Activating Youth Voices: Promoting Activism and Advocacy in Teens and Young Adults
Dr. Crystal Lee and Dr. Christy Byrd
Poem: Speak Up, Speak Out by Audrey Apollon
Image by Je’wel Lucas
Overview

• Why Youth Activism

• Youth Activism in Action
  - #PasstheMicYouth
  - Literacy and Community Initiative

• Resources and Next Steps
View our slide deck at

https://go.ncsu.edu/studentactivism
Who We Are

Dr. Crystal Lee
Assistant Professor
English Education
cchen32@ncsu.edu
@crystalchenlee1

Dr. Christy Byrd
Assistant Professor
Educational Psychology
christy_byrd@ncsu.edu
@ChristyMByrd
WHY YOUTH ACTIVISM?

Excerpt from #PassTheMicYouth episode: Activism, According to Students
What is Activism?

Sociopolitical action planned and executed for the specific benefit of positive social change, eradication of oppression, and promotion of justice (Hope et al., 2019)
Types of Activism

- **Low-risk activism**
  - Buying and displaying a t-shirt, poster, or sticker
  - Reading information about a social or political issue
  - Challenging someone’s negative statements about a group or issue
  - Boycotting a product or company
  - Signing a petition
  - Attending a peaceful protest or rally

- **High-risk activism**
  - Engaging in a physical confrontation at a protest or rally
  - Engaging in political activities where you may be arrested or put in physical danger

- **Formal political activism**
  - Organize an event
  - Give a lecture or talk about an issue
  - Donate money to a candidate or organization that supports your causes
  - Send a letter or email to a politician, public figure, or media outlet
  - Participate in a political campaign
Write
Revise and edit
Publish
Celebrate
Engage and lead
Write
Celebrate
Engage and Lead
Excerpt from #PassTheMicYouth episode: Not Your Mother’s Activism
#PassTheMicYouth

Amplifying Youth Voices
#PassTheMicYouth

- **Hosts/Producers**
  - Luke Shealy
  - Nyawira Nyota
  - Matin Maani
- **Faculty Directors:**
  - Dr. Maru Gonzalez
  - Dr. Christy Byrd

- Not Your Mother's Activism
- Activism is in Fashion
- Mic Drop: Cultural Appropriation
- Activism, According to Students
- Micdrop: Juntos Means Together
- Mic Drop: Stop The Stigma, Period.
- Puerto Rico and the Power of Protest
- Should School Resource Officers be in Schools?
- Rallying Together for Mental Health
- Mic Drop: Divisive Conversations
- Journey of a Transgender Youtuber
- Mic Drop: Unity + Engineering = Inspiration
- First Things FIRST in College
- Mic Drop: Mental Health During Crisis
- Mic Drop: The Power of Podcasts
- Teaching for Social Justice Amidst a Pandemic

*NC STATE* Friday Institute for Educational Innovation
Teaching for Social Justice Amidst a Pandemic
Blog and Resources

www.passthemicyouth.com

Recent posts:

• Liberation & Juneteenth - Art Activism Challenge Recap
• Paper Bridges: Immigrant Students Write Letters to Orphans
• Everyday Mental Health Activism: College Edition
• 4 Young Black Activists You Should Know

Liberation of the Diaspora by Abigail Thomas

I choose to shine now
The ancestors of my past
Led me to this life
I won't disappoint
My family heritage
So I must fight now
The future is soon
Freedom is for everyone
One diaspora

NC STATE Friday Institute for Educational Innovation
Curriculum

#PassingTheMic: A Curriculum to Amplify Youth Voices & Develop Critical Consciousness

For students aged 13 to 22
45-60 minute lessons for up to 20 students

Each lesson in this curriculum uses an experiential model of learning that includes the introduction and exploration of a new topic followed by reflection, application, assessment, and facilitator self-evaluation.

Pre-production
Setting the Stage
Finding Your Voice
Showtime
Standing Ovation
Going Viral
Leaving a Legacy
After Party
Impact of #PassTheMicYouth

“PTMY has validated my experiences as an activist. I have heard so many incredible stories and learning moments, like the ones I have. I have been able to learn from my mistakes and harm I may have caused, and work to reconcile them. It's empowering to meet other young people who are doing important work. It can feel like you're the only one doing all this work, but that's never the case. When you lose hope, it's an important reminder, many people are fighting for the same causes as you.”

