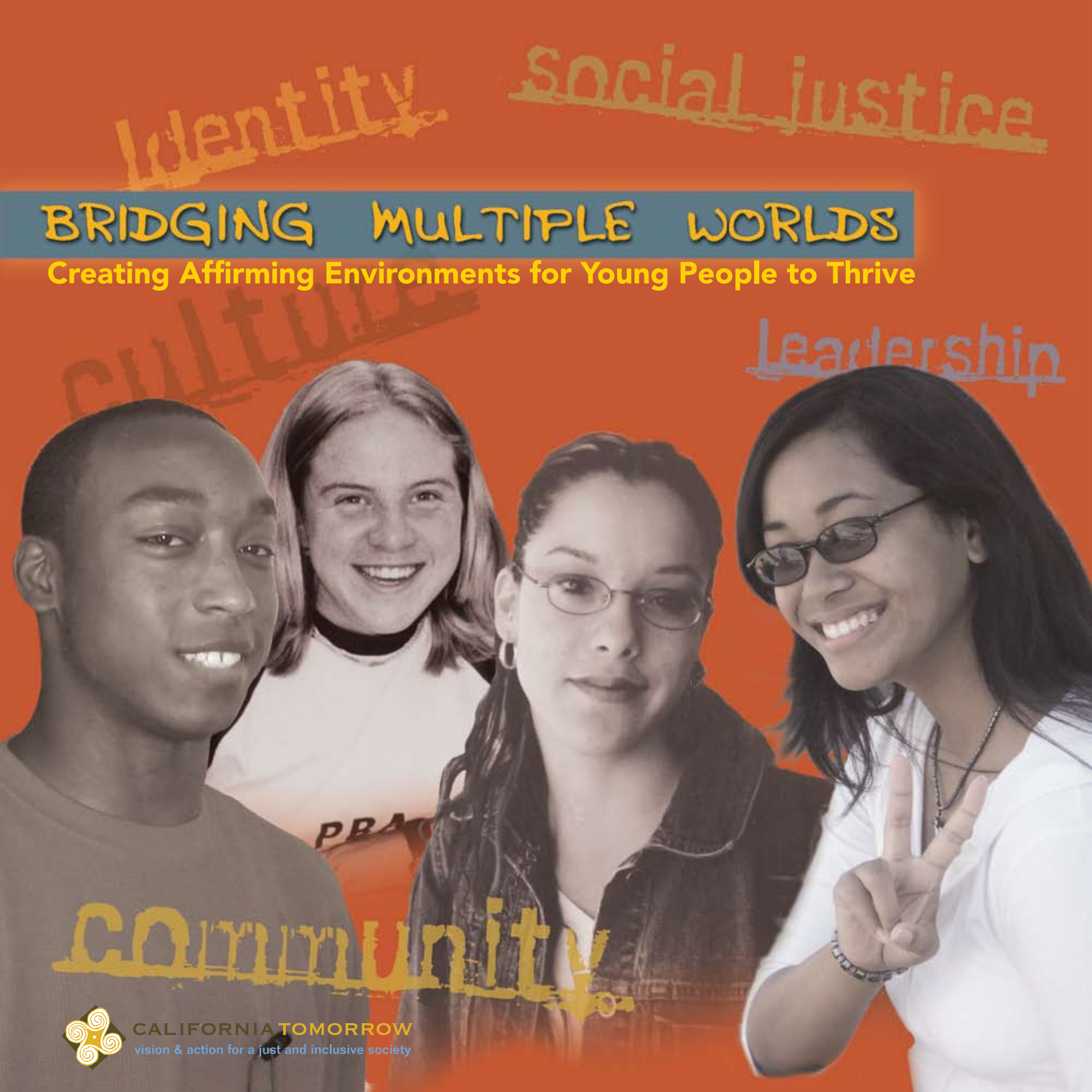
Bridging Multiple Worlds Competencies Reflection

How is the competency I chose being supported at my site?	What are some ways I can incorporate the competency I chose into my site?


identity
social justice
BRIDGING MULTIPLE WORLDS
Creating Affirming Environments for Young People to Thrive
culture
leadership
community
CALIFORNIA TOMORROW
vision & action for a just and inclusive society

Bridging Multiple Worlds

Creating Affirming Environments for Young People to Thrive

Bridging Multiple Worlds Staff / Writers

Jhumpa Bhattacharya, *Project Lead*
Jimena Quiroga
Laurie Olsen

Bridging Multiple Worlds Interns

Ronnie Giddeon
Roxanne Isaguirre
Roger Moy

Editor

Carol Dowell

Designer

Guillermo Prado, 8 point 2 Design Studio

Printer

Chimes Printing

© California Tomorrow, January 2007

Bridging Multiple Worlds (BMW) was supported by the Barrios Trust, California Endowment, Cisco Foundation, and the Butler-Koshland Fund. We thank these organizations for their support.

We would like to thank and acknowledge the students and staff at Mandela High School for 3 incredible years of partnership. Particularly, we thank Patricia Arabia, Robin Bailer-Glover (Principal), Emma Batten-Bowen, Randall Bustamante, Kevin McNulty, and Ellen Salazar for their support, time, and energy towards implementing this program into their school. We also would like to appreciate and thank Alicia Romero for her tireless championing and passion for Bridging Multiple Worlds. Your help and support is greatly valued by us all.

Thank you to Sergio Arroyo who taught and co-designed the elective class with us. Your passion and commitment to youth and social justice is unparalleled.

Finally, we give a special shout out to our fabulous interns Roger, Ronnie, and Roxanne for all their hard work and dedication on this publication and to BMW in general, and to the 2006 BMW graduates: Sergio Barajas, Ivonne Calderon, Mey He, Antara Henderson, Roxanne Isaguirre, Irving Leyva, and Kenyatta Wilson. We miss you.
Go and change the world!

Imagine: Young people strongly rooted in who they are — as members of their families, their communities, and the world. They are proud and knowledgeable about their ethnicities, cultures, and histories, and they understand the connections between the well-being of their own communities and others' around the globe.

Imagine: Teenagers who have access to a rich variety of books and information about their heritage. They are interested in learning and exchanging knowledge not only about their own history but about other people and cultures in their community and beyond.

Imagine: Young people who fluently read, write, and discuss literature and ideas in more than one language. They can fully participate in school discussions in English and other languages, and interact with family members who offer them guidance and wisdom in the languages of their homes.

Imagine: Young people growing more open to friendships with people who are different from them. They counteract fears and stereotypes and develop new communication skills that can benefit relationships throughout their lives.

