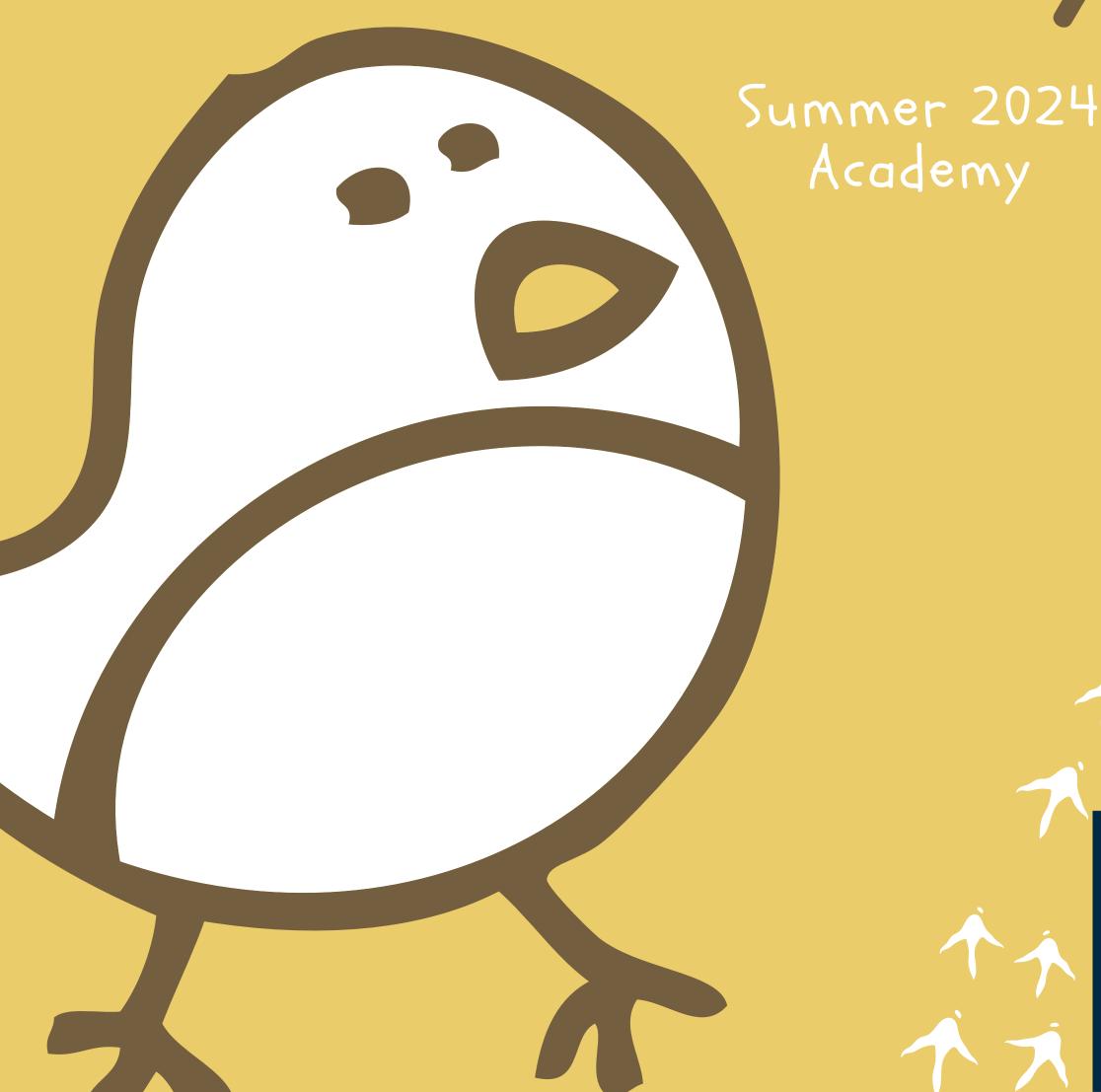




NVR Youth Poetry





Who is NVR?



New Voices are Rising (NVR) is a Bay Area initiative dedicated to empowering underserved youth of color to lead their communities in the environmental justice movement.

On July 28th, at Nido's Backyard, 25 NVR interns showcased their poetic talents, delving into pressing issues such as water justice, climate change, gun violence, and racial equality. Their words resonate with a call to action, urging us all to work towards a cleaner, more equitable future.

We hope you find inspiration in this collection of poems from the Poetry Slam 2024!

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Featured Poems: 1. Do You Smell Smoke 2. Forests and Green

Spaces



Do You Smell Smoke

Out the window do you see clear skies and beauty.

The birds singing and feeling that cool breeze.

Forests are filled with great biodiversity. Then the factories put out smog drying up the trees.

Suddenly, a spark, a match, a campfire, a cigarette.

Lives claimed left and right with no time to

regret.

I'm coughing from the ashes of our destruction and damnation.

It makes me want to input solutions that will bring salvation.

For schools to deal with the fires,

Days off are now required.

Do you see what's beginning to transpire? Are factories causing asthma and cancer what you desire?

Where there's smoke there's fire.

Do you see the smoke?

Do you see the smoke?

Do you see the smoke?

You can't run from the fire.

Are we trying to do a scorched earth policy?

In my future I see more homes burned down by endless greed.

Days are becoming too hot to handle. Our planet's temperature is reaching 2 degrees.

The opportunity to prevent it is like a burning candle.

Time is running out for humanity.

We need to think about our safety.

The temperature is killing people.

The heat of summer days shouldn't be lethal.

The average person can't afford basic necessities.

Water reservoirs are faced with scarcities.

We need greenery to absorb the heat. Renewable energy like solar and wind cannot be beat.

Houses have to be prepared for the heat

and the rising tides.
The problem is getting worse as time goes

Precious resources should not be wasted for economic gain.

For people who are exploited it will bring them pain.

We need to install green policies.

That is my personal belief.

Ecosystems and wildlife have to protected.

We cannot let biodiversity be affected.

Invasive species will be controlled.

Endangered species will be protected like 9010.

Fossil fuels will be switched off. This will bring about a new dawn.

Forests and Green Spaces

When I traverse the vast, ancient woods, the air smells fresh.

The city with the traffic and pollution gives me distress.

Refineries fill the sky with smog and toxins. Many chemicals released can be neurotoxins.

The rainforest is a natural carbon sink.

Logging and farming has caused it to shrink. Doesn't the loss of green spaces make you think?

The giving tree can give no more.

Did we forsake the ecosystem that was there before?

The earth can't handle any more greenhouse gasses.

We must decarbonize before the opportunity passes.

There is nature missing in our cities.

Greening will clean our air and not only make it look pretty.

Green spaces bring a community together. Greening a city is all for the better.

The dangers of heat islands can be reduced. The solutions are ready and just need to be introduced.

Every person should have access to fresh produce.

Solar panels installed on every roof.
No lives should be ruined by fracking or refineries.

No one is deprived of affordable clean water, food, and electricity.

Communities must come together to make the change.

Living spaces just need to be slightly rearranged.

Public transportation should be expanded.

I am tired of traffic jams leaving me feeling stranded.

The tools to reduce the warming of our planet are in our hands.

We have to come together to take a stand

Featured Poems: 1. Feel it in the Air



Feel It In The Air

Watching smoke choke the sky It always makes me want to cry

We should find a better, safer way To put the contaminating waste away

FEEL IT IN THE AIR

It is time to make people see how we are damaging our Earth
Because nature is disappearing at an alarming rate
And it might be gone soon if we are too late

FEEL IT IN THE AIR

It makes me want to reduce, reuse, and recycle, and Be responsible for my planet and future

FEEL IT IN THE AIR

I see in my future A silent Earth, with an empty core A lifeless land with nothing more

FEEL IT IN THE AIR ..