-Sam Chan, Co-Host/Producer (2018-2019)
Impact of #PassTheMicYouth

“My students recognize that they are changemakers. They are inspired by the reactions of others that often reinforce how relevant, timely, important such perspectives are in addressing what often is perceived as intractable. Students are shifting their outlooks from a win-lose to a win-win mentality by recognizing how influential they are in bettering themselves, marginalized groups, the planet.”

-Michael Kokozos, Teacher Collaborator
Impact of #PassTheMicYouth

“[#PassTheMicYouth] means opening the space for others to use their voice and making that a possibility for those who don't typically get the chance to. I think the idea of passing the mic is a concept that is integral for the future. It involves recognizing that our voices are important and a powerful tool for change but sometimes the greatest power and quality of a changemaker is the willingness to let others speak. The world is full of not only diverse people but diverse perspectives. Realizing that there are so many people who have the interests that they have passion for, means that nobody is alone in their passions; therefore, we must work together with those aligned passions. We are stronger together. Passion is one of the strongest changemakers, however, passion is finite and a common issue in changemakers is they get burned out. To combat this, when you take the spider web of people's interests and you pair them up with those similar, you create a supported web of people with like-minded who will keep each other engaged and challenged.”

-Amelia, Student Participant
THE LITERACY AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVE
The Literacy and Community Initiative

BLUEPRINTS: Rebuilding Lives and Redesigning Futures
by Bull City YouthBuild Students
Durham, North Carolina

THE ROOTS OF OUR PEOPLE:
FROM ONE WORLD TO ANOTHER,
JUNTOS
by Aurora NC,
Graham High School

STRONG AND UNBROKEN
by Bull City YouthBuild Students
Durham, North Carolina

The Voices of Our People:
Nuestras Verdades
Written for the authors from the Hispanic Literacy Group
Bull City NC Literacy and Community Initiative
NC State University

SEE UNBROKEN PIECES
THROUGH THE SHADOWS
by Bull City YouthBuild Students
Durham, NC

A LEG UP
a book by
Corral Riding Academy

NC STATE
Friday Institute for Educational Innovation
Literacy and Community Initiative

Our mission is to amplify student voices through student publications, advocacy, and leadership.

Our Motto is: Write, Engage, and Lead.
Our Partners
Youth Activism Framework

PUBLIC READINGS
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INTERVIEWS

ADVOCACY
LETTERS TO EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS
COMMUNITY DIALOGUE (Q&A)

LEAD.
ENGAGE.
WRITE.

PUBLISHED BOOKS
AUTOETHNOGRAPHY
POETRY
PERSONAL NARRATIVES

Friday Institute for Educational Innovation
Critical Literacy Framework

We believe that when students are involved in texts and learning that are important to them, they engage and lead in topics, issues, and questions that are inclusive and critical.
Activism In Countepublic Spaces

Power of Literacy:
Re-centering their marginalization through narrative writing to “navigate their way out of labels and stereotypes” (Winn, 2010, p. 445).

Self-Empowerment:
Discovering Voice Through Writing

Out-of-school Literacy Contexts:
CBOs as Sites for Social Change
**LCI Theory of Change**

**ASSUMPTIONS**
- Reading and writing investigates positions of power within the self, community, and world that offers transformative outcomes for youth (Morrell, 2007).
- Multimodal expression allows these students to define and position themselves within their communities (Camangian, 2008).
- Critical literacy can be liberating for marginalized youth when they present themselves as individuals beyond their external labels.
- Youth-serving CBOs enable students to realize their potential outside of traditional school environments by building partnerships between teachers and communities to share pedagogical practices in mutually beneficial ways.

**INPUTS**
- STUDENTS
- FACULTY & GRADUATE STUDENTS
- COMMUNITY (CBO, PARENTS AND FAMILY)
- RESOURCES (TIME, FUNDS, MATERIALS, TECHNOLOGY, ETC.)

