



"It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men."

-Frederick Douglass

Level-Up is a monthly publication of civic engagement, education, and history, locally, nationally, and globally!



Every voice should be heard Upcoming Event



By Arati Chapagai
Doherty High School Intern

One frequently asked question is "what do you believe in?" I believe in equality, in expressing. We all have our voices, we use them for certain issues whereas we stay silent for others and that's our right. There are some who are forced to stay quiet because they are "smaller", uneducated or poor. Why haven't they gotten their chance to be heard?

We all seem to believe having a voice and being heard is the same but it is not. You know the saying "in one ear, out another," having a voice is kind of like this, you have your voice, you EXPRESS but are they really listening to you or are they just hearing the are saying and let them slide by. But having a voice is most important for yourself even if you aren't being heard. It takes a lot of confidence and courage to be able to express and defend yourself. From my own experience, I can say that I'm not heard all the time but I have a voice. Having a voice makes you more confident, it gives you the power to stand for yourself and to even speak for someone who may not have found a voice yet.

Being heard is not as important because that's more like, what do others think? How can you change them? The most important thing is to believe in yourself by first finding your voice before worrying about being heard.

Everyone should have a chance to voice their opinions. It's a free country but why aren't some people allowed to? Your voice might not be heard by many right now but it's being heard by someone. Joe Franco once said, "There are many ways to get your voice heard. I find the easiest way is to be in a position like this one - the kind that you can more easily reach out to the largest number of people, and I like that." I think, me writing this is reaching out to some people, it might not be a big crowd but it's a crowd nonetheless. Everyone should be opinionated and should be able to have a voice.

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By Kamala Chapagain
South High School Intern

Respect is a feeling of deep admiration for someone or something elicited by their abilities, qualities, or achievements. Respect is important because it shows that one values another as an individual, and that you honor the personal rights and dignity of the person as a fellow human being. People who are disrespectful often have few friends and alliances, and others do not enjoy being near them. Making good friends and warding off enemies is simpler when a person shows respect for others. If a person is respectful, it shows that he has a positive attitude.

A child who respects the requests of his parents shows good character and obedience. But as we grow older, we seem to lose that respect for them and expect them to respect us. When you respect each other, you can communicate well and collaborate with each other.

Respect also involves appreciating others, even though their way of doing things may differ from yours. Some people think that showing respect to someone means that you are degrading yourself, when it's just expressing your feelings for that person. Respect is very important especially to my parents since they deserve it so much.

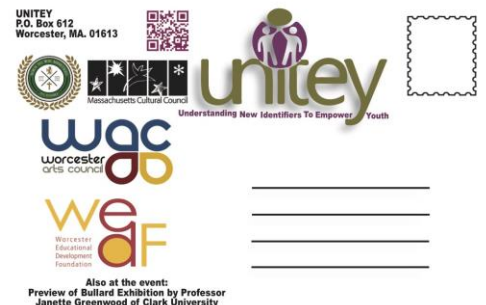


UNITEY Culinary and Musical Arts Series
Saturday, May 27th 2017
11am - 2pm
at North High School
140 Harrington Way, Worcester, MA
BETTER TOGETHER
www.UNITEYcdc.org | 774-232-1025 | info@uniteycdc.org

FREE

- South East Asian Coalition Lion Dance
- Soft Skills Learning
- Afro Vibes Drummers
- Civic Engagement
- North High School Dance Team
- Education
- North High Junior Cultural Fashion
- Black History
- Spoken Word Poetry
- Art

You can learn about a people or person through food!



UNITEY
P.O. Box 612
Worcester, MA. 01613

WAC
Worcester Arts Council

WEDF
Worcester Educational Development Foundation

Also at the event:
Preview of Bullard Exhibition by Professor
Janette Greenwood of Clark University

Programs and Services

LEVEL UP-JOURNEY

Over the course of the semester, each participant will take part in one of the Seven Level-Up Journey experience modules.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING AND BUILDING

Through civic engagement, community organizing, volunteering and different language skills, youth will acquire community organizing and building skills. These skills help the youth not only to fit in their community but also to be involved especially in things/policies that shape the community.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Training for civic and placement exams will be provided to help youth and young adults achieve their future goals and dreams.

COLLEGE READINESS

College readiness is the key for youth and young adults who wish to continue their education.

