

Connecting people through their stories to foster empathy, equity, and community collaboration.

GIVING VOICE

October 1, 2020



A Note From Our Editor

Welcome to the first issue of Giving Voice!

In these digital pages you will find the thoughts, opinions, and suggested solutions from students who are attempting to understand the world around them and find ways in which they can engage and improve their community. In a year fraught with seemingly insurmountable problems, it can be difficult to find time to focus on a single issue, think through it, and act on it. And yet that is precisely what we've asked these young people to do—and what we humbly ask you to do as well.



When I was approached to act as an editor and mentor for Giving Voice, I thought back to what sparked my own interest in writing. Although I had always enjoyed it, I recalled visiting a free writing lab at Illinois Central College. At the age of 16, I worked with mentors who helped me correct grammatical issues, shape phrases, and frame my arguments. It was a simple act, but I left feeling empowered. Writing became not just an academic strength, but a professional and personal one as well. These communication skills made countless opportunities available... and it is a gift we wish to share with others.

“Youth” is, obviously, a pretty relative concept. My own generation, Millennials, have historically been portrayed fairly negatively, usually with a banal reference or two to avocado toast. (For the record, I fit that particular stereotype!) If you are a Gen X or Baby Boomer, I'm sure you endured your share of raised eyebrows from older generations.

But what if we approached Gen Z differently?
What if we engaged in a dialogue?

The act of sharing and listening is transformative. The acknowledgment of another's voice and opinion does not have to exist in a vacuum, of course. As the students wrote their articles, we pushed back and challenged them on some of their ideas. We asked them to think through the topics critically, research their arguments, and find potential solutions. It's easy enough to complain, but much more challenging to step up as a leader and create change.

I did my best to preserve each student's writing style. We anticipate that you will learn something from each of them, just as we have. I want to thank the Giving Voice team—Doug and Eileen Leunig, Jamie Wunning, and Trent Miles—for the incredible work that they put into bringing this program to fruition. I also want to thank each of the students for sharing their words with us—they are powerful, and they are necessary in order to change, heal, and grow our community.

Mae Gilliland Wright, PhD
Giving Voice Editor-in-Chief

GIVING VOICE

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Big Picture Initiative
Board Members
at recent
virtual meeting



A Note From Our Publishers

A Love Letter

Giving Voice is a love letter to our community. Everything we do at Big Picture Initiative, we do out of love. We believe in arts education opportunities for all, spanning in age from children in our schools and community centers to folks in retirement communities. From the 50-foot tall “Abraham Blue” mural on the Peoria County Courthouse to enhance the visual vibrancy of our city, to our new endeavor, Giving Voice, we are showing what we love about our community. It's all the nooks and crannies, the highs and lows, and the diversity that makes us who we are. We also know in our hearts that the people of Central Illinois can make our community a home with a bright future, and our youth are an essential part of building that future.

We believe the arts give students a voice—a voice that is often hidden in the quest for test scores and metric achievements. The arts fill a void for students to give them a platform for self-expression and contribute to their environment. Big Picture Initiative's first arts education programs were based on visual arts, and the team has decided that now is the time to expand into communication arts. By gaining experience in being more effective communicators and having a public audience, we help prepare the next generation for their place in the future.

Through Giving Voice students will cover subjects that young people are passionate about: social justice, racial equity, the environment, living during a pandemic, adapting to the virtual world, finding employment during a job drought, learning to be influencers, and pitching in to improve to our community. Giving students a voice to address our community's most pressing needs gives them an opportunity to experience real-world situations where learning is relevant and applied.

The writers in our first issue were selected because they care about community, too. We posed the question “What does our community need?” Unlike many of the voices that are broadcasted every day, the students didn't comment on potholes or taxes, but on concepts of kindness and understanding. We are proud to feature their voices in our first issue.

Please join us in this act of building community.

Doug Leunig, Eileen Leunig, Mark Misselhorn, Maggie Misselhorn,
Heather Ford, Nikki Romain, Heather Brammeier

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“White Silence = Violence” - 30 May 2020, We Matter March

The Role of Online Communities in Social Justice

by Adeline Ferolo

The notion of community is rooted in uplifting others to help them succeed—and it is this belief that is the backbone of a successful community. Within Peoria, Illinois, a group of young people have acted upon this concept to address issues of social injustice throughout the city. In the wake of a new wave within the Black Lives Matter (BLM) Movement, the youth-led and Peoria-based organization Young Revolution coordinated two peaceful protests that addressed issues of police brutality within Peoria. The first protest, called the “We Matter March,” took place on May 30th with an

estimated attendance of 1,000 people, according to the Peoria Journal Star (Renken). The participants came from a wide range of ethnicities and ages across the region. The objective was clear: to hold the police accountable for previous injustices of brutality, which have historically and disproportionately impacted the Black community.

These marches signify a new sense of community within Peoria, specifically in the youth sector, who are engaged in a progressive, worldwide view of politics—especially when

compared to previous generations. According to the Pew Research Center, Gen Z encounters a significant gap in beliefs concerning race relations, global warming, and government involvement when compared to their elder counterparts within Gen X and the Baby Boomer Generation. Gen Z is proactive in sharing their thoughts through increasingly accessible technology. Within various social media platforms, including Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok, young activists are voicing their opinion regarding many topics of interest, ranging from government reform, Native American rights, reproductive justice, and policing reform. These online platforms

create an unprecedented sense of community that was inaccessible to past generations due to a lack of technology. Almost all teenagers today have access to the internet and inevitably spend most of their time within an online community. A 2018 Pew Research Center survey found that “95% of 13- to 17-year-olds have access to a smartphone, and a similar share (97%) use at least one of seven major online platforms” (Parker). A digital community has evolved within these major online platforms to connect teens and facilitate the exchange of beliefs, morals, and ethics in a matter of milliseconds.



