



Atlanta Youth  
ACADEMY

2012-2013 ANNUAL REPORT

ATLANTA YOUTH ACADEMY (AYA) is a community rich with stories — stories of vision and achievement, of effort and excellence. Each individual whose life touches ours brings to AYA a unique ingredient: he may be a new student in Ms. Simpson’s pre-K class . . . a young teacher ready to take on challenges not to be found in other schools . . . a volunteer seeking meaningful opportunities for his time and service . . . and a parent prepared to make every necessary sacrifice, every day, because she envisions a brighter future for her child .

AYA offers its students an unparalleled Christ-centered education regardless of their families’ economic status. As Derrick Lockwood, Dean of the Academy, once observed, “No shortage of hugs around here.” Love and camaraderie are prized here, as well as mentoring and civility. We believe we’re charged with educating the next generation of great leaders.

WELCOME TO AYA. We want you to get to know us. On the following pages are just a few stories from our community of leaders.



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*Derrick Lockwood, Dean of the Academy, greets new and returning students on the first day of school.*

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

THE PAST YEAR WAS A BLESSING TO EACH AND EVERY CHILD IN OUR CARE. Thank you for making it possible: your financial gifts, your work around the school, your willingness to pray for AYA, and your faith in our faculty, staff, and students have made it one of the best years in our history.

As you read about our sixth, seventh and eighth grade teachers, imagine the unseen hours of effort that make an AYA education so academically rich. Their dedication—and that of all teachers at AYA—is what opens doors for our alumni at the top independent schools in the Atlanta metro region and beyond. You'll read about two of them, both graduates of Blair Academy, now pursuing their undergraduate degrees at two of our nation's finest colleges.

David Plyler is one remarkable man. I've heard him tell our students, "During eighth grade, you will make one of the most important decisions of your life." He can change a student's trajectory through life in a way that will impact many lives. He does this important work with his wonderful daughter Molly and we thank God for them every day.

So what are AYA stories? These are stories of community and dedication: faculty dedicated to bright children who need—and deserve—top teachers and mentors; kind, loving volunteers who make bold statements about a child's future and stand ready to gently guide the outcomes. *And these are stories that come true.* AYA students reach top-level colleges and universities, each child dedicated to realizing the potential that God bestowed, which was then strengthened by the parents, guardians, faculty, staff, and volunteers of AYA.

Thank you for what *you* mean to AYA and for what you will do for these children in our care. God bless you!



A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Peter".

**PETER ROONEY**

*President*

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## David Plyler | IN THE THICK OF WHAT'S GOING ON

*There are thousands of volunteer opportunities in the Atlanta region. What drew you to AYA?*

My wife and I were looking for an organization that was Christian-based and oriented to inner-city kids and their educational needs. I think we found the right place.

*What do you wish other donors and volunteers would learn and understand about AYA?*

AYA is a place where you can share all your gifts — time, talents, and financial resources. The AYA community has embraced us in every way we have asked to serve. Every Friday, my daughter Molly and I teach a leadership class to the eighth graders. The kids are so receptive to us! When you're on campus you just feel like you're in the thick of what's going on.



*In your professional life, you must see pervasive concerns about workforce-readiness and economic literacy in the next generation. How well do you feel AYA is responding to these?*

With this next generation, the biggest challenge for schools and parents is to love with toughness. AYA knows how to do this. The kids know the teachers love them very much, but that they must adhere to the standards of performance and character needed in today's world. AYA also does a wonderful job with the younger children, allowing them to see where their AYA education leads — they get to witness the celebration of each eighth grade scholarship, to know hard work pays off. The school reminds these kids all the time that there is no gain without effort.

