

# ON THE LEVEL

VOL. 19 ISSUE 2 | SUMMER 2019 | DVULI.ORG

**DVULI 2019  
Think Tank**  
tackles the  
multiple hits  
of trauma

**BERNARD FRANKLIN**  
urges youth workers to  
take action with care

**2019 Reunion**  
20-year celebration  
photo highlight





# The Deepest Well

## Healing the Long-term Effects of Childhood Adversity

**Resource recommendation**  
by Eileen Kooreman, Staff

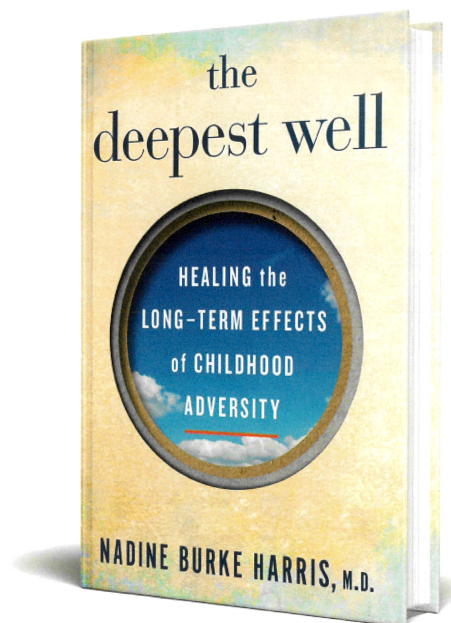
Dr. Nadine Burke-Harris, the author of *The Deepest Well: Healing the Long-term Effects of Childhood Adversity*, is a primary care physician who recognized the impact of trauma on inner-city youth and changed her approach to medicine and treatment. DVULI alumnus Anne Heerde (Grand Rapids 2000), is a Think Tank panelist, who suggested this resource to our staff. She believes it can help urban youth workers and ministers learn more about trauma.

Often, trauma is at the heart of many of the problems our young people face today. Trauma is nearly guaranteed to be present in the world of youth work. The good news is youth are resilient; a caring adult, like you, can make a huge difference in their life. You will benefit from being able to view youth behavior through the possible lens of trauma.

*The Deepest Well* is available on Amazon and is a great read.

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/132850266X>

Supplemental interviews with Dr. Nadine Burke-Harris can be found online. We recommend this short, but informative TEDTalk on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=95ovIJ3dsNk>



# The Devereux Adult Resilience Survey

**Resource recommendation**  
by Eileen Kooreman, Staff

Are you equipping and training youth to be resilient in the face of trauma? Resilience is not a trait youth have or do not have, but behaviors, thoughts, and actions that can be learned and developed. Building resilience in youth starts with resilient adults. A youth leader's level of resilience directly impacts the development of this important capacity in young people.

How resilient are you? Recognizing the important link between the health of children and the adults who lead them, the Center for Resilient Children published a self-assessment

to help adults evaluate their social and emotional strengths. *The Devereux Adult Resilience Survey*, written by Mary Mackrain, can also help adults build on strengths, such as creativity or setting limits, and develop strategies for improvement so you can better cope with adversity, the stresses of daily life, and positively impact youth.

Find the assessment at: <http://bit.ly/DVULIAssessResilience>



# Breakthrough

— Archie and Melissa Collins  
(Atlanta 2008)

by Gerald Bell (Kansas City 2003)



Archie (top right) and Melissa Collins (bottom center) and their three children.

**Eleven years into their marriage, Archie and Melissa Collins (Atlanta 2008) were trying to figure out what exactly their ministerial calling had to do with each other and the family—which included three children— they were building.**

**While Archie was a full-time youth pastor at a prominent megachurch, Melissa was managing all the demands of home. This arrangement offered limited fulfillment to either of them, and, over time, it became evident something needed to change.**

As head of household, Archie was concerned about the survivability of his family and ministry. He admitted they had entered a period where he had several “what and how” questions swirling through his mind, and uncertain where to turn for answers. “What do I do and how do I do it? How do I get from here to there? Do I go back to school? What is that going to look like? Then, how do I get my family to see all of this?” he pondered.

