

Zaccho Youth Performing Arts Program Study Guide



Prepared by Joanna Haigood
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Introduction

So . . . What is a Hero?

For centuries society has idolized extraordinary individuals it designates as “heroes.” Many of these heroes are stereotyped and misrepresented as archetypal, even legendary, people who have conquered inconceivable obstacles. But we encounter heroes everyday, and particularly among youth. Young people have led civil rights movements all over the world, fought for sensible legislation, lobbied to make their communities safer, and lovingly taken on the role of caretaker for family members.

We are proud to be working with over ninety Bayview Hunters Point youth in celebration of the young heroes who are working in our own community and internationally. We hope to inspire our students and audiences -- young and old -- to discover and energize their hero within. In the Fall of 2019 we collaborated with local community leaders to nominate young people for the Young Heroes Award whom they consider to be exemplary citizens -- youth who are doing powerful things in Bayview Hunters Point and the San Francisco Bay Area. During the 2020-2021 school year, each of the selected Young Heroes will engage our students through video calls and interviews. With support from the Zaccho Teaching Artists and their classroom teachers, the students will use these engagements as inspiration to create artistic projects utilizing the Young Heroes theme



Sacagawea (Tsakaka-wias)

By Teresa Potter

Although spelled many different ways in the original journals of expedition members, the third syllable always starts with a hard g. Sacagawea lived with the Hidatsa just before joining the Lewis and Clark Expedition, and there is no soft g in the Hidatsa language. Sacaga means “bird” and wea means “woman” in the Hidatsa language. She is best known for joining Lewis and Clark on their expedition westward from the Mississippi to the Pacific Coast.

Sacagawea was born around 1790 in what is now the state of Idaho. When she was 10 years old, Sacagawea was captured by an enemy tribe, the Hidatsa and taken from her Lemhi Shoshone people to the Hidatsa villages near present-day Stanton, North

Dakota. A few years later, she was married to Toussaint Charbonneau, a French-Canadian trader, either by force or by choice.



In 1803, the United States acquired the Louisiana Purchase from France which almost doubled the size of the country. With the acquisition of so much land, it was necessary to determine the actual boundaries of US land. President Thomas Jefferson hired Virginia’s Meriwether Lewis to explore this land; Lewis sought out frontiersman William Clark, and they led about forty men in three boats up the Missouri River to what is now Bismarck, North Dakota. As the expedition sailed up the Missouri River,

the group met with various tribes of Native Americans, and during the winter months Lewis and Clark made the decision to camp near the Hidatsa villages, where Toussaint Charbonneau and Sacagawea made their home.

Charbonneau proposed that Lewis and Clark hire him as a guide and interpreter. Charbonneau knew Hidatsa and the sign languages common among the river tribes and he was married to a Shoshone which could be useful as they travelled west. Lewis and Clark hired Charbonneau as a member of the Corps of Discovery, but Sacagawea was expecting her first child. The Americans stayed in this relatively safe and warm camp through the winter of 1804-05 and waited even longer in the spring so that the pregnant Sacagawea could accompany them west. On February 11, 1805, Sacagawea gave birth to a baby boy whom she named Jean-Baptiste Charbonneau. He was nicknamed Pomp meaning “first born” in Shoshone.

With her baby on her back and her husband at her side, Sacajawea and the men left Fort Mandan on April 7, 1805. Every member of the Corps of Discovery was hired for a special skill such as hunting, woodworking, blacksmithing, sailing, etc. At about 18, she was the only female among some forty older men. Sacagawea proved to be essential to the expedition. She had the skills and abilities to offer much assistance. Her knowledge of native languages was a great help during their journey.



She communicated with other tribes and translated for Lewis and Clark. She was also very good at finding edible plants. Sacagawea also was valuable to the expedition because she represented peace and trustworthiness. A group of males traveling with a woman and her baby appeared less menacing. Sacagawea and her baby allowed others to feel that it was safe to befriend the newcomers.

On May 14, Sacagawea showed bravery and clear thinking that earned Lewis and Clark’s praise and gratitude. Charbonneau was steering a boat through choppy waters when a sudden storm caused the boat to tip sideways and fill with water. The expeditions valuable supplies had fallen into the water and Charbonneau froze. One of the men threatened to shoot him if he didn’t right the boat. Sacagawea stayed calm and rescued instruments, books, gunpowder, medicines, and clothing. Without these supplies, the expedition would have been in serious trouble. She faced the same dangers and difficulties as everyone else, but she did it while having full care of her infant son.

In July of 1805, the Corps was paddling up the Missouri, and Sacagawea recognized the landmarks—the three forks in the water, where three smaller rivers come together to form the Missouri. On August 15, the expedition met up with the Shoshone tribe. Lewis and Clark arranged for a meeting with the chief, Cameawait, and Sacagawea acted as translator. As she began translating, she realized that the chief was her brother. She ran to him, threw a blanket around him and wept tears of joy. Though she was moved to

tears, she resumed her duty as interpreter. She convinced the Shoshone to provide additional guides and to trade horses.

Sacagawea left with the Corps of Discover, and the expedition reached the Pacific Ocean on November 8, 1805. They held a vote to determine where they would locate their winter quarters. It is a mark of their deep respect for her that Sacagawea was given a voice in the decision by being allowed to vote. They built Fort Clatsop near the Columbia River and stayed until March 23, 1806.

For the return journey, the Corps divided into two groups-one led by Lewis and the other by Clark. Traveling with Clark, Sacagawea guided his group south of the Yellowstone River by recommending a way through the mountains (known today as Bozeman Pass). Clark wrote in his journal,



*“The Indian woman...has
been of great service to me as
a pilot through this country.”
- Captain William Clark*

The two groups reunited on August 12. They arrived back at the Hidatsa villages two days later, and Sacagawea and her family departed the expedition. Lewis and Clark prepared for their journey back to St. Louis, but before they left Clark offered to take Pomp back to St. Louis with him. He said he would give Pomp a good education and raise him as his own son. Sacagawea promised she would bring Pomp to visit, but she could not let go of her son.

As promised, when Pomp was five Sacagawea and Charbonneau took him to St. Louis and left him with Clark to get an education. It is believed that she also gave birth to a daughter named Lizette in 1812. There is some controversy regarding her death. Records from Fort Manuel, where she was living, state that she died in December 1812 of typhus. However, according to some Native American oral histories, Sacagawea died in 1884 on Shoshone lands in Wyoming.

source: <https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/sacagawea>



One Student's Faith in 1960

By Ruby Bridges

Posted on Guideposts Jan 14, 2009

I was born in Mississippi in 1954, the oldest child of Abon and Lucille Bridges. That year the United States Supreme Court handed down its landmark decision ordering the integration of public schools. Not that I knew anything about school at the time. What I knew and loved was growing up on the farm my paternal grandparents sharecropped.

It was a very hard life, though, and my parents heard there were better opportunities in the city. We moved to New Orleans, where my father found work as a service station attendant, and my mother took night jobs to help support our growing family.

As I got a bit older, my job was to keep an eye on my younger brothers and sister, which wasn't too difficult. Except for church and the long walk to the all-black school where I went to kindergarten, our world didn't extend beyond our block. But that was about to change.

Under federal court order, New Orleans public schools were finally forced to desegregate. In the spring of 1960 I took a test, along with other black kindergartners in the city, to see who would go to an integrated school come September. That summer my parents learned I'd passed the test and had been selected to start first grade at William Frantz Public School.



My mother was all for it. My father wasn't. "We're just asking for trouble," he said. He thought things weren't going to change, and blacks and whites would never be treated as equals. Mama thought I would have an opportunity to get a better education if I went to the new school—and a chance for a good job later in life. My parents argued about it and prayed about it. Eventually my mother convinced my father that despite the risks, they had to take this step forward, not just for their own children, but for all black children.

A federal judge decreed that Monday, November 14, 1960, would be the day black children in New Orleans would go to school with white children. There were six of us chosen to integrate the city's public school system. Two decided to stay in their old schools. The other three were assigned to McDonogh. I would be going to William Frantz alone.

The morning of November 14 federal marshals drove my mother and me the five blocks to William Frantz. In the car one of the men explained that when we arrived at the

school, two marshals would walk in front of us and two behind, so we'd be protected on both sides.

That reminded me of what Mama had taught us about God, that he is always there to protect us. "Ruby Nell," she said as we pulled up to my new school, "don't be afraid. There might be some people upset outside, but I'll be with you."

Sure enough, people shouted and shook their fists when we got out of the car, but to me it wasn't any noisier than Mardi Gras. I held my mother's hand and followed the marshals through the crowd, up the steps into the school.

We spent that whole day sitting in the principal's office. Through the window, I saw white parents pointing at us and yelling, then rushing their children out of the school. In the uproar I never got to my classroom.



The marshals drove my mother and me to school again the next day. I tried not to pay attention to the mob. Someone had a black doll in a coffin, and that scared me more than the nasty things people screamed at us.

A young white woman met us inside the building. She smiled at me. "Good morning, Ruby Nell," she said, just like Mama except with what I later learned was a Boston accent. "Welcome. I'm your new teacher, Mrs. Henry." She seemed nice, but I wasn't sure how to feel about her. I'd never been taught by a white teacher before.

Mrs. Henry took my mother and me to her second-floor classroom. All the desks were empty, and she asked me to choose a seat. I picked one up front, and Mrs. Henry started teaching me the letters of the alphabet.

The next morning my mother told me she couldn't go to school with me. She had to work and look after my brothers and sister. "The

marshals will take good care of you, Ruby Nell," Mama assured me. "Remember, if you get afraid, say your prayers. You can pray to God anytime, anywhere. He will always hear you."

That was how I started praying on the way to school. The things people yelled at me didn't seem to touch me. Prayer was my protection. After walking up the steps past the angry crowd, though, I was glad to see Mrs. Henry. She gave me a hug, and she sat

right by my side instead of at the big teacher's desk in the front of the room. Day after day, it was just Mrs. Henry and me, working on my lessons.

Militant segregationists, as the news called them, took to the streets in protest, and riots erupted all over the city. My parents shielded me as best they could, but I knew problems had come to our family because I was going to the white school. My father was fired from his job. The white owners of a grocery store told us not to shop there anymore. Even my grandparents in Mississippi suffered. The owner of the land they'd sharecropped for 25 years said everyone knew it was their granddaughter causing trouble in New Orleans, and asked them to move.

