

Juliana Bernier

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Hello! My name is Juliana and I am a 24 year old NYRican (Puerto Rican from New York) with a heart burning to make positive change in our world. I have just earned my master's degree in social work from the University of Illinois at Chicago and am excited to explore the next part of my journey utilizing all the skills that I have learned.

Over the last few years, I have realized my passion and talents as a visionary for working with youth, especially those labeled "at risk" and/or facing the criminal justice system. My interests center around the creative development of restorative justice and psychoeducational programs that provide young people with skills that are necessary for existing in a world that expects success, without seeing to it that the proper tools and foundations are first given to them. This past year, I have been blessed with the opportunity to intern at the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center (JTDC) which gave me the platform to create a program called "Buried Seeds." This program works to re-empower young people through the personal development of grit, perseverance, tenacity and strategic planning.

During my year of service with YAV, I hope to continue learning the ways in which we can truly make a difference in this world. With intentionality, I aim to give back to those who will provide me with new tools and opportunities for further growth. And lastly, but most importantly, my goal is to stand in solidarity with those who have already committed their lives to service, to spread hope and love, and to work towards a greater future for our world and its people.