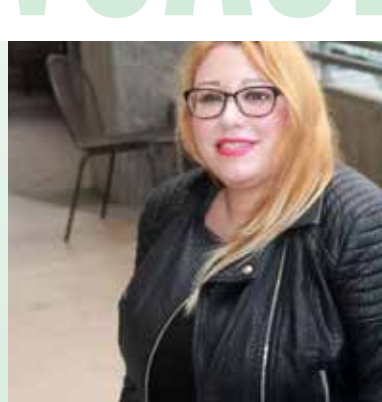




2016 PROJECT VOICE PHOTOGRAPHY SHOWCASE



Project Voice is one of the youth programs offered through the Leataata Floyd Student and Family Community Center at Leataata Floyd Elementary School. Established in 2015, The Center provides mental and behavioral health support and counseling, academic assistance, parent and youth leadership training, creative arts, and other enrichment programming. The Center is operated in partnership by Mercy Housing California, the school and the Sacramento City Unified School District in order to serve students and parents of Leataata Floyd Elementary and youth from the surrounding community.

Project Voice is an after-school youth development program that empowers young women to be leaders and social advocates in their community. Through project-based learning and youth-led research assignments, Project Voice inspires young people to explore and solve real problems.

Building off their inaugural photography project showcase at Sacramento's Crocker Art Museum in February 2015, the students of Project Voice interviewed and photographed residents living in public and affordable housing in Sacramento and San Francisco. Their goal was to give a voice to these residents and share their stories. Over the past year, the students learned how to develop a research plan, create an interview protocol, and conduct meaningful interviews.

The following photo captions are excerpts from interviews with residents of Mercy Housing California affordable housing communities and residents of two public housing sites, Sunnydale in San Francisco and Marina Vista/Alder Grove in Sacramento. Mercy Housing has been working in Sunnydale and Marina Vista/Alder Grove as a part of Choice Neighborhood Initiatives and Neighborhood Transformations.

Through the photographs and resident interviews, the student photographers hope to promote dialogue, build bridges, strengthen community, teach the value of listening, and advocate for healthy affordable housing communities. The product of their time and effort is presented in this photo catalog.



TABLE OF CONTENTS



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	4
RESIDENT PROFILES	5
James	5
Lafu	6
Patricia	7
Larry	8
Shana	9
Rashawn	10
Jerry	11
Maurice	12
Marcus	13
Sandra	14
Maresa	15
Shay	16
Maiu'u-Sam	17
Wanda	18
Mara	19
PROJECT VOICE STUDENT RESEARCHERS	20-21
PROJECT VOICE TEAM	22
THANK YOU	23



2016 PROJECT VOICE PHOTOGRAPHY SHOWCASE

Congratulations to the students of Project Voice! Once again, you have created a thought-provoking photography showcase that challenges us to rethink the way we view public and affordable housing. Your beautiful art, your passion, and your commitment to social change continues to inspire us all.

On behalf of Project Voice, I would like to thank our friends, families, and loved ones for supporting us. I would also like to thank Alexis Armstead, Jonathan Strack, Megan Mueller, Stefanie Hilder, Whitney Bonner, Sister Mary Waskowiak, and the Sisters of Mercy for volunteering their time to assist the students of Project Voice.

Furthermore, I would like to acknowledge the Residents of 1028 Howard, 7th and H Street Apartments, Alder Grove, Bayview Hill Gardens, Marina Vista, and Sunnydale for participating in our research project and trusting Project Voice with their stories.

Lastly, I would like to extend a special note of gratitude to our donors and generous sponsors: Mercy Foundation, Kelly Foundation, Teichert Foundation, Bayside Church Midtown, University of California, Davis, Mercy Retreat Center, Kira Lauren Photography, and the Sierra Health Foundation.

With thanks and appreciation,

Ashlei Hurst
Resident Services Manager | Project Voice Director
Mercy Housing California



JAMES

*SUNNYDALE
San Francisco, California*

*Research: Tamaya Johnson
Photography: Elvira Huitt-Carney &
Tamaya Johnson*

"I hope to see a better life. I hope people stop going to jail, and getting killed. I hope my kids won't have to go through what I have gone through. I feel I am the hope, and I hope people look forward to seeing me. I hope they see me in a positive manner, not as a negative role model . . . Bear is my nickname, and I hope people look forward to seeing Bear."