At the same time, there were a few white families who braved the protests and kept their children in school. But they weren't in my class, so I didn't see them. People from around the country who'd heard about me on the news sent letters and donations. A neighbor gave my father a job painting houses. Other folks baby-sat for us, watched our house to keep away troublemakers, even walked behind the marshals' car on my way to school. My family couldn't have made it without our friends' and neighbors' help.

And me, I couldn't have gotten through that year without Mrs. Henry. Sitting next to her in our classroom, just the two of us, I was able to forget the world outside. She made school fun. We did everything together. I couldn't go out in the schoolyard for recess, so right in that room we played games and for exercise did jumping jacks to music.

I remember her explaining integration to me and why some people were against it. "It's not easy for people to change once they've gotten used to living a certain way," Mrs. Henry said. "Some of them don't know any better, and they're afraid. But not everyone is like that."

Even though I was only six, I understood what she meant. The people I passed every morning as I walked up the school steps were full of hate. They were white, yet so was my teacher, who couldn't have been more different from them. She was one of the most loving people I'd ever known. The greatest lesson I learned that year in Mrs. Henry's class was the lesson Martin Luther King, Jr., tried to teach us all. Never judge people by the color of their skin. God makes each of us unique in ways that go much deeper.



From her window, Mrs. Henry always watched me walk into the school. One morning when I got to our classroom, she said she'd been surprised to see me talk to the mob. "I saw your lips moving," she said, "but I couldn't make out what you were saying to those people."

“I wasn’t talking to them,” I told her. “I was praying for them.” Usually I prayed in the car on the way to school, but that day I’d forgotten until I was in the crowd. Please be with me, I’d asked God, and be with those people too. Forgive them because they don’t know what they’re doing.

“Ruby Nell, you are truly someone special,” Mrs. Henry whispered, giving me an even bigger hug than usual. She had this look on her face like my mother would get when I’d done something to make her proud.

Another person who helped me was Dr. Robert Coles, a child psychiatrist who happened to see me being escorted through the crowd outside my school. Dr. Coles volunteered to work with me through this ordeal. Soon he was coming to our house every week to talk with me about how I was doing in school.

Really, I was doing fine. I was always with people who wanted the best for me: my family, friends, and in school, my teacher. The more time I spent with Mrs. Henry, the more I grew to love her. I wanted to be like her. Soon, without realizing it, I had picked up her Boston accent. Neither of us missed a single day of school that year. The crowd outside dwindled to just a few protestors, and before I knew it, it was June. For me, first grade ended much more quietly than it began. I said goodbye to Mrs. Henry, fully expecting her to be my teacher again in the fall.

But when I went back to school in September, everything was different. There were no marshals, no protestors. There were other kids—even some other black students—in my second-grade class. And Mrs. Henry was gone. I was devastated. Years later I found out she hadn’t been invited to return to William Frantz, and she and her husband had moved back to Boston. It was almost as if that first year of school integration had never happened. No one talked about it. Everyone seemed to have put that difficult time behind them.

After a while, I did the same. I finished grade school at William Frantz and graduated from an integrated high school, went to business school and studied travel and tourism.

For 15 years I worked as a travel agent. Eventually I married and threw myself into raising four sons in the city I grew up in. I didn’t give much thought to the events of my childhood until my youngest brother died in 1993. For a time, I looked after his daughters. They happened to be students at William Frantz, and when I took them there every morning, I was literally walking into my past, into the same school that I’d helped to integrate years earlier.

I began volunteering three days a week at William Frantz, working as a liaison between parents and the school. Still, I had the feeling God had brought me back in touch with my past for something beyond that. I struggled with it for a while. Finally I got on my knees and prayed, Lord, whatever it is I’m supposed to be doing, you’ll have to show me.

Not long after that, a reporter called the school. The psychiatrist Robert Coles had written a children's book, *The Story of Ruby Bridges*; now everyone wanted to know what had happened to the little girl in the famous Norman Rockwell painting that had appeared in *Look* magazine. No one expected to find me back at William Frantz. Dr. Coles had often written about me, but this was the first book intended for children. To me it was God's way of keeping my story alive until I was able to tell it myself.



One of the best parts of the story is that I was finally reunited with my favorite teacher, Barbara Henry. She reached me through the publisher of Dr. Coles's book, and in 1995 we saw each other in person for the first time in more than three decades. The second she laid eyes on me, she cried, "Ruby Nell!" No one had called me that since I was a little girl. Then we

were hugging each other, just like we used to every morning in first grade. I didn't realize how much I had picked up from Mrs. Henry (I still have a hard time calling her anything else) —not only her Boston accent, but her mannerisms too, such as how she tilts her head and gestures with her hands when she talks. She showed me a tiny, dog-eared photo of me with my front teeth missing that she'd kept all these years. "I used to look at that picture and wonder how you were," she said. "I told my kids about you so often you were like a part of my family."

We have stayed a part of each other's lives ever since. It turns out that because of what I went through on the front lines of the battle for school integration, people recognize my name and are eager to hear what I have to say about racism and education today. I speak to groups around the country, and when I visit schools, Mrs. Henry often comes with me. We tell kids our story and talk about the lessons of the past and how we can still learn from them today—especially that every child is a unique human being fashioned by God.

I tell them another important thing I learned in first grade is that schools can be a place to bring people together—kids of all races and backgrounds. That's the work I focus on now, connecting our children through their schools. It's my way of continuing what God set in motion 40 years ago when he led me up the steps of William Frantz Public School and into a new world with my teacher, Mrs. Henry—a world that under his protection has reached far beyond just the two of us in that classroom.

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"Our Ruby taught us all a lot. She became someone who helped change our country. She was part of history, just like generals and presidents are part of history. They're leaders, and so was Ruby. She led us away from hate, and she led us nearer to knowing each other, the white folks and the black folks."

~ Ruby's Mother

Source: <https://www.guideposts.org/better-living/positive-living/one-students-faith-in-1960>

The Ryan White Story

as told by his mother Jeanne White Ginder

Ryan White was diagnosed with AIDS on December 17, 1984. He was one of the first children, one of the first hemophiliacs to come down with AIDS, and it was definitely a time where there was no education and there was hardly any information on AIDS at the time. So I was living in Kokomo, Indiana, and Ryan was attending Western Middle School, and it was something that I really didn't even believe he had. I felt like, "How could he have AIDS?" He was a hemophiliac since birth, and I just felt like "How could he be one of the first ones?" I felt like somehow, in some way, it was going to be something else. I really never really believed he had AIDS for quite a while. At that time, of course, he had no precautions, or anything. There were no precautions at the hospital. And all of a sudden the CDC shows up and the CDC started putting in all kind of precautions, you know: the gloves, the gowns, the masks and so forth, and started talking to the nurses and so forth. It became apparent just like overnight that all of a sudden things were different.



When Ryan was diagnosed, they only gave him 3-6 months to live. So at that time, I thought every cough, every fever, I worried that it was going to be his last. And I really never thought he'd be healthy enough to go to school. But as he started getting healthy, as he started gaining weight, he started to ask, "Mom," he said, "I want to go to school, I want to go visit my friends. I want to see my friends." So I really kind of put him off for awhile and finally he just said, "Mom, I want to go to school, I want to go visit." So it was a long process, we had to go through almost a year and a half, he didn't go to school for about a year and a half. He was worried about taking the 7th grade over again, and he didn't want people to think he was dumb, because he was a very smart and intelligent kid. So it was a long process. Through court hearings, we thought it would take one court hearing, and we'd have all these medical experts in so to speak, and then everybody would be educated, but it didn't happen that way.

It was really bad. People were really cruel, people said that he had to be gay, that he had to have done something bad or wrong, or he wouldn't have had it. It was God's punishment, we heard the God's punishment a lot. That somehow, some way he had done something he shouldn't have done or he wouldn't have gotten AIDS.

Then we moved to Cicero, Indiana, and there, the community welcomed us. And it was all because a young girl, named Jill Stuart, who was president of the student body, who decided to bring in the medical experts and talk to the kids, and then the kids went home then and educated their parents. So Ryan was welcome, he got to go to school, he got to go to proms and

dances. He even got a job. It was kind of funny, he came home once after he turned 16 and told me he had a job for the summer. I thought, "Oh my gosh. Who is going to hire you, knowing who you are?" I said, "What are you going to be doing," and he said, "I'm working at Maui's Skateboard shop." I said, "Really? What are you going to be doing?" and he said, "I'm going to be putting together skateboards." And I said, "How much are they going to pay you?" and he said "\$3.50 an hour." I said, "Ryan, that won't even buy your gas to Indianapolis and back." He said, "Mom, you don't get it. I got a job just like everyone else does." So it was really important to Ryan, to just be one of the kids, and to just fit in. He never bragged or anything about who he was, or what he got to do, he just wanted to be around his friends.



Well a lot of people will say, "Your son was such a hero" and all that, but to me, he was my son. And you know, sometimes it's so confusing, because he was my little boy, and to share him with everybody, because he wasn't perfect, but at the same time, he was my son.

At the time when Ryan was diagnosed with AIDS, I mean, we heard of so many drugs coming out, and none of them was worth anything. By the time you heard of one, there would be another one out, and you would never get the research for one. And none of them worked. And

so even in the early 90s, when I was hearing there was hope, I kind of thought, "You know, we had that hope, too, but they didn't pan out." But they did pan out! The biggest contribution I think that Ryan made is, and I didn't know it at that time, that his legacy would be that people are getting their drugs and their treatment and that people are living with AIDS.

The Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program

The Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program provides a comprehensive system of HIV primary medical care, essential support services, and medications for low-income people living with HIV who are uninsured and underserved. The Program funds grants to states, cities/counties, and local community-based organizations to provide care and treatment services to people living with HIV to improve health outcomes and reduce HIV transmission among hard-to-reach populations.

More than half of people living with diagnosed HIV in the United States receive services through the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program each year. That means more than half a million people received services through the Program.

Source: <https://hab.hrsa.gov/>

THE SAN FRANCISCO YOUTH COMMISSION



2019 -2020 Youth Commissioners after their Swearing-In Ceremony with President Norman Yee and other members of the Board of Supervisors Mar, Walton, Safai, Lee-Fewer, and Mandelman.

History

In 1995, community members lobbied City Hall to develop a resolution that would create a Youth Commission. Then-Supervisor Angela Alioto sponsored a Charter Amendment that put the question of whether or not to create the Youth Commission to the voters of San Francisco. In turn, Proposition F won 60% vote on the November 1995 ballot, and the Youth Commission was created! The first class of Youth Commissioners were sworn in to office in April of 1996.

