



African American Youth Leadership Coalition (AAYLC) Strategic Plan 2026–2030

Advancing Leadership, Advocacy & Cultural Excellence

Prepared for:

African American Youth Leadership Coalition

Strategic Planning Lead & Facilitator:

Christopher Sherrod

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This Strategic Plan was reviewed and adopted by the African American Youth Leadership Coalition Board of Directors in January 2026.

The Board commits to annual review, progress tracking, and alignment of governance and financial oversight with the priorities outlined in this plan.

Board Chair: _____

Date: _____

Executive Director: _____

Date: _____

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Executive Overview

The African American Youth Leadership Coalition (AAYLC) is dedicated to fostering leadership development, educational excellence, and community engagement among African American youth. This Strategic Plan for 2026–2030 outlines the organization’s goals, priorities, and strategies for advancing this mission and strengthening long-term impact. Rooted in AAYLC’s core values of growth, community, cultural identity, integrity, resilience, and love and compassion, this plan serves as a roadmap for empowering the next generation of leaders.

Our vision is a future where African American youth are equipped to lead, excel, and transform their communities. We aim to achieve this through the following strategic priorities:

- **Increase Visibility and Regional Leadership:** Elevating youth voices through culturally relevant storytelling, youth-led media, community events, advocacy engagement, and strategic partnerships to position AAYLC as a trusted regional leader.
- **Strengthening Organizational Excellence and Leadership Systems:** Building strong governance, staffing, onboarding, succession planning, and leadership development systems to support sustainable growth and accountability.
- **Enhance and Expand Culturally Rooted Programs:** Deepening mentorship, intergenerational programming, cultural education, and youth leadership opportunities through responsive, community-centered program design.
- **Diversify and Stabilize Funding for Long-Term Sustainability:** Strengthening financial stability through diversified fundraising, grant partnerships, recurring donors, reserve-building, and transparent financial practices.

This strategic plan is designed to guide AAYLC’s growth, decision-making, and resource alignment over the next five years. Through intentional leadership development, operational strengthening, community-centered programming, and sustainable funding practices, AAYLC will continue to expand opportunity, amplify youth voice, and create lasting impact for African American youth and families.

Our Foundation

Mission

AAYLC creates a community environment that inspires and promotes leadership, advocacy, and excellence through programs and mentorship.

Vision

The AAYLC empowers confident, bold, and authentic leaders with high self-esteem and integrity to achieve their full potential.

Core Values

- Growth
- Community
- Cultural Identity
- Love and Compassion
- Integrity
- Pride
- Resiliency
- Education

Strategic Context & Case for Change (2026–2030)

External Environment

AAYLC operates within a rapidly evolving regional and national landscape. Black youth and families continue to face systemic barriers in education, economic mobility, health equity, and representation. At the same time, funding competition has intensified, political polarization has increased scrutiny of equity-centered work, and nonprofit organizations are experiencing workforce and capacity constraints.

These dynamics create both urgency and opportunity. Organizations that are culturally grounded, data-informed, and strategically positioned will lead the next phase of regional youth development and advocacy.

Community Needs

Black youth in the region continue to face disparities in academic achievement, mentorship access, cultural affirmation, and leadership opportunity. Families seek trusted institutions that provide culturally relevant programming, intergenerational connection, and pathways toward

long-term success. There is a clear need for structured mentorship, youth voice amplification, and community-centered leadership pipelines.

Organizational Readiness

AAYLC has built strong community trust, volunteer commitment, and mission clarity. The organization now stands at a growth inflection point. To sustain and expand its impact, AAYLC must invest in operational infrastructure, leadership development, funding diversification, and long-term governance systems.

Strategic Imperative

Without a structured multi-year roadmap, AAYLC risks overextension, funding instability, and leadership fatigue. This strategic plan ensures that growth is intentional, sustainable, and aligned with community priorities. It positions AAYLC not only to serve youth effectively but to emerge as a regional leader in culturally rooted youth development and advocacy.