*Mr. David Plyler, pictured above with his daughter Molly, is president and CEO of the Gleneagles Group, an MFO that manages a limited number of high-net-worth families with a collective net worth of over \$1 billion.*

“ From the moment we become parents, everything our children do is significant to us. This should not change once our children begin school. It's just as much our job as it is the teachers' — to guide and train our children — and what better way than to join your child's school and its mission by being involved? I know my children benefit when I get involved in their school: how much more is the school benefitting from my involvement as well? It only makes sense! ”



DONYAL ANDREWS  
President, 2013–2014 PTO

## Kathryn Stanley | LOVING “THE JESUS YEARS”

*Please tell us about yourself and what led you to teach at AYA.*

After graduating from Spelman College I chose to study at the University of Virginia School of Law. I practiced law in Alabama but, upon moving to Atlanta, I worked in the nonprofit community on issues affecting women and children. Somewhere in there, I began teaching adults in various settings. I truly enjoy it: my spirit soars whenever I teach.

My coming to AYA was simply God’s doing, Dean Lockwood and I met through Leadership Atlanta, so he knew of my desire to join the profession. He believed I’d be good at it. He believed it well enough to hire me! I am grateful to God for bringing me to teach English in AYA’s junior high. It’s the most challenging job I’ve ever had but I don’t choose to do anything else.

*AYA is a place of wonderful stories. As an educator, what are some stories that bolstered your belief in AYA and its community? What keeps you going?*

When you teach this age group, you sometimes get a lot of resistance. You can’t always tell when and how you’ve had impact. So many of our alums are *soaring* in high school. I’ve had AYA alums tell me, “Guess what we’re reading, Ms. Stanley? *Animal Farm*. *Romeo & Juliet*. We already read those in your class!” Their successes and enthusiasm let me know I did give our students the background and confidence to compete in different environments.

I have a relative who says after Jesus’ parents found him in the temple at age 12, we don’t hear from Jesus again until he began his ministry at age 30 — in other words, the years from 12 to 30 are “the Jesus years,” when God is working on them.

As a former civil rights attorney, I am also fueled by a desire to have our students embrace the social gospel of Jesus Christ: in addition to teaching them to speak, write, and reason effectively, I help them become more aware of their heritage as African Americans, and how the faith of our ancestors still lives in them today.



*Benjamin Wills* | LIVING INTENTIONALLY

A NATIVE OF DALLAS, TEXAS, AYA'S JUNIOR HIGH LEAD TEACHER MR. BENJAMIN WILLS first visited Atlanta in 2006, when he and his wife Sara completed an urban service program called Mission Year. "We were exposed to issues and problems that plague inner-city neighborhoods." Although he had a management position with a large mortgage company, Mr. Wills says, "Our life was extremely comfortable, but we both felt God was calling us back to the inner-city — to live more intentionally. A teacher is the first thing I ever wanted to be, to teach history at the junior high level. I contacted Dean Lockwood and learned there was a position available in junior high teaching history. I called my wife after the interview with a deep sense that this is what God had been preparing me for."

He adds, "I wish more people knew about our students' willingness to serve, and their quest for excellence. Our students work extremely hard in the classroom and wrestle with difficult personal issues through a Christian perspective. This is so much more than an '8-to-3:30' job. Our teachers really put in the work to make it possible for students to get everything they need to go to the next level."

Mr. Wills also teaches Life Skills to AYA's eighth graders. "We start with conflict resolution and peer relationships. The most effective way to teach anything is by modeling the desired behavior. We spend a great deal of our time exposing students to different experiences in collaboration, and the outcome is always the same: they are forever changed, and we are forever changed by witnessing this transformation. It is truly by God's grace that all of this is possible."

*Being the father of a three-year-old girl further informs his professional insights. "Eliana's the pride and joy of our lives."*



*Katie Koerten* | COMING HOME

*Imagine you're in another part of the world. How would you describe AYA's mission and community to someone unfamiliar with the school?*

AYA's mission is to provide exceptional education to urban children in Atlanta. We believe every child is created in the image of God, that He has a plan for their lives. I have the privilege of preparing my students for high school and lifelong learning while encouraging them in their faith. The AYA community feels like one big family — it's a close-knit group of students, parents, faculty, staff, plus all the contributors and volunteers who support us so lovingly in our mission. This is my second year at AYA, and it's been the perfect fit for me because it encompasses my two passions: Jesus and teaching urban children.

