



News from the Office of **ADAM J. BELLO** **MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE**

For Immediate Release
September 16, 2020

MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE ADAM BELLO ANNOUNCES NEW DIRECTOR, NEW VISION FOR YOUTH BUREAU

ROCHESTER, NY -- Monroe County Executive Adam Bello today announced that Brent Whitfield has been named the new Director of the Rochester-Monroe County Youth Bureau. Whitfield's appointment is part of the County Executive's commitment to overhauling youth services and ensuring that the county supports young people, especially those in vulnerable populations.

"Brent brings a unique set of experiences to this position, and I look forward to his leadership within the Youth Bureau," said Bello. "Now, maybe more than ever, it's imperative that the county mobilize its resources to help create a supportive, caring environment that will empower and uplift the young people of Monroe County. Brent has fresh ideas, a new vision and a tremendous energy I know will be a benefit to our community."

Whitfield has served as an Empire State Fellow in the state Office of Children and Family Services since 2018. As a member of the state's LGBTQ+ Interagency Task Force, Whitfield also worked to educate state agencies about best practices to serve and work with LGBTQ+ populations.

"I am so excited for the opportunity to advocate for Monroe County's young people," Whitfield said. "I will be making decisions with a trauma-informed, family-based lens guiding me, and am determined to reach the kids who truly need our help the most. I share County Executive Bello's vision for the future of the Youth Bureau – one that is focused on helping all of our young people flourish."

Whitfield said the revamped Youth Bureau will coordinate and promote innovative strategies to advance youth development, addressing not only the diverse needs of youth and their families in the Monroe County area, but also services that will help close economic and opportunity gaps within the county's most vulnerable populations.

"The Youth and our community will have an active voice, they will be the cornerstone of all the work we do around youth development in Monroe County," he said. "Our goal is to actively

engage our young people and support a holistic vision that will lead to informed systems of necessary supports and resources our youth need to reach their full potential. We will continue to seek to provide every opportunity for every youth to become healthy, productive adults.”

Under Whitfield’s leadership, the vision of the Monroe County Youth Bureau will include:

- All youth, 21 years old or younger, will have the opportunity to grow up in a healthy, substance abuse free environment. We will provide the supports necessary for Youth to become productive members of society in a crime-free environment. They will be the voice on how we support the achievement of high academic success and physical/mental wellbeing. We will ensure a culturally sound plan forward by taking a deliberate approach to interacting with our youth.
- We will have a youth bureau where every youth’s opinion on how to meet their educational needs matter. We will work to ensure our youth obtain the skills necessary to be a member in the 21st century workforce.
- Assessed services for youth reflect that particular youth’s needs.
- Decisions made mirror the individual assessments so that services designed by and for our youth lead to happy, healthy members of our community.
- The youth bureau will have a keen focus on equity in funding ensuring equal representation of the populations served.
- Full community participation, as well as youth participation will help to ensure quality programming.
- The safety of youth is the utmost concern of the Bureau, we will work with our Youth and our community so that our youth have safe, supervised places they can go to in times of need.
- The youth bureau will work with our community agencies to ensure we have the diversity needed to provide the most comprehensive services to youth.

-30-

Media inquiries:

Steve Barz, Acting Director of Communications

SteveBarz@MonroeCounty.gov

(585) 410-0935

Meaghan McDermott, Deputy Director of Communications

MeaghanMcDermott@monroecounty.gov

(585) 469-4365