

**EVAC Movement FAQ’s:**

What is the EVAC Movement?

The EVAC Movement began when 15 youth realized their shared experiences with Jacksonville, Florida’s statistically-extreme violence, racism and incarceration. By sharing these experiences in a safe peer setting, they not only began to heal, but became empowered to create change.

How did the Movement start?

They began by inviting officials to class for discussions. Their first roundtable was with the Sheriff of their local community. In just one year (and with no formal curriculum, training or funding), they went from being labeled “at-risk”, to recognition as at-hope youth leaders.

What type of youth does EVAC hope to support?

At its inception, EVAC included 13 young men. Out of these 13,

* 12 had an immediate family member in jail for a significant amount of time
* 13 had been detained and questioned by police
* 7 had been arrested
* 12 had a close family member murdered
* 9 had been shot at
* 11 had seen someone get shot
* 11 had an absent parent
* 13 had felt pressure to provide for their family

Evac hopes to support these youth to voice their concerns, and create a support space for each other.

What does EVAC mean?

In 9th grade, Ms. Donofrio's first lesson was “Plato’s Allegory of the Cave.” EVAC is “cave” backwards; through sharing their stories, they hope to ‘evacuate’ other youth from the cave of hopelessness.

Who sponsors EVAC?

While EVAC started as a regularly scheduled class in a Duval County public school, they have no official forms of funding or sponsorship. Through adversity, they have found additional community support through organizations like The Ville church in Jacksonville, Florida.

What is the main focus of EVAC?

Sharing stories and supporting youth in the community as they encounter racism, police brutality, and inequitable media representation. They hope to spread a message of juvenile justice, and authentic youth empowerment.

How can EVAC help my community?

EVAC supports communities to redefine youth as the experts on community youth issues, and to insert youth voice into civic decisions and media spaces that previously excluded them. EVAC believes all youth can join what they’ve started and strive to empower others with the knowledge to do so.

EVAC offers the following as core strategies to youth empowerment:

* peer mentoring/accountability
* authentic adult mentoring (skill/field-based)
* partnerships with system leaders and community resources

What has EVAC accomplished?

In its short time in existence, the EVAC movement has accomplished more than they ever thought possible. These triumphs include:

GROUP ADVOCACY ACHIEVEMENTS:

* Presenters, Harvard University Annual Alumni of Color Conference, March 2018
* TedxJacksonville Speaker, “At-Risk or At-Hope: How We View Youth Matters, Oct. 2017
* US Dept. of Justice Youth-Police Roundtable in DC (2 of 14 youth nationwide),, April 2016
* Presenters at Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ) National Youth Summit, Aug. 2016
* *The New York Times* front page article*,* “Youth Court Fines and Fees,” Sept. 2016
* Speakers at US Senate Committee Hearing on Capitol Hill, Sept. 2016
* White House Roundtable Policy Briefing Participants, Sept. 2016
* Contributors to President Obama’s Youth Justice Proclamation, Oct. 2016
* Selected Member of Harvard Youth Advisory Board (1 of 26 Nationwide), Oct. 2016
* Official Meet and Greet with President Obama, Nov. 2016
* National Winners of Campaign for Youth Justice Social Media Challenge, Jan. 2017
* National Winners of Harvard’s KIND School Challenge, June 2017
* Featured panelist of TedxFSCJ: Law Enforcement’s Community Relationships, Sept. 2017
* Presenters at The Ethics Project National Youth Summit, Nov. 2017
* Met Sen. Cory Booker and civil rights legend Rep. John Lewis
* 25+ participations in justice panels/presentations
* 35+ features in the media

GROUP PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENTS:

* Doubled several of their GPAs
* Considered college for the first time
* Taken on their first college tours (Howard, Morehouse, Georgetown)
* Got their first suit and dress shoes
* Fully avoided violence and arrest
* All got jobs & hosted a job fair for their school
* Built their first positive relationships w/officers & justice officials
* Took their first flight and/or first time out of Jacksonville
* Comforted their classmate through the loss of a parent
* Celebrated their classmate as he graduated HS
* Shared with their classmates while they were homeless
* Successfully fought for their classmate to return to juvenile court after direct-filing & 10yr original sentence
* Created a brotherhood in a class where many have lost brothers
* Embraced hope for their future and their Jacksonville community

What if I want to start my own EVAC chapter?

Amy Donofrio, a co-founder and sponsor of EVAC, as laid out the essential components needed to start your own local EVAC movement. She stresses that funding is not necessary, only open discussion and active listening.

Essential Components:

* STORIES- Youth stories (share, build brotherhood, find relevant issue to change)
* DATA- Empower youth with DATA to support their stories (get field specialists)
* SETTING- Bring officials TO the youth (during school day, at school)
* YOUTH-LED DISCUSSIONS- roundtables w/ground rules; fiercely moderate
* IMPACT- give opportunities for tangible youth impact (media, policy, “important person” relationships, roles, contests/awards/trips)

What is the benefit to the school who hosts EVAC?

* Free (embedded into scheduled class ie. leadership, speech/debate, social studies or ELA elective)
* Improves student outcomes (GPA, test scores, and student violence)
* Positive publicity

Do you accept donations?

EVAC does accept donations. They are excited to accept donations in the form of food, supplies, technology equipment, or funding.

To make a monetary donation (tax-deductible):

* Online: [www.TheVille.givingfire.com](http://www.TheVille.givingfire.com) (IMPORTANT: Under “fund” drop down to “EVAC”)
* Check: Make out to “The Ville Church” (“EVAC” in memo line).
  + Mail to 221 N Hogan St. #502, Jacksonville, FL 32202

Can I follow the movement on Social Media?

They are on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter with the handle @EVACMovement

How can I reach out for questions, contact, media relations, speaking engagements, or other opportunities?

For any of the above, please reach out to the following:

* Amy Donofrio, EVAC Co-Founder and Teacher, [amy.e.donofrio@gmail.com](mailto:amy.e.donofrio@gmail.com), 513-702-8041
* Sarah Lux, EVAC Public Relations Specialist, [Mrs.Sarahlux@gmail.com](mailto:Mrs.Sarahlux@gmail.com), 407-383-8602