



A LETTER FROM JENNIFER CUMMINGS

When my father founded the Elijah Cummings Youth Program nearly three decades ago, he believed that investing in young people was one of the most powerful ways to shape the future. He often reminded us that children are “the living messages we send to a future we will never see.” That belief continues to guide ECYP today.

In a world where division too often overshadows understanding, our mission feels more important than ever. My father envisioned a program that would expand young minds and worlds by bringing young people together across cultures, encouraging meaningful dialogue and preparing them to lead with empathy, curiosity, and courage.

This year’s impact report is a celebration of growth — not only the growth of our program, but of the remarkable Fellows and alumni who continue to inspire us through their leadership, resilience, and commitment to building stronger communities.

I had the privilege of traveling with the Classes of 2025 and 2026 through Eastern Europe. Together, we visited places that challenged us to confront difficult histories, reflect on our shared humanity, and consider our responsibility to one another. Yet what has stayed with me most was not any single place we visited. It was watching our Fellows ask thoughtful questions, listen with intention, challenge one another with curiosity and compassion, and build relationships across cultures. Those moments reminded me that some of ECYP’s most meaningful lessons happen not only in classrooms or at historic sites, but in conversations, shared experiences, and the willingness to see the world through someone else’s eyes.

The experiences in these pages remind us that impact is reflected in the confidence a Fellow discovers, the lifelong friendships formed, the empathy cultivated through meaningful dialogue, and the ripple effects that continue long after.

As we celebrate another year of growth, we are deeply grateful to our ECYP alumni, families, sponsors, and supporters. Your belief in this mission ensures that my father’s vision continues to thrive through each new generation of Fellows. Together, we are helping build a future rooted in understanding, service, and hope.

Thank you for being part of this journey.



With gratitude,
Jennifer Cummings
BOARD MEMBER
Elijah Cummings Youth Program



OUR IMPACT

ECYP ALUMNI OUTCOMES

 **325+**
ALUMNI
and growing

95% of ECYP alumni have
 **EARNED**
a college degree

 **100%**

of college-eligible
alumni are currently
ENROLLED
in higher education

of our Class of 2025
graduates were
ACCEPTED
to four-year colleges and
universities

CLASS OF 2025 COHORT

100%
of **PARTICIPANTS**
reported being very likely to
RECOMMEND
the program to others
&
very likely or likely to
PURSUE
community service activities

 **83%**
reported being
very likely or
likely to engage
in political
activity or
advocacy

 **91%**
reported
being very
likely or likely
to research
other cultures
because of
ECYP

 **91%**
reported
being likely
to pursue
leadership
positions in
college

 **91%**
reported
being very
likely or likely
to study
abroad



WHERE THE CLASS OF 2025 IS HEADED:



Xavier University
of Ohio



Morehouse
College



Louisiana State
University



University
of Maryland,
College Park



Morgan State
University



Towson
University



Chatham
University



Howard
University





This year, ECYP expanded the leadership journey with new learning experiences that challenged Fellows to explore history, identity, and their role as bridge builders. From our inaugural Eastern Europe experience exploring the Jewish diaspora to our Civil Rights Journey through the American South, Fellows gained a deeper understanding of the stories that shape our world.

EASTERN EUROPE 2025



1

August 2025 WELCOME BACK

ECYP Fellows shared powerful, heartfelt stories about walking through Auschwitz and tasting new food from their travels through Eastern Europe. This storytelling tradition, inspired by Congressman Cummings, continues to honor his legacy as a master storyteller and leader.



2

September 2025 CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS (CBC)

ECYP Fellows attended the 54th Annual Congressional Black Caucus Legislative Conference, where they engaged in meaningful discussions on policy issues affecting the Black diaspora and connected with influential Black leaders from across the country who are driving social, economic, and political change.



3

September 2025 – April 2026 SOCIAL JUSTICE TEEN FELLOWSHIP

The Social Justice Teen Fellowship is a nine-month leadership development program that brings together 12 predominantly Black ECYP high school seniors and 12 predominantly Jewish high school students for a shared journey of social justice education, cross-cultural dialogue, and civic engagement.



January 2026 BIRTHDAY EVENT

On January 18th, what would have been Congressman Elijah E. Cummings' 75th birthday, ECYP brought together community leaders, partners, and neighbors to celebrate his legacy. We reflected on Congressman Cummings' impact, discussed Black-Jewish relations in Baltimore with Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott and City Council President Zeke Cohen and reaffirmed the importance of continuing Congressman Cummings' work to empower future generations.

SHARED LEGACIES

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February 2026 CIVIL RIGHTS TRIP

The Social Justice Teen Fellowship led 21 Baltimore teens on a transformative Civil Rights Mission trip. Fellows explored key sites of the Civil Rights Movement in Atlanta, Birmingham, Selma, and Montgomery; met courageous changemakers and eyewitnesses; and reflected on the enduring impact of justice, advocacy, and allyship.