Ken Jiana

Featured Poems: 1. What I Believe 2. My Gasp of Hope



What I Believe

Air should smell fresh and clean
I believe that the breeze should be green
Attention is needed, to bring before the bar
of those under a suffering in this nightmare
Not one soul would savor this admonish
dream
Nor could I ever mirthfully indulge this
manmade misery
This is a statement for all, all those that
inhale
This is a statement for all, all those that
are living
Without coaction, those of living awaits
weakening

My Gasp of Hope

In the city's breath, a silent plea, Air thick with tales of inequity, Where factories roar and highways sigh, Beneath a smog-choked, weary sky. Children play in fields of gray Their laughter lost in toxic spray While voices rise, a justice call, For cleaner air, for one and all. No walls should trap the poisoned breeze No heart should wheeze or lung displease, From urban sprawl to countryside, Let pure air flow, let health abide. Together we must stand and fight, For every breath, for every right, To breathe in life, to share the sky, For air is free, and so must we.

Featured Poems: 1. Can You Breathe?



Can You Breathe?

Can you breathe In communities where aspirations are planted,

When each breath they take is not their

own,

The air they breathe is an unseen enemy that is silent yet plows deep.

Highways roar and factories hum, and their

toxins seep through every door.

Can you breathe, Children play on contaminated land, innocence where poisons are abundant.

Can you breathe, Fathers sigh, mothers fret, Smog covers the brilliant blue sky, Can

you breathe.

The grip of asthma and strained lungs, They carry the hurt in their marginalized hearts. However, hope endures on every street. In each beat, in each smile, They speak up in favor of cleaner air.

Together, they reach a decision.

To battle for the clearest blue skies,

For clean air and bright futures, Faced with injustice, they take a strong stance.

They assert their entitlement with every breath.

So Can you breathe?

Auristeld

Featured: 1. Air Pollution

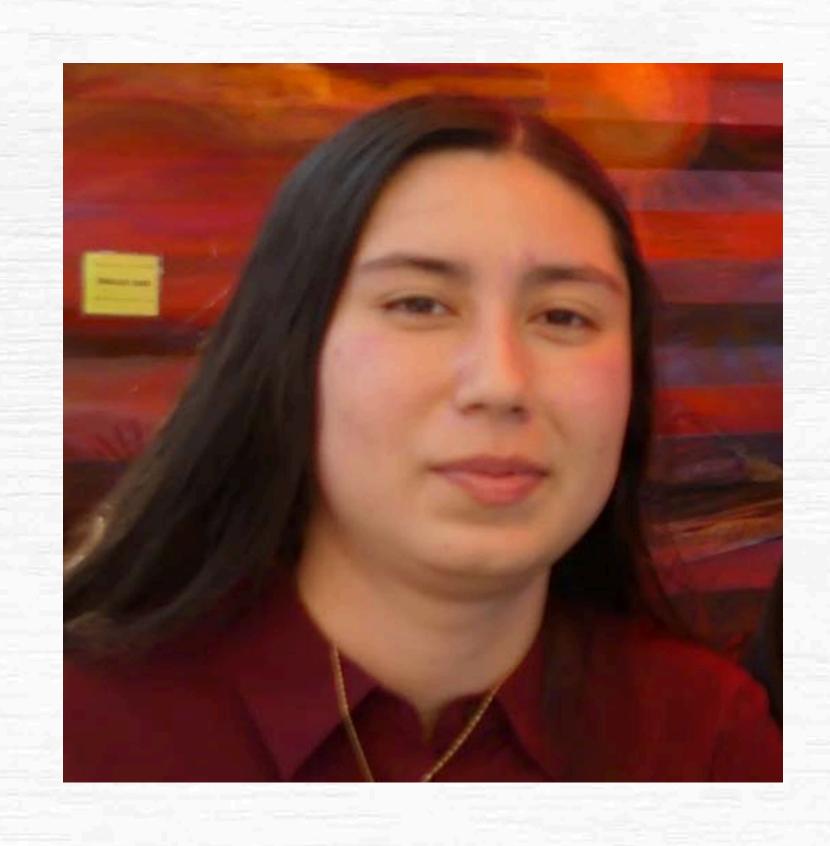


Air Pollution

My lungs hate breathing in the toxic air just as I hate shallow people I believe I say to the trees branch's knocking on my window as it's leaves dance to the polluted air It doesn't matter until the numbers increase in ou health deteriorating and flowing like it's one with the air It matter because it's slowly taking me away it will sweep my feet of the ground and I won't feel It makes me want to feel the air we once had the one wouldn't damage me Better air less damage my lungs say and again better air less damage Not doing anything makes my toffy eyes see the souls leaving us behind

ROSD

Featured Poem: 1. Climate Change



Climate Change

Summers are getting extremely warmer, Along with a power of extreme droughts But there is also some days where the sky is gray

And the cold breeze that is blowing makes

us shiver like an egg

Our climate is developing

Its really valid without hesitation Forest fires are burning with fury.

It's a threat to the ecosystem there.

It's a threat to our community

People start feeling like a balloon that has

lost its air when it's hot.

People start gasping for air like a fish out of the water when there is smoke in the air. People start feeling like ice when it's cold.

For years we have been told "things are going to change" For years people who belong to minority communities have been getting impacted the worst with health problems that climate change brings

For years many humans have evolved into asthma and other illnesses because of

climate change.

Now were is the change in this problem Now we're is all the equality politics and democracy talk about

The only thing we have seen is this becoming

a bottomless hole issue.

The community always gets dropped in the ocean and never gets rewarded like other communities.

Rettstatt

Featured Poem: 1. A Feast for the Earth



A Feast for the Earth

There's a hurricane of garbage swirling through the natural currents in our ocean called the Great Pacific Garbage Patch

It lies in wait,

With the sentiment to suck sediment through the world's weary water supply.

A girl I know once dumped her water to the soil, said,

"It's for the landfills now.

This water causes cancer,

So it's better we give it to the earth to

And my tap water is cancer too,

After all,

Cycled day and night through sky and shoeworn asphalt

It comes from the landfills.

In 2017 the Great Pacific Garbage Patch was dubbed the Trash Isles due to its size being that of a country

Three times the size of France.

You can't step on the Trash Isles, but swimming through the water Is like crushing shoes over concrete

when it rains;

Plastic clings to your skin like a fresh landmass.

The ocean is for the landfills.

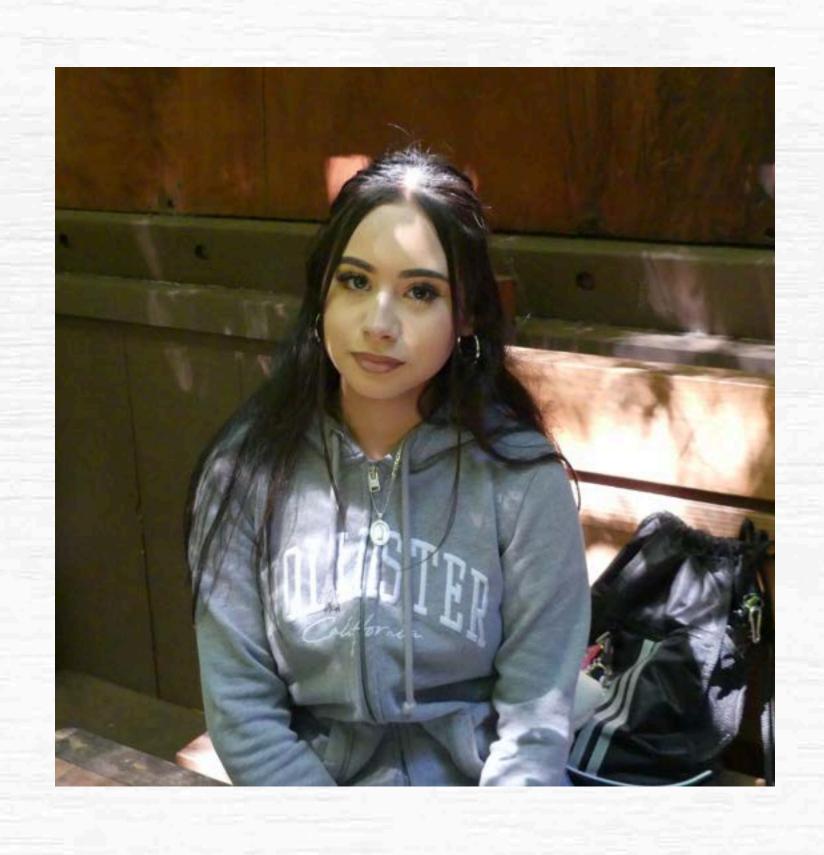
We are of Earth;

We have eaten ourselves, Suppressed life underfoot,

Under ship, Over water.