Program participants will be encouraged to attain their full potential via college preparation in the areas of education, teaching, writing, and involvement in the production of the "Level-Up" newsletter.

CAREER OUTLOOK

It is very important to assure at-risk youths and young adults are skilled for the current job market. Through "Career Outlook," "different areas like job search, finance literacy, and an entrepreneurial series, will be presented in seminar setting.

TECHNOLOGY ETIQUETTE

In this era, technology is misused by our youth and young adults. Technology etiquette that addresses proper use of social media will be taught to program participants.

SYSTEMATIC RACISM

Racism is a sensitive issue and many times we shy away from it. The "Systematic Racism" module will teach program participants about race, heritage, and culture and how to identify and appreciate self, and how to work around structural-institutional racism.

EXTENDED SUPPORT

Youth and young adults are part of families that make up our communities. Without enough family support in our community, our youth and young adults do not thrive. UNITEYCDC works to extend support to youths, families and the community at large through counseling referrals, character

"UNITEY CDC is committed to being the culture broker that connects Level Up program participants to private, public and non-profit sectors by providing a holistic streamline approach for access to social and human services, assuring a quality tomorrow for the youth and young adults who reside in the City of Worcester."

Source: <http://uniteycdc.org>



In My Opinion

Would it have made a difference if the voting age was lowered?



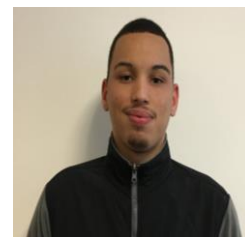
**By Jose Ortiz
North High School Intern**

There are certain countries in the world that have lowered the voting age from 21 to 18 or raised it from 16 to 18. The world hasn't heard our voices and what we say about politics as 16 or 17-year-olds. I have imagined the world to be a wonderful place and never having to deal with any issues in life. Then now as a 17-year-old boy I wonder why we must wait till we are 18 to vote for some president that I feel doesn't know what he or she is talking about where it comes to the people

Why can't we vote? What is the point of politics? Why is voting important to people? Why do people vote? Why can't we 16 or 17-year-olds not vote? We need to make this right. We young adults need to know why we cannot vote. If young adults had the right to vote it would make a big difference. If they weren't worried about Clinton's issues she would have been president but no let's pick trump he has money

It's unwise when people make fun of people because of their race, like Mexicans, African Americans, Puerto Ricans, or Asians. The fact being that during the 50s and 60s most of the White Americans would make the law and have the schools, buses, water fountains and diners or bars.

The segregation laws said that African Americans couldn't use the same facilities as Americans. Therefore, on the voting issue the difference would be big if the age was lowered and we would totally show the world that we young adults can be. We are getting older and we want our right to vote. I'm arguing that we should get to vote as young adults. We are people too. We want you to listen to us. We have a voice that wants to be heard. Wouldn't it make a big difference if you adults gave us 16-17-year-olds a chance to speak up?



My name is Michael Leon and I'm currently a junior in South High Community School. I was born in the Dominican Republic where both my parents are from. At the age of 5 I came to the United States with my dad while my mom went to live in Spain. When I came to the US I was put in kindergarten but it was almost the end of the school year and I knew no English at all so I was held back. Since getting held back, I'm usually older than pretty much all the kids in my grade. This comes with its advantages and disadvantages. A big part of my life is my family who are very supportive and push me to be the best I can possibly be. All the adults work so we kids can have a bright future which is something I'll appreciate for the rest of my life. For this reason, I push myself in school by taking the hard courses. I'm currently taking 3 AP classes this year. The main reason I push myself to do good in school is to get into a good college and hopefully get a scholarship so my parents don't have to worry about spending their money on my education debt.

Worcester is my home and a place I love. This city is where I grew up with my family, which makes it a very dear place to me. It gave me opportunities I thought I would never have when I was growing up in Dominican Republic. As soon as I arrived in Worcester opportunities opened to me that I would probably have never had. With those opportunities, I see a bright future for myself and even if that future takes me away from Worcester, I will never forget the place I call home.

Civic engagement means when either individuals or communities come together to recognize and address public concerns that the community has. It's when the citizens of a community come together to make a difference. It can come in both a political and nonpolitical form so anybody from any social class in the community can make a difference. Any action that you're doing today improve your community would be considered civic engagement. Which is something everybody should strive to do. Why would you not improve your city?



