



KristenAmerson
• Youth Foundation •

Annual Report 2021

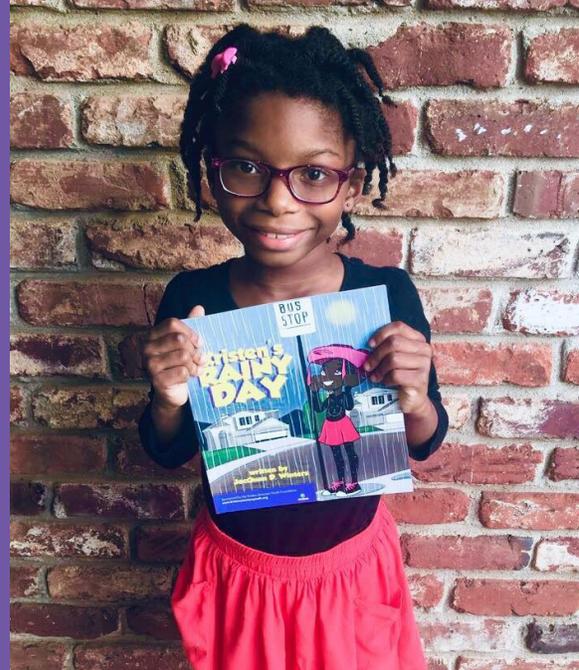


Table of Contents

- 1** Mission and Vision
- 2** Letter from Executive Director
- 3** Kristens's Story
- 4** Initiatives
- 5** Initiatives cont.
- 6** 2021 Facts
- 7** Financial Report
- 8** Strike Out Suicide Bowling Night
- 9** Sponsors
- 10** Board of Directors

Our Mission

To promote healthier lives for youth by providing age-appropriate resources for suicide prevention and positive educational experiences.

Our Vision

To eliminate suicide among all youth in West Alabama.

Letter from Executive Director

JacQuan Winters

Hello Kristen Amerson Youth Foundation supporters, volunteers, and interested community members! As the Executive Director of the Kristen Amerson Youth Foundation, I am excited to present this annual report for 2021's calendar year. In this report, we will outline information of the foundation, our impact, and our financial standing. We value each and every supporter and we would like to take the opportunity to be transparent. It is our hope that you find this report as exciting as we do.

We are all aware of the Covid-19 pandemic that continues to impact every single life in some way or another. A goal for 2021 was to complete a strategic plan for the Kristen Amerson Youth Foundation. I am elated to say that our strategic plan is finished, and we are hard at work. A special thank you to the staff, board of directors, and key stakeholders of the Kristen Amerson Youth Foundation and to Vantage Associates for a job well done.

Although this pandemic caused us to change how we provide services, we remain dedicated to serving the youth, their families, and the Tuscaloosa community. Our newest initiative is titled Prevention First. Prevention First is comprised of two trainings, Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) and Signs of Suicide (SOS). The Kristen Amerson Youth Foundation will conduct QPR (Question, Persuade, and Refer) Gatekeeper Training for Suicide Prevention which consists of a 1-2-hour educational program designed to teach lay and professional "gatekeepers" the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to respond. Signs of Suicide is a universal school-based prevention program designed for students ages 11 - 17. We are excited to train students and educators of the signs of suicide to coincide with our vision which is to eliminate suicide among all youth in West Alabama. In 2021, the Kristen Amerson Youth Foundation hired our first full-time employee. Our grant revenue for 2021 was over \$23,000.

The Kristen Amerson Youth Foundation is excited for what is to come in 2022. Mental health remains a constant need in our community, country, and world. We as a foundation aim to be a resource of suicide prevention and mental health awareness. It is our goal that we continue to make a positive impact in the Tuscaloosa community and the West Alabama community. On behalf of the staff, board, and volunteers of the Kristen Amerson Youth Foundation, I would like to personally thank each of our supporters. Without you, we would not be able to empower the community. With all sincerity, thank you for all that you do! As we embark upon 2022, we ask that you continue to support the mission and vision of the Kristen Amerson Youth Foundation.

JacQuan D. Winters



Kristen's Story

Kristen Amerson was a beautiful young lady who loved experimenting with fashion, make-up, and hairstyles. She was the only girl in a household with three brothers and one of her favorite activities was playfully teasing her brothers. Anyone who knew Kristen could see how gifted she was, and how much of a gift she was to both her family and her community.

