



# MAINE YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

November 4th-5th, 2021

## WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

**Meet the presenters!** This year the Conference workshops are interactive and interesting, virtual and in-person, facilitated by and with young people. It is a great line-up!

The workshops will stretch across the 2-day Conference spanning topics like youth leadership & changemaking, racial justice, youth activism, storytelling, restorative justice, climate justice, indigenous rights, disability rights, LGBTQ rights, mental health, substance youth prevention and so much more! Keep reading to learn more about *who* is presenting in November.

The Leadership Team & MYAN staff thank all the presenters and volunteers who are making this hybrid event possible. Whether online or in Orono, we look forward to seeing you very soon!

*Pro Tip: Register for the Conference to sign-up for these great workshops!*

[Register Here](#)

## MAYA WILLIAMS

Hear Maya speak about using poetry and spoken word as a leadership tool, and how being inspired at a young age to use poetry as a way to connect with others continues to push the work Maya does today as an adult.

Maya Williams (ey/they/she) is a Black Mixed Race suicide survivor as well as the seventh poet laureate of Portland, Maine. Ey is also the Community Care Program Coordinator of MaineTransNet, a statewide nonprofit led by trans people for trans people. They have been featured in The Kennedy Center's Arts Across America series, The Portland Press Herald, The Indianapolis Review, FreezeRay, glitterMOB, and more. She will be releasing her first collection of poems with Game Over Books.



[Read More about Maya](#)

## Thursday Afternoon – Virtual Workshop Offerings 2:00 pm - 3:00pm

### Campaigning and Advocacy

**Speaker(s)** – Victoria Pelletier

**Description:** I work in racial equity and economic development, am a community leader, and am also running for city council in Portland, Maine. I represent the demographic of a young, working class Portlander, and as a Black woman, I would love to have a discussion about my experiences in advocacy work and local politics.

Adults welcome! Organizing/Activism

### I Hear the Story of: Using Deep Conversation to Find Your Voice

**Speakers** – Gabe Harrison, Valo

**Description:** Join a conversation bound to stir heart and mind. Take a risk and join valo teens as we get real and begin to discover our authentic voices. Share a bit of your story and listen to other teens share theirs. Experience what it feels like when we all speak our truth. Curious? Come along...

Youth Only Space Confidence & Self-Esteem

Youth Voice

### Telling Your Story in 20 Seconds

**Speaker** – Kennady Savage

**Description:** In my workshop, we will talk about using your story as fuel for change, the importance of networking, and the art of the elevator pitch. More information coming soon!

Youth Only Space Organizing/Activism

### Digital Dependence & Wellness

**Speaker** – Christina Schechtman, Students Against Destructive Decisions

**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.

Youth Only Space Mental Health

## Thursday Afternoon – In Person Workshop Offerings 2:30 pm - 3:30pm

### Promoting COVID-19 Vaccines in Your Community

**Speakers** – Healthy Acadia Youth Vaccination and Healthy Equity Team & Corrie Hunkler

**Description:** This workshop will be a discussion format led by the Healthy Acadia Youth Vaccination and Healthy Equity Team, including 6 high schoolers from Washington County. We will explore what young people can do to support vaccine promotion by holding respectful and non-judgmental conversations with those who are hesitant.

Youth Only Space Organizing/Activism

### Let's Dig Deep to Challenge Stigma Around STIs

**Speakers** – Victoria Preston & Olivia Clarks, Maine Family Planning

**Description:** We will explore stigma and how it affects our sexual health and sexuality. We will address the roots of stigma and the many messages that surround it and the aggression around STIs. Youth will leave with a call to action regarding addressing stigma to overall sexual health, in particular STIs and sexual well-being in their school and community. We ask that they are "ready to fight the good fight."

Youth Only Space

### Propelling Youth Power: Elevating Your Voice for Change

**Speakers** – Kosi Ifeji, JustME for JustUS

**Description:** In this workshop, we'll be focusing on the importance of empowerment when looking to solve issues in your community. We'll do this by learning how to incorporate civic engagement into community work, strategizing how to address community issues, and directing youth to resources to help actualize these solutions.