Purpose and Duties

The Youth Commission is responsible, under SEC 4.124 of the City Charter, for advising the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor on "the effects of legislative policies, needs,

assessments, priorities, programs, and budgets concerning the children and youth of San Francisco."

The Youth Commission also has the duty to provide the Board and the Mayor with "comment and recommendation" on all proposed laws "that primarily affect the children and youth" of San Francisco.

In particular, the Youth Commission is charged with "identifying the unmet needs" of San Francisco's children and youth through a variety of methods. These include researching existing government and private programs and sources of funding for such programming, holding public forums and cooperating with existing advocacy organizations.

Following the Charter, each year the Youth Commission provides the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor with the following:

- comments and recommendations on pieces of proposed legislation that would affect San Francisco's young people;

- resolutions that formally articulate the Youth Commission's positions on various youth-related issues; and a set of policy priorities to guide the City's annual budget process as it relates to young people.

A chronology of the official proceedings of the 2016-2017 Youth Commission can be found [here](#).

Membership

The City Charter dictates that there be 17 Youth Commissioners, each of whom serve a 1-year term (historically, this term begins in August of each year). Each member of the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor appoint one Youth Commissioner; the Mayor is also charged with appointing 5 "members from underrepresented communities to ensure that the Commission represents the diversity of the City." Commissioners must be between the ages of 12 and 23 and reside in the City & County of San Francisco.

Each year, the Youth Commission staff produces an application and conducts an interview process for people who are interested in joining the Youth Commission. Ultimately, of course, each Supervisor and the Mayor have the final say on whom they appoint to the Commission.

If you are interested in serving on the Youth Commission, please contact your district Supervisor, the Mayor or Youth Commission staff, Kiely Hosmon (kiely.hosmon@sfgov.org).

District Ten Commissioner: Rome Jones

Representing Bayview Hunters Point, Potrero Hill, Dogpatch, and Visitacion Valley neighborhoods

Appointed by Supervisor Walton

Transformative Justice Committee

I grew up in SFUSD public schools and that I am a person with Cerebral Palsy. I am passionate about working on housing and School and Police relationships with youth. I'm a realtor and my family owns a construction company. I like food, video games and shopping.

You can reach me at
romemjones@gmail.com



United We Dream Network



We are the Largest Immigrant Youth-Led Community in the Country.

When you're undocumented, you face a lot of discrimination, and that creates a lot of fear. At United We Dream, we transform that fear into finding your voice. We empower people to develop their leadership, their organizing skills, and to develop our own campaigns to fight for justice and dignity for immigrants and all people. This is achieved through immigrant youth-led campaigns at the local, state, and federal level.

United We Dream Network (UWDN), founded in 2008, is the largest immigrant youth-led organization in the US. Its nonpartisan network is made up of over 100,000 immigrant youth and allies and 55 affiliate organizations in 26 states. UWDN organizes and advocates for the dignity and fair treatment of immigrant youth and families, regardless of immigration status. UWDN seeks to address the inequities and obstacles faced by immigrant youth, and believes that by empowering immigrant youth, justice for all immigrants can be achieved. UWDN was influential in persuading President Obama to create the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) program in 2012, and now through its Own the Dream campaign is helping DACA-eligible youth benefit from this program. In 2014 it had a major influence on winning Administrative Relief through its powerful We Can't Wait campaign to expose the suffering of immigrant communities caused by immigration enforcement policies and practices.

We create welcoming spaces for young people – regardless of immigration status – to support, engage, and empower them to make their voice heard and win!

We have an online reach of over 4 million and are made up of over 400,000 members as well as 5 statewide branches and over 100 local groups across 28 states. Over 60% of our members are womxn and 20% identify as LGBTQ. We are made up of fearless youth fighting to improve the lives of ourselves, our families and our communities. Our vision is a society which celebrates our diversity and we believe in leading a multi-ethnic, intersectional path to get there.

Whether we're organizing in the streets, building cutting edge technology systems, opening doors for LGBTQ immigrant youth, clearing pathways to education, stopping deportations or creating alliances across social movements, United We Dream puts undocumented immigrant youth in the driver's seat to strategize, innovate and win.

Our guiding principles are what we believe and how we operate as an organization. They were developed over 18 months and reflect the input of over 400 UWD members, including affiliate leaders, online members, a national leadership committee, staff, and our board. Together we created our "2020 Vision" and we seek to embody these guiding principles in all that we do:



Source: <https://unitedwedream.org>



Earth Guardians trains diverse youth to be effective leaders in the environmental, climate and social justice movements across the globe - using art, music, storytelling, on the ground projects, civic engagement and

legal action to advance solutions to the critical issues we face as a global community. How do we do this? Through the creation and training of Earth Guardian Crews. These crews, ranging from ten to several hundred young people per crew represent the heart and soul of the organization. They are the young activists, artists, and musicians that are on the front lines driving action and fueling the cultural shift toward a regenerative future.

Our Most Recent Projects Include:

The design and development of a cutting-edge app to educate, gamify, measure and track our individual and collective environmental impact

National and State class action lawsuits

Creation and publication of EG Climate Action Lesson Plans distributed to 250K students and 300K summer campers

Launch of Historic Indigenous Youth Leadership Training

Opened Earth Guardians satellites in Africa

Trained 10,000 youth leaders through our on the ground crews

Grown from 20 to 264 on the ground Earth Guardian youth crews creating tangible change within their communities, located in over 50 countries in the past 3 years

A total of 54 MILLION people reached (FB followers, YouTube views, Instagram, Twitter, and mainstream media)

Organized Climate Strikes through our 264 crews across the globe

Granted \$30K to Crews in 2018 with a goal of tripling that amount in 2019

Earth Guardians - Mexico expanded crews to eight different states of the Mexican Republic

Earth Guardians India reached 5,000 youths and 10,000 women through different peace and human rights education.

Earth Guardians Africa has received official recognition by the Toganes government and grown from 7 countries to 18 African countries in 2018. They are on target to become the first Earth Guardian Continent by end of 2020.

Planted over 100,000 trees through our Earth Guardians Africa and India and US crews

Ran a national We Rise, We Vote campaign, encouraging younger generations to vote in the 2018 Mid-term elections in partnership with Rock the Vote, Headcount, ACE, Do Something, and Unifyre.

HISTORY

Earth Guardians began as an accredited high school in Maui, Hawaii in 1992, focusing on environmental awareness and action in its core curriculum. Students studied the history of social movements and took action to restore sandalwood forests and shut down the toxic practice of burning sugar cane. The school became recognized throughout the Hawaiian Islands and beyond, with the Dalai Lama presenting the Children's Torch of Hope to twenty-five Earth Guardian students.



Seeing the need to empower and give voice to a wider audience prompted Earth Guardians to relocate to Colorado in 1997 and engage more young people in programs to empower and amplify their voice. Earth Guardians began teaching youth about the

involvement in political action and activism, working to stop the spraying of pesticides in public parks, establishing an environmental fee on plastic bags, advocating for municipalizing Boulder's energy grid, and helping to achieve a moratorium on fracking. Earth Guardians received a great deal of press and attention for local actions, allowing the organization to expand into national and international work.

Now with thousands of engaged youth on six continents, Earth Guardians has given youth a voice and direction worldwide in order to become effective leaders and make measurable change in their communities. Earth Guardians is developing the resources to build a stronger collaborative network and cultivate this large wave of youth engagement.

Youth Directors



Earth Guardians' Youth Director **Xiuhtezcatl Martinez**, (his first name pronounced 'Shoe-Tez-Caht') is a 19-year-old indigenous climate activist, hip-hop artist, and powerful voice on the front lines of the global youth-led environmental movement.

At the early age of 6, Xiuhtezcatl began speaking around the world, from the UN Summit in Rio de Janeiro, to addressing the General Assembly at the UN in New York.

He has worked locally to get pesticides out of parks & coal ash contained, as well as initiating moratoriums on fracking in his home state of Colorado. He is currently a plaintiff in a youth-led lawsuit against the federal government for the government's inaction around the climate crisis and its failure to protect their essential public trust resources.

Xiuhtezcatl has traveled around the world educating his generation about the climate and environmental crisis, and has launched Earth Guardians youth crews in 60+ countries. His work has been featured on PBS, Showtime, National Geographic, Rolling Stone, Upworthy, The Guardian, Vogue, Bill Maher, The Daily Show, Nickelodeon, Comedy Central, CNN, MSNBC, HBO, VICE, and more.

Xiuhtezcatl's book "We Rise" was published by Rodale in 2017, and he has just finished writing "Imaginary Borders" to be published and released by Penguin in the spring of 2020. Xiuhtezcatl is stirring his generation with his music and released his first EP, "Broken" and album, "Break Free" in 2018.

In 2013, Xiuhtezcatl received the United States Community Service Award from President Obama, and was the youngest of 24 national change-makers chosen to serve on the President's youth council.

He is the 2015 recipient of the Peace First Prize, the 2015 Nickelodeon Halo Award, 2016 Captain Planet Award, Sweden's 2016 Children's Climate Prize , 2017 Univision Premio's Ajente de Cambio Award, 2018 My Climate Hero, 2018 Shorty Award, Huffington Post Top 10 Movers and Shakers, Grist Top 50 Fixers, TIME Next Generation Leaders, MTV Emma Award and the 2019 Senckenberg.

Marlow Baines is a 17 year old from Boulder, Colorado. Born in Seattle, WA and raised in the mountains of Evergreen, CO she has an intrinsic and deep love and appreciation for wild, open spaces and places.



Working closely with Xiuhtezcatl Martinez and Tamara Roske, Marlow has been an integral member of the Earth Guardians National Council, Rising Youth for a Sustainable Earth (RYSE), and is honored to serve as Co-Youth Director alongside Xiuhtezcatl. She previously served as Earth Guardians Global Crew Director, a role in which she actively connected with youth leaders across the globe about their initiatives and resource needs, while providing educational materials and support. More than anything else, Marlow recognizes the importance of Earth Guardians mission to cultivate healthy communities, where youth are recognized and uplifted for their important contribution, energy, and ideas - absolutely necessary to usher in the solutions required to combat the climate crisis.

One could say that Marlow's work as an Earth Guardian began when she was a small child. At 7 years old, she asked her parents if she could start a "nature club." She would take her friends and her younger brother into the forest that surrounded her home and generate ideas for their club, encouraging her friends to share with her what they wanted to learn. She spent many hours as a small child sitting quietly among the native plants around her Evergreen, CO home, listening to the stories she heard them tell, and relating her stories to her friends.

