

Yale University President's Public Service Fellowship
Summer 2021

Proposal for Fellow working remotely for organization

- Organization: Squash Haven
- Full street address of organization: 78 Ashmun Street, New Haven CT 06511
- Website: www.squashhaven.org
- Name and title of person who will be the Fellow's direct supervisor: Michael Greer – Teacher/Director of Outreach
- Phone number and e-mail address of proposed direct supervisor: (203) 444-0722, mike@squashhaven.org
- Placement dates:

June 1st – June 25th, July 5th- August 6th

- Are placement dates flexible? Are you able to accommodate a Fellow working in a different time zone?

Yes, if they were able to adhere to an EST work day of 9-5. For dates we are unable to be flexible with July and August, but can be flexible beforehand.

- Proposed 37.5 hour per week work schedule:

June 1st-June 25th – 10:30-6 M, T, W, F; 9-4:30 Tuesdays

July 5th-August 6th – 9:00a-4:30p M-F



Squash Haven's High School Girls celebrating earning first place in the 2019-2020 Fairwest Cup, while a few short months later our seniors came together for their only real graduation ceremony under much different circumstances

- Organization description:

Squash Haven provides individually directed academic enrichment, squash instruction, and college preparation and placement to New Haven public school students in fifth grade through college. Through intensive academic and squash sessions at Yale, Squash Haven supports New Haven youth to achieve school success, physical wellness and to forge a path through higher education to engaged citizenship. The Squash Haven team is currently comprised of 100 students attending New Haven public schools in fifth through twelfth grades and 30 students in college. In our first thirteen years, we have helped team members earn 45 national-level squash championships, 22 private-school scholarships, and over \$2.4 million annually in renewable financial aid grants and scholarships. 75% of team members matriculate at colleges and universities in the top 100 and 93% of team members would be the first in their families to graduate from college.



Screenshot from one of Squash Haven's Virtual Team Meetings last summer featuring 2020 PPSF Stephen Carrabino '23 (bottom right hand corner in blue)

- **Write a 1-2 sentence summary of the work that the Fellow would be conducting:**

Love kids? Interesting in teaching? Squash Haven's Summer Teaching Fellow will gain an immersion in teaching and youth development that will leave them with transferable skills and lasting relationships. The Fellow will teach three literacy blocks or academic electives per day and will lead one to two administrative projects. Our Fellow will also play an active role in our small staff and comprehensive programming. Get ready for a summer full of learning and reward!



Squash Haven enjoying some socially distanced outdoor squash and academics, Fall 2020

- Write a more complete description of the specific project you propose and list the duties/outcomes expected of the Fellow.

Squash Haven's primary objective is to prepare New Haven Public School students to attend and succeed in higher education. Our academic program is designed to: support student academic performance at school; enhance student classroom learning; connect interested students to additional academic opportunities and resources outside of Squash Haven; and inspire team members to fully engage themselves in school and to become lifelong learners. This project supports each one of our academic goals and will help us ensure that our students are moving forward academically throughout the summer and beyond.

Squash Haven provides intensive summer academic programming to help combat inequities between high and low income students that can be attributed to summer learning loss. Students will receive differentiated, literacy based academic programming in the summer of 2021. Literacy units follow a common theme, which in 2020 was Antiracism. In addition, students will also enjoy squash programming and additional academic electives that in the summer of 2020 included Wellness, Hip Hop History, and Music History.

The initial weeks of the Fellowship will include program immersion and research. During this time, the Fellow's primary responsibilities will be to 1) get to know and understand the academic program

through daily work with students ages 10-18 in the remote classroom, 2) collaborate with academic staff to learn about curricular development, begin to construct a behavior management plan for the summer, and develop initial lesson plans; and 3) work through a major administrative project ideas that can be completed during the Fellowship that will have lasting impact for Squash Haven. Past projects have included an overhaul of our safety manual, a new staff handbook, and a new video for a grant application.

