

# Mockingbird Times

Youth Leadership. Youth Voice.

Follow us online: [mockingbirdsociety.org](https://www.mockingbirdsociety.org)

20 Years of IMPACT  
The Mockingbird Society™

## VOICES OF CHANGE

### content

2020 Youth Leadership Summit page 1

Imagine your Community Without Police by Wesley Stewart page 1

Letter from the Editor by Annie Blackledge page 2

The Legacy of Slave Patrols by Brianna Franco page 2

A Never-Ending Cycle by Alyssa Downing page 4

History of Policing and Racism by Ezra Alem page 3

Devoted to Me by Heaven Calvert page 4

Why Advocacy Matters by Victoria Gredics page 4

### staff reporters



### Stay Connected

@Mb\_society  
The Mockingbird Society  
[mockingbirdsociety.org](https://www.mockingbirdsociety.org)  
The Mockingbird Society

## 2020 Virtual Youth Leadership Summit

Despite the challenges of being unable to gather in person because of COVID-19, Mockingbird’s advocates remained passionate and determined to change the systems that impact their peers. Young people from across Washington state came together, virtually, to share their recommendations for reform. Their recommendations included considerations for improved family connections, legal representation for foster youth, and health care resources for those experiencing homelessness. Their voices get us one step closer to transforming foster care and ending youth homelessness.

### Reflection Question: How has COVID-19 affected the way you think about advocacy?

“To me, COVID is amplifying the ways our systems currently function — how people who are already pushed down by our systems are being negatively impacted the most. It is really upsetting to see, but also makes it easier to address and do advocacy work around. I think that is because the effect COVID-19 is having is undeniable, and people are starting to care more about the people being oppressed by our systems. Also, people are sort of forced to care because every single person is affected by COVID in one way or another.”  
**Emily Stochel, Tacoma Chapter**

“COVID-19 has highlighted how advocacy isn’t a part-time activity. Even while we are separated, we should stand in solidarity, and fight for equity and justice for all!”  
**Wesley Stewart, Network Representative**



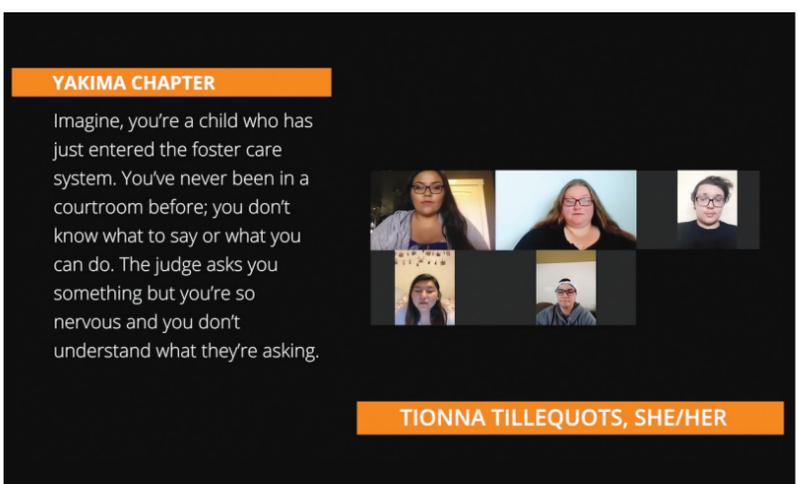
## Imagine Your Community Without Police

On your way home from work, you see a disheveled woman dangerously wandering in the street. You pull over and call 911. The operator informs you that an MHD (Mental Health Department) vehicle is responding to the incident. Within minutes, two field medics trained in mental health, de-escalation, and basic medical care are on the scene. They quickly manage the crisis and begin to help the woman find long-term care. You continue your drive home knowing that she’s safe.



