

# Changemaker Experience

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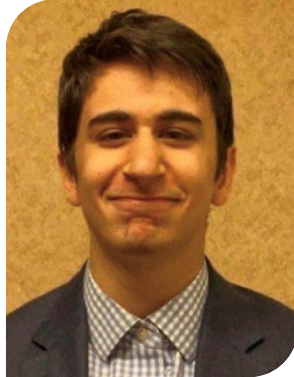


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# ND4Y Changemakers

The following section highlights 10 of our Changemakers. Meet ALL of the ND4Y Changemakers on the [website](#)





## Isabel Coronado

*I envision a future that treats public safety as an "everyone" issue. Not an "us vs. them" system.*

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- + Phoenix, Arizona
- + Research Scholar
- + Coordinator of the Family-Based Justice Center
- + ND4Y Legislative and Evaluation Group

## Accomplishments & Aspirations

- Coordinates the Family-Based Justice Center, a national technical-assistance center that helps localities, states, and tribal nations create programs to keep families together.
- Led the campaign to pass the FAMILIES Act, a federal bill that diverts parents from prison and provides their children with resources.
- Author of report covering federal, tribal, state and local policies that support children of incarcerated parents from arrest to reentry.
- Advocated at the 2022 White House Tribal Nations Summit for increased mental health support for systems-impacted youth.

“

I am a daughter of a formerly incarcerated mother, a citizen of the Mvskoke Nation, and a policy expert who is on a mission to bring awareness and solutions to the issues impacting children of incarcerated parents and the mass incarceration of Native people. I believe those most impacted should be at the center of creating change.

”

Meet ALL of the ND4Y Changemakers on the [website](#).







## **Marissa Howdershelt** **(They, Them)**

*I envision myself aiding the next generation of changemakers.. creating a more just world wherein folks basic needs are met, mutual aid is commonplace and mental health accessibility is easy and free.*

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- + **Chino Hills, California**
- + **New Deal for Youth Changemaker**
- + **University of California Riverside Graduate**

### **Accomplishments & Aspirations**

- **Major: Public Policy – Minor: Education.**
- **Organizing board member for a mutual aid organization located in San Bernardino, CA.**
- **Disability justice and mental health advocate who has worked with CLASP and Mental Health America.**
- **Keynote Speaker: Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs (August 2020).**

“ —

**I am most passionate about mental health advocacy, radical disability justice and a commitment to putting community first. I believe that all policy should be shaped around and inclusive of the community in which it serves. There is true power in community and a collective voice.**

— ”

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## **Jazmine Banks** **(They, Them)**

*I may have started at the back when it comes to this system race but my success will be in first place my ancestors will be proud of me.*

- + **Oakland, California**
- + **Activist**
- + **Beyond Survival**
- + **Public Awareness, Grassroots & Organizing, LAG, Legislative**

### **Accomplishments & Aspirations**

- **Day of Action in Washington, DC.**
- **Sharing my letter to my kids on the podcast.**
- **Start a non-profit that focuses on self care (hair, nails, make-up for youth in the juvenile and foster care system**
- **Obtain a probation officer certificate.**
- **Earn my cosmetology licenses.**

“

**You will get something wrong today, and tomorrow, and every day of your life. So will I, and everybody you know. You don't have a choice about being wrong sometimes: mistakes will be your life-long companion. But you do have a choice about whether to approach your error in terror so you suppress, ignore and repeat it — or to make it your honest, open ally in trying to get to the truth. - Johann Hari**

”

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- + **Detroit, Michigan**
- + **Mental Health Advocate**
- + **Grassroots, Advocacy, and Public Awareness**

### Accomplishments & Aspirations

- **Hill Day October 2022.**
- **Panelist at the Atlanta Event and speaking about Arab American representation and health.**
- **Meeting youth from across the nation who are passionate about change.**
- **Continue to learn about the struggles and obstacles that various communities in the U.S. endure.**
- **Learning to give myself grace and patience as I do with others.**
- **Strive to be an adult a younger me would be proud of.**

### Malaak Elhage

(She, Her)

*I envision a day when Middle Eastern/North African communities in the U.S. are recognized and are represented in various sectors of society.*