Featured:

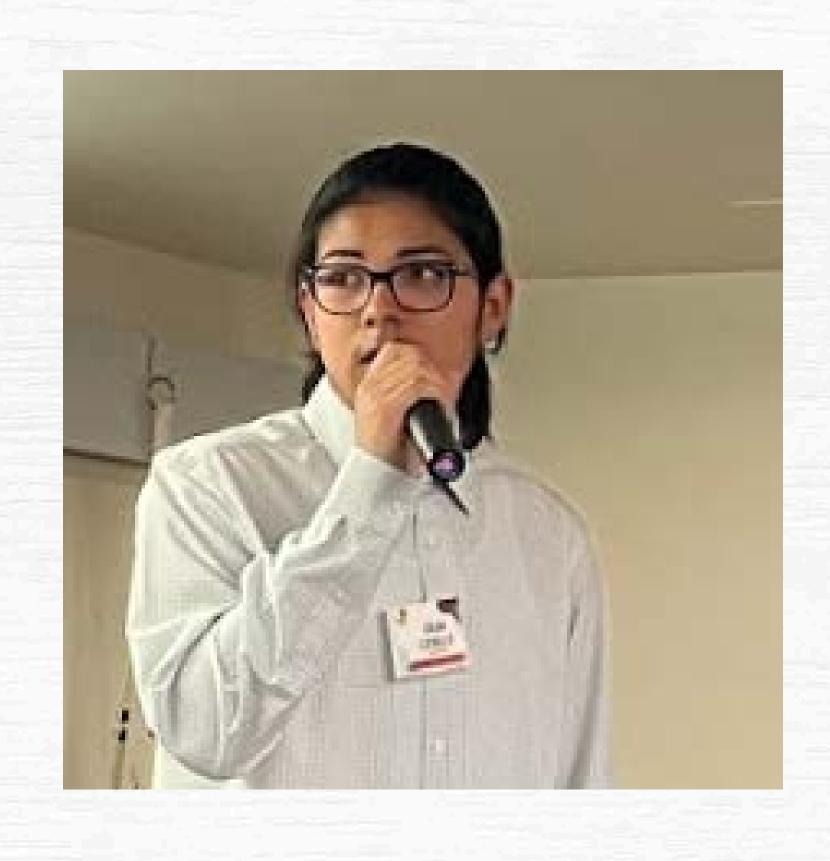
١.



Explanation and awareness are the best form of understanding the most beautiful people i know have suffered and are known for withstanding It is easy to judge and many people will never budge we are similar but different we are close but also apart I believe in justice for you and your family I believe in the change in you, i await it anxiously who will fight when things are tight it's a cycle call it a spectrum we face injustice and stereotypes Unfairness is unmatched and has ruined my economy it's hard understanding there is no freedom without liberty us as a community face struggles no others can compare we cry and watch as the white man ruins and tairs Realize through our eyes the unsafeness we live through we all try and pursue I want closure and my cities fixed, but tell me who? we are at the bottom of the list, they push us aside and give us a kiss my arms are fied I'm baffled and speechless i wish i could tell them how much we suffer and much of us are hopeless it is only now, now that we are older we seem to realize

i promise we will arise if only I didn't have a ego i would beg and insist I've realized if the white man who ruins and tairs doesn't give in i will do it on my own and work hard until we are no longer thin thin of money, housing, and health benefits These people only care about whatever fits Filthy capitalist rain In our society I'm scared if I talk they will try and quiet me While the government is smirking There is children in the Congo uncontrollably working My heart breaks but yet it tells me maybe one day there will be a restore in humanity Trough our heart a strong bond comes from within through judging we separate. But through understanding we grow and accelerate one last thing from the river to the sea may Palestine be free

Featured: 1. Can't Breathe



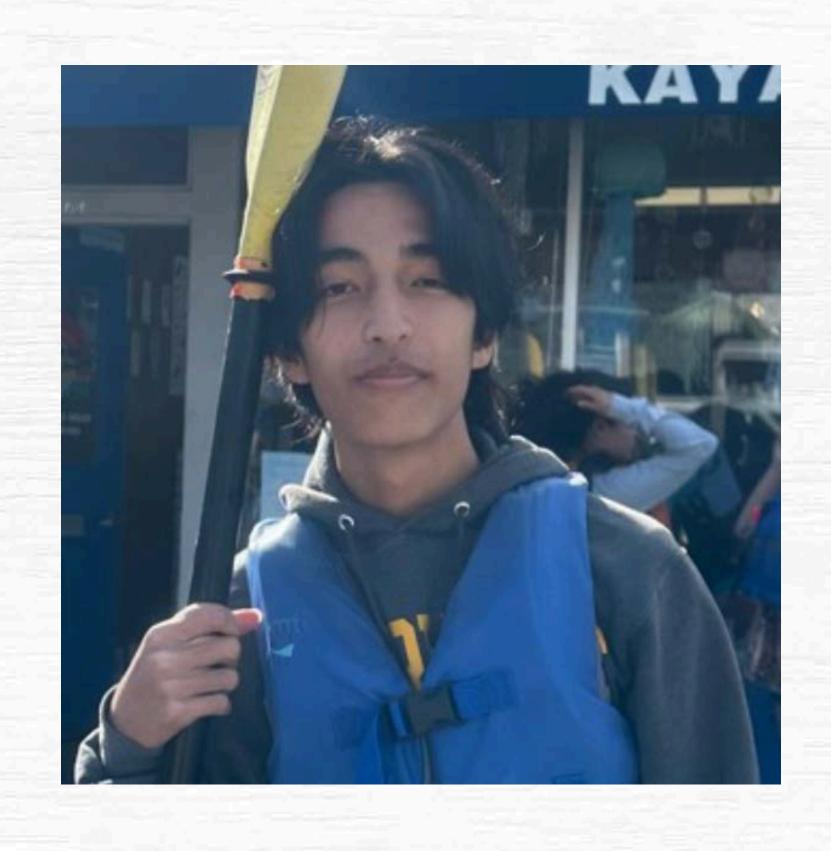
Can't Breath

Water is getting dirtier
I believe it gonna lead to mass murder
Water is disappearing when we all need it
Have to save the underwater population from
plastic entanglement
It makes me question what i've been drinking
Can't swim
Can't drink
Can only sink
From what i can see we'll only be going deeper in
the hole we dug ourselves in the decay and
waste we created

Air isn't getting any cleaner
I believe we'll smoke out the planet
Air so full of company residue people can
practically taste it
Have to save ourselves from the harm it brings
It makes my allergies worse
Can't breathe
Can't breathe
Can't breathe
Soon enough no one will be able to breathe with
companies looking on with glee for the profit

Energys revolution
Decades of nonstop use of fossil fuel
Resources nearing it end
Protect the choice of the communities
Makes me wonder if it'll ever change
The sun
The wind
The water
The green new deal is a dream of the people to
those in power that can't decide to make the
decisive transition for the future

Featured: 1. Hope Persists



Hope Persists
In streams once clear, the toxins flow, Silent whispers of sorrow grow.