While online platforms have accelerated the process of acquiring and sharing information, as evident with the BLM movement in early summer 2020, simultaneously it has increased desensitization among teenagers. When important topics receive a lot of attention on social media, some teens join in simply because it may seem trendy. Rather than displaying empathy, they seek clout—looking for likes and shares, their posts become a form of performative activism. This form of activism is self-motivated in an attempt to appear helpful but is extremely destructive as it skims the surface of the issues in favor of gaining

followers instead of understanding the problem itself. It is the responsibility of users within online platforms to educate themselves regarding social justice issues and to hold other

users accountable. It is equally important to practice these values in the real world, by helping a neighbor mow their lawn or creating a recycling program within your neighborhood. These actions are essential

in bridging the gap between virtual and real-life communities to make way for changes and reforms.

“...a new sense of community within Peoria...”

About Adeline Ferolo



Stories, arguably, are the most underrated form of currency that floods the digital world, through highlighted Instagram posts and viral YouTube videos. As a rising senior at Richwoods High School, Adeline Ferolo aims to express herself and the issues closest to her authentically through engaging, storytelling, and other mediums. She is a competitively academic student. Her interests range across many creative outlets—as an active writer for the Richwoods Shield, the monthly school newspaper, and as a contributor to the youth-led blog EnviroWrite, which explores rising environmental concerns. Recently she has discovered her passion for the medium of film after attending the National High School Institute summer program at Northwestern University, where she had previously studied creative-intensive subjects ranging from sustainable architecture to graphic design. Within the past year, she has focused her efforts on exploring the visual medium in both her academic and personal life, opting to create experimental videos for class projects and continuing to explore different aspects of the visual language.

BE AN ARTIST



LOVE YOUR WORK





What Our Community Needs Most: Accessible Healthcare in Peoria

by Aasiyah Adnan

In tumultuous times such as these, the spread of COVID-19 has pushed the American healthcare system to its limits. As hospitals struggle to get the protective supplies they need for their staff and patients, the cost of care rises steeply. The American Hospital Association finds that treatment of COVID-19 could be well over \$88,000 for those who need ventilators. This current pandemic has reminded the public of the presence of health inequity and the unbearable burden of healthcare costs, and this is starkly apparent in Peoria, IL.

Peoria is home to four large hospitals along with their respective care centers: OSF Saint Francis Medical Center, UnityPoint Health, Methodist Medical Center, and Proctor

Hospital. These hospitals provide care to the larger Peoria area, surrounding suburbs, and rural areas. However, one look at downtown Peoria and the stark juxtaposition between its hospital facilities and its residents is obvious. According to the United States Census Bureau, the poverty rate in Peoria is 16.6%. NPR Illinois's "Impoverished in Illinois" finds that steady employment is difficult to find and thus many traditional jobs for teenagers are going to full-time workers. This is compounded with the fact that 24/7 Wall St. listed Peoria as the seventh worst city for Black Americans to live. The average poverty rate may be 16.6%, but USA Today found that compared to a poverty rate of 9.3% amongst the white population, 34.5% of Black Peorians live in poverty. All of this has laid bare an inequity between a large

population of Peoria and its healthcare system. They are underinsured or uninsured and unable to utilize the facilities present.

The problem is vast and complicated. Almost 40% of Peorians do not go for annual routine checkups and 12.5% do not visit a doctor because of cost, according to HOI United Way's 2017 assessment. However, solutions do exist to help combat this large divide. One solution is streamlined and transparent resources. Companies like GoodRx provide coupons for reduced cost prescription drugs, and many pharmacies also have \$4 and \$10 drug lists. All four hospitals also offer financial assistance services, but they can be difficult to navigate. Expanding awareness and creating better and easier accessibility to these cost-reducing resources will ease the burden on all individuals, even those with proper insurance. Another solution is to take advantage of technology. COVID-19 has shown that telemedicine is possible as many individuals communicate virtually with

doctors and physicians for appointments and checkups. The reduced cost of online resources and their widespread availability allows for cheaper, more accessible options for patients. While the system is still young in Peoria, its implementation has begun, and support in its development and usage will help the program grow.

In the meantime, clinics such as Heartland Health Services and Córdoba Clinic work to provide free and reduced primary and specialty care for Peoria residents. These clinics are geared toward the underinsured and uninsured, and they work to provide excellent care at low or no cost. They can only serve the community if they are supported through spreading awareness about their services and, if possible, donating. While the problem of healthcare in Peoria is glaring, supporting solutions that exist and pushing for the implementation of accessible services can help to better the health of the community.



