
YOUTH UNITED FOR CHANGE

FALL 2025



YOUTHUNITEDFORCHANGE.ORG



27 NOVEMBER 2025



GIVING SEASON

Mission

Youth United for Change (YUC) develops young leaders in Philadelphia with a critical political, historical, and economic understanding of society, and empowers them to improve the quality of their lives and communities.

Who Are We

Our Vision:

To develop the leadership of youth from communities of color who are capable of leading and governing all of society, using grassroots organizing as the training vehicle

To build an organization powerful enough to help create community-based power focused on maintaining the right of Black and Brown people to control their own lives

To produce leaders who can organize their communities to change the structure of society towards justice for all people

Who Are We

We are community members, educators, healers, abolitionists and archivists committed to uplifting Philadelphia's Queer, Trans, Black, Indigenous People Of Color (QTBIPOC) youth and community through grassroots organizing using tools that include community mobilization, civic engagement, interdisciplinary education, and healing justice. YUC develops leaders' critical political understanding of society so they can improve the quality of their lives and their intersected communities.

We are the inheritors of a victorious cultural and social legacy. We have received tools for liberation and healing from our ancestors and it is our duty to deliver them to our youth and our communities as a demand from all of our ancestors whose lives will never go in vain.

In the immortal words of Asatta Shakur,
"It is our duty to fight for our freedom.

It is our duty to win.

We must love each other and support each other.

We have nothing to lose but our chains."



In this current moment of political division, censorship and intimidation, we must affirm the need for collective care. As an abolitionist organization—Youth United For Change (YUC) is firmly committed to providing a safe space for ALL people. We affirm that in the here and now, that we are able to join together to heal ourselves through joy, imagination, unity, self-determination and collective care work (s) that create the changes we want to see in our communities, homes, schools and within ourselves. As a function of freedom, we must recognize, embrace, and affirm our full selves.

YOUTH UNITED FOR CHANGE

FALL 2025



[YOUTHUNITEDFORCHANGE.ORG](https://youthunitedforchange.org)



27 NOVEMBER 2025

WHAT'S NEWS

No Thanks Given

This “Thanksgiving”, we denounce colonizers, fascists, and those who believe human rights aren’t universal. We’re constantly confronted with international humanitarian crises. My heart goes out to those suffering in Gaza, Ukraine, Sudan, and Nigeria. Yet, I can’t help but grapple with a common thread connecting these situations: the enduring legacy of colonial extraction of profit and power. Whether it’s a state or people, there is always someone looking to profit by controlling resources from places we consider “underdeveloped”. The language we use here is imperative. We must acknowledge that the hardship these countries face is not accidental; they are not naturally disadvantaged; they are underdeveloped because resources have been strategically extracted from them for profit’s sake. Sudan is one example of many—the country is currently facing the world’s largest displacement crisis as a direct result of its historic British-Egyptian colonial rule and the uneven economic development and political division it created, in addition to foreign intervention sustaining and prolonging the conflict. (Conflict in Sudan: A Map of Regional and International Actors, 2024) & (Civil War in Sudan | Global Conflict Tracker, n.d.)

Watching these issues play out internationally, we may remove ourselves, thinking nothing like that could happen here. However, in recent years, as we’ve seen the rise of fascism here in the US, that veil has been lifted. The current commander-in-chief blatantly disregards the Constitution, the rule of law, and the rights of the people, and congressional representatives are led by fear rather than by their constituents’ interests. Thinking back to January 6, 2021, the feeling of shock, and the question of what has this country come to? The US positions itself as a beacon of hope and civility, but watching insurrectionists lay waste to the nation’s capital was like watching a symbol of democracy fall.

Today, seeing military personnel being pressured to choose between law and loyalty and seeing people being abducted by unmarked police feels like we’re in a Black Mirror episode. The President is a criminal who persecutes his political enemies and protects predators. This has not only been distressing, but I can’t believe it’s our reality.

