

BILL & MELINDA
GATES foundation
DISCOVERY CENTER

For Immediate Release – Sept. 5, 2019

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**BILL & MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION DISCOVERY
CENTER PRESENTS “WE THE FUTURE: YOUNG LEADERS
OF SOCIAL CHANGE” EXHIBITION**

October 3, 2019 – March 21, 2020

Free Community Celebration: Oct. 5, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.



This October, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Discovery Center presents *We the Future*, an exhibition that showcases the stories of ten young leaders working to build an equitable and inclusive world through their respective social change movements. Inspired by Amplifier’s “We the Future” education campaign and co-curated with the Gates Foundation Discovery Center’s Youth Ambassador Program, the exhibit celebrates youth leadership and action across a range of social justice issues and invites audiences of all ages to imagine and become the change they want to see in the world.

The exhibition features the powerful stories of Xiuhtezcatl Martinez, Amanda Gorman, Leah the Activist, Ismael Nazario, Winter BreeAnne, Lydia X. Z. Brown, Lindsay Amer, Amanda Nguyen, Isra Chaker, and Paul S. John – alongside iconic graphic artworks of each of these 10 young leaders by the artists Shepard Fairey, Rommy Torrico, Munk One, and Kate DeCiccio.

The young leaders featured in this exhibition are shaping a new era of human and environmental rights. They are building organizations, passing legislation, creating media, and speaking out about climate justice, criminal justice reform, voting rights, queer rights, immigration justice, disability justice, and gun reform.

We the Future will also include inspiring videos, hands-on art-making, brave spaces for community dialogue, a series of public programs, and ways to take action.

“Visitors will experience an immersive exhibition that brings to life not only the power of art but also key concerns of young people today. With a goal to flip observers into participants, this exhibition is intended to empower each visitor with tools to take action in their community,” said Cleo Barnett, Deputy Director of Amplifier. “Every day young people live with the impacts of adult decision making, and now is the time we listen to them as they offer solutions towards a future that centers human dignity, equity, and climate justice.”

The Discovery Center’s Youth Ambassadors, a cohort of high-school students, participated in every aspect of the exhibit’s development, from exhibit design and visitor experience to communications and public programs. The Youth Ambassador Program inspires high school students to create positive social change. They organize the annual Teen Action Fair, develop youth-centered programs and exhibits, and foster inclusion and belonging in their schools and communities.

The exhibition stems from an education campaign created in 2017 by Amplifier, a Seattle based nonpartisan design lab that builds art to amplify the voices of grassroots movements. Well-known for its 2017 “We the People” campaign, Amplifier draws from a deep portfolio of artists to build symbols, language, and distribution strategies that can change the national narrative. The organization’s art campaigns address issues such as voting rights, gun violence, and the evolving American identity.

Amplifier’s “We the Future” campaign began in 2018 and distributed free artwork and lesson plans representing the ten young leaders and their movements to more than 20,000 schools nationwide. Amplifier worked with community organizations and design labs to identify hundreds of young leaders laboring for social justice, and ten were selected to be featured. The leaders and their organizations worked with Amplifier’s education program to develop lesson plans to accompany each artwork.

“As a nonprofit organization, Amplifier is a public service, so when educators across the country asked for artwork and teaching tools for their classroom, we answered!” said Amplifier’s Barnett. “Educators continue to be undervalued and underfunded, so we are

answering the call by bringing nonpartisan teaching tools into classrooms to celebrate and amplify youth leadership.”

We the Future will feature iconic art posters of each young leader, created by artists Shepard Fairey, Kate DeCiccio, Rommy Torrico, and Munk One in collaboration with Amplifier. Free posters will be available for visitors to take away and post in their communities.

In conjunction with *We the Future*, the exhibition will also highlight young changemakers from Washington State through the 100 Changemakers Project – an effort to recognize the power of youth in our area to make a difference. Each month, the exhibit will feature the stories of ten young people who are working to create positive change in their communities.