Educated in a Waldorf school in Boulder, CO, her connection to nature was fostered and strengthened, inside and out of school. Her mother homeschooled her in her earliest elementary years, emphasizing the importance of learning in and from nature, spending many weeks in the Southern Utah wilderness with her family and grandparents,

camping far away from artificial light and indoor plumbing, learning to ride singletrack behind her grandfather and naming the constellations with her grandmother.

Her freshman year in high school found her in a public school, where the contrast between how she was raised and educated came into stark contrast with the lockdown drill and high security environment of the public school system. A trip to Standing Rock in October 2016, to deliver supplies to the prayer camp started by reservation youth, changed the course of her life. She discovered the power of people working collaboratively to make positive changes in their community. Returning to school she realized she needed to surround herself with people and peers who valued the role of community to impact positive change in the world. Later that month she joined Earth Guardians and applied to the RYSE National Council. As she tells it, her experience at the Earth Guardians youth training during the summer of 2017 was so uplifting, energizing, and motivating, that she couldn't imagine an environment of learning devoid of such life-giving energy.

She recalls the moment she decided to leave the public school system, the simple realization that she needed a breath of fresh air and the sun on her face, to calm her mind and spirit, before returning to class. Knowing she couldn't leave the building between classes without being locked out, she opted instead to leave the public school system to pursue independent studies.

Marlow's insatiable desire to learn, to deeply understand issues, and to elevate the voices of her peers gives her the energy and the motivation required to balance her school work with the work she does organizing at the local, state, national and international levels. As youth representative for Earth Guardians, she has participated on youth organizing committees for Alliance for Climate Education (Class of 0000 campaign), International Indigenous Youth Council, US Youth Climate Strikes, Fridays for Future, and collaborated with Zero Hour, Future Coalition, Extinction Rebellion, 350.org, Our Children's Trust, Colorado Rising, and others. Marlow has attended, presented, and helped plan youth programming at conferences across the US including Bioneers (San Rafael, CA), Earth's Call (Aspen, CO), Planet Home (San Francisco, CA), VERGE 2019 (Oakland, CA), WAGIN the Washington State Global Issues Network (Seattle, WA), and the UVM Youth Climate Summit (Burlington, VT). Marlow has presented alongside Bernie Sanders and met with Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi as one of the diverse coalition of youth demanding climate action from Congress. As part of the effort to bring awareness to the Youth Climate Strikes, Marlow was recently featured alongside 18 youth climate activists in the Facing Extinction campaign by Patagonia.

source: <https://www.earthguardians.org/>

Malala Yousafzai



I was born in Mingora, Pakistan on July 12, 1997.

Welcoming a baby girl is not always cause for celebration in Pakistan — but my father, Ziauddin Yousafzai, was determined to give me every opportunity a boy would have.

My father was a teacher and ran a girls' school in our village. I loved school. But everything changed when the Taliban took control of our town in Swat Valley. The extremists banned many things — like owning a television and playing music — and enforced harsh punishments for those who defied their orders. And they said girls could no longer go to school.

In January 2008 when I was just 11 years old, I said goodbye to my classmates, not knowing when — if ever — I would see them again.

I spoke out publicly on behalf of girls and our right to learn. And this made me a target.

In October 2012, on my way home from school, a masked gunman boarded my school bus and asked, “Who is Malala?” He shot me on the left side of my head. I woke up 10 days later in a hospital in Birmingham, England. The doctors and nurses told me about the attack — and that people around the world were praying for my recovery.

After months of surgeries and rehabilitation, I joined my family in our new home in the U.K. It was then I knew I had a choice: I could live a quiet life or I could make the most

of this new life I had been given. I determined to continue my fight until every girl could go to school.

With my father, who has always been my ally and inspiration, I established Malala Fund, a charity dedicated to giving every girl an opportunity to achieve a future she chooses. In recognition of our work, I received the Nobel Peace Prize in December 2014 and became the youngest-ever Nobel laureate.

Now I am studying Philosophy, Politics and Economics at the University of Oxford. And every day I fight to ensure all girls receive 12 years of free, safe, quality education.

I travel to many countries to meet girls fighting poverty, wars, child marriage and gender discrimination to go to school. Malala Fund is working so that their stories, like mine, can be heard around the world.

We invest in developing country educators and activists, like my father, through Malala Fund's Gulmakai Network. And we hold leaders accountable for their promises to girls.

With more than 130 million girls out of school today, there is more work to be done. I hope you will join my fight for education and equality. Together, we can create a world where all girls can learn and lead

Source: <https://www.malala.org/>

1000 Black Girl Books

Marley Dias made headlines as a sixth grader when she initiated the #1000BlackGirlBooks project to collect and donate 1,000 titles that featured black girls as the central character. Marley's drive has since yielded more than 11,000. Her first book, *Marley Dias Gets It Done: And So Can You!*, was published by Scholastic the same month she turned 13.

Why was it so important to you to bring awareness to a lack of diversity in children's literature?

"Bringing awareness to the lack of diversity in children's literature is important to me because there were so many students who have never and will never see themselves reflected in literature assigned in schools. I want to stop the intentional exclusion of some people's stories, and I want every child to have a place in literature where they can see themselves and learn about the experiences of others."



Do you consider yourself a changemaker, and if so, why?

"I consider myself a changemaker because I am working toward changing the systems in schools so that students are able to see diverse main characters. I have been able to achieve this on a global scale and I will continue until every student can see themselves and diverse people as the main characters."

How does your book encourage tweens and teens to become changemakers?

"My book tells my story and shows my path. I started when I was 10 years old. I am now 13 years old. If I can do it then anyone can. *Marley Dias Gets It Done: And So Can You!* encourages tweens and teens to become changemakers by giving real specific tips for them to make a change in their communities. Instead of just saying work hard or believe in yourself, this book puts all of that information into clear and achievable steps."

What can their adult teachers learn from reading it?

“Teachers, like parents, can learn that they must listen to kids voices and support kids’ actions so that they can succeed. Teachers can learn that by offering diverse books they are reducing ignorance as well as helping children become more confident. Being informed and being more confident will help children succeed in and out of the classroom.”

You are often referred to as an advocate for literacy. What’s next for you in that area?

“I believe that literacy is important because it gives you the tools to express yourself and share your ideas. I want parents and kids to know that reading is fun; it is not just about doing well in school. It’s about being a thoughtful person who positively contributes to the world. To make sure that this idea grows, I am starting the Black Girl Book Club. The book clubs can happen in schools as well as in community spaces. I want kids—and adults—to get together and talk about books and share ideas.”

How does literacy play into your social justice campaign for racial harmony?

“I don’t usually define my work in terms of racial harmony. To me, my work is really about understanding. I want to make sure that people are taking the time to learn about others. I also want people to imagine black girls as leaders and accept that we can be and are the main characters of our lives. I know that if this understanding happens, racial harmony may be the outcome, but racial harmony is not the first thing I think about when I think about my work. Achieving equity and opening spaces for black girls and others to learn are the core reasons for my campaign.

Also, sometimes I think when we say harmony it can make people feel like they are being forced to get along. My work is about education and acceptance. I want people to develop the patience and tolerance to know that there are other ways of being. They may not agree with those ways but they still need to make and hold space for other thoughts, ideas, and possibilities.”

What are three books you’re super excited about right now (and why)?

“The books I’m super excited about are Children of Blood and Bone by Tomi Adeyemi because it shows the world that in fantasy books, black people don’t have to die first, or be the slapstick character, but can be leaders. Next, I’m excited about An Absolutely Remarkable Thing by Hank Green. It hasn’t come out yet, but Hank Green is my favorite YouTuber and now he has books, just like his brother, John Green. Last, I’m excited about Rebound by Kwame Alexander because he is one of my favorite authors telling stories about black boys.”

Source: <https://www.literacyworldwide.org/blog%2Fliteracy-daily%2F2018%2F05%2F31%2Fmarley-dias-on-inspiring-activism-diversifying-children%27s-literature-and-her-latest-reads>

CLIMATE CHANGE ACTIVIST



Greta Thunberg is a Swedish climate youth activist who sparked an international movement to fight climate change beginning in 2018. With the simple message "School strike for climate" handwritten on poster board, Thunberg began skipping school on Fridays and protesting outside the Swedish Parliament. Thanks to social media, her actions have spread and influenced millions of young people all over the world to organize and protest.

Launching "Fridays For Future," Thunberg and other concerned youths throughout Europe have continued to pressure leaders and lawmakers to act on climate change through their regular

walkouts. Thunberg has also traveled the world, meeting with global leaders and speaking at assemblies to demand climate solutions and a recommitment to the Paris Agreement. Recently diagnosed with Asperger's, the activist has publicly shared her views on her disorder, referring to it as her "superpower." In 2019, she was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Early Life

Thunberg was born on January 3, 2003, in Stockholm, Sweden. Thunberg began her climate activism at age 15. Thunberg was born and raised in an artistic family. Her mother, Malena Ernman, is an opera singer, and her father, Svante Thunberg, is an actor. She has a younger sister, Beata, who is a popular singer in Sweden. Like her sister, Beata has been open about her own challenges dealing with disorders like ADHD and OCD.

Thunberg was only eight when she first learned about the climate crisis. Since then, she has made efforts to lower her carbon footprint by not flying and becoming vegan and has influenced her family to do the same.

As the face of the climate youth movement, Thunberg has been invited to speak at numerous rallies including ones in Stockholm, London and Brussels. In December 2018, her speech at the United Nations COP24 in Katowice, Poland, went viral.

"You are not mature enough to tell it like is," she said at the summit, addressing the Secretary-General. "Even that burden you leave to us children. But I don't care about being popular. I care about climate justice and the living planet."

Cross-Atlantic Trip to the United States.

Invited to speak at the UN Climate Action Summit in New York City, which took place in September 2019, Thunberg traveled across the Atlantic on a zero-emissions yacht, accompanied by her father and a supporting crew. Taking a little over two weeks, the yacht arrived in New York City on August 28th, and from there, Thunberg visited with President Barack Obama and later spoke before the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the House Select Committee in Washington D.C. on September 18th.

Known for her blunt speaking style, Thunberg barely spoke before the committees and instead pushed forward the latest UN report. "I don't want you to listen to me," she said. "I want you to listen to the scientists."