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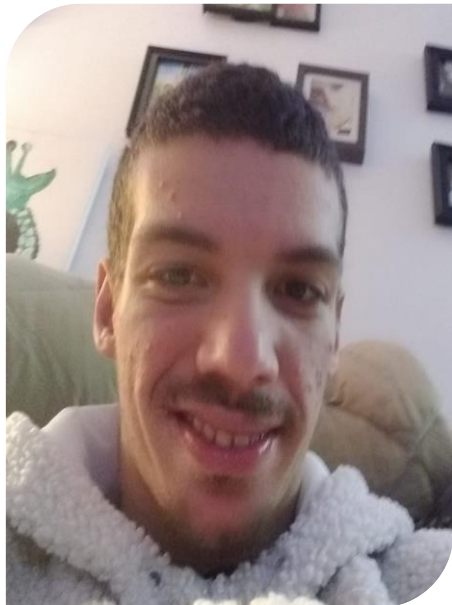
**Never a failure, always a lesson.**

أبدا فشل ، دائما درس



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- + Amherst, Massachusetts
- + Changemaker and Northeast Co-lead
- + Legislative Advocacy, Evaluation, Admin and Public Awareness

### Accomplishments & Aspirations

- Hill day meeting with officials.
- Admin panel during the week of action.
- Working with Changemakers in this amazing group.
- Becoming the best leader I can be.
- Earn my BA in public policy.
- Travel to new communities.

**Cody Rooney**  
(He, Him)

*Teamwork makes the dreamwork*

“

As a person with a disability and a leader I want to make waves and make change.

”



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**Joseph Yusuf**  
(He, Him)

- + Washington, DC
- + Changemaker
- + ND4Y Admin Group

### Accomplishments & Aspirations

- ND4Y Painting on The Mall.
- ND4Y Block Party in 2022.
- ND4Y Generating demands for The healing & well being of youth across the nation.
- Personal Goal 1 - Continue being the best Father I can be to my daughter.
- Personal Goal 2 - Continue my growth as a creative. I write, I produce, I create, and have plenty of reasons to dominate.

“ ——— | **The marathon continues...** | ——— ”  
- Nipsey Hussle



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- + Chicago, Illinois
- + Changemaker
- + Youth organizer
- + Grassroots & organizing

### Accomplishments & Aspirations

- DMV block party.
- Atlanta mural painting.
- Meeting all the change makers in person.
- Establish my own organization.
- Buy a house before I am 26 years old.
- Save at least 10k before September 2023.



### Meyiya Coleman (She, Her)

*I can't pour from a cup that is empty.  
I should always be kind to myself.  
Before I try to heal the world.*

“  
Everyday the sun won't shine ,but that's  
why I love tomorrow.  
”  
- Gloria Woods

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- + Los Angeles, California
- + Social Entrepreneur & Independent contractor
- + ND4Y Legislative Advocacy Group Co-chair, Evaluation and Community Building

### Accomplishments & Aspirations

- Outstanding Young Leader Award
- Associates in Sociology and Child Development
- California State University (Los Angeles) - Social Work
- Los Angeles Reproductive Health Equity Program Advisory Board
- Youth-Led Participatory Action Research
- She Ready Foundation



### Alexis Obinna (Queen, She, Her)

*Always Do What's Right*

“  
*Stand for Justice*  
”

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- + Bloomfield Township, Michigan
- + Democratic Socialists of America
- + Public Awareness Group, Evaluation Group

### Accomplishments & Aspirations

- Interviewed Changemakers on their ND4Y experience.
- Wrote and published an op-ed on President Biden's climate failures.
- Networked with interesting people from across the country.
- Writing and publishing more political op-eds.
- Continuing my involvement in policy advocacy both in America and abroad.

**Elias Khoury**  
(He, Him)

“Be the change you wish to see in the world.”