February 2026 ADVOCACY DAY

ECYP Fellows spent the day in Annapolis for a hands-on experience with Maryland's legislative session. Junior Fellows explored the State House and its history, while Senior Fellows met with legislators from their home districts. The day wrapped with Senate committee hearings, giving Fellows a front row seat to public testimony and real-time policymaking.



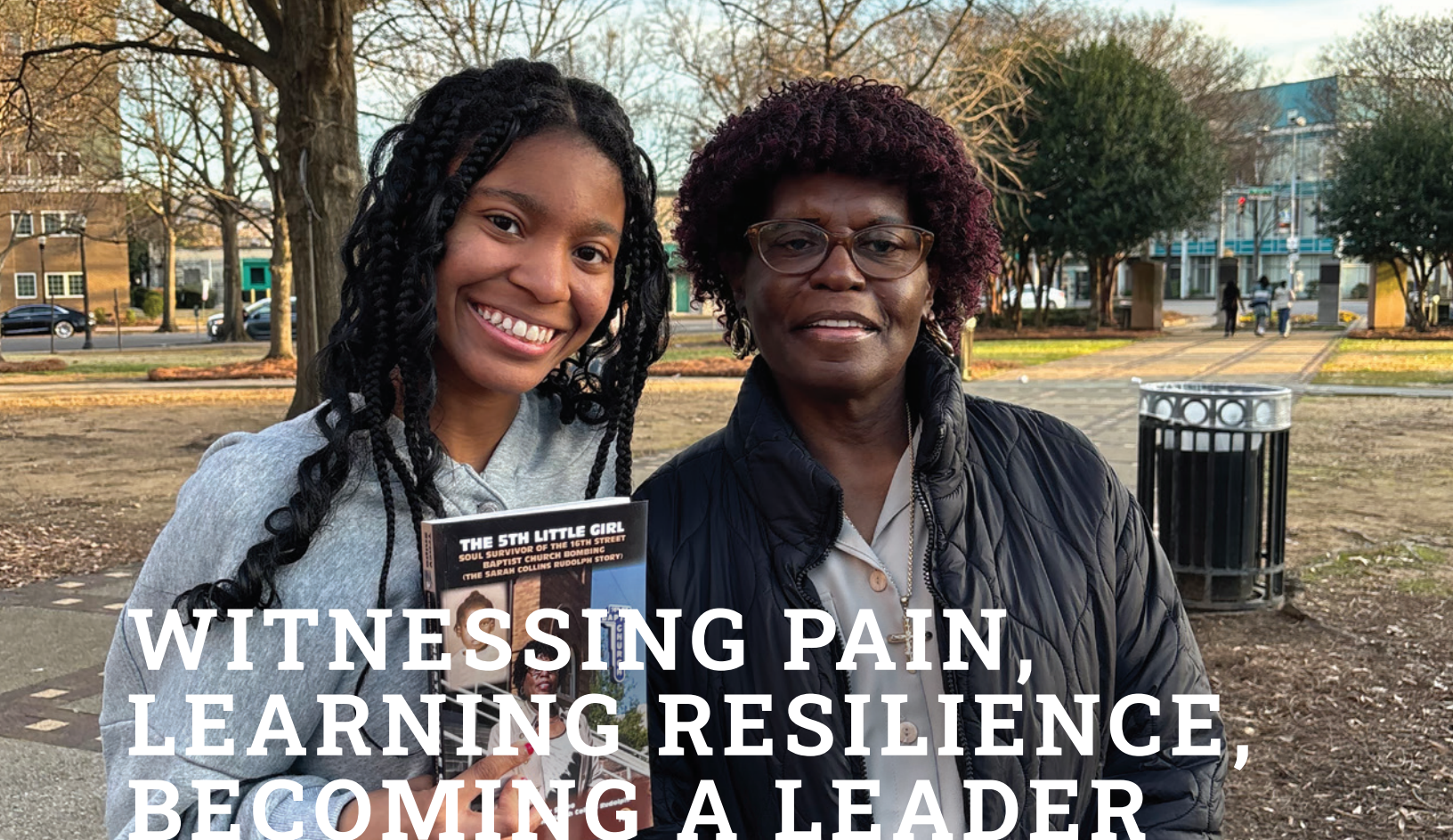
May 2026 ECYP ALUMNI AND FELLOW DINNER

ECYP alumni and current fellows came together for an evening of networking, meaningful connection, and playful competition as we celebrated the legacy and impact of ECYP. It was especially powerful to witness graduates sharing stories, laughter, and experiences with current fellows — all connected by the unique bond of the program.



