




YELLOWSTONE SCHOOLS

FALL 2023

Dear Yellowstone friends and family,

As summer finally turns to fall, it's a wonderful time to reflect on how your hard work, determination, and faith are truly making a difference. Your contributions are providing an exceptional educational experience for our scholars. Our entire community will benefit as our Yellowstone young adults reach their full potential and take their place as our next generation of leaders.

Because of you, our Yellowstone family has expanded to almost 600 students, and will grow to 12th grade in a few short years. **Like you, we believe every child deserves a chance to thrive and succeed.** With your help, we are creating a premier educational institution in Third Ward that delivers on the promise of a quality education, leading to lives full of possibility. Thank you for your generosity. Together, our blessings are bountiful. 

*Let us not become weary in doing good,
for at the proper time we will reap a
harvest if we do not give up.*
Galatians 6:9 (NIV)



Students from our upper and lower schools pose for a picture during breakfast on the first day of school.

The Adams family thrives because of Yellowstone



L-R: Jayla, Isaiah, Makaila, Karri, and Jazmyne Adams at Jayla's high school graduation.


When Karri Adams enrolled the first of her four children at Yellowstone, she had no idea how life-changing it would be for her entire family.

Karri's children are flourishing, with her oldest attending Babson College, her second daughter thriving at Louisiana State University, a son in high school, and her youngest in 8th grade at Yellowstone. Karri is also blazing new trails, having recently started as a PreK teaching assistant at the school. Your gifts

of time, talent, and financial resources have made it possible for her family to chart a new course.

Through the years as a parent, volunteer, and now staff member, Karri believes that the school's close-knit family culture creates an environment where anyone can achieve their full potential if they try. The hardworking Adams family is inspired by how donors, volunteers, staff, and the community pull together to invest in these young scholars.

"I am so happy to see how everyone gives both time and money because these children are worth it—they are going places."

You have given Karri the chance to grow as she finishes her associate degree and nurtures her students in a safe place with people they can rely on. "I love my school family and thank them for letting me take on more opportunities and challenges. I am so pleased I can serve my community in this way." 

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



James Mosley, EdD
Superintendent

First, thank you for welcoming me with open arms into my new role as Superintendent. It is a blessing to serve the Yellowstone family. I'd like to give special thanks to Ryan Dolibois, our former superintendent, without whose work we would not have our beautiful new campus and the ability to serve our 600 scholars. I am also grateful to

everyone involved in our recently completed *Yellowstone. Forever.* campaign. We exceeded our goal, raising over \$31 million.

Many have asked about my vision for Yellowstone. It's simple—by 2026, we will provide 750 PreK through 12th-grade students with life-changing experiences on one campus in our Third Ward community.

To accomplish this, we must rise to the challenges COVID brought to education, which have had an outsized impact on students of color. We need your help purchasing two new buses and hiring five new staff members to support our students. We also need additional funding to support our Special Education scholars, a need that grows every school year.

Our students deserve a high-quality education. Within a framework of faith, rigorous academics, and an array of support services, you provide a level of opportunity that otherwise wouldn't exist. Your generosity is truly making a profound, genuine difference in the lives of others. Thank you! 🙏

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Mosley', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Dean of students says, 'What you focus on, you get more of.'

Itajha Shields knows first-hand how critical it is to have faith and perseverance to achieve your dreams. She also knows the importance of a support network in helping children reach their full potential.

When she joined the Yellowstone staff as a PreK assistant in 2010, she had no idea what the future would hold. She was promoted to lead teacher, became a Master of Education, and landed her dream job as Yellowstone's dean of lower school students. She remarks, "It's a blessing to have seen my growth along with that of the school."

"It is pure joy to work with our kids," Itajha says. "They are little sponges, and we get to set the tone for their academic experience. Their growth—educationally, spiritually, socially, and emotionally—is tangible, and they need all of our help."

Itajha credits Yellowstone's ability to reach its scholars in new and meaningful ways because the entire staff has the same calling. She points to how everyone worked together during COVID. Teachers, volunteers, administrators, and donors pivoted to ensure students were given adequate resources. From adapting lesson plans, supporting school renovations, providing needed school supplies, and countless other initiatives, the Yellowstone family stood together. Itajha sees the same spirit today as children are still recovering post-pandemic.

