



# MYAN'S YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE 2021

April 15th – 16th

## WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

The Youth Planning Team and MYAN staff are delighted to introduce you to the Youth Leadership Conference presenters! The Conference workshops bring together participants from all across Maine offering engaging, interactive and youth centered content. 2021 workshop topics include: youth leadership & changemaking, racial justice, youth activism, creative writing, storytelling, restorative justice, climate justice, indigenous rights, disability rights, LGBTQ rights, mental health, body positivity, substance youth prevention and so much more!

The workshops will stretch across the 2-day conference and you will find all the information you need within this booklet. The Youth Planning team can't wait to host so many young people in April!

MYAN is also thrilled to offer separate Adult Community Spaces to learn and share in community with fellow adult conference attendees!

**Reminder: You can only sign up for workshops after registering for the conference.**

[Register Here](#)

# WORKSHOPS!



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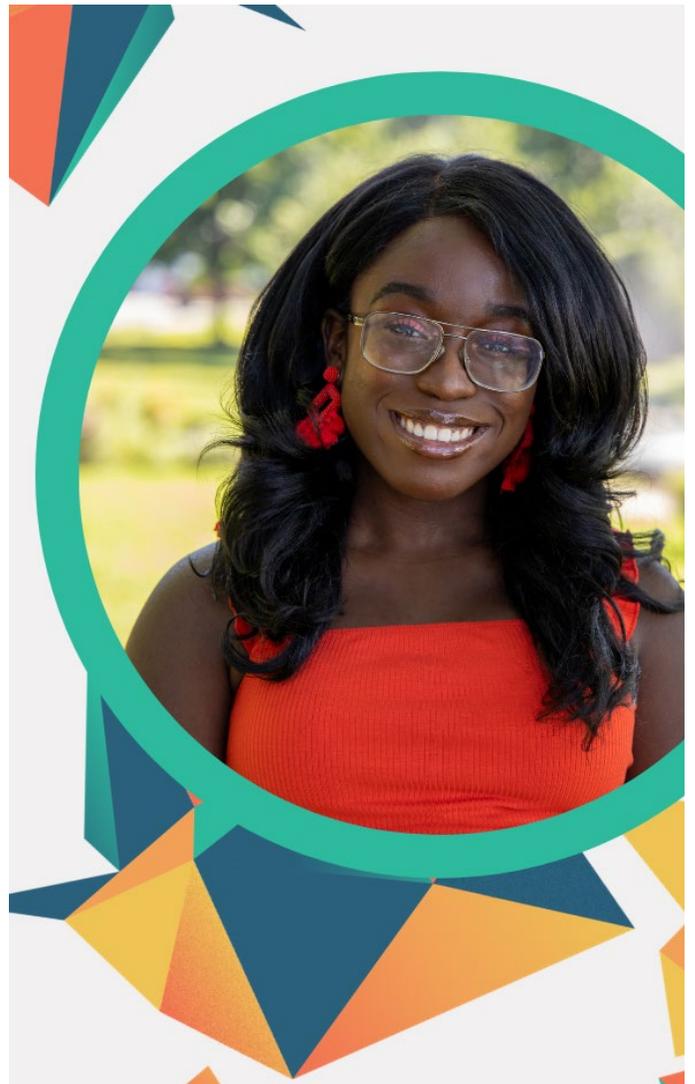
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## AMARA IFEJI

Hear Amara speak about her experiences growing up in Maine and engaging in community-based action and changemaking.

Amara Ifeji is a 19-year old climate justice activist and advocate for equitable access to the outdoors for ALL youth. Her barriers to access to environmental learning drove her to lead citizen science learning efforts and conduct internationally awarded climate change research. Through her role with the Maine Environmental Education Association, she strives to empower a network of over 400+ youth environmental activists in the Maine Environmental Changemakers Network. Amara also pushes for both state and federal environmental education policy reform through her roles with the Nature-Based Education Consortium and the Maine Climate Council Equity Subcommittee. In recognition of her work, she was recently awarded the National Geographic Young Explorer Award—one of only 24 youth in the world.

Learn more about Amara’s work by connecting with her on instagram: @meeassociation, @mycj\_coalition; FB: @justmeforjustus, @MaineEnvironmentalEducationAssociation



[Read More about Amara](#)

**Thursday, April 15** Workshops – Session 1, 1:20 pm - 2:15 pm

## **Workin' With It: Being Trans and Expressing Yourself**

LGBTQ Rights Workshops - Session 1

**Speakers** - Jon Robbins, University of Maine at Machias; Leah Trommer, OUT Maine

**Description:** This workshop will include personal stories of how I have had experiences with emotion and struggled with how to express myself, this includes being trans and being disabled. This includes stories, introductions of myself and those in the workshop, a time for brainstorming or thinking about a way of expression that has either been discouraged or unexplored, and closing questions as well as thoughts from the workshop.

