

# WILLIAM EVANS

Neighborhood Benches, Inc.

Funded with support from the Jerome L. Greene Foundation

2019 Black Male Achievement Fellow



## BIG BOLD IDEA

Break the cycle of youth violence and incarceration of black boys and men by creating leadership and educational models for them to change behaviors, build community, and organize for positive change.

## ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Neighborhood Benches educates people on leadership and good practices that break cycles of youth violence and incarceration, making it easier to focus on leadership roles, educational studies, and next steps. Neighborhood Benches achieves this mission by engaging some of the hardest-to-reach people from underrepresented communities, and by implementing initiatives that teach young people to act as leaders for finding solutions and implementing them. The process and solutions are roadmaps for directly impacted people to model changed behaviors and for building community with both resident leaders and the next generation of leaders organizing for change.

## PERSONAL BIO

William Evans is the founder and president of Neighborhood Benches, an organization increasing the presence of leadership to focus on youth violence and incarceration. Prior to Neighborhood Benches, William worked at the Fortune Society as an "alternative to incarceration counselor" and community liaison and then joined the I-CAN (Individualized Corrections Achievement Network) Discharge Planners on Rikers Island. William believed that by returning to his community with a specific plan to recruit individuals and helping them understand the need for change, the role they could play in inspiring others and implementing solutions, great changes would come. Knowing these extraordinary individuals had a tremendous impact on how youth live today, on how their society functions, and on what values young people hold, William resigned. They were the leaders who "made a difference," and he wanted to recruit them to create long-lasting changes that would improve the quality of life and decrease rates of violence and incarceration. William figured a good strategy would be an effective alignment between benches in the courts and benches in the "hood," focusing on systematic changes. William is a 2019 Echoing Green Fellow.

### Issue area

Education

### Organization/Fellow Location

Bronx, United States

### Impact Location

North America

United States

### Organization Structure

Nonprofit

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