Youth Only Space Climate Justice

### Being True To You!

**Speakers** – Raine Grant, Biddeford High School

**Description:** My workshop will be about how to be confident in being yourself! I will use my story and a friend's story to model this, then invite participants to share their own stories as well.

Youth Only Space Confidence & Self-Esteem

LGBTQ+ Rights

### Finding Inspiration, Hope, and Confidence in The Face of Fear

**Speaker** – Frederick Macomber, Accelerate Youth L3C

**Description:** Ever feel swamped in negativity by big media? News has become a sellable commodity, and as a result, we are bombarded with what people are willing to pay to hear about - threats to their existence. Despite this, there are many bright spots- many examples of things going right, of change that is needed, and of people making a difference. This workshop brings good news, reasons to feel hopeful, and suggestions for how you can be part of the solutions. You can be excited about the future! Let's move forward, embrace the positive, and build the future we want to see. Why? Because we can.

Youth Only Space Confidence & Self-Esteem

Mental Health

### Harm Reduction 101 & Overdose Prevention + Response Training

**Speakers** – Kristin Doneski, Maine Access Points

**Description:** Maine Access Points presents Overdose Prevention & Response Training, Harm Reduction 101 training and community advocacy work in this session. Come get involved!

Adults welcome! Substance (Mis)Use Prevention

## Friday Morning – Virtual Workshop Offerings 10:45am - 11:45am

### Compassionate Conversations for Youth Mental Health Advocate

**Speakers** – Dana Asby, New England Mental Health Technology Center

**Description:** We will begin this workshop with a short mindfulness practice to bring us together as a community. We will share some practical tips on best practices for maintaining positive mental well-being. We will then facilitate a Compassionate Conversation based on the model we introduced at the beginning of the workshop. We will provide some reflection questions for attendees and will guide a discussion about their successes, challenges, and curiosities around positive mental health practices. We will leave some time at the end of the workshop to answer any questions about mental health practices, the New England MHTTC's work, and May's mental health advocacy.

Youth Only Space Confidence & Self-Esteem  
Mental Health

### Western Maine Restorative Practices

**Speakers** – Mckella Ford, Mt. Blue High School

**Description:** Learn about Restorative Practices including substance use prevention, next-level listening, asking questions, and reflecting. More information coming soon!

Adults welcome! Restorative Justice

### Prioritizing Community Conditions that Support Resilience

**Speakers** – Jana Richards, The Opportunity Alliance, Public Health Program

**Description:** We will discuss how individual resilience is connected to the resilience of the community, sharing how social connections, the physical environment, and equitable opportunities, can strengthen or challenge the community as a whole. Presenters will particularly highlight the impacts of these conditions on mental health and substance use disorders. Participants and presenters will identify strategies where youth voice is already at the table, strategies they'd like to incorporate youth voice, and how they can work with their community to take action.

Adults welcome! Substance (Mis)Use Prevention  
Mental Health

### Enhancing the lives of LGBTQIA+ Youth

**Speaker** – Kai Morley

**Description:** Armored Teaching is a workshop that will provide adults with the skills and information to enhance and save the lives of LGBTQIA+ youth. The workshop will consist of storytelling and instruction around gender, sexuality, and gender stereotypes. Kai Morley, the founder of Armored Teaching, is a trans man who has six years of experience in public education. He created Armored Teaching to positively transform school institutions and organizations that serve youth.

Adults welcome! LGBTQ+ Rights

## Friday Morning – In Person Workshop Offerings 1:30pm - 2:30pm

### Sacred Seven Teachings to help Guide through Life

**Speakers** – John Dennis

**Description:** Students will be able to use these teachings to help guide the students through what life will bring them.

Adults welcome! Confidence & Self-Esteem

### Mindfulness Matters: At Work, At Home, and In Community

**Speaker** – Wendy Krom, Community Consulting Services

**Description:** This workshop will introduce you to mindfulness awareness meditation instruction. We'll practice the technique together, share experiences, and explore ways to apply mindfulness in our daily lives. Mindfulness techniques cause physical changes in the brain that improve our ability to focus and manage stress. Studies show benefits ranging from sleeping better at night to reducing depression and anxiety.