Two days later on September 20th, Thunberg walked with millions of protesters in New York City to demand climate action at the New York City Global Climate Strike. The demonstration became the largest climate protest in history with a total of 4 million people marching all over the world. The next day, she spoke at the UN Youth Climate Summit.

Although the world's eyes were already on the teen activist, her speech on September 21, 2019, at the United Nations Climate Action Summit brought headline news. Speaking before leaders, lawmakers and U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, Thunberg lambasted them with one of her most indignant speeches.

"You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words. And yet I'm one of the lucky ones. People are suffering. People are dying. Entire ecosystems are collapsing," she said. "We are in the beginning of a mass extinction, and all you can talk about is money and fairy tales of eternal economic growth. How dare you!"

Greta Thunberg.

She added: "For more than 30 years, the science has been crystal clear. How dare you continue to look away and come here saying that you're doing enough, when the politics and solutions needed are still nowhere in sight... You are failing us. But the young people are starting to understand your betrayal. The eyes of all future generations are upon you. And if you choose to fail us, I say: We will never forgive you."

Days later, Thunberg joined 15 other young climate activists to file an official complaint that five countries — Argentina, France, Germany, Brazil and Turkey — have not honored their Paris Agreement pledges and have therefore violated the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child treaty.

President Trump's Response

Thunberg's "How Dare You" speech attracted so much attention that President Donald Trump, a vehement climate change denier, felt compelled to offer a mocking tweet: "She seems like a very happy young girl looking forward to a bright and wonderful future. So nice to see!" he wrote.

In response, Thunberg changed her Twitter bio temporarily, using Trump's language against him. Her profile read: "A very happy young girl looking forward to a bright and wonderful future."

In March 2019, Thunberg was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for her climate activism. However, she lost the award to Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed.

Taking a year off of school to campaign for climate action, Thunberg plans to travel to Mexico, Canada and South America to meet with environmental activists and see firsthand the regions most affected by climate change. In December 2019, she is set to attend the UN Climate Change Conference (COP25) in Chile.



Source: <https://www.biography.com/activist/greta-thunberg>

Bay Nature's 2020 Local Heroes

Vincent Medina, Ohlone Community Leader & Co-Founder, *mak-'amham*

Vincent Medina is a member of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe and a leader of the movement to revive its language and culture. He is also co-founder of mak-'amham, an organization that prepares traditional Ohlone cuisine using seasonal wild foods.



Through his work, Vincent highlights the critical and continued connection between the indigenous people of the greater Bay Area and our local environment. A 2004 graduate of Arroyo High School in San Lorenzo, in the indigenous Ohlone area known as halkin, Vincent developed his personal mission through his close relationship with his family and his tribe, who nurtured in him a strong sense of identity.

“I grew up close to the same creeks where my ancestors fished salmon and steelhead,” he wrote in a 2018 article for Bay Nature. “My parents drove me up dusty roads to Sunol for tribal camp, and we spent time in the tule marshes at Coyote Hills. Being in these

landscapes with older Indian people gave me an understanding of how deep and layered our story is here.”

At Berkeley City College, where he received an Associate's Degree in Anthropology, Vincent was active in the Indigenous Student Alliance. He is now a board member of Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival as well as the host of KPFA's radio show Bay Native Circle. He has helped produce videos with the California Indian Museum and Cultural Center to educate the public about mission history, acorn traditions, and stewardship, and he currently works with tribal youth ambassadors on food sovereignty.

“I have known Vincent for more than a decade,” said Nicole Lim, who nominated him for the award. “As a young adult, he had a passion for social justice and cultural revitalization. He has taken that passion and worked to revitalize the language, educate the public about Native American issues, and work as an advocate for Bay Area tribal communities. [With] his commitment and positive outlook ... Vincent has proven to be an important leader and inspiration for our tribal youth.”

[Read more about Vincent's work](#) and the first cafe dedicated to Ohlone cuisine, which he co-founded in Berkeley.

Avalon Qian, Course Director, GirlVentures

Twenty-four year-old Avalon Qian is a passionate advocate for ensuring that young people from all communities learn to enjoy and protect nature. Born in China and raised in the Bay Area, Avalon participated in her first GirlVentures rock-climbing course when she was just 12. She continued taking courses from the Oakland-based outdoor education nonprofit through her teen years, returning as an assistant instructor after high school and a full-time instructor during college.

A 2018 graduate of Bard College with a BA in Anthropology, Avalon rejoined GirlVentures as the program coordinator for its Girls Climb On San Francisco program, and is now a course director for one of its summer wilderness programs for girls.



“Avalon combines depth of skill in backpacking, rock climbing, and other outdoor sports with a humility and humor that puts young people at ease, and her passion for nature inspires other girls and young women to protect and advocate for the natural world,” said Emily Teitsworth, GirlVentures’ Executive Director.

“In an industry that has historically been predominantly white, male, and affluent, Avalon represents the next generation of outdoor and environmental justice leaders, who are helping build new models of inclusive leadership in the outdoor industry.”

source: <https://baynature.org/awards/presenting-bay-natures-2020-local-heroes/>

Mari Copeny “Little Miss Flint”



Mari Copeny, also known as 'Little Miss Flint', is a 12-year-old activist fighting for the children of Flint, Michigan. At only 8 years old, Mari and her siblings had to learn not to turn on the water in Flint, Michigan after news broke of a water crisis. All of the water that was consumed in the city had to come from a plastic bottle, and bottled water became the way of life.

As Mari was on her way to Washington DC to attend a Congressional Hearing on the water crisis, she wrote a letter to President Obama and convinced him to come to Flint, Michigan to get a closer look at the Flint Water Crisis. A couple of days before the hearing, Mari asked her mom if she could send a letter to President Obama, knowing that the chances of him looking at it were about 1%. About a month and a half after the hearings Mari's mom received a call from a private number. When she picked up it was a staff member from the White House on the phone. President Obama not only read a letter from little 8-year-old Mari, but he decided to respond and come to Flint, Michigan to meet her. President Obama's visit to Flint, Michigan gained national attention and support towards Flint, Michigan

Since 2016, Mari has fundraised over \$500,000 that has impacted over 25,000 children in Flint and beyond. These funds have gone towards supporting students in getting school supplies, toys, bikes, clean water, and other resources needed to ensure a fulfilled and healthy life.

When the state of Michigan decided to stop paying for bottled water for Flint residents Mari stepped up and began raising funds. Through her bottled water campaign she raised over \$280,000 and was able to distribute over a million bottles of water to the citizens of Flint. In the summer of 2019, she decided to switch the focus from distributing bottles of water to something more convenient and environmentally friendly. That is why she partnered with socially responsible water filtration company to bring state of the art water filters to communities all across the US that are dealing with toxic water.

Source: <https://www.maricopeny.com>

Fighting the development of a coal plant in West Oakland



Isha Clarke, Oakland, CA

Isha Clarke, a 16 year old from Oakland, California, is one of the original members of Youth vs. Apocalypse, a diverse group of youth activists who came together to protest a coal terminal which was (and still is) to be built in an underserved community of color in Oakland.

Isha's activism began in the city where she lives. In 2017, Isha found herself at a youth-led action targeting a developer who was in the process of suing the city of Oakland to allow him to build a controversial coal terminal through West Oakland, a low-income community of color. Isha learned that this community was already struggling with environmental illnesses such as asthma, that would be exacerbated by the coal terminal. This is when she discovered how central environmental racism is to fighting for environmental justice. Isha felt it was right to stand up and speak truth to power.

Isha has broadened her activism and is now one of the leaders of Youth Vs Apocalypse, a group of youth activists from the Bay Area who recently confronted Senator Dianne Feinstein, along with Bay Area Earth Guardians Crew and Sunrise Movement, about her stance on the Green New Deal in a now viral video. This event sparked a vital national conversation about both the Green New Deal, and the role of young people in climate activism. Since gaining this platform, Isha and Youth Vs Apocalypse activists have continued fighting for radical climate action that is centered around frontline

communities. They organized the hugely successful March 15th Bay Area Youth Climate Strike, planned a community block party, both aligning with the Friday's For Future campaign started by Greta Thunberg, and, with Sunrise Movement, organized a powerful series of actions at the California Democratic Convention.

Isha strives to create a movement that reflects the world that young people want to see. She works to make sure the voices of young people, people of color, and disenfranchised frontline communities are the loudest.

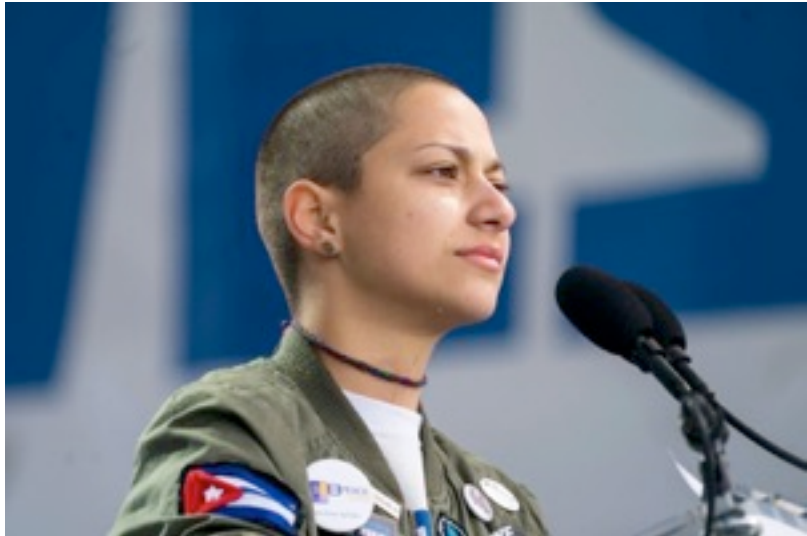


Source: w.broweryouthawards.org/winner/isha-clarke/
Isha's website: <http://youthvsapocalypse.org/>

Why This Generation Needs Gun Control

by Emma Gonzalez

On Wednesday, February 14, seventeen students and faculty at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, were gunned down on the campus where I also attend school. Their names were Alyssa Alhadeff, Scott Beigel, Martin Duque, Nicholas Dworet, Aaron Feis, Jaime Guttenberg, Chris Hixon, Luke Hoyer, Cara Loughran, Gina Montalto, Joaquin Oliver, Alaina Petty, Meadow Pollack, Helena Ramsay, Carmen Schentrup, Alex Schachter, and Peter Wang. Our lives and our community are forever changed due to this senseless tragedy — one we know could have been prevented.



