



A YEAR IN REVIEW

2023-24 AYLF Program Year



Fellows present their Community Impact Project, Chicago, May 2024.

In 2023-24, Aspen Young Leaders Fellowship (AYLF) continued to foster its belief in the power of young people as changemakers. By partnering with Fellows and their communities to develop their understanding of self and take action on ideas for social solutions, AYLF planted the seeds for Fellows to thrive as leaders and steward positive impact.

I had no idea that emotion shared typically with close friends with similar experiences could be shared with strangers in the seminar room. The stories, the curriculum, the people - this combination, you can't help but be vulnerable in this space. It made me want to ignite a flame in myself and our cohort.

DEMI TRIMM, FELLOW,
MIAMI 2023-24 COHORT



Demi Trimm and Destiny Elistin, Fellows, Miami 2023-24 cohort.

2023-24 BY THE NUMBERS

AYLF deployed 30 seminars for 18-22 year-olds in partnership with 3 communities: Chicago, Mississippi & Arkansas Delta, and Miami.

**49
Fellows**

graduated in the
2023-24 cohort

**28,800
minutes**

of leadership
seminar facilitated
across all 3
communities

**441 hours
coaching**

individual
Fellows across 10
months

**67
local youth**

invested in as
youth facilitators,
recruiters, and
stewards for
community impact

**\$258,000
invested**

on average in each
of the 3 AYLF
communities
to deploy
programming

Examine the world as it is. Imagine it as it could be.

The AYLF cohort experience was a journey, transporting Fellows through stories as they explored ideas from thinkers, artists, and other changemakers within and beyond their communities. Fellows came together 10 times, sharing fresh perspectives in the sacred seminar space, connecting deeply, and designing and deploying Community Impact Projects (CIPs) that addressed a need in their communities.

AYLF DREAMS

AYLF kicked off the program by bringing together Fellows and community stakeholders for dinner and conversation about what it means to make dreams possible.



Chicago Dreams event, August 2023.



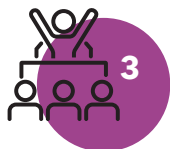
Beginnings

Fellows build trust among one another, centering in storytelling and delving into text-based dialogues.



Little Stories

Fellows toured their communities, grounding their sense of place and exploring their own identities, stories, and histories, examining the day-to-day micromoments that impact who they are.



Big Stories

Evolving their understanding of critical leadership, Fellows begin to ideate on their CIP. This session was a multi-day retreat with Fellows traveling to the Key West, Little Rock, and Lake Geneva.



Community Tour, Miami, September 2023.



The Challenges of Leadership

Developing an understanding of the complexities and contradictions of leadership, Fellows built capacities to hold ethics around how they engage with community and continue with their CIP.



Freedom Dreaming & Collective Action

Fellows freedom dreamed and pitched their initial designs of the CIP to Senior Fellows. Freedom dreaming helps move individuals and communities from a mere state of survival toward realizing imaginative dreams and making them a reality.



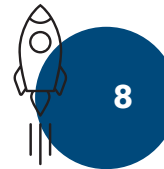
Inspiring Direct Action

While continuing to cultivate relational trust, Fellows engaged in two final CIP design sprints. This session culminated in Fellows presenting their revised CIP designs to the other cohorts in the AYLF ecosystem.



Leadership Through Vigilance and Resilience

Fellows identified ways to stay resilient and vigilant in their leadership and continued to work on the implementation of the CIP.



Leadership Through Vigilance & Sustainability

Fellows take a look at what sustainability and leadership look like, within and beyond AYLF, and examine what long-term community impact can be.



Storying Our Legacy

Fellows reflect on their journey and share living artifacts of their work. They identified hopes for their Senior Fellowship and centered on the power of stories to hold connections to their past, present, and future.



Building a Life of Meaning

As we brought closure to AYLF with graduation, we looked at how the Fellowship contributes to the collective effort of building meaning and envisioned futures with continued AYLF opportunities and expanded community.



Fellows in seminar making art, Miami, February 2024.



Fellows in seminar, Mississippi and Arkansas Delta September 2023.

Transformational change is happening. Parents have run into me in the community and said, "We don't know what you did, but our kid has transformed."

JAMES FORTE, LOCAL PROGRAM FACILITATOR, MISSISSIPPI & ARKANSAS DELTA



Mississippi and Arkansas Delta Program Facilitators and Fellows on retreat in Little Rock, October 2023.

LEARNING GAINS

9.45% average increase of learning gains for Fellows in capacities that are critical to leadership

- problem solving
- sense of belonging
- self-awareness
- integrative thinking
- agency
- systems navigation
- social perspective-taking
- resilience



Program Facilitators and Fellows at Graduation, Chicago, June 2024

Community Impact Projects



Chicago

Reinforcing the positive understanding of identity for young children, Fellows wrote a children's book and reached 40+ family members at their launch.



Delta

Bridging 11 organizations with 100+ community members, Fellows linked young people with educational and employment opportunities across the Delta.



Miami: Fridge of Plenty

Fellows reached over 200 families in Overtown and distributed 450 pounds of vegetables, fruit and bread. They also established a community fridge to sustain access to fresh food.

Beginning in a new community: Miami

AYLF celebrated its inaugural cohort in Miami this year. Partnering with Miami Dade College, the University of Miami and Florida International University, AYLF fostered lasting connection among Fellows across cultural and socioeconomic differences. Fellows valued interacting with other peers to develop shared understanding on critical issues they face, such as immigration and climate change.



As seminars unfolded, Fellows began to realize what communities exist beyond their social circle and that those communities may hold different experiences. They redefined community and broadened their understanding of how that informed their civic engagement, the responsibility they held, and how they would put it into action with their CIP.

DR. RON WABOMNOR, LOCAL PROGRAM FACILITATOR, MIAMI