About --- Aasiyah Adnan

Aasiyah Adnan is a senior at Dunlap High School. She is dedicated to community involvement on multiple levels. At school, she is academically competitive in her classes, a cross country/track captain, varsity runner (IHSA State qualifier in 2018 and 2019), Madrigals performer, speech captain and varsity performer (IHSA State qualifier in 2020), Scholastic Bowl varsity player, and Best Buddies officer. Aasiyah is also the Dunlap Student Body President and a part of Twelve Eagles, a student group focused on bridging the gap between the student body and administration. She focuses on ensuring that the student voice is heard and has spoken out at school board meetings about student mental health. She is currently in the process of starting the Muslim Student Association at Dunlap, and she hosted the first Global World Hijab Day in recent memory last school year. In the community, Aasiyah is active in her local mosque and volunteers at the Sunday School. She has been a Girl Scout for twelve years and is currently working on her Gold Award project on Muslim representation and resources at Dunlap. Since January 2019, Aasiyah also volunteers weekly at Córdoba Health Care, a free specialty clinic in Peoria that provides care to the uninsured.



BE AN ARTIST



CREATE YOUR WORLD



Covid-19 and Our Collective Compassion

by Jenin Manna

It's undeniable that 2020 has been eventful in the worst way possible. With Australia's wildfires, followed by the possibility of a World War III, and the introduction of COVID-19, it feels like the universe is playing a joke on us with a deadly virus as the punchline.

With 6 months of this year completed, it may be easier to cast 2020 aside as a faulty year. It's like having a malfunctioning iPhone subject to water damage—putting your iPhone in rice for 24 hours is sure to fix the damage. As a community, I'm sure dunking 2020 into a large enough bowl of rice may do the trick! But what if I told you that I have a solution to our community's issues that does not involve a single grain of rice?

As a community, we need compassion. That seems like such a general proposition, but with every individual's contribution, achieving compassion within our community is simple.

How can we show compassion to people when we are expected to maintain a 6-foot distance from them during a pandemic? The irony regarding COVID-19 lies within the fact that we're saving other people by maintaining a distance from them. With the urgency to return to normalcy, it's easy to abandon the will to keep away from friends and family. However, understanding how COVID-19 is affecting our community makes the 6-foot distance easily achievable.

The CDC calculates that Illinois ranks in the top 6 highest number of COVID-19 cases within the United States. As of the time this article was written, Peoria is 1 of 4 counties out of a total of 102 counties that are now at a warning level by the state Department of Public Health. Peoria is teeming with COVID-19, but the majority of our community are not changing their actions. They are refusing to acknowledge the severity of COVID-19 because it may not be personally affecting them at the moment.

This behavior shows a lack of compassion.

That being said, a little compassion goes a long way, and these numbers are reversible. The director of the CDC proclaims that coronavirus cases would be significantly decreased in weeks if everyone wore masks and socially distanced. After ruling our community for 6 months, COVID-19 would be dethroned with a few compromises in our daily life that would ultimately stem from a desire to be compassionate. There are very few positive highlights within the year 2020 thus far.

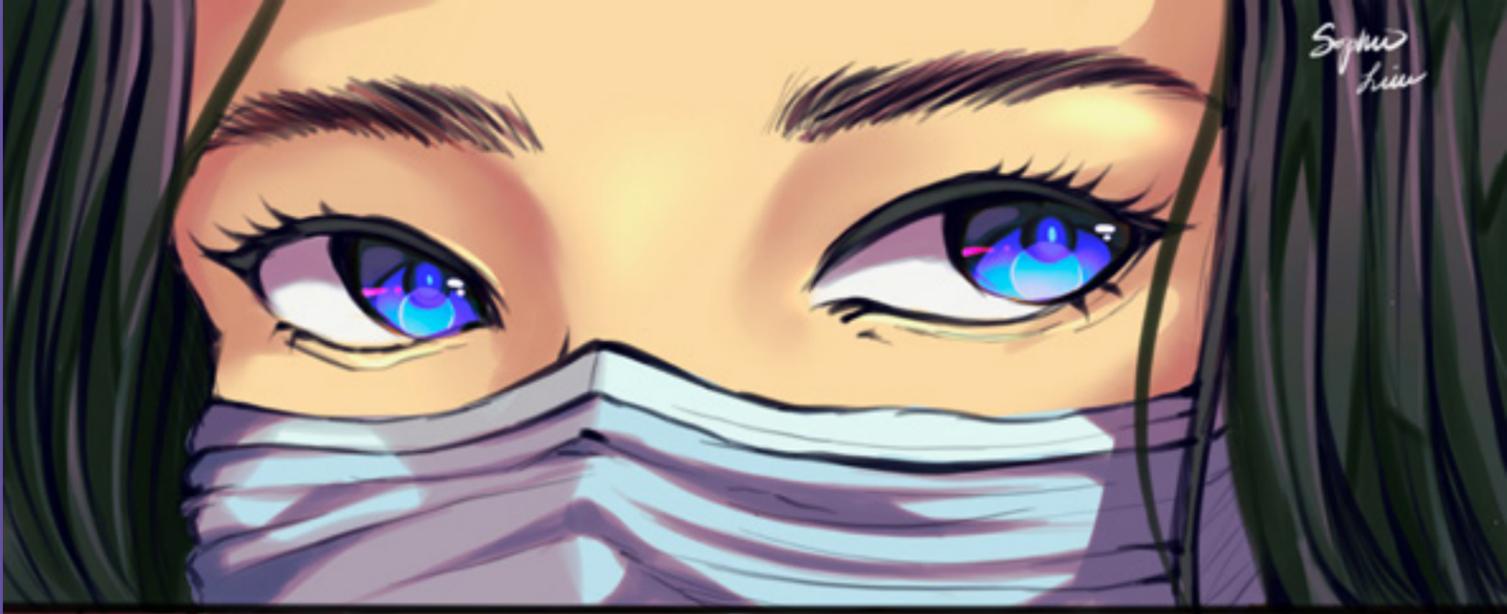
But, there are still 3 months of this year left—and so much we can do within that stretch of time. Coronavirus might leave our community as quickly as it came! All we have to do is recognize our vulnerability to this virus, socially distance, and wear our masks for the

sake of ourselves and others, and trust that the CDC is instilling guidelines for our benefit. It may be easy to believe you are no more than a grain of rice amidst our community, but every individual that contributes their share

is sure to make a large impact.