LAFU

SUNNYDALE
San Francisco, California

Research: Brijae' Young
Photography: Kelaija Bolling

"I want to become a CPA later on in the future, and I want to start something really focused for the senior residents. In order for us to make this a healthy community we have to get everybody involved, and seniors are one of the most important folks in this movement."



PATRICIA

♥ BAYVIEW HILL GARDENS
San Francisco, California

Research: Lordess Jackson &
Sammarria Hightower
Photography: Sammarria Hightower

"I hope that everyone in my community is happy, and I hope they get the help they need. I want them to be happy, and I hope God will bless them. Sometimes I cry because I care, and I see what they are going through because I went through it. CPS took my kids when they were a baby, and I had to struggle to feed them. It's hard for me you know, they never gave my kids back.



LARRY

SUNNYDALE
San Francisco, California

Research: Lordess Jackson &
Sammarria Hightower
Photography: Sammarria Hightower

"Oh, I got all kinds of hopes. Powerball where you at? That's my ultimate hope is to win the lottery. Other than that, man I got two sons, one twenty-three, one twenty. I want them to have the best life. I want all these youngsters to raise they kids, and be the best father they can be. Fathers really don't understand how important they are to their kid. The dad is really really important, you know. Especially when the streets is starting to pull 'em away."



SHANA

SUNNYDALE
San Francisco, California

Research & Photography: Brijae' Young

"Well, I write. I am a writer. I just wrote three plays. My hope is to get them produced with somebody like Ice Cube or Tyler Perry, you know, so I can make my way outta here, because that's all I've got. I don't know what else to do. I'm not the smartest person you've ever met, but I'm not the dumbest either. You know, and all I wanna do is to try to make it up outta here one day... with my life and my daughter intact."



RASHAWN

SUNNYDALE
San Francisco, California

Research: Lordess Jackson &
Sammarria Hightower
Photography: Sammarria Hightower

"I really want to move out of here. I have been here all my life, but it is kinda hard cause I'm trying to make progress. I'm really not making enough money this year, but I'm trying to move out."



JERRY

SUNNYDALE
San Francisco, California

Research & Photography: Brijae' Young

"I got four kids, two girls, two boys. It's about my kids right now for me. Once they came into this world I was like, do I want 10 girlfriends? I know I don't want my daughter to be with somebody that's having nine other girlfriends. I had to change some things around."



MAURICE

"The whole point of life is growing and changing."

♥ BAYVIEW HILL GARDENS
San Francisco, California

Research: Lordess Jackson &
Sammarria Hightower
Photography: Sammarria Hightower



MARCUS

*SUNNYDALE
San Francisco, California*

*Research: Lordess Jackson &
Sammarria Hightower
Photography: Sammarria Hightower*

"From what I know, I was pretty much born into this... From my grandma's generation to my mom; it's pretty much been in the projects. My hopes for the community? Remodel it. Rebuild it. Get it together."