Imagine: Young people who act as allies to newcomers or others they see being excluded or harassed. They stand up against racism and discrimination, and share with their peers the value of connecting across differences.

Imagine: Groups of teenagers building inter-racial alliances to call political attention to injustices in their neighborhoods and help the people in their communities. They possess the leadership skills and sense of empowerment to work together to change conditions of inequity in their world.

Imagine: Young people successfully bridging multiple worlds.

If you are a teacher, a young person, a youth worker or anyone who interacts with youth, as you read these words, hopefully some remarkable young people come to your mind. For generations, young people — on their own or through strong intentional support from family, community, and their schools — have managed to fulfill their own amazing potential as multicultural, multilingual citizens of the world. The movements for social justice and educational access and equity have worked for decades to create and protect opportunities for youth to develop into these very kinds of people — the leaders our society needs to build a future of peace, justice, and connection.

But the reality is that despite great efforts and successes that continue today, the majority of young people — especially those from communities of color, immigrant communities, and low-income communities — still get little or no support to realize this vision, at a time when it is needed more than ever. They are on their own to find their way through a world of pervasive discrimination and exclusion, a daily onslaught of negative messages about their ethnicities and cultures, a still too-narrow school curriculum in which their experiences and communities are invisible or marginalized, and persistent inequities in access to economic resources and political representation. The current reality is that far too many young people still drop out or disengage from school, hold fears and misconceptions about people who are different, and struggle with the wounds and scars of living in a society that devalues them and their communities. The current reality fails our young people — fails to provide access, to honor basic human dignity, and to help them develop the skills needed in the world they are inheriting.

But educators, young people, youth workers and parents can join in the ongoing movement to undo this reality. Schools and youth programs can and must take responsibility for creating affirming environments that support all young people to thrive with the skills for fully participating in society. This publication describes an inspirational and crucial approach — called Bridging Multiple Worlds — that both schools and youth programs can adopt with support from California Tomorrow to take on these challenges.

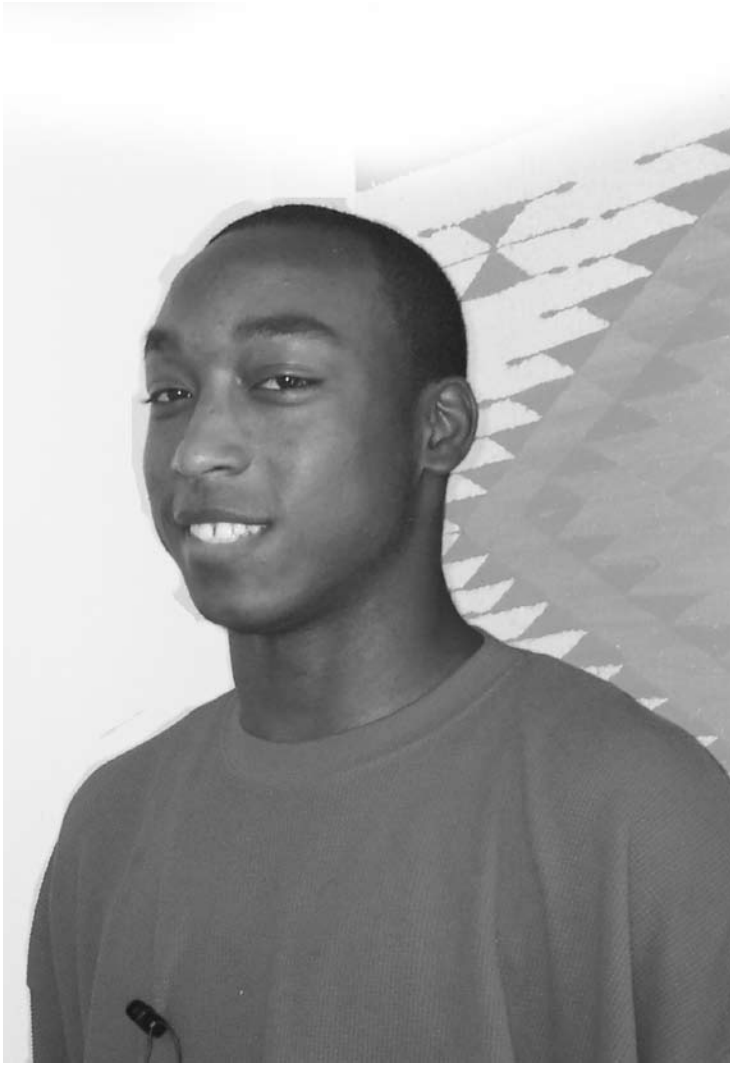


Photo by Jhumpa Bhattacharya

Photo by Jimena Quiroga

"I learned to respect and accept my culture. I now realize how important my race is and how much we helped in the creation of this country. My self-esteem is a little bit higher because I know more about where I come from and that I come from a race of strong and self-determined people."

- Antara Henderson

The Importance of Bridging Multiple Worlds

At the foundation of Bridging Multiple Worlds is a set of strong core competencies (see pages 6 and 7) that all youth need to thrive and lead in a diverse society, and that all schools and youth programs can contribute toward helping students achieve. How this takes shape — through activities, curriculum, and relationship building — will differ from site to site, but nurturing the Bridging Multiple Worlds core competencies is always the goal.

The generation coming of age in the United States today is marked by unprecedented cultural, linguistic, and ethnic diversity. No one is more aware than young people that diversity is a reality. The media bring information and popular images into even the most isolated and segregated pockets of the country from all over the world. In the halls of public schools, young people brush against peers from every continent and hundreds of cultures. More youth of this generation than any other are multiracial, living in families that encompass two or often several different cultures.

There is great promise in a diverse society that authentically draws on the best of everyone and finally puts an end to the degradation and marginalization of some communities. But racial and economic separation and injustice still persist, and people and institutions in this country have far to go to achieve that promise. Inter-group dynamics are more marked by ethnic and racial inequities, separation, fear, misunderstanding, disrespect, and outright hostilities. For

••••••• continues on page eight

Strong cultural identity

The Bridging Multiple Worlds Core Competencies:

Strong Cultural Identity

Young people need knowledge, pride, and self esteem about who they are and where they come from, hand-in-hand with the ability to reject racist and prejudicial messages from mainstream society about their ethnicities and cultures and those of others. This requires they be supported to fully develop the language and cultural skills to appreciate and contribute within their families and communities, and the skills to "unpack" and resist forces that degrade them or make them invisible.

