

VOICE

Youth and World Peace

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Australia

17 year-old Katie Gerszkowski is from a small rural town in Australia. From a young age, she has always had a strong passion for creating a positive change in the world by helping to motivate and inspire others. Inspired by her own experience with chronic illness, Katie is using her role as a CHIME IN Youth Ambassador to represent the UN Sustainable Goal Healthy Lives for All.



THE CHANGE IS ME INTERNATIONAL



WWW.THECHIMEIN.ORG

About CHIME IN (The CHange Is ME INternational)

With the motto I Am the Change, CHIME IN is an international, youth-driven, adult-supported initiative that trains and educates future leaders of the world by giving them the skills and the platform to “chime in” and make a positive difference in this world.

Currently, 14 Youth Ambassadors, ages 16-25, from Uganda, Kenya, Guatemala, Honduras, Mongolia, Nepal, Australia, Jordan, Dubai, The UK, and the US are engaged in the year long CHIME IN Youth Ambassador Program, which is based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The Youth Ambassadors brainstorm via weekly web-based teleconferences to develop actionable solutions to those goals. They then each choose a goal to focus upon and create solutions-driven projects to implement within their respective communities.

www.TheChimeIn.org

CHIME IN’s year-end goal

To celebrate a year of learning and team building, the Youth Ambassadors will congregate in one ambassador’s home-

town at the end of each year to participate in a meaningful, sustainable group community service project that will make a true impact on the community they visit. This year, they will be meeting in Guatemala City, Guatemala in December to collaborate with the international NGO TECHO and join with Ambassador Antonio Roca in building transitional homes for people living in the slums there.

<http://www.techo.org/en/>

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: The CHIME IN Youth Ambassador Program educates, empowers and activates the future compassionate leaders of the world. A core component of our program involves the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Of the seventeen goals, our group focuses on the following:

- Eradicate poverty and hunger*
- Achieve universal primary education*
- Promote gender equality and empower women*
- Ensure environmental sustainability*
- Attain healthy lives for all*
- Reduce inequality within and between countries*

The program provides an in-depth study of each goal through a written program, weekly calls, training by mentors, and individual community service projects by each ambassador.

Be the change you wish to see in the world.

~ Mahatma Gandhi

"Sometimes it falls on the next generation to be great." These words of the great Nelson Mandela set the scene of what is needed in today's society. Conflict, cynicism and chaos are seeded through out our world: our world which should be peaceful, positive and patient. Why is it not? What led to these destructive seeds being planted? How can these seeds be weeded out and replaced with more productive ones? Nelson knew how. Through the next generation, the youth of tomorrow, the future leaders of our world!

The youth of today

have a weight falling upon it no generation before has. But this weight does not scare us. This weight does not make us retreat to the ways of our fore fathers who lead us blindly into this plantation. This weight of world peace falling onto our shoulders does not make us buckle at the knees, nor does it make us weary. It is our motivation, our inspiration and our aspiration. I am the youth of our world, and I believe in world peace.

Two simple words - which when uttered - are often shot down by claims of naivety and childish dreams. But have you ever pulled

back from predetermined judgment and actually delved into the meaning of 'world peace'? It is defined by Google as "the ideology of universal global understanding and nonviolence." To me that is not naive and most certainly not a childish dream. It is within our human capacity to understand one another, and to communicate in a nonviolent way. The only difference is, world peace is these actions spread across the entirety of our globe. So do not tell me world peace is unattainable. And most importantly, do not tell me these dreams are a subject of my age.

I am seventeen years old,

and at this age society has already granted me many rights. I can drive a motor vehicle without adult supervision, and I can consent to sexual relationships. In less than two months I will also be able to consume alcohol. But, society labels me naive for my belief in the possibility of a world with global understanding and nonviolence. My belief in world peace was birthed from a place where peace was absent. My body was suffering from chronic illnesses, and this made my soul a place of chaos. Yet, when I discovered peace within myself, my body and soul began to thrive in a rhythm I had never felt before.

Believing in world peace does not make me naive, it makes me - me. As a youth, I want my voice on this belief to be heard and respected.

The Change is Me International (CHIME IN), is a global platform for youth, like myself, to have their voice heard and beliefs taken seriously. They focus strongly on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, which are a pillar in attaining world peace. As one of the 14 Youth Ambassadors for this organization, I have represented the goal of 'Healthy Lives For All' for the past year. In this time, I have

been transformed from a youth with a belief to a youth with the tools for realistically and practically achieving my belief. A fire of motivation is ignited within us when there is someone holding a candle in the direction of our dreams. This organization is doing exactly that. CHIME IN is leading the future leaders of our world by shining a candle in the direction of creating a better world.

Youth and world peace are the pieces to connecting our disjointed jigsaw world. With CHIME IN as an instrument for connecting these pieces, creating global understanding

and nonviolence is possible. I am a youth, and my generation has the weight of world peace falling upon it. Nelson Mandela, I assure you

our generation will be great, and we will plant the seeds of peace, positivity, and patience. It has already begun.



You cannot shake hands with a clenched fist.

- Indira Gandhi