Since that day, many fellow survivors and I have not kept quiet. We have taken the media by storm through appearances and interviews, met with state and federal lawmakers to beg them to enact much stricter gun control laws, and been joined in protest by students around the nation and the world who've held school walkouts and demonstrations that exhibit the energy and power of young people in full force.

In just a few weeks' time, we, the youth of the United States, have built a new movement to denounce gun violence and call for safety in all of our communities.

And this is only the beginning.

A Generation Raised on Violence

I was born in 1999, just a few months after 13 people were left dead after a shooting at Columbine High School in Colorado. From 1966 to the Valentine's Day that my school proved to be less than bulletproof, nearly 1,100 people have been killed in mass public shootings in the U.S.. From the deaths of 26 at Sandy Hook Elementary in Newtown, Connecticut, in 2012, to the 2016 massacre of mostly Latinx people at Pulse nightclub in Orlando, to the loss of 58 lives at an outdoor concert in Las Vegas last year, we've seen mass shootings play out again and again and again.

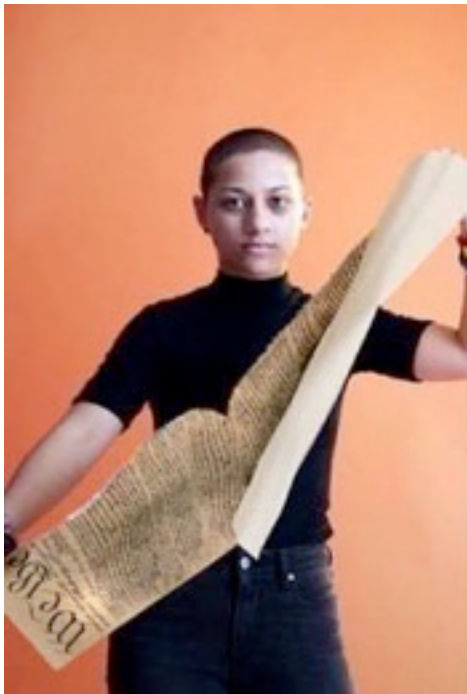
Gun violence has torn up many communities across the country, mainly due to negligence on behalf of local and national government to properly regulate access to guns, ignorance to their constituents' varying situations, and willingness to take money from organizations that very clearly do not have the best intentions for the future of the United States.

The problem of gun violence goes beyond the countless demographic differences between people. Any way you cut it, one of the biggest threats to life as a teen in the U.S. today is being shot. People have been shot to death en masse in grocery stores, movie theaters, nightclubs, and libraries, on school campuses and front porches, and at concerts — anywhere and everywhere, regardless of socioeconomic background, skin color, age, ethnicity, religion, gender, geographical location.

Young people in this country have experienced gun violence for their entire lives, only to be faced with a number of representatives and officials who have been seduced by the gun lobby or have generally failed to make effective change. The pro-gun propaganda peddled by the National Rifle Association feeds myths about gun ownership, and these myths arguably perpetuate the suffering of thousands of Americans each year.

After all of this pain and all of this death caused by gun violence, it seems as if the kids are the only ones who still have the energy to make change.

What Do We Mean When We Say “Change”?



Parkland youth are working to end gun violence through actions like the March for Our Lives event in Washington, D.C., on March 24 and the ongoing #NeverAgain movement. I'm one of them. Fed up with the apathy pervading this country, we realized that we don't need to wait around to have our voices heard or for someone else to make change — we have to be the change we need to see.

The mass walkouts held around the country on March 14, which marked the one-month anniversary of the mass shooting at our school, weren't even organized by March for Our Lives. They were efforts led by students around the world who were speaking in the most influential way they knew how: civil disobedience, marching in the streets with signs and chanting truth to power. Efforts to mobilize young voters are widespread, and many are being conducted by first-time organizers.

Students around the country have already shown commitment to doing their part. Now it's on the adults to join us.

Many companies have broken ties with the National Rifle Association, and the House of Representatives passed a bill to fund more security measures in schools. That's great, but it's not enough.

We need to digitize gun-sales records, mandate universal background checks, close gun-show loopholes and straw-man purchases, ban high-capacity magazines, and push for a comprehensive assault weapons ban with an extensive buyback system.

It would also benefit us to redefine what assault weapons are so that when we call for a ban against them, it's clear that we aren't trying to ban all guns. No one needs to use an assault weapon to protect themselves while walking home at night. No one should be allowed to use an AR-15 to strategically hunt people, which, in case anyone forgot, is what made us speak out in the first place.

Rather than engage with this logic, many are suggesting that a possible solution to increasing school safety would be arming teachers. This doesn't make any rational or logical sense. For those who don't agree, I have questions:

How would arming teachers work, logistically?

Would they have to buy their own guns, or would there be armories in schools? Would students be able to break into armories?

While teaching, would a teacher keep their weapon on their person or in a lockbox?

If it was in a lockbox on the other side of the room when a threatening person walked in, would the teacher be able to get to their gun in time?

If the threat and the teacher were in close proximity, would the threat not be able to disarm the teacher and turn the pistol on them and in turn the students?

Why would a student shooter even need to worry about metal detectors or getting patted down if they already know they can overpower the teacher and take that gun for their own use?

If the teacher wasn't in close proximity, what would stop the teacher's bullets from hitting other students who might be in the way and obscured by gunsmoke?

And since there was a resource or police officer on campus to help protect students and teachers, why didn't that stop 17 people from getting killed and 15 from getting injured on February 14?

At Stoneman Douglas, the entire shooting lasted roughly six minutes. In that time, the shooter — a former student who conducted this violence in a three-story building known

as the freshman building — fired at least 100 shots, which hit walls, windows, classrooms, and 32 people. Seventeen people’s lives ended far, far too soon, and each of them had ties and connections to countless other individuals, and all of those people have to grapple with the fact that these students and faculty — our friends, our teachers, our coaches, our family — are gone.

Beyond Parkland

This is the reality we face as young people in America today: the constant fear of being gunned down in the places we should feel the most secure. We have grown up in this country and watched violence unfold to no resolution. We have watched people with the power and authority to make changes fail to do so.

And that’s why we are stepping up. Some of us are new to this fight, but across America there are people, young and old, who have been fighting for gun safety and an end to gun violence of all kinds.

This month, Teen Vogue is dedicating its digital cover to rising voices in the gun control movement, young people who are working on the issue in different ways, all of them impacted by gun violence.

There is 21-year-old Howard University student Clifton Kinnie, who, in 2014, mobilized teenagers to organize against gun violence and register to vote after 18-year-old Mike Brown was killed by a police officer in Ferguson, Missouri. Natalie Barden, a 16-year-old sophomore at Newtown High School in Connecticut, was a preteen when she lost her younger brother, Daniel, in 2012, during the Sandy Hook shooting. She’s been asking for change for more than five years as part of a family that has become vocal anti-gun-violence organizers, and she is now courageously stepping up to mobilize her peers.

Jazmine Wildcat, a 14-year-old member of the Northern Arapaho Tribe, is part of a gun-owning family in Riverton, Wyoming, and she started writing letters to her lawmakers after the students were killed in Parkland. In her community, where gun ownership is considered a fact of life and a point of pride, she’s bravely taking a stand as one of the few voices advocating for change in her area. Kenidra Woods, a 17-year-old junior from St. Louis, was already advocating for more discussion of self-harm and mental health among teens before Parkland, after which she sprang into action to help conduct a walkout at her school in February in solidarity. She and her classmates faced resistance from administrators after students were barred from returning to class, and she’s since become one of the most vocal young activists in this nationwide movement.

Nza-Ari Khepra of Chicago founded Project Orange Tree after a friend, 15-year-old Hadiya Pendleton, was shot and killed in 2013. She’s now 21 and a student at Columbia, continuing her efforts to end gun violence; her smart work was the inspiration for the nationwide “Wear Orange” campaign.

Then there are those of us representing Parkland: Fellow Stoneman Douglas student Nick Joseph lost one of his best friends, Joaquin Oliver, on February 14, and is speaking out in his name by organizing and marching, rising to a challenge no 16-year-old in mourning should have to face. Sarah Chadwick, 16, has been organizing the March for Our Lives event set for March 24, and she is loudly denouncing critics like the NRA's Dana Loesch on Twitter. Jaclyn Corin, 17, who lost her friend Jaimie Guttenberg on February 14, planned a trip to meet lawmakers at the very start of the movement and has been a crucial member of #NeverAgain.

We Stoneman Douglas students may have woken up only recently from our sheltered lives to fight this fight, but we stand in solidarity with those who have struggled before us, and we will fight alongside them moving forward to enact change and make life survivable for all young people. People who have been fighting for this for too long, others who were never comfortable enough to openly talk about their experiences with gun violence, or still others who were never listened to when opening up about their experiences with gun violence or were afraid to speak out — these are the people we are fighting with and for.

The media afforded a group of high school students the opportunity to wedge our foot in the door, but we aren't going through this alone. As a group, and as a movement, it's vital that we acknowledge and utilize our privilege, use our platforms to spread the names of the dead and the injured, promote ideas that can help spread kindness rather than hostility, support those who aren't being heard, take our voices and use them together with the megaphones provided.

We the Wounded of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Future, establish Justice, ensure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common People, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Generations to Come, do ordain and establish this March for the United States of America.

Source: <https://www.teenvogue.com/story/emma-gonzalez-parkland-gun-control-cover>

Afghan & Honduran share a common mission

By Jillian Slutzker
2016

Hailing from different corners of the globe, Honduran skater Jessel Recinos Fernandez and Afghan online campaigner Ahmad Shakib Mohsanyar have at least two things in common—a drive to create positive change in their communities and the recognition of the U.S. State Department.

For their efforts to create positive social change, Fernandez and Mohsanyar were selected to receive the State Department’s 2016 Emerging Young Leaders Award. They are two of only 10 young people from around the world between the ages of 16 to 24 to receive the honor.

“They represent the power of young people to launch grass-roots initiatives to improve their communities,” said Evan Ryan, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs, speaking at the awards ceremony in Washington, D.C., April 20.

The Emerging Young Leaders Award and Exchange Program brings leaders like Fernandez and Mohsanyar together with other young leaders and experts in their fields from the U.S. and other countries to share best practices, sharpen their leadership skills and form invaluable networks that will help amplify the results of their projects.



