

MILWAUKEE BUSINESS JOURNAL

CRYSTAL MCCLAIN, 36 FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, Revive Youth & Family Services

Crystal McClain launched Revive Youth & Family Services in 2010 when she opened the door of its first group home at 2518 N. 17th St., Milwaukee, and started working with at-risk adolescent boys. Today, the multimillion-dollar social service agency with four locations has supported more than 300 youth and families.

McClain was raised in Milwaukee's central city, and is a product of Milwaukee Public Schools.

She earned her master's degree in social work at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and is state-certified as an Advanced Practicing Social Worker.

When we asked her to name the most pressing issue facing the Milwaukee area, she had a ready answer: "Increased crime, deteriorating neighborhoods, lack of employment resources, and lack of housing resources," as well as a ready solution: "I honestly believe that the work and mission of Revive Youth & Family Services is bridging the gap for young people aging out of foster care in each of these areas."

Word that best describes you? "Resilience"

What was your first job? McDonald's

Go-to person when you need help? "My Mom, Cheryl McClain"

Person you would most like to meet? Oprah Winfrey

Something about you that would surprise people? "I was Ms. Teen Wisconsin in 1999 (American Coed Pageants)"

Who's your mentor? Uncle Terrence McClain

Your favorite film? "The Help"

What would you tell your teenage self? "Choose wisely — the choices you make now can affect the rest of your life."

Describe yourself in a tweet. "I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change. I am changing the things I cannot accept." — Angela Davis

Who would play you in a movie about your life? Taraji P. Henson

Favorite saying? "Cool beans"

Favorite type of music? Neo soul

Favorite app? Calm (daily mindfulness app)

Favorite form of social media? "Instagram — one of the peak platforms to engage with a different audience all over the world and an essential tool for branding businesses"

Best stress release? A spa day

What do you want to be doing in 10 years? "Lecturing and training up-and-coming social workers. I firmly believe that I am not only in the business of assisting and advocating for foster care youth, but I am also in the business of making the next generation of social workers."

Favorite hobby? Shopping

If you could give \$100,000 to one charity, which would you choose and why? "I lost my grandfather to cancer my freshman year in college. My grandfather did everything he could to secure my future. I would give money to cancer research in hopes of finding a cure."

Where would we find you on a typical Saturday? "Working, attending a sorority meeting, attending a board meeting"

What you like best about living in the Milwaukee area? "Being close to family"



CLOSER LOOK

Hometown: Milwaukee

Education: Bachelor's degree, social work, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater; master's degree, social work, UW-Milwaukee