



## A Message from CEO, Wesner J. Pierre

As the new CEO here at Partnership with Children, I am thrilled to be joining such a deeply committed team during such a critical time in our society as we support the children who were hit hardest by the pandemic. The work of our team that brightens their paths forward is deeply touching to me. I am proud that we are leading the way as exemplars in our commitment to antiracism and deconstructing systemic racism through education and dialogue with our staff so our youth and communities can thrive. The work of PWC resonates with me personally. I was raised in South Jamaica Queens NYCHA houses during the height of the crack epidemic of the 1980's. I was personally touched as my mother, a single mom, developed deep mental health struggles and tragically became a victim to the same drug abuse that ravaged my community; finding herself largely incapable of raising my three siblings and me. Luckily for us, my grandmother stepped in to take care of us and although she did her best to shield us from the toxic environment we were growing up in, I still witnessed some things that no child should ever see. My three siblings and I were wards of the court for our entire childhood and ACS monitored our upbringing including home visits. I found myself going to afterschool programs seeking additional protective factors in my life. How I would have loved it if there were a PWC in my community to help me navigate my challenging upbringing; this is what connects me to PWC in a very personal way. While the fullness of our impact cannot properly be quantified, my commitment is that I will champion the work of our team and the voices of our youth every day. We will continue to deeply invest in our DEI work, including more resources to assess and meet the DEI needs of our staff and schools. We will also continue to strategize and develop new ways to advocate for the needs of the students, families, and communities we serve. Each day I am both ignited and inspired by the efforts and dedication that the staff shows to their work in general, and specifically the DEI work. It is our goal to be the lead community-based organization doing meaningful DEI work in New York City schools. As I conclude my 60-day listening tour, I can't wait to lean in and strive together with you to empower our students and the marginalized communities we serve.

**Wesner's Bio:** Wesner Pierre is a positive change-maker, having worked in the social purpose sector for over a dozen years. A former Vice President at CAMBA Inc., and Executive at the Harlem Children's Zone, Wesner is excited to bring his passion, creativity, and innovation to bear at Partnership with Children. As a native New Yorker who grew up in the underserved inner-city community of South Jamaica Queens, Wesner began his successful career by working in and giving back to that very same community.

Wesner started his work in education and youth development as a Beacon Community Center director. While at CAMBA, able to grow the community center program reach from 3,100 youth and families served to over 13,500 served annually. During his time at HCZ, Wesner oversaw all the organization's pipeline programs serving 28,000 youth and families.

Wesner is a former adjunct professor, author of educational texts, a board member of the CUNY School of Professional Studies (SPS) Masters in Youth Studies Program. He is active in the ongoing work of leadership development and is an alumnus of the American Express Leadership Academy, 2015; member of the Forbes Nonprofit Council, 2017; PASEsetter, 2017; American Express Global Alumni of the year nominee, 2019; an Aspen Fellow, 2019; and was published in Forbes twice in January 2020; and Creator of the American Express Global Alumni Platform, LeadersCafe 2020. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the City College and a Master of Arts degree from Queens College of The City University of New York.



### BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

*'A Taste of Power: A Black Woman's Story':* Elaine Brown

*The Black Church:* Henry Louis Gates Jr

*The Talk: Conversations About Race, Love & Truth:* Wade and Virginia Hudson

*Black Buck:* Mateo Askaripour

*We Are Not Here to Be Bystanders  
A Memoir of Love and Resistance:*  
Linda Sarsour

*Dear Justyce:* Nic Stone

*How Black Feminists Are Changing the World from the Tweets to the Streets:* Feminista Jones

*The School of Good Mothers':* Jessamine Chan

# Podcast

Hip Hop Saved My Life with Romesh Ranganathan

Our Body Politic

Just Women's Sports

Louder Than A Riot

Lady Don't Take No

Intersectional Feminism—Desi Style!

## Articles

[-Lauren Halsey Chosen for Met Roof Installation](#)

[-Making the SAT and ACT Optional Is the Soft Bigotry of Low Expectations](#)

[-Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: The First Great Latin American Poet](#)

[-Tearing Down the Barriers for Black Inventors Begins With Honoring Their Historic Breakthroughs](#)

[-Women's Worlds in Qajar Iran](#)

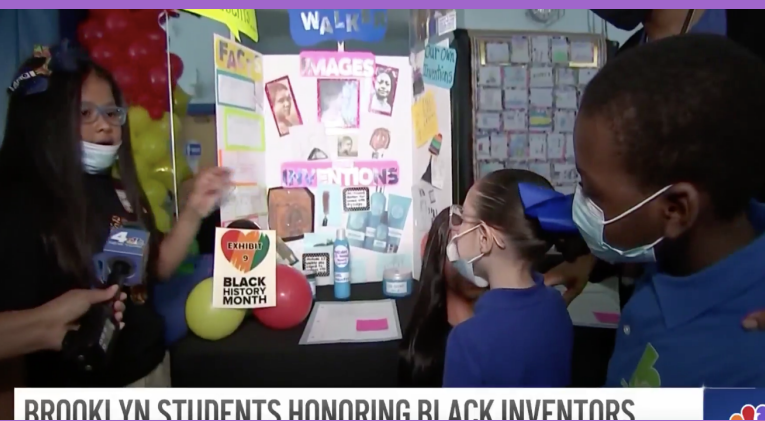
[-Gordon Parks Photography](#)

## Black History Month Share Outs Around PWC

Kevin Powell met with the PWC community as a whole to discuss to empower and discuss ways to uplift the youth community around NYC. During the discussion, Kevin emphasized the importance of a mentor in youth's experience, with the focus on meeting the students where they are. Read one of Kevin's books to learn more about his perspective: *The Education of Kevin Powell: A Boy's Journey into Manhood, Grocery Shopping with My Mother*.



Brooklyn Gardens had students create their own research-based museum to create interactive displays of famous Black inventors. (Click to watch the news story!)



Shaniqua Palmer and her students at New Visions Charter School for the Humanities II created a movie club to celebrate and discuss Black Directors and Creators. The club watched movies such as *Native Son*, *Crooklyn*, and *Do the Right Thing*.

### 40 CHANGE MAKERS: SHAY HUFFMAN

Shay Huffman featured as a change maker for the Anti-Violence Project around NYC.

*Can you describe your experience being a part of AVP's work?*

"Two words: Life-saving. Life-altering.

Being part of AVP provided the opportunity to engage with and learn the stories of individuals I would not have met otherwise. Hearing their struggles and learning their histories strengthened my own resolve. I was always aware that systems and policies operated to deny many communities equitable access and opportunities. At

AVP, I saw the effects and outcomes up close and personal. There, I became a change agent. The knowledge, tools, and confidence gained, relationships built, can only be described in the superlative."



## Additional Women's History Month Resources