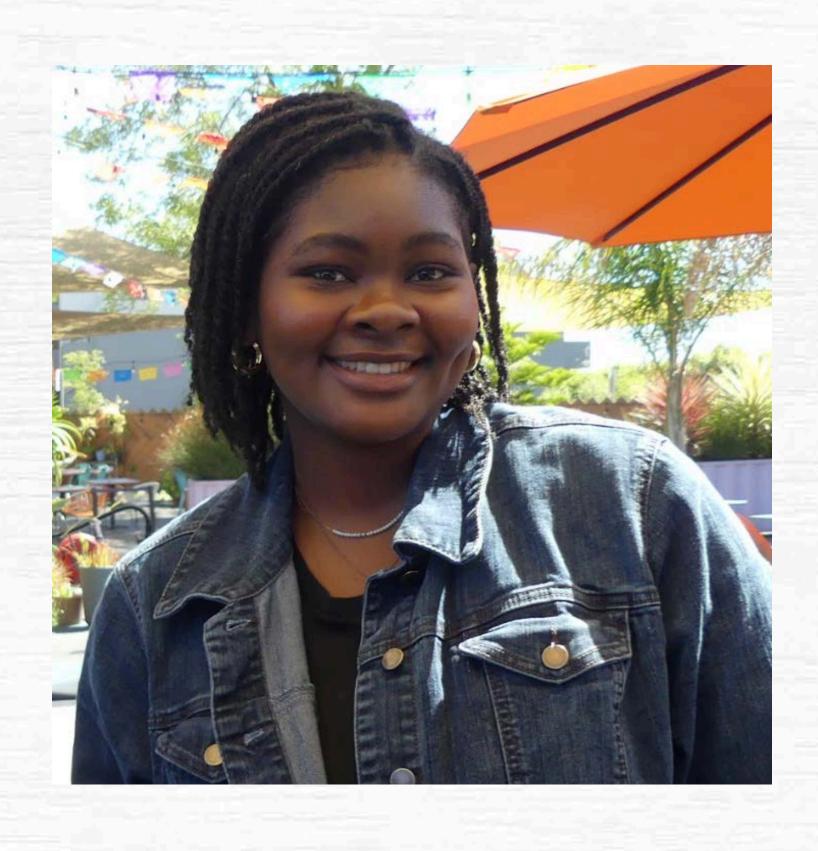
A shimmering sheen where fish once swam, Nature cries, but who gives a damn?

Plastic tides and chemical rain, Beauty lost, and all in vain. The waters dark with mankind's blight, A shadow cast on nature's light.

But hope persists, a fragile thread, In hearts that mend where greed has

Cleanse the streams, let rivers heal, Abrighter dawn, our pledge, our seal.

Featured: 1. The Ones Who Look Away

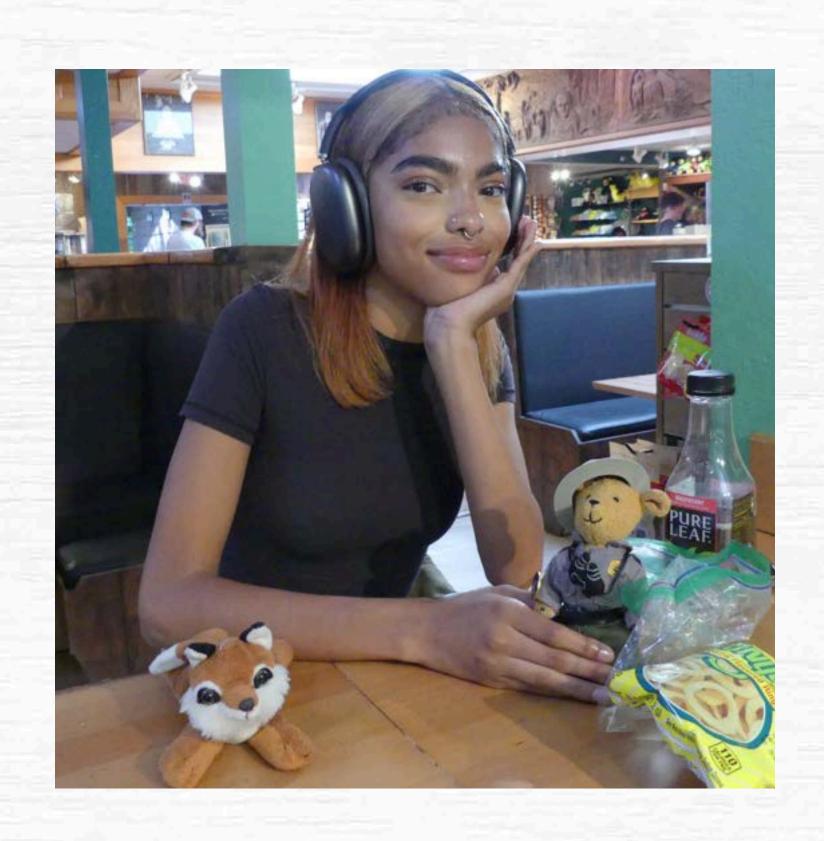


The Ones Who Look Away

Tattered shoes, hollow fields, a forgotten home A broken promise from those who left this world to roam But how can one task a child alone To brave a force still yet to be known Obligation can be a curse when one is To face in silence a world unchecked But what purpose is there looking back When barred from the future we remained trapped The ones who look away So high in the clouds their futures sound So different from those pulled into the depths and drowned Waves turning and churning and spinning around Crushing those who look up and those above who look down But even the weight of a million atrocities Won't stop those with a morbid curiosity Whose hearts so vile and devoid of light Brew misery and anguish in a cauldron of spite

One, two, five How many cries will it take to realize A kingdom is only as stong as the ones who burn To push the wheels that allow it to turn Place a crown on the head of a king Who runs at first sign when the war bells ring Who cares not for the lives that hang in the wind But the taste of victory with a final sting Yet we continue to fight in a castle of decay We continue to stay silent to all the things we can say But the truth will come out and we will realize someday That we are the ones who look away

Featured: 1.DO YOU SEE, DO YOU CARE?



DO YOU SEE, DO YOU CARE?

I stand here, loud but voiceless, watching the earth's breath grow weaker, its pulse fading in the silence. I see the forests, that was once vibrant, now skeletal and dry, their leaves a brittle memory of green.

Do you see?

Oceans, vast and deep, now hold more sorrow than life, their waves heavy with the weight of our carelessness.

Creatures of land, sea, and sky disappear quietly, unnoticed, as if their songs were never sung.

Do you care?

We walk upon this earth with our heavy steps, forgetting the softness of its soil, Yes this is our earth but you don't own a land that's wasn't yours to begin with Our cities rise, of steel and concrete, while rivers murmur, polluted, and ignored.

In our pursuit of progress, we carve scars into mountains, strip forests to their bones, turn oceans into graveyards of waste and plastic

Do you see?

I wonder, will we wake only when the last tree falls, when the final river runs dry, when the silence of the wild becomes absolute?

Or will we remain, closed eyed, to the beauty we destroy, hearts closed to the grief we cause?