In late 2007, when the DeVos Urban Leadership Initiative was recruiting for a second training round in Atlanta, couples were not considered for participation. Only Archie received the invitation to apply, but Melissa, who was carefully stepping into the youth ministry door, wanted to be a participant as well. She said, “I don’t know why, but I thought, ‘God, this [training] is for me. I’ve got to get in there.’”

The DVULI team placed specific restrictions on the two and gave Archie and Melissa permission to participate in the same cohort. In their first local workshop, the couple learned they were both a “High D” on the DiSC Biblical Profile. “That literally blew us out of the water,” Melissa said. “The whole weekend we were thinking, ‘oh my God, now we understand why we bump heads.’”

Throughout the 15-month training year, they would discover more about themselves as a couple and as individuals. “The whole entire time I was in DeVos training I felt like I was finding my voice,” says Melissa, getting emotional. She describes her DVULI experience as “totally necessary,” and a means of “taking her life back.”

Melissa warmly recalls how she cried while presenting her breakthrough plan before her cohort members at the final workshop. This new experience of speaking in front of people helped her achieve the breakthrough she desired and affirmed her place in youth ministry alongside her husband.

“That marker in my life is so monumental,” she reflects. “I always, say ‘[DeVos] literally changed the course of my life...and has led me to where I am.’”

Together, they lead in ministry at World Changers in Houston, Texas, where they relocated shortly after graduating from DVULI. For Archie, the DVULI experience was humbling. Much of his early days in ministry lacked a supportive community. He owns the fact that he led the ministry often in isolation, which also meant to the exclusion of Melissa. Now that he has reordered his priorities to work more interdependently, there are fewer risks for the family and ministry.

“We found that community has to be discovered and sometimes you have to be the active agent to build that kind of support,” said Archie.

Come January 2020, Archie and Melissa will celebrate 23 years of marriage and they’re one child away from being empty nesters. The Collinses have established their roots as leaders of their church in the Houston area. In addition, they both serve the ministry’s Global Missions division, and Melissa is the director of the New Change Early Learning Center daycare.



# A TRAUMATIC TREND

by **Gerald Bell** (Kansas City 2003)

Leaving one dead and eight injured, this was the fourth school shooting in Colorado since the Columbine High School massacre some 20 years ago. In May 2019, two individuals were identified as responsible for opening fire at a STEM school in Highlands Ranch, a suburb of Denver, Colorado, which has 1,850 students in grades K-12.

Mount Lebanon Kids Camp in Cedar Hill, Texas, was the site of a sexual assault of a minor by an adult in the summer of 2012. It took the victim seven years to begin verbalizing what happened, making church-based sex abuse a top agenda item at the Southern Baptists Convention in 2019.

After thousands of hits to the head in practices and games, a Pop Warner youth football player in San Diego, California, took his own life in 2014. The 17-year-old boy reportedly suffered from anxiety and depression after playing mostly lineman positions for nine years.

In unfathomable numbers, cases of youth traumatization are assuming an increasing amount of space on many youth ministers' agendas. Sadly, the reported incidents of trauma are occurring in spaces where youth assume they are safe, such as in the classroom, at church, or even where they sleep at night.

Trauma is an emotional response to a terrible event like an accident, rape, or natural disaster. Trending as sources of trauma nowadays are cyberbullying, poverty, bodily injury, parental neglect, the sound of gunfire, abortion, witnessing a crime, and personal threats. This list gets even longer for youth living in disadvantaged communities.

Does the youth worker only pray and believe that memories and behaviors, resulting from trauma, will just go away? Anne Heerde (Grand Rapids 2000), David Medina (Philadelphia 2019), and Karin Wall (Boston 2000) insist praying is only a first step. As the DVULI Think Tank for this topic, these mental health experts are faced with mounting cases of trauma in their context of ministry to youth daily.