Leadership Skills to Act for Change

Young people need the tools, knowledge, and confidence to speak out and intervene against acts of injustice aimed at themselves or others. As the conditions that produce social disparities and inequities persist in their communities, youth of color, low-income youth, and immigrant youth must learn not only about the roots of injustice, but ways to take action. With such leadership skills and motivation, they can develop into positive forces for their families, communities, and society, working with others to create change.

Knowledge

Critical Thinking Skills

Youth must develop critical thinking perspectives and analysis for looking at issues facing their communities and the world. In an interconnected global society, they need to be able to critique inequalities and understand the dynamics of power and privilege in relation to their own lives. Critical thinking gives young people an awareness of multiple perspectives and helps them analyze divergent views on current and historical events. It helps them recognize and name prejudice and stereotypes in their own behavior and in the behavior of others. Students who are critical thinkers apply those skills in the classroom and in their approach to learning and interacting in the world. Critical thinking allows youth to become fully engaged citizens in society.

Bilingual Skills

Cross-cultural Skills

Young people need to understand the concept of culture, and to be sensitive and adaptive to interacting with people from different ethnic/cultural backgrounds than their own. This involves learning how people's perspectives and ways (including their own) are shaped by their lived experiences, as well as the social, political, and economic contexts in which they live. As young people develop awareness of and respect for their own identity group and others, the next step is better communication. In neighborhoods struggling with tense intergroup relations, cross-cultural skills are fundamental and can help young people mediate conflicts when they arise.

Cross-cu

Understanding of one's community

Bilingual Skills

Young people need their bilingual skills to be supported as a valuable asset to themselves and society. For youth whose families speak a language other than English, this is a core way to honor who they are and what they bring. But in today's climate, many young people are not getting this support; more often they are made to feel that they must choose English and let go of the home language. Being bilingual enables them to communicate with and participate fully in their own families and communities, as well as in the mainstream dominant society. Monolingual English-speaking youth, too, must be supported to learn other languages. For all young people, mastery of two or more languages is not only in high demand throughout the labor market, it is one of the most crucial leadership tools for working to unite people to create positive change in the world.

Knowledge of History and Social Justice Movements

Young people need truth and inspiration about the long history of social justice activism in this country and the world. They need to know about the conditions, people, and movements that have brought communities together across differences. Immigrants and young people of color especially need to know about the leaders from their own communities who have stood up against injustices through the generations. They need models and lessons learned from the past and awareness of current struggles that directly connect to their own lives. Learning about global dynamics, key events, and specific examples of leadership and activism through history can inspire youth about their own potential to make change in their communities and the world.

Understanding of One's Community

Young people need to know how and why their communities have evolved over time. Over the past decades, many neighborhoods have undergone demographic and economic changes that impact human relationships along with cultural and political dynamics. It is important that young people not only be aware of these changes, but understand the implications for their daily lives. Learning about the history and experiences of the different cultural groups among their neighbors can help contextualize the changes youth see taking place in their communities.

••••••• continued from page five

young people to negotiate their way in this diverse society, to thrive, to lead, they must learn to understand and appreciate their own cultures and those of others, to feel comfortable and respectful of people different from themselves, to feel empowered to act against injustice and exclusion, and to bridge national, racial, cultural, and personal divides. For many young people, the ability to find common ground across racial and language lines has become a matter of survival in neighborhoods struggling with tense relationships between ethnic groups, as well as between immigrant newcomers and long-time residents.

The Bridging Multiple Worlds core competencies are crucial for all young people. For youth of color, immigrant youth, and low-income youth, they contain a special urgency for counteracting the power of racism and social inequities on their development and potential. Like all young people, who they are and how they relate to the world is deeply shaped by the customs, traditions, and experiences of their families and communities. They function in both their own cultures and languages and in the dominant mainstream English speaking society, learning the codes and ways of all. But as they pick up messages that their communities are lesser or invisible, it is not surprising that they often do not feel safe or open to learning and participating. The Bridging Multiple Worlds core competencies provide an alternative, positive foundation for young people to prepare for the great challenges of a diverse society and their future roles in life.