At home, your child tells you about one of their classmates. They’ve been falling asleep in class and sometimes wear the same clothes multiple

days per week. Sometimes they get into fights after school or have difficulty making or keeping friends, and you suspect there might be problems at home. After dinner, you call the CC (Community Cohesion) phoneline. An automated message asks you whether you’re from Seattle or other parts of King County, calling for an adult or child, whether your call is about (1) a domestic disturbance, (2) public health concern, (3) housing need, or (4) other. You press (1) and leave a brief message stating your observations, worries, and any details you can remember about the



Advocates from the Yakima Chapter explain the need for legal representation for all youth in care in Washington state.

### How was your experience different in a virtual format?

“Having our first virtual Summit made me think about this quote from comic Calvin and Hobbes, “I think we dream so we do not have to be apart so long. If we are in each other’s dreams, then we can play together all night.” Summit was stressful, but it was really fun — especially the game night. And I met quite a few people that I hope I can continue to have a relationship with in a friendly way.”  
**Olivia Drinkwine, Seattle Chapter Leader**

### What our audience said:

“I am so very grateful for all the young people involved in the Mockingbird Chapters. This Summit is the highlight of my work year — every year. We learn so much from you, honor your lived experiences, and are committed to working with you to achieve the objectives you define.” **Jim Bamberger, Director, Office of Civil Legal Aid**

“Will continue to be supportive and willing to take on the change and the support in the Senate! It is critically important if inequities are going to be solved. Thanks for your voices!” **Sen. Claire Wilson**

“This [Summit] been amazing as usual. You all always hit the nail on the head and are addressing very practical issues that get in the way of success. I am in support of all the proposals I have heard. Thank you.”

**Melinda Giovengo, Executive Director, YouthCare**

“We learn so much from you, honor your lived experiences, and are committed to working with you to achieve the objectives you define.”  
**Jim Bamberger, Director, Office of Civil Legal Aid**

student and where they live. The next morning you receive a text that summarizes your call and informs you a casefile has been created for follow-up.

A few days later, you’re on a walk and you notice a person asking folks for spare change for food. You quickly open the *NAb-FoodS* app (Neighborhood Abundance & Food Security) on your phone. On the app you see there is a community farm just a few blocks from the park, and it looks like that location is a Community Cohesion hub. After giving the person the few dollars you had on you, you offer to walk with them to find some food at the farm. Once there, they’re able to have a hot, healthy meal and a community member is helping them find transitional shelter. You’re curious about that Community Cohesion casefile, and you step away to access the

see *Imagine*, continued on page 4

## shout outs!

Every quarter the Mockingbird Youth Network highlights a few chapter members' accomplishments



Congratulations to Isabelle Owens for receiving her diploma! We can't wait to see what she will achieve next!



Shout out to Dakota M. becoming the newest Leader! So glad to have

## our team

### Senior Management

Annie Blackledge, *Executive Director*  
 Fernando Clara, *Director of Practice Innovation*  
 Hickory Gateless, *Deputy Director*  
 Beth Harvey, *Director of Finance & Administration*  
 Phyllis Sutton, *Director of Youth Programs*  
 Liz Trautman, *Director of Public Policy & Advocacy*

### Staff

Ileana Areiza, *Youth Programs Manager*  
 Katherine Bicknell, *Development & Communications Coordinator*  
 Hayley Bridwell, *Family Programs Manager*  
 Emma Embleton, *Administrative Coordinator*  
 Juli Forman, *Grants & Evaluations Manager*  
 Lauren Frederick, *Public Policy & Advocacy Manager*  
 Sarah Kurtzman, *Accounting Coordinator*  
 Leah Nguyen, *Youth Development Manager*  
 Amy Nickum, *Executive Assistant*  
 Natalie Pond, *Donor Engagement Coordinator*  
 Amanda Sandoval, *Public Policy Coordinator*

### Regional Engagement Coordinators

Charles Adkins, *Everett*  
 Arick Erechar, *Spokane*  
 Brianna Fenske, *Tacoma*  
 Bekah Manikowski, *YAEH & Seattle*  
 Rinn Cronin Kleinman, *Olympia*  
 Jade Tillequots, *Yakima*

### Network Representatives

Ezra Alem, *Network Representative*  
 Alyssa Downing, *Network Representative*  
 Brianna Franco, *Network Representative*  
 Avrey Tuttle, *Network Representative*  
 Wesley Stewart, *King County Network Representative*

