

Visions of Resilience

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Youth Peace Leaders: Ariella Pacheco, Claire Chung, Cris Magyawi, Fernanda Garcia, Kidane Klages

“Others have seen what is and asked, ‘Why?’ I have seen what could be and asked ‘Why not?’”

- Pablo Picasso

The Start-Up



Having the first meeting with anyone could end up being exciting or intimidating, depending on how you perceive the setting. For our first few Thread Meetings, the impact that we had on each other allowed for us to grow as a close-knit group and it led me to firmly believe that it resulted in creating a bond between our entire Thread that will continue forward.

The interns that supported our Thread were Jake, a student attending SDSU, and Jessica, a grad student attending USD. The ambitious Youth Peace Leaders that were a part of the Youth Diversion Through Artistic Expression Thread represented all counties of San Diego, as well as from Tijuana, Mexico. Ariella, who was traveling from Encinitas, Claire, traveling from Poway, Cris from National City, and Fernanda and Kidane that traveled from Tijuana, Mexico. Their attendance at the Thread meetings, despite their traveling efforts, had proven their noble commitment and discipline to create an impact that will carry forward in the community.



The specific locations we attempted to base our Thread Meetings in, were in the Barrio Logan community, where many expressions of creative art can be found located in Chicano Park, as well as neighboring art galleries and murals. In addition to picking our Thread meetings, we built our bonds as a Thread by introducing icebreakers at the beginning of each of our meetings to allow for us to learn more about each other than what meets the eye. An icebreaker that allowed us to create more of a unique sense of connection was a simple question, such as, “If you moved to Sesame Street, who would you want as your neighbor and why?” This youthful question allowed more of the importance of learning about each other’s communicative preferences by the choice of Sesame Street character we chose. Most of us either said Cookie Monster or Oscar the Grouch, but in all, we had fun discussing our reasoning on why we would choose them in particular to be our neighbor.

While brainstorming project ideas we had difficulties distinguishing a simplistic goal since our topic could be viewed as being broad or specific in many ways. Art itself can symbolize a vast majority of representations according to the artist creating the piece.

From all the ideas that were brought to the table, one theme that was a popular topic among the Thread was the creation of a music video. The Youth Peace Leaders wanted to create a music video that represented the adverse perception of youth that may be undergoing challenges in life and turn it into a positive recognition to spread awareness that these youth hold a strong position of the value in their community.

Problem Statement: “Youth that has been through challenging situations may be unaware of healthy outlets such as art, which may result in having them turn to negative outlets, such as violence.”

Goal: “Share the Resiliency of Youth who use Artistic Expression to overcome the challenging situations they have endured.”

The Production

Brainstorming impactful ideas sometimes led us to areas where we found ourselves struggling with just sticking to one vision. Since art carries such a broad spectrum of media to choose from, depending on how one would view it, the Thread had many ideas that they intended on implementing to develop a creative impact. Ideas ranged from creating a music video, distinguishing particular songs relevant to our topic, interviewing youth or other individuals who use art as an alternative outlet, creating a mural, and many more. We just wanted to be able to portray our detailed message of how we visualize art being a constructive outlet through the best media output we can create.



Once we concluded creating a video with a sense of a documentary-type of vibe, we had to move forward evasively with creating our next steps in the planned project. The Youth Peace Leaders wanted to take someone that uses art as a passion and expresses it through a visual output. An individual who possesses the capabilities of being able to express their value of art and how they use art as a positive outlet was the target subject to help express our message to the wider community.

Once we finished our thought process of creating our project, the challenges soon presented themselves. We had to figure out how we would get in contact with these specific participants that are willing to share our idea through their ART! For the first few weeks, there were tons of communication that we had to implement to get a start on our project. We came to times where it was so frustrating in not being able to find those that would volunteer their time and experiences with us, so we can showcase it to those individuals that are unaware of art and its positive uses.



Our Program Officer, Tina Medina, was so resourceful when it came to ideas or organizations to get in contact with for our project. We threw our project plan at Tina and she was able to relay us to get in touch with Movement BE to see how their form of art can help develop our project. From one of the workshops that Movement BE had conducted, we spoke with Terrance Carter and Caleb Shaw about our project and they were more than honored to help provide their insight of spoken word and how it has helped them through life.



Another connection that we were able to network with was a representative by the name of David Beltran from David's Harp Foundation. David had undergone the assistance of what David's Harp Foundation provides and he found himself moving into the role of being an instructor for the organization. The specific art that he chose to share with us is a hobby of his, lyrically rapping. He was able to share some of his background story about how he found himself at David's Harp Foundation and why he chooses to speak through rap to divert his feelings and emotions. It was such an eventful experience being able to learn about the organization as well as what they offer to students that face adverse situations. We also learned more about different media of art and how it can be used to divert your energy into a positive outlet, such as rapping.

“Resiliency will help Youth overcome the negative situations they may come across in life.”

- Ariella Pacheco, Youth Peace Leader

The Finish Line



So much was learned through this Thread with the confrontation of real-life events. We came face to face with challenges in terms of figuring out how we would produce our video and how the storyline should be revolved around? What do we want to represent from our Thread? How will we tell our story of how art can make a difference as long as you can give it a chance?

One word came to mind, RESILIENCY. From the beginning, we were immediately put into a position where we found ourselves scrambling about what we want to do as a project? Flipping back and forth between creating a music video, a documentary, or an inspirational video caused lots of barriers. We overcame that. Once we collaboratively decided on creating an inspirational video using art, the next barrier was finding someone or anyone willing to work with us and share their artistic nature of how they divert their emotions. Those individuals were found and they were more than happy to share their experiences and how art can be more than just a subject in school. It allows being what you to be what you want to be in life.

Once we completed the video, we were invited to share our project at another Thread's event, who shared a similar topic to ours, Alcohol and Drug Prevention. They partnered with Natural High, which is an organization where they empower youth to develop the skills to live life well. The event we were invited to was titled, The Alternative, where

multiple youths came to perform their talents or natural high in front of an audience. Our Thread was able to share this experience by giving an opener of who we are and what our video represented. The outcome was spectacular! Being able to share our production project was such an extravagant feeling. We sensed the positive vibe from the crowd and the positive feedback from the audience showed us that we did something that helped out our community in a positive way.

For future expectations to future Youth Peace Leaders and Interns, don't let barriers stop you from getting to that next step. The pathway to success is never an easy road to get to. Challenges should be expected and you may never always have your expectations met due to those challenges. Working through adversity determines the grit and resilience that an individual contains to complete any set goals. If you were to ever come to a halt, remember to take a step back, analyze the situation, create a strategy and apply. Our Thread kept that guideline to help us get through the adversity and we ended up creating a bond we would never have expected working through the challenges. We have learned so much from each other and we grew as a team and in the end, we collaboratively decided that we will always be the Visions of Resilience.