June 2026 LEADERS AND LIVING MESSENGERS: CELEBRATING ECYP ALUMNI

The ECYP community gathered for the annual Leaders and Living Messengers celebration, honoring the individuals who embody Congressman Elijah Cummings' legacy of leadership and service. The celebration highlighted the transformative power of mentorship, community, and investing in young leaders.



WITNESSING PAIN, LEARNING RESILIENCE, BECOMING A LEADER

AUTUMN, CLASS OF 2026

There are moments in life when history stops being something you read and becomes something you feel. For me, that moment happened at the National Memorial for Peace and Justice. Walking through that space, surrounded by the names of men, women, and children who were victims of racial terror, I felt a weight that was both crushing and clarifying. I thought about how easily these stories could have been erased, how often our pain is minimized, and yet how powerfully our resilience endures.

In that silence, I realized something that reshaped me: my community is miraculous. Despite centuries of oppression, displacement, and injustice, we are still filled with joy. Our spirits are still well. We still laugh, create, worship, lead, and love boldly. That understanding shifted how I see myself. I am not just the product of struggle; I am evidence of survival. And if I carry that truth, then leadership for me cannot simply be about achievement, it must be about honoring legacy, protecting dignity, and ensuring that the stories of the past fuel justice in the present.

One story that will forever live in my heart is Sarah Collins Rudolph's. Listening to her journey of forgiveness after surviving the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing challenged me in ways I didn't expect. Forgiveness, I learned, is not about excusing harm. It is about refusing to let hatred shape your identity. She showed me that what people do to you does not have the power to define who you are or limit the impact you can have on your community. That lesson felt deeply personal. As a young Black leader, it can be easy to internalize the narratives placed on us by society. But her life is proof that we have agency. We choose who we become. We choose how we respond. We choose whether pain hardens us or refines us. I want to lead from a place of refinement, where

strength and softness coexist, where conviction is paired with compassion.

My experience learning about Jewish history and the Jewish Diaspora in Eastern Europe deepened this understanding even further. Studying centuries of displacement, persecution, and resilience alongside African American history forced me to see identity as both fragile and powerful. I saw how cultures survive through memory, tradition, and collective responsibility. I saw how injustice, though shaped differently across communities, leaves similar wounds and how healing requires solidarity. It challenged me to think beyond my own lived experience and recognize that justice is interconnected. When one community's humanity is denied, it threatens us all. When one community rises, it creates space for others to rise too.

ECYP did more than take me to new places; it prepared me to engage with history thoughtfully and courageously. It taught me to ask deeper questions, to sit with discomfort, and to listen across differences without defensiveness. It showed me that empathy is not passive; it is active, intentional, and necessary for leadership. Through every conversation and every site visit, I began to understand that my voice matters. Even when it shakes. Even when it feels small. Leadership is not about waiting until you feel ready or qualified enough. It is about recognizing that you already carry power, the power to speak up, to challenge injustice, to build bridges, and to inspire change.

As I step into the next chapter of my life, I carry these lessons with me. I carry the resilience of my ancestors. I carry the courage of survivors like Sarah Collins Rudolph. I carry the understanding that identity is layered, sacred, and worth protecting. Most importantly, I carry the responsibility to lead with intention.

In my school, in my community, and wherever my future path leads, I will show up grounded in truth and guided by empathy. I will strive to create spaces where others feel seen and valued. I will stand up for what is right, even when it is uncomfortable. These experiences did not just teach me about history; they taught me about myself. And the leader I am becoming is rooted in remembrance, strengthened by resilience, and committed to justice that reaches beyond me.



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Donor Spotlight:

THE HOFFBERGER FAMILY FOUNDATION

For more than 25 years, the Hoffberger Family Philanthropies has been a steadfast partner in the Elijah Cummings Youth Program, helping shape the organization into what it is today.

In 1999, the Foundation established an endowment in honor of former Baltimore Orioles owner Jerold C. Hoffberger, whose belief in leadership and service continues to inspire ECYP's work. At the time, Peter Hoffberger, Jerold's son and a dedicated ECYP board member for more than two decades captured his father's philosophy:

"The difference between speaking for yourself and speaking for your community is the difference between isolating oneself and assuming a power of leadership. Jerold Hoffberger inspired those around him to assume positions of leadership."

That vision has become a defining part of ECYP's story. With the Hoffberger family's early investment and continued partnership, ECYP grew from a single educational trip to Israel into the transformative two-year leadership fellowship that now equips young people across Maryland's 7th Congressional District with the skills, experiences, and confidence to lead.

The Hoffberger family's impact extends far beyond philanthropy. Through decades of volunteer leadership, ongoing board service, and thoughtful guidance, they have helped strengthen ECYP's mission and expand its

reach. Their belief in our students and our future has empowered hundreds of young leaders to discover their voices, build bridges across communities, and create lasting change.