My name is Michelle Puch and I am a sophomore at Doherty Memorial High School. I have two younger siblings, a boy and a girl. As of now I take 5 honors classes, one college theater class and one AP human geography class. The reason I took AP human geography as my first AP class is because I am interested in politics and demographics and how it works, but mostly I tend to want to learn more about the social issues, since I am a millennial and all. I play tennis as a school sport in the spring and in the summer, I have a job at Tenacity, a tennis learning program for ages 6-16. I'd like to have a job in the field of politics when I am older.

It all started in middle school when I was told that we were going to have a new kind of state test. State testing was already as bad as it is, and changing it up, I thought, wouldn't really make it any better. Once I learned that my voice wasn't loud and strong enough, I started to wonder when I would have an impact for choices on the bigger issues. Voting for what you are passionate about is one thing, but being, better yet, a famous politician who can speak freely on the issues however they want, whenever they want, and hopefully not regret it? If I can do that with my political opinions, I'd be very happy with what I'd do for a living. That is when Bernie Sanders came into my life. He, and a lot of others, showed me that civic engagement isn't just about politicians. Civic engagement can only work if everyone tries hard on what they're passionate about so that even voice loud or low can work together to shake everyone up. Bernie Sanders started a revolution and I want to be a part of it. I want to try harder, work more in my community and try to make it better and that is what I think civic engagement is.

I always hear people around me talk about leaving Worcester, about hating Worcester, and how when they get older they'd move out immediately. As I hung around them, I thought about the city I grew up in, and wondered what about it made them feel not at home? People have their own preferences. One might like the city life of Boston or New York instead of the suburbs in Worcester, or one might enjoy the quiet country side instead (although I hear more about the city life they'd like more). Worcester isn't a special or important place, not many people talk about it unless it's to complain about the pronunciation of it, but I couldn't imagine growing up anywhere else. The fact that it's a city in Massachusetts makes me feel better as well, since we're so accepting of anything. Even though Worcester isn't perfect, I think my parents made a good choice to settle here.

In My Opinion



By Aqualla Wolobah, Doherty High School Intern

Cultural appropriation is huge now in our society today. Cultural appropriation is the adoption or use of the elements of one culture by members of another culture. Cultural appropriation is sometimes portrayed as harmful, framed as cultural misappropriation, and claimed to be a violation of the intellectual and traditional property rights of the originating culture. Society feels like it is okay to express yourself in anyway shape or form. But you must ask yourself "are you doing it the right way?" There are many transracial people out there that feel their ethnicity is never good enough they feel the need to change themselves, their lifestyle and sometimes even their religion. Rachel Dolezal, a White woman, who is an American former civil rights activist and former Africana studies instructor, considers herself a Black individual and states this "Because of a familiarity with black culture, she may regard herself as 'transracial.'"

Rachel also states that "I'm Black because I identify as a Black". How does this make you black? How do you think it makes the Black community feel? And most importantly how does a Black person act? Society chews you up and spits Black people right back out.

Like Michael Jackson, Sammy Sosa or Kimberly Denise Jones also known by her stage name Lil Kim. They would rather have a different race than what they originally were born to be. Was it because of society? Or was it because it was always something they felt like doing? Changing into another culture is like changing your world. Ask yourself is this ok? Or is it a start to a new beginning?

In My Opinion



Hello, I'm Tionna Cox I'm a sophomore at Doherty Memorial High. As the youngest of four siblings you'd think I'd be very extroverted; a wild child. However, I've always been very introverted; wild imagination type. I can genuinely say with pride that I've always been very into helping others. That's what had initially caught my attention about this program. Though, if you want to know more about me that would be that I absolutely adore reading and writing. My passion for helping others has really turned me into a good people-person. I'm a little like Peter Pan in the sense that I am a bit scared of what awaits me in the future, but excited to pursue my dream job of becoming a psychiatrist.

Civic engagement? The way I see it, it is simply getting involved within the community, working towards making it better and improving. It's SUCH a broad term in the sense that there are so many way you can do these things. Go "big" like protesting about important issues happening within your community or go "small" like starting an after-school study club. So, in the simplest terms civic engagement is working towards bettering the lives of people within your community and thus the community itself.

