Youth and Young Adult Coordinator (YYAC) Report
SEYM Yearly Meeting Sessions 2020
Fifth Month 30, 2020

The past year since Yearly Business Meeting 2019 has seen a lot of growth and experimentation in SEYM programs for youth and young adults. The Youth and Young Adult Coordinator, SEYM Youth Committee, and volunteers added two new events to the yearly meeting calendar, and expanded the offerings for youth, young adults, and families at our existing events. I visited several monthly meetings to lead programs for them and build relationships. I initiated and am coordinating an update to our child safety manual. I coordinated the SEYM “Virtual Gathering” when our in-person gathering was cancelled due to the public health crisis.

The ongoing pandemic has introduced significant uncertainty to planning in-person events, which in turn has a significant impact on the YYAC role. I am continuing those parts of my work that can be conducted remotely, trying to step up my direct, individual engagement with youth, young adults, and families, and seeking ways to offer expanded online fellowship opportunities. We are also proceeding cautiously with planning a retreat for youth and families in late July with both in-person and remote participation options.

My main goal for the next year, in addition to supporting youth, young adults, and families and finding ways to stay connected during the pandemic, is to engage more SEYMers in this work with me. I hope to meet with all active SEYM Committees to discuss how their work can support vibrant, inclusive intergenerational community, and to see how I might be a resource to them. I hope to convene and collaborate with event planning committees that include youth and young adults in leadership roles. I want to expand the number of SEYM adults who have participated in the Child Abuse Prevention Policy (CAPP) training process, so that when we are able to meet again in person, we will have a stronger collective capacity to care for our community’s youth. That process will be smoother once we have identified an SEYM CAPP Coordinator. If you are, or know, a reliable Friend with sound judgement and just a couple hours to spare per month, who wants to support SEYM youth programs, please send them Nominating Committee’s direction.

I am mourning the opportunities that have been lost, trying to stay focused and trust God’s leading, and listening with others for how way might be opening.

With love, Kody Hersh
Youth and Young Adult Coordinator
April 2019 to April 2020 Review

In-person Events:

- April 2019, SEYM Annual Gathering
  Supported the youth program and facilitated fellowship events for young adults

- June 2019, Young Adult Retreat
  Hosted by Sarasota Friends Meeting and planned by the YYAC and a planning committee of young adults; 13 participants, about half new to SEYM events

- July 2019, Youth and Families Retreat
  Long weekend at Lake Louisa State Park, attended by 26 participants, including two families new to SEYM events

- September 2019, Monthly Meeting Visits
  Attended Gainesville MM’s young-adult-led midweek meeting
  Led a workshop for Ft Myers MM about meeting the needs of youth and families

- October 2019, Fall Interim Business Meeting
  Coordinated with Tampa Meeting to offer an overnight camping option for families. Only one family attended, part time, but we had fun!

  “Roots of Injustice, Seeds of Change”
  Facilitated Indigenous Peoples Days workshop on colonization at Gainesville MM

- November 2019, Miami Meeting Retreat
  Led a one-day meeting retreat focused on holding each other and the community in love and gratitude; planned a “pop up” afternoon gathering for local SEYM young adults

- Half Yearly Meeting
  Worked with HYM committee to support youth and young adult attenders. On the last night, we had a really fun pizza and board games party.

- January 2020, Winter Interim Business Meeting and Michener Lecture
  Youth attendance was sparse during WIBM, but we had a good crew on Sunday afternoon during the lecture, and took a field trip to the Orlando Women’s March.

  “Finding Your Role in the Movement for Peace and Justice”
  Workshop at Gainesville MM

- Young Adult Retreat, planned for spring 2020, postponed
Online Events:
● October 2019, Virtual Climate Strike
  With Field Secretary for Earthcare (FSE)

● March-May 2020, Quaker Family Devotionals
  With FSE, and as part of a national team, offered twice-weekly online eco-spirituality-focused worship for Quaker families

● April 2020, SEYM Virtual Mini-Gathering
  Coordinated event for all ages, including youth, young adult, and intergenerational offerings

● Ongoing since April 2020, monthly movie nights
  Expanded Orlando Meeting’s monthly community night to include Friends from across SEYM

Other:
● Convened committee to begin CAPP manual revision
● Active in the work of the Quaker Religious Education Collaborative
● Individual pastoral care emails and calls with young adults and families
● Supported young adult-initiated Quaker book group
● Shared news about happenings in the Quaker world outside SEYM with youth, young adults, and families