

Youth News

Educating communities about the need for people to consider
becoming foster/adoptive parents and mentors

Outstanding, Inspirational & Motivational Stories

Keisha Mitchell speaks on her journey
writing and self-publishing

Do Black Lives Really Matter?

on page 13.



**DO
BLACK
LIVES
REALLY
MATTER?**

KEISHA MITCHELL

Youth News

Inspiration, Motivational & Outstanding Stories

Youth News magazine is a way to celebrate the good news of youth. *Youth News* provides fostered, adopted, kinship cared and mentored youth with real on-the-job training skills. Youth are paid as they learn how to produce this publication for the general community. Donations for ad space is how we pay youth in training. The "Dove" logo is a symbol we use as a message of good news. Our goal is to bring Outstanding, Inspirational and Motivational stories to encourage people to open their hearts and support youth.

Freelance Writers & Contributors are needed. Teen - Adult writers, editors, sales, photographers, and marketing support is needed. *Youth News* highlights the accomplishments of young people near and far.

If you have a story and want to share it with others, please email us at:
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Black Lives Do Matter, Even in Health

By: Alisa N. Howard

We are indeed in unprecedented times in our country and in our world. Times that most of us have never seen before, have only read about or watched a documentary on, and times that some can recall hearing stories from their ancestors about. However, one thing is certain. Some things are not unprecedented, and some issues tend to haunt certain communities, and racial groups in our society on an on-going basis whether there's a recession, stock market crash, or a new deadly virus upon us, and

that is RACISM.

This article will come from a public health lens in regards to racism and its effects on public health.

Our nation's founders wrote that all people are created equal with the right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Therefore, the principles of equality and equal opportunity should be deeply rooted in our nation's value system not just for some, but for all. The notion is that everyone has a fair shot to succeed with hard work.

However, our nation's social and economic well-being depends on the well-being of its communities, and many Black communities are facing great and evolving challenges due to racism. The structure of this country was founded on the backs of African Americans, but we have not been considered human enough for the 14 amendment to apply to us.

Across the country, Black communities are suffering from insufficient access to jobs, adequate transit, safe and affordable housing, parks and open space, healthy food options, or quality education— basically, the necessary conditions and opportunities to fully thrive. This lack of opportunity is evident in the disparities that exist in health status and health outcomes between different zip codes or census

tracts throughout cities. Health inequities are systematic differences in the opportunities groups have to achieve optimal health, leading to unfair and avoidable differences in health outcomes (Braveman, 2006; WHO, 2011). Structural inequities are the personal, interpersonal, institutional, and systemic drivers—such as racism, sexism, classism, xenophobia, and homophobia, etc.— contribute to the lack of fair distribution of health access and outcomes. Policies that cultivate inequities at all levels (from organizations to community to county-state) are reasons for structural inequities, which has been found to have a direct correlation to structural racism.



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Structural inequities produce health inequities through social, environmental, economic, and cultural determinants of health. These determinants are the conditions in which people live, including access to healthy food, water, and housing, the quality of

schools, and neighborhoods. Because the quality of neighborhoods and schools significantly shape the life trajectory and the health of the adults and children, an adverse effect is that African American women are more likely to give birth to

low-birthweight infants, and their newborns experience higher infant death rates. African Americans have the highest death rate and shortest survival of any racial and ethnic group in the U.S. for most cancers. Racism deeply affects the physical and mental health of Black people in a number of ways. Research has shown that healthcare providers treat Black patients differently than white patients, recommending lifesaving procedures to white patients more often, but less likely to administer pain relief in emergency rooms to non-white patients.

The COVID-19 virus has been an invisible enemy that all Americans have been faced to deal with within 2020, but racism is also an invisible virus that African Americans alone have been

faced to deal with and live with since 1619. Not only have we been trying to survive a pandemic this year, but while inside our homes, we've had to learn about and watch the murders of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd. Racism's harm to health is both physical and mental. Experiencing acts like these, racial profiling, and microaggressions have been found to lead to a higher risk of depression, anxiety, and trauma for a Black person. This isn't a figment of one's imagination. It's traumatic to one's health, and America is evoking constant trauma on its Black citizens. As large corporations and organizations, public health entities, schools of public health, cities, counties, and states make statements, declarations, and

and proclamations that 'racism is a public health crisis,' America needs to make plans of action to address it through long-term change across all sectors of government, including education, housing, and criminal justice. Now is the

time to lift the many arms that are wrapped around the policies, practices, and procedures that govern and harm Black lives in this countrybecause despite what some think, **BLACK LIVES DO REALLY MATTER!**



About Alisa N. Howard

Alisa N. Howard is a Public Health Servant Leader. For the past 9 years, she's been a Health Policy Writer, Director of health programming, Speaker, Training Facilitator, and Community Health Worker Instructor. She is the Owner and Founder of Minority Health Consultants (MHC), a boutique public health consulting firm where she focuses on the social determinants of health as it relates to health education, prevention, advocacy, and policy for minority communities. In addition to health, Alisa is also a published writer and provides writing and editing services through another small business she owns, AHP Writing & Editing.



