

*New Yorkers Against Gun Violence  
Education Fund*

# 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



Across the city and the state, New Yorkers Against Gun Violence Education Fund took big strides in 2019, making the kind of progress that will save lives and create a new generation of activists fighting for comprehensive solutions to gun violence.

America's gun violence epidemic disproportionately affects youth of color - and they're leading the fight to stop it. That's why we at NYAGV Ed Fund are growing our programs to reduce gun violence by elevating the voices of the young people most affected by it.

The start of 2019 brought a major step forward in Albany, where our state government enacted a sweeping package of gun laws that will make our communities safer. According to the Center for American Progress, New York State now has the fourth-lowest gun death rate in the country, in large part due to our strong gun laws.

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Despite New York's strict laws, gun violence continues to take a savage toll in our urban neighborhoods, in part due to the inflow of guns from other states. In 2019, New York City saw shooting incidents climb to 772 from 749 in 2018, including a mass shooting in Brownsville that left one person dead and 11 injured.



**Left: Youth Over Guns activists and Education Director Shaina Harrison at the Presidential Gun Safety Forum in Las Vegas in October 2019.**

**Above: Program Director Frank Teah works with students at John Bowne High School in Queens.**

But we are at a pivotal moment. Social awareness and activism about gun violence are at an all-time high, and our in-school gun violence education program, ReACTION, is having an impact.

ReACTION is a youth empowerment program, working with students to identify root causes of and solutions to gun violence - and teaching them how to respond constructively through activism. In 2019, ReACTION began a major expansion that will allow our curriculum to reach 2,000 more NYC students by the end of the 2020-21 school year.

In partnership with the New York City Office to Prevent Gun Violence, NYC public schools and city community groups, we began a Train-the-Facilitator series of workshops designed to bring even more "credible messengers" - people who are from the neighborhoods we serve - into classrooms as educators. These crisis mediators have violence intervention skills and experience and have had success preventing shootings in their own neighborhoods. With the new group of facilitators, we are now offering ReACTION in more schools in the Bronx, Queens and Brooklyn.

Our Miller Mentorship program kicked off in summer 2019 with a cohort of 10 students who had completed our ReACTION program and were interested in digging deeper into gun violence prevention advocacy. Through a series of workshops, press events and field trips, the students in the Miller Mentorship program learned how to galvanize their peers to prevent gun violence.

To support our growing programs, we've grown our budget and diversified our revenue stream. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, our revenue jumped from \$326,173 to \$536,229 between 2016 and 2019. That included a 41% increase in corporate donations, a 63% increase in individual and family foundation donations, and a 192% increase in foundation grants. Our fundraising success has allowed us to grow our operating budget to over half a million dollars - ensuring financial health and allowing for the expansion of our programming.

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We celebrated our progress in the fight against gun violence at our Annual Benefit, held at the Edison Ballroom in October. More than 300 people gathered to recognize our successes and honor the legislators who were instrumental in passing new laws: New York State Assembly Speaker Carl E. Heastie, New York State Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and New York State Senator Brian Kavanagh. We also paid tribute to student activists Luis Hernandez, Andrea Gonzales and

Alliyah Logan, who lead Youth Over Guns, elevating the voices of students of color who are most affected by gun violence. Finally, we heard from author Angie Thomas (pictured above with two ReACTION students), whose bestselling novel *The Hate U Give* has inspired a generation of young activists - including our ReACTION students - to speak out for safety and justice in their communities.

As the leaders of the NYAGV Education Fund, we thank you sincerely for all you do to help end the gun violence that is plaguing our communities. Because we are a small nonprofit, your support has an outsized impact as we work together to create a new generation of advocates who are equipped to fight for holistic solutions to this devastating problem.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Fischer,  
Executive Director

Phil Jonas,  
Board Chair

## SUMMER PROGRAM: MILLER MENTORSHIP



Thanks to the generosity of Larry Miller and Carolyn Cohen, we launched the Miller Mentorship, our first-ever summer program. Over a span of eight weeks, participating students explored how gun violence intersects with race, gender, and economic inequality. Students were trained to speak to the press, and learned how to mobilize other young people to

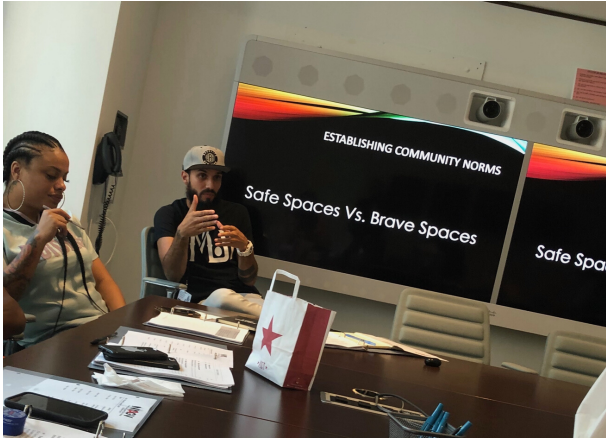
advocate for safer schools, streets, and communities. Members of Youth Over Guns - our youth activist arm - served as mentors.

The students and mentors attended eight intensive full-day workshops on a range of topics around gun violence and advocacy; attended press events and meetings with Governor Andrew Cuomo, U.S. Senators Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand and others; and took a field trip to the Ford Foundation's art gallery highlighting the fight for social justice.

Perhaps the most exciting outcome of the mentorship program? The students designed a school assembly presentation for high schools around the city, so they can share their knowledge about gun violence and advocacy and recruit new youth activists. These school town halls will launch in 2020.

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# REACTION GROWTH: FACILITATOR TRAINING



and other foundations, we embarked on a Train-the-Facilitator series of workshops.

In the workshops, we trained seven conflict mediators, known as credible messengers, on how to deliver the ReACTION curriculum in additional neighborhoods affected by gun violence, like Jamaica and Mott Haven. Our senior staff provides coaching to the recently trained facilitators (pictured at left), and we have another workshop planned for April 2020.

For years our ReACTION curriculum has empowered students to stand up for safer communities. In 2019, we piloted a program designed to expand our reach by partnering with grassroots community organizations.

With the help of city and state funding and grants from the New York Community Trust

Now we're reaching more students than ever. In the past, ReACTION served 750-800 students each year; we expect that number to grow to 1,200 in 2019-20. Our goal for 2020-21 is to train even more facilitators so we can continue galvanizing students to become advocates for themselves, their schools and their communities.



**Executive Director:**  
Rebecca Fischer  
rfischer@nyagv.org

**Education Director:**  
Shaina Harrison  
shaina@nyagv.org

**Program Director:**  
Frank Teah  
frank@nyagv.org

**Board Chair:**  
Phil Jonas  
pjonas@nyagv.org

**Development Director:**  
Jaime Pessin  
jpessin@nyagv.org

**Youth/Community Outreach Coordinator:**  
Andrea Gonzales  
andrea@youthovergunsny.org

**New Yorkers Against Gun Violence Ed Fund**

PO Box 3354  
New York, NY 10163  
(212) 679-2345