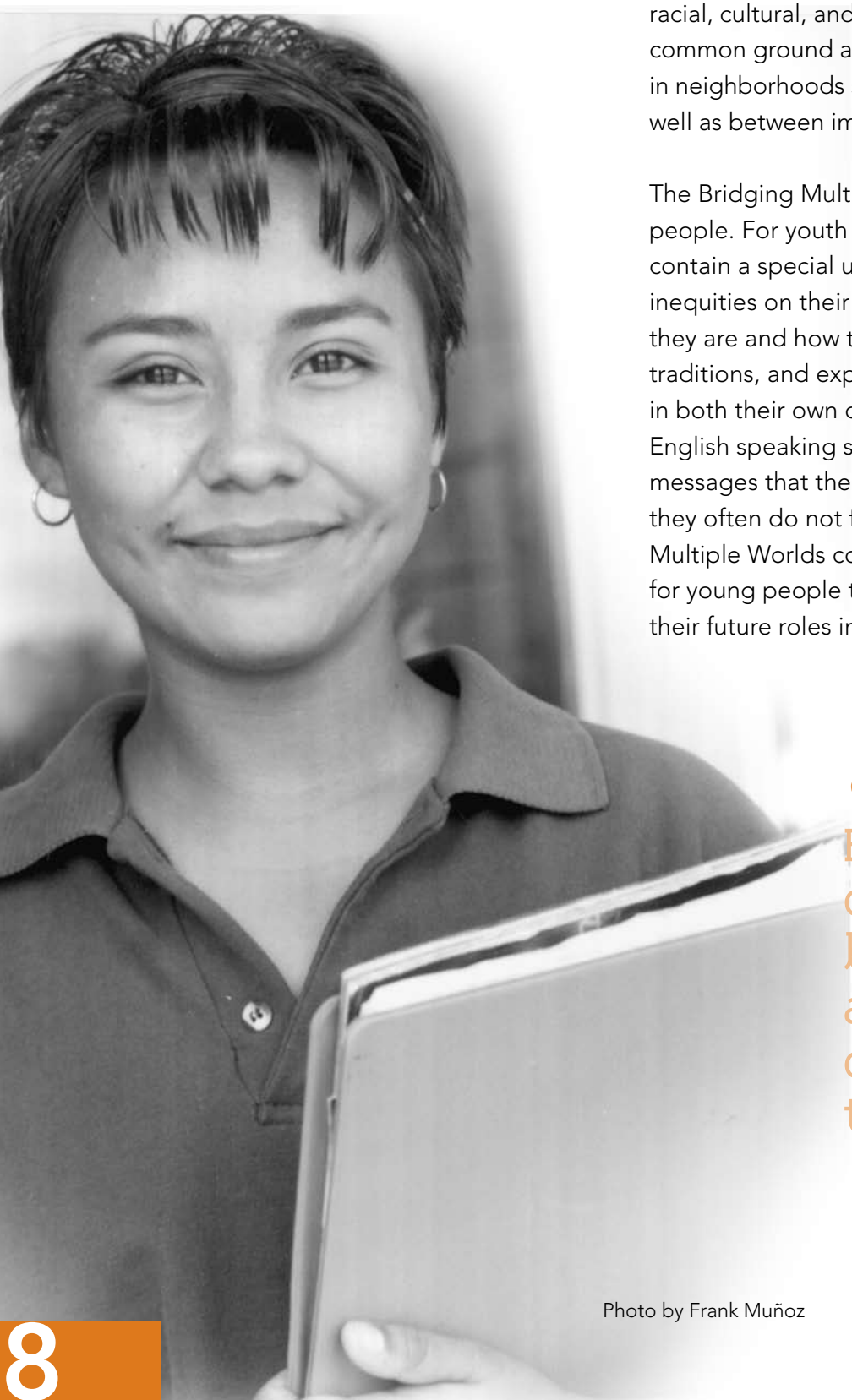


Photo by Frank Muñoz

"Before being a part of Bridging Multiple Worlds, I didn't care about other cultures, but now I want to learn more about them. I've learned not to criticize them, just respect who they are."

- Mey He

The Bridging Multiple Worlds approach can be customized around the interests and needs of any youth serving establishment, from the school to the classroom to after-school and community programs. Beginning on page 11 we tell the story of how one high school, Mandela High School in East Oakland, California, implemented the Bridging Multiple Worlds competencies in their school. In partnership with California Tomorrow, Mandela High School tackled questions like: What does it take to create an empowering pedagogy and affirming environment in a school or community? How do we go about supporting and honoring young people's cultural identities, home languages, and heritage? What does it look like to develop and deliver a curriculum that is inclusive and that prepares young people for the challenges of a diverse society? How do we support young people to build the skills, courage, and collective relationships to play a role in countering the inequities they face in their world? Through this partnership and the process of uncovering answers to these questions, Mandela High School and California Tomorrow ultimately infused a Bridging Multiple Worlds framework throughout the school community.

"I understand so much more now — I don't blame my community anymore. Instead I look for ways to change it."

- Irving Leyva

Photo by Moe Nadel

MANDELA HIGH SCHOOL

Mandela High School: Piloting a Bridging Multiple Worlds Approach

In the summer of 2003, a new small high school, Mandela High, was conceived in East Oakland, California. Prompted by persistent underachievement, high dropout rates, and serious inter-group tensions in the neighborhoods surrounding its large comprehensive high schools, Oakland Unified School District embarked on a major reform initiative to break the schools into smaller autonomous ones that would be more personalized and conducive to supporting students. Mandela High was one of five small schools that emerged out of Fremont High School.

Mandela High School is tremendously diverse. In the 2005-06 school year, 25% of its 354 students identified as African American, 12% Asian, 2% Filipino, 58% Latino, 2% Pacific Islander, and 1% White. Of this population, 64% spoke a language other than English at home, and 39% were designated English Learners. The school serves a primarily low-income neighborhood with 79% of the students qualifying for the Free or Reduced Lunch program in 2005-06.

Like all the schools in the initiative, Mandela's journey to becoming a small school began with the assembling of a design team to determine the approach, theme, and curriculum emphasis. Familiar with the work of California Tomorrow, the Mandela design team enlisted the organization's staff to help create a high

school dedicated to developing future leaders with the skills, awareness, and knowledge to bridge cultural differences and to participate and thrive in a diverse society. During a two-day retreat to design a program based on this vision, the Mandela team and California Tomorrow staff pondered: What would a school look like where young people's cultures were honored and acknowledged as an asset? How can we foster healthy cultural and linguistic identities for our school's young people? How can we design our school to bring together students across differences in race, language, and culture? As the dialogue went on, the Bridging Multiple Worlds concept took shape.

"I do feel proud of my culture, proud of being Latina and being a woman. Learning about Latina writers, actors, and activists made me feel proud and it encouraged me to continue being a part of such activities."

-

Ivonne Calderon

Over the course of the next three years, the Mandela staff in partnership with California Tomorrow would develop and infuse eight components supporting the Bridging Multiple Worlds vision throughout the school. The goal was to offer students multiple ways to learn key concepts and competencies, and also the opportunity to amass work towards a new "Bridging Multiple Worlds Certificate" upon graduation from high school.

Mandela High School's Eight Bridging Multiple Worlds Components

The Bridging Multiple Worlds After School Club

This was the very first Bridging Multiple Worlds component to be implemented at Mandela and it validated for school staff how interested students were in opportunities to focus on these issues so core to their lives. Created as a bi-weekly after school leadership club, participants explored the Bridging Multiple Worlds concepts of identity building, social justice issues, and cross-cultural awareness. They learned about different cultural and ethnic forms of music and how they influence each other, created informational and fun bulletin boards around the school commemorating cultural and ethnic holidays, recruited other students to participate in Bridging Multiple Worlds, made presentations in Advisory classes, and conducted school-wide surveys to illicit fellow students' ideas and desires related to creating an inclusive climate on campus. It was through such a survey that the after school participants learned that Mandela students wanted to have the content of the after school club expanded into an elective course. With the results of the survey in hand, the students approached the school administration and lead the effort to institute the Bridging Multiple Worlds elective course described next.

The Bridging Multiple Worlds Elective Course

A year-long elective course was designed and offered to students to immerse them in academic study, dialogue, reflection and experiences core to the

Bridging Multiple Worlds competencies. The curriculum focused on exploring personal cultural identity and developing awareness of others' cultures and languages; learning about historical and contemporary examples of activism and movements for cultural rights, civil rights, and social justice not taught in most history or social studies courses; developing cross-cultural skills and applying those skills in the school and community; and developing a critical lens to examine the conditions in the students' community and society as a whole along with strategies to create change. The course engaged students in reading, research, keeping journals, writing papers, field trips, critical analysis of videos and films, art projects, and discussion. Through participation in the four-unit sections of the course, students were able to complete materials required for their Bridging Multiple Worlds portfolio (see later description). The response to the class was overwhelmingly positive, as the quotes throughout this booklet reveal. California Tomorrow staff co-developed and taught the course in the first year, with Mandela faculty taking the lead thereafter and adapting the curriculum as the school evolved.