**Which young person is most likely to be living with trauma?**

- a.** Teen gang member
- b.** 4.0 middle school student
- c.** State champion athlete
- d.** All of the above

"Everybody has experienced something traumatic physical, mentally, socially, or even spiritually," says David Medina, Psychotherapist with Hispanic Community Counseling Services in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. "One of the things that I tell our youth leaders is that you don't want to seem shocked because [a youth discloses] something,"

## **Detecting Trauma**

When a youth leader commits to working with a kid who has faced a traumatic experience, it means they are dealing with something that has already happened, and they are confronting the complex expressions or scars of the occurrence. In situations when there is no physical evidence, Medina says a high priority is "to listen to your youth."



"You've got to have an open mind to listen to the trauma—but then, just listen to them," he stressed. "Don't think because they're violent, they don't want to speak about it, it's part of the trauma [reaction]. The [best] thing is to have a relationship with them because they will open up."

According to Anne Heerde, a Supervisor with Community Mental Health in West Michigan, part of listening is discerning somatic complaints and observing "what's happening to their physical bodies."

"There might be some kids that don't do the moods or the explosive behaviors," Heerde says. "They may start having more stomachaches or complain of muscle tension, muscle fatigue, headaches, changes in sleep, or changes in appetite. When we start to hear [of those symptoms], our brains go to thinking trauma because there are lots of kids who are physically going to [show] those strong reactions to trauma."

#### Set Boundaries

When a young person chooses to tell a youth worker about their incident(s) of trauma they prefer no one else knows, it is not unusual for the minister, or young person, to become attached. Karin Wall, a Senior Clinician with Home for the Little Wanderers, an agency that serves Boston Public Schools, explains how attachment must be managed because there are times youth become overly attached. One day they may approach the leader they have come to trust with, "can you be my mommy?" or "can you take me home?"

"If it's possible, [build a] relationship with the family, too," advises Wall. Knowing mom, dad, or caregiver allows you to have open conversations with guardians, prevents imminent danger, and lends to a measure of accountability. "The tone and the boundaries that you set from the beginning are very important and signal to the child that you really are trustworthy," Wall says.

When putting boundaries in place, be sure to clearly communicate to the youth that you are their friend and will walk them through this phase in their life, Wall said. It puts you

in a better place to reflect on the boundaries that have been established as you are journeying with them.

#### Handing Off

American Psychological Association research has shown that longer-term reactions to trauma include, "unpredictable emotions, flashbacks, strained relationships, and other physical symptoms like nausea." Many people have difficulty moving on with their lives after the trauma. Therefore, turning to a mental health professional is key to helping individuals find constructive ways of managing their emotions.

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**-David Medina**



"I think sometimes it's hard to feel like you have to have all the answers when you're that frontline youth worker," says Heerde. "It's easy enough to say to a parent or guardian, 'I'm seeing some behaviors that are concerning, I'm thinking your child might want to talk to somebody besides me.'"

The difficulty for some youth leaders is handing off a traumatized individual whom they have also been disciplining—although, ultimately, it is for the good of the youth. "I really wouldn't risk it," Medina urges. "I would just make a referral to a community [clinic] or a church that offers professional counseling. I think it's a [greater] risk for our youth not to have the proper services."

Heerde says making a referral should not be misconstrued as abandoning the young person. She encourages working collaboratively with a local agency and obtaining the best outcome. "We recognize how it takes a village to raise everybody for all of us. As a youth worker, my lane looks like 'this.' As a therapist, my lane looks like 'this.' So, everybody has a role to play. If we all stay in our lane and drive [alongside] each other the flow of traffic goes so much better."

*(continued pg.6)*



Heerde further adds, "I don't want any youth worker to feel like they've got to be the expert when it comes to trauma treatment. Those of us in the field who do trauma treatment, go through extensive training certification processes and it is a lot of work."