This “Thanksgiving,” we are reminded of the destructive power of prejudice. We have seen food and healthcare used as political tools, leaving the over 2 million Pennsylvanians who depend on SNAP (Krueger, 2025) in terribly precarious positions as we enter the 2025 holiday season. Philadelphians, in addition to hardship from the national government shutdown, were impacted by the strike held by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees District Council 33, also known as DC33, wherein 9,000 city workers, including sanitation workers, emergency service dispatchers, and more, were forced to stop working over contract negotiations. The union was seeking a 15% wage increase over 3 years, but was forced to settle for 9% after an eight-day work stoppage. In an interview with WHYY, DC33 president Greg Boulware said, “We got people that work and repair the water mains and can’t afford their water bill. We got people that repair the runways at the airport and can’t afford a plane ticket. I don’t want to be rich. We just want comfort inside the city that we serve daily.” (Sharber, MacDonald, Pulcinella, & Schmidt, 2025)

YOUTH UNITED FOR CHANGE

FALL 2025



[YOUTHUNITEDFORCHANGE.ORG](https://youthunitedforchange.org)



27 NOVEMBER 2025

WHAT'S NEWS

No Thanks Given

Feeling the hunger and smelling the trash pile up, we are forced to acknowledge the greed of the state and those in power, who clutch their powers tight and dismiss the fall of the masses they were hired to uplift. Gov. Josh Shapiro just approved a \$50.09 billion state budget (Sweitzer 2025) as of November 12, 2025. We need to ensure budget allocations benefit Pennsylvanians and don't just maintain the status quo or feed our already over-funded carceral system.

As difficult as these times are, I still see glimmers of hope. That is not to make light of the situation, because the hardship is real and widespread, but I am seeing signs of hope from our community. I'm excited to see how many restaurants, venues, nonprofits, and groups around the city have marshalled resources to support the communities most in need here in Philly and internationally. At Youth United For Change, we are committed to reshaping engagement, working with staff and community to define needs rather than telling the community what they need. The first step to restoration is care. At Youth United For Change, we take action by caring first and then by doing. Events centering youth voice, alongside the expansion of youth as a spectrum of experience, inform targeted, specific interventions Youth United For Change can take to know better and then to do better.

Change is not linear and does not always come in the form of fiduciary capital. It also looks like taking accountability for the people who boldly and fiercely leave their homes to commune in space with YUC and its constituents. As such, this "Thanksgiving" is a day to remember Indigenous people and an opportunity to support your local community. Remember that Philadelphia was founded on the land of the Leni Lenape people, and this city is rich in culture and history. This Black Friday, divest from corporate greed and billion-dollar corporations that support colonization and extract wealth from our communities. Instead, shop local, shop Black, shop Indigenous, try putting your money into something you believe in. Enjoy time with those you love, and when you come together, be in community, using it as a space to care for one another and support one another, but also as a time to cultivate ideas and share information. This "Thanksgiving", don't disregard its problematic history; be a part of a new history.

References

- Civil War in Sudan | Global Conflict Tracker. (n.d.). Council on Foreign Relations. Retrieved November 24, 2025, from <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/power-struggle-sudan>
- Conflict in Sudan: A map of regional and international actors. (2024, December 19). Wilson Center. Retrieved November 24, 2025, from <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/conflict-sudan-map-regional-and-international-actors>
- Krueger, R. L. (2025, November 4). A list of local food pantries, a SNAP and federal shutdown update, and more. Pennsylvania House of Representatives. <https://www.pahouse.com/Krueger/EmailArchive/?id=140950>
- Sharber, C., MacDonald, T., Pulcinella, M., & Schmidt, S. (2025, July 8). Philadelphia's largest union holds first strike in 40 years. WHYY. <https://whyy.org/articles/philadelphia-largest-union-first-strike-40-years/>
- Sweitzer, J. (2025, November 13). City & State's 2025–26 Pennsylvania state budget tracker. City & State PA. <https://www.cityandstatepa.com/politics/2025/11/city-states-2025-26-pennsylvania-state-budget-tracker/407692/>