She says, "Caregivers should know their child is loved and safe. And with those two things in place, they can learn, problem solve, and become upstanding citizens." 🙏



Dean Shields poses in her Master of Education regalia.



Lead Counselor Carranda Comeaux poses for a picture with several upper school students.

Counselor’s Corner: From rain comes rainbows


Many of Yellowstone’s scholars can experience incredible hardships. You are a beacon of light and stability for these children and their families. For all our students, Lead Counselor Carranda Comeaux works to identify when a child needs help so they can learn in the classroom.

She tells of one child who, uncharacteristically, was acting out. It turns out the student was hungry, and her family needed food. With your support, Yellowstone worked with the Houston Food Bank’s “Backpack Buddy” program and with H-E-B for a one-time gift card. Soon, the scholar was back on track.

“Our families are often stretched thin, so they may not be able to afford food, supplies, or clothing,” Carranda says. “Or worse, some experience abuse, neglect, or criminal incidents beyond their control.

We work with our partnerships to secure needed resources. Our children are smart and capable but sometimes need lifting up. “

She is thankful for partnerships like the one Yellowstone has with Ascend Performance Materials, our 8th-grade class sponsor. As the school grows and more needs come to the forefront, Carranda points out that investment in additional counselors and social workers will be critical.

In the meantime, thank you for your generosity in helping so many of our students with challenges that go beyond academics. Your continued support makes a substantial impact on these young lives. 


Interested in becoming a community partner?
Learn more about available opportunities at yellowstoneschools.org/community-partnerships.

Yellowstone alum participates in coveted University of Florida neuroscience internship.

Jerrica Francisco, a 2014 Yellowstone alum who went to Cristo Rey High School, is now a Lamar University senior with big plans for her future. This summer, she was selected for and participated in the University of Florida’s Summer Neuroscience Internship Program (SNIP). This challenging 10-week paid research program supports college students from diverse backgrounds pursuing careers in biomedical research, education, and enterprise.

Jerrica was excited to be chosen for the internship as it’s highly selective and known for its rigor. This high achiever, a fifth-year senior pre-med neurology student, was up for the challenge. The opportunities she experienced early in her academic career at

Yellowstone helped shape her drive, self-confidence, and faith in herself to achieve at the highest levels.

Jerrica has worked through college, achieving high grades and volunteering her time for others in need. She is grateful for the help she received along the way and is well on her way to achieving her dreams of medical school and taking her place as a leader in the community. Thanks to you, it all started with Yellowstone! 



Jerrica at work as part of her internship.



We need your help to purchase two new buses! Pictured above is one of two new buses that could be ours with help from you!

Anonymous Matching Gift Gets the Wheels Rolling

Each year, approximately 50% of our students rely on our buses to safely get them to school and back home. So when two of our buses unexpectedly broke down recently, we urgently needed to replace them. We needed a miracle to cover this expense in addition to the costs of implementing our revamped, intensive academic recovery plan. **Through an anonymous donor, our prayers are being answered with a \$250,000 matching gift.**

Your generosity in meeting this matching grant will allow us to purchase two new-to-us buses and add critical instructional support. This support includes two teachers for upper school and three aides, along with needed technology and classroom set-up.

Your support ensures our scholars arrive at school on time for breakfast and first-period Bible class. By donating to this matching gift, you also directly contribute to our children's intellectual growth and development through highly qualified instructors who believe that all children are made in the image of God and are born with a purpose and destined for success.

Can we count on you?



YES! I want to help unlock the matching gift and DOUBLE my impact!

Please use my gift to impact a scholar at Yellowstone Schools!

- \$1,000 = One seat on a new-to-us bus.
- \$3,500 = Fuel for one month of bus transportation.
- \$10,500 = Fuel for three months of bus transportation.
- \$75,000 = The cost of one new-to-us bus!
- \$ _____



We appreciate you!

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Gifts designated for a particular project are used as requested until that need is fully met that fiscal year. Remaining funds are used where they will do the most good. All contributions are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law. Yellowstone Schools is a 501(C)(3) non-profit organization.

Give online at YELLOWSTONESCHOOLS.ORG/NEW-BUS