### Interns/Volunteers

Shazia Ansari, *Database Volunteer*

Design: Poetica Design

## about us

The Mockingbird Society's mission is to transform foster care and end youth homelessness. We create, support, and advocate for racially equitable, healthy environments that develop and empower young people at risk of — or who are experiencing — foster care or homelessness. Working in partnership with young people with lived experience, we change policies and perceptions standing between any child and a safe, supportive and stable home. We envision each young person, regardless of race or individual experience, reaching adulthood with an equitable opportunity to thrive. The *Mockingbird Times* is a key component of our youth development program, the Mockingbird Youth Network. All youth reporters are paid employees, and contributors from across the country receive up to \$25 for published works. The *Times* is distributed nationally to more than 20,500 through our mailing list and as an insert in *Real Change*, a Seattle-based community newspaper. As a nonprofit organization, we appreciate your private contributions to support our youth and family programs. Donate online, by phone, or mail.

The Mockingbird Society, 2100 24th Ave S, Ste 240, Seattle, WA 98144  
 www.mockingbirdsociety.org  
 206.323.5437 (KIDS)  
 information@mockingbirdsociety.org

No part of the *Mockingbird Times* may be reproduced without written permission. All content copyright ©2020, The Mockingbird Society.

## Letter from the Executive Director



Annie Blackledge  
Executive Director

The events of this year have forced us to evaluate our values and consider how best to move forward. We are experiencing a national reckoning, one that amounts to a pivotal moment in our history. And within our grasp lies the opportunity for change. At Mockingbird, we know that the best way to create lasting change is to include the voices of those most impacted in the solution. Recently, Mockingbird's youth advocates came together virtually and shared their vision for reform at our 15th annual Youth Leadership Summit. Even though they could not be together in person, these leaders remained steadfast in their commitment to transforming the systems that impact their peers.

Each Chapter proposal contained themes of community and connection — themes that are especially applicable in a time when most of us are feeling isolated. These feelings of isolation are not new to Mockingbird's young people, as they have all experienced foster care and/or homelessness. In this moment, I am struck by how relevant their solutions are for our greater society.

Most especially, our Network Representative team has asked our partners to commit to reduce the interactions between young people and police. Nationwide, we know that



**System Reform**  
Brianna Franco

# The Legacy of Slave Patrols



Brianna Franco

*[patroller's name], do swear, that I will as searcher for guns, swords, and other weapons among the slaves in my district, faithfully, and as privately as I can, discharge the trust reposed in me as the law directs, to the best of my power. So help me, God.* — Slave Patroller's Oath, North Carolina, 1828.

History tells us that the United States police force originated during the age of slavery. The job of these first police was "slave patrol". These slave patrols were formed in the South and gained momentum due to the constant fear of slave rebellions. Their duty was pretty straightforward—patrol the enslaved population. According to historian Gary Potter, there were three main functions of the slave patrols: "(1) to chase down, apprehend, and return to their owners, runaway slaves; (2) to provide a form of organized terror to deter slave revolts; and, (3) to maintain a form of discipline for slave-workers who were subject to summary justice, outside the law."

How one became a part of slave patrol differed throughout the colonies; some

25% of young people who have been in foster care become involved with the justice system within two years of exiting, and almost a third will experience homelessness. Increased involvement with law enforcement due to a lack of resources creates a larger barrier for young people who already have the deck stacked against them. The Network Representatives are advocating for the reduction of funding from these systems and reinvestment into community solutions that are influenced by those most impacted.

The call to defund the police has drawn both attention and controversy. However, it is the correct conversation for us to have. "Defund the police" is not a call to abolish police entirely; it is a call to reallocate and redirect funds away from the police department to other agencies and community services. The premise is simple — law enforcement should not be the first response when the community need is for resources.