*AYA has been described as "unapologetically Christian." In a diverse world of growing complexity, how does this faith-based approach to education work for AYA's students?*

Junior high is a very difficult time in their lives — they're searching for identity and a sense of belonging. I have the privilege to walk alongside and encourage them in their faith as they grasp that their identity is found in Christ. At AYA we are able to encourage good behavior beyond merely "Because I said so." Students learn the truths found in the Bible, and see that their words and actions should reflect Christ.

We also are able to instill in them a strong work ethic. We encourage them to do as Colossians 3:23 says: *Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord.*

## ALUMNI PROFILES

*AYA is filled with wonderful stories. Describe something that happened to you as an AYA student that helps you in your decisions about life.*

### John Welch | CLASS OF 2009

ONE OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL AND MEMORABLE MOMENTS of my life was filming a short comedy skit with my friends during seventh grade at AYA. It was Brigham Hall, Kyle Woodruff, LaMarvin Hines, Amazier Ouya, and me, with our teacher Chad Pritchard as the cinematographer. The process of making the short skit was easily the funniest time I had at AYA. The plot of the short was to warn our classmates what would happen if we failed our final exams. We screened the film to the entire middle school a week before midterms. The forty of us watched the final cut that Mr. Pritchard put together. It was *hilarious*.

A year later on my graduation day, knowing of my interest in film, Mr. Pritchard gave me a framed magazine cover of [film director] Spike Lee. I still have that now, as a freshman in college. It's a consistent source of inspiration, nostalgia, and influence as I continue on.

*After attending AYA, John went to Blair Academy where he joined the wrestling team and became a national-level wrestler, and received a school award for Best Film. He now attends Rollins College, where he is working on a degree in film production.*



### Alexis Vinson | CLASS OF 2009

WHEN I THINK BACK TO MY TIME AT AYA, the lesson that stands out the most is the importance of *service* and *giving back*. I remember AYA service projects such as volunteering with Habitat For Humanity, a local nursing home, and Operation Shoebox. I remember going to the nursing home when I was in the sixth grade, and singing for the residents. I wasn't the best singer, but it was fun watching the elderly residents smile, sing, and clap along. These humbling experiences still play out in my life today: I now attend St. John's University in New York, a school that prides itself on being a Vincentian institution. This means that St. John's is inspired by St. Vincent's compassion and drive for service. AYA showed me that giving back and helping others is not only rewarding but fulfilling as well.

*Alexis also attended Blair Academy after graduating from AYA. Currently studying psychology at St. John's, she plans to attend medical school, become a psychiatrist, and open her own practice.*

## ALUMNI LISTING

### CLASS OF 2004

**CHRISTOPHER DAVIS**  
Tech High School

**JINEKA GASTON**  
Tech High School

**DAVION GREER**  
Washington High School

**DIANNA PORTER**  
Tech High School  
Albany State University

**PAIGE REYNOLDS**  
Grace Christian Academy  
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**DECARLO TATUM**  
Tech High School