SANDRA

SUNNYDALE

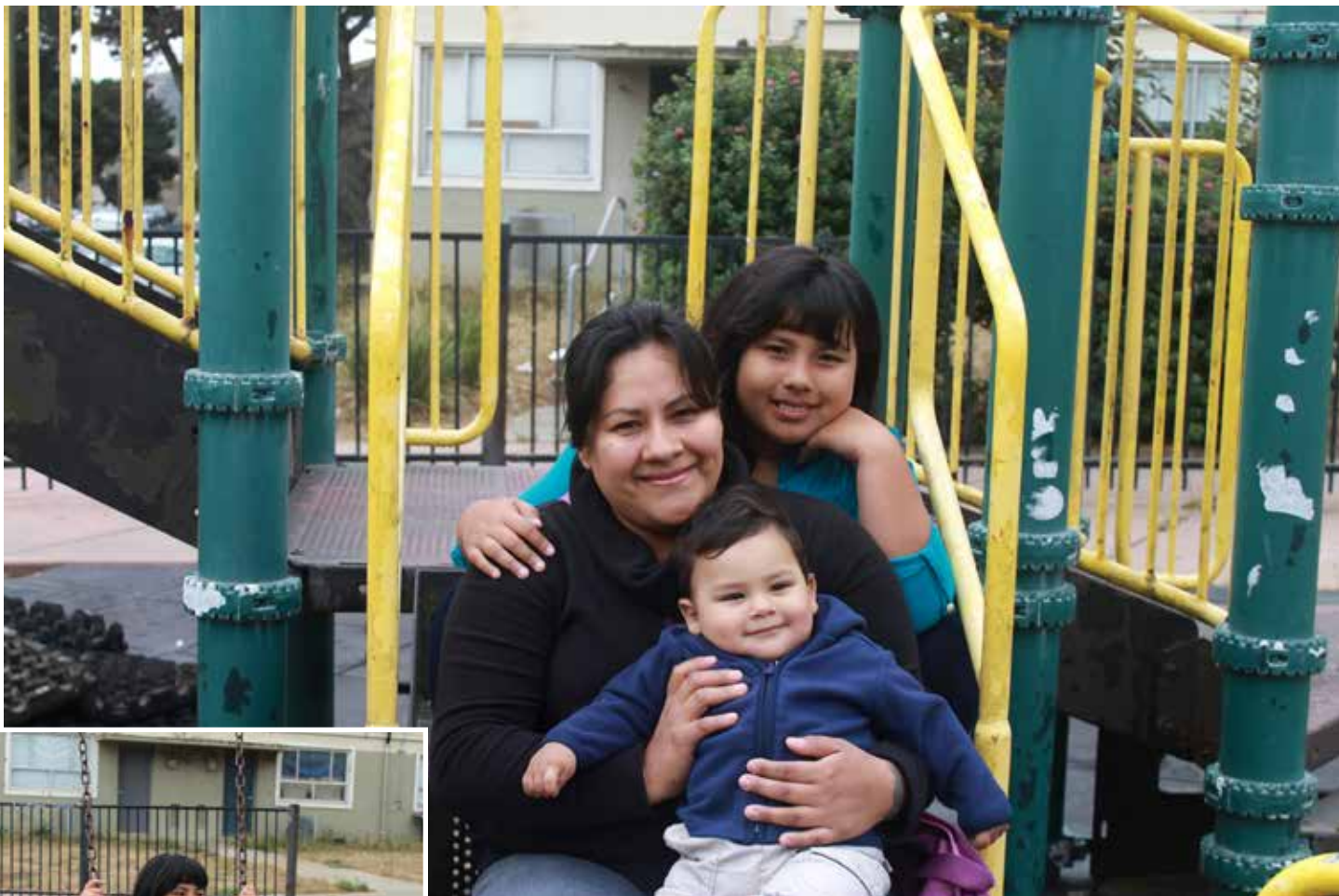
San Francisco, California

Research: Lordess Jackson &

Sammarria Hightower

Photography: Sammarria Hightower

"I'm keeping my fingers crossed. It's [the redevelopment of Sunnydale public housing community] been a long time coming. It's supposedly been going on for 40 years. I feel like this change is coming. I'm waiting to move into new housing. These buildings have been here since WWII, think about that. I have pictures of my mom sitting on the hill in diapers. My mom's almost 56."



MARESA

SUNNYDALE
San Francisco, California

Research: Lordess Jackson &
Brijae' Young
Photography: Elvira Huitt-Carney

"En las tardes, en la mañana, los cuido ustedes, te llevo a la escuela, y en la tarde, me voy a trabajar, y, quisiera, algun día tener mi propia compania de limpieza de casa, y todo eso."

"In the afternoons, in the mornings, I take care of you guys [the kids] I take you [her daughter] to school, and in the afternoon, I go to work, and, I wish one day to have my own cleaning company, and all that."



SHAY

MARINA VISTA
Sacramento, California

Research & Photography: Sammarria Hightower

"In the future, I want to get my master's in nursing, and I hope to find the cure for mental illness."



MAIU'U-SAM

MARINA VISTA
Sacramento, California

Research & Photography: Tamaya Johnson

"The reason I became a teacher was to support and educate the students in my neighborhood. I understand that education is the great pathway out of poverty, and I am committed for the rest of my life to see kids from my neighborhood and all impoverished children attain a college degree."



WANDA

♥ 7TH & H STREET APARTMENTS
Sacramento, California

Research: Brijae' Young
Photography: Keyari Bizzle

"I'm trying to be healthy for myself because I've been through a lot; I've been through a whole lot. I just appreciate the building. I appreciate the people who are here running it, and I'm just glad I'm here . . . I'm trying to eat better and I got a little dog. Her name is Dido and she likes her name."



MARA

♥ 7TH & H STREET APARTMENTS
Sacramento, California

Research: Sammarria Hightower &
Elvira Huitt-Carney
Photography: Kelaija Bolling

"I would like to compose and produce my own music one day. I grew up playing classical and pop music on the piano. I want to get my own studio set up and get into all types of music genres: hip hop, indie, rock, etc. Playing music is my most memorable experience and accomplishment."