2020 has somehow just flown by and also dragged on at the same time hasn't it? Goodness! It's been so long since we have heard from you in all this bustle these days. But I wanted to reach out to let you know that the upcoming October foster parent training is the **last foster parent training of the year!** It's so hard to believe we're already to our last group! If you are interested in joining this class so you can get your foster care license in 2020, we'd love to have you!

In order to be enrolled in the class, you need to first meet with Stephanie to go over all the paperwork. She has some pre-scheduled times over these next couple of weeks that you can register for with the links below. Make sure you log on at the time you've selected to participate! It is a live class so that she can answer any questions you may have. There is a drop down to show the different dates you can select.

She is hosting these paperwork training's on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

For Tuesdays Click here: <https://tinyurl.com/SAFYTuesdays> .

For Thursdays Click here: <https://tinyurl.com/SAFYThursdays>

Stay safe!

For more information contact:

Caitlin Johnson
 Foster Parent Recruiter
 SAFY of Nevada
 Cell: 702-275-9547
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Keisha Mitchell: Young Author, Activist, and Mentor

Keisha Mitchell speaks on her journey writing and self-publishing
Do Black Lives Really Matter?

Written By: Rebeca Garcia

Keisha Mitchell is a Virginia state resident that continuously advocates within her community. As an aspiring nurse, she aims to promote physical and mental health, especially in the state of the world we are currently living in. She also feels it is her duty to help promote social awareness, aiming to help build a world where she could one day raise a happy family. At the young age of 20, Keisha has written and self-published her first book, *Do Black Lives Really Matter?* It is a

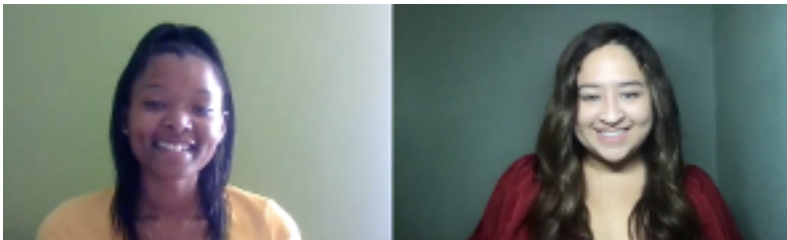
mesmerizing and breathtaking book that captures an emotional rollercoaster of racism in the United States. Through inspiring words, Keisha hopes to enlighten minds by reminding the world that Black lives do matter. Keisha described her three-month process of writing *Do Black Lives Really Matter?* as very painful.

After the murder of Ahmaud Arbery, immediately followed by Breonna Taylor, she was prompted to write.



As a Black woman, she constantly felt like a minority in this country which made her want to begin voicing her personal feelings. She remembers that George Floyd's death was the catalyst to finish her book, realizing people just like her were feeling the

same way and needed a source of inspiration. The "Dear Black Girl" section was particularly hard to complete according to Keisha. Although she says writing is cathartic, recalling hardships during her childhood was difficult to put on paper. Moments of disparity closed upon young Keisha because they were moments she would, in a very literal sense, have to relive. Keisha said that "the chapter labeled *Stress*, was hard to relive. All the vivid emotions and thoughts circled my mind back to when I was 15." She explained how many scenarios during that time centered around racial inequality. There were moments where young Keisha was able to grasp what was going on but managed to somehow block them out in order to



Keisha (left) and Rebeca (right) during their virtual interview.

continue and succeed in other parts of her life such as school. The last chapter was a dedication to Black individuals that have lost their lives due to senseless acts of violence. The dedication was geared to the families of these individuals that can no longer hold their loved ones. Keisha recalled that "the whole process of writing the book was sad but I especially cried during this chapter. Watching videos of grieving families brought many, many tears." This made her realize that there was somebody out there that needed to hear and read her words.