Bridging Multiple Worlds Elective Course Curriculum Outline

Created for Mandela High School, Oakland, CA

Unit One: IDENTITY

- Understanding and examining the role of culture in our lives
- Looking at the role and importance of language in our own lives
- Understanding dynamics of language and culture and how these enter into oppression of people of color in the U.S.
- Learning about language rights struggles
- Reflecting on how we perceive and shape our identities
- Examining stereotypes
- Reflecting on the power of the media in shaping stereotypes and our identities
- Deconstructing and examining the concept of race
- Exploring and defining nationality and citizenship

Unit Two: FOUNDATIONAL CONCEPTS FOR UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL JUSTICE

- Defining levels of power: institutional, structural and interpersonal power
- Exploring concepts of "oppression" and "privilege"
- The ISMS: sexism, ageism, ableism, heterosexism, adultism, racism
- Understanding capitalism and its effect on poverty and crime
- Defining and understanding globalization
- Reflecting on and defining what it means to be an "ally"
- The concept of universal Human Rights
- The Prison Industrial Complex

Unit Three: MOVEMENTS FOR SOCIAL CHANGE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

- Slave Rebellions
- Pueblo Rebellions
- Marcus Garvey
- Zoot Suiters
- Filipino Farm Workers Union Movement
- Malcolm X
- The Black Panthers
- The Crusade for Justice/ Chicano Movement
- The Young Lords
- The Fight for the International Hotel
- TWLF (Third World Liberation Front)
- The American Indian Movement, the takeover of Alcatraz and Wounded Knee
- Japanese Reparations
- The Youth Movement of the 1990s
- Arab and South Asian communities working against 9/11 backlash

Unit Four: TAKING ACTION

- Conducting a community survey on issues and problems facing the community
- Conducting a survey on what people feel that solutions to these problems could be
- Participating and helping plan a Community Violence Forum
- Creating an organization for social change and justice
- Research projects: Inspiring Latinos, Asian Americans, and African Americans — Learning about how everyday people can help make a difference
- Youth Panels to help inform the community and others of issues relevant to youth

"I have a little brother and I've been trying to teach him the stuff I've been learning in class so that he can understand things like racism, sexism and stuff. The other day he told me that he was telling his friends that some of the stuff that they say are racist and they should stop 'cause it's not right."

-Sergio Barajas

A Bridging Multiple Worlds Advisory Curriculum

All students at Mandela attend a 40-minute school-wide advisory period four days of the week. California Tomorrow developed a 6-week thematic curriculum to be taught during this advisory period on the themes of culture, language, family history, identity, stereotypes, and demographics. Activities in the curriculum included defining what culture and identity are comprised of, exploring and understanding the demographics of Oakland, and understanding the harms of using stereotypes.

Infusion of Bridging Multiple Worlds Concepts into Existing Courses and Curriculum

Each teacher at Mandela was given the opportunity to meet with California Tomorrow staff to either create new units and assignments or align their existing course curriculum to foster the Bridging Multiple Worlds competencies among their students. For example, in 10th grade English, the teacher assigned students to write a paper on an historical act of oppression for their required persuasive essay. Similarly, an autobiographical paper required in the English Language Development class was reframed to focus in part on cultural identity. In Social Studies, the teacher incorporated a new unit on human rights during International Human Rights Month. During African American History Month, the art teacher introduced an activity on creating African masks, among other activities throughout the school. All of these efforts helped to infuse Bridging Multiple Worlds concepts throughout the school, while the students who completed the assignments could use them to fulfill various requirements in their Bridging Multiple Worlds portfolios.

Community Service

California requires high school students to complete community service hours in order to graduate. This fit well with the Bridging Multiple Worlds emphasis on youth developing leadership skills and contributing to their communities. In order for students to be eligible to receive the Bridging Multiple Worlds certificate at graduation, Mandela instituted a requirement that they complete half of their community service hours in a placement using cross-cultural and/or bilingual skills, and the other half serving their own cultural communities.

Travel

It has long been an accepted educational principle that students gain valuable cross-cultural and linguistic skills through travel. It is common to hear of higher income students traveling all over the globe, but many public high school students rarely have a chance or the means to leave their

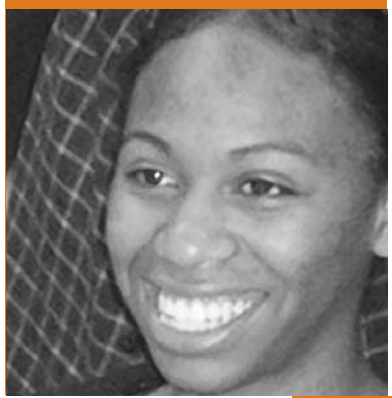
neighborhoods. Students in the Bridging Multiple Worlds After School Club and elective course traveled to Angel Island in San Francisco Bay to learn about the history of Asian immigration to California. Another trip took them to schools in a nearby wealthier community where they were able to compare and contrast their lived experience with their peers' in more resourced areas. Students also participated in a two-day Farm Worker Justice Tour arranged through Global Exchange; here they traveled to rural Salinas, California to learn more about environmental justice concerns such as the plight of laborers in the fields, the differences between organic and traditional farming, and the efforts of labor unions to improve and protect working conditions. Upon return from each of these trips, students wrote reflections to insert into their Bridging Multiple Worlds portfolios.

Bridging Multiple Worlds Portfolio

The "Bridging Multiple Worlds Portfolio" was instituted at Mandela for students to compile activities and assignments completed over the course of their high school years. Students present their portfolios as seniors to become eligible for the Bridging Multiple Worlds Certificate on their diploma. Assignments in a student's Bridging Multiple Worlds portfolio might include, for example, a translation piece to demonstrate biliteracy, an identity collage, an essay on an example of oppression, write-ups of cultural events attended, reflections on travel, and an autobiographical essay.

Bridging Multiple Worlds Internship

California Tomorrow created a Bridging Multiple Worlds internship within the organization for three Mandela students in the last year of collaboration with Mandela High. The goals of the internship were for the students to develop and implement three meaningful school-wide cultural events, research and produce the Community Service Directory with interesting placements for students to use cross-cultural and bilingual skills, plan a special Bridging Multiple Worlds graduation ceremony for the first graduating class, and contribute to the development and writing of this publication explaining Bridging Multiple Worlds. The Bridging Multiple Worlds interns planned a school-wide African American Jeopardy Tournament in honor of African American History Month, created a student friendly information sheet with important facts regarding the recent Immigrant Rights Movement, and an Advisory Activity around understanding and celebrating Lunar New Year. Perspectives on the Bridging Multiple Worlds experience written by these three youth interns appear starting on page 18.



