Friends of Youth Speaks,

For 27 years, Youth Speaks has thoughtfully challenged the mythical “center” of the social and cultural order to actively seek out voices, texts and narratives that have been deliberately excluded from the larger American Story. Generations of young people have trusted Youth Speaks to help them harness their creative bliss, reconcile contradictions of the worlds through their words and support them in their declarations as stewards of a soundful generation.

20 years ago, I first started my journey with Youth Speaks. It was at a time when our country and world was in a similar moment we find ourselves in today.

The U.S. was in the midst of launching a war on Iraq. A pandemic known as SARS was gripping the globe. Rights to same-sex marriage and educational equity were being aggressively contested in the highest courts across the country.

Times have changed but the urgency of our mission has not.

YOUTH SPEAKS BELIEVES, THAT BRAVE NEW VISIONS OF THE FUTURE DEMAND THE CREATION OF NEW VOICES AND NARRATIVES TO LEAD THE WAY. THIS PAST YEAR, WE DID JUST THAT.

We activated our new 4,623 square feet building in the Mission District of San Francisco—a performance space for safe, brave place-keeping and youth storytelling. Our welcoming, inclusive third space has built a community for local residents, youth and their families, with a focus on engaging youth who have been historically marginalized, isolated and affected by displacement.
We convened a national network of youth voice organizations and arts leaders across the country and hosted 200 youth poets in San Francisco for a return of the beloved Brave New Voices Poetry Festival & Convening.

We partnered with the California Arts Council to administer vital resources to emerging, established and legacy artists at the intersection of art, Indigenous practice, and multi-racial movement work in Northern California.

Our work in Bay Area public schools and neighborhoods continue to reach young people who have limited access and opportunities to literacy programs that build their creative intelligence and critical thinking skills through one-to-one mentoring and peer support.

Youth Speaks is an incubator for youth voices and ideas, and a platform to amplify revolutionary dreams. We honor legacy, but don’t believe in resting on it. As we look ahead, we are excited to spark new ideas that challenge us to grow—like Power Lab—and stay true to the models that have enabled us to deliver impact year after year.

Our greatest power is to listen to and amplify the stories of young people of “uncommon” cultures and places, who bring the noise to declare that this world is theirs. This is our work.

Thanks for being part of this movement with us.
WE CREATE SPACES THAT CHALLENGE YOUTH TO DEVELOP & AMPLIFY THEIR VOICES AS CREATORS OF SOCIETAL CHANGE
VISION

We envision a world in which young people are heard, honored, and connected through creative ecosystems of interdependence and care.

OUR GOLDEN RULES

1. THERE ARE NO WRONG ANSWERS
2. THE STANDARD IS YOURSELF
## Timeline of Youth Speaks

For nearly three decades, Youth Speaks has witnessed the power and potential of youth voices when they feel safe enough to be heard, and seen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>American poet Marc Smith is credited with starting the poetry slam in Chicago.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Youth Speaks founded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Hip Hop music and artists have a breakout year with albums from 2pac, Outkast, Nas, &amp; Jay Z.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>First ever Youth Poetry Slam in the world hosted by Youth Speaks in San Francisco, California.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Youth Speaks hosts first National Youth Poetry Slam (later known as Brave New Voices) in Albuquerque, New Mexico.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Queeriosity launches in response to queer youth of color &amp; allies advocating for racial equity, &amp; more safe spaces that reflect their beauty &amp; brilliance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>The global warming and climate change documentary <em>An Inconvenient Truth</em> brings in $50M at the box office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Youth Speaks pilots youth narrative change campaign, Speak Green. 150 BIPOC poets tour w/Bishop Desmond Tutu, President Bill Clinton &amp; 75+ mayors to amplify intersectional climate justice discourse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>HBO airs 7-part documentary airs nationally on Brave New Voices International Youth Poetry Festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Launch of The Bigger Picture campaign combating public health disparities through digital storytelling and poetry.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Marriage Equality becomes a reality.

2015

President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama welcome Youth Speaks to the White House for the Poetry Jam.

2016

Youth Speaks' Bigger Picture Campaign helps pass City and County of San Francisco’s Sweet & Sugary Beverage Tax.

2016

Youth Speaks partners with XQ for The Super School Project, a Nationwide campaign inviting youth to reimagine public education.

2017

Greta Thunberg begins a regular strike from classes in Sweden every Friday to protest climate issues.

2018

Survival Pending Revolution Campaign launches to explore COVID-19’s effects on underrepresented (& under-resourced) communities.

2020

Resolution passed by SFUSD Board of Education to mandate 2 semesters of Ethnic Studies coursework.

2020

World Health Organization (WHO) selects Youth Speaks to receive NCD (Noncommunicable diseases) Lab Award.

2021

Youth Speaks moves into our permanent home in the Mission District, San Francisco.

2021

Launch of our newest program, Power Lab.

2021

Brave New Voices alumna and Inaugural Youth Poet Laureate, Amanda Gorman, performs poem at President Biden’s inauguration.

