

**From:** BILLY DAVIS <[apsmccrp@aol.com](mailto:apsmccrp@aol.com)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 20, 2020 12:45 PM  
**To:** Samuel Kaufman <[skaufman@cityofkeywest-fl.gov](mailto:skaufman@cityofkeywest-fl.gov)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Draft 2

Hey Sam

On its way to print.

Thanx

Billy

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Carol Tedesco <[ctedesco@aol.com](mailto:ctedesco@aol.com)>  
**Date:** December 20, 2020 at 12:26:31 PM EST  
**To:** [apsmccrp@aol.com](mailto:apsmccrp@aol.com)  
**Subject:** Draft 2  
**Reply-To:** Carol Tedesco <[ctedesco@aol.com](mailto:ctedesco@aol.com)>

**For Immediate Release**

**December 20, 2020**

### **A Positive Step of Monroe County asks public to advocate for program**

At a time when job opportunities for young people nationwide dramatically more miss than hit, a valuable local program that has for a decade helped prepare Key West High School students for success in the real-life work world is now in danger of going belly-up due to current City of Key West budget cuts.

Since 2010 the non-profit organization A Positive Step of Monroe County, which has been serving Monroe County's highest risk kids and their families since 1999, has partnered with the City of Key West to provide paying summer employment for Key West High School students aged 16-18 through a program called the Idle Hands Summer Youth Employment Program.

Students apply to participate in the program, and those who are accepted—generally 20-25 students each year—go through a two-week readiness orientation process during which they practice interview and other professional skills to prepare them for city jobs, which can include administrative assistant, community service, and media department positions, among others.

Each year, the city has provided both the jobs for the students, and \$35,000 towards the more than \$70,000 program budget. APSMC has raised the difference through fundraisers, private donations, the Community Foundation of the Florida Keys and the Key West Sunrise Rotary Club.

This year, the city has announced that there will be zero city funding for non-profits due to COVID-19 and budget constraints. APSMC founder and executive director Billy Davis is working to convince the city to reinstate its traditional \$35,000 contribution, and is asking the community to help by contacting their city commissioners and requesting that the city restore the program funding.

“This program is crucial for socially and economically disadvantaged students at the high school, teaching them essential work, professional, and social skills and making them eligible candidates for future job opportunities, both with the city and beyond,” said Davis. “Our program breaks a cycle of low expectations and is their launching pad into a better life – and that’s good for them and for society as a whole.

The Idle Hands Summer Youth Program \$70,000 budget covers the student’s paychecks, and the cost of employing one APSMC orientation instructor/job coach.

Some of the Idle Hands program students proceed directly from high school into the working world. Some, like Jemima JeanBaptiste, a senior at Key West High School, are also Take Stock in Children program participants, and will go on to college. JeanBaptiste, who worked as an APSMC intern with the Citizens Review Board in 2019 and currently holds a job as a junior coordinator at the Key West Boys & Girls Club, said that participating in the program taught her a lot, including time management and how to create a resume, and said she thinks continuation of the program is important because much of what is learned is not taught in school. She plans to major in marketing at the University of Central Florida beginning in 2021.

To send a request for the city to reinstate the traditional \$35,000 contribution to the program, please email the Mayor, City Manager, and your district commissioner: Mayor Teri Johnston, [mayor@cityofkeywest-fl.gov](mailto:mayor@cityofkeywest-fl.gov); City Manager Greg Veliz, [citymanager@cityofkeywest-fl.gov](mailto:citymanager@cityofkeywest-fl.gov); commissioner Jimmy Weekly, [District1@cityofkeywest-fl.gov](mailto:District1@cityofkeywest-fl.gov); commissioner Sam Kaufman, [DistrictII@cityofkeywest-fl.gov](mailto:DistrictII@cityofkeywest-fl.gov); commissioner Billy Wardlow, [DistrictII@cityofkeywest-fl.gov](mailto:DistrictII@cityofkeywest-fl.gov); commissioner Gregory Davila, [DistrictIV@cityofkeywest-fl.gov](mailto:DistrictIV@cityofkeywest-fl.gov); commissioner Clayton Lopez, [DistrictVI@cityofkeywest-fl.gov](mailto:DistrictVI@cityofkeywest-fl.gov); commissioner Mary Lou Hoover, [DistrictV@cityofkeywest-fl.gov](mailto:DistrictV@cityofkeywest-fl.gov).

For more information about A Positive Step Monroe County programs visit [APSMC.org](https://www.apsmc.org) or contact APSMC founder Billy Davis at 305-304-1969.

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#### 1\_Idle Hands:

Last summer the advent of COVID-19 scuttled the planned Idle Hands Summer Youth employment program with the City, so A Positive Step of Monroe County teamed up with the Take Stock in Children organization for a Computer Education Summer Camp at which Take Stock in Children participants left to right, Jemima Jean Baptiste (also a 2019 Idle Hands Youth Employment Program participant), Valerie Thene, Makayla Delivois, and Joelineca Delva, prepared lunch for the computer campers while earning community service hours.

#### 2\_Idle Hands:

Jemima JeanBaptiste, right, stands in front of the Key West Police station with fellow A Positive Step of Monroe County "Idle Hands Summer Youth Employment Program," participant Laura Theodore, left, in 2019. Jemima, now a senior at Key West High School, worked as an APSMC intern with the Citizens Review Board in 2019.

#### 3\_Idle Hands:

Students in the A Positive Step of Monroe County "Idle Hands Summer Youth Employment Program" take steps toward the future during a job orientation session at Key West High School on Thursday, June 27, 2019, accompanied by Key West City Manager Greg Veliz, far left, and City of Key West Human Resources Director Samantha Farist, second from left. The planned 2020 program is currently in limbo due to City budget constraints.