Brijae' Young

Brijae' Young is a junior at C.K. McClatchy High School. She lives in Alder Grove, a low-income housing neighborhood in Sacramento. Brijae' has been a consistent member of Project Voice for three years. She hopes to graduate high school, study medical science in college, and become a gynecologist. Most of all, she wants to make her mom proud and live life to the fullest. Brijae' loves to hang out with friends for fun, and listens to music on the weekends. Her favorite food is french fries, and her favorite music is R&B/ hip-hop. Her unique talent is her singing voice, and she loves to dance. In addition to Project Voice, Brijae' has interned at Bayside Midtown and volunteered at Leataata Floyd Elementary School.



Elvira Huitt-Carney

Elvira Huitt-Carney is a resident of the Marina Vista community in Sacramento, California. Elvira is a 16-year-old junior at Sacramento Charter High School, and has been a member of Project Voice since fall of 2015. Over the past year, Elvira and the other participants of Project Voice have been working on their photography project that highlights the positive stories of residents living in public and affordable housing. Elvira is really into makeup and being with her friends. She is good at making people smile and won't give up until she puts a smile on someone's face. In addition to participating in Project Voice, Elvira has interned at Bayside Midtown Church and volunteered at Leataata Floyd Elementary School.



Kelaija Bolling

Kelaija Bolling, a junior at C.K. McClatchy High school, is a resident of the Marina Vista community. She has participated in Project Voice for three years and presented her artwork at the Crocker Art Museum. She loves to read books and watch TV shows. Her unique talents are singing and playing instruments such as the piano, tenor saxophone, french horn, and tuba. She is very goofy, independent and fun. She loves fashion and 90s music. Her dreams are to love her flaws, share wisdom, and to care for others. She wants to show her uncle and grandma, who passed away, that she made it.



Sammarria Hightower

Sammarria Hightower is a junior at C.K. McClatchy High School. She lives in Seavey Circle also known as Marina Vista. She is a current member of Project Voice, and has participated in Project Voice since October 2014. This is Sammarria's second art showcase, the first was held in February 2015 at the Crocker Art Museum. Sammarria has high aspirations for herself, such as making her mother proud and accepting herself. Sammarria is a good listener and has an eye to see the good in people. She loves spending time with people, watching her favorite movie, Monsters Inc., and is gifted in creative arts. She spent time serving impoverished churches in Mexico, and was an intern for the past two summers for Bayside Church Midtown.



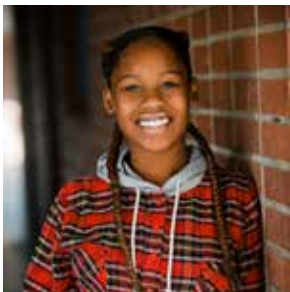
Keyari Bizzle

Keyari is a freshman at C.K. McClatchy High School, and lives in the Marina Vista community (also known as Seavey Circle). Keyari is new to Project Voice, and has been participating in the program since October 2016. Keyari is just like any other teenager, and loves to listen to loud music. She enjoys hearing the bass in her ears. During the hardest times, music helps her focus. Music helps her block out everyone and everything when needed. Keyari is an amazing hairstylist and loves to play with hair. In addition to loving hair, she also likes to draw. Keyari is striving to be a cosmetologist in the future, and hopes to own her own shop in Atlanta, Georgia. Keyari's main focus is making her dreams come alive, and she has promised herself that she will go after her dreams no matter what it takes.



Tamaya Johnson

Tamaya is a freshman at Sacramento City College and is a member of the track and field team. She lives in Marina Vista and has been a part of Project Voice since 2014. Tamaya hopes to receive a scholarship to UC Davis and plans to obtain a degree in Psychology and Sociology. After she graduates UC Davis, she would like to become a counselor. She intends to help people just like her counselors have helped her. Even though Tamaya may seem angry or emotionless at times, she loves talking to people, making new friends, and learning new things. She also loves throwing shot put, watching Netflix, and talking to her mom. She likes anything made with potatoes, music, sketching, and is happily employed at the new Golden 1 Center in downtown Sacramento.