Young Leaders of Social Change include:

Xiuhtezcatl Martinez (he/him) (first name pronounced ‘Shoe-Tez-Caht’), Youth Director of Earth Guardians, is an 18-year-old indigenous climate activist, hip-hop artist, and powerful voice on the front lines of the global youth-led environmental movement. At the early age of six, Xiuhtezcatl began speaking around the world, from the United Nations Summit in Rio de Janeiro, to the General Assembly at the United Nations in New York City. He has worked locally to get pesticides out of parks, to contain coal ash, and to put moratoriums on fracking in his state. Xiuhtezcatl is part of a youth-led lawsuit against the federal government for their failure to protect future generations from the effects of climate change. His work has been featured on PBS, Showtime, National Geographic, Rolling Stone, Vogue, Daily Show, Comedy Central, CNN, MSNBC, HBO, and VICE.

Amanda Gorman (she/her), often called the ‘next great figure of poetry in the US’, is a published author and the first ever Youth Poet Laureate of the United States of America. Amanda’s first poetry book, “The One For Whom Food Is Not Enough”, was published in 2015 by Penmanship Books. A student at Harvard University, she has worked as a United Nations Youth Delegate at the U.N. Headquarters in New York City, a HerLead Fellow in training with girl leaders in D.C. and London, and an Ambassador for the feminist platform School of Doodle. She has been published in The Huffington Post, mariashriver.com, and multiple award-winning anthologies. At 16, she founded the community project One Pen One Page, which promotes literacy and youth activism. Amanda partners with 826 National for the We the Future campaign to bring the campaign’s artwork and teaching tools into classrooms across the nation.

Leah the Activist (she/her) was just 13 years old when she was selected by Amplifier to be part of the We the Future campaign and has been an activist since she was seven. Her cause is very personal: she is fighting for the rights of her parents to not be deported and to protect her sister’s DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) status. As a youth leader with Families Belong Together, she uses her voice to fight for the rights of all families to be together, and for children to be free and treated with dignity. Leah leads campaigns to ensure that schools in her community are safe for

immigrant students and to advocate for Miami's status as a sanctuary city. She has taken her message to Congress and to national rallies in Washington, D.C. She partners with WeCount! and the American Friends Service Committee and is a longtime member of the We Belong Together campaign.

Ismael Nazario (he/him) is a formerly incarcerated advocate for prison reform, social justice, and human rights. He works to help individuals at high risk for recidivism from Rikers prison reintegrate into society after their release. Ismael has worked with many advocacy projects such as I-CAN (Individualized Correction Achievement Network), a program of The Fortune Society; the Raise the Age campaign; Banning Solitary Confinement; and Rikers Reform. In 2015, he was recognized for his contributions and received the Peabody Award for Community Activism. Through the lens of his firsthand experience within the criminal justice system, Ismael sheds light on numerous social justice and human rights injustices and encourages others to become part of the solution. Ismael partners with Performing Statistics for the We the Future campaign to bring the campaign's artwork and teaching tools into classrooms across the nation.

Winter BreeAnne (she/her) is a youth advocate and organizer from Los Angeles, CA. She began her work at age 16 when she founded Black Is Lit after observing the lack of representation of black folks' accomplishments in mainstream media. Through Black is Lit, Winter has traveled to elementary schools across the nation, aiming to galvanize students' civic engagement. Formerly in partnership with Women's March Youth, Winter spearheaded the March 14th National School Walkouts, which called for action against gun violence in America. She currently focuses on expanding her non-profit, Just Active, contributing at Crooked Media, and collaborating on several initiatives for civic engagement, including the TOMS #EndGunViolenceTogether Campaign. Winter was distinguished as "Riverside, California's Most Remarkable Teen," in Spring 2018. Her work landed her a coveted spot on Teen Vogue's "21 Under 21" list and as well as appearances on CNN, MSNBC, and ABC. She has also written and been featured in op-eds and articles published by Bustle, Fast Company, CNN, and more.