## **Story of Water**

Youth Leadership/Changemaking Workshops - Session 1

**Speaker** - Chuong C. Nguyen

**Description:** Through a visually powerful and relatable presentation, Chuong C. Nguyen, empowers students and adults to embrace diversity and celebrate our resiliency in our lives and communities. Chuong uses humor and heart to share his vivid childhood of Vietnam and the drastic and at times painful challenges of coming to and fitting in in America. Chuong shares his 20 years of social work justice and advocacy work from the foster care system, the Maine State Prison and public education. Chuong shows how we all can overcome the racial, socio-economic, and cultural barriers in our communities by embracing our resilient spirits and the strengths of our voices, stories, and heritage.

## **It Starts with You: A Self-Care Toolkit for Changemakers**

Mental Health Body Positivity Middle Schoolers Welcome! Workshops - Session 1

**Speakers** - Danielle White, Yellow Tulip Project

**Description:** Stressed. Anxious. Nervous. Uncertain. Overworked. Overwhelmed. The world seems to move at such a fast pace, and far too often we forget to stop for a moment, to take that much needed deep breath and center ourselves. Caring for the world starts with caring for ourselves. Join us for this one-hour long workshop where we share self-care tools, offer tips on how to create a well-being practice, and discuss what it means to find the balance between working to better the world and ourselves.

**Thursday, April 15** Workshops – Session 1, 1:20 pm - 2:15 pm

## Change By Design: Using Empathy-Based Problem Solving to Change the World

Youth Leadership/Changemaking Middle Schoolers Welcome! Workshops - Session 1

**Speaker** - Elyse Pratt-Ronco, University of Maine at Farmington Upward Bound

**Description** This interactive workshop will engage participants in the process of Design Thinking, which is empathy-based creative problem solving. Together, we will explore a problem and then you will have time to be creative with what you have around you to prototype and address the challenge. We will laugh, create, and share.

## Beyond Protests: Creating Concrete Action in Your Town

Climate Justice Youth Leadership/Changemaking Middle Schoolers Welcome! Workshops - Session 1

**Speakers** - Hallie Arno, Watershed School Climate Action Leadership Lab

**Description** Sometimes the most powerful and effective changes can happen on a local level. Community-level action can be tailored to what the people in your area need, can get widespread and bipartisan support, and have the potential to spread positive change into other areas. Learn how to work with your town to solve problems like climate resilience, greenhouse gas emissions, or food insecurity. After discussing some examples, we will go through a brainstorming session to identify problems, articulate solutions, and outline steps to implement them. We will focus on how youth can work with town representatives and governments to implement concrete and measurable action to benefit their environment and community.

## Using Restorative Practices

Restorative Justice Workshops - Session 1

**Speakers** - Imti Hassan

A restorative practice training and discuss the history of restorative practices and how to include it at schools. More details coming soon!

## Chasing Your Dreams

Youth Leadership/Changemaking Middle Schoolers Welcome! Disability Rights Workshops - Session 1

**Speakers** - Anna McDougal, Community Connect Maine

**Description** Presented by Anna McDougall, a 42-year-old Wiscasset woman who has Down Syndrome. By any standard, irrespective of her disability, Anna is a very accomplished woman. She has published a memoir and is in the process of writing a second book, and has had her artwork exhibited in local galleries. She earned three medals in downhill skiing in the 2017 Special Olympics Games in Austria, and was interviewed on ESPN in Austria and by local Maine news outlets. But she is

**Thursday, April 15** Workshops – Session 1, 1:20 pm - 2:15 pm

perhaps most proud of her advocacy on behalf of people with disabilities – Anna has testified and spoken at press conferences about pending legislation, and her advocacy has had a positive impact. Anna will talk about the importance of reaching for your dreams and standing up for what you believe in.

**Friday, April 16** Workshops – Session 2, 10:35 am - 11:30 pm

## Want Justice? Just Need This: Restorative Practices

Restorative Justice Adults Welcome! Workshops - Session 2

**Speakers** - Abbie Young, Corrie Hunkler, Hancock County Drug Free Communities Coalition & Downeast Restorative Justice

**Description** Restorative Practices are very important because kids need to be in school to learn. Traditional methods use punishment in the place of teaching. Restorative practices are more effective than traditional methods, more equitable, and help to combat systemic discrimination and break the school to prison pipeline.