“ ...a little compassion goes a long way... ”





About Jenin Mannaa

Jenin Mannaa is a rising senior at Dunlap High School. Her stellar academic performance has granted her entrance to the National Honors Society at her school. Jenin has expressed her love for advocacy through her involvement on the Dunlap Speech Team as Junior and Senior Captain. Within speech, her primary goal has been expressing her identity as a Muslim-American woman. Jenin attended IHSA State for Oratorical Declamation her junior year of high school. Within her speech team, she was also awarded Sophomore and Junior MVP. Jenin's passion for the arts is evident through her involvement in Stage 323, where she was inducted in the International Thespian Society. She has also been involved in Concert Choir, Women's Chorale, and Show Choir throughout her high school career. Moreover, her devotion to garnering support for ethnic minorities motivated Jenin to create Dunlap's UNICEF Club, which educates students about the tribulations of underprivileged individuals in impoverished countries. Within UNICEF, she leads fundraisers, and within the first few months of the club she raised approximately \$500. During her summers, Jenin has spent over 200 hours volunteering at the Unity-Point Methodist Hospital within the daycare or shadowing various doctors within Peoria.



Digital Art By Sophie Liu:
Art serves as a creative outlet as well as a means of advocacy. Sophie Liu is a talented 17-year-old artist from Dunlap High School who created this art piece to portray the importance of wearing a mask.

How to be an Advocate for your Community

by Trent Miles

Due to the failure of global administrations, climate change is progressively becoming worse. If we continue to turn a blind eye to the pain of those suffering under its oppression, we will never escape this detrimental cycle. Take a moment to look back and reflect on all of the natural disasters in this past decade; picture the broken homes, neighborhoods, and communities. In recent years it is happening at an even quicker and more violent rate. Wildfires are currently spreading throughout parts of California and Oregon, with smoke reaching as far as Connecticut. Just recently, Hurricane Laura, a category four storm, slammed into Louisiana.

The climate crisis will continue to grow worse if we do not take action now, and the death toll from these natural disasters will rise. In this article, I will discuss why advocacy is

an important part of the process to become a "greener community" and three ways to make it happen.

Reconnecting with your community is the first tip to making your community environmentally friendly. Talk to your neighbors, friends, local emergency support, and others. It sounds cliché, but sometimes it's hard to connect with your community. In order to remedy this, try creating community projects, such as implementing a local vegetable or fruit garden or starting a community trash pick-up day—and don't give up if it doesn't always work out. Recently, in Peoria's second district, a community garden was torn down. Residents took a stand in opposition with demonstrations. They can also make their voices known in the February 2021 primary election.

This leads me to my next tip: buy local! Shopping locally not only diminishes food miles, but it keeps produce flowing in the community. Furthermore, it's a great way to become acquainted with your neighbors.





When was the last time you talked with the person who grew your cucumbers? Places like the Peoria Riverfront Market, Metro Centre's Peoria Farmers Market, and the Junction City Farmers Market provide fresh produce to neighborhood communities daily.

My third tip to transform your community is to become active and engaged in local, national, and state politics. This seems intimidating, but the power to change government policy rests in your hands. How can you influence the massive institutions and large groups of people that wield the power? All you need to do is show up to a polling booth and vote! It is vital to let and make your voice

be heard. Don't forget that environmental ills often fall disproportionately on the low income and marginalized citizens.

Learning how to be an advocate for your community when it needs you is important. Currently, I have created a petition to increase awareness about climate change. I have had 10,000 people sign my petition. Change and advocacy doesn't have to start when you're twenty or thirty years old. You can start now—at any age. Your voice is the most powerful tool you have. As Malala Yousafzai once said, "When the whole world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful."

About Trent Miles



Trent Miles is a rising senior at Richwoods High School and has been working for Big Picture Initiative since May 2020. He is academically competitive and a well rounded student. Trent is the co-founder of his Richwood's climate action club, Vice President of the Minority Academic Advancement Project, and a varsity tennis player. Outside of school, he is involved in Jack and Jill of America, where he served as the Central Region Teen Vice President in 2018. In his chapter he served as Vice President, Legislative Chair and Foundation Chair. Trent also runs his own environmental blog called "EnviroWrite," which is a youth-run blog that seeks to innovate how we discuss and inform ourselves on environmental concerns. He has won 1st place in a Regional Best Hobby Exhibits competition and two Regional Alexander Pushkin writing competitions. He has contributed more than 800 hours of community service through various service projects including a winter wear drive, collecting toiletries, and even an educational African-American museum.

BE AN ARTIST



EXPRESS YOURSELF



“ I believe that the
most important thing
that a community can have is
Empathy.”