### What To Do and What Not To Do

For the youth worker who is dealing with youth experiencing trauma, the Think Tank developed a modest list of helpful recommendations:

- Maintain an open relationship with the schools your youth attend
- Access the school's counseling program, if they have one
- Keep a list of therapists in your area at your fingertips
- Connect with community mental health stakeholders
- Know the public and private mental health agencies in your community
- Be informed about city and state-specific resources and liabilities
- Have a relationship with a case manager
- Understand how insurance works for mental health services
- Know the services that are free or low-cost for individuals without insurance
- Only call 911 if there is an immediate danger (not because they have a traumatic past)

The Think Tank encourages youth workers to not view professional services as a replacement for their diligence to pray and minister to a kid who has been traumatized. "God has also put into us those things that [can] help us and should in all cases be accompanied by prayer," Medina concludes. "We need both the youth worker and the therapist to deal with our traumatic past, and at the same time know how to see it from the spiritual perspective."

"I always say to people God created everything and therapy, or whatever, is not new to God," reflects Wall. "It doesn't undercut God or cancel out faith to go see a therapist."

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### Link

<https://www.apa.org/topics/trauma/index.html>

### Audio Link

*Listen to the full Think Tank conversation at [dvuli.org/2019thinktank](http://dvuli.org/2019thinktank)*

### Contributor List

*The 2019 Think Tank members for the summer issue of On The Level are: Anne Heerde (Grand Rapids 2000), Karin Wall (Boston 2000), and David Medina (Philadelphia 2019)*

# The Think Tank



**ANNE HEERDE**  
(Grand Rapids 2000)



**KARIN WALL**  
(Boston 2000)



**DAVID MEDINA**  
(Philadelphia 2019)



# Winning A STRESSFUL FIGHT

Opinion by **Bernard Franklin** (Kansas City 2001)

This past school year, I consulted for numerous school districts and urban leaders regarding toxic stress, trauma, neuroscience, and resilience. In many settings, trauma is the latest fad in our attempt to label the condition of our young people.

**Our communities are hurting. In many cases, our children are out of control. Trying to find an immediate solution, we often move quickly on to the next new program or project.**

With our limited knowledge from reading one article or hearing one non-therapeutic presentation, we label ourselves experts in trauma-informed care. Months and years ago, we bought into the lie that many of our children were ADHD, ODD, lazy, or any number of other labels. While we may have had good intentions then, and we may have good intentions now, we have failed to deeply understand

God's creation and what happens to His creation when we don't follow His plan. I am afraid that many well-intended urban leaders may be doing more harm than good by assuming from their limited reading or a presentation they know what's best for our young people.

*(continued pg.8)*



### How Stress and Trauma Affect the Brain

When God created our magnificent brain, it was as if He created an upstairs part of our brain and a downstairs part. The upstairs brain, called the prefrontal cortex (PFC), is our thinking brain, where learning happens. The PFC is where higher-order functioning skills develop like planning, organizing, regulating, and managing impulses. The downstairs brain consists of our amygdala and our limbic system, the area responsible for our fight, flight, or freeze response.

Under stress, the lower part of the brain bypasses the PFC so our bodies can respond quickly to threats of danger, perceived or real. The body then relies on the downstairs brain and automatically operates from that position.

### What Does This Look Like?

- Cortisol and adrenaline, stress hormones, flood the brain
- Muscles contract and our eyes dilate
- Heart rate increases
- Hands and palms may get sweaty

The body is ready to fight, to run away (flight), or to freeze to survive. God wired our brains and neurosystems for survival. While good in small doses, large amounts of stress can be toxic for our brains and bodies. When we are faced with ongoing traumatic events in our lives, our homes or neighborhoods, our brains are constantly in a state of toxic stress.

Under these conditions, our sense of safety has been interrupted. If a developing child is constantly under stress, the cortisol tap is always on, flooding the system, and is poison to the brain. When cortisol is present, energy and resources that should be used to make new connections for learning are rerouted to the parts of the brain dedicated to survival.

Children are usually emotionally stunted at the point of the onset of stress, stuck in the stressed reaction. Under constant or daily unresolved stress, a child can remain



in a fight, flight, or freeze response. Meanwhile, once the amygdala is activated, it becomes even more sensitive, and a traumatized child can have knee-jerk reactions to unprocessed emotional memories related to their trauma or stressors.

