

Exploring Asylum Hill - Compass Jr. Peacebuilders

The Compass Youth Collaborative has recently expanded into Asylum Hill. Their mission is to work with youth, especially those who show signs of having leadership potential to develop the skills necessary to be successful in life and to be future leaders in the community. The Jr. Peacebuilders Program, in their own words, seeks to provide these youth with “job readiness skills, communication skills and stipends for internship placements. The program aims to help youth learn non-violent ways to solve problems, improve their employability skills, and increase their community pride.”

They began in the South end of Hartford and have just recently begun working in Asylum Hill. So on Wednesday evening 12/30 fourteen young



AH residents who had completed their training received their certificates of completion. Marcus Alexander, Camani Bell, Janyl Byrd, Taizjah Drayton, Fredrick Engram, Jerin Garrett, Toddisha Joiner, Jeremy Rodriguez, Tyzhiana Starks, Jedidjah Telfer, Tyshawm Walker, Kyesha White, J'Briana Williams and Ty'reck Williams will now begin their internships with local employers HeartBeat Ensemble, Representative Matt Ritter's Office, Marshall House, Boys & Girls Club and Habitat for Humanity.

Funding for the program including the stipend money came from The Hartford, Asylum Hill Congregational Church and Avon/Canton Rotary Club. Immanuel Congregational Church hosted the event.

It was truly heartening to see these young people and their families gathered to celebrate the occasion. Tiazjah Drayton and Jedidah Telfer spoke before the awarding of the certificates about the value of the program and demonstrated some of the communication skills they have acquired. Look for each of them to be active in the neighborhood in the months ahead. More photos are available at <https://goo.gl/photos/vtC8fvaXspdvudRY9>