The recurring economic recessions our country has experienced over the last several decades is the root of this systemic issue. The resulting budgetary cuts have hit disenfranchised communities the hardest. They are disproportionately impacted because community programs that help those in need tend to be eliminated first. This leaves us with a situation in which police are the only remaining option. Many of these circumstances are outside the scope of law enforcement training and expertise. Often, the needs of a community could be better met by those services that have been cut.

Given that the majority of 911 calls are nonviolent in nature, the skillsets of police

officers are often out of line with the needs of those in crisis. The solution to this problem must come from within the communities experiencing over-policing, and they must be guided by the voices and input of those demanding change. Perhaps we reallocate this funding to mental health and substance abuse programs, or towards an increase in social workers and crisis response teams. Education services and job placement go a long way toward combating homelessness — a pervasive problem that police are often tasked with, even though their involvement often exacerbates the issue for those experiencing it.

Government is more effective and reaches its intended potential if we — the people — remain steadfast in our engagement. We need to come together and cross the artificial lines that separate us to lay a foundation for lasting change. Our focus must be on how to deliver these changes, and we must have the resolve to do so. Let us commit as a community to keep a firm grasp on this moment. Let's ensure that request made by our youth advocates to reallocate funding does not go unheard or unheeded. We can overcome these challenges together. It is in our power to ensure that our future is one of triumph for our young people and those who are most affected in our community. Our efforts must be built on the idea that ALL people deserve to live in a community that offers meaningful opportunities to thrive. ■

In Community,

Annie Blackledge  
Executive Director

had their local militias recruit from their rosters of white young men. Other colonies recruited from a list of landowners ranging from the lower-class to wealthy, and included women who were given the chance to fill the role or pick a male to step in on her behalf.

Slave patrols contributed to the violence that enslaved African Americans experienced. Whites were compelled to serve in these patrols by local authorities as it was considered a "civic duty," which could result in a fine if not fulfilled. In some cases, patrollers were compensated financially for the work they did. They enforced curfews, checked for travelers' permission passes, rounded up those who were traveling without passes, and prevented any form of organized resistance.

As historian Sally Hadden writes in her book, *Slave Patrols: Law and Violence in Virginia and the Carolinas*, "The history of police work in the South grows out of this early fascination, by White patrollers, with what African American slaves were doing. Most law enforcement was, by definition, White patrolmen watching, catching, or beating Black slaves". Slave patrols trace back to as early as 1704 in South Carolina.

We know that slavery officially ended for all slaves in 1865 (as some were freed in

1863), but just because they were no longer called "slave patrols," their design and purpose were baked into the police forces that emerged after the Civil War. Southern police forces implemented similar tactics including systemic surveillance, curfews, and notions of who could become a police officer. We are still actively seeing white individuals "policing" Black lives and their actions with deadly consequences. Ahmaud Arbery was 25-years-old, when he was innocently killed in February after being chased by two armed men who told police he looked like a burglary suspect as he was going for a jog. This is an example of this "policing" Whites continue to engage in today.

"Though law enforcement looks very different today, the profession developed from practices implemented in the colonies." — [lawenforcementmuseum.org](http://lawenforcementmuseum.org) ■

leuman for  
YAEH Chapter  
re you on the team!



A huge thank you to Esther Taylor for facilitating this year's Youth Leadership Summit! She did an incredible job.

## Summit Chapter Proposals

### Seattle Chapter:

**Topic:** Improve homeless youth caseworker retention by reducing paperwork.

### Tacoma Chapter:

**Topic:** Address racial disproportionality and other systemic biases within Child Protective Services with an equity toolkit that includes youth voice.

### Olympia & Spokane Chapters:

**Topic:** Improve family connections for children and youth in foster care through centralization, data collection and virtual visits. This includes those with siblings placed in other systems.

### Everett Chapter:

**Topic:** Establish an intergovernmental task force to identify the barriers and gaps Native youth face in accessing state services.

### Youth Advocates Ending Homelessness:

**Topic:** Ensure hygiene and wound care resources for youth and young adults experiencing homelessness after discharge from hospitals and clinics.

### Network Representatives:

**Topic:** Address police brutality by removing power and funding from the criminal justice system and reallocate funds to community solutions informed by those most impacted.