### How Young People Respond to Trauma

Trauma experts estimate 45% or more of children have one or more Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), and approximately 10% have three or more. In the urban community, there can be more children impacted by ACEs. Yet, only 20% of children with mental, emotional, or behavioral disorders receive care from a specialized mental health care provider, like a social worker, psychiatrist or psychologist. In the absence of support, children develop survival mechanisms that help them seemingly control their environments and feel safe.

As adults, many of us have become "internalizers," meaning we prefer to keep to ourselves. Others are "externalizers," meaning we express our emotions and feelings outside of ourselves. In either case, pure, unprocessed emotion or traumatic experiences can cause damage. Keeping things bottled up can lead to depression or anxiety. Spewing feelings out can lead to aggressive encounters and words or actions that feel out of control.

### My Story

God began to work in me through the death of my mother, wife, and younger brother, who was my best friend and college roommate. All three died within three years. My daughter, a bi-racial young lady, spiraled out of control in response to the deaths and family chaos. As a therapist, I did



**"In the absence of support, children develop survival mechanisms that help them seemingly control their environments and feel safe."**

**-Bernard Franklin**

not understand her bizarre behavior and labeled her out of my ignorance. When I decided to enter Texas Christian University for a graduate training certificate in trauma-informed care, I learned trauma could begin in utero. Conceived out of wedlock, my daughter's trauma began at that moment. When the family chaos erupted, my daughter's brain immediately began to function out of her lower brain. She was in fight, flight, or freeze mode.

Trauma did not begin with any of these challenging, painful life events. Adam and Eve brought trauma when they sinned against God's command. When they wrapped themselves in fig clothes, they were in trauma. Their brains and neurosystems did not know how to function apart from their Creator because they were not intended to function apart from the Father. We have been suffering the effects of the fall of our first parents since then, and each generation gets more stressful, anxious, and broken.

When our secure attachment breaks, we all face a massive amount of stress, anxiety, and trauma. When we, or our children, are not properly attached in a divine relationship, we are all subject to the effects of our broken origin. When we are not properly attached to our birth parents, family, friends, and spiritual community, we suffer trauma. All of us are products of broken parents and broken family systems and have fought our way to where we are today.

When my daughter started acting out, her behavior brushed up against my bruised and unresolved issues from my parents and the generations before. I was yelling and screaming at her, frustrated because she would make me look bad as a professional in Kansas City. After my training, I realized my daughter was not going to heal unless I recognized the

post-traumatic slave and sharecropper/depression era impact on me. Once I saw how my actions were exacerbating my daughter's behavior, I was quick to seek healing.

There's a reason why our ministries are not healing our community. Our churches and our community leaders are people who have been traumatized by the depression, slavery, 9/11, the 2008 economic downturn, racism, and hundreds of other severe life events. Until we fully begin to understand the impact of the fall, the impact of not being properly attached to our Father, we will continue to see the chaos in our communities and streets.

Today, my daughter is not just surviving, she is thriving, and I am walking in the quiet, safe, cool, healing breeze of my Creator!

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*Bernard Franklin (Kansas City 2001) is Vice President for Student Life at Mount St. Mary's University outside of Baltimore, Maryland. He has an M.S. in Counseling and Behavioral Studies from the University of South Alabama and a Ph.D. in Counseling and Higher Education Administration, with an emphasis in Family Studies, from Kansas State University. Dr. Franklin's research for both advanced degrees was focused on boys' and mens' development.*

*Opinions expressed by alumni do not necessarily reflect the views of DVULI.*

*Got an opinion about a subject matter impacting your work as an urban youth leader? Email: [staff@dvuli.org](mailto:staff@dvuli.org), Attn: Alumni Push Back*



# Changing Course

**Sean Goode** (*Seattle-Tacoma 2012*), leader of Choose 180, empowers troubled youth to embrace a positive path, just as he did.

by **Rachel Weaver**, Staff Writer



**Breaking doors, punching holes in walls, and hitting his mother, were the ways Sean Goode (Seattle-Tacoma 2012) expressed his anger at home as an adolescent.**

**The house he grew up in started out with two parents and his siblings. But the abusiveness of his dad caused all that to collapse, and issues of poverty, mental illness, and crime redefined the family's way of life.**

Goode's early upbringing eroded as more trauma ensued. Soon, he would become a poster child for youth most likely to face incarceration or end up dead. Even his brother served a juvenile life sentence for a crime he committed at age 13.