Fernandez is being honored for his role as the founder and leader of the Skate Brothers Club, a club for at-risk youth to learn rollerblading, skateboarding, BMX, and breakdancing, and gain a sense of belonging and direction to keep them off the streets and away from gang violence.

Honduras has one of the highest murder rates in the world, suffering from a nationwide gang violence epidemic. Its capital city, San Pedro Sula, has earned the unenviable moniker “the murder capital of the world.”

Fernandez’s Skate Brothers is one of nearly 40 youth activity clubs run out of 46 youth Outreach Centers across the Honduras as part of the Alianza Joven Honduras project, which is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development and implemented by Creative Associates International.

The Outreach Centers provide a haven for at-risk youth like Fernandez and safe spaces for recreation, tutoring, music lessons, life skills, vocational training, volunteering and more.

For a younger Fernandez, growing up in the violence-plagued town of Cofradia just outside of San Pedro Sula, a violence-free future—let alone an honor from the State Department—was unimaginable. Like many other youth in his neighborhood, Fernandez became involved in gang life. But after being shot, Fernandez realized he needed to change course.

“When I got to the hospital the doctors couldn’t believe it,” he said at the awards ceremony. “They thought I should have been dead. Then I realized that perhaps life was giving me another chance to do something else with it.”

He became involved in his neighborhood Outreach Center and discovered a path to a different kind of life, one with a brighter future. In 2011, he founded the Skate Brothers Club and has not turned back since.

Fernandez views the club as a platform to not only teach at-risk youth new sporting skills, but to help them avoid going down the same perilous road he did.

“We want to prevent these young people from getting lost,” he said in a 2014 video about the club. “We are not only teaching skating, but giving them moral values, giving them the respect they deserve and teaching them new things.”



Mohsanyar is being honored for founding and leading the “Afghanistan Needs You” social media campaign to encourage young Afghans to stay in the country and build their futures at home.

In recent years, emigration has drained the country of young educated Afghans, which has had negative implications for the country’s economy as it recovers from years of conflict. “Afghanistan has changed a lot since 2001, and the youth should stay in the country and help their future or to make their future,” said Mohsanyar. To date, the Afghanistan Needs You campaign has garnered more than 26,000 likes on Facebook and international media coverage from the BBC and Deutsche Welle, among others. Mohsanyar says the award is not only an honor for him but also offers more motivation to Afghans of his generation to stay in their country and find success there.

“This award will open the door to new opportunities that can further help my country and the youth. It will increase my commitment, and I hope this can be an inspiration for other youth of my country to be part of this development and not leave their country,” he says. Offline as well, Mohsanyar has done his part to keep his peers in the country.

As a Job Development Officer and Training and Placement Expert with the Afghanistan Holding Group, he organized training courses to equip young job seekers and workers with the workforce skills that companies need and then helped to match them with available positions or to secure promotions. Rather than fleeing the country for work, his peers can find a path to economic independence and a stable income at home. The group is a grantee of the Afghanistan Workforce Development Program, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development and implemented by Creative. Through grantees like the Afghanistan Holding Group, the program has trained more than 27,000 young Afghans with in-demand job skills. More than 17,000 of these graduates have found work, received promotions and/or increased their wages.

source: <https://www.creativeassociatesinternational.com/stories/afghan-honduran-share-a-common-mission->



Mina Fa

2019 Gail Sadalla Rising Peacemaker Award

Mina Fa is a senior at Phillip and Sala Burton High School in Visitation Valley. Mina and her family are Cham, an ethnic group from Southeast Asia that she credits for teaching her to treat everybody she meets equally. Mina says her Muslim background teaches her to be mindful of the impact of her words.

Through the support of Peer Resources, Mina has developed an array of conflict resolution and life skills based on these core beliefs.

Through her Peer Resources experience, she turned her life around. Now she not only mediates student disputes, but she also mentors first generation and struggling young women who remind her of herself. She helps them secure clothing, school supplies, and employment while boosting their self-esteem.

Taking honors and AP classes, Mina will graduate with a 4.0 GPA and will begin San Francisco State University in the fall.

Mina is a strong advocate for herself and others, and she never fails to do what she knows to be the right thing. One of her teachers shares, “Mina looks conflict straight in the eye, listens to all perspectives with empathy, and works with all involved to move forward.”

In her own words, “I create peace in my community to eradicate the stigma of poverty. Coming from adversity should not define you, it actually helps create you.”

source: https://myemail.constantcontact.com/The-2019-San-Francisco-Peacemaker-Awards--Meet-Mina-Fa.html?soid=1011266320026&aid=I_RTL6FahDY



Project I Am

Project I Am was created by 8-year-old Jahkil Naeem Jackson. Jahkil, now 12, has a heartfelt desire to help those in need. After helping his aunt distribute food to the Chicago homeless, he knew that he wanted to do more to make a difference.

It quickly became Jahkil's mission to build awareness of homelessness and to help the homeless population by offering them what he calls "Blessing Bags," a giveaway filled with wipes, socks, deodorant, hand sanitizer, granola bars, toothbrushes, toothpaste, bottled water, and more.

Jahkil Jackson has set and surpassed many goals in his young life. Distributing his Blessing Bags to the homeless has been one of his biggest achievements thus far. In just a few years, Jahkil's efforts have touched over 35,000 men, women and children across the world. Along with the help of friends and family, Jahkil has organized distribution to those in need in Chicago, Los Angeles, Oklahoma, Washington D.C., Atlanta, Virginia and Idaho. He has also provided Blessing Bags to orphans in

Mbabane, Swaziland, as well as volcano victims in Guatemala, and hurricane survivors in Florida, Houston, Puerto Rico and the Bahamas.

Jahkil is a motivational speaker on a mission to influence kids around the country to get involved in their communities. He plans to continue to join forces with other like-minded youth to lead a life of service, encouraging them to find their passions and make the world a better place. To continue to reach his goals, he is asking the public for supplies and monetary donations.

Summer 2016, he was named a Youth Ambassador for Heartland Alliance, one of the world's leading anti-poverty organizations, working in communities in the U.S. and abroad to serve those who are homeless, living in poverty, or seeking safety. Winter 2017, Jahkil became a member of the WE International Youth Council. WE is a movement that exists to make the world a better place. WE Day is also a celebration of youth making a difference in their local and global communities. Jahkil was a guest speaker for 2017 and 2018. Fall 2018, Jahkil became the youngest member of the Independent Youth group which empowers today's youth to become tomorrow's business leaders and entrepreneurial innovators. Jahkil was recently voted Vice Chairman of the 2019 KidBox Youth Board of Directors, named one of BET's 15 under 15 and is a CNN 2019 Young Hero.

Most notably, Jahkil was acknowledged as one of three influential people of 2017 by President Barack Obama and the Obama Foundation.

<https://officialprojectiam.com/>

Joshua Espulgar Rowe: I am a Leader
November 14, 2019



I first became interested in Youth Leadership Institute (yli) programs as a result of frustrations that I experienced in seventh grade. My tiny rural school implemented new rules restricting bike riding on campus – a trivial issue in retrospect – but one that impacted many of the 19 other students in my class. Though I was unhappy with the new regulations, my discontentment stemmed primarily from the total lack of youth input into a decision that impacted us. My dejection ended when my good friend Ruby enthusiastically told me about her participation in a yli-run program called the Marin County Youth Commission (MCCYC), a cohort of young people appointed by the county government to advocate for the interests of youth constituents. I was immediately enticed by the opportunity to put myself on the same level as the adult leaders in my community, and I begin my first term during my eighth grade year.

I began my tenure as a youth commissioner by swearing an oath to protect and defend the Constitution. As I stood alongside my new colleagues and affirmed my loyalty to my state and country, I became fully conscious of the situation's gravity – I had never made a serious commitment like this before. After the swearing-in ceremony, the returning

commissioners chatted about their previous projects, like making a documentary about educational inequities that existed in Marin. This just reinforced for me how new and important this role was going to be. I was definitely one of the youngest commissioners and it took me awhile to find my voice.

Although I remained reserved for my first two years on the Commission, I eventually gained the confidence to express my character and feelings during a major campaign to reform Marin County's youth criminal justice system. I had brought MCYC together with a coalition of community organizations – Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol – to research and address the issue of youth substance use. Our research revealed that the County's response to youth drinking was not only ineffective, with high rates of recidivism, but it saddled youth with criminal records that could follow them throughout their lives. They also learned that it disproportionately impacted low-income youth of color who could not afford expensive legal counsel.

I was apprehensive about speaking up, but the issue was so important that I felt compelled to take the risk of becoming more visible. It was the first time I was presented with a situation in which I could see myself.

It was clear to all of us that punishing someone who is experiencing substance abuse over and over won't solve the problem. Fortunately, one of our coalition partners, the YMCA Marin County Youth Court, had a solution: instead of funneling kids into the parole system, they recommended a restorative justice process whereby respondents



would be faced with a jury of their peers. Recognizing the important role of family in addressing youth substance use, the parents of respondents would be included in the restorative plan. The Court also made an effort to connect the youth that it served with additional resources, such as counseling. A family's income wouldn't impact the outcome, and youth wouldn't be strapped by a criminal record. Of course, expanding the scope of Youth Court wouldn't solve all the problems, but it addressed many of the inequities.

Then came the hard part: convincing powerful members of our community – elected officials and government leaders – that this was a good solution. We spent months refining our exact course of action so we would all be on the same page when we presented to our networks. Our meticulous preparation was followed by meetings with the Marin County Board of Supervisors, the County Public Health Officer, and law enforcement, among other powerful community partners. I was pleasantly surprised by how receptive government officials were to the ideas of constituents who weren't even

old enough to vote, and it was exhilarating to be working with the people in charge to make a difference.

After almost a year of late-night work sessions and stressful lobbying meetings, we finally testified before the Board of Supervisors, who passed our policy unanimously. I felt so honored to have had the chance to work alongside adults to influence change – and it made me realize just how critical youth voice is. We had a deeply unjust system that was impacting youth – one that, once revealed, everyone agreed was unjust – but there was no way to bring the issue to the attention of the Board of Supervisors until MCYC brought it up. There are many issues that only impact youth, so we are the only ones who can share meaningful perspectives. In this case, our solution was simple. The Youth Corp already had a great program in place. The connection just needed to be made.

After this big win, I remained on MCYC's Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Subcommittee. We focused on e-cigarette use, and drafted an informational poster that we shared with partner organizations. It felt like a minor project in relation to our recent win, but it wouldn't have been successful if we hadn't built the network through our last campaign. Once again, it underscored the value of youth leadership: even though we aren't scientists, we were able to develop a poster that would engage our peers.