That tradition of hands-on leadership continues within the family today. Foundation President Heller Zaiman previously served on ECYP's board, and Jerold's grandson, Chase Hoffberger, now carries the family's commitment forward as a current ECYP board member. As Chase reflected:

"ECYP's mission to educate, organize, and connect young leaders across Baltimore's Black and Jewish communities is admirable and essential. I can think of no better way to foster dialogue than through the programming that ECYP provides, and our family is proud to continue our tradition of supporting this mission."



The Hoffberger
Family Philanthropies



ECYP STAFF



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Liza Koh
PROGRAM DIRECTOR



Karla Press-Porter
PROGRAM COORDINATOR

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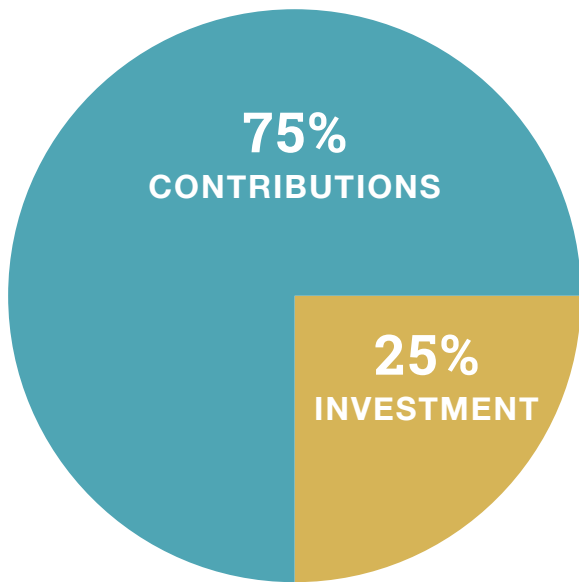
Mr. Torrey Smith, DIRECTOR

Ms. Martha Weiman, HONORARY
BOARD DIRECTOR

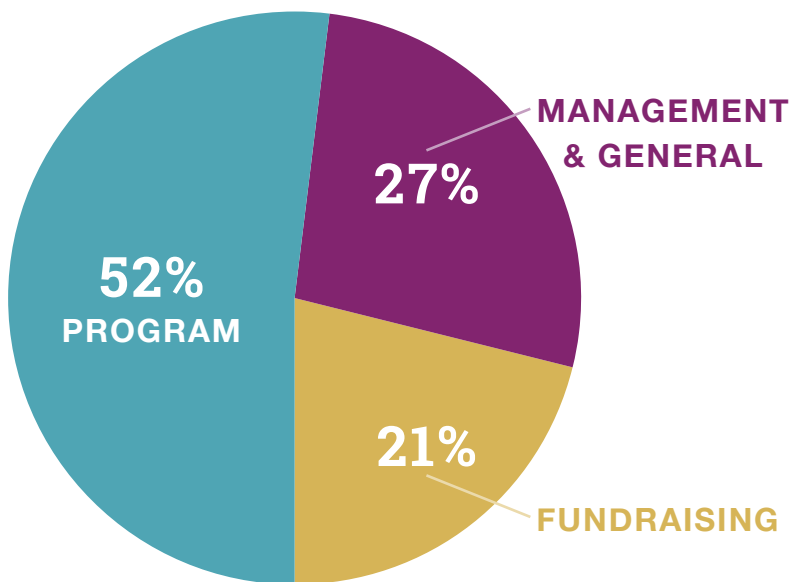


25/26 FINANCIALS

REVENUE



EXPENSES



A LETTER FROM KATHLEEN

LOOKING AHEAD

In less than two years, ECYP will celebrate its 30th anniversary. That milestone is remarkable for many reasons. For nearly three decades, ECYP has invested in young people, helping them develop the skills, courage, and compassion needed to lead in an increasingly complex world.

The work ECYP does to build leaders is as necessary today as it was when Congressman Elijah Cummings and members of the Baltimore Jewish community launched the program in 1998. In many ways, the need is even greater. We live in a time that often feels more polarized and divided, where understanding across differences can seem increasingly difficult. Yet these challenges only reinforce the importance of developing young leaders who are willing to listen, engage, and build bridges.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to our mission of preparing the next generation of Living Messengers, young people who lead with empathy, integrity, and a deep sense of responsibility to their communities. As we approach this important milestone, we are inspired by the hundreds of alumni who continue to embody Congressman Cummings' belief that our children are "the living messages we send to a future we will never see."

With your partnership, ECYP will continue to create transformative experiences that empower young people to lead, connect communities, and carry this legacy forward for generations to come.



Kathleen St. Villier Hill addresses Fellows, families, alumni, and community members during ECYP's Annual Graduation and Induction Ceremony, celebrating the accomplishments of the Class of 2026 and welcoming the Class of 2028.



Thank you,
Kathleen St. Villier Hill
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Elijah Cummings Youth Program



ELIJAH CUMMINGS YOUTH PROGRAM

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