Goode remembers the day his father paid an unexpected visit home. The return wasn't about reconciling with his estranged family but to assault their mom once more.

While witnessing the abuse, Goode was stung by his dad's words; "He looked back and told me, 'I am not your father, and you are not my son,'" he recalls. "For me, this was a pivotal moment where things changed, and I became the [rebellious] child that my mother feared I would become."

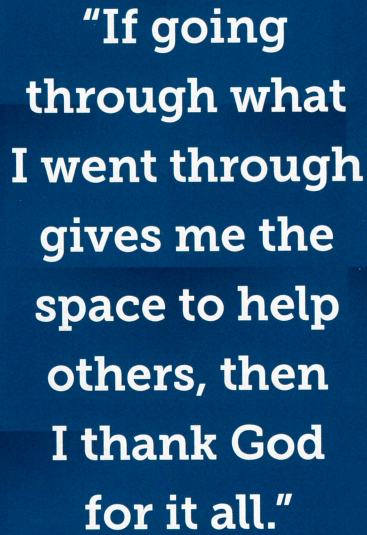
## Second Chances

When his brother returned from prison, another pivotal moment occurred. "My brother helped me redirect my behavior and supported me in a new direction," Goode says. The mentorship and encouragement Goode received were life-changing. "I wouldn't be here today. I wouldn't be here [at Choose 180]. I wouldn't be Samuel's father. I wouldn't be the husband that I am."

There would be a few more ups and downs before Goode finally surrendered to God's plan for his life. In his twenties, Goode became a standout leader at the YMCA of Greater Seattle and his church. He led a gang intervention team in the neighborhood he grew up in, formed relationships with local law enforcement and elected officials, and served in a volunteer capacity at his church as the youth minister. However, the work was challenging. "We were serving people on the block during a weekday, and a couple of weekends later I was presiding over their funeral," said Goode.



During this time, Goode participated in the DeVos Urban Leadership Initiative and narrowly avoided burnout. He then began directing youth and family programming at the Matt Griffin YMCA, serving 10,000 youth and families each year.



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When a friend encouraged him to consider a leadership position at a restorative justice nonprofit, Goode says he didn't apply. Only after the friend prompted him again did he take the job seriously. The opportunity turned out to be another one of his life's pivotal moments. In January 2017, Goode was hired as Choose 180's first Executive Director.

#### **Overcomers**

"Choose 180 is the culmination of everything I've ever done, violence reduction methods, leading programs at the Y, and even the stuff I thought was irrelevant," Goode says, referring to his past. "We've been trying to solve youth violence by focusing on keeping young people from dying rather than helping them thrive."

"What we all need is the ability to make a mistake in our lives, recognize the error of our way, and be connected with people who can help us see what the way out looks like," says Goode. "Simply put, if we decriminalize youthful behavior, we would no longer have a need for a criminal justice system."

Goode puts his passion into practice at Choose 180, which demonstrates transformational outcomes for young people who have encountered the criminal justice system. The organization's flagship program is a half-day diversion workshop for youth charged with a felony or misdemeanor. It is designed to get at the heart of why young people sometimes make bad choices so they can make positive changes and stay out of the criminal justice system for good.

Choose 180 helps youth to understand their agency and focus the positive decisions, thoughts, behaviors, and postures youth can adopt to make significant changes in their lives and circumstances. "Our workshops and small groups are a place for them to pause, pivot, and choose a new direction for their life," says Goode.