Thoughts on Worcester: My thoughts on Worcester are that it isn't nearly as bad as a lot of people from Worcester say it is. Personally, I think it's very safe as opposed to other places in the U.S.A. However, my main issue with Worcester is that I can see, as the years go by, that the youths within the community are becoming increasingly involved with things they shouldn't be doing; activities such as drugs, gang violence. I'm hoping that within this program I can begin working towards alleviating this problem. This is my generation, I'm a part of it and I would like to see this generation do well

“Just because it is not happening to you. Does not mean it is not happening”

Author unknown

Does deporting family members back to their countries solve the immigration problem?



By Grabiella Cruz
North High School Intern

Trump's order of immigrant deportation has caused disturbance among families in the United States. Family members are being separated from each other due the removal law. President Trump is willing to deport anyone who has been charged with a criminal offense, used a false Social Security, has an order to leave the country or poses a risk to public safety or national security. In other words, anyone who has abused the government and committed a crime according to the law.

However, the population has been asking themselves if the president has considered what this law enforcement really means. There are a bunch of news articles published about the deported peoples, many of them were only working to sustain their families. An example is, Garcia de Rayos, a Mexican mom who left behind two daughters born in the state of Arizona and an American husband when deported for using a fake Social Security to work so her family could have a home and food at the table. "The truth is I was there [in the United States] for my children. For a better future. To work for them. And I don't regret it, because I did it for love," she said in a news conference in Mexico. She has no regrets because she was only trying to take care of her children, which is a mom's duty. Immigrants come to the country running away from a miserable life searching a better one, they are all trying to pursue a better future for their families. It is the typical story, the parents fighting for a future for their children, something they could not get in their original countries, but are willing to work hard enough to provide in the United States.

-teens use fake ID's to go to clubs at night
-the emotional and emotional damage in the family



Hello, I'm Tereza Saliu I'm a sophomore at Doherty Memorial High School. I'm just a typical teenager. I'm American born, but Albanian raised. I enjoy playing sports. I love swimming, volleyball and track and field. I love to travel. I also love acting, and fashion. Something about myself is I like working for things I need. I don't like asking people for things. I think education is very important. I stress out a lot but that's only because I want to do good.

I guess Worcester is okay. I don't really have an opinion on it. I don't plan on living in Worcester in the future. I think it's plain and I wish there were things to do here. We do have very good schools here, but I don't want to stay here, I want to be in Boston or New York.

To me civic engagement means people working together to make a change. The changes help the community.

OUR MISSION

To be a builder of positive power that will enhance the potential of Black youth ages 12 – 17 and young adults ages 18 – 26, thereby enabling them to efficiently navigate and be of service to their neighborhoods.

OUR VISION

To be the community leader that increases access and awareness to resources producing skill sets that forms a prosperous and civic-minded future for Black youth and young adults.

LEVEL-UP JOURNEY

Over the course of the semester, each participant will take part in Seven Level-Up Journey experience modules. As recognition is the key in motivating our youth and young adults, program participants will be rewarded for their achievements and efforts toward the program goals and measures.

Our Contacts

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Email: info@uniteycdc.org

PARHAM'S CORNER



Liberalism and Progressivism

As I sit back and review my rationale for being an active participant in public policy, and in the political arena here in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, I am keenly aware that the political demographics of current political parties - Democrats, Republicans, Tea Party-ers, and Independents - are quite diverse.

Many times, the words *liberalism* and *progressivism* are used interchangeably in an insulting manner in order to incite shame. However, at a time when political opposition or pundits refer to Massachusetts as being very liberal in terms of social order and political alliances, it is very clear they want to be liberal. (??) Yet, they are very conservative in their methodology and approach to public interest and government stance.

If I had to categorize my political ideology it would be that of a Democratic with a progressive agenda. For the past nineteen years, as resident of Worcester, I have worked to make fundamental changes in low-income communities on the issues of race, class, mental health, gender, sexuality, health care, and just and equitable housing. It is evident when surveying my Worcester community, that these issues are of concern to our community.

Progressivism is the vehicle to change public policy and the political landscape, by placing women of diverse backgrounds at the core of organizations working on the issues of housing, nutrition, education, healthcare, and safety, and by creating truly equitable opportunities for all people.