Above top: Matthew Coffin, PPSF ’17 and Yale ’19, enjoys time with his students at the courts during his PPSF summer. Matthew became our most loyal and committed volunteer and his PPSF summer helped shape his interest in a career in urban education. Above bottom (on the left playing dodgeball), Peter Levenstrong, PPSF ‘19 and DIV ’20 used the summer to develop his interest in teaching, leading a literacy blocks and two world religions electives. He continues to volunteer in our classrooms this fall.

● Organization: Squash Haven

● Full street address of organization: 78 Ashmun Street, New Haven CT, 06511

● Website: www.squashhaven.org

● Name and title of person who will be the Fellow’s direct supervisor (the supervisor must be available to supervise Fellow on a daily basis): Christi Boscarino, Program Director
• Phone number and e-mail address of proposed direct supervisor: 203-974-3718, christi@squashhaven.org

• Placement dates: Tuesday, May 26th – Friday, June 26th and Monday, July 6th – Friday, August 7th

• Are placement dates flexible? If so, please describe: Within reason between May 26th and June July 3rd but from July 6th on, dates are not flexible

• Proposed work schedule (placements should be equivalent to full-time and not more than 37.5 hours/week): Weeks from May 26th – June 26th, 10:30 am – 6 pm, Weeks of July 6th – August 7th, 9 am – 4:30 pm

• Organization description (mission statement, population served. 150 words or less.):

Squash Haven empowers New Haven youth to achieve and maintain school success and physical wellness, and to forge a path through higher education to engaged citizenship. 420 hours annually of academic and athletic sessions at Yale prepare team members, who predominantly come from low income families and would be the first generation college students, to thrive in college and beyond. The Squash Haven team is currently comprised of 110 students attending New Haven public schools in fifth through twelfth grades and 40 students in college with whom we work actively. In our first twelve years, we have helped team members earn 46 national-level squash championships, 21 private-school scholarships, and over $2.1 million annually in renewable financial aid grants and scholarships. 78% of team members have matriculated at colleges ranked in the top 60 in the country, including Bowdoin, Brown, Georgetown, Middlebury, and Yale.

• Please write a 1-2 sentence summary of the work that the Fellow would be conducting (50 words or less. This will be used as your agency’s project description summary on the PPSF website, so please be succinct):

Our Yale Summer Teaching Fellow will gain an immersion in teaching for a small education focused non-profit. The Fellow will teach three to four literacy blocks or academic elective sessions per day and will be trained and supported by an outstanding academic staff that includes two Teach for America alumni. Our Fellow will also play an active role in our small staff and comprehensive programming including Fun Summer Fridays and other team based events.

• Please write a complete description of the specific project you propose and list the duties/outcomes expected of the Fellow. (Suggested length: one to two pages.)
Squash Haven’s primary objective is to prepare New Haven Public School students to attend and succeed in higher education.

Squash Haven provides intensive summer academic programming to help combat the achievement gap between high and low income students that can be attributed to summer learning loss. Students receive 2.5 hours daily of differentiated, literacy based academic programming for 5 weeks. Literacy units follow a common theme, which in 2019 was empowerment.

The first three weeks of the Fellowship will encompass program immersion and research. During this time, the Fellow’s primary responsibilities will be to 1) get to know and understand the academic program through daily work with students ages 10-18 in the classroom, 2) collaborate with academic staff to learn about curricular development, begin to construct a behavior management plan for the summer, and develop initial lesson plans; and 3) work through a major administrative project ideas that can be completed during the Fellowship that will have lasting impact for Squash Haven. Past projects have included an overhaul of our safety manual, a new staff handbook, and a new video for a grant application.

With the Summer Teaching Fellow’s help, we will support 2.5 hours per student per day in groups ranging from fifth through twelfth grades. The Fellow will be responsible for developing and implementing approximately three to four hours per day of classroom work. This time will be spent working with small groups of 10-12 students from a variety of grade levels. The curriculum will be developed by the Fellow as desired. Examples might include: Global Warming, Introduction to Journalism, or The History of New Haven. The Fellow’s curriculum will include either a weekly culminating project or one culminating project at the end of the five week summer session. Culminating projects for the above classes might include a poster presentation on aspects of global warming, a newspaper, or a city-wide scavenger hunt. We are excited for the Fellow’s energy and particular vision to help make this a summer our students will never forget!

The Fellow will also lead several administrative projects. These could include policy documents and review, program enhancements, and other ideas of the Fellow’s choosing that align with program needs. These will be developed in the initial weeks of the Fellowship and carried out over time.

The Squash Haven academic program is designed to: support student academic performance at school; enhance student classroom learning; connect interested students to additional academic opportunities and resources outside of Squash Haven; and inspire team members to fully engage themselves in school and to become lifelong learners. This project supports each one of our academic goals and will help us ensure
that our students are moving forward academically throughout the summer and beyond.

Above: 2019 seniors boast their college shirts; our classroom at 78 Ashmun St

• Specific skills/experience required for the project (please list):
  ✓ Outstanding speaking, writing and interpersonal skills
  ✓ Adaptability, creativity and ability to take initiative
  ✓ A passion for working with children
  ✓ A belief in our mission and interest in education

• Additional requirements (e.g. a car or weekend working hours). If a car is required, please include information regarding parking arrangements and mileage reimbursement):

As a youth serving organization, Squash Haven’s Fellow may be asked to work some weekends. They will be expected to join our team for our season ending squash tournament (overnight trip) at Williams College during the third weekend in June. Additionally, they may be asked to support staff at community service projects and other, more local squash tournaments. All other responsibilities will be performed throughout the week. A car is not required, though could be helpful.

• Briefly describe the work that Yale PPSF Fellows have done with your agency in the past and present. If you have not worked with Yale Fellows, please describe any work that Yale students have done with your agency.

We have happily hosted three PPSF Fellows, most recently Peter Levenstrong DIV ‘20 in the summer of 2019. Peter taught one literacy block and two electives; his other major project was working to help overhaul our safety manual. He was a passionate, enthusiastic, and invaluable member of our summer staff, and we were so happy that the experience further strengthened his interest in a career in education.
Peter was responsible for developing and implementing curricula for 5th through 11th graders. He taught one book built around the summer’s theme of empowerment to rising tenth and eleventh graders: *The Fifth Season*. Activities surrounding these books included culminating projects, reading quizzes, vocabulary quizzes, and nightly homework. Peter also taught two electives on World Religions to our youngest students. Classes included interactive homework and activities to help students think through the ways these religions are realized. Activities included stopping five times a day to mimic prayer (Islam) and cutting up the prior night’s homework (Buddhism, nonattachment).

Some additional reflections from PPSF fellows follow below:

“I really loved that I had the flexibility to teach what I wanted, but staff not only spent a ton of time helping me learn how to manage a classroom and how to write lesson plans before we began teaching, but also helped me refine my lessons and better differentiate my content for individual students while I was teaching.”

“My work over my PPSF summer provided me with the opportunity to intimately discover the inner works of a small educational nonprofit. As a teacher, I had not only the freedom to decide what I wanted to teach, but also benefited from professional guidance from staff to shape my vision into standards-based curricula to implement in my classrooms. But more important than the work I did was the people I worked with. I have never encountered a more welcoming staff, who immediately treated me like their equal and constantly prioritized my experience. But beyond this, the passion which they bring to their work every day and the genuine respect that tints every interaction with students in their programming showed are truly unparalleled. This is an incredible organization filled with incredible people, and I am so lucky to have been able to be a part of it.” - Matthew Coffin Yale ‘19

We encourage you to reach out to any of our past fellows or us if you are considering a summer at Squash Haven!