Kristen ended her life on Thursday, April 10th, 2014, at the young age of 11. Suicide amongst youth always leaves the family and loved ones wondering what more could've been done, and Kristen's family is no different. There was never a point when Kristen's family pictured life without her, she was a given, and they never thought she wouldn't be with them. With increasing awareness of youth suicide, it is understood that no one can know the truth of what an individual is experiencing.

Kristen's life was just beginning, and she never got the chance to meet her potential or find her purpose, but her life has inspired the formation and work of the Kristen Amerson Youth Foundation to spread awareness of issues including youth suicide, mental illness, trauma, and bullying. The hope of the organization lies in its ability to impact the lives of the local community and underserved youth who need support.

Initiatives

Spreading Prevention & Empowering All Kids (S.P.E.A.K.)

S.P.E.A.K. is a school based program created to prevent suicide, bullying, and other struggles endured by youth through an evidence-based learning curriculum.

Prevention First

Prevention First is comprised of two trainings, Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) and Signs of Suicide (SOS). For educators, The Kristen Amerson Youth Foundation will conduct QPR (Question, Persuade, and Refer) Gatekeeper Training for Suicide Prevention. This training consists of a 1–2-hour educational program designed to teach lay and professional “gatekeepers” the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to respond. Signs of Suicide is a universal school-based prevention program designed for students ages 11 – 17.

My Happy Place Children’s Book

Written by JacQuan D. Winters, My Happy Place was written to help children cope with and handle bad emotions in a healthier way. The Kristen Amerson Youth Foundation uses My Happy Place as a resource to help children explore different coping skills.

Kristen’s Rainy Day Children’s Book

Kristen's Rainy Day was written by JacQuan D. Winters to continue the legacy of his younger sister, Kristen Amerson, and teach children to remain positive through negative situations. The Kristen Amerson Youth Foundation uses Kristen's Rainy Day as a resource to help children learn the valuable lesson of positivity at an earlier age.

Initiatives cont.

Presentations

Per request, the Kristen Amerson Youth Foundation is able to conduct presentations on topics such as suicide and bullying prevention.

Presentations use factual information, statistics, and real-life experiences to raise awareness of suicide and bullying and their negative effects on students. Presentations are available for upper elementary students (3rd – 5th grade), middle school students, high school students, college students, parents and community members, administrators and educators, and other professionals.

QPR Gatekeeper Training

QPR (Question, Persuade, and Refer) Gatekeeper Training for Suicide Prevention is a 1-2 hour educational program designed to teach lay and professional "gatekeepers" the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to respond.

Mental Health Backpacks

As a response to COVID-19, the KAYF created mental health backpacks as a mental health resource for children. Mental health backpacks are meant to supply children with resources to help them through their personal issues while waiting for access to a mental health professional. The mental health backpacks include journals, journal prompts, pen/pencils, coloring books, crayons, stress toys, stuffed animals, and lists of coping skills and positive affirmations.

2021 Facts

3 Read Alouds

1 News Appearance

6 Speaking Engagements

6 Outreaches

40 Volunteers

2000+ Individuals Impacted

Financial Report

Fundraiser Income - \$29,386

Grant Income - \$23,700

Individual Donations - \$12,366

Interest Income - \$14

Total Cash Receipts – without Donor Restrictions - \$65,466

Expenses - \$53,878

**Annual
Strike Out Suicide Bowling Night**

**18
Sponsors**

**200+
People in attendance**

**\$25,500
Raised to support
our mission**

Sponsors

Alabama Credit Union

Alabama Power Foundation

Alabama Public Radio

Cadence Bank

Carrie Fitts Real Estate

EXIT Capstone Realty

McKinney Orthodontics

Michele Coley

Morrison & Smith, LLP

Movement Mortgage

People Optimum Consulting

Stillman College | School of Business, Entrepreneurship, and Computational and Information Sciences

The Gray Group at Keller Williams Realty

Turner Law Group

Tuscaloosa Association of Realtors & West Alabama Multiple Listing Service

University Medical Center

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Member at Large

WE'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO STAYING PROACTIVE WITH PREVENTION IN 2022!

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