Often, Choose 180 is the first time youth encounter mercy and encouragement. "Many youth experience consistent failure and are looked-over and looked-past," Goode says. "Yet, all of these moments of rejection create muscle memory of being an overcomer." Goode believes youth who struggle with and overcome tremendous challenges learn critical life-skills that equip them to be outstanding leaders.

As per an agreement with the Prosecuting Attorney's Office, upon completion of a Choose 180 workshop, youth have their criminal offense dismissed and avoid a criminal record. The organization's methods are working long-term too. Eighty percent of youth graduates and 97 percent of young adult graduates have stayed out of the criminal justice system.

#### **Difference Makers**

In his own life, Goode had several risk factors for developing delinquent behavior; however, he also gained protective factors from the presence of a positive adult role model that fostered resilience and self-esteem. Goode believes even though many urban youth workers do not work in the juvenile justice system, they can be difference makers in young people's lives.

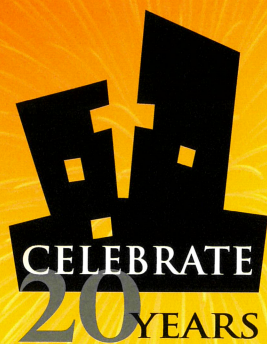
Regardless of the ministry context, Goode says that youth workers can export his mindset. "Stop solving problems and change our way of being...We serve the God of possibilities." Goode encourages peers to focus on seeing young people as full of possibility, decriminalize their youthful behavior, be in relationship with difficult people, and dare to do something different.

"It just takes us to stop and see people as they are—love them as they are, support them where they are—and have enough hope within us to believe that they can be something better, something greater, than what it is that they see for themselves," says Goode. "For my son, I get to be that. For my community, I get to be that. If going through what I went through gives me the space to help others, then I thank God for it all."

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*Sean Goode (Seattle-Tacoma 2012) is the Executive Director of CHOOSE 180 in Seattle, Washington, where he serves youth ages 12-24. He is the husband to Kimberly for eight years and the father of a son and daughter. Contact Sean at: [sgoode@choose180.org](mailto:sgoode@choose180.org)*





# ALUMNI CELEBRATE AND RELAX AT REUNION 2019

From relaxing by the pool under the blazing sun to jumping on the dance floor with Freddy Funk, DVULI celebrated 20 years of serving urban youth leaders with alumni and their spouses in Phoenix, Arizona, at Reunion 2019.

Throughout the four-day celebration, alumni took deep dives into ministry-related workshops, heard empowering keynote speakers, fellowshiped with old and new friends, and soaked in an abundance of worship, rejuvenation and flavorful delicacies!

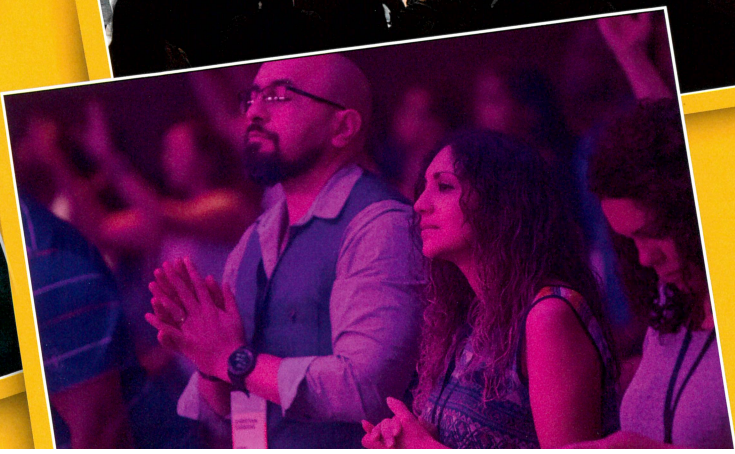
Doug and Maria DeVos attended on behalf of the DeVos family. They enjoyed worshipping, dining, and interacting with attendees. Doug even joined reunion mascot, Freddy Funk, in a picture-perfect dance jam-session. During the Friday evening dinner, Doug addressed the crowd saying, "We are so thankful for this time to celebrate together with you, celebrate who you are, celebrate the amazing people that you are, and the gifts and the talents God's given to you...to touch and enrich the lives of others. So, we celebrate that, and we thank you for letting us be a part of it."