Overall, *Do Black Lives Really Matter?* was a way that Keisha used to heal. She used her voice to share these personal thoughts stating, "It is definitely the most emotional book I will ever write. The words are painful. My heart hurt even as I ended the book because, though it was the end of the story, it was not the end." Keisha's *Do Black Lives Really Matter?* is geared for any age. She purposely wrote the book for young and mature readers. She stated, "I realize how much power the words hold. I move with intention, everything I do has a

purpose. I want to inspire those around me and even my future children." Keisha uses her words carefully because she believes the greatest power comes out through the use of words. To new readers, she advises considering perspective. If you read between the lines, you can apply things to

your life even if it is not directed specifically to you. She stated, "I may have gone through the experiences but you can take this perspective into life. You have the power because Black lives do matter. Everything will soon be a memory."

To purchase your own copy of *Do Black Lives Really Matter?* Visit Keisha's website at <https://keishamongeinspires.com> or on Amazon at <https://tinyurl.com/BuyKeishasbookamazon>.



About Rebeca Garcia

Rebeca Garcia is a Mexican American writer. She is a dog mom to Nala and Chewy and is currently obsessing over James Patterson's thriller series. In her free time, she writes in her blog, Crossing Borders. As a social justice advocate, she voices testimonials aiming to spread racial and cultural awareness.

Facing it. No Longer Faking It.

Written By: Keisha Mitchel



"How do we keep our people well while we are surviving, escaping, setting forth a new path of freedom and liberation?" This is a question asked by Cara Page in the midst of a conversation about healing justice within the Black, LGBTQIA+, and indigenous communities.

Cara, a "Black Queer, Feminist, cultural worker, curator, and organizer for 30 plus years", fiercely spoke in power on these topics in particular. The question she asked stood out to me the most as I'm currently experiencing the same feelings and constantly reiterating the question, how do we keep our community well all while

trying to heal from passed on generational trauma, and every other thing within our own lives that we must deal with on a day to day basis? What I took from the conversation with Cara is that we must face it. We can no longer fake it. We can't fake our feelings, we can't fake the fact that the justice system is built on the foundation of the historical and racial framework. As Cara stated, COVID 19 came and gave us no other choice but to sit,

listen, and pay attention to the inequalities that are continuously being faced. Now we must face it. We must dig deep, and find ways to change it. We must do it as a collective, interchangeably.

To conclude, coming together as a collective in a stance to tear down what was built years ago, and build up new meaning, a new healing, a new justice, a new framework, will make for a new beginning to what Cara Page defines as a "healing justice."



About Keisha Mitchell

Keisha Mitchell is an inspirational author, writer, poet, and creator. She self-published her first book titled, *Do Black Lives Really Matter?* at the age of 20. Keisha chooses her words wisely as she believes that her greatest power comes out through the use of words. Her favorite line to use, "What you speak is what you seek." As a registered nursing student, Keisha is dedicated to use her voice to advocate for improving health and wellness within the minority community.



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Beyond Rhetoric Corporation

Written By: Sophia

Beyond Rhetoric is an entirely non-profit organization dedicated to connecting with incarcerated youth and thereby rehabilitating them in lasting ways. In the spring of last year, Founder and President Troy Spencer Grant read a book called *Just Mercy*, detailing the life of a young law student who worked with inmates on death row, many of whom were there innocently. As a result, he felt a need to give back and called the Department of

Juvenile Services to offer to volunteer his time. That was how Beyond Rhetoric was born.

In the words of Grant, the organization has quite a simple formula: connect people who are skilled or passionate about something and want to volunteer their time with the youth in the prison system. Grant states "As a result of this relationship, this combination of those that want to serve and those that are in

situations like juvenile detention, I believe it will bring about a tremendous, tremendous growth for the future. That's what my hope is." Instead of preaching to or lecturing youth who made some mistakes in life, Grant's guiding value is to connect with them and to teach youth real-life skills through activities. Grant emphasizes that we can't always understand people's decisions because we haven't lived their lives and weren't born in the same situations.

Many incarcerated youth are born into situations with unsafe neighborhoods or unstable home lives that influenced their decisions, and Grant noted that this can greatly influence their choices.

Many people have heard of the very popular African proverb, *it takes a village to*

raise a child. But here's another African proverb that Grant holds dear: *The child that is not embraced by the village will burn it down to feel its heat.* Grant notes "Beyond Rhetoric wants to help them feel the warmth of the village so that when they get out, they won't burn it down."

