

# BYM Youth Programs Manager Annual Report 2012

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*Submitted by Alison Duncan to Baltimore Yearly Meeting Interim Meeting  
at Dunnings Creek Meeting on June 16, 2012*

It is the end of another school year, and series of Junior and Young Friends events for the youth of our Yearly Meeting.

I have good news to share – we stopped growing! This year we served 43 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders in our Junior Young Friends program, with an average of 33 participants at each weekend conference. The difference between this and last year's 32-person average is negligible. We served 140 different High Schoolers in our Young Friends program with an average of 90 participants at each conference. We did have an event with uniquely low participation, held within one week of Easter, and during spring break for most youth. If you remove that outlier, the average is 100, virtually the same as last year's 101-person average. With stability in the programs, we have been able to standardize programming for this larger size.

More good news – we came in under budget in 2011! We spent \$700 less than projected, and earned \$15,100 more than projected, so came in \$15,800 under budget. Where we planned for \$41,000 in support from the Yearly Meeting, we actually used \$25,500. Because we started budgeting for 2011 in 2009, we were not quite sure what to expect for registration numbers at that time, and we should be more accurate in 2012 and 2013.

The Junior Young Friends (JYFs) had a great year. The theme for their four conferences was *Insecurity* – a topic important to them at this time in their lives. The first conference of the year focused on body image, and attempted to build their security in their *bodies*. We moved on to *minds* in the second conference, trying to build their security in the way their mind works both intellectually and emotionally. The third conference I focused on *Social Identity*, and the JYFs understood the concept readily. We talked about how it can make you insecure, and ways to combat it. The final retreat showed the investment of the year, for after I defined self-esteem, and they were tasked with discussing which aspects of their social identity influenced their self-esteem, they chose mental illness, among other things. I was proud to see how close they had become with each other over the course of the school year. They chose *Trust and Relationships* for next year, and requested that I build from friendships to dating to marriage over the course of the school year, but not forget to touch on abuse of trust and how to get it back when it is lost. I hope to rise to their expectations of me.

The Young Friends (YFs) also had a great year. They do not have a theme for their five conferences, but managed to have workshops on their own self governance, folk dancing, safe sex, and massage. They did service through the William Penn House. The real success of the year was a feeling of community with larger numbers. They enforced pre-registration two weeks in advance of each conference, and the community self-selected youth who are more committed to the program. Their committees continue to produce results. The calendar committee scheduled each conference, and learned not to plan one within a week of Easter. The Handbook Committee revised about half of the Handbook, and will continue through it next year. The 'do good deeds committee' focused on

environmental concerns this year, and we now use 'mess kits' instead of disposable dishes. They also recommend that food planners plan vegetarian conferences to reduce our strain on the environment. The Nominating Committee named the next year's Executive Committee, and the Executive Committee members grew through the experience of stewarding a community.

The Executive Committee of the Young Friends consists of 23 individuals who meet before each Meeting for Business to create the agenda, hold the individuals to the Gathering Expectations, and meet at three additional weekend conferences throughout the year. There was an average of 17 participants at each of these weekend. At them, we did training for specific position responsibilities as well as 'Exec' membership at large; we practiced with the Clearness Committee process; and we explored Quaker history.

Youth Programs Committee continues to be very supportive of me. One sub-committee did two Friendly Adult Presence (FAP) trainings in this school year, double that of last year. Their organization and implementation of this curriculum takes a lot off of my plate. Another sub-committee confirms the locations and FAPs for the Junior Young Friends conferences, freeing me up to plan programming. The last sub-committee oversees me (with help from Riley), but mostly helps me communicate with the committee and sub-committees. A number of committee members who have been on since before I started are rotating off, and it will be sad to see them go.

As for me, my title changed from Youth Secretary to Youth Programs Manager for more clarity when communicating with non-Friends. I was invited to give a presentation on Quakerism at Sidwell Friends School, and enjoyed showing the Upper School the Spiritual basis for Friends' actions both current and historical. I was also chosen as a BYM staff representative in the BYM Vision Implementation Committee. I greatly enjoy thinking about the future of Quakerism, as I spend most of my time with the future of Quakerism. My participation in the Young Adult Friends consultation and Stakeholder Survey both sponsored by Friends General Conference have informed my participation in that committee. They gave me perspectives about how the rest of the country envisions the future of Quakerism, though I enjoy most implementing it here.

I'd like to close with a quote from Mary Ellen Saterlie, who serves on the Vision Implementation Committee with me. She says 'there has never been a time when Quakerism was needed more.' With a war that no one feels connected to, and fear that will be used to inspire voting, we should all be able to connect with our inward guide to keep us centered rather than swayed by outside forces. I hope to give those qualities to the youth that I serve. She makes me proud to be a Quaker.