This workshop will have a "What Are Restorative Practices?" basics and how to run a restorative circle. We will talk about how to involve administration and create policy change, as well as focus on data and data-based rationale surrounding restorative practices.

## Mirror, Mirror on the Wall: Unpacking Body Positivity for All

Workshops - Session 2 Body Positivity Middle Schoolers Welcome!

**Speaker** - Victoria Preston, Laura Parent, Maine Family Planning

**Description** We will explore what body positivity means to you. We will look at unpacking and reframing negative body images and body shaming messages, many we have received at birth, We will challenge you to find creative and personal ways to and about your own bodies and support others as they do the same. you will leave with tools and resources to think about, talk about and learn more about body positivity and assist you to create a call to action for your school and community. Now, let's do some unpacking!

## A Walk Through the System

Racial Justice Restorative Justice Workshops - Session 2

**Speakers** - Skye Gosselin, Maine Youth Justice

### Description

Our work shop intends to bring more knowledge about the juvenile justice system. We will go over the element in Maine that allows the system to work. It will go over the school to prison pipeline and how that is in Maine.

**Friday, April 16** Workshops – Session 2, 10:35 am - 11:30 pm

## **New Statewide Network of School Teams Uses Arts to Build Tolerance - Join us!**

**Workshops - Session 2** **Youth Leadership/Changemaking** **Middle Schoolers Welcome!**

**Speakers - Susan Potters** (Speaker) **Maine Alliance for Arts Education** (Speaker)

**Description** School arts programs - whether music, art, theater, dance or poetry - not only provide a safe and welcoming space for the students in those programs, but can also contribute to a positive and tolerant school climate for all students. New student arts advocacy teams being formed at middle and high schools around the state are helping to build stronger arts programs and also helping those programs influence their school's climate. Learn more about this team initiative, organized by the Maine Alliance for Arts Education. See how you can help your school form a team and join the statewide network. No arts experience is required. None is required for workshop participants either - just be ready to get comfortable, make new friends and have fun!

## **Tending to our Minds, Healing our Communities**

**Mental Health** **Workshops - Session 2** **Adults Welcome!** **Middle Schoolers Welcome!**

**Speakers -** Julia Hansen, Yellow Tulip Project

**Description** During my sophomore year of high school I lost my two closest friends to suicide while struggling with my own levels of depression and mental health issues. I was done losing loved ones to suicide and I was done being silent due to the stigma surrounding the topic of mental health. Because of this, I founded a non-profit called The Yellow Tulip Project which is aimed at destigmatizing mental illness, bringing hope and light into peoples lives and reminding people that it is okay to not be okay: getting help is a strength not a weakness. Students were immediately drawn to this message and were eager to bring YTP to their schools and communities. Today, YTP is proudly youth-led with over 380 YTP ambassadors who are actively bringing hope and mental health awareness into their schools and communities. We are a safe and inclusive community of young people who are eager to shed light on this incredibly important and prevalent issue. In my workshop I will share my story of finding resilience and strength amongst adversity, reiterate how it is okay to not be okay, that there are accessible resources to receive help and hope and break down the methods of how to bring our programs/missions/conversations into your homes/schools and communities. Along with this I want to focus on the importance in tending to our minds and our mental wellbeing and introduce methods of self-care and compassion.

**Friday, April 16** Workshops – Session 2, 10:35 am - 11:30 pm

## Audio changemakers: Sharing our stories and using audio to support our activism

Workshops - Session 2 Youth Leadership/Changemaking

**Speakers** - Alice Anderson, Blunt Youth Radio Project (WMPG)

**Description** Come and find out more about using audio to tell your story, speak truth to power and get the word out on the issues you care about. Youth from Blunt Youth Radio's Climate Activism Workshop will share their experiences and why they think audio is a powerful tool for young leaders and activists. Participants will not only listen to youth-made audio clips, but will have a chance to add their voice to an audio piece that we'll record during the workshop! We will talk about some of the elements of a compelling audio story and some of the tools that you can use to make one. Plus, you will be invited to share suggestions for future audio workshops and learn how you can participate in further Blunt Youth Radio initiatives.

