

Communication from Public

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Council File No: 21-0223
Comments for Public Posting: Please see attached for full remarks.

From the Desk of Taneda K. Jordan-Larios

Remarks for Council File 21-0223

Submitted April 7, 2021

My name is Taneda Jordan-Larios, and I am the product of targeted programming for youth, who because of this focus, was lifted out of poverty into government service and this is my story.

I grew up in a neighborhood where losing friends to gang violence (one year I lost five friends in two months) was the norm and stereotypes about what our future would hold were limited in scope and pervasive in our community due to the lack of exposure to alternative possibilities and opportunities even though we held hope for different outcomes. While enrolled in a program for teen mothers completing my High School education, I was introduced to the Youth Service Academy program. **This is where my hope met opportunity** and as you will see shortly, the return of investment from this program during the Bradley era has paid and will continue to pay dividends to many generations.

The YSA program was not a hand-out rather a hand-into opportunities and instruction that would afford me an alternative path to overcome the stark challenges facing a couch-surfing, eighteen-year-old mother with a three-year-old son. The YSA program provided accountability in schoolwork, mandatory service to the community and a much-needed job. I am proud to say that I have faithfully served the City of Los Angeles for the past 29 years as result of the YSA program. Although obtaining long-term employment would be a sufficient return on the investment made from the program, that is not where my story ends, rather, it's where it begins.

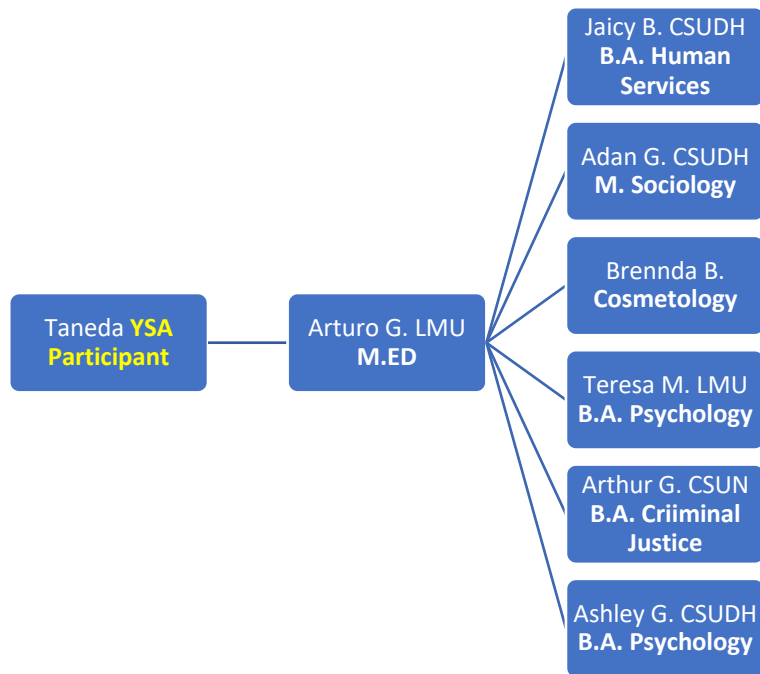
The real return on the investment of having a strategic and targeted program for youth is found in the fact that through the job opportunity that I was afforded, I was able to raise my son and fund his education to Loyola Marymount University where he completed his Bachelor's and Master's Degree in Education, he then returned to serve the inner-city community as a teacher and administrator and acquired over one million dollars in funding and programming for his school communities. Additionally, prior to my son attending college, not a single cousin on one side of our family had attended college. Now, all seven who were of college age have either attended a four-year college or a trade school and have mainly chosen careers that give back to their or other disenfranchised communities.

This is result of one program and one person in that program. Imagine the results that could be yielded from a Department dedicated to providing and executing a comprehensive strategy for youth development. Sometimes you have to spend money to save money.

The future of our youth is worth the sacrifice. When you look back at your tenure as a legislator, don't you want a part of your legacy to reflect that you understood that the

future of our City is in the hands of our youth **now** and that you provided a pathway for them to be competent, empowered, and a perpetual voice within a city that exists to serve all of its constituents including the youth.

It is with profound hope and expectation that I ask you to move to approve Council File 21-0223 and create a standalone Department for Strategic Youth Development.



Sincerely,

Taneda K. Jordan-Larios