With the Summer Teaching Fellow's help, we will support summer groups ranging from fifth through twelfth grades. The Fellow will be responsible for developing and implementing several hours per day of classroom work. This time will be spent working with small groups of approximately 15 students from a variety of grade levels. The curriculum will be developed by the Fellow as desired for electives and text selection will for literacy blocks will be made in conjunction with the supervisor based on the summer's theme. The Fellow's curriculum will include either a weekly culminating project or one culminating project at the end of the five week summer session. We welcome the Fellow's energy and unique vision to help make this a summer our students will never forget!

The Fellow will also lead one or more administrative projects. These could include policy documents and review, program enhancements, and other ideas of the Fellow's choosing that align with program needs. Current program needs include website enhancements and social media initiatives. This project will be developed in the initial weeks of the Fellowship in conjunction with the Executive Director and carried out over time.

- List specific skills/experience required for this work:

- ✓ Outstanding speaking, writing and interpersonal skills
- ✓ Adaptability, creativity and ability to take initiative
- ✓ A passion for working with children
- ✓ A belief in our mission and interest in education

- Equipment/resources you will provide to help Fellow conduct work:

- ✓ Thorough onboarding and training in the following: organization procedures, youth development, safety, teaching fundamentals, and best practices for remote learning
- ✓ Daily and weekly support to develop lessons, manage students and families, and more
- ✓ A supportive and committed staff team

- Briefly describe the work that Yale PPSF Fellows have done with your organization in the past and present. If you have not worked with Yale Fellows, describe any work that Yale students have done with your organization.

We have happily hosted four PPSF Fellows – three undergraduates as well as a Divinity School student. We had a terrific experience in Summer 2020 with our first remote PPSF Fellow. Each has been a welcome addition to our staff who has remained connected to our kids and program long after their Fellowship ended and who walked away from their experience having learned powerful new skills and made lasting connections. Each of our PPSF staffers has assumed the role of Teaching Fellow.

Perhaps the strongest connection we have maintained with a Fellow is Matthew Coffin '19. In the summer of 2017, after his first year, Matthew taught one literacy block and two electives; his other major project was the development and filming of a new video for a grant application in addition to helping with data management and our year end surveys. He was a passionate, enthusiastic, and invaluable member of our summer staff, and we were so happy that the experience further strengthened his interest in a career in urban education. Over the years Matthew remained one of Squash Haven's most enthusiastic and committed volunteers. By senior year he had become such a strong teacher that for his final semester at Yale he taught our incoming students. And, in the summer of 2020, home from China due to the pandemic, Matthew volunteered to teach two remote literacy sessions for Squash Haven!



Matthew supporting our students at a squash tournament!

Matthew was responsible for developing and implementing curricula for 5th through 8th graders. He taught two books in the five weeks of summer programming - *Bridge to Terabithia* and *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. Activities surrounding these books included culminating projects, reading quizzes, vocabulary quizzes, in-class worksheets, and nightly homework. Matthew also taught a class that focused on famous speeches throughout American history. This was a hybrid class of history, language arts, and public speaking. Classes included discussions on the historical context of the speeches and their historical significance as well as analysis of the rhetorical techniques and oratory strategies that speakers used. Students wrote their own speeches on similar themes and presented them to the class. Authors/speakers included Susan B. Anthony, Sojourner Truth, Lincoln, Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. DuBois, Langston Hughes, and Martin Luther King Jr.

A reflection from Matthew on his PPSF summer follows below:

“My work over the past summer provided me with the opportunity to intimately discover the inner works of a small educational nonprofit by working on administrative projects and grants. As a teacher, I had not only the freedom to decide what I wanted to teach, but also benefitted from professional guidance from staff to shape my vision into standards-based curricula to implement in my classrooms. But more important than the work I did was the people I worked with. I have never encountered a more welcoming staff, who immediately treated me like their equal and constantly prioritized my experience. But beyond this, the passion which they bring to their work every day and the genuine respect that tints every interaction with students in their programming showed are truly unparalleled. This is an incredible organization filled with incredible people, and I am so lucky to have been able to be a part of it.” - Matthew Coffin '19