### We Welcome Your Work

We welcome submissions of articles, poetry, artwork, and photography from our young readers who have experience in the foster care system and/or homelessness. If you want to be, or have been, published in the Mockingbird Times visit [mockingbirdsociety.org](http://mockingbirdsociety.org), call us at (206) 407-2134 or email us at [youthprograms@mockingbirdsociety.org](mailto:youthprograms@mockingbirdsociety.org).

Note: Incoming letters to the editor and correspondence to youth under 18 years should be addressed to the Mockingbird Times and will be opened first by adult editorial staff.

Black people and other people of color. If we invested in Black communities and stop using coded racist language to describe them, it would lessen the opportunity gap between communities. The government should be paying more attention to developing communities of poverty, rather than oppressing them.

We can do this by defunding the police and prisons, limiting military spending, and managing the salaries of politicians. This money should be more focused on citizens and communities. I can imagine some people will view this as

[see History, continued on page 4](#)



### System Reform Alyssa Downing

# A Never-Ending Cycle



Alyssa Downing

Seattle police performed 93 sweeps of homeless camps. That's nearly one per day. These sweeps usually involve forcibly removing people from the area, arresting them if they don't comply, and confiscating or outright destroying any items left behind.

For larger camps, police are required to give 72 hours' notice before they sweep an area, but the majority of these sweeps are performed on smaller encampments, where there are little to no regulations on what the police are allowed to do. Even then, people's belongings are often separated from them. When you're homeless, a simple tent and sleeping bag are luxuries, and it's difficult to replace them.

This is part of a tactic the city of Seattle

People experiencing homelessness are no strangers to police violence, even here in Seattle. According to *The Seattle Times*, in the first four months of 2019

calls "Clean and Hold," where the police will "clean" an area of people experiencing homelessness (which implies they are inherently dirty, of course), and then "hold" the area. Holding an area means patrolling it to make sure more people experiencing

**"If you have fines you can't pay, they turn into warrants, and if you get picked up with a warrant, you end up in jail. If you get released, you still have no resources. If you had stuff at a shelter somewhere, it's gone."**

homelessness don't show up. If these sound like tactics a military would use to expel foreign invaders to you, you're not the only one.

Encampments aside, laws are often enforced disproportionately for people experiencing homelessness. For instance, it's illegal in Seattle to sit on sidewalks in commercial areas, like University Way in the University District. In practice, however, people sit on the sidewalks all the time with no repercussions. But, if they have a large backpack, dirty clothes, or a lot of change, they'll be taken aside by police, their IDs checked for warrants, and then fined when they can't pay.

Seattle also has aggressive panhandling laws, that are incredibly open to interpretation by law enforcement. Simply asking someone for change for the bus, depending on what you look like, could get you fined or arrested. This is especially true for black and brown people, who are often coded as being more aggressive.

This all adds up in the end. If you have fines you can't pay, they turn into warrants, and if you get picked up with a warrant, you end up in jail. If you get released, you still have no resources. If you had

a job, it has now fallen through. If you had stuff at a shelter somewhere, it's gone. You start over, and the cycle continues.

Penalizing people for being homeless doesn't stop them from being homeless. In fact, it does the opposite. If we stop giving people fines they can't pay or arresting them for sleeping on a bench, and instead connect these people with services and make sure they get the help they need, we can finally start solving the problem and reduce the number of folks who are unhoused. It starts with people standing up for human rights, and taking funding from

[see Cycle, continued on page 4](#)



### System Reform Ezra Alem

# History of Policing and Racism

To this day we are taught that the narrative of Black history is something to be seen as negative. We are taught little about powerful and influential people of color. We were taught to remember the bad things that happened to the Black community. We know about slavery. And how an entire people were oppressed simply because of their darker skin color. ed all over the world because of slavery and oppression. Sadly, we are not fully aware of Black history outside of these circumstances.