After having success in the beginning weeks in connecting with youth, Grant has a message for readers who support his organization.



"Please donate, anybody that can. We're very young...We're non-profit, so the money goes to keeping the lights on, and being able to connect and train people about what it means to go into a detention center, what it means to

interact with youth, the majority that is traumatized."

To learn more about Beyond Rhetoric and support their mission, visit their website at: <https://beyondrhetoric.org>



About Sophia

Sophia is a Managing Editor at Youth News Magazine published by FAMILY Arts @ WHALER's Creation and the People Editor for her highschool's newspaper, The MVHS Oracle. In her free time, she works as the Head Grant Writer for Olimpico Learning, writes poetry, and serves as Founder and Editor-in-Chief of Binsey Poplar Press literary magazine. When she's not writing, she spends her time volunteering as a docent for her local history museum, drinking tea, and practicing calligraphy.

Divest to Save Lives. Invest To Heal Communities.

Written By: Kmulya

On August 20th, 2020 Founder and CEO of Think Make Live Youth, Terry Green II, and Xochitl Bevera, Director of the Racial Justice Action Center, came together to have a group discussion on the topic of Black Lives. They came from different backgrounds but have one main goal to "Divest to Save Lives. Invest To Heal communities." Think to Make Live Youth is a non-profit organization

based on youth and justice systems and connects to foster care youth. Terry Green was affected indirectly by his best friend who lost his life when he was only 20 years old due to gun violence, his mom being castrated, and his distant dad. His personal experience was that he had to serve in jail for 4 years for drug trafficking for "F4" and "F5" drug possession charges.

There was already a stereotype placed around people who came from that 'background' and the odds were in favor of those statistics. He had to break those barriers, so he worked with an attorney and the Ohio justice system to put together a motion which was so powerful that the prosecutor withdrew his objection that he had made earlier unknowing of the person when he went to get his record expunged. The judge eventually granted him an expungement without a court hearing. He is one of the many people who face this and he has been a lucky one to make it out of this injustice justice system.

Xochitl Bevera on the other hand who served time in jail as well is reminded of the fact that people "who were closest to the problem are closest to the solution but often furthest from power."



The criminal legal system eats families but lives in the shadows due to the prevailing mindset that it is only bad people who exit from the prison system, so people tend to forget about them. The targeting of Black people in the criminal justice system is so intense in places yet so unknown in some communities. It is a system that feeds off marginalized people. Advocates believe that their voices should be heard, not at the time of the passing any proposed bills, but during the time of

designing legislation and writing legal briefs centered around freedom, equity, etc. This is how engagement and leadership are meant to be.

Terry Green II conducted a youth justice march from Columbus city to the juvenile justice detention hall and back, amidst the rain. As Terry Green II participated and organized many protests, he observed that many young people and older white men were all there wanting change. Everyone was sick and tired of the existing problems in their lives. They wanted things to change and held their ground for what they believed. People have to acknowledge the African American community as human beings. For centuries Black people have not been looked or treated the same way as

other human beings. Now is the time to take action, especially the people who have the privilege and power to change these policies. People who are actively talking about abolition, protesting, and are trying to take action shows that change is on the horizon. The problem is at the heart of this system.

Advocates are challenging to divest the millions of dollars focused on oppressing young people and Black communities and reinvest into mental health and healing leaders and communities, and supporting those in need. We should reinvest our money and resources from prisons to other places that are in a dire situation such as public health solutions. More money flows into the criminal justice system



rather than education, public health, and other main priorities. The criminal justice system in Atlanta spends 32.5 million dollars to run this system. People who were charged with a minor misdemeanor are sent to different jails in the city. These jails served as homeless shelters and even mental health hospitals. This large building still looms in downtown Atlanta as a

reminder of the kind of oppression and history that the city had at the time. This sends a reminder to where the city invests its money. The goal of Xochitl and her organization is to get this building to be repurposed or replaced. It is not about just questioning and pointing out the faults in our justice system but rather asking ourselves, "What is that makes us feel safe?"

The younger generation is speaking about mental health, stress, domestic violence, and the education system that results in development. Young people are lacking pro-social activities, mental awareness, and other things that society needs to focus on. There should be a space so that people can heal from racial tensions.

The main questions that need answers are: What

would an anti-racist school look like while holding social justice systems accountable and how can the younger generation change the policies of these social justice systems into ones which truly bring justice to our country and not just by name? Together, there is nothing that the youth can't do to fix these injustice systems; we just need to work together, focus on our goal, and take the required actions.