Strategic Risks & Organizational Resilience

The following risks have been identified to ensure proactive planning and sustainable growth:

Risk Area	Potential Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation Strategy
Funding Gaps	Program instability or staffing delays	High	Diversify revenue streams; build 3-month operating reserve; hire Resource Development staff
Staff & Volunteer Burnout	Turnover and program disruption	Medium	Phased growth plan; leadership pipeline; regular recognition and training
Political & Policy Climate	Reduced support for equity-centered initiatives	Medium-High	Strengthening coalition partnerships; increase advocacy presence; diversifying funding sources
Leadership Transition	Organizational instability	Medium	Succession planning framework: Emerging Leaders pipeline; documented onboarding toolkits
Technology & Data Gaps	Inefficient tracking and reporting	Low-Medium	Implemented updated CRM and data tracking systems; quarterly dashboard review

By proactively identifying and addressing these risks, AAYLC strengthens its capacity to remain resilient, responsive, and mission-focused throughout the 2026–2030 planning horizon.

Five-Year Strategic Framework

Priority 1: Increase Visibility

AAYLC wants to be known For: Culturally relevant programming that supports Black youth and families.

Goal: Build a strong and recognizable public presence through a dynamic website, social media, and storytelling platform (with youth/staff/board spotlights).

- **By 6/30/2026:** Launch refreshed website with youth/staff/board spotlight feature.
- **By 12/31/2026:** Achieve 500 total social media followers.
 - **Metrics:** Maintain 5% engagement rate (likes, shares, comments); 2 youth-led posts per month.
- **By 12/31/2026:** Develop and implement a social media/media tracking system.
- **By 12/31/2026:** Complete comprehensive marketing plan.

Goal: Strengthen partnerships and advocacy presence.

- **By 12/31/2026:** Establish 5 new partnerships annually.
 - **Metrics:** At least 2 joint events or projects per year with partners.
- **By 12/31/2026:** Appoint liaison to sit on existing advocacy organizations (NAACP, Linn Benton Health Equity Alliance, etc.).
 - **Metrics:** Liaison reports shared twice annually with the board.
- **By 12/31/2028:** Host 6 community events and 1 fundraiser annually.
 - **Metrics:** Average 100 participants per event; event satisfaction surveys ≥80% positive.
- **By 12/31/2028:** Solidify liaison program with at least 3 advocacy groups.
- **By 12/31/2030:** Launch annual “AAYLC Conference” drawing at least 600 participants.

Goal: Host community events and create signature experiences, such as an annual AAYLC Conference, that highlight youth voices and impact.

- **By 12/31/2026:** Pilot 2 youth-led community events.
 - **Metrics:** Minimum 50 participants each; collect baseline youth impact surveys.

- **By 12/31/2030:** Annual AAYLC Conference established with 600+ participants and youth leadership in planning.

Goal: Develop consistent partnerships with schools, cultural institutions, and community organizations.

- **By 12/31/2026:** Formalize partnerships with 3 schools and 2 community organizations.
 - **Metrics:** 2 joint programs piloted through these partnerships.
- **By 12/31/2028:** Expand to 5+ schools and 5+ cultural/community institutions.
- **By 12/31/2030:** Maintain 10+ partnerships providing 25% of annual program delivery.

Goal: Create youth-led media and digital storytelling opportunities to elevate voices from the next generation.

- **By 12/31/2026:** Train 5 youth in digital storytelling and launch 1 youth-led video campaign.
 - **Metrics:** At least 1,000 views across platforms.
- **By 12/31/2028:** Ongoing youth media team produces quarterly content.
- **By 12/31/2030:** Youth media team recognized regionally; at least 4 campaigns annually with average reach of 5,000 views.

Goal: Position AAYLC as a regional leader in culturally relevant youth development and advocacy.

- **By 12/31/2026:** AAYLC leadership participates in 2 regional advocacy forums.
- **By 12/31/2028:** Recognized as partner or collaborator in at least 5 regional initiatives.
 - **Metrics:** 3 references to AAYLC in partner publications or local media annually.
- **By 12/31/2030:** AAYLC identified by partners as a top regional leader in annual stakeholder survey (≥90% agreement).