Over the course of the three years of the California Tomorrow/Mandela partnership, almost all students took part in at least one of the components of Bridging Multiple Worlds. Bridging Multiple Worlds students had the opportunity to be a part of a learning community where they were not seen just as learners, but also as teachers themselves, where the knowledge they brought to the classroom was valued, and where they were encouraged to share their life experiences and thoughts. In June of 2006, Mandela High School celebrated its first graduating class of some 40 students, including 8 seniors who proudly earned the Bridging Multiple Worlds Certificate, having amassed a body of work and experiences testifying to their mastery of the Bridging Multiple Worlds Core Competencies.

Crucial to the success of Bridging Multiple Worlds at Mandela was that it was tailored around the unique interests, goals, and population of the school. The strongest picture of the impact and potential of Bridging Multiple Worlds education can be found in the voices of the young people who have had the chance to participate. The quotes throughout this booklet are those of students who participated in the Mandela Bridging Multiple Worlds elective course, including seniors who completed years of work qualifying them to receive the Bridging Multiple Worlds Certificate with their diploma.

"Bridging Multiple Worlds helped me find a lot of answers to the questions I always had but never dared to ask. Questions like, 'Why are there so many drugs in places where people of color live?' or 'Why do people of color get represented in bad ways on television?' and 'Why do women get so disrespected?' It made me realize all the problems in the world stem from money and greed and that there's better things than money — things like culture, family, and friendship."

Irving Leyva

Photo by Jimena Quiroga

Student Perspectives on Bridging Multiple Worlds

"A strength that I gained through Bridging Multiple Worlds is knowing more about my culture, learning more about third world countries, famous activists, writers, and actors. I learned the issues and problems America has and how they are connected to the problems of third world countries. I learned about famous people that help change and encourage young people to fight and stand for their rights."

- Ivonne Calderon

Roxanne Isaguirre, *Bridging Multiple Worlds Intern*

Before being a part of Bridging Multiple Worlds, I used to think that I was quite aware of the issues people were facing. I was strongly opposed to racism and sexism because I thought these were the major problems that people from my neighborhood were facing. Racism was of course on my list because I grew up in a community of minorities and I am a minority. Sexism was also an important topic for me because I grew up in a household where my sister and I had to do chores such as vacuuming and ironing clothes, but my parents would never ask my brother to do these things. After being involved with Bridging Multiple Worlds, however, I learned that there are so many more types of isms that we practice everyday without knowing it. I've learned about oppression and what others have done to stop it from happening. That is really important to me — to learn about things people have done in the past to fight against oppression. It gives me hope, like I can do the same.

I also never knew why poor countries were so poor, or why it was so hard for them to get their economy going, but Bridging Multiple Worlds made it more clear to me. My parents are originally from the Philippines, so of course I was aware of the struggles my family in the Philippines were dealing with, but my parents would send them money when needed and it was never a huge concern of mine. I didn't realize how big an impact poverty had in other countries. In the Bridging Multiple Worlds class, I learned about the World Trade Organization (WTO) and how the wealthy countries would let poor countries borrow money only if they agreed to

certain trade agreements and other regulations which put them more in debt, basically never allowing poor countries to ever get wealthy. The essential thing about me learning about the WTO was learning how ignorant I really was about the outside world.

Without critical thinking, it makes it harder for one to know that they should ask questions and find things out on their own. For myself, I know I question things a lot more than I used to now, and I look more in-depth to facts or opinions headed my way. Bridging Multiple Worlds opened up my eyes to things that I didn't know existed. I think there is a responsibility in teaching what I have learned through Bridging Multiple Worlds because what we have learned affects my whole community. The message I am leaving with is to fight injustice, not to suffer in silence, and that I can make a difference. Power to the people!

"I thought that normally there was only one language in one country, but learned that through imperialism by mostly European countries many other places not European have languages based on the country that took over them."

—Antara Henderson

Roger Moy, ***Bridging Multiple Worlds Intern***

Bridging Multiple Worlds is all about what the name says — bridging worlds together and learning about different cultures as well as your own. When I started this program though, I realized, how can I learn about other people's cultures when I don't even know about my own culture? I was inspired to think about my own culture a bit more and wanted to understand my Chinese culture. So, I started to take a Mandarin and Cantonese class offered at a community college and learned so much about my language — the different ways of writing, the differences between the languages, how written Chinese can be different from spoken Chinese, and it was beautiful to me. The class taught me a lot about how language and culture are closely related.

Now being Chinese has become a central factor in my life and I have become more in tune with my culture. I watch shows relating to and of my culture and I recognize that my Chinese inheritance is a big part of my life. Being Chinese is not just a part of me, it makes me who I am today.

Bridging Multiple Worlds has also helped me get along with people from different cultures and ethnicities. It has helped me learn not to stereotype people. It is important to not have stereotypes of others because it is not fair to the person to predetermine something about them beforehand. How can you decide how you feel towards someone when you do not truly know them? Sometimes, you think something about someone just because of a thought that you have, which probably started because "you

heard" this or that. I, myself, have learned not to pre-judge people by their ethnicity or culture, but by getting to know someone. Stereotypes are sometimes created from lack of communication and understanding of one another. With effective communication I do not think these stereotypes will happen. Different backgrounds and cultures are a part of human life. It gives people a uniqueness about them and their own individuality.

Ronnie Giddeons, ***Bridging Multiple Worlds Intern***

Bridging Multiple Worlds inspired me to change the community and myself by teaching me what was going on around the world, like about the Black Panthers, Cesar Chavez, and other powerful people that they don't really talk about in the textbooks in the schools. Plus this class gave me a better understanding about the government, which was something that I really didn't care about 'til after taking the class. I never thought about voting till after this class. My responsibilities have changed since I took the class, my life has changed since I had the class. It's like this one class changed my life from going down a bad road to going down a good road. To tell the truth I would be dead or in jail somewhere, if I didn't have this class.

Honestly, before being a part of this program, I only talked to Black people and was like and thought, "If you ain't Black then don't come near me." A lot of that was because I stereotyped people. Especially after 9/11, I think I was feeling like a lot of people felt about Arabs or people from the Middle East — that they were bad people who like to fight us all the time. After taking this class, I see that I was wrong, that's just a stereotype. This class has helped me with understanding where stereotypes come from and why they aren't true, and I realize now that it's important to learn about others' cultures and not distrust them.

I never used to worry about other races, what they're problems were and stuff, but after taking the class I really started to understand why that was important. It's a part of critical thinking and understanding what is going on around me and my family.