Empathy Transforms Communities

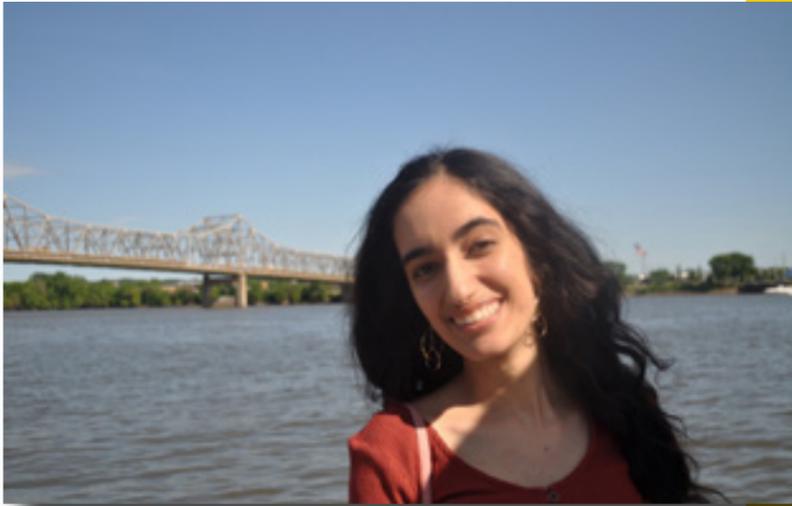
by Kratika Tandon

The question “What does our community need the most?” is a difficult one to answer. The responses are always different, usually catered towards the individual themselves or based on what has affected them the most. People offer ideas like food, housing, and education. While these are all crucial to a functioning and healthy society, I believe that the most important thing that a community can have is empathy. We need to understand that every person has different needs. Rather than

focusing solely on what holds importance or applies to us, it's crucial to sympathize with the experiences and needs of others. Without empathy, we are nothing. We aren't a community; rather a clustered group of individuals simply coexisting. In this world where so much information is at our fingertips, it can become overwhelming—and it's far too easy to turn a blind eye to injustices that people around us are facing. It is a problem that many face in our generation.

Our communities are starved of compassion and empathy. According to Dr. Jill Suttie's UC Berkeley article, “Why the World Needs an Empathy Revolution,” empathy requires an ability to perceive one another's feelings, to imagine why they might feel in such a way, and to be concerned for their wellbeing. She continues to simplify these three aspects of empathy as containing emotional resonance, a cognitive component, and concern. If individuals in our communities are empathetic, we can put our energy towards a multitude of different projects working for the betterment of the people. This is more efficient than only petitioning for what matters to us, because if we take on a self-serving outlook on life, all progress that we make will be hindered. Striving for a more empathetic community isn't a futile vision—it's something that can be easily implemented. The most important thing we individuals can do to become more compassionate towards others is just to take a personal interest in the people around us. We need to talk to our neighbors, call our friends, and go out of our way to listen to people's stories. Taking a special interest in the lives of those around us helps us become more mindful of others and helps them feel like they matter. By taking small steps like these, we can continue to grow and nourish our communities to reach their fullest potential.

About _____ Kratika Tandon



Kratika Tandon is an incoming freshman at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She is majoring in biology and graduating with a minor in environmental economics and policy. She graduated from Dunlap High School as class valedictorian. Tandon is incredibly passionate about sustainability. As such, she is interested in many different career paths that involve helping the environment. She is most interested in writing about the subjects of environmental issues, social justice, life during a pandemic, and racial equity. She is proficient in informative and expository writing as well as public speaking. Tandon was a part of her high school's speech team for four years. This past season, she competed in two events at the state championship tournament: original oratory and informative speaking. She wrote and perfected these speeches on her own, both tackling specific topics dealing with the environment. Tandon was also the president of her school's local Interact Club. She possesses great leadership, communication, and teamwork skills. She is participating with Giving Voice because she wants to use her voice and writing to inspire others and facilitate change.

BE AN ARTIST



FIND YOUR PASSION

The Influence of Education

by Izaak Garcia

The spread of information is a skill that humans above all have perfected, yet still have so far to go. From mainstream media outlets to newspaper stands on the street corner, sharing information is one of the essential ways that people can see what is happening outside of their own lives. But information, in this case, is not always power. With a multitude of news outlets reporting on events happening in our country and around the world, we are bound to come across one or two who are not telling the whole story, or even spreading the wrong one.

Trying to discern which stories are correct and factual and which are not is not an easy task. More than likely, when a news outlet is sharing a story, they might not be giving the public all the details. So how can we, as the general public, ensure that we are being well informed, and not misled? We must question

the information given to us by the media and ask ourselves: *is it what we want to hear, or what we need to hear?*

The question of what our community truly needs most is one asked by almost every single person who cares about their community and what happens to it. Obtaining this piece of information isn't rocket science, but what is rocket science, or close to it, is actually doing something about it and making the change that you would like to see. Determining what a community needs is not just a 'one size fits all' kind of deal because communities across the United States (and frankly the world) are not the same. This isn't necessarily a bad thing. After all, differences in our communities gives our world its unique diversity. Otherwise, we would just be a copy of one another, everyone being exactly the same, living the exact same way, and doing the exact same thing.

So, the question arises again: "What does our community need most?" Some could say a community needs a basketball court or a

soccer field for kids. Others may say that they need more affordable housing so a person who is not as fortunate as another has a place to stay for the night, and the night after that, and hopefully for many more nights. The point that is being made here is that the needs of a certain community vary everywhere you go, whether it be across the country, or just a few blocks over. But it is the community that must determine what it needs most—and to do that, the community must be educated. With knowledge comes great opportunity, and with that given opportunity, the people can determine what their community needs most because they are the only people who can.