**NICOLE WARTHEN**  
Pathway Christian School  
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### CLASS OF 2005

**ROBERT BOYD**  
Southwest DeKalb  
High School  
Georgia Southern

**CLARENCE DIXON**  
Grace Christian Academy  
Chattahoochee Tech

**MYOSHA GOSIER**  
Mount Vernon  
Christian Academy  
Valdosta State University

**BRENT GRANTVILLE**  
Druid Hills High School

**SYTHEA LESTER**  
Greenforest Christian Academy  
Emory University

**JAMEEL STOKES**  
The Lovett School  
Georgia Southern

**JAMEESA STOKES**  
The Lovett School  
Auburn University

**ALBERT WILSON**  
Rabun-Gap  
Nacoochee School  
Winthrop College

### CLASS OF 2006

**QUADULYN CUMMINGS**  
Tech High School  
Paine College

**ANTHONY GATES**  
Whitefield Academy  
Morehouse College

**JAQUAN FORD**  
Rabun-Gap  
Nacoochee School  
Louisiana State University

**KEENON RUSH**  
The McCallie School  
Wake Forest University

**CAROLYNE OUYA**  
Miss Porter's School  
Santa Clara University

**KENTARVIA WHEAT**  
Southwest DeKalb  
High School  
Gordon College

**BRITTNAY WILSON**  
Starr's Mill High School  
Tuskegee Institute

### CLASS OF 2007

**JOEL BARBER**  
Carver School of the Arts  
University of West Georgia

**SEKANI CRAWFORD**  
Newton County High School  
Georgia State University

**SABRIA HALL**  
Tallulah Falls  
Georgia Perimeter College

**MILTON HANCOCK**  
Darlington School

**TATIANA MAPP-PEARSON**  
Norcross High School  
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**KOREY PHILLIPS**  
Hope for Excellence School

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Leadership Academy

### CLASS OF 2008

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**DESIREÉ FRALEY**  
The Lovett School  
University of  
Southern California

**CHELSEA NORWOOD**  
Westlake High School  
Savannah State University

**TYREE RUSH**  
The McCallie School  
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Druid Hills High School  
Valdosta State University

**JAMAL WILLIS**  
Druid Hills High School  
Auburn University

**TEVIN WOODRUFF**  
Early College High School  
at Carver  
The Art Institute of Atlanta

### CLASS OF 2009

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Tech High School

**JASMINE FRANCIS**  
The Piney Woods School

**BRIGHAM HALL**  
Grady High School

**ONRICA HARRIS**  
The Piney Woods

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Riverwood High School  
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South Atlanta High School

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*We have made every effort to list in this report all who gave either of their time or financial resources to Atlanta Youth Academy from August 1, 2012-July 31, 2013. We regret any errors or omissions and request that you report corrections to Caroline Fejoku at [carolinef@atlantayouthacademy.com](mailto:carolinef@atlantayouthacademy.com).*

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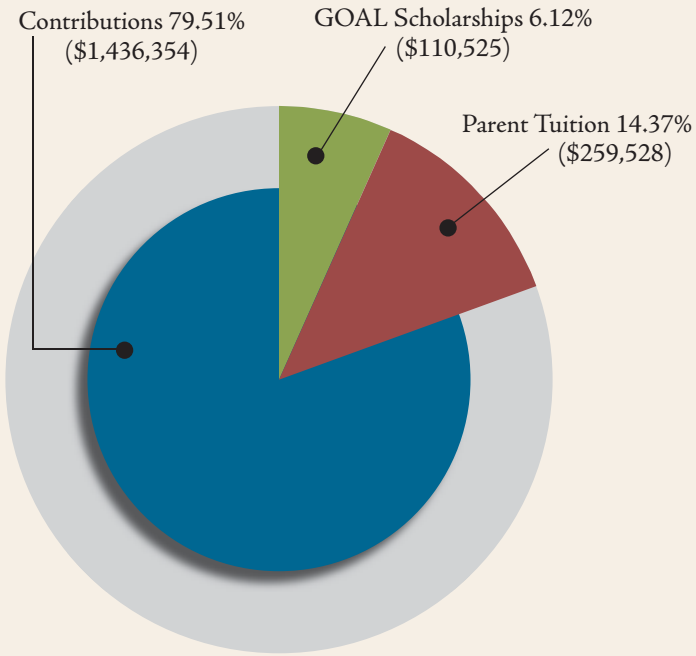
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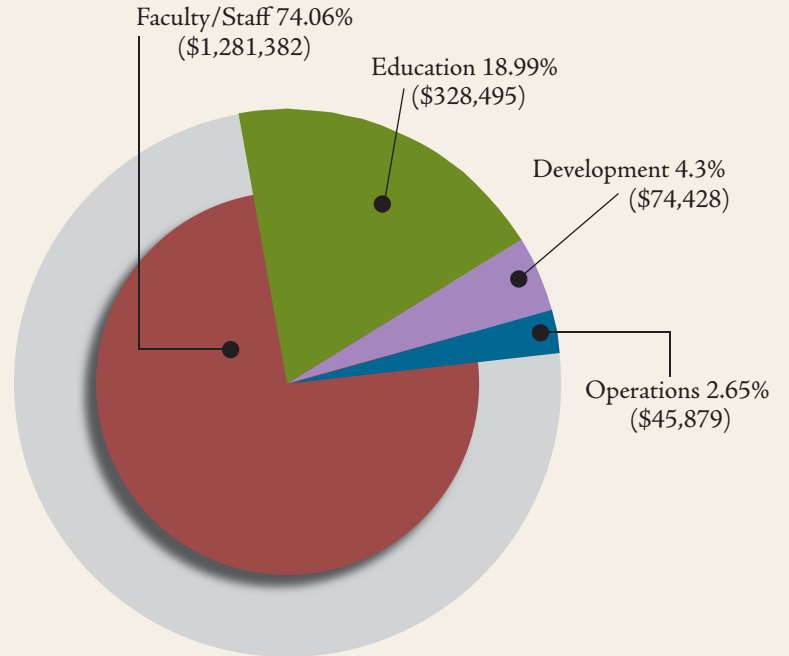