Adults welcome! Mental Health

### Fictional Storytelling for Real Life Voices

**Speakers** – Misael Beltran-Guzman, Colby College

**Description:** Be it reflecting on the struggles we face, amplifying our voices, or advocating for our needs, Oscar Garcia and I (Misa Beltran-Guzman) have used fiction writing to express our realities for the past two years. This workshop will begin with a screening of this short film, followed by a discussion of how to engage in fiction writing and storytelling as a catalyst for reflection and amplifying youth voice. Participants will engage in reflective and creative prompts throughout the workshop.

Adults welcome! Confidence & Self-Esteem

### Mental Health and Body Image

**Speaker** – Layla Chai, Hardy G\*rls Healthy W\*men

**Description:** We will be discussing how social media affects our body image, which can in turn

affect our mental health. We will be giving examples of how to manage this in a world where social media is very prevalent.

Youth Only Space Mental Health Body Positivity

### A conversation on stigma & othering

**Speakers** – Jess Falero, Maine People's Housing Coalition

**Description:** My hope would be to break the stigma around mental health, substance use disorder, homelessness, or any other systemic inequality. The workshop will be conversational, inviting a discussion about things that are "shushed" or "hidden" in our society, with an emphasis on carrying the same vulnerability and willingness to talk about these critical issues post conference.

Adults welcome! Mental Health Organizing/Activism Substance (Mis)Use Prevention

### Climate Conversations

**Speakers** – Edge Venuti, Washington Academy

**Description:** After a quick round of introductions, the leading speaker will share a personal story about the climate crisis, encouraging attendees to share a personal story, or any story they might have about the environment. It is a guided conversation that is meant to shed light on how climate change has an affect on all of us. After all the stories are shared, the group will work to brainstorm together ways to help and stay positive in times like this.

Adults welcome! Climate Justice

### Finding your career path and building personal skills and awareness along the way

**Speaker** – Vlad Dasic, VukMultiMedia

**Description:** I'll be discussing with the attendees what my current job is/what I do, while giving them some interesting back story about where I'm from and how my life has evolved to bring me where I am today.

Adults welcome! Confidence & Self-Esteem

## Friday Afternoon – Virtual Workshop Offerings 1:30pm – 2:30pm

### A Ripple That Starts the Wave: Integrating Elements of Activism into Your Daily Routine

**Speakers** – Danielle Whyte, Yellow Tulip Project

**Description:** A droplet. A wave. An ocean. A tsunami. Small actions can and do amount to significant change. Where do you start? In an ever-changing world, focusing on one's daily actions is the first step towards moving mountains. It's easy to feel small when you're not the person leading protests but every action matters: bulb by bulb, the Yellow Tulip Project started locally with just a few voices, then we found community, rallied around our shared message, & became an international garden.

Adults welcome! Mental Health Organizing/Activism

### What is Feminism?

**Speakers** – Natalie Emmerson, Morse HS

**Description:** In today's world, young people have power. It's important they use that power to bring people together instead of alienating them. Based on the HeForShe campaign's approach to gender equality, this workshop will support participants to define feminism and brainstorm changes needed in our communities. It's extremely important for young people to realize they have a voice and if they use it, people will listen.

Youth Only Space Organizing/Activism

### Restorative Circle: Co-creating a Safe Space to Reflect on our Learning

**Speakers** – James Kim, University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education

**Description:** This workshop will offer a safe space of dialogue for young people to experience and reflect on the importance of a restorative circle. The topic of this restorative circle will center around disciplinary actions in their respective schools. We will also discuss the inequities and racist practices present in zero-tolerance policies. Participants will strengthen confidence and learn to advocate for restorative practices in schools.

Youth Only Space Youth Voice Restorative Justice

### The Ripple Effect of Co-curricular Group Collaboration

**Speakers** – Lee Anne Dodge, SoPo Unite

**Description:** South Portland High School has over 60 co-curricular clubs/organizations and many of them have collaborated over the past few years to: support each other's missions, increase student awareness of crossover issues, promote participation, and create synergy for activities and strategies! Members of SoPo Unite's youth committee (part of the Drug Free Community Coalition with a mission to prevent youth substance use), the Black Student Union, the GSA (Gender Sexuality Alliance) and Safe BAE (sexual assault prevention) will share their experiences in breaking down the silos of clubs/organizations and share how student voice is more powerful when there is collaboration and connection.