About Amulya

Amulya is a Contributing Writer for Youth News Magazine published by FAMILY Arts @ WHALER's Creation. Amulya enjoys helping people of all ages from teaching seniors technology to teaching elementary kids on concepts that they don't understand and teaching other students to code. In her free time, she likes to play sports, code, graphic design, read, and write novels. Her ambition is to be a scientist with a focus on neuroscience, and genetics. She is passionate about standing up for what she believes in and volunteering where it is needed!



I Already Have Senioritis and It's Only the Beginning of Junior Year

2 weeks into virtual learning, and I'm eagerly awaiting June.

Written By Sophia

You don't have to tell me the junior year is supposed to be grueling-- I've heard it from upperclassmen and teachers alike. Ever since I entered high school, the grumbling from juniors about their seemingly endless amounts of homework and stress has always been around me. Although I was doubtful of the time they had to spend. To be fair to them, it did sound like a lot of work:

maintaining the perfect GPA with stellar grades and a rigorous course load, cultivating extracurriculars while embarking on new leadership positions, narrowing down your college lists, preparing for standardized tests months in advance to be a 'selective applicant', and balancing it all while trying to maintain a semblance of social life.

But this year, there's an unexpected factor that has tipped me over the edge as an incoming junior, and it's not just sheltering in place during the pandemic: *it's virtual learning.*

I understand that our passionate educators are doing all they can with limited resources, and I deeply respect them for this. It's not easy to create an online curriculum and form relationships with a fresh bunch of students when you're still learning how to use new technology yourselves. With rising case numbers in our district, opening school is also neither safe nor feasible. However, at the same time, it must be acknowledged that virtual learning isn't working the way it should. With our newly implemented schedule, students spend approximately 75 minutes per class staring at the muted glow of their computers. And this isn't



Representative Image from
<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/>

always just doing work. As teachers desperately try to engage the class, most spend the entire time explaining lessons via video call.

Starting at 9:30 on Monday mornings, I work to prop my eyes open until the end of my last class at 3:30. We are given 15 minutes between classes and an hour-long lunch break, but I usually spend this time trying to video call with my friends, as this is the only opportunity we have to talk together. And that only adds to the time we spend on video

calls. I usually find school something I genuinely look forward to, as I love to learn and delve deeper into the new curriculum of the year. Class discussions, literature analysis, solving problems, interacting with new peers, and teachers--it's a new adventure as soon as I walk onto campus. Yes, I may admit that by the end of the year, the prospect of summer does look enticing, but this doesn't usually happen to me until late May. But what concerns me about virtual learning is that less than 2 weeks into the school year, I'm feeling drained like never before--not even the same way I feel in early June.

The fatigue that overwhelms students after endless hours spent on Zoom is all-encompassing. By about 30 minutes into my second class call, the

listlessness takes over, and all the teacher's words begin to merge together. After nearly 6 hours of video calls, finding myself exhausted and ready to take a break, there's always something more. Extracurriculars, family calls, or teacher office hours, all of which take place on video calls, ensue. When I've finally finished it all, there are 2-3 hours of homework waiting for me--on yet another screen. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no longer than 2 hours of screen time for teenagers per day and encourages teenagers to spend more time outdoors getting exercise. Well, at the rate my average days have been progressing, I'm spending 4-6 hours on video calls alone-- and that's not including the time I spend after school.

When that screen time is factored in, including the time it takes to complete homework, this figure looks closer to 7-10 hours. With the air quality plummeting as fires abound in California, going outside to get exercise is a safe choice. But with almost no free time after 9:30 a.m., I hardly have time to squeeze in exercise at all. I know that being a junior is supposed to be demanding. This is the year you're supposed to give it your all, the final push before college admissions time rolls around. I think about the freshmen, their first experience

of high school through a screen. The sophomores trying to navigate AP tests with teachers they've never met. The seniors who'll miss the dances, graduation, and goodbyes to treasured friends. But I'm 8 days into my junior year, and I'm feeling the senioritis hit hard. If schools continue to remain closed for the rest of the year, the mental and physical effects of extended screen time *will* take their toll. And all I can do is stare at the Zoom screen, watching it connect to another 7 hour day of technology.



About Sophia

Sophia is a Managing Editor at Youth News Magazine published by FAMILY Arts @ WHALER's Creation and the People Editor for her highschool's newspaper, The MVHS Oracle. In her free time, she works as the Head Grant Writer for Olimpico Learning, writes poetry, and serves as Founder and Editor-in-Chief of Binsey Poplar Press literary magazine. When she's not writing, she spends her time volunteering as a docent for her local history museum, drinking tea, and practicing calligraphy.