Lydia X. Z. Brown (they/them) is a community organizer, writer, speaker, educator, attorney, and advocate for disability justice. Their work combats the violence that takes place against multiply-marginalized disabled people in the forms of institutionalization, incarceration, and policing. They were born in Jiangsu, China in 1993. Lydia is currently a Justice Catalyst Fellow at the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law in Washington, D.C., and is a Founder and Co-Director of the Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network's Autistic People of Color Fund. They work to advance transformative change through organizing in the streets, writing legislation, conducting anti-ableism workshops, testifying at regulatory and policy hearings, and disrupting institutional complacency. Lydia fights for love, liberation, and community care.

Lindsay Amer (they/them) is a queer activist, artist, and storyteller. They create and host Queer Kid Stuff, an LGBTQ+ educational web series for all ages. Lindsay obtained their BS from Northwestern University in theater and gender studies and their MA from

Queen Mary University of London for theatre and performance studies. They were named a Rising Star by GLAAD and a Webby Award Honoree, and have been recognized by HuffPost, Teen Vogue, Refinery29, and Kidscreen for their work. At Bluelaces Theater Company, Lindsay makes multi-sensory theatrical experiences for people with autism and other developmental differences in New York.

Amanda Nguyen (she/her) is the CEO and founder of Rise, which advocates for sexual assault survivors' rights and helps people write and pass their own bills. Amanda was nominated for the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize for penning her own civil rights into existence and unanimously passing the Sexual Assault Survivors' Bill of Rights, after having to navigate the broken criminal justice system after her own rape. 18 other bills protecting sexual violence survivors have modeled her federal law, which was the 21st bill in modern US history to pass unanimously on the record. Amanda has been named a Forbes 30 Under 30, Foreign Policy's Top 100 Leading Global Thinker, Marie Claire's Young Woman of the Year, The Tempest's #1 Woman of Color Trailblazer, and a Frederick Douglass 200. Previously, Amanda was appointed by President Barack Obama to the United States Department of State as his Deputy White House Liaison.

Isra Chaker (she/her) is a Syrian-American civil rights activist, campaign and advocacy expert, and public speaker. She serves as the Refugee, Migration, and Protection Campaign Lead at Oxfam, where she advocates for refugees, asylum seekers, and temporary protected status (TPS) holders while fighting against discriminatory policies such as Muslim bans. President Trump's Executive Order 13769 (also known as the Muslim ban) not only reduces the total number of refugees accepted into the U.S., but also prohibits entry by citizens of several majority-Muslim countries, including Syria. Unable to reunite with her family in Syria, Isra is personally affected by this ban and is passionately driven in her work to reunite families and advocate for vulnerable people.

Paul S. John (he/him) is a social justice advocate working to end anti-Black racism and systemic violence. As Manager of Mayoral Outreach at Mayors Against Illegal Guns, Paul works with current and former mayors across the country to amplify their support of gun safety laws while facilitating the exchange of local strategies between municipal officials that reduce gun violence. Paul has also worked with the Million Hoodies Movement for Justice, where he led the organization's efforts to build membership, communicate strategies and initiatives, and support the next generation of leaders.

ABOUT AMPLIFIER

Amplifier is a nonprofit design lab that builds art and media experiments to amplify the most important movements of our times. They design and distribute art that engages people in the creation of a more just, inclusive, and sustainable future. Since 2015, they've worked with hundreds of renowned artists, distributed over a million pieces of art, and sent free artwork to hundreds of thousands of students across the United States. More information at amplifier.org.

ABOUT BILL & MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION DISCOVERY CENTER

Located next to Seattle Center and the headquarters of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Gates Foundation Discovery Center is a catalyst to educate, inspire, and motivate local and global awareness and action. Through exhibits and programs, the Discovery Center convenes and connects people to relevant topics, stories and resources to inspire action in Seattle and beyond. Admission is always free. Open Tuesday – Saturday 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. More information at discovergates.org.

ABOUT BILL & MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION

Guided by the belief that every life has equal value, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation works to help all people lead healthy, productive lives. In developing countries, it focuses on improving people's health and giving them the chance to lift themselves out of hunger and extreme poverty. In the United States, it seeks to ensure that all people—especially those with the fewest resources—have access to the opportunities they need to succeed in school and life. Based in Seattle, Washington, the foundation is led by CEO Sue Desmond-Hellmann and Co-chair William H. Gates Sr., under the direction of Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffett.