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Iva “Queen” Boykins Elevates the Sober Curious Movement

*Iva B*oykins, with the determination of a culinary artist on a life-changing mission, elevates the Dry January movement into a celebration of the spectrum of flavors, colors, and textures that inspire her imaginative non-alcoholic beverages creations.

Early on, Boykins noted a social phenomenon: “People are always happier when they have a drink in their hands. That feeling of joy inspires my craft. My mission as a mixologist is to spark that same response without relying on alcohol.” Boykin’s passion resonates with Dry January, a month when people pledge to voluntarily stop drinking alcohol – usually after over-indulging over the holidays – and begin the new year on a healthier, more mindful note. Although a movement inspired by good intentions, Dry January is catching on. According to CivicScience, roughly 41% of U.S. adults surveyed intended to take part in Dry January 2023 but just 16% managed to abstain from drinking alcohol all month.

These well-meaning, sober-curious Americans are the people Boykins aspires to reach. A culinary instructor with **Kitchens for Good**, she understands the inherent risks, and the unintended consequences, of drinking socially. “Mentoring justice-informed San Diegans, including those who have served time in prison because they’ve harmed someone while driving under the influence, has opened my eyes to the trauma that could have been prevented if someone decided not to have one more drink,” Boykins explains. “The apprentices I’m mentoring have been given a second chance through their participation in the Kitchens for Good Culinary Arts program, but the dozens of San Diegans, who are tragically killed in DUI crashes each year, were not given that gift of a new start.”

Doing her part to break the cycle of social drinking also resonates, on a personal level, with the mother of four children, including 8-year-old twins. “My heart breaks when I remember my good friends from high school who believed having fun at parties could not be possible without alcohol and paid the ultimate price,” Boykins recalls. “Losing their lives at such an early age taught me a valuable lesson: never to miss a moment. My gratitude for every day – and the sadness I feel when I think of the joy and wonder they were not able to experience – is my passion for creating delicious non-alcoholic beverages that appeal to social drinkers year-round.”

Poppin’ Pisces, a fanciful aqua-blue social beverage, created for **The Collective Coalition**, San Diego’s “Star-Crossed Signs” Silent Disco Night, is served in fish bowls where Swedish Fish candies swim atop a landscape of colorful, tangy Nerds gummy clusters. The alcohol-free libation pays tribute to her best friend, a dreamer who looks for the good in people and finds beauty and joy in the world around her.

Boykins has learned to follow her heart when choosing community partners – and causes – to showcase her signature alcohol-free beverage creations. The Collective Coalition’s mission to create a safer, more inclusive world for members of the LGBTQ+ community dovetails



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CRPC Youth News



Advocates for Change Today



Advocates for Change Today is a coalition of teens in City Heights committed to promoting a healthy lifestyle while focusing on substance abuse prevention. *“My favorite thing about ACT is that we get to talk a lot and engage with our peers, my favorite project was the podcast, because we felt free to speak about our thoughts. People should join ACT because we focus on our community and we are empowered to making positive changes in our community.”* said Nayeli, a current ACT member.

For more information about ACT, please contact: Eiliana Miramontes at Emiramontes@saysandiego.org

Youth Unite—Preventing Youth Violence on School Campuses Campaign

Our community's Youth Unite chapter is diving deeper into their advocacy campaign for the 2023-24 school year. Over the past few months, our youth members have dedicated themselves to researching critical issues affecting themselves and their peers in San Diego. They've delved into topics such as cannabis use, overdoses, mental health, violence, and tobacco, all with a focus on understanding their direct impact on today's youth. After extensive research and thoughtful consideration, youth members have decided to center their advocacy campaign around preventing youth violence on school campuses.

Upon reaching this decision, youth immediately set to work creating a survey to gather data from their peers. The survey addresses the prevalence of violence on San Diego's school campuses, youth substance use, and suggestions for how adults can better support youth in ways that mitigate the potential for violent incidents at school. Collaborating with a professional evaluator, Youth Unite members ensured the survey's effectiveness and accuracy, guaranteeing it reaches a broad sample size. The survey will be accessible through a QR code distributed by Youth Unite members and will also be promoted through flyers posted around school campuses. To encourage participation, participants completing the survey will have the chance to win \$50 Amazon gift cards through an opportunity drawing. See survey on page 4.