Reunion 2019 was also time to recognize the many individuals who contributed to the development of DVULI's infrastructure and curriculum, such as the trailblazing City Coordinators and trainers. All in attendance were thankful for such a wonderful opportunity and for being a part of the DVULI family.



# REUNION 2019







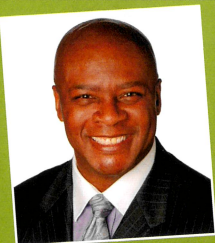
**CELEBRATE**  
**20 YEARS**





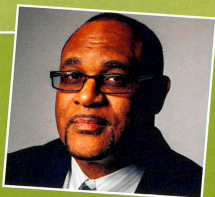






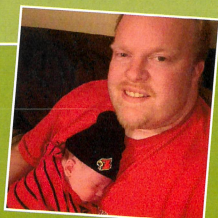
**Harroll V. Chisom**  
(Los Angeles 2003) became a licensed minister and preached his first sermon at Calvary Baptist Church of Pacoima in San Fernando, California.

**Arthur Gray** (Columbus 2017) was named City Network Leader at Made to Flourish in Columbus, Ohio.



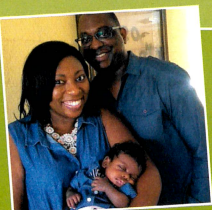
**Anthony Rivisto**  
(Seattle-Tacoma 2012) and his wife, Rebekah, welcomed their second daughter, Ester Ann Rivisto, on February 13, 2019.

**Mark Singleton**  
(Indianapolis 2007) and his wife, Kendra, welcomed a healthy baby boy, Charles Evan Singleton, on February 27, 2019.



**Matt Dascenzo**  
(Columbus 2017) married Jenna Grace LaBorde on April 13, 2019.

**Thell Robinson III**  
(Columbus 2015) was named a 2018 Global Fellow by Echoing Green and received a paid two-year fellowship for his organization, Halt Violence.



**Chrain (Simes) Walls**  
(Orlando 2010) and her husband, Derek, welcomed a baby boy, Langston K. Walls, on December 16, 2018.

For more, visit

[facebook.com/dvuli](https://facebook.com/dvuli)

[instagram.com/dvuli](https://instagram.com/dvuli)

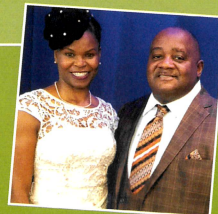
# ALUMNI UPDATES

**Char (Biggs) Fields**  
(Pittsburgh 2006) married Toroe L. Fields on March 14, 2019.



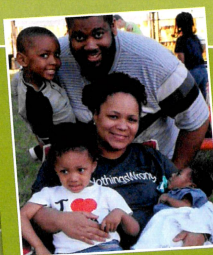
**Kimberly Kossie-McKee**  
(Houston 2005) was installed as senior pastor at Latter Day Deliverance Revival Church in Houston, Texas, on April 28, 2019.

**Ray Banks** (Chicago 2007) married Deaneen Merritt on November 11, 2018.



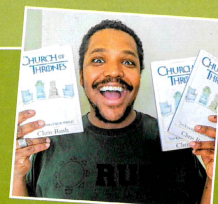
**Kenneth Hite, Jr.**  
(Boston 2016) earned a Master of Arts degree in Urban Ministry Leadership from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in Wenham, Massachusetts.

**Annette Bittner**  
(Twin Cities 2008) earned a Master of Arts degree in Children's and Family Ministry from Bethel Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota.



**Ryan Kirkland**  
(Pittsburgh 2018) and her husband, Loren, welcomed a baby boy, Logan Oliver, on April 19, 2019.

**Chris Rush** (Twin Cities 2008) published *Church of Thrones: The Kingdom House Model*.



**Nes Espinosa**  
(Philadelphia 2002) became the Associate Regional Director for Young Life Philadelphia.