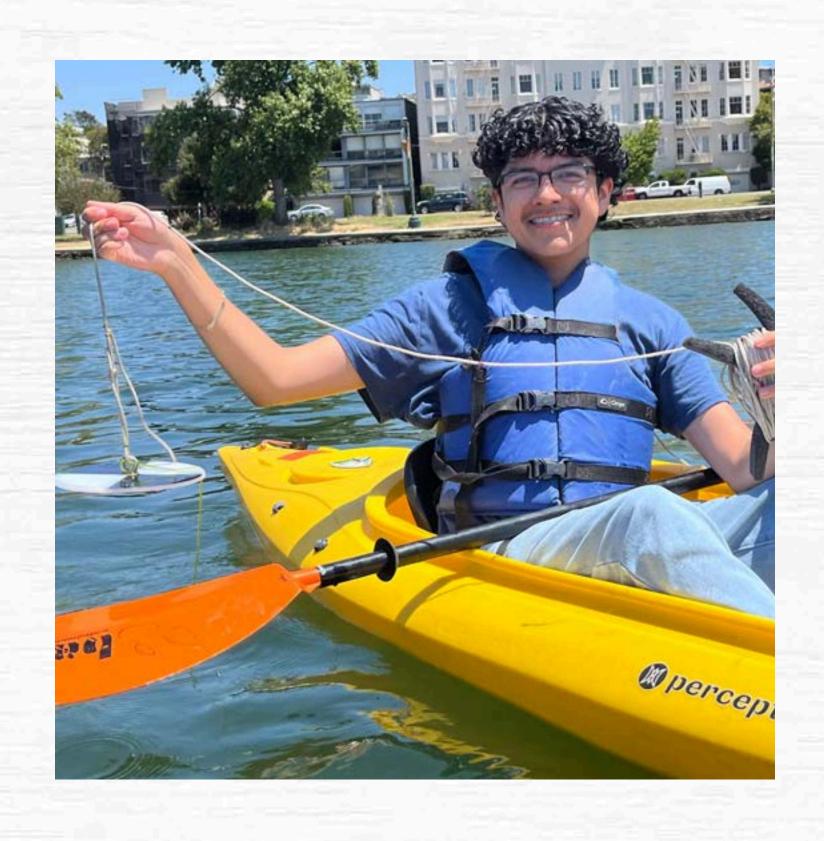
Do you care?

Our dream for you to leave the trees and let our children breathe
The earth sighs under our weight, its breath growing shallow, and we speak, though no one listens,

the simple truth that to care for it is to care for each other, and ourselves. hoping the echo of these words might stir a spark of care, a whisper of change, before it is too late.

Do you see?

Featured:
1. Gun Violence
2. Brighter Waters



Gun Violence

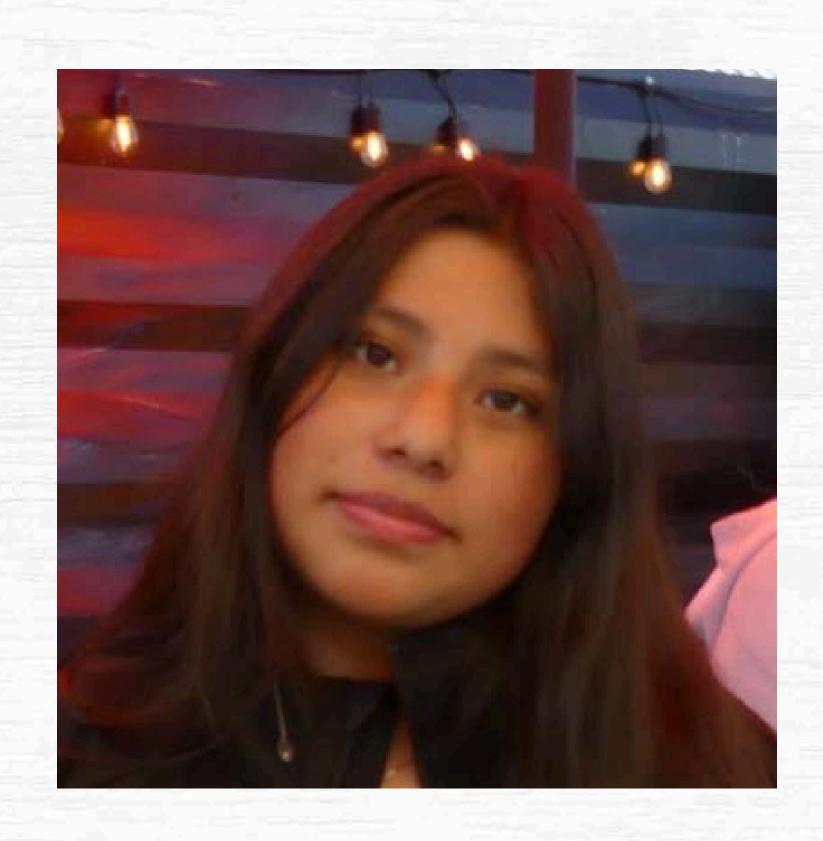
Gun Violence all over our country Gun legislation not as strong as it should be Boys and girls, young and old, dying left and right Yet no one from higher power seems to bat an eye it won't happen again said again and again My heart hurts seeing children lose their life so young and wonder, will the next one be someone I know? it won't happen again said again and again It makes me want to make a change and speak out about gun violence related issues Without change, history will repeat without a doubt Communities and families, fractured and destroyed Innocence is buried yet in this darkness, a spark remains United and strong to right the wrong For the safety of us all We must act

Brighter Waters

Our sea life and waters, contaminated day by day The consequences of our actions affecting the poor Waters deepen, as cities sink Contaminate deep through the blue, it is true Chemicals dumped into our oceans through currents vast, they advance Fish and wildlife gasp for breath in poisoned streams Dreams dissolved under human weight Yet hope flickers, as voices rise on every side Let's pledge today, to protect our waters in need Laws enacted by government, to protect the life of our oceans; fish, coral reefs, sharks, and all With change, our future sees brighter waters on the horizon

Castanon

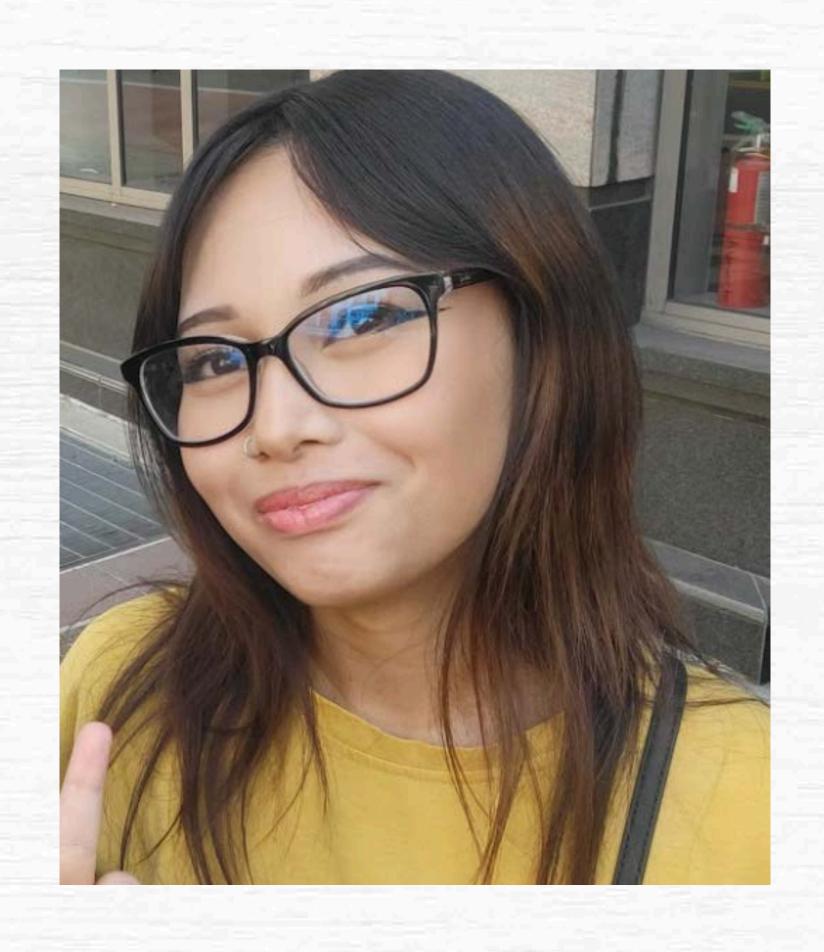
Featured Poem:
1. we don't talk about last night



we don't talk about last night

i believe we should all these incidents on the road dead bodies associated with drunk driving prevent DUI's because i care and we should care making families bleed internally a whole lot of pain they'll never understand but we don't talk about last night right so what will it be next? ignorance you swear it doesn't cause harm oh but it does, believe me is picking up the phone or answering a text more important than ones life? i really don't seem to understand how that can be it really only takes one second to destroy one's life oh but we don't talk about last night i believe we can always do better or we should, in fact to prevent last night i hope.