Critical thinking means where you can read a book and understand what's going on — and seeing more then just what the book is telling you. It's looking at yourself and seeing what you really are or seeing what you are becoming. After this class my self-esteem has been boosted up and if I had a chance I would take that class again.

I have never regretted being what I am, but BMW made me proud of my culture even more by teaching me how to not let people put me down with any stupid comments about my culture.

—Sergio Barajas

Photo by Jhumpa Bhattacharya

Become a Bridging Multiple Worlds Partner...

An Invitation to Youth Programs and Schools

Bridging Multiple Worlds can be adapted into any youth serving setting or school that seeks to create an affirming environment where youth are empowered, acknowledged for the skills and expertise they bring, and given a safe space to develop their understandings about the world and the roles they can play in it. The core competencies for thriving in a diverse society that students attain through Bridging Multiple Worlds are relevant to their lives, and help them to become successful members of their families and leaders in their communities.

California Tomorrow is looking for partners to bring Bridging Multiple Worlds to more young people in youth programs and schools. California Tomorrow will work with your school or program and its young people to determine your priorities and innovate the best ways to incorporate Bridging Multiple Worlds into current or new activities.

If you are interested in bringing Bridging Multiple Worlds to your site, please contact California Tomorrow.

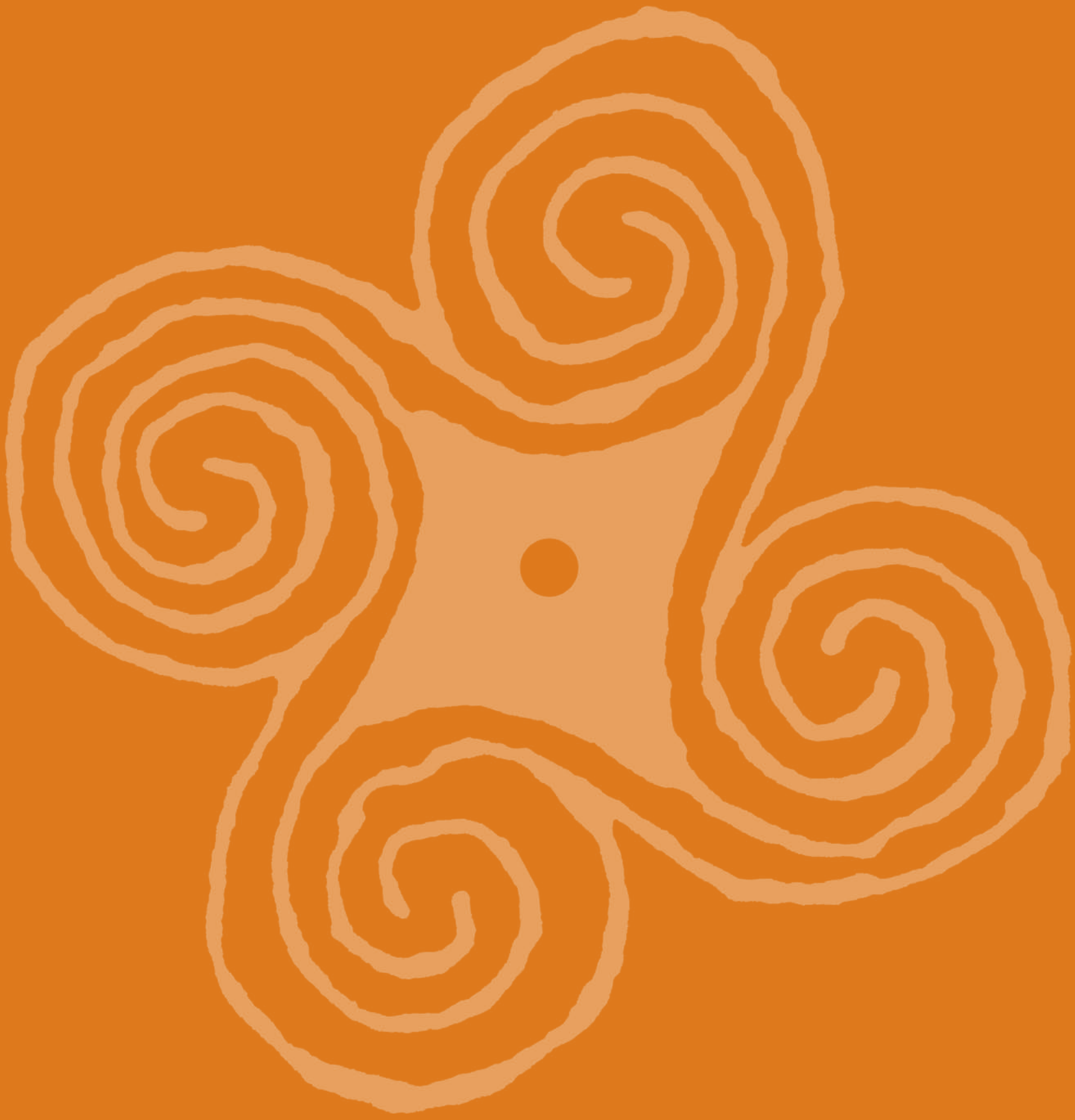
California Tomorrow
1904 Franklin St, Suite 300
Oakland, CA 94612

510.496.0220, ext. 373
www.californiatomorrow.org

Our mission

California Tomorrow's mission is to help create a just and inclusive multiracial, multicultural, and multilingual society by promoting equal access to social, economic, and educational resources and equal participation in major institutions, and by embracing diversity as a great strength. We provide vision, leadership, research, customized strategies, and ongoing support to community organizations, schools, policymakers, and advocates working toward a more equitable, inclusive, multicultural society. We help transform institutions so that they are better able to serve a broader, more diverse public.

In memory of Alan Watahara, who passed away on October 29th, 2005. A relentless warrior for children of all races and cultures, he was one of California Tomorrow's first Fellows, a long-time colleague and friend, and for six years served on California Tomorrow's Board. We miss him dearly.



RAINING ROCKS

Grade Level: 9-12

Purpose:

- Discover how to use "people power" to create change
- Explore and understand different ways for creating social change

Materials:

- Different Ways to Create Change chart (handout)
- Different Ways to Create Change facilitators edition
- Raining Rocks story (handout)
- Blank chart paper
- Markers

Set Up:

Explain that today we are going to be exploring the different ways we can create positive change in our communities by using "people power." It is important for us to know that we as ordinary, everyday people can create change in our communities and today we will be learning how. We will be going over different strategies and types of organizations you can be a part of or create to help your community.

Procedure:

1. Begin by putting up the definition of people power on the board:

   The capacity of a group of people to decide what they want and to act in an organized way to achieve their goal.