Priority 2: Operational Excellence

AAYLC wants to be known For: Integrity guiding leadership and accountability.

Goal: Create organizational staff positions with long-term growth opportunities (programmatic and administrative).

- **By 12/31/2026:** Assess staffing needs and draft growth plan.
 - **Metrics:** Identify 2–3 priority roles; budget scenarios prepared.

- **By 12/31/2028:** Add at least 1 new programmatic and 1 administrative position.
 - **Metrics:** Staff-to-program ratio improves by 20%; 85% staff retention.
- **By 12/31/2030:** Expand to full staffing model with 25% increase in FTEs since 2026 baseline.

Goal: Establish clear board and staff roles, supported by onboarding and governance toolkits.

- **By 12/31/2026:** Develop and distribute:
 - Board Onboarding Toolkit (roles, governance, equity framework).
 - Staff Onboarding Toolkit (policies, job responsibilities, culture guide).
 - Youth Council Toolkit (leadership expectations, meeting guide, mentorship pathways).
 - **Metrics:** 100% of new board, staff, and youth complete onboarding within 30 days.
- **By 12/31/2028:** Toolkits reviewed and updated annually; delivered digitally and in print.
 - **Metrics:** 90% of new members report confidence in roles after boarding.
- **By 12/31/2030:** Toolkits integrated into leadership succession process and cited as best practice by partners.

Goal: Provide regular board and leadership training in ethics, equity, finance, and governance best practices.

- **By 12/31/2026:** Conduct first board/staff retreat with self-assessment survey.
 - **Metrics:** 90% participation; baseline governance score established.
- **By 12/31/2028:** Deliver annual training in at least 3 core areas (ethics, equity, finance).
 - **Metrics:** Year-over-year improvement in self-assessment scores by 10%.
- **By 12/31/2030:** Achieve 100% participation in retreat/training; governance recognized regionally as model practice.

Goal: Develop and adopt a comprehensive Policies & Procedures Manual to guide operations and growth.

- **By 12/31/2026:** Complete first edition of manual.
 - **Metrics:** Adopted formally by board; referenced in 100% of HR and program onboarding.

- **By 12/31/2028:** Annual updates integrated into board approval process.
- **By 12/31/2030:** Manual externally reviewed; compliance confirmed with nonprofit standards.

Goal: Build and implement succession plans for board leadership, executive staff, and key program roles.

- **By 12/31/2026:** Draft succession framework for board and executive roles.
 - **Metrics:** 3 critical positions identified with interim coverage plans.
- **By 12/31/2028:** Succession plans finalized and tested through mock transitions.
 - **Metrics:** At least 2 leadership transitions piloted smoothly.
- **By 12/31/2030:** 100% of leadership roles have been named successors or development pathways.

Goal: Launch an Emerging Leaders pipeline for youth, alumni, and community members to transition into leadership roles.

- **By 12/31/2026:** Identify and recruit 10 youth/alumni/community prospects for pipeline.
 - **Metrics:** ≥50% are alumni or underrepresented groups.
- **By 12/31/2028:** Launch program with 10+ participants annually.
 - **Metrics:** 70% report increased leadership readiness.
- **By 12/31/2030:** At least 25% of board/committee roles filled by Emerging Leaders or alumni.

Goal: Foster a culture of transparency and recognition where contributions are celebrated and accountability is embedded.

- **By 12/31/2026:** Publish first annual “State of AAYLC” organizational/financial report.
 - **Metrics:** Distributed to 100% of donors/partners; ≥75% stakeholder trust rating.
- **By 12/31/2028:** Recognition of staff, board, and youth contributions embedded in quarterly board meetings.
 - **Metrics:** 90% of members report feeling valued in surveys.
- **By 12/31/2030:** AAYLC recognized regionally for transparency; cited in ≥3 external reports or awards.

Priority 3: Strengthen & Enhance Programs

AAYLC wants to be known For: Black-centered legacy programs that honor the past while preparing youth for the future.

Goal: Establish a Youth Council with representation on the board to ensure youth voices shape decision-making.

- **By 6/30/2026:** Recruit 15 Youth Council members, with 2–3 serving on the board.
 - **Metrics:** Youth Council Toolkit created; 100% of members boarded with toolkit.
- **By 12/31/2028:** Youth Council co-leads at least 1 program annually and submits 2 recommendations to the board each year.
 - **Metrics:** 80% of recommendations acted upon by board.
- **By 12/31/2030:** Youth Council leads a signature initiative engaging 200+ youth annually.

Goal: Expand mentorship opportunities by connecting youth with Black professionals, alumni, and community leaders.

- **By 12/31/2026:** Maintain 20 active mentors; recruit 5 additional employees annually.
 - **Metrics:** Each mentor supports at least 2 youths; 80% mentee satisfaction in surveys.
- **By 12/31/2028:** Grow to 35+ active mentors; implement annual mentor/mentee evaluation system.
- **By 12/31/2030:** Expand to 50+ mentors with regional alumni mentorship network established.

Goal: Create intergenerational programs linking youth with elders and cultural traditions.

- **By 12/31/2026:** Design framework for intergenerational programming.
 - **Metrics:** Launch 1 pilot program with at least 25 youth and 10 elders.
- **By 12/31/2028:** Operate 2 intergenerational programs with sustainable funding sources.
 - **Metrics:** Average annual participation of 75+.
- **By 12/31/2030:** Maintain 2 financially stable intergenerational programs embedded in AAYLC's core offerings.

Goal: Develop cultural workshops and learning opportunities rooted in Black history, art, food, and storytelling.

- **By 12/31/2026:** Maintain 3 existing workshops through Proud Responsible Individuals Dedicated to Excellence and Success (PRIDES) and mentorship programs.
 - **Metrics:** 100+ youth participants annually; 80% satisfaction.
- **By 12/31/2028:** Expand to 6 workshops by adding 3 new offerings.
 - **Metrics:** Partner with 5 cultural institutions to co-facilitate programs.
- **By 12/31/2030:** Workshops are institutionalized with at least 200 participants annually and regional recognition.

Goal: Partner with colleges, museums, and cultural institutions to deepen programming.

- **By 12/31/2026:** Formalize partnerships with 3 institutions.
 - **Metrics:** 2 collaborative events/programs launched.
- **By 12/31/2028:** Expand to 5 total partnerships.
- **By 12/31/2030:** Maintain 10+ active partnerships contributing to 25% of program delivery.

Goal: Build an alumni network and develop a Legacy Program Toolkit to sustain long-term impact and replication.

- **By 12/31/2026:** Launch alumni directory and Legacy Toolkit.
 - **Metrics:** 50 alumni engaged in network.
- **By 12/31/2028:** Alumni networks grow to 100+ members with annual alumni gatherings.
- **By 12/31/2030:** Alumni lead 20% of mentorship and fundraising activities; Toolkit replicated in at least 1 other community.

Priority 4: Diversify & Stabilize Funding

AAYLC wants to be known For: Financial transparency and sustainability with public and private audiences.

Goal: Establish a signature fundraising event that highlights Black culture, arts, and talent.

- **By 12/31/2026:** Host first signature fundraising event.
 - **Metrics:** Raise at least \$10,000; 100+ attendees; 80% satisfaction from participant surveys.
- **By 12/31/2028:** Expand to 2 signature fundraising events annually.

- **Metrics:** Combined fundraising revenue \geq \$50,000.
- **By 12/31/2030:** Host 3 annual signature events raising \geq \$100,000 collectively.

Goal: Establish a Resource Development position (Year 3).

- **By 12/31/2028:** Hire full-time staff dedicated to fundraising, donor relations, and grant management.
 - **Metrics:** Position funded through diversified revenue; role responsible for at least \$200,000 raised annually.
- **By 12/31/2030:** Resource Development staff leads a team or committee responsible for sustaining growth targets.

Goal: Strengthen grant-seeking capacity and secure long-term partnerships with foundations and institutions.

- **By 12/31/2026:** Submit proposals to Oregon Community Foundation, Meyer, Collins, United Way, Roundhouse Foundation, and Black United Fund.
 - **Metrics:** Minimum of 5 proposals submitted; \geq 2 new relationships established.
- **By 12/31/2028:** Secure at least 2 major grants annually totaling \geq \$200,000.
 - **Metrics:** Grants cover \geq 50% of staff and program expenses.
- **By 12/31/2030:** Sustain \geq 5 multi-year institutional partnerships.

Goal: Develop recurring donor programs and cultivate support from individuals, Black-owned businesses, and corporations.

- **By 12/31/2026:** Launch recurring donor program and “Friends of AAYLC” circle.
 - **Metrics:** Secure 50 recurring donors in Year 1.
- **By 12/31/2028:** Increase donor base by 5% annually; host first “State of AAYLC” donor event.
 - **Metrics:** Donor retention \geq 80%.
- **By 12/31/2030:** Grow to 200 recurring donors; 25% of donations from Black-owned businesses and corporations.

Goal: Achieve sustainable financial growth supported by diversified revenue streams and operating reserves.

- **By 12/31/2026:** Establish baseline operating reserve.

- **Metrics:** Reserve = 1 month of operating expenses.
- **By 12/31/2028:** Grow operating reserves to cover 2 months of expenses.
- **By 12/31/2030:** Achieve 25% increase in overall revenue compared to 2026 baseline; reserves cover 3 months of operations.

Goal: Ensure transparency and accountability by sharing financial reports and outcomes publicly.

- **By 12/31/2026:** Publish first audited annual financial report on website and distribute to donors.
 - **Metrics:** 100% completion of audit on time; 75% of donors report confidence in financial transparency.
- **By 12/31/2028:** Host annual donor briefing to share financial and program impact.
- **By 12/31/2030:** Launch online financial dashboard with real-time reporting; external audit affirms best-in-class practices.

Communication and Brand Strategy

Enhancing Visibility, Engagement, and Advocacy through Storytelling and Connection

Communications Overview

The AAYLC Communication Plan (2026–2030) strengthens visibility, advocacy, and community trust through clear, consistent, and culturally resonant communication. Aligned with AAYLC’s mission to inspire leadership, advocacy, and excellence among Black youth, this plan integrates storytelling, digital engagement, and partnership outreach to ensure that AAYLC’s impact reaches a broader audience and deepens community connection.

Key Goals

- Elevate AAYLC’s visibility and public recognition.
- Build strong community and media partnerships.
- Engage youth, alumni, donors, and partners through inspiring storytelling.
- Ensure transparency and accountability through regular updates and reports.
- Celebrate leadership, culture, and community through consistent branding.

Key Audiences

Internal Stakeholders: Board members, staff, youth council, alumni, mentors, and volunteers.

External Stakeholders: Parents and families, K-12 schools, colleges and universities, donors, funders, community-based organizations, businesses, advocacy groups, media, and the public.

Core Communication Objectives

1. **Visibility:** Position AAYLC as a regional leader in Black youth development and advocacy.
2. **Engagement:** Strengthen relationships with youth, families, and community partners through consistent, inclusive messaging.
3. **Advocacy:** Amplify youth and community voices on issues of equity, leadership, and cultural identity.
4. **Transparency:** Regularly share financial, operational, and programmatic outcomes to build trust and accountability.
5. **Celebration:** Honor achievements and legacy through cultural storytelling and recognition.

Communication Channels & Strategies

Channel	Purpose	Frequency	Key Actions
Website	Central hub for updates, youth spotlights, and impact storytelling	Ongoing	Launch refreshed website by June 2026; Post quarterly updates with milestones and youth stories; Add “AAYLC Voices” media page for youth-led content; event and volunteer opportunity promotion.
Social media (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, TikTok, others)	Community engagement, advocacy, event promotion	3–5 posts/week (reels, stories, regular post)	Share youth/mentor spotlights, event recaps, and advocacy content; Feature 2 youth-led posts monthly; event and volunteer opportunity promotion. Use hashtags like #AAYLCLeads #BlackYouthRise #CulturalLegacy