About Izaak Garcia



Izaak Garcia is currently a senior at Richwoods High School, enrolled in the International Baccalaureate program. After high school, Garcia plans to study Computer Science. He has played soccer with FC Peoria and Richwoods for over a decade combined. Garcia has also played tennis for 4 years, securing a spot on both junior

varsity and varsity teams. Along with this, he has competed with the Richwoods Worldwide Youth Science and Engineering team for Biology and Computer Science for 2 years and earned multiple awards for the school. Garcia is also heavily involved with the arts. As a multi-instrumentalist, he has played the saxophone for 8 years and piano for 2 years. During his junior year of high school, he was involved in theater at Richwoods as stage crew and manager. He helped with two total productions and was being trained to be stage manager for senior year before the COVID-19 pandemic impacted school. Outside of school activities, Garcia is involved in Jack and Jill of America (an organization for young African American men and women to serve the community). He served as his chapter's treasurer during his freshman year of high school. Along with Jack and Jill of America, he enjoys coding, learning new coding languages, and video games.



POWER OF DIVERSITY:

A PAME Photo Exhibition

Many creative and persevering children from different backgrounds and cultures inspired the creation of Performing Arts Master Classes and Events (PAME). Thousands of youth have participated in PAME campaigns with the purpose of helping their community understand their needs.

PAME gives children and youth a voice in philanthropy through the arts. Earlier in 2020, they held a #powerofdiversity campaign in Peoria to get youth involved. The goal of the #powerofdiversity campaign was to bring

youth together to celebrate cultural differences and similarities by respecting each other through a diversity-awareness photography contest.

PAME is happy that the campaign allowed children to express themselves about important issues. Groups in Illinois and Texas partnered with them to permit youth to be loud and proud about their actions, bringing forth positive change. The photos shown here are images selected from students in Illinois whose work was displayed at the Peoria Art Guild.

“Different Backgrounds United”
by Luis Valadez



DREAM
CREATE
INSPIRE

WWW.PAMEKIDS.ORG



DeSean
by Misty Reed
Mount Carmel Elementary School

"Diversity means to me being different and staying positive!"

by Evelyn Avila
Lincoln School



“..Diversity means being different and staying **positive!**”



Livi and Hanna

“My picture is of me, Livi Bryant, and my Penguin Project partner Hannah Capitelli sharing a fun moment between rehearsal scenes at last year’s Penguin performance of *Hairspray!* The Penguin Project embraces inclusion through an annual musical theater performance. The cast is made up of kids with various special needs who are partnered with a mentor that leads them through rehearsals and performances. Both Hannah and I started the Penguin Project three years ago and we are currently working on our third show together.

I have grown so much getting to know Hannah and thoroughly enjoy the time we get to spend together!”

Livi Bryant, Brimfield HS freshman
Hannah Capitelli, Richwoods HS senior

“..embracing **inclusion** through performance..”

“...different **happy** smiles.”

“Diversity means to me different happy smiles.”
by Estefany Madrigal
Glen Oak School



Catrina Makeup
by Andraia Pankey

“ ..our similarities and differences **shine.**”

“The photo that I am submitting shows how there is a difference in height, skin color, size, shape, personality, and style in all different types of people. In the photo they are all holding a flag. They are flags for color guard, which is something that we all share.

You can find multiple different types of people and cultures through something that we share. We are all passionate about color guard and share the similarity through what we do and how much we have worked for it. Even though we are all different we come together and make something that we share with people. We are all different and have different ways that we view the world. Color guard is a place where our similarities and differences shine.”

by Danielle Gantt
Dunlap High school



“...permit youth to be
loud and proud...”



Born with a Limb Deficiency
by Kylie Sullivan
Dunlap Valley

Carley
by Carley Osterman
Homeschooled





“
...
bringing
forth
positive
change
”
...

