



EQUAL VOICE

ONE VISION FOR AMERICA'S FAMILIES



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For more information, contact:

Kathleen Baca, 206.273.7381

12 Young Leaders Win Sargent Shriver Warriors Against Poverty Award

SEATTLE – Marguerite Casey Foundation earlier this month presented 12 young community leaders with the Sargent Shriver Youth Warriors Against Poverty Leadership Award in recognition of their vision, passion and dedication to improving the lives of families and their communities. The young organizers from Arizona, California, Illinois and New Mexico each received \$5,000 in honor of their leadership.

Whether running for a school board position, fighting for immigrant rights, helping young fathers become better parents, or organizing youth in their communities, each of the award winners has a unique and inspiring story that Marguerite Casey Foundation hopes to share with other youth and communities. If you would like to know more about any of the following young warriors against poverty, please contact the foundation's communication team at 206.273.7381.

Adriana Aguilar (Los Angeles, Calif.)

A leader in the California Dream Act Campaign, Adriana organized support for two California Assembly bills ensuring that undocumented immigrant students have the same access to financial aid as citizen students. She speaks to over 500 students a year, inspiring them to graduate from high school and continue their education.

Christina Saeteurn (Richmond, Calif.)

Long before the recent devastating oil refinery fire in Richmond, Christina mobilized her community to fight expansion of the Chevron refinery, educating residents about chemical spills and giving them a voice, she became a leader in stopping tar sand oil refining in Richmond

Darius Anderson (Chicago, Ill.)

A high school sophomore, Darius is a founding member of a multiracial campaign on investment in youth and youth employment. Conquering his stuttering, Darius meets with elected officials and speaks at press conferences and rallies.

Jason Fuller (Albuquerque, N.M.)

Jason, a student at the University of New Mexico donated more than 2,000 hours to Albuquerque's most marginalized communities. From his experience of struggling with the SAT college exams, he joined, then expanded the "Go to High School, Go to College" program to provide students with information they need to take tests and apply for college.

Laureano Rivera (Chicago, Ill.)

After Laureano lost his mother to street violence, he wanted to end violence in his community. He also needed a job to help support himself and his grandmother. Through Leaders Investing For Equality (LIFE), Laureano urges elected officials to increase investment in youth programs and to support jobs for youth. He recently pushed for dedicating new money from traffic speed cameras to a summer jobs program.

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Lester Meza (Los Angeles, Calif.)

Like many students in East Los Angeles, Lester encountered crowded public schools, low expectations and little encouragement to pursue a college education. Now he fights education inequities that perpetuate poverty and pushes for programs to help inner-city students prepare for college.

Lorren Dangerfield (San Francisco, Calif.)

Although Lorren struggled with the death of her mother and family poverty, she turned her energy to improving opportunities for students in San Francisco: pushing for free MUNI bus passes for youth, an ethnic studies curriculum in public schools, and alternatives to suspension and expulsion policies that disproportionately affect students of color.

Maura Rodriguez (Phoenix, Ariz.)

Inspired by her mother's efforts to improve conditions at the laundry where she works, Maura registers new voters and talks with them about issues critical to strengthening their community. Her efforts helped elect the first Latino council member in her working-class neighborhood and a progressive mayor.

Pedro Lopez (Phoenix, Ariz.)

Responding to the lack of young decision makers in his community, Pedro is running for a seat on the school board in Phoenix. He wants to be an advocate for families, making sure that every student has access to a quality education.

Ricardo Zamudio (Phoenix, Ariz.)

Brought to the U.S. as a baby by immigrant parents, Ricardo couldn't accept a dream scholarship to play football for the University of Southern California. When Ricardo's neighborhood was raided by Sheriff Joe Arpaio, he hid with his father. He refuses to hide anymore. Ricardo runs an after-school mentoring program for middle school through pre-college youth.

Sergio Rodriguez (Phoenix, Ariz.)

As one of the first young civic engagement volunteers at Arizona Center for Empowerment, Sergio helped register hundreds of voters in Latino neighborhoods. He quickly emerged as a powerful speaker on the American Jobs Act campaign, sharing his family's story of struggle with poverty.

Sheldon Smith (Chicago, Ill.)

Like many of the young men he grew up with, Sheldon has served time and became a father at a young age. He's also the executive director of The Dovetail Project, which he founded to give young fathers the tools they need to be good parents, and is a powerful advocate for young black fathers and criminal justice reform.

Throughout his life, Sargent Shriver, architect of the War on Poverty and visionary leader of Head Start, Peace Corps, Job Corps and VISTA – worked to provide opportunities for people to lift themselves out of poverty.

Marguerite Casey Foundation is dedicated to creating, through the Equal Voice Network, a national movement of low-income families advocating on their own behalf for social and economic policies that strengthen families and communities.