YOUTH UNITED FOR CHANGE

FALL 2025



YOUTHUNITEDFORCHANGE.ORG



27 NOVEMBER 2025

WHAT'S NEWS

Dr. Refaat Alareer “If I Must Die” 2023

As we think about “Thanksgiving” and the global injustices, we recall the words of Dr. Refaat Alareer, a Palestinian writer, poet, translator, and university professor whose organizing work has directly affected Philadelphia and whose words have inspired people around the world. On December 6, 2023, he was murdered by an Israeli airstrike along with his brother, sister, and their children in Israel’s ongoing genocidal siege of Gaza of 2023. Just five weeks before his killing, he shared this poem titled “If I must die”, and pinned it to his Twitter profile.



If I must die,

you must live

to tell my story

to sell my things

to buy a piece of cloth

and some strings,

(make it white with a long tail)

so that a child, somewhere in Gaza

while looking heaven in the eye

awaiting his dad who left in a blaze—

and bid no one farewell

not even to his flesh

not even to himself—

sees the kite, my kite you made, flying
up above

and thinks for a moment an angel is
there

bringing back love

If I must die

let it bring hope

let it be a tale

YOUTH UNITED FOR CHANGE

FALL 2025



YOUTHUNITEDFORCHANGE.ORG

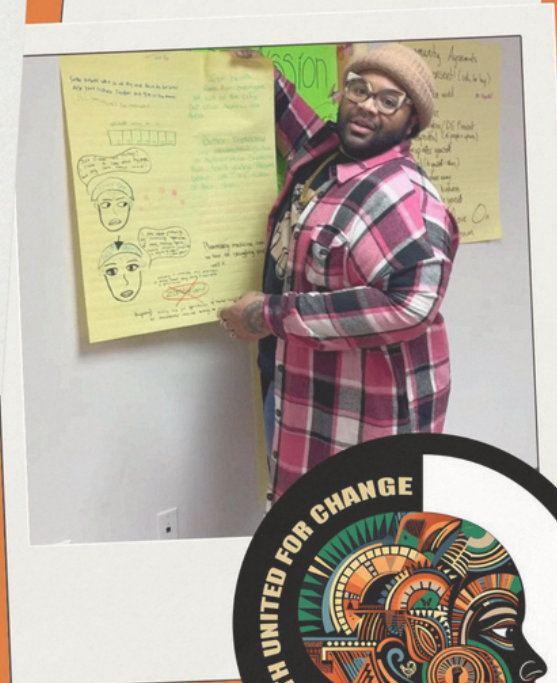


27 NOVEMBER 2025

WHAT'S NEWS

Funky Fall Festivities Recap

YOUTH
UNITED FOR CHANGE



YOUTH UNITED FOR CHANGE

FALL 2025



YOUTHUNITEDFORCHANGE.ORG



27 NOVEMBER 2025

COMING UP AT YUC

Expect the Spectacular



12/17/2025 4:30-8:00PM

520 N CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS BLVD
205, PHILADELPHIA, PA 19123



HOSTED BY SHIRLEEN BEARD
BRWNGRLWELLNESS STUDIO

RELEASE THE CHALLENGES OF
2025 AND STEP CONFIDENTLY
INTO 2026 WITH CLARITY,
MINDFULNESS, AND INTENTION.

GUIDED MEDITATION,
MINDFUL MOVEMENT, AND
GOAL-SETTING EXERCISES

YOUTH
UNITED FOR CHANGE

YOUTH UNITED FOR CHANGE

FALL 2025



[YOUTHUNITEDFORCHANGE.ORG](https://youthunitedforchange.org)



27 NOVEMBER 2025

JOIN US IN GIVING

YOUTH
UNITED FOR CHANGE



Giving Tuesday is almost here. On December 2, we will come together to celebrate generosity, community, and the power of young people leading change through Youth United for Change.