Featured Poems: 1. Title 1 2. Title 2



Independence

"So tell me about yourself, why are you here?"
Uh.. I guess I like reading and video games
and I live in constant fear

"Constant fear?"
Constant fear that I won't be able to steer clear through
America's "independence" fable

Every July 4, it's independence day
But what about the rest of us
Who never got a say
In what we were forced to do everyday?

"Explain."

Can you imagine the horror on my face
When I learned about my ancestors

Experience in the United States?

They put us in cages in zoos
Enclosure signs read "Filipino eats Food"
And Americans would gawk and talk
While my people sat there lost and in
shock
"But that was centuries ago."
It was one of the first examples of
mistreatment

And I can't say we're progressing slow because Roe v. Wade was overturned in disappointment To all the women and children and survivors Who lost their independence

I sat there during that therapy session Wishing these thoughts didn't interfere with my depression And anxiety but can I mention We can't erase history, so can we just lessen The violence and misery and microaggressions

Anxiety
Imagine one day, you're sitting
At your desk, doing homework
But then the room starts spinning
The suffocating feeling lurks
How am I going to balance
Living my life along with
Being alive?

I think too much about it The future, and what it can hold until soon the clock reads 11:59 in bold Finding Happiness

For years at a time, Happiness was always short Of being mine

It was always out of reach
I wish I could teach
Myself life isn't
Always a peach

It was always others before me Until for once, I disagreed

I took control of my life Now to this day I'm free of spite

Days with Nathan, Marc, and Ben Never get old again and again I couldn't ask for better friends

Life Goes On

Everyday I'm glad
That I can wake up and say
I'm happy

Not in a "My life was so horrible before!"
Type of way

I'm just grateful
For everything that happened
I hated being dreadful
And completely flattened
out dry, and tired

I'm grateful for the little things
And all things big
But I can't wait for what the future
holds
And what new opportunities bring

I love poetry

Things I Find Perfect

There's a lot of things I find perfect, Although things may seem
Not all that worth it.
Like how kids have big dreams
Or that cartoon, Planet Sheen

The crisp air on October days
The bright sun during June heat waves
I think there's perfection in everything
Not limited to gold chains or shiny rings

I love the feeling
Of a freshly cleaned room
Or how the flowers look
When they're all in bloom

That feeling of genuine love

Whether it's from Nathaniel Or family, for me it's enough

There's a lot of things I find perfect,
But a list could never be long enough
To contain all that;s with it
And describe what dreams are made of

Pernanda Polanco Orellana

Featured Poem: 1. Fight for Change



Fight for Change

In a world where echoes of gunshots ring,
A heartache's song, a painful thing.
A daughter's tears, her father's gone,
Injustice reigns from dusk till dawn.

Why should people care, you ask? To see the truth behind the mask. A life cut short, a dream undone, A future lost with every gun.

Injustice sears in silent screams,
Shattering hopes, unraveling dreams.
A father's smile, forever missed,
A daughter's grief in shadows kissed.

Why should people care, you wonder? To stop the storm, to quell the thunder. Lives entwined in sorrow's web, A bleeding wound that needs to ebb.

The cost of violence, so profound, A father's love, no longer found. Communities torn, families weep, A promise made we must now keep.

Why should people care, you cry? To halt the tears, to rectify. To stand for justice, to demand, A safer place, a healing hand.

For every soul in darkness cast, We raise our voices, hold steadfast. In unity, we find our way, To brighter, hopeful, peaceful days.

So let us care, let hearts ignite, To end the violence, make things right. In memory of those we've lost, We fight for change, no matter the cost.

Featured Poem: 1. Lend a Hand



Lend a Hand

In the shadows casted by wealthy's glow I feel thse muffled lives should be showed,
The empty hands, the hollow eyes, the dreams postponed and the muted cries,
Do you see?
In a life withou rights, a world with spite
A world unseen, lives torn down,
Hope in broken pieces on the ground,
Yet inside, the flame yet to be found,
did you see?
Lend a hand so hope can be found
Build a bridge, break the chain,
Lend a hand through the pain,
Together, let the light remain.

Featured Poem: 1. A Promise



A Promise

In the heart of forests deep and green, Where rivers weave and maintains fleam, There's an echo for justice, bright, and bold because here he stories of the earth are told

But in the fields, were farmers toil with care
Their harvests blessed by sunlit air
You can their sweat, their hopes so bright
in a world that takes and takes, and takes
We can only hope to be able to up a fight

But across the pains were wild winds roam
And creatures find their ancient home
There that sympohony of the worlds refrain
And a call for harmony, not disdain

But in the cities, where the smog clouds rise
And neon lights paint urban skies and voices rise from every street
There's a demand for change
A future's that's sweet.

Food justice isn't just a word
But a promise, to avenge a world that
we hurt
To heal the scres, we've left behind
And hope to nurture and restore

Featured Poem: 1. Food Prices are Rising



FOOD PRICES ARE RISING

We should be able to pay for our foods.

It should matter because we need to be able to nourish our bodies starvation on the streets, kids can't eat, i hate to see it happen, help us eat

It makes me want to give back and give out a lot of food our communities needs us and so do you

save us from starvation save us from starvation save us from starvation

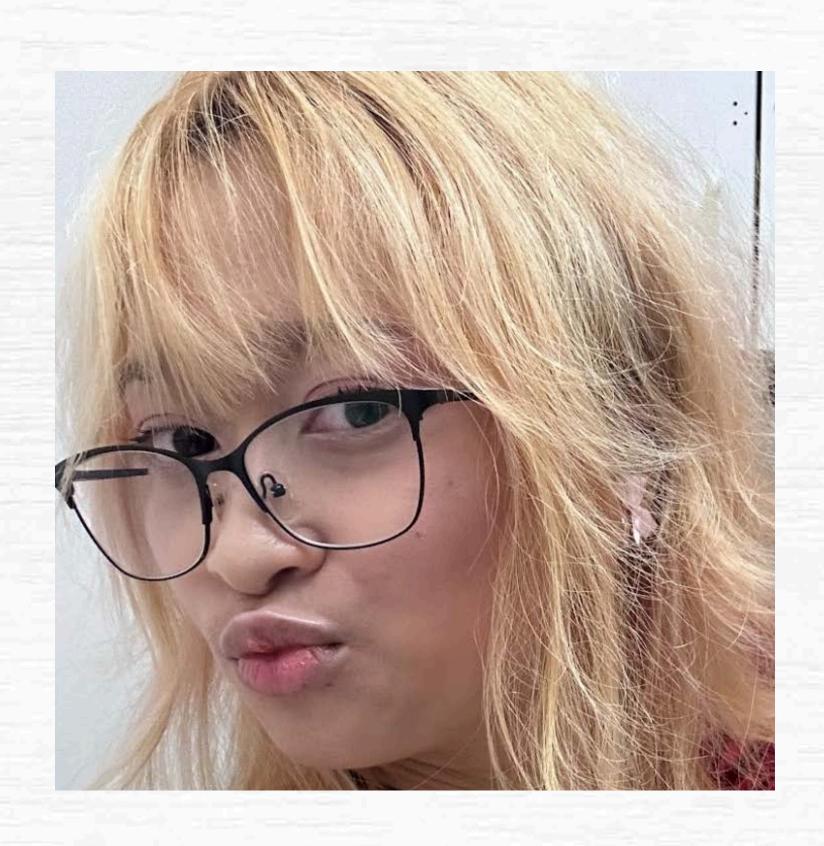
without doing anything, it will be grocery in the house and kids being able to eat