Campaign to End Youth Prisons

Ending youth incarceration and beginning community healing

Written By Lenna

Is child imprisonment wrong? The short answer would be yes, but why might you ask? It is because children are small, fragile, and deserve to live a full life.

First, throwing a child in prison can be extremely dangerous for the next stages in life during adolescence. The child can be influenced to commit more crimes and acts of cruelty after being in prison. Not only will it affect them

from a behavior standpoint but it lowers the rate that a child graduates high school, college, and achieves success.

According to a 2015 study authored by Anna Aizer, Brown University's Joseph J. Doyle, Jr., MIT's published in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, "[Juvenile Incarceration, Human Capital and Future Crime: Evidence from Randomly Assigned Judges](#)"

analyzes 10 years of data on approximately 35,000 juvenile offenders in Chicago.

The study's findings include:

-The data suggests that "assignment to a judge with a high incarceration rate in other cases leads to a significantly lower likelihood of high-school completion and a significantly higher likelihood of incarceration as an adult, including incarceration for violent crimes."

-Juvenile incarceration decreases the chances of high school graduation by 13% to 39% and increases the chances of incarceration as an adult by 23% to 41%, as compared to the average public school student in the same area.

Additionally, children become friends with other inmates and this makes what is called a

"criminal capital." Next, we need to keep into consideration that one reason children act up is that they are not raised around good-hearted people. What good would it do to put them in with more of that environment? Lastly, though our nation is trying to advance economic justice for youth and adults impacted by the criminal justice system. We still have to rebuild those already affected from incarceration to a new light along with a work pathway that includes life long connections.

In conclusion, sending children to a hurtful environment is not teaching a lesson, it is showing society that it can be detrimental to what will be our future.

The next generation should see the world as a place to grow and learn, not a place to suffer. All children have the right to mess up, but no child should spend time in a cruel area with people that can influence them for the worst. No child should spend time in prison.

To learn more about the campaign to end Youth Prison, check out <https://www.nokidsinprison.org/>.



About Lenna

Lenna is a young writer living in a crowded city. Though she is a part of society's youth, she writes to show others what is important to the future generations and what our future world will look like. Lenna values education and strives to inform others on important topics relatable to the youthful audience. She does not shy from argumentative pieces and hopes audiences open their minds to different view points from her writing.

Citation: Aizer, Anna; Doyle, Jr., Joseph J. "Juvenile Incarceration, Human Capital and Future Crime: Evidence from Randomly-Assigned Judges," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, February 2015. doi: 10.1093/qje/qjv003



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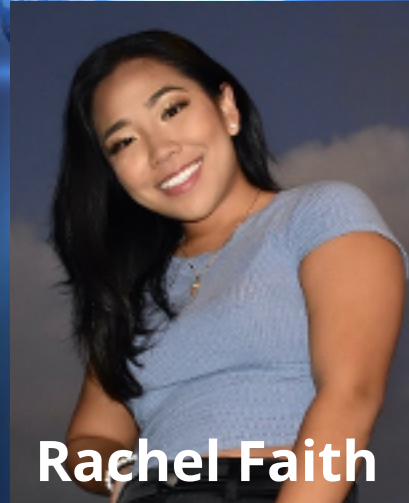
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Youth Spotlight



Rachel Faith

Rachel is a gifted and talented young lady who lives in Hawaii. She is a local celebrity with dream of performing to the world. This class of 2020 high school graduate is currently enrolled in college, pursuing a performing arts degree. When asked who influences her music the most, she said, "*Bruno Mars*, a Hawaiian native. who started his career here in Hawaii.

I saw him in concert when he came home to perform and the show was so awesome!!! I knew after that I wanted to be a performer. I am so inspired by him."

Rachel is a talented, singer, actor and dancer who career goal is to be a professional entertainer and one day open a performing arts school for kids in Hawaii.

She has been featured in over 30 musician shows, won numerous vocal competitions, and appeared in several shows as lead or supporting performer. She has performed in shows throughout Hawaii, California, New York, Florida and Chenghu, China, just to name a few places.

We wish this superstar a world of success!

To book Rachel Faith for your upcoming event :
rachelfaith.studio@gmail.com
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The views and opinions expressed in "Ask Lillie" are
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