We're incredibly proud of the dedication and hard work exhibited by our community's Youth Unite chapter, and we eagerly anticipate the positive impact their efforts will have on their annual advocacy campaign.

For more information, please contact: Riley Steinley at Rsteinley@saysandiego.org

Cont'd from Pg 1

Iva “Queen” Boykins Elevates the Sober Curious Movement

with Boykins' passion for cultivating safe and healthy social gatherings around substance use prevention and health equity. “I'm aware of the slick alcohol marketing campaigns directed at LGBTQ+ individuals, while so many are emotionally vulnerable to substance use,” Boykins explains. “I'm grateful to channel my creativity into elevating celebrations that cultivate individual expression, personal resilience, and social connection.”

Discovering the sweet spot between passion and purpose gives Boykins the confidence to harness the power of her imagination to create her signature alcohol-free cocktails. “My creative process is inspired by the extra, fun touches,” Boykins says with a wink. “I call my company *Queen's Signature Quenches*. If it isn't fit for a queen, I'm not making it!”

Poppin' Pisces – A Social Beverage for Dreamers and Good-Doers

- Step 1: Sprinkle just enough Nerd candies to cover the bottom of a small goldfish bowl.
- Step 2: Combine three-parts chilled lemon-lime soda with one-part cooled Curacao Syrup.
- Step 3: Drop three Swedish Fish candies into the bowl.
- Step 4: Serve and savor!



Office of Child and Youth Success

See the flyer on Page 4 to review the Child and Youth Plan and to leave feedback.

Space and Grace



New Event Series
Space and Grace

Lead by: Grace Nakashima (she/her)
Grace is a Community Organizer at SAY San Diego with the Collective Coalition. She is excited to go beyond traditional meetings and lead safe and welcoming in-person dialogue where everyone is invited to share, ask questions, and connect.

What is this?
Space to talk with people, not at them! The Collective believes in the power of conversation. We strive to foster a supportive space where individuals can comfortably dive into topics surrounding substances that might feel otherwise intimidating.

When and Where?
Every other month at comfy places such as coffee shops, parks, and bookstores.

Contact Information:
Grace.Nakashima@saysandiego.org
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TheCollectiveCoalitionSanDiego.org

Who is this for?
LGBTQ+ and Allies

Upcoming Topics

- Sober Curiosity
- Building Connections outside of substances
- Coping and Substances
- Sex and Substances
- Mocktail workshops
- Sober Friendly Community Organizing

Partially Funded by San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency

The Collective Coalition is thrilled to announce the launch of Space and Grace, our newest event series designed to foster thoughtful dialogue and discussion on sensitive topics in a supportive and inclusive environment.

Our overarching goal is to cultivate a community where everyone feels valued, supported, and empowered. We understand the importance of fostering healthy relationships with substances, which is why we strive to create a safe and welcoming space for open discussions and interactive activities. We believe that breaking down barriers and challenging stigmas are crucial steps toward promoting intentional strategies for a thoughtful approach to substance use.

Our first event, centered around Sober Curiosity, occurred on Sunday, February 25th, at Ultreya Coffee and Tea in San Diego. Attendees enjoyed meaningful conversations, reflective activities, and mocktails crafted by the wonderful team at Ultreya Coffee. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all who joined us and contributed to the creation of a safe and inclusive environment for learning and engagement. Stay tuned for more upcoming events in the Space and Grace series!