We need saving, feed us with care I hate to see this happen it isn't fair

HEALTHY FOOD HEALTHY FOOD HEALTY FOOD

We need better choies to be able to eat, this will help us grow, build our bodies, and keep us healthy
Move fast, don't move slow we need your help. think of this close

Featured Poem: 1. divine fate



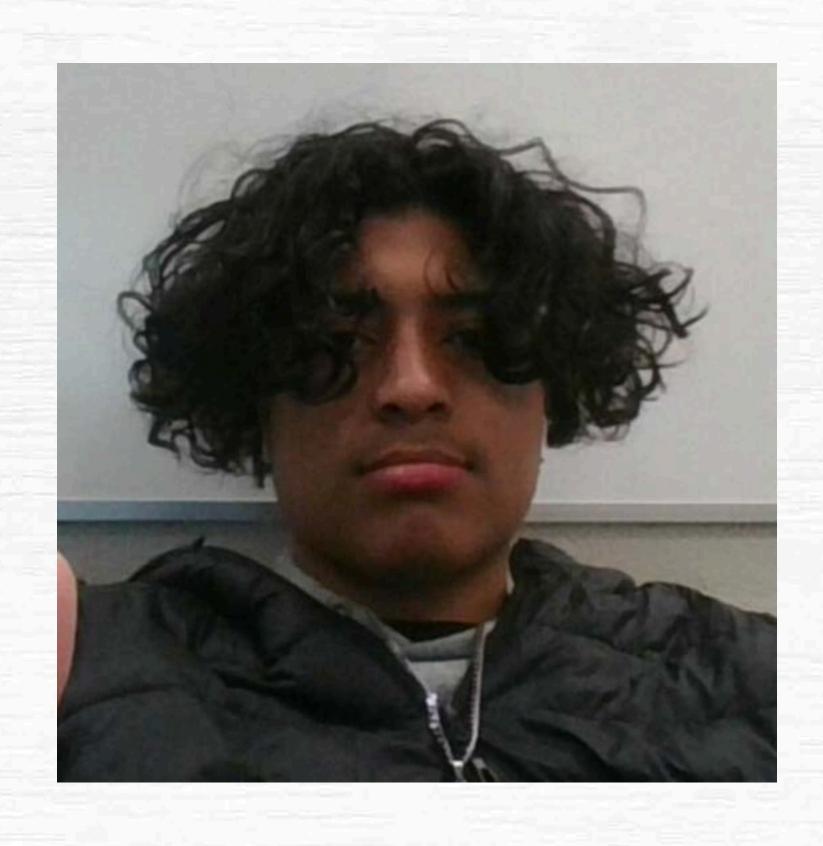
divine fate

born just to die fighting just to stay alive born with a chain around your neck trying to keep up even when you're going slower than everyone else being trained from calf to cattle, to crave the taste of the grass learning that if you get enough grass, you'll be able to escape wondering why it has to be this way why you can't just be free why your freedom comes with a price while others roam freely happy and heathy, with grass being hand fed to them when everyday you have to exert every drop of energy in your body to hope for just a piece of it working becoming synonymous with existing feeling the ache from your bones to your soul having no visible escape and feeling caged to your destiny barley being able to get up everyday and every thought from when you wake up to when you sleep being owned by work

framing your days around it, always thinking about it while going about everyday as if you were put into a state of hypnosis seeing the others around you drop like flies, to the same circumstances as you to then watch as greed strips them of everything they had wondering when it'll come to be your turn hoping that it will be enough born to be put in a hopeless situation but having the feeling that you feel the most, be hope hoping that your dreams can come true dreaming of your calf being taken care of dreaming that they don't have to live the life you lived, and go through what you went through dreaming that they end up okay but being born in a slaughterhouse doesn't leave much to dream for

Jayaen Thompson

Featured Poem: 1. The March



The March

In crowded streets, voices merge into a chorus,
Each one a thread in the fabric of a movement,
Seeking balance in a world tilted,
Where shadows cast long by history obscure the light.

People gather, hands clasped in solidarity, Faces painted with hope and determination,
An array of human experience, each story a testament,
To struggles faced and battles yet to be won.

They speak of lives lived under the weight of injustice,
Of dreams deferred and promises broken,
In the silent spaces where the powerful tread softly,
Stepping over the cries of the oppressed.

Here, in this assembly, every voice matters, Echoing through the corridors of power, Demanding acknowledgment of pain, recognition of worth, A plea for a world where every life is valued.

No chants of empty rhetoric, but raw truths laid bare,
The honest articulation of need and right,
Not as an act of rebellion, but as an affirmation of existence,
A declaration that each soul is precious, indispensable.

Marching not for the triumph of one, but for the elevation of all,
They hold aloft banners of change,
Inscribed with the names of those silenced,
And the ideals that refuse to die.

Justice is not a gift to be granted,
But a state to be reclaimed, a right to
be restored,
In every courtroom, every school, every
street corner,
Where the invisible become seen, the
unheard are listened to.

From the cracks in the pavement grow flowers of resilience,
Petals of myriad colors, roots intertwined,
A symbol of unity in diversity, strength in numbers,
An ever-expanding circle of compassion and resolve.

This is the fight for the soul of humanity,
Where justice serves as the foundation of peace,
A continuous struggle against the tides of indifference,
An unwavering journey toward a fairer world.

In every step taken, a statement is made,
In every stand, a promise is kept,
That until justice rolls down like waters,
And righteousness like a mighty stream,
The march will continue, unyielding,
undeterred.

Featured Poems: 1. Home Is 2. Untitled



Home Is

Where my friends used to play and my mother nursed me
Where I took my first leap
And woke up to soft breeze
Where our nest kept us warm
And my wings grew into their own
Before the grey took over
Where my home used to be

Now when I peek
At the bare and uncovered
I fill with confusion and wonder
Of what could've been done
Against man and machinery
What I could've done
To save where my home used to be

One day soon
I know my friends will return
And our nest will feel warm
We can feel some certainty
That we will be treated kindly
That our existence may be treasured

For now I'll try to cope
Of the ruin of my home
The brown and unkempt
And all that's unforesee.
I still always wonder
Why they built a store where my home used to be

Scars and Stars

In a world where skies knew peace
And trees knew of warmth instead of
heat
Before fires and oceans cried over
communities
Land was for all, to be owned by none
Each had their own star
To live in harmony with the ton

We plead to protect the green
But scar them still in the face of greed
And who most deeply feels these scars
Must most restlessly champion
For their own stars

In the hands and hearts of eager greed We watch littles go without greens A place to play A place to wonder and to create

But in the hands and hearts of those who create
Are those who echo silenced cries
And change do they make
Scars do they heal
Visions do they conquer
A new world do they shape

So should we decide to wallow
To watch raging orange cover ground
And gray our hope

Or gather to ensure
That the lands we roam
The skies we gaze upon
Are more guarded than ever before

Featured Poem: 1. The Knight's Battle



The Knight's Battle

Once upon a time, in a world not so far away
A monster lurked, growing stronger every day
It wielded power over land and sea
A terrifying force known as climate change, you see