## First-generation/Low Income Narratives Project at Colby College

Workshops - Session 2 Youth Leadership/Changemaking College Exploration

**Speaker** - Misael Beltran-Guzman

**Description** The First-gen/Low Income Program for Success (FLIPS) and FLI Narratives Project at Colby College center first-generation-to-college and low income students, allowing them to share their narratives, perspectives, and experiences through means genuine to them. I began this project after being featured in a campaign video, being highlighted as one success story as a FLI student. I wanted to make sure all FLI students had the opportunity to voice their successes, challenges, and stories. Working with multiple departments and offices on campus, the FLI Narratives Project invites all FLI Colby students to submit their narratives whether through art, poetry, journal entries, voice recording, videos, or interviews with our staff. This project serves as one facet of the FLIPS at Colby, cultivating pride in the FLI identity and fostering the FLI community as an integral part of Colby College. It is a student-led project. This workshop would focus on how myself and my peers began this project, sharing our experience with narrative sharing as an advocacy tool. We hope to discuss the use of "success stories," the power of self-expression, and the ability of FLI students to influence their education experience.

## Build the Best Youth Advisory Council

Workshops - Session 2 Youth Leadership/Changemaking

**Speakers** - Alicia Heyburn, Nolan Cyr, Teens to Trails

**Description** A Youth Advisory Council can offer valuable leadership and guidance to an organization, ensuring that youth voices are heard, and programs intended to provide benefit to youth actually meet their goals. Workshop participants will discuss eligibility, roles and responsibilities of Youth Advisory Council members, projects and deliverables that would be fun and

**Friday, April 16** Workshops – Session 2, 10:35 am - 11:30 pm

meaningful, governance, equity, stipends, meeting frequency and ways to celebrate to create the most effective and rewarding Youth Advisory Council. Bring ideas from prior experiences, dreams of a better world, links to existing examples or other input to shape this vision. Workshop host Teens to Trails connects high school students to life changing outdoor experiences by helping schools and community centers form outing clubs so that youth can build relationships with each other, adult mentors, and the revitalizing benefits of being outdoors. They would like to start a Youth Advisory Council to ensure they are meeting student's current needs and wants for outdoor recreation. Participants are eligible to win a \$50 gift card to L.L.Bean.

## **Beyond the Margins: Wabanaki Writing Protocols and Educational Leadership as Tools for Political Change**

Workshops - Session 2 Indigenous Rights Adults Welcome!

**Speaker** - Nolan Altvater

**Description** This workshop will center Wabanaki voices and methodologies, exploring and conceptualizing writing in a non-western perspective and its transformations throughout time. Concisely, it shows the power of Indigenous writing protocols and concepts to change the physical universe. It will then confront the lack of application of these protocols in the political system by discussing the lack of implementation of LD 291. The audience will be able to engage with the workshop and see how western concepts of writing and education can limit their development as student leaders. They will be asked to express their feelings while reflecting on their educational experiences through a modality of their choice (writing, drawing, mapping, etc.) and then engage in a dialogue with how to take communal action, which the protocols of Wabanaki writing includes.

**Friday, April 16** Workshops – Session 3, 1:00 pm - 1:55pm

## You Can't Write About... (Let's Break These Rules!)

Workshops - Session 3 Youth Leadership/Changemaking Middle Schoolers Welcome!

**Speakers** - Amanda Dettmann, Ladi Slas, Telling Room

**Description** This workshop will explore what our families, teachers, and communities have told us we can't write about. We'll break writing "traditions" and see how it feels to write about anything (and I mean seriously anything!). While the workshop will involve writing, it will also include storytelling as a theme.

## Giving Youth the Tools to Advocate for Their Mental Well-being

Workshops - Session 3 Mental Health Middle Schoolers Welcome!

**Speaker** - Dana Asby, New England Mental Health Technology Transfer Center

**Description** This workshop will help youth understand how to understand their own mental well-being, and determine and advocate for their mental health needs. They will understand how fostering agency and choice can support healing from trauma, promote resilience for the future, and help them transition from childhood to adolescence and beyond. This workshop will include information about what positive mental health and well-being looks like and strategies for achieving that for all in the school community: students, teachers, administrators, family members, and community members.

## Building and Channeling Youth Power with Maine Youth Power

Workshops - Session 3 Youth Leadership/Changemaking Middle Schoolers Welcome!