For more information, please contact Grace Nakashima at Grace.Nakashima@saysandiego.org


Project Rejuvenate—Final Graduation Ceremony

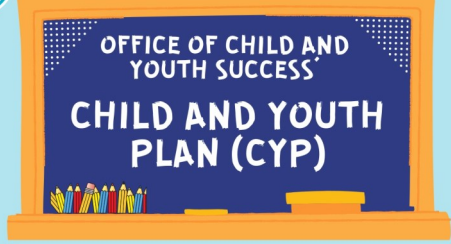
In January, Project Rejuvenate held its final graduation ceremony for the last program cohort for both the Restorative Talking Circles and the Employment Readiness course. The final cohort, which began in October of 2023, was hosted with freshman and sophomore students at Logan Memorial Education Complex (LMEC). Participants, selected by the school counselors, participated in both program components once a week for nine weeks. Through the program, LMEC students developed their emotional literacy skills by participating in Project A.W.A.R.E.'s Restorative Circles where they discussed topics like healthy relationships, substance use, violence, and trauma. As the students participated, they showed greater ability to communicate their own emotions, while better understanding and empathizing with their peers. Many students requested that the programming return to the campus in the future.

In the Employment Readiness component of the program, students received training from UPAC's Neighborhood Enterprise Center and Cafe (NEC) on culinary arts and print design. For the print design portion of the class, students learned about how the print shop designs and produces various products for their clients. They even had the opportunity to design and print their own T-shirts and mugs. The NEC team held a workshop for students on entrepreneurship, in which they discussed the different considerations, challenges, and opportunities when starting their own business. To conclude the course, students learned basic culinary skills and techniques where they received hands-on instruction from the NEC's chefs. Through the guidance of the chefs, students made handmade pasta and spring rolls. At the course's end, students were recognized at the Project Rejuvenate graduation ceremony by receiving graduation certificates and gift cards from Project Rejuvenate staff. At the celebration, the program graduates were able to enjoy a delicious meal prepared by the NEC Cafe staff.

With this final graduation, the Project A.W.A.R.E. and UPAC components of the program have ended. Over the past three years, Project Rejuvenate has served youth from across the San Diego Promise Zone neighborhoods. A total of 74 youth participated in the Employment Readiness component since the grant. One-hundred eight students participated in Project A.W.A.R.E.'s Restorative Talking Circles, while another 38 participated in Project Rejuvenate's advocacy component, Youth Unite. Through the support of other SAY San Diego programs, Youth Unite will continue meetings at the Jackie Robinson YMCA at 4PM on the first and third Tuesdays of the month.


Community Events

LEARN ABOUT THE  Office of Child and Youth Success




THE CYP WILL WORK TO ESTABLISH ACTION PLANS TO PRIORITIZE THE NEEDS OF OUR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN SAN DIEGO, ENSURING THEIR SUCCESS AND DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE CITY!

REVIEW THE CYP



LEAVE FEEDBACK!



MAIN ADVOCACY THEMES

- EDUCATION AND CAREER PATHWAYS
- ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
- YOUTH EMPOWERMENT
- ENGAGING ACTIVITIES

SPACE *and* GRACE

FIRST EVENT TOPIC: *Saber Curiosity*

**Sunday, 2/25
4-6pm**

Utreya Coffee and Tea

This is a LGBTQ+ and Allies space

What does this mean? Reframing, stigmas, and more!



No RSVP necessary but first 10 people get a free Mocktail



Raffle Prizes
Live Music!
By Latin Rollers Band!

Dj Jose Monterrosa
Dj Betty Bangs
Mental Health Resources!
Local & Food Vendors!

Solida

Car Club
San Diego

presents
Mario C. Rivera
4th Annual
Suicide Awareness Event
Low Rider Car Show & Bike
Sat. May 25, 2024 10am-5pm
Roll-in Time 6am-9am

Free to The Public!

Location: Jacob Center 404 Euclid ave, San Diego, Ca 92114

All Clubs, Vicleros, Solo Riders, RC cars, Pedal cars Welcome!
with \$25 Entry fee (Bikes & Pedal cars \$20)

All Categories 1st, 2nd, 3rd!
30s Thru Presents! For Plaques & Trophies!

Supporting Mental Health! DM us @solidacarclubsandiego


You Matter!



SCAN HERE

A SURVEY CREATED BY SAN DIEGO YOUTH TO EXAMINE PEER-TO-PEER VIOLENCE ON SCHOOL CAMPUSES

YOUTH SURVEY



\$50 AMAZON GIFT CARDS

BY COMPLETING THIS SURVEY, YOU WILL BE ENTERED INTO AN OPPORTUNITY DRAWING!