Youth Only Space Organizing/Activism Youth Voice

## Friday Afternoon – In Person Workshop Offerings 1:30pm - 2:30pm

### What happened here? Rewriting Maine's History from the Grassroots

**Speakers** – Meadow Dibble, Atlantic Black Box

**Description:** New England has long repressed the memory of its complicity in slavery, just as our dominant narrative has occluded the stories of the region's free and enslaved Black and Indigenous populations. Despite these gaping holes in the historical record, by collaborating to perform research at the local level we can work to recover our collective memory and—thanks to these sustained efforts—our humanity.

Youth Only Space Youth Voice

### Connecting to Personal and Collective Wisdom

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

**Description:** How do individuals move ideas forward and change the world? First by connecting with like-minded folks to create the social field for change. In this workshop, we will briefly talk about a model for working co-creatively to bring new ideas into reality and then focus on one step - connecting to Source, another word for personal and collective wisdom, the place from which we sense our highest future selves.

Adults welcome! Organizing/Activism Youth Voice

### Downeast Teen Leadership-- What's up

**Speakers** – Downeast Teen Leadership Camp & Corrie Hunkler

**Description:** This will be staff from Downeast Teen Leadership Camp and Gateway to Opportunity leading discussions and activities around leadership and other unique things we do at camp!

Youth Only Space Youth Voice

### Propelling Youth Power: Elevating Your Voice for Change

**Speakers** – Kosi Ifeji, JustMe for JustUS

**Description:** In this workshop, we'll be focusing on the importance of empowerment when looking to solve issues in your community. We'll do this by learning how to incorporate civic engagement into community work, strategizing how to address community issues, and directing youth to resources to help actualize these solutions.

Adults welcome! Climate Justice Organizing/Activism

### Youth Leadership in Organizing

**Speakers** – Jordyn Miller, Maine Youth Power

**Description:** This workshop serves to help young people build confidence in creating and implementing successful campaigns, whether that be in their school, their community, or beyond. The presenters are current Bangor High School Students and an alum speaking about their active campaign for Voter Education and Access. They will discuss how they came up with demands, the plan they made for action, the current actions are taken, and how the campaign is going! These members of the Maine Youth Power Bangor Core will guide participants through their process and offer a question and answer portion of the session discussing making a campaign and a list of demands that could look like for anyone!

Youth Only Space Organizing/Activism Youth Voice

## Friday Afternoon – In Person Workshop Offerings 1:30pm - 2:30pm

### Introduction to YOQC Maine- a club for supporting and engaging queer youth across Maine

**Speakers** – Sage Hart, YOQC Maine

**Description:** In this workshop, we'll introduce our newly founded statewide club, YOQC (Youth-Oriented-Queer-Club) Maine. We will start brainstorming ideas with other youth on how to collaborate to make a change in our communities. We want to hear what's going on in schools around Maine relating to LGBTQ+ issues, and figure out how YOQC can be a support system for students, and help students rise up and make a change.

Youth Only Space LGBTQ+ Rights

### Climate Change and Water Privatization: An intersectional Approach to Resisting Corporate Control of Water Sources

**Speakers** – Luke Sekera-Flanders, Maine Environmental Changemakers Network

**Description:** As the climate crisis worsens, we feel its effects surge with each new flood, hurricane, drought, and forest fire. We as youth will be confronted with the problem of water insecurity, and even scarcity. Water rights and security are particularly relevant to Maine. Because of our abundance in clean, drinkable water and the growing global demand for bottled water, corporations are rushing to gain access and control over our water sources for private profit. In this workshop, we will go over a brief history of water privatization in Maine, as well as the movement that has risen to reclaim stewardship of water for the people. We will also discuss the ways that we can take initiative in our own communities to protect water sources and resist corporate power, and how we can equitably share water resources to areas experience water insecurity.

Adults welcome! Climate Justice Organizing/Activism