



Position Title: Senior Editor

Location: New York City

Department: Editorial

About the Role

Youth Communication needs an experienced editor to help teenagers write stories about their experiences that will engage and inspire their peers and inform adults. The editor must have extremely strong editing skills, deep compassion, an ability to see past challenges to focus on young people's strengths, and a strong belief in the power of storytelling to effect change for writer and reader.

The teens at Youth Communication write stories that initially appear in two digital magazines, our general [high school publication](#), and [Represent](#), which is written by youth in foster care. Though all Youth Communication editors work with writers from both magazines, this editor will have principal responsibility for working with and recruiting *Represent* writers.

The role requires strong organization skills, and an independent spirit while also valuing teamwork. The editor will also need to have prior knowledge of the foster care system or be eager to quickly learn about it through reading and talking with people in the system. An ability to build strong, mutually beneficial relationships with partnering foster care related organizations is a must.

About Youth Communication

Founded in 1980, Youth Communication (YC) mobilizes the power of youth voices to improve the lives of young people who are the furthest from opportunity, including youth of color, youth living in poverty, and youth experiencing housing instability, and in foster care. Our writing program helps teen writers—and the peers who read their stories—imagine bigger and brighter futures and strengthen the social and emotional and literacy skills that will help them achieve their goals.

The teens' stories are the foundation of award-winning curricula and professional development that we create and sell to educators, most of whom work in schools, but also including after school staff, probation officers, and foster care staff. In addition, the teens' stories are widely reprinted on websites like Chalkbeat, *The Imprint*, and *The Nation*, and in commercial curricula, anthologies, training manuals, and other places where authentic youth voices strengthen educational offerings.

Responsibilities

General

- **Work one-on-one with 6-8 writers at a time**, most of whom will be in foster care, on personal, memoir-style stories and occasional reported essays and interviews. The editor listens closely to each writer to help identify the story they want to write. Then, the editor helps the teen as they write multiple drafts, often over several weeks or even months, in pursuit of a story that will move and inform YC's audiences. Writers are encouraged to work on a schedule of two days a week for



two hours at a time. But youth in care lead complicated lives; in reality, the schedules are aspirational. The editor must be firm but also flexible. A significant part of the job is building relationships of trust and caring with writers and this takes time. Therefore we are seeking a candidate who is patient and empathic. (Note: This job is unique, and even strong editors are unlikely to have worked with teens in this capacity. We provide several months of training and coaching as the new editor gets up to speed and begins to work with writers.)

- **Stay on top of the foster care beat**
 - **Recruit writers** via contacts from our existing database of foster care supporters and relationships that you will develop through visits to foster care agencies and programs, homeless shelters, advocacy groups, and other organizations.
 - **Maintain an evolving list of potential story ideas related to foster care**, youth development, and current events, and be alert for writers whose interest and experience make them likely candidates to write those stories.
 - **Proactively follow major developments in foster care** related to teens in NYC via publications like *The Imprint*, *ACS Provider News*, and *New York Nonprofit Media*. Maintain contact with a small group of key individuals who can provide insight into foster care issues. When appropriate, find ways to have writers address those issues in their stories.
 - **Collaborate with the marketing team** to build our visibility and impact in the foster care community.

- **Be attentive to the varied needs of individual writers.** We are both a writing program and a youth development program. While our first goal—and each teen’s goal—is to produce a story that will move a reader, the editor provides support and referrals to experts for other issues that inevitably arise in the teens’ lives, such as connections to mental health counselors, scholarship opportunities, and immigration lawyers.

- **Work collaboratively with YC’s other editors** to plan, read and provide feedback on each other’s stories, discuss writer challenges, and plan workshops (see below).

Co-lead an in-person Summer Writing Workshop

In addition to our school-year writing program, the Senior Editor works alongside other editorial colleagues to run a full-time, six-week summer writing workshop for 12-15 teens.

- Select a workshop theme, along with readings, speakers, and field trips that help engage the teen writers and deepen their understanding of the theme.
- Create and facilitate lessons related to the workshop theme (building on existing lessons).
- Assist in day-to-day workshop management such as reading and winnowing applications, scheduling, booking guests and trips, etc.



- Work with up to 5 writers to produce one or two stories each by the end of the workshop.

Manage Our Annual Awards for Youth in Foster Care Writing Contest

- We provide \$1,000 scholarships to 10 winners and honor them and their family and friends at a small annual event in May. Responsibilities include working with the marketing team to solicit entrants, selecting the winners from among 50 entrants, and editing their essays for the awards journal.

Other Ongoing Editorial Tasks

- Post completed stories on the website and other possible related tasks online to be determined.
- Perform other editorial duties from time to time, such as maintaining an organizational style sheet, making updates to the editor's manual, and proofreading YC documents and publications.
- Alert our media partners to new stories they may want to reprint.

Required Qualifications

- Understanding of the strengths and challenges of the communities of color where 80% of our writers live and go to school.
- Proficiency in Google Docs and Meet, Microsoft Word and Teams; learn to use the editorial modules of our Salesforce database, and WordPress for posting stories.
- Bachelor's degree in English, journalism, or another applicable field. Master's degree in journalism is a plus.
- 5+ years of writing and editing experience, with clips.
- Passion for YC's mission and purpose (see YouthComm.org for more information).
- Spanish speaking skills are a plus.

Salary

- \$60,000-\$70,000, based on experience.

Benefits

- Youth Communication offers a generous health care plan (paid 85% by the organization); three weeks of paid vacation in the first year, 11 paid holidays, and other benefits. The office operates on a hybrid model with a mix of work-from-home/in-person.

To apply: Send a cover letter, resume, and two relevant clips to careers@youthcomm.org.
Tips for the cover letter: Please don't just recap your resume. Instead, based on a close reading of our website, and especially the Represent vertical, show us how your experience and interest fit our mission and goals. And, if there are areas where you might want more training and support, mention those too. Thank you.



**Note: All employees of Youth Communication must show proof of vaccination.
Deadline: January 12, 2023, or until filled.**