This year, your support will strengthen five key programs that help youth learn, lead, heal, and serve their communities:

- The Leadership Library
- Healing Justice Toolkit and Workshops
- Arts and Media Project
- Youth Leadership Cohorts
- Community Fridge



Every contribution, large or small, helps build a future where young people have the tools, knowledge, and confidence to transform their communities.

Give early or share the campaign to help us reach more supporters. Together, we can make Giving Tuesday a day of lasting impact.

YOUTH UNITED FOR CHANGE

FALL 2025



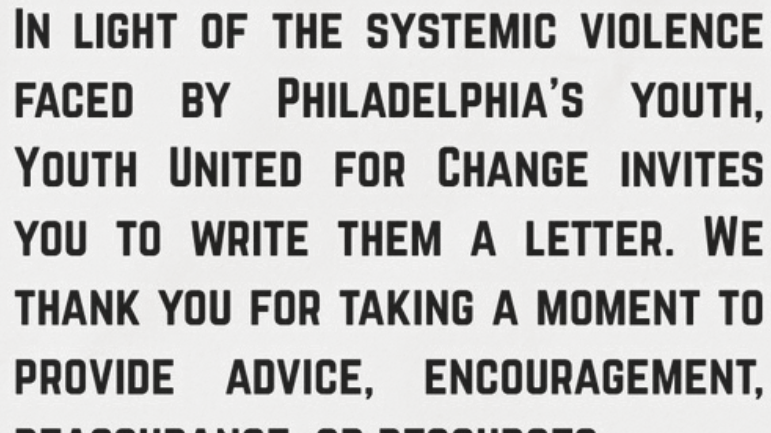
[YOUTHUNITEDFORCHANGE.ORG](https://youthunitedforchange.org)



27 NOVEMBER 2025

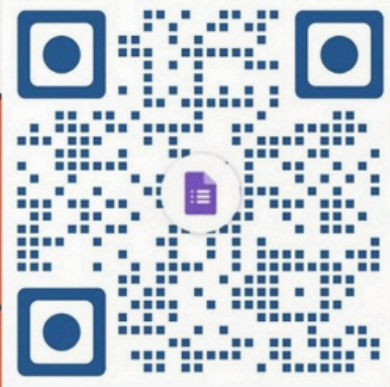
CALL TO ACTION

LETTERS TO PHILLY YOUTH



IN LIGHT OF THE SYSTEMIC VIOLENCE
FACED BY PHILADELPHIA'S YOUTH,
YOUTH UNITED FOR CHANGE INVITES
YOU TO WRITE THEM A LETTER. WE
THANK YOU FOR TAKING A MOMENT TO
PROVIDE ADVICE, ENCOURAGEMENT,
REASSURANCE, OR RESOURCES.

PLEASE SHARE YOUR RESPONSES BY
SCANNING THE QR CODE:



YOUTH UNITED FOR CHANGE

FALL 2025



YOUTHUNITEDFORCHANGE.ORG



27 NOVEMBER 2025

PROGRAMS AT YUC

YUC PROGRAMMING

Tuesday

Youth Drop-In
3:00 - 6:00PM

Community Drop-In
11:00-2:00PM

Wednesday

Youth Drop-In
3:00 - 6:00PM

Community Drop-In
11:00-2:00PM

Thursday

Youth Drop-In
3:00 - 6:00PM

Community Drop-In
11:00-2:00PM



LEADERSHIP TRAINING

LITERACY SUPPORT

LIFE SKILLS,

COLLEGE READINESS

CASE MANAGEMENT

QTBIPOC SUPPORT GROUPS

COLLABORATIVE MEDIA PRODUCTION

MINDFULNESS, MEDITATION, YOGA



Youth United
for Change



@yucphilly

YOUTHUNITEDFORCHANGE.ORG

520 N CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS BLVD

205, PHILADELPHIA, PA 19123

YUCYOUTH@GMAIL.COM