Everyday Citizens
by Jessica Shelby
Pekin Community High School

THE NEW NORMAL: Returning to Campus During COVID-19

Bradley's Communication Agency



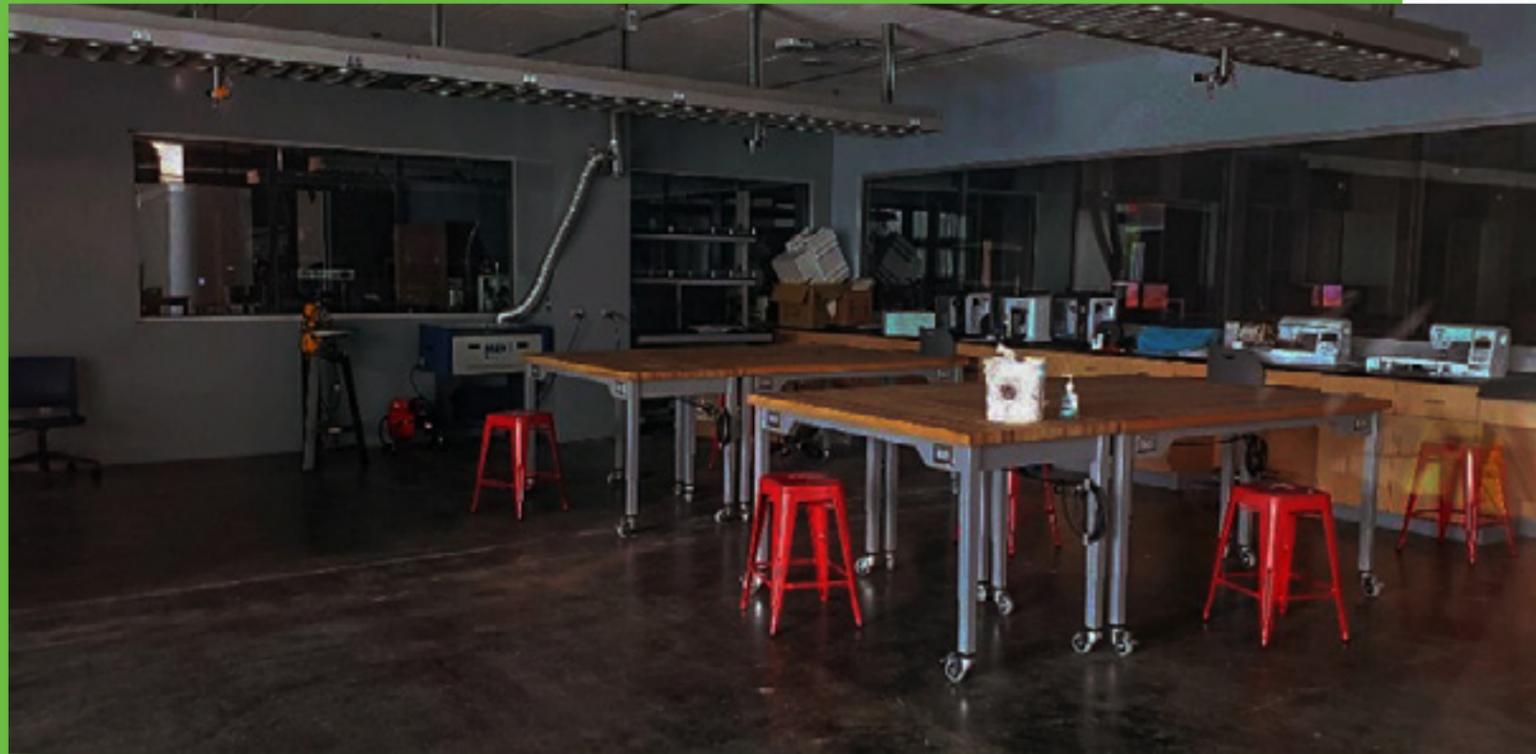
"New study places featuring safety guidelines."
by Lisbeth Houdek



"Lydia statue following COVID-19 guidelines."
by Marilyn Gutierrez

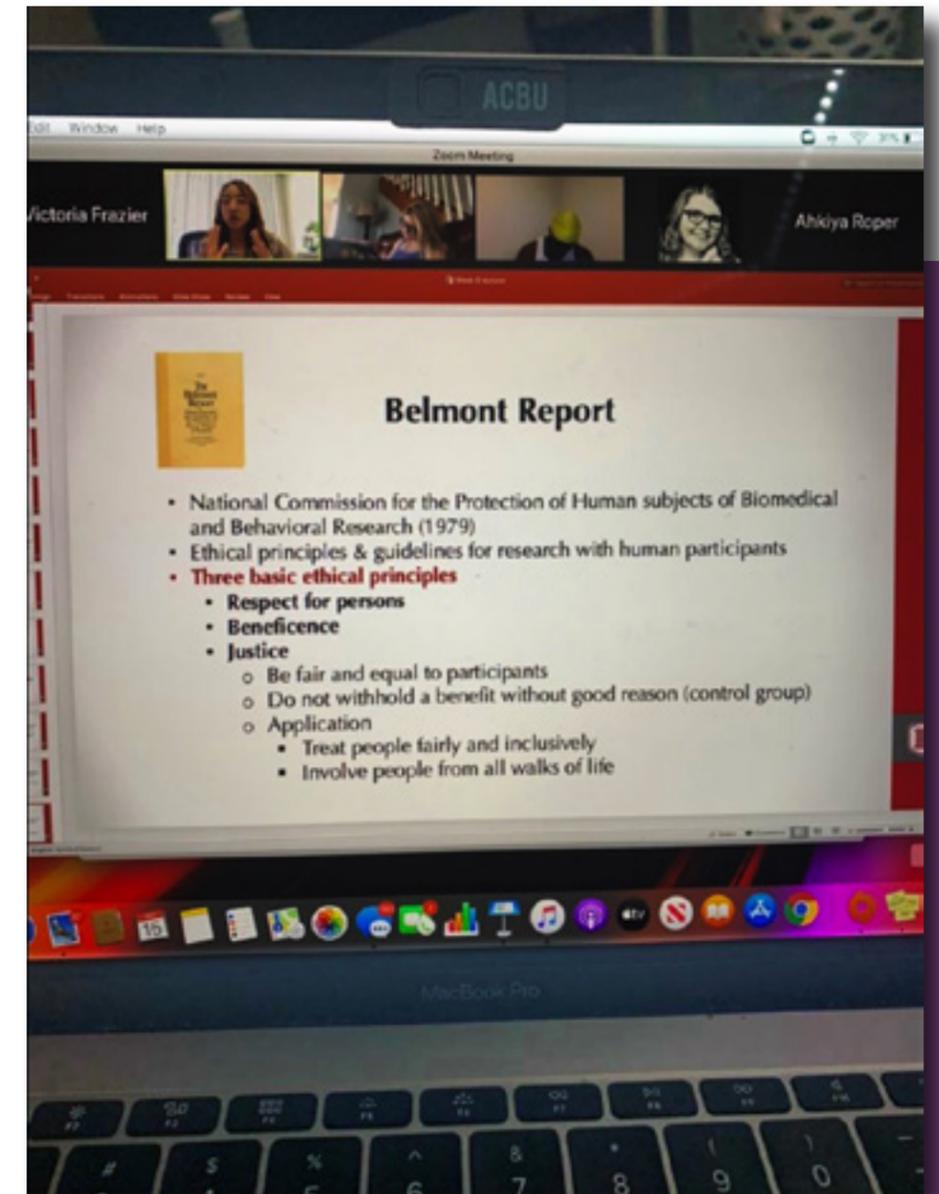
"Students who want to study in the library can make reservations online."
by Lisbeth Houdek