**ACTIVITIES**
- WRITE
- ENGAGE
- LEAD

**OUTPUTS**
- PUBLISHED BOOK
  - AUTO-ETHNOGRAPHY
  - POETRY
  - PERSONAL NARRATIVES
- PUBLIC READINGS
  - FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INTERVIEWS
- COMMUNICATION & OUTREACH
  - MEDIA BLOGS
  - WEBSITE
- ADVOCACY LETTERS
  - PEER REVIEWS
  - COMMUNITY DIALOGUE (Q&A)

**OUTCOMES**
- INCREASED LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL
  - (Civic Engagement)
- IMPROVED LITERACY
  - (Reading, Writing and Speaking)
- ENHANCED EMOTIONAL & SOCIAL OUTCOMES
  - (Self-Esteem, Self-Determination, and Self-Compassion)

**IMPACTS**
- INCREASED SELF AND COMMUNITY ADVOCACY
- INCREASED LEADERSHIP CAPACITY
- INCREASED EDUCATIONAL EQUITY
WRITE.
## What is an Autoethnography?

**What is it?**
A combination of research and personal narrative to better understand one’s positioning in their culture or a cultural experience. Essentially: using scholarly research to analyze your own personal experience, or vice versa.

**Description pulled directly from NCSU Syllabi:**
Autoethnography (3 pages):
In Project 3, students will practice gathering and evaluating scholarly research about an in-group to which they belong. They will draw from, synthesize, and integrate their chosen research into their reflection and exploration of their experiences in this group.

Autoethnography:
For this project, you will write an autoethnography to shed light on what membership in one of the groups you belong to is like and how it affects your interaction with and role in society. To accomplish this, you will need to combine personal narrative that shows readers what membership in your group has been like for you, with analysis of that experience that connects the personal to the sociological.

**Sample titles:**
- We to Me: An Autoethnographic Discovery of Self - In and Out of Domestic Abuse
- It Is Something Else: An Autoethnographic Journey of Working Mothers Parenting a Child
- Gender, Older Female Bodies and Autoethnography: Finding my Feminist Voice by Telling my Illness Story

**What you need to do:**
1. Identify your “in-group”
2. Google Scholar: Find 3 sources (at least one academic source)
3. Write: Aim for a 50:50 ratio - half narrative, half reflecting on sources
   a. No more than 3 pages typed

### A Publishing Curriculum
Write, Edit, Share, & Celebrate

https://www.fi.ncsu.edu/pages/our-framework/

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<tr>
<th>2.5</th>
<th>10/23/2018</th>
<th>Editing Day</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Editing of Lesson #2</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Oral performance lesson</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Progress on websites</td>
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<td>Students will:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finalize their drafts of Lesson 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submit final draft of Lesson 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improved literacy performance (reading, writing, speaking)</td>
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<td>Enhanced psychological outcomes (self-efficacy, esteem, compassion, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increased leadership skills, knowledge and abilities</td>
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<tr>
<th>3</th>
<th>11/6/2018</th>
<th>Families: Exploring family stories</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Exploring the stories of our families:</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Humans of Our World</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Learn more about the triumphs, struggles, challenges, happiness, and worries of our communities by those around us, our families</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Establish why we conduct interviews</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Read over examples</td>
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<td>Students will:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learn how to conduct an interview</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compose 10-15 open-ended questions to ask our families</td>
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<td>Compose a list of 5 potential people we could interview, and why</td>
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<td>Practice an interview with a peer</td>
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<td>1.</td>
<td>Editing of Lesson #3</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Review what we learned through interview process as well as who we interviewed, and why</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Progress on websites</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Collect IRB forms and Blackout poems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students will:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Start transcribing interview</td>
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<td>Try to have at least one page of transcript completed</td>
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<td>Submit final draft of Lesson 3</td>
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<td>Enhanced psychological outcomes (self-efficacy, esteem, compassion, etc.)</td>
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<td>Autoethnographies:</td>
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<td>a.</td>
<td>Examine and analyze “in-groups” from the perspective of a member, and a researcher</td>
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<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>What does the data say, what do we say?</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Lesson: Show don’t tell</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Obtain Blackout poems, Interview Documents, and IRB forms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students will:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify an “in-group”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Start collecting sources and quotes to utilize in writing their autoethnographies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enhanced psychological outcomes (self-efficacy, esteem, compassion, etc.)</td>
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MY CHILD
by Aliyah Wilson

Hey, my child,
Don’t let anybody tell you that you can’t and won’t do or be
something, because you can, and you will, and
you shall be whatever you want to be, and
you shall succeed.