This monster, born from greed and neglect
Fed on pollution and destruction, with no regret
It spread its arms far and wide
Leaving devastation in its wake, with nowhere to hide

The people were victims of this monster As the monster destroyed their homes without a care
But amongst them stood a brave knight Ready to take up arms and fight

Through valleys of drought and mountains of fire
The knight embarked on a journey, never to tire
Resilience was his moto
It never let him down

He fought against the monster with all his might
Swinging his sword, shining all throughout the night

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The monster roared and lashed out in anger
But the knight stood firm, his resolve never to waver
He battled through storms and the rising floods of tears
Knowing that victory was near, his were no more fears
For the people's support and care was all that he needed

As the monster's power had no repair The knight pressed on, his determination never to wear

He fought for the people, the land, and the sea Against the monster that represented an ignored enemy

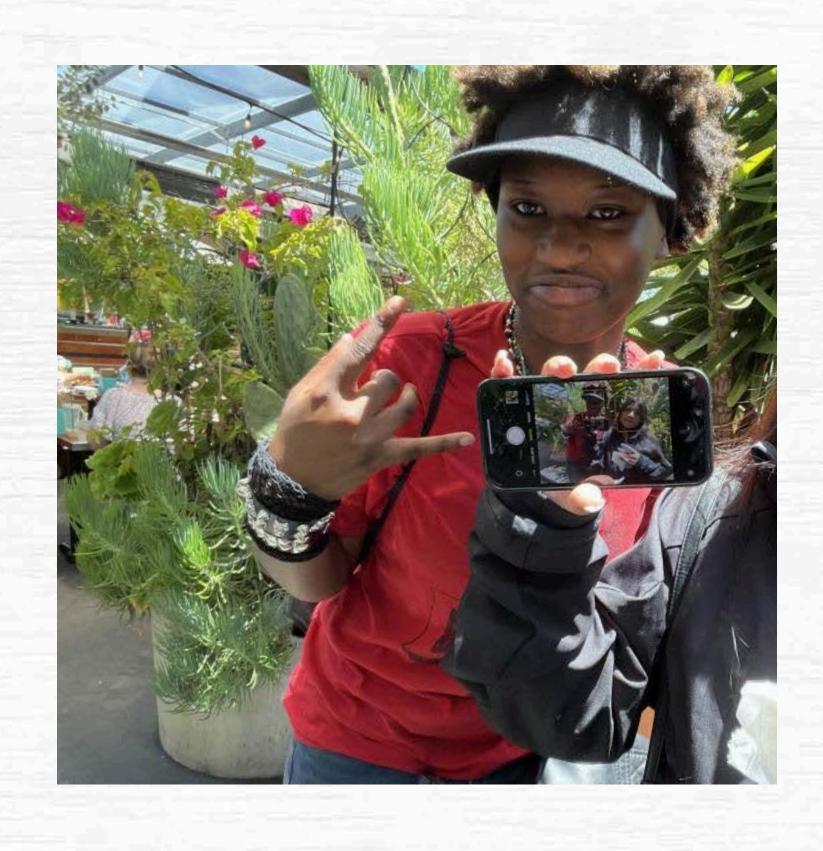
Through forests of smoke and rivers of trash
The knight pushed forward, his heart full of passion and flash
He stood up against the tide of greed and hate
Knowing that the future of many generations was at stake

And in the end, after a long and bitter fight
The monster was defeated, banished from sight
The land began to heal, the people to sing Of the brave knight who had conquered the shunned monster

But the battle was not over, the war not won
For the fight against this monster had only just begun
The knight continued on his journey, his sword held high
Ready to confront any challenge, to never let the truth die

And so the story goes on, a tale of courage and might Of a knight or a generation who will fight for what is true and right Against the monster that is so much more than just a monster In the hope that one day our resilience will change the lives of many, our generation will begin the fight against this monster, our children will be able to live in a world without monsters.

Featured Poem: 1. It isn't fair



It isn't fair

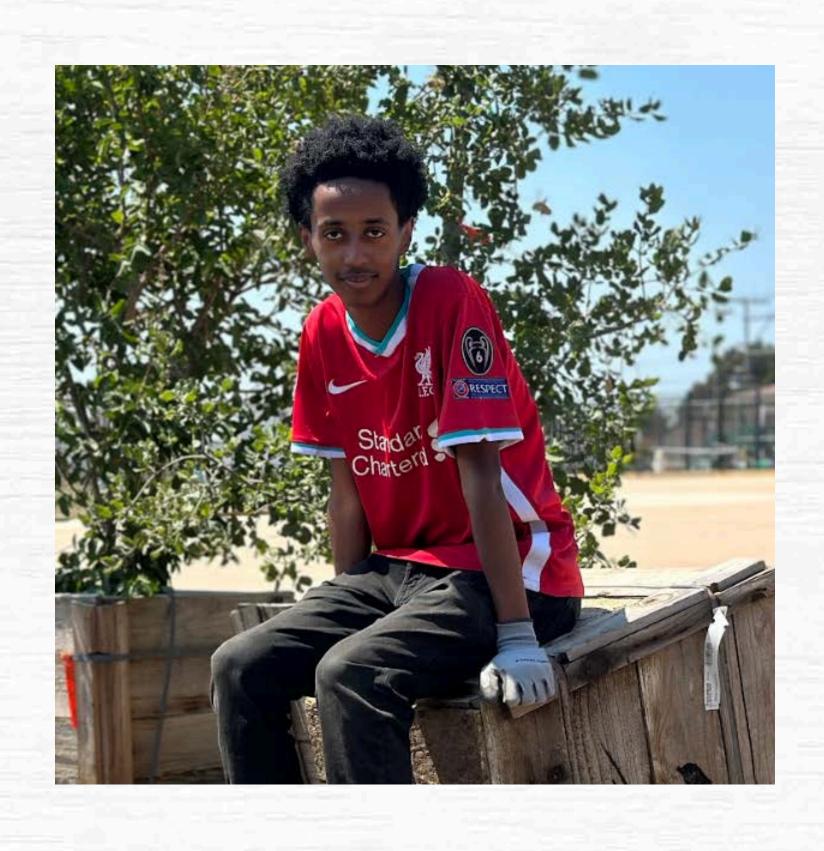
The present anti-blackness in m community and everywhere I look I ask we be saved I feel anti-blackness is slowly becoming normalized, even black people themself are beginning to believe it has nothing to do with race (but rather it's based on "their character or their actions" when we all know that isn't true So I ask we be saved

The community should care because we are people too, this treatment should have been over from the Civil Rights Act in 1946 - yet it continues to 2024? This matters to me because I've had to deal with and watch injustice towards my people all my life, all because the color of our skin it isn't fair. This will never not affect me because I am black, and I will never be black. It makes me want to educate these people because racism is ignorance. And even if not forgiven, you always be taught to do better. It' not fair, and so I ask we be saved,

saved from the borderline racism, saved from police brutality and saved from discrimatiation, saved from the abuse, the insults, their ignnorce, and unwillgness to change their mindsets Because if this poor treatment continues, who to say we won't all be erdicated 77 more years down the line, possibly even earlier than that

Mekonnen

Featured Poem: 1. The Knight's Battle



Special Thanks to Mona!



Thank you for exploring our youth poetry book! This project wouldn't have been possible without the incredible support of Mona Shomali, Director of the New Leaders Initiative at Earth Island Institute.

Each year, Mona plays a pivotal role in helping our interns find their voices through poetry. She leads a Poetry Workshop, where she guides them through the entire creative process, from inspiration to finished poem.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Mona and the Earth Island Institute for their unwavering commitment to organizing the Poetry Slam year after year. Your dedication to empowering our youth and uplifting our communities is truly appreciated!

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