Looking back at American history, certain times cause some of us to cringe. Others view those times as evidence that they were somehow better than another ethnicity. Let's take for example the famous 1861 speech by Confederate Vice President Alexander H. Stephens, called the Cornerstone Speech. He declared that the new government was founded on the idea that the white race was superior. In the following decades, there were a great deal of Black politicians, doctors, and leaders. Yet, white Americans did not like the idea of Black people having power. In the "Democrat Handbook", there was a paragraph that claimed that this country was a white man's country and should be governed by whites only.

Many scholars describe how the criminal legal system was created to keep people

of color, specifically African Americans, oppressed through this avenue of structural racism. have described how the creation of the criminal legal system was mainly to

**"It is not the fault of the negro that he is here, and he is not to be punished for being here; but this is a white man's country and white men must control and govern it."**

*Quote from The Democratic Hand Book, 1898, exemplifying the pervasive white supermacy at the turn of the century.*

keep people of color, specifically African Americans, oppressed through this avenue of structural racism. Today, there are many systematic forms of oppression, specifically implemented to oppress Black communities. Examples include mass incarceration and limited support for health and mental health. Resources for housing, education, and employment are limited in Black communities, resulting in corresponding negative results.

To this day, we see the effects of this structural racism, both subtly and openly. Myths about the danger and superhuman

strength of Black bodies that originated with chattel slavery creates fear. This fear, combined with the responsibility some feel to keep Black people 'in their place', results in violence against Black people. This is especially true when that violence is enacted by police forces. Somehow, justice is never served equally for those who have suffered at the hands of the government.

Capitalism further complicates these dynamics. While there is an understandable drive to be successful and live out the "American dream," we can't forget that capitalism is built on profiting from the suffering of others. I understand the drive to be successful and live out the American dream, but capitalism is built on profiting from people's suffering. The court system profits from criminal justice. And criminal justice often plays into the fear, resulting in higher incarceration rates for Black people. It is scary to be a person of color and walk around town with the constant threat of being treated as a criminal because of this ignorance.

There are a lot of reasons why some communities are not doing as well as others. The language that we use to describe neighborhoods is one of those reasons. Neighborhoods and schools are described as 'good' when there is an absence of Black people, and 'bad' when there is a majority of

## blog bar

Youth voice is the voice of change. Their voices speak out against inherently racist policies and demand that we institute meaningful change to all the systems of oppression to Black, Brown, and indigenous communities. They are showing us we are not without agency to change the structure and institutions that govern our lives. They are reminding us that we, the people, are the government." — Annie Blackledge, Executive Director



### Art in Action Heaven Calvert

#### Devoted to Me

Devoted to Me  
My hips are big,  
and round.  
They are not pretty,  
nor ugly.  
They are hips,  
they are devoted to supporting me  
as hips are supposed to.

My hips connect to a pair of legs,  
strong, short, thick legs



### Power of One Victoria Gredics

# Why Advocacy Matters



Victoria Gredics

One of my aspirations is to become an investigative journalist reporting on social injustices. Originally from Florida, I am now a Chapter Leader in Olympia for the Mockingbird Society. I decided to join the Mockingbird Society to encourage equity and inclusion, and to increase the opportunities available for young people who have experienced foster care or homelessness. I believe giving young people an equitable start will provide better social and economic outcomes for everyone.

I grew up as the proverbial "black sheep" and experienced some homelessness due to emotional cutoff and abandonment. Many young people who experience foster care or

that are devoted to carrying me where I need to go.

My legs connect to my ankles.  
As determined as they are to twist,  
they are also devoted to carrying me.

Above my hips is my stomach.  
It's not remarkable and yet  
everyone has something to say about it.  
It's big, it's round, and  
It is entirely devoted to digesting the  
nutrients I need to live.

Above my stomach is my center, my heart.

My heart has experienced pain,  
And aches so intense I thought I was  
dying,  
I wished I was dying,

But it is utterly devoted to keeping me alive.

Connected to my center are a pair of arms,  
they aren't long or strong,  
but they're devoted to allowing me to create  
and carry my life.

Above my center is my face,  
emotive, free, mine.  
Devoted to letting me express myself.