My child, you are smart, intelligent, wise, clever, bright, able,
sharp, useful, not just a pretty face.
You will do all the things that you put your mind to.

My child, you can be a doctor, lawyer, judge, teacher, lab tech,
police woman, you will be whatever you want to be.
Whatever your life’s desire.

Ciara, you will not be like me, you will be better than me.
You will do better than me. You will not let anybody pull you
down and tell you that you can’t and won’t.
You will not give up in life.
You will keep pushing until there’s no more fight in you.

You will be successful, by any means necessary.

Love,
Mom

WHERE I'M FROM
by Raynell Mays

I’m from a caught in between place;
The middle of a nightmare and dream place.

When times are tough, it can’t show on your face.
I’m from the secret strive place.

Emotions in silence place.
Check your ambitions, can’t be too loud place.

Can’t even judge ‘til you walk a mile place.
Life is hard, and we still smile place.

True friends are family place.
When hard times hit, we all pitch in place.

Where the opportunities are endless place,
If you are connected to right people place.

Instincts and eyes gotta stay sharp in this place,
And if the timing is right, you can leave your mark on this place.
BOXED IN
by Aldo Galvan Hernandez

I am from a box
A box that contains the dualities of my identity
Una caja hecha en Mexico
And shipped to America

I am from a box made of wood and dreams
I am from a trailer home in a neighborhood of immigrants
I am from the barrio that kept its roots
I am from the forest where lost things go

I am from a place between everywhere and
there is nowhere I can’t go
but the somewhere I’m supposed to be

IMMIGRATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY
by Kevin Garcia-Galindo
ENGAGE.
Our Books
Public Engagement
Engaging With The Community

“And it's just this whole experience writing the book and then going to readings ...made me realize that my issues are worth talking about because it's not just my issue. It can be an issue for more people and as long as I can vocalize it, then other people can vocalize it as well.”

- Briza (student author) -

Students reading their published book to superintendents and family members at Family Night at Garner Magnet High School
LEAD.
Audience Testimonials

- “I learned that high school students can be serious writers and reflect on their experience in a very meaningful way. I plan to read the book and share it.”

- “This reading make me feel proud to be a Latino and to hear that there are students expressing their feelings and thoughts for society to hear. “

- “I thought it was amazing. I honestly was not expecting this high-quality poems and writings from students like me. I loved all the languages that “showed” imagery in my head. Their voices were also matching with their writings. I appreciate their vulnerability tonight for sharing their experiences.”

- “I think literacy is truly key to creating/retaining true equality in communities, a type of rehabilitative activism/nurturing allows greater resiliency, ability to speak up, make/advocate for real change”
RESOURCES
Take Action!

- Literacy and Community Initiative: [www.go.ncsu.edu/lci](http://www.go.ncsu.edu/lci)
- Student Publication: [https://www.fi.ncsu.edu/pages/student-publications/](https://www.fi.ncsu.edu/pages/student-publications/)
- LCI Curriculum: [https://www.fi.ncsu.edu/pages/our-framework/](https://www.fi.ncsu.edu/pages/our-framework/)
- READING GUIDES:
  [https://www.fi.ncsu.edu/resources/the-power-of-youth-voices-bringing-a-publishing-curriculum-to-your-classroom/](https://www.fi.ncsu.edu/resources/the-power-of-youth-voices-bringing-a-publishing-curriculum-to-your-classroom/)
Take Action!

- [www.passthemicyouth.com](http://www.passthemicyouth.com)
- Podcast episodes
- Blog
- Discussion questions
- Curriculum
- Educator Toolbox
- Caregiver’s Coren
THANK YOU!

For follow-up conversations and questions:

ccchen32@ncsu.edu and christy_byrd@ncsu.edu