



“Support equals success,” shares Andre Bullard. Andre, Evan Cook, and Will Jimerson lead MSC’s new Positive Outcomes Program (POP).

POP serves youth and young adults ages 12 to 24 years of age that are typically overlooked or underserved, many of whom are at risk of interaction with the juvenile justice system. The program provides advocacy and support to help these youth meet their goals for the future. POP is strengthened by the support and leadership of the Federal Way Youth Action Team, a collaboration of adults and organizations that provide youth development opportunities.

Andre, Evan, and Will visit schools, malls, and locations in the community where at-risk youth are likely to gather. They also connect with youth on a referral basis through other service organizations, referrals for home visits, as well as law enforcement who may provide a referral to the program as an alternative to incarceration.

“We look at what way we can connect with them where they are at, whether that’s basketball or education,” shares Evan. “We build a relationship with them, not bombard them with services, so they will open up and we can show them what we can offer them,” adds Will.

POP provides positive mentorship as well as connections for young people interested in getting support in areas such as graduating high school or obtaining a GED, enrolling in college or a training program, obtaining employment, or finding resources such as transportation, school supplies, clothing, housing, or food. POP also works with families to provide additional support to make sure that the youth in the program meet their goals.

The program is unique because it serves youth as young as 12 and is led by individuals that are representative of the population the program serves.

“This is my life calling. When you look at other groups for marginalized populations, they are usually led by someone from that population. However, when you look at groups for young people of color, they are

often led by someone not generally of that same background,” shares Will, “Sometimes we are the first example of a positive role model these kids have had. And, we’re approachable. We dress like them and look like them and are able to connect.”

“This doesn’t feel like a job,” shares Andre, “it feels like what I’m supposed to do. Youth need opportunities and people to support them during important life events.”

“I want to be and give people what I didn’t have,” shares Evan. “I want to help make the community a community. I want people to be proud of where they are from.”

For more info on youth programs visit mschelps.org/gethelp/edemp/youth/.



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