**Speakers** - Phoebe Dolan, Maine Youth Power

**Description** Maine Youth Power is an inclusive movement of young Mainers working in solidarity for human dignity, equity, and a livable future by building power across rural and suburban Maine. Our workshop will provide an overview of creating strategic campaigns: choosing an issue, building a base, identifying decision makers, working in coalition, taking action, and carrying that power beyond campaign victories. The presentation will then deep dive into the most important element -- base building and organizing. Participants will learn the essential tools to organize their people (friends, school, community) to support a campaign. These tools include canvassing, one-on-one's, member retention, and leadership development and training. Through both modeling and discussion, participants will learn how through organizing a group of people aligned through a common goal builds power, which can be used to win any campaign they set out to organize. A facilitated, open discussion with the group will follow this training. The discussion will center how participants crave to see change in their community. This section is a place for attendees to connect with one another on ways they want to channel youth power and we will follow that up with a discussion of our current campaigns and goals and how to get involved. Presentation attendees will leave the training with a strong sense of how, through building strong relationships, organizing, and

**Friday, April 16** Workshops – Session 3, 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

picking strategic targets, young people are able to create and wield an incredible amount of political power.

## **I hear the story...finding our voice and listening to others**

**Workshops - Session 3** Youth Leadership/Changemaking

**Speakers** – Isla Bamby, Macy Gilroy, Katie Casper, Valo

**Description** Come join a conversation bound to stir your heart and mind. We dig digging deep and bet you will, too! Able leaders understand themselves and others. Together we'll begin the work of drafting our own "I believe" statements and exploring the importance of both sharing and listening as we connect and create community. Curious? Come along...

## **Learning is My Journey: Expressing my Experience of Learning through Letters**

**Workshops - Session 3** Youth Leadership/Changemaking **Middle Schoolers Welcome!**

**Speaker** - James Kim

**Description** What does it mean to take ownership of your own learning? How and what is the most effective way to communicate these feelings and concerns? This workshop is an open invitation for Middle-level learners to experiment with the mode of expressive writing to share their own experiences of learning through the practice of letter-writing. The workshop aims at discussing what the practice of expressive writing looks like in a learning setting and advocates for the empowerment of youth voices through narrative writing. Come experience how one letter can start a chain of transformative dialogue!

## **You're Simply the Best!**

**Workshops - Session 3** Substance Use Prevention

**Speakers** - Brianna Bryant, Robin Carr, Bangor Public Health (Speaker)

### **Description**

"When one of us shines, all of us shine". Moira Rose. Are you a Johnny Rose (Leader), a David Rose (dreamer), Moira Rose (star), Stevie Budd (Loyal Friend)? Join the Substance Use Prevention Team from Bangor Public Health for an interactive personality quiz based on the popular TV series Schitt's Creek. We will lead participants through a series of questions that will help them determine which character strengths they most identify with and how they can use that style to help a friend. Are you a "Johnny" who is the leader or a "David" who is the dreamer. Or, are you "Stevie" a loyal friend. Best Wishes. Warmest Regards.

## So You Want to Change the System?

Workshops - Session 3 Youth Leadership/Changemaking

**Speakers** - Jennifer Chace, The Source School

**Description** The workshop's goals are to give: 1. an overview of how connection - to our communities, the environment, and our selves - is the cure for the systems breakdown we are experiencing worldwide (This part is pretty short and is mostly presentation of images with presenters talking.) 2. a feeling for how to use prototyping as a way to engage with their communities, themselves, and the problem they wish to work with. (There is a balance of presentation and participant active engagement.) 3. opportunities to practice the empathetic and generative listening as skills necessary for transformation of self and the system. (This part is heavy on participant active engagement.) 4. opportunities to practice presencing: being quiet to listen to what is emerging in you and the system. (This part is heavy on participant active engagement.)

## I'm Not Your College Essay - Disability Inclusion, Intersectionality, and Identity Development

Workshops - Session 3 Youth Leadership/Changemaking Middle Schoolers Welcome! Disability Rights

**Speakers** - Carrigain Rowan, Community Connect Maine

**Description** Presented by Carrigain Rowan (with support from her mother, Erin Rowan). Carrigain is a Scarborough Middle School seventh-grader who has Down Syndrome. Carrigain is proud of her disability identity and outspoken about injustices in her community and around the world. Empathy is her superpower, and acceptance and understanding are her most fervent wishes. Carrigain will talk about her experiences with disability in the context of youth identity development, empowerment, and social justice work, as well as about the importance of intersectional and inclusive advocacy for equity.

## Understanding an Opioid Overdose, Naloxone Reversal, and Aftercare

Workshops - Session 3 Substance Use Prevention

**Speakers** - Erika Farnlof, Wabanaki Public Health and Wellness

**Description** This workshop focuses on understanding harm reduction and stigma, learning and understanding what an overdose is and how to assess a situation, and Naloxone reversal and supportive aftercare. Using an open discussion about stigma and harm reduction around Substance Use Disorder to start the training of how to recognize an overdose and administer Naloxone and provide supportive judgement free aftercare.