Lordess Jackson

Lordess Jackson is 16 years old and goes to The Met High school. She has lived in Marina Vista for over a decade and started participating in Project Voice a little over two years ago. Lordess hopes to have a career in music. She plans to perform, produce music, and become a successful recording artist. Lordess likes to go out to eat, she loves to dance around, and sing. Lordess' most precious and unique talent is her personality; she gives off a warm and beautiful vibe. Over the past year, Lordess has worked with children in her community. She has worked at Leataata Floyd Elementary School, and last spring she took a trip to Mexico and taught the little niños and niñas about God.



Ashlei Hurst

Ashlei Hurst is a Resident Services Manager at Mercy Housing California, Site Coordinator of the Leataata Floyd Student and Family Community Center, and the founder of Project Voice. She is passionate about empowering youth, building community, and spreading hope. She loves working at Leataata Floyd Elementary School, and dreams of opening a comprehensive health and wellness center for youth and young adults. She enjoys traveling, frolicking around midtown Sacramento, dancing, and spending time with her friends and family.



Alexis Armstead

Alexis Armstead was born and raised in Sacramento, California. After attending Bible college in Lafayette, Louisiana, she returned to Sacramento to pursue a vocation in youth advocacy. She currently serves as the Middle School Director at Bayside Church Midtown. Outside of her work with students at Bayside Midtown, she finds great joy in serving her community, playing music, and being a part of the rich culture of the Sacramento region. She has a passion to see young people know their value and purpose and loves seeing those passions realized in the work happening at Project Voice the past year.



Megan Mueller

Megan Mueller is a UC Davis student pursuing a master's degree in Community Development. Her professional interests include youth development, public participation, and local and regional planning. Megan has been volunteering with Project Voice since June 2016 helping participants develop resumes and reflect on their time in the program. Megan enjoys incorporating creative expression into youth programming and has enjoyed taking part in Project Voice's Live in Hope showcase. After graduate school, Megan hopes to work on multi-stakeholder projects, curating dynamic conversations, and expanding public access in planning processes.



Stefanie Hilder

Stefanie Hilder is a licensed speech pathologist at Mercy General Hospital in Sacramento. She has been volunteering with Project Voice since the fall of 2015. Stefanie hopes to see the Project Voice students graduate from high school, and hopes to help the girls reach their future goals. She loves to travel around the world, race in triathlons, and go on long walks with Baer, her Boxer dog. Stefanie has volunteered locally and internationally through Bayside Midtown Church, and enjoys supporting youth and other organizations in her community.

THANK YOU!

Mercy Housing California offers its heartfelt thanks to the Sierra Health Foundation for making its facility available for the Project Voice Photography Showcase. In addition, we extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to the following donors, sponsors and volunteers whose generous gifts of financial support and time are furthering the work of the Leataata Floyd Student and Family Community Center and Project Voice:

Alexis Armstead
Elizabeth Axelgard
Tausha Balbiani
Leia Baraza
Kira Bautista
Bayside Church Midtown
Whitney Bonner
Jeannette Brantley
Steffan Brown
Suzanne Buckley
Lester Cabezas
Rebekah Coffman
Jake DaRosa
Kathleen DaRosa
Justin Davis
Christina Ellermeyer
Enterprise Community Partners
Leataata Floyd Elementary School
Staff
Jason Flynn
Renee Freidrich
Patsy Harney, RSM
Kevin Hatanaka
Judy Hawkins
Kimberlie Hicks
Stefanie Hilder
Tyson Hinshaw
Mimi Holtkamp
Kaiser Permanente Northern
California Community Benefits
Programs

Keller Williams
Kelly Foundation
Kira Lauren Photography
Mercy Foundation
Mercy Retreat Center
Marcella Mitchell
Rick Mode
Megan Mueller
Lillian Murphy, RSM
Alexandre Musskopf
Carmen Rodriguez, RSM
Sacramento City Unified School
District
Christopher Saizan
Tracy Saizan
Klint Sheridan
Ruby Shields
Geneva Smith
Jenny Smith
Jonathan Strack
Chad Talach
Daniel Tarantino
Teichert Foundation
Cara L. Torruellas
University of California, Davis:
Professor of Landscape
Architecture & Environmental
Design, Sheryl-Ann Simpson and
students Warwin Davis, Chris
Quintana, Diego Verduzco and
Melinda Wang

Connie Van Real Estate
Rhonda Warner
Mary Waskowiak, RSM

List as of November 16, 2016





2016 PROJECT VOICE PHOTOGRAPHY SHOWCASE

 **mercy**HOUSING

©2016 Project Voice: Mercy Housing California
All rights reserved

1276.03