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## **JDCAP 2018 Volunteer of the Year Nomination**

### **Will Kiefer**

Lancaster County Youth Intervention Center  
Years Volunteered: 4 years  
Bench Mark Program

Will Kiefer reached out to me in August of 2014, by email to present his very specific but phenomenal idea. Will, a National Strength and Conditioning Association Certified Personal Trainer, is the leader of an organization here in Lancaster City called the Bench Mark Program. They work with inner city at-risk youth through strength training in a gym setting and offer them a very unique type of therapy through interaction with the program's community mentors.

As a former JPO youth advocate, Will has worked with many students enrolled in the PULSE program (LCYIC's weekend treatment program), and when he would spend his week days working with the students through the Bench Mark Program, PULSE program staff have noticed very positive changes in their lives. For this reason, Will was invited to bring a few members of their team from Bench Mark to YIC's detention center and shelter program to give the kids here some fun interaction in our gym and to introduce them to their organization. The hope is that when our residents someday leave YIC, we hope that they will enroll in the Bench Mark Program for long-term support. The Bench Mark organization provides all of the care and support that a youth advocate would, except they provide that care long-term through a gym facility. Their hope is to join with us at YIC in improving the lives of the young people that come to our facility. They are willing and able to offer those interested the opportunity to learn new and exciting exercises through some volunteer training sessions (we call them workshops) with the Bench Mark Program. They come in one day each week to meet specifically with our male resident units in both detention and shelter. During their time spent here they are connecting with the guys on a personal level but also teaching them valuable life lessons, specifically the importance of exercise and accountability. Will and the Bench Mark program were just recently granted a contract with the Lancaster County Juvenile probation office and look forward to continuing to develop positive and healthy relationships with kids coming through the system with hopes of transitioning them out of the system.

Much more information about Will's organization can be found on their website:

[www.benchmarkprogram.org](http://www.benchmarkprogram.org).

For these reasons we have selected the Bench Mark Program as our Program of the Year recipient and to be nominated for JDCAP's On-going Program of the Year award. The Lancaster County Youth Intervention Center is honored to nominate Will Kiefer as the JDCAP 2018 Individual Volunteer of the Year.



Submitted By:  
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