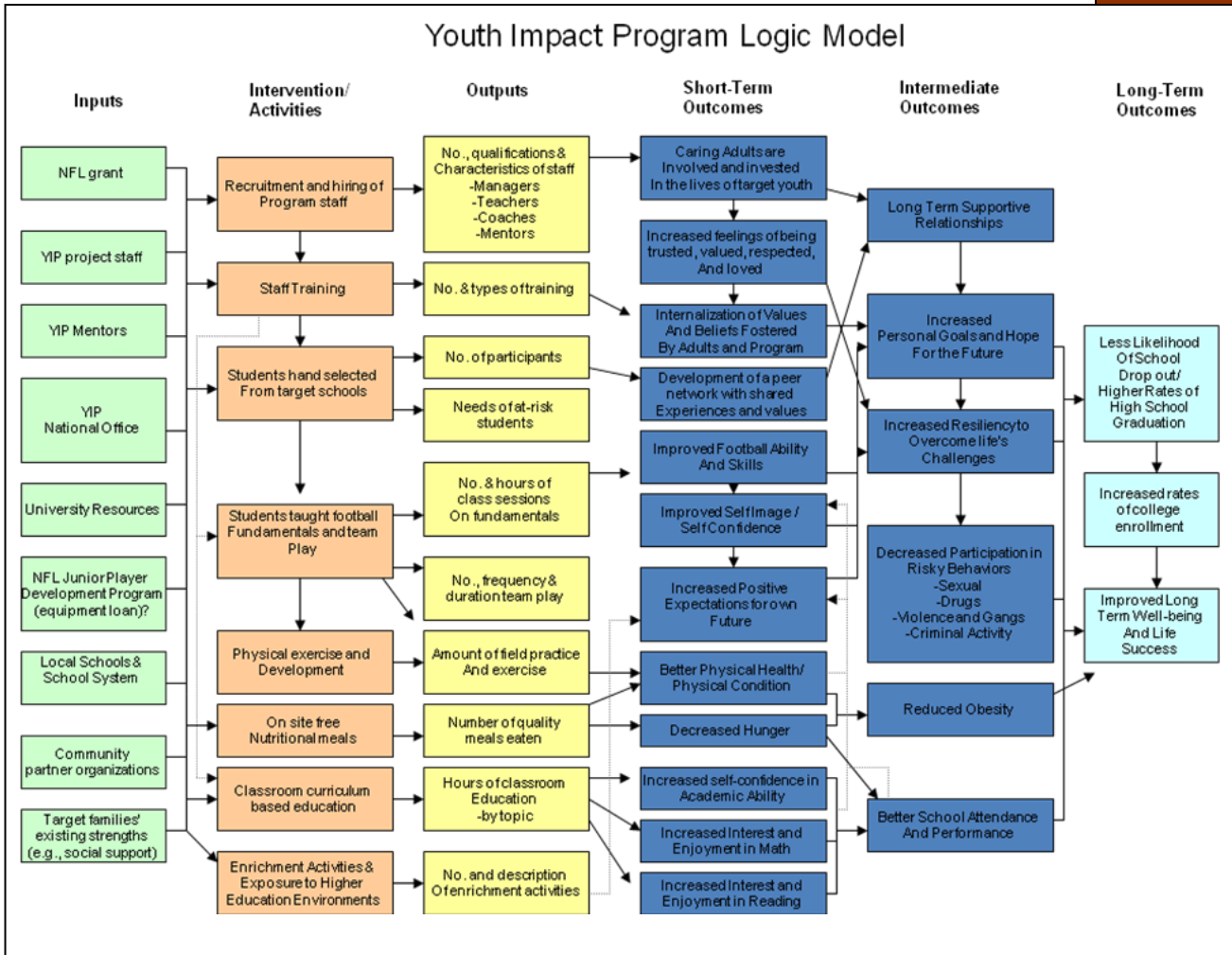
### **Financial Report**

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



# Appendix A

## YIP Logic Model



## Appendix B

# Congressional Letter of Support

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WWW.HOUSE.GOV/WATSON



### Congress of the United States House of Representatives

June 10, 2009

Commissioner Roger Goodell  
National Football League  
280 Park Avenue  
New York, NY 10017

Dear Commissioner Goodell:

We commend the efforts of the Youth Impact Program (YIP) and the National Football League (NFL) in working with our inner city's "at-risk" youth.

We would like you to be aware of our interest in continuing the future growth and success of this partnership. The partnership is important because 1 out of 3 inner city males do not receive a high school diploma. In addition, juvenile delinquents 7-12 years old are three times more likely to become violent and chronic offenders. Moreover, homicide is the leading cause of death for African American males 10-24 years old.

The YIP program has a motivating core taken from the great American sport of football. Through the powerful lessons contained within competitive football, the young men are also taught life skills, health and nutrition, science, engineering, technology, mathematics, and reading literacy.

We want to personally applaud the NFL for helping our "at-risk" youth in Los Angeles, New Orleans, Tampa Bay, and Houston. The NFL's commitment to our children means a lot to us and our constituencies. Furthermore, during this difficult financial time it is encouraging to see the NFL taking a leadership role by not only supporting a football program, but a well-rounded community program that will impact our youth from all walks of life.

Sincerely,

Diane E. Watson  
Member of Congress

Shelia Jackson-Lee  
Member of Congress

Kathy Castor  
Member of Congress

Anh Cao  
Member of Congress

OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT  
REFORM COMMITTEE

Chair, Subcommittee on Government  
Management, Organization, and Procurement  
Subcommittee on Domestic Policy  
Subcommittee on Information Policy, Census  
and National Archives

FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health  
Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific and  
the Global Environment  
Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation  
and Trade

DEMOCRATIC SENIOR WHIP

CHAIR, Congressional Entertainment  
Industries Caucus

Youth Impact Program  
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