2012 – 2013 SCHOOL YEAR RESULTS

**INCOME**  
\$1,806,407



**EXPENSES**  
\$1,730,184



## ATLANTA YOUTH ACADEMY & FOUNDATION THREE-YEAR BUDGET PROJECTIONS

*Excluding Endowment, Capital Campaign & Depreciation*

	2013 – 2014	2014 – 2015	2015 – 2016
<b>INCOME</b>			
<b>CONTRIBUTIONS</b>			
Scholarship Partners	\$ 832,144	\$ 855,028	\$ 878,541
Partial Partners	153,951	158,185	162,535
Individuals	211,676	218,026	226,747
Foundations & Corporations	390,412	404,076	419,229
<b>OTHER INCOME</b>			
Parent Tuition/GOAL Scholarships	375,576	381,210	386,928
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$1,963,759</b>	<b>\$2,016,525</b>	<b>\$2,073,980</b>
<i>Yr to Yr Increase</i>		2.62%	2.77%
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Faculty & Staff Salaries	\$1,384,717	\$1,419,335	\$1,454,818
Educational Program	423,823	432,299	440,945
Operational/Administrative	59,193	60,377	61,886
Development/Fundraising	96,026	97,469	98,929
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$1,963,759</b>	<b>\$2,009,478</b>	<b>\$2,056,578</b>
<i>Yr to Yr Increase</i>		2.28%	2.29%
<b>WORKING CAPITAL</b>	<b>\$ 81,587</b>	<b>\$ 88,634</b>	<b>\$ 106,036</b>

*All contributions to the Atlanta Youth Academy go through our fund raising foundation, Atlanta Youth Academies Foundation, Inc.*

*Atlanta Youth Academies, Inc. and Atlanta Youth Academies Foundation, Inc. are audited each year by Mauldin & Jenkins, LLC.*

*As of August 15, 2013, the audit for school year 2012–2013 is not complete. At your request, we would be pleased to provide you with a copy of our audited financial statements. Mauldin & Jenkins may also be contacted directly at 200 Galleria Parkway, Suite 1700, Atlanta, GA 30339–5946 or by telephone at 770.955.8600.*





Atlanta Youth Academies Inc.  
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Atlanta, GA 30315  
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[www.atlantayouthacademy.com](http://www.atlantayouthacademy.com)

*"For I know the plans I have for you,"  
declares the Lord, "plans to give you  
a hope and a future." JEREMIAH 29:11*

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## *Our Mission*

The Atlanta Youth Academy Foundation exists to advance the Kingdom of God by providing the funding necessary to offer students of Atlanta Youth Academy an excellent, Christ-centered education regardless of their families' economic status.

## *Our Vision*

The Atlanta Youth Academy Foundation seeks to vigorously raise the financial support necessary to provide assistance to as many needy students as the Atlanta Youth Academy can accommodate. Then, as these students are empowered, they will utilize their gifts and resources for the Kingdom of God and in turn help others in their communities. Additionally, the vision is to serve as Christian witness to all, regardless of race, creed, resources or religion, by exemplifying a contagious spirit of benevolence.