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## **Kadesha Mitchell** (She, Her)

*To all young adults and young people  
you are equipped where you are now!  
You have the knowledge to make a  
change.*

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- + **Maryland Southern Maryland**
- + **Changemaker + Young Adult Peer Support Specialist**
- + **Public Awareness + Grassroots & Organizing Team**

### **Accomplishments & Aspirations**

- Natcon Virtual Poster Session
- #Whywecantwait Podcast with Prevention Institute
- Supporting our homeless youth to gain access to mental health resources
- Become a High School Counselor for a Public School Alternative School
- Grow in my ministries and photography/creativity

“

**Bloom where you are planted.**

-Unknown

”

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- + Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
  - + Youth Advocate and Changemaker
  - + we REIGN
  - + Grassroots and Organizing
- Accomplishments & Aspirations**

- Having the opportunity to co-facilitate with remarkable organizers
- The ND4Y Week of Action. Meeting and conversing with so many like-minded, kindhearted, and incredible people was inspiring and an unbelievable experience.
- I have a goal to establish a transitioning home for young people ages 16-25.
- I hope to grow and develop into a person Black girls can look up to.

**Kayla Knight**  
(She, Her)

*I envision a world where there is no longer a need for activism or advocacy. A world where everyone is held.*

“

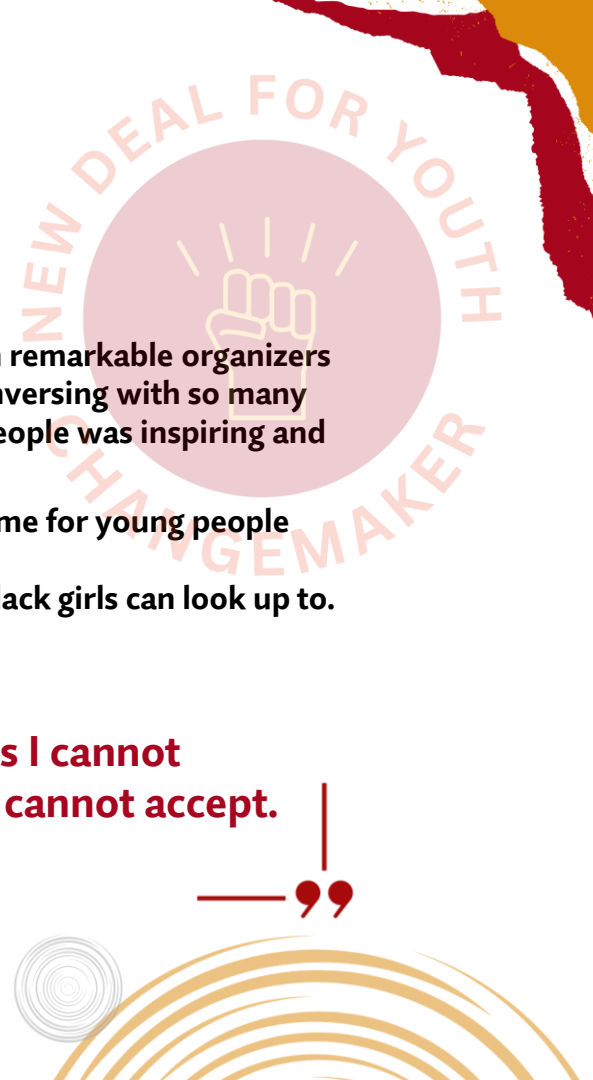
**I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change. I am changing the things I cannot accept.**

- Angela Davis

”

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Meet ALL of the ND4Y Changemakers on the [website](#).



# Changemaker Experience

The ND4Y Evaluation Strategy group, in collaboration with ND4Y staff, developed interview protocols and analyzed interview data from all Changemakers. In Spring 2022, they developed a short survey and coordinated data collection of the Changemaker experience in ND4Y.

Information collected provided actionable data to better understand the Changemakers experience and to inform program planning and capacity building opportunities. Interviews and survey questions were divided into 4 sections:

- 1) Knowledge & Skills
- 2) Overall Experience
- 3) Connectedness
- 4) Social Action Impact

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# YPAR: Common Themes

Led by Changemakers Elias Khoury and Marissa Howdershelt, the evaluation group conducted several interviews with changemakers.