In my sophomore year, yli's CEO reached out with an offer to join yli's board of directors. I was surprised. Until that time, I had imagined board members as old, powerful, wealthy people. I didn't even know nonprofits had boards. But as I read the invitation, it occurred to me that youth board positions – especially at an organization like yli – made perfect sense: we're all about youth voice, so we should have youth represented at the executive level. Needless to say, I was happy to accept yet another opportunity to have a voice.

As a yli board member, my most important responsibility is to review and approve the organization's annual budget. I feel a special obligation to ensure that our fiscal plan aligns with the interests of youth. Another big decision that I faced as a board member was the acquisition of the youth media organization, Youthwire. I was really excited about this merger and was a strong advocate for it. In my view, there was a real need to increase the visibility of the awesome things yli youth are doing in their communities. I think that sharing my perspective reinforced the affirmative votes for the acquisition.

Now that publicizing our work is a priority, I can't wait to see where this takes us. The videos, the publications – they are so important because it's how the world is going to find out about issues that impact youth. I know that people are concerned about the state of education, for example, but in order to arrive at real solutions, they need to hear from the people most affected – and if youth can present their cases in a way that encourages people to support them, we can mobilize more people to help us.

One of the most important impacts that yli has had on my life is figuring out my direction. I'm fascinated with government and political science – that's what I want to major in. I've taken summer classes on constitutional law, and now I'm thinking about law school so that I can continue to advocate for others. I've become more confident because I know my perspective is valid and important – and I've been privileged to have the opportunity to share it in a forum that it will be heard by other youth and by government. I am eager to continue using my leadership position to help other youth to have these opportunities so that more perspectives can be shared, so that more issues can be brought to the table.

To me, youth leadership is about organizing and inspiring others. I don't have to be the loudest person in the room in order to be an effective leader. What matters most is bringing the voices of others to the forefront, gaining their respect, and encouraging them to share their voices so that we can enrich our communities together.

Source:<https://yli.org/2019/11/josh-rowe-i-am-a-leader-series/>

Who is Sebastian?

The Kid Entrepreneur Who Loves Kooky Socks



Have you ever loved something so much you wanted to spend every day thinking about it? Well, that's the kind of love we're talking about with Sebastian Martinez and his love of color, wacky socks.

“Sebastian Creates a Sock Company” is the story of Are You Kidding?, a sock company founded by entrepreneur Sebastian Martinez when he was only five years old, with the help of his family. Known as “the Sock Kid” in preschool, Sebastian always loved and wore wacky socks. His grandma worked in retail and brought him socks when she visited. Unlike other kids, Sebastian was happy to receive socks as a gift! By the time he was five, he had more than 100 pairs of colorful, tall socks. His love for their wacky designs spurred a question in mother Rachel Martinez: “Would you like to design your own socks?” She remembers the exact date: June 25, 2013.

That inquiry alone marked the beginning of the sock venture, with Sebastian launching full speed ahead with designs. He wanted to turn his designs into real socks, and his mother helped make that dream a reality. A publishing advertising executive with expansive relationships in Latin America, Rachel got straight to work, trying to figure out how her son could have a “real” sock. Eventually she connected with a manufacturer in Guatemala that could produce samples.

In May 2014, Are You Kidding? became a real company, and Sebastian, at six years old, took the seat as CEO, while his mother led as president. Just one month prior, the

first shipment of socks arrived. Boxes filled the Martinez home and overflowed into other relatives' houses, as well. They were ready to sell!

Older brother Brandon's knack for socializing and presenting shined at the company's first sales outing that month. Rachel and Sebastian set up a table at Sesame Step Children's Shoes in Miami, Florida. Sebastian was shy and had a tough time speaking with strangers early on. Rachel made a call to her husband Fabian Martinez, pleading that he bring Brandon by the shop to inject some energy into the Are You Kidding? table. As soon as he arrived, Brandon had customers in awe, loving the socks and buying them left and right.

That day, Brandon earned the title of "Director of Sales," or as he likes to be called, the "DOS." Earlier that day, the company recorded its first sale, and Brandon's energy helped accelerate customer interest. He, too, stepped up as a model of confidence and salesmanship for younger brother Sebastian.

Today, the duo has built an inspiring business that has not only sold tens of thousands of socks, but also partners with nonprofits — such as the Live Like Bella Foundation, SLAM ALS, Autism Speaks, Breanna Vergara Foundation, and the American Cancer Society — to design and sell cause-specific socks that support each organization's mission.



For the funds and awareness they have raised for pediatric cancer, Sebastian and Brandon received a Commendation from the Mayor of The City of Miami, one of the many honors of which they are most proud. The team was also named Honorary Firefighters by the Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Union and got to fly in a helicopter as a perk, a story the two tell with much excitement. They've appeared on Good Morning America, The Harry Show, Noticiero Univision, and CNN en Español's Dinero, among other shows, and continue to inspire many with their story.

Are You Kidding? offers both children's and adult socks and includes designs such as Lady Bug, Bubbles, Rocket Ship, and Googly Eyes (Sebastian's favorite), as well as an array of custom charity socks.

While writing the Entrepreneur Kid book series, illustrator Li Zeng, videographer Dan Ndombe, and I visited Sebastian and the Martinez family. The story and pictures featured in Sebastian's book were all inspired by in-person and online interviews with the family.

To learn more about Sebastian, Brandon, and the Are You Kidding? story, preorder "Sebastian Creates a Sock Company" on Kickstarter starting on March 28th and visit areyoukidding.net to see the company in action.



source: <http://www.entrepreneurkid.com/2017/03/23/sebastian-martinez-are-you-kidding-socks/>

Video resources

Hunters Point Heroes (2006)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t48cvDtPtZo>

Nine middle school youth from BAYCAT, which is located in the the BayView Hunters Point neighborhood in San Francisco, spent six weeks of their summer making Hunters Point Heroes, a 12 minute film that focuses on seven neighborhood heroes. The youth researched their neighborhood, selected their heroes, filmed the interviews, and then edited together the final video.

Every Day Hero

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IA0trdWmPog&list=PLXEi2n_wfDtafU27e1TJkGhvZMxu1CjSa&index=6&t=411s)

[v=IA0trdWmPog&list=PLXEi2n_wfDtafU27e1TJkGhvZMxu1CjSa&index=6&t=411s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IA0trdWmPog&list=PLXEi2n_wfDtafU27e1TJkGhvZMxu1CjSa&index=6&t=411s)

Keenla Williams, from Bayview Hunters Point Williams, was driving on Highway 101 in the early morning hours Oct. 19, 2011 when she saw a big rig crash, flip onto its side and burst into flames. Williams sprang from her car, jumped over streams of flaming diesel fuel and pulled the driver away from the burning wreckage.

Less than three years later, Keenia pulled another person from a smoking car, this time on I-80. She's been called a hero by the Mayor of San Francisco, first responders, and her daughter.

Sabrina McFarland Boys and Girls Club SF Youth of the Year

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c3tsy7los2g>

Selected among six outstanding youth, Sabrina McFarland has been named the Citywide Youth of the Year by Boys & Girls Clubs of San Francisco (BGCSF). The Citywide Youth of the Year title is a prestigious honor bestowed upon an exemplary young person in recognition of leadership, service, academic excellence and dedication to live a healthy lifestyle.

Sabrina is a senior at Lick-Wilmerding High School and has been a Club member for 10 years. She is on the Student Council and is part of the Dance Team and Feminist Club. Last summer, she spent a month helping to build a school in Senegal, West Africa. After graduation, Sabrina plans to attend Columbia University, Barnard University or Howard University to study law or education.

For the Heroes: A Pep Talk From Kid President

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tgF1Enrgo2g&list=PLXEi2n_wfDtafU27e1TJkGhvZMxu1CjSa&index=2)

[v=tgF1Enrgo2g&list=PLXEi2n_wfDtafU27e1TJkGhvZMxu1CjSa&index=2](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tgF1Enrgo2g&list=PLXEi2n_wfDtafU27e1TJkGhvZMxu1CjSa&index=2)

This one goes out to all the heroes - the kids and the grownups who are doing extraordinary things to make the world more awesome.

GLOSSARY

Hero

Demonstrating integrity, honesty, forthrightness, possession of special gifts shared or used for the protection or benefit of others; could be mythological.

Qualities of a Hero

altruistic

showing unselfish concern for the welfare of others

bravery

daring and impetuous courage

caring

feeling and exhibiting concern and empathy for others

considerate

showing concern for the rights and feelings of others

conviction

fixed or strong belief; unshakable belief

courageous

able to face and deal with danger or fear without flinching

daring

a challenge to do something dangerous or foolhardy

decisive

characterized by resoluteness and firmness

determination

the act of finding out the properties of something

dilemma

state of uncertainty in a choice between unfavorable options

empathetic

showing ready comprehension of others' states

fortitude

encountering danger and enduring pain with a steadfast and unbroken spirit.

gallant

having or displaying great dignity or nobility

humanitarian

marked by devotion to popular welfare

moral

concerned with principles of right and wrong

perseverance

persistent determination

resilient

recovering readily from adversity, depression, or the like

risk

a source of danger

role model

someone worthy of imitation

self-sacrificing

willing to deprive yourself

selfless

showing concern for the welfare of others

thoughtful

exhibiting or characterized by careful consideration



IDEAS FOR THE STUDIO

What Is a Hero?

Invite the students to create their own dictionary for the word. They can do this together or in groups.

Personal Heroes

Have the students discuss and explore familiar people in their own lives; ask them to think about family members, friends, neighbors, teachers, coaches, and so on. What qualities do they admire? Why are they heroes to them?

The Hero in Me

Give students an opportunity to think about times in their own lives when they faced a challenge in order to help someone. Maybe they stood up and told the truth when it was hard, worked on a project until it was finished when everyone else gave up, helped to save an animal that was hurt or trapped. They can share the stories in pairs or small groups.

Bring a Hero to Class!

Invite a Bayview Hero or another youth hero to the studio either in person or via video conferencing. Prepare the class by introducing the hero to your class and have them create a series of questions that would like to ask. Follow up with a discussion with the students in the next class.

Write a poem

Write poems with your students about their heroes and she-roes, read them together in small groups, then use them as source material for making dances.

Building vocabulary

Have your students build a list of action words that describe their heroes, then make phrases using the words.