Finally there is my brain,  
Intelligent, creative, hard-working.  
My brain doesn't fit in a neat little box,  
It is devoted to me being me. ■

### Race Equity Vision

The Mockingbird Society will define racially equitable partnerships, practices, and processes. Mockingbird has an internal culture dedicated to addressing racial inequity and intersectionality for ourselves and those we serve.

### Race Equity Mission

The Mockingbird Society is committed to actively creating racial equity and eliminating the negative impact of intersectionality in our work by embodying the changes we want to see.

homelessness never heal from those feelings of abandonment because they are never given the opportunity to do so. I aim to use my personal power to help others that

root problems that keep young people from succeeding. I want to bring about change in the system and believe this can be achieved through inclusion and connection.

has impacted family visitations. We proposed administrative changes to improve family visitations and that will help to build family connections. Without maintaining connections with family while in foster care, a child can feel so abandoned that they will develop coping mechanisms that are maladaptive to their growth. This inhibits the blossoming life we want all young people to have.

When in-person visitation is possible, it is challenging for many young people to get even the bare minimum of one weekly visit with their siblings or parents. To identify the best way to combat these challenges, we are asking the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) to collect and evaluate data in order to learn how disabilities, race/ethnicity, and age effect the frequency of visitation.

We also advocated for DCYF to provide more support for hard-working social workers by contracting an external organization to assist with organizing family visitation, and to provide a more nurturing visitation environment. As for COVID-19, we understand that social worker availability has been reduced and visitation has been negatively impacted. But we stand firm in our resolve to help youth maintain family connections, and we will work hard to bring about these improvements. I am excited for the changes that are to come and extremely grateful to be part of a team of young leaders advocating for change. ■

**Many young people who experience foster care or homelessness never heal from those feelings of abandonment because they are never given the opportunity to do so. I aim to use my personal power to help others that require healing and help them to move on to adulthood successfully**

require healing and help them to move on to adulthood successfully. I am here to ensure everyone has an equal chance at success, and to make sure everyone gets the support they need to get there.

It is crucial to give a developing young person love and support so they can grow and be exceptional in a society that sometimes ostracizes those with different experiences and backgrounds. Everyone needs engagement and healthy relationships to flourish. As a young adult, I will work my hardest to identify solutions that address the

I recently participated in my first Youth Leadership Summit, where young advocates from across Washington state presented our proposals for reform in the child welfare and homelessness systems. The Olympia and Spokane Chapters focused on mitigating the challenges of in-person visitations with siblings and parents for youth in foster care.

We identified important obstacles such as short visitation times, a lack of support for families with disabilities, uncomfortable visitation environments, and how COVID-19

### Imagine, from page 1

public computer. It looks like someone has already followed-up, and you're confident everything will be resolved. Another community member offers you a few fresh fruits before you head back home.

The following week, you're at home watching the news. It's all good news. You hear petty theft and burglaries are at all-time lows, and that a flu outbreak was contained to one school and a few neighborhood blocks. Also, 500 new units of affordable housing have been built near the zero-emissions Rapid Ride bus line. Suddenly, you recognize a familiar face — it's the woman from the street! It seems her family reported her missing two months ago, and her rescue has led to the prosecution

of her abusers. Your phone rings. It's your city district's Office of Community Cohesion. After a visit to the student's home, they found a single parent was struggling to work multiple jobs and support their child after school. After some outreach, the family was connected to dozens of single-parent and multi-parent households that could provide daycare, car-pooling, and study groups. The family wanted to thank you for watching out for them and extended an invitation to stay connected. You happily accept.

If we prioritize the needs of people over the protection of property, a world without police is possible. ■

### Cycle, from page 3

bloated, unnecessary, and unhelpful systems (like the police), and putting it in the hands of people who need it most. ■

### History, from page 3

socialism, and I know many people disagree with socialism. But the funny thing is, many don't see it as socialism to seek out financial government assistance to survive this pandemic. In the end, we all need help. Capitalism, and the systemic racism it is built upon, is hurting more people than it is helping. We need a better system, one that supports people. We need to fight for what is right, because our lives are important and worth more than money. ■