

September 2020 — Young adults carry the banner of justice

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Recently, I attended a protest in Louisville that demanded justice for Breonna Taylor, the 26-year-old Black woman who was shot and killed by Louisville police when they entered her home with a no-knock warrant. It was a sobering moment; it was a moment of grief; and it was a moment of young adults. As I looked around at the crowd, people of all ages and backgrounds were there. However, the young adult presence was visible and inspiring. Young adults continue to carry the banner of justice in our country in ways that give hope for the future. They chanted, “Say her name — Breonna Taylor.” I was deeply encouraged by the many ways that diverse young adults are showing their care and boldness in times of racial unrest in the U.S.

While the YAV program will not have an in-person travel component for 2020–21, due to the uncertainties around the COVID-19 pandemic, the YAV office team has created a virtual program that seeks to expose young adults ages 18–30* to issues of social justice. **There is no cost to participate in the virtual YAV year (2020–21).** On this virtual journey, participants will learn about the inner workings of PC(USA) ministries, be mentored by YAV alums and provide accompaniment to one another through their assigned cohorts. Transforming colonial models of mission through education and training is an important aspect of preparation for missional service and the work that our times demand.

Virtual participant Diamond Duman from Key West, Florida, said it best: “Participating in a YAV year is supposed to provide young adults with two primary things: an opportunity to directly address root causes of poverty, and a chance to explore the meaning of Christian faith and accountability.” She added, “The goal has not changed; the method has become different. I am engaging in the virtual YAV program with aims to still enact change in my community, combat poverty and grow in my faith during trying times. I know the information I gain and the skills I learn will make me a stronger activist when I am called to be a leader of progress.”

Serve from wherever you are. Apply by Sept. 29!

Going virtual provides the YAV program a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for English-speaking young adults from all over the world to participate in this program. It also gives the young adults who sign up an opportunity to engage in long-term mission by applying to serve in-person during the 2021–22 YAV year. Young adults are the future of the world and they are lifting up their voices to shape the world they want to create. The YAV program wants to be a part of that!

The application process for the 2020–21 “virtual” YAV year (ages 18–30) is open now through Sept. 29. [Apply to be a virtual YAV](#). For more details on the virtual YAV year, [download the flyer](#).

The application process for the 2021–22 “in-person” YAV year (ages 19–30) opens Oct. 1, 2020. To learn more about the program, go to presbyterianmission.org/ministries/yav.

*For the first time, as a one-time exception, the virtual year also will be open to 18-year-olds who are interested in exploring the YAV program. (Student loan repayment assistance is available. No stipend and no health insurance are provided.)