2021
OUR ALUMNI STORY

You can find our alums thriving in music, television, the arts, theater, design, activism, government, politics, academia, journalism, publishing, and of course, poetry.

HIEU MINH NGUYEN
Poet & Lecturer at Stanford University

TERRY TAPLIN
Poet & Berkeley City Council Member

CHINAKA HODGE
Poet, Educator, Playwright, Screenwriter, & Youth Speaks Board

RAFAEL CASAL
Writer, Rapper, Actor, Producer, Director, & Showrunner

CRETCHEN CARVAJAL
Entrepreneur, Artist & Youth Speaks Staff

DAVEED DIGGS
Actor, Rapper, Film Producer & Singer-Songwriter

BENJAMIN EARL TURNER
Film Writer, Actor, Rapper

GEORGE WATSKY
Rapper, Singer, Songwriter, Record Producer, Poet, Author, & Illustrator

OBASI DAVIS
Artist, Designer & Educator
OUR CO-AUTHORS
RADICAL PARTNERSHIPS

sundance institute
BRADY
THE REDFORD CENTER

UCSF Center for Vulnerable Populations
XQ The Super School Project
Reveal

TFME Task Force for Meaningful Change

SFUSD San Francisco Public Schools
Lemonade

The Kennedy Center
HBO
CPB Corporation for Public Broadcasting
“[We] youth share such similar experiences but I find that sometimes poetry is the only time we’re truly brave enough to share it.”

- Myra, 17, Youth Speaks Participant
Youth Speaks believes in the power of fostering creativity through the arts to support the healthy development of young people. We know that access to the arts is especially vital for Indigenous, Black, Latine, Asian & Pacific Islander, immigrant, LGBTQIA+ youth, and others who are historically unheard.

Youth Speaks operates locally in the Bay Area, regionally working with partner organizations throughout California, and nationally through our Brave New Voices network. Here are our key programs.

**IN-SCHOOL RESIDENCIES**

Residencies are high-level creative writing and performance poetry workshops at local schools. Youth Speaks Teaching Artists partner with teachers in complementary subjects to engage youth in culturally relevant arts education.

**WRITING & PERFORMANCE WORKSHOPS**

Our Writing and Performance Workshops are the heart of Youth Speaks. Young people come together weekly with an amazing poet mentor to imagine, write, share and rehearse.
Our famous monthly open mics are produced and promoted by SPOKES members and are curated to provide emerging young writers and performers affirming spaces to flex their skills on the mic in a fun, safe, and brave environment.

The Teen Poetry Slam is an opportunity for youth artists to represent the Bay Area at the Brave New Voices International Youth Poetry Slam Festival. The Slam is an Olympic-style competition where poets have 3 minutes to rock the stage.

Unified Fest is where the Bay Area’s best young emcees and youth poetry slam teams gather to show their skills in two events: MC Olympics and the Unified Poetry Slam. MC Olympics is an Olympic-style hip hop competition featuring the Bay Area’s best young emcees.
POWER LAB

Power Lab brings together youth, organizers, industry experts, and community leaders to leverage the power of culture to influence policy, combat misinformation, and heal civic trauma. We bring together passionate young poets to learn about the power of public narratives and social justice storytelling by exploring dominant narratives about complex issues at the center of young people's lives. Power Lab participants innovate and create new works that connect individual voices to collective stories.

SPOKES

SPOKES are Youth Speaks’ youth advisory board. They are the decision-makers, vision bearers, and spirit of what Youth Speaks does. SPOKES is a paid position that works directly with Youth Speaks staff to build community and receive artistic and leadership development through hosting, curating and leading event and workshop spaces including the Backyard Conference.

NATIONAL

BRAVE NEW VOICES FESTIVAL & BRAVE NEW FUTURES CONVENING

Brave New Voices is the only festival of its kind. Every year, 500 young poets and the nation’s leading artists convene in a different U.S. city, or online during the pandemic years, for a multi-day celebration of arts education, performance, and civic engagement. In addition to youth tracks, Youth Speaks provides professional development and enrichment for adult leaders in the field. In July 2022, Youth Speaks convened adult leaders from 11 youth arts and culture storytelling organizations for a multi-day conference about the future of our field and moving towards narrative and cultural building power.
“My favorite part of the event was hearing about other people’s vulnerabilities. It was a reminder for me to be honest with my emotions, pains, and experiences. This was healing and has inspired me.”