Email Newsletters	Updates for families, donors, and partners	Quarterly	Highlight program outcomes, events, and youth stories; Include volunteer and donor calls-to-action; Provide links to reports.
Press Releases & Media Outreach	Increase visibility through local and regional media	Quarterly & as needed	Announce events, partnerships, and milestones; Feature AAYLC Day, scholarships, and leadership initiatives
Community Events	Engage youth, families, and partners through connection	Bi-annually	Promote AAYLC Day and mentorship celebrations; Partner with cultural institutions and local businesses
Annual Reports & Transparency Briefings	Build accountability and donor confidence	Annually Financial and Impact report done by August/September)	Publish “State of AAYLC” report; Share impact metrics, financial summaries, and success stories
Board, Youth, & Volunteer Meetings	Strengthen internal alignment and communication	Monthly	Provide updates on strategic goals; Gather feedback and success stories for communications
Stakeholder Surveys & Feedback Loops	Evaluate message reach and effectiveness	Annually- Done by May or June	Measure awareness, trust, and satisfaction; Adjust strategies based on results

Implementation and Accountability Framework

Messaging Framework

Central Message: *AAYLC empowers Black youth to lead, achieve, and create change through mentorship, advocacy, and community.*

Key Themes:

- Leadership through legacy
- Black excellence and pride
- Youth voice and empowerment
- Integrity and transparency
- Intergenerational connection
- Cultural celebration and resilience

Implementation Timeline

Q1 (Jan–Mar 2026)

- Launch refreshed website and new visual identity
- Publish AAYLC’s strategic plan and announcement press release (January 2026)
- Send first stakeholder newsletter

Q2 (Apr–Jun 2026)

- Establish media tracking and content calendar
- Conduct first community awareness survey
- Launch digital youth storytelling campaign
- Host Annual Youth Leadership Conference

Q3 (Jul–Sep 2026)

- Publish mid-year report with impact highlights
- Annual Black Family Barbecue event
- Publish “State of AAYLC” annual report (edit name of it however you like)

Q4 (Oct–Dec 2026)

- Execute year-end donor and alumni engagement campaign
- Host board/staff/community reflection celebration
- Annual AAYLC Day pilot event

Ongoing (2027–2030)

- Maintain quarterly newsletters, annual reports, and stakeholder engagement
- Expand media features and partnerships annually
- Integrate youth media outputs into all communication platforms

Metrics & Evaluation

Focus Area	Target by 2028	Target by 2030
Brand Recognition	50% increase in public awareness (survey-based)	AAYLC identified as a top regional leader (90% stakeholder agreement)
Social Media Engagement	5% engagement rate, 2 youth-led posts/month	10% engagement rate; 4 annual youth media campaigns
Donor & Partner Growth	5% annual increase in donor retention for black owned business	25% of donations from Black-owned businesses
Media Coverage	4 media features per year	8+ regional or statewide media features annually
Transparency & Trust	75% stakeholder trust rating	≥90% donor and partner confidence in surveys

Roles & Responsibilities

Role	Primary Duties
Executive Director / Board Chair	Approve communication priorities, serve as media spokesperson
Communications Lead or Contractor	Manage digital platforms, oversee storytelling and branding
Youth Media Team	Create content for social media and websites; produce video campaigns
Development Committee	Coordinate fundraising communications, donor recognition
Partnership & Advocacy Liaison	Lead press engagement, partnership features, and advocacy communication

Brand Tone & Voice

- **Authentic & Empowering:** Reflects the real stories and aspirations of Black youth.
- **Culturally Rooted:** Honors Black history, identity, and legacy.
- **Inclusive & Collaborative:** Invites families, partners, and allies to engage.
- **Transparent & Trustworthy:** Shares successes and challenges openly.

Conclusion

This communication plan positions AAYLC to tell its story boldly and strategically—through the voices of youth, families, and communities it serves. By mirroring the AAYLC’s structure of visibility, transparency, and engagement while emphasizing cultural pride and leadership, AAYLC can expand its influence, sustain its growth, and elevate the next generation of leaders.