"Classrooms that used to be filled with students are now empty."
by Lisbeth Houdek

A Different View.



"College-ish."
by Victoria Frazier



"No extra boost, can't sit in Starbucks due to two week quarantine."
by Kianna Goss

"Eating areas are now empty without BU students."
by Lisbeth Houdek



Ready For Students.



No One
in **Sight.**

"Lonely classrooms, empty desks, and no students."
by Lisbeth Houdek

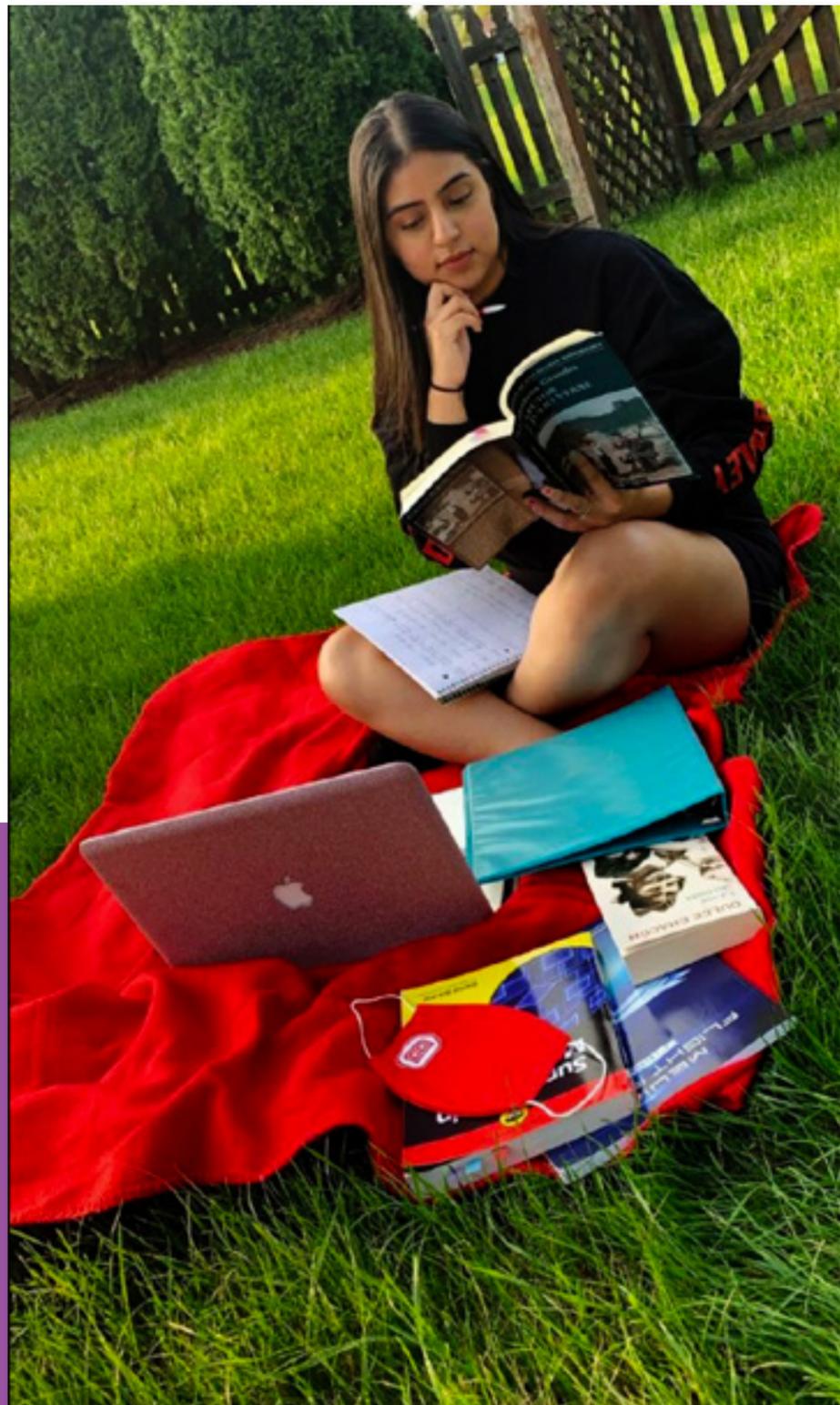


"Katie and service dog in training, Parker, finishing up studying at 30/30 Coffee."
by Katie Magree



"Isolation and social distancing at work."
by Kianna Goss

Work and School in a **New World.**



"Studying from home."
by Anai Salgado



"Buildings and doors are labeled to guide students on how to enter and exit."
by Lisbeth Houdek

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