2. Ask students to think of examples that they know of people power (ex: winning the women's right to vote, creation of minimum wage/social security, Civil Rights Movement, Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, etc.)

3. Next explain that now we will be going over the different ways you can use people power, like folks did in the examples we just talked about.

4. Pass out the "Different Ways to Create Social Change" chart and go over the different change methods (left column of chart). Make sure you give them the non-facilitator version! As you go through each method, give examples of organizations or categories of organizations that students know to help them understand, and ask them fill out the examples column. The facilitator edition of the chart has examples filled in for you.

5. Pass out the Raining Rocks story. Have a volunteer read the story out loud. You can ask one person to read the story out loud or do it popcorn style. After the story is read, ask the group, "What is the problem in Swisstown?" (you want them to say that the problem is that there are rocks being thrown on the people by Mr. Richbanks and his friends in hopes that they will move out.)

6. Next explain that we are going to be brainstorming how to help the people of Swisstown by using the "Different ways to Create Social Change" chart. Split the group up into 6 small groups and assign a specific method of change from the "Different ways to Create Social Change" chart to each group.

7. Give students the following instructions for their small groups:
    a. Take a look at the "Different Ways to Make Change" handout and find the method of change your group was assigned. Read through the description to understand what type of organization your group will be creating.
    b. Create an organization and action plan to help the people of Swisstown with their problem. Make sure to name your organization and have 3-4 steps that your organization will do. Base your action plan on the strategies the chart indicates your type of organization would use. Prepare to share with the whole group.
    c. Discuss the following questions in your group: How will the situation in Swisstown change if they follow your plan? What else needs to happen to completely deal with the issue?

7. As students are working in their small groups, walk around and check in with each group to make sure they understand the directions and the method of change they were assigned. If needed, help them brainstorm their action plan by giving them some examples of things they can do.

2. After about 20-30 minutes, ask the large group to come back together and have each small group share their organization and action plan. Encourage the students to ask questions to the small groups after they present.

3. After each group has presented, have the following discussion:
    a. What seems like the most effective way to address the problem?
    b. Is there only one way to address the issue? What would happen if only the grassroots/organizing folks were around and there were no direct service people to help heal the wounded? What would happen if it was vice versa? (encourage students to understand that often more than one of these methods of social change must be used in order to be the most effective, and that they all play an important role.)

4. Thank everyone for their good work!

RAINING ROCKS STORY

(adapted from SOUL)

Once upon a time there was a little town in the mountains called Swisstown. It's a nice little town where everyone gets along well and people are happy. One winter, a villager taking a walk in the hills finds a man lying in the snow – he has been hit by a falling rock. The villager, being a very caring person, uses her jacket to bandage the injured man and carries him back down into the village.

The next day falling rocks hit two more people and other villagers rescue them. The day after that, four people are hurt, then eight, and then twenty. Life becomes very dangerous for all villagers because rocks keep falling down. A couple of villagers sneak up the mountain and discover that a millionaire, Mr. Richbanks, and his friends are throwing the rocks. Although they already own a few business and restaurants in Swisstown, they now want to build a luxurious hotel and golf course there to make more money. This new golf course and hotel will span the entire area of Swisstown. They are throwing the rocks hoping to get rid of the villagers so they can take over the entire town and the land.

Your job:

- Take a look at the "Different Ways to Make Change" handout and find the type of change your group was assigned. Read through the description to understand what type of organization your group will be creating.

- Create an organization and action plan to help the people of Swisstown with their problem. Make sure to name your organization and have 3-4 steps that your organization will do. Base your action plan on the types of strategies the chart indicates your type of organization would use. Prepare to share with the whole group.

- Discuss the following questions in your group: How will the situation in Swisstown change if they follow your plan? What else needs to happen to completely deal with the issue?

* This story is adapted from SOUL's (School of Unity and Liberation) *Building Power, Sharpening Minds* curriculum. They can be contacted at: http://www.schoolofunityandliberation.org/

thrivepoint GROUP

Different Ways to Create Social Change (facilitator edition)

Type	Goals and Objectives	Strategies	Who would oppose it?	Examples
Direct Service	Directly serve the people through hands on help.	Provide basic services (food shelter, drug abuse clinics etc.) to help those in need.	Taxpayers (when government funded), homeowners near the service	• American Red Cross • Meals on Wheels • Homeless shelters, drug abuse clinics, etc.
Policy and Advocacy	Work within the current system to impact laws and policies to help society.	Advocates for the creation of new policies and laws or changing existing policies or laws to help a bad situation get better.	Special interest groups, policymakers	• NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) • MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) • ACLU
Community/ Grassroots Organizing	Bring and unite everyday people together to create direct change in people's lives.	Believes in a "ground up" philosophy and uses the collective power of a united people to challenge the power structure. Often uses strategies such as walkouts, protests, boycotts, and physical action.	Those in power, other organizations who don't agree with tactics	• Civil Rights movement • Obama campaign • Gandhi's independence movement in India • United Farm Workers • PICO (People Improving Communities Through Organizing)
Electoral	Use voting power to impact change	Elect officials and laws that are responsible to the needs of the community	Other candidates/parties	• Statewide propositions • Electing candidates that support your viewpoint.
Education and Awareness	Raise knowledge about issues so people can have a better understanding of what is happening	Conduct and read research on a specific problem and inform and educate people about their findings.	Those benefiting from the issue, those who disagree with the analysis	• DARE • Truth campaign • Medical associations like the American Cancer Society

Different Ways to Create Social Change Chart

Type	Goals and Objectives	Strategies	Who would oppose it?	Examples
Direct Service	Directly serve the people through hands on help.	Provide basic services (food shelter, drug abuse clinics etc.) to help those in need.	Taxpayers (when government funded), homeowners near the service	
Policy and Advocacy	Work within the current system to impact laws and policies to help society.	Advocates for the creation of new policies and laws or changing existing policies or laws to help a bad situation get better.	Special interest groups, policymakers	
Community/ Grassroots Organizing	Bring and unite everyday people together to create direct change in people's lives.	Believes in a "ground up" philosophy and uses the collective power of a united people to challenge the power structure. Often uses strategies such as walkouts, protests, boycotts, and physical action.	Those in power, other organizations who don't agree with tactics	
Electoral	Use voting power to impact change	Elect officials and laws that are responsible to the needs of the community	Other candidates/parties	
Education and Awareness	Raise knowledge about issues so people can have a better understanding of what is happening	Conduct and read research on a specific problem and inform and educate people about their findings.	Those benefiting from the issue, those who disagree with the analysis	

thrivepoint GROUP