- Stacy, Youth Speaks Participant
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>96%</td>
<td>Youth Speaks events helped them connect more to others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95%</td>
<td>Felt more inspired to write or create art after a Youth Speaks event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99%</td>
<td>Youth Speaks event had a positive effect on their mental health</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We helped them understand perspectives different from their own

We had a positive effect on their mental health

We bring value to their school that is different from other programs
OUR REACH

During the 2022-23 program year, we engaged:

- **9,018** youth engaged in local programming
- **7,000+** audience members got down with us at an event!
- **$80,000** in stipends for youth artists
DIGITAL REACH

During the 2022-23 program year, we engaged:

20M REACHED
ON INSTAGRAM
19.6K Followers
Gained 8k+
in one year on
Youth Speaks &
Brave New Voices
profiles

4M VIEWS
ON TIKTOK
64.6K Followers
Gained 60K in
one year

2M VIEWS
ON YOUTUBE
259K Subscribers
“It’s the 21st century, we’re long past the time where we associate age with wisdom.”
- Yamini, age 16
So often when we talk about the future, the future itself is rarely in the conversation. Since 2006 (and the launch of our Speak Green campaign), Youth Speaks has applied our deep knowledge of youth culture and narratives to shift mindsets, transform policies and expand dignifying opportunities for Indigenous, Black, Latine, Pacific Islander, Asian American, Arab, immigrant and working class youth to bring us closer toward tangible transformation.

We’re committed to creating opportunities for leadership where youth learn cultural organizing principles and “culture change” skills to amplify their voices as leaders of artist-led systems change.

For a new generation of cultural leaders to live confidently and with hope depends our unwavering support of artists, whose applications of voice advance systems of interdependence, abundance and belonging. Our commitment to young people of our Future World includes the voices, stories, and lived experiences of young people among us whose expressions of survival have often been met with sentences of silence and civic abandonment.

We are excited to lead a broad-scale Youth Narrative Strategy for justice powered by the voices of young people—a movement where youth artists can enter the public policy domain as valuable purveyors of community-led change. And we’ve spent the last 27 years setting the stage for it to happen.
GLOBAL REACH

Top YouTube Cities

Nairobi, Kenya
New York, U.S.
Lusaka, Zambia
Pretoria, South Africa
Los Angeles, U.S.
Accra, Ghana
Chicago, U.S.
London, England
Kampala, Uganda
Sydney, Australia
Cape Town, South Africa
Toronto, Canada
Abuja, Nigeria
Melbourne, Australia
Houston, U.S.

Aiya “Youth Speaks Teen Poetry Slam Finals 2019”
232,000 Plays (1.1M all time)

Get Lit “Rape Joke”
144,000 Plays (7.2M all time)

Royalty “Letter To Your Flag”
107,000 Plays (1.5M all time)
A thank you from the Youth Speaks staff for making this past year incredible.
## Consolidated Statement of Financial Position

**July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023**

### Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash And Cash Equivalents</td>
<td>$659,837.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receivables</td>
<td>$3,189,739.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments, at Market Value</td>
<td>$3,406,226.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed Assets</td>
<td>$31,730.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property</td>
<td>$1,783,461.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepaid Expenses, Inventory Assets Deposits</td>
<td>$16,417.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$9,087,414.19</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Liabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$8,704,497.31</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Net Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Without Donor Restrictions</td>
<td>$4,674,645.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With Donor Restrictions</td>
<td>$3,837,953.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Net Assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$8,512,599.62</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Support & Revenue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributions &amp; Grants</td>
<td>$5,016,175.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fee-for-Service, Registration &amp; Ticket Sales</td>
<td>$159,923.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Assets Temporarily Restricted</td>
<td>$-3,456,369.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Assets Released from Restrictions</td>
<td>$1,231,259.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Support &amp; Revenue Before Gains on Investments &amp; Other Assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,950,987.93</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gain or Loss on Investment</td>
<td>$85,401.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Support</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3,036,389.64</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Operating Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programs</td>
<td>$1,979,830.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supporting Expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,812,380.98</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>$308,993.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>$50,979.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>$386,466.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities</td>
<td>$86,111.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Net Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Income</strong></td>
<td><strong>$224,008.66</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Financials are unaudited
“Youth Speaks is a force of nature. It is a powerful space within our democracy from which young people can fly bravely out into the world with new found voices...Youth Speaks is the beat of a generation, empowering young leaders who’ll take us through the years ahead in ways we can’t yet imagine.”

- Robert Redford, Actor & Philanthropist
Youth Speaks is proud to be a BIPOC-led, woman-led, immigrant-informed organization.

- **99%** of staff members identifies as BIPOC
- **57%** of our team identified as children of immigrants
- **71%** of our board identifies as BIPOC
TEAM

Michelle Lee  Joan Osaro  Stephanie Cajina  Darius Rashad Parker

Bijou McDaniel  Nick James  Sandy Vazquez  Paola Ramírez

Kaylé Barnes  Gretchen Carvajal  Aleah Bradshaw  Leticia Guzman

Vania Luna Gutierrez  Annie Jupiter-Jones  Bridgette Yang  Jose Portillo  Maximiliano Urruzmendi

England Smith  Kat Evasco  Perla Barraza  Moira E. Pirsch  Tierra Lu
As we embrace resist
the future the present the past
we work we struggle we begin we fail

to understand to find to unbraid to accept to question
the grief the grief the grief the grief
we shift we wield we bury
into light as ash

across our faces

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...THE NEXT GENERATION SPEAKS FOR ITSELF