Common themes included:

1. **Commitment:** Changemakers commitment to pursue grassroots political work as a lifelong endeavor.
2. **Lived Experience:** Changemakers have come to do this work because of their own personal experience.
3. **Youth-Doing it Differently:** Changemakers emphasized the importance of blazing their own trail. While past activists provide inspiration and learnings, Changemakers believe it's important to cultivate their own style of leadership and activism.
4. **Youth Leadership:** There is collective agreement, when asked *what sets ND4Y apart?*, Changemakers stated that ND4Y is authentically youth-led.

*Being a black girl is hard. Society really tries to push us out. When I realized that, it seemed obvious this problem required legislative solutions. We need to pass bills and transform the legal landscape to empower marginalized communities.*

Oumou Kay (Changemaker)



**My alma mater, lacked a quality infrastructure for mental health despite its progressive reputation. Administrators dismissed young people’s perspectives and did not see them as experts on their own experiences. We felt that our concerns regarding mental health fell on deaf ears. So, I sought to validate young people’s experience and advocate for youth mental health.**

- Smitha Gundavajhala (Changemaker)



**I found something I was truly passionate about. Before New Deal for Youth, I never expected to fall in love with activism, politics, and policy. But the passion grew as I did the work and now it is an essential part of my life.**

- Cody Rooney (Changemaker)

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**95%**

of Changemakers  
agreed that they had an  
**engaging and positive**  
experience with ND4Y.

n = 21

## Overall Experience

**Key Takeaways:** Changemakers felt their experience provided them with the opportunity to explore their own interests and were highly engaged. Many Changemakers appreciated being **challenged to try new things** as well as building new relationships and friendships.

### What Changemakers Had to Say...

“

*The most important thing I learned as a Changemaker is to take in all the stories from other Changemakers because this experience gave me an opportunity to look at life from several different lenses and grow from that.”*

*I have been able to have the opportunity to hear different views on topics that impact every youth and young adults. I have seen the power of different minds coming together to make a difference.*

”



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**90%**

of changemakers felt  
connected to their strategy  
group lead.

**81%**

of changemakers felt connected  
to the changemakers in their  
strategy group.

n = 21

## Connectedness

**Key Takeaways:** ND4Y started working with Changemakers in 2021 at the height of COVID. By 2022 zoom fatigue had set in and people were excited to see each other in person. **As a result of feedback** ND4Y hosted two weeklong in-person events in 2022 and began providing spaces for Changemakers in the same region to connect more frequently.

### What Changemakers Had to Say...

“






*I love y'all, but these Zoom meetings... I want to connect with you all in real life.*

*As COVID is becoming more manageable and many cases aren't fatal, maybe some more in-person events. Maybe small tri-state area events so the people attending are relatively close to the destination or offer one trip a year for the all changemakers.*

”

# Social Action Impact

**Key Takeaways:** ND4Y Changemakers participated in over **40 meetings with congressional offices**, reviewed and scored over **80 pieces of legislation**, and elevated the ND4Y story at over **50 different events** across the country. Changemakers reported a high level of growth attributed to:

-  **Taking action to solve issues facing their community**
-  **Organizing with peers around social issues**
-  **Analyzing policy**
-  **Creating policy that benefits their community**
-  **Interacting with Lawmakers**

# 100%

of Changemakers felt confident to organize their peers around social issues they care about

# 90%

of Changemakers felt confident to analyze policy and interact with lawmakers

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\*After participating in two years of ND4Y (N=21).

# Knowledge and Skills Impact

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**Key Takeaways:** Changemakers reported gaining and strengthening a variety of skills, engaging in new experiences and feeling proud of their work as well as more confident as a result of participation. The top skills Changemakers reported include: **1) Gaining 21st Century Skills 2) Using the Arts to Advance Change; 3) Facilitation and Leading a meeting; 4) Policy analysis.**

## What Changemakers Had to Say...

“

*I have learned a lot about the importance of intersectionality when thinking of policy solutions as well as a better understanding of how advocacy differs across the different branches of government.*

*I have learned how necessary it is to have and to hear the voices from every walk of life possible as well as how much work goes into forming, analyzing, and pushing demands, as well as catering demands to the policymaker we want to influence.*

”

# 94%

of Changemakers agreed that they have experienced **personal growth** as part of their participation in ND4Y.

n = 21