

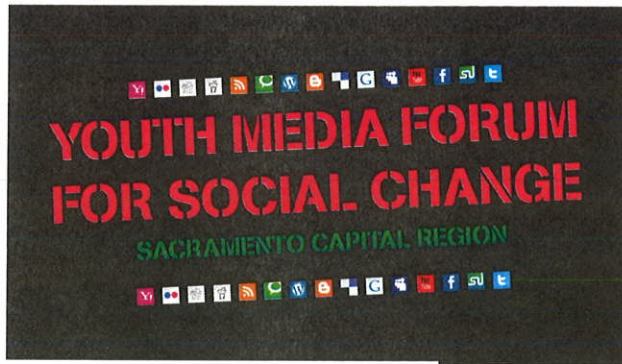
3rd Annual Youth Media Forum For Social Change 2012, Live in Sacramento at The Sacramento Press

Set-up began early – at 8:30 a.m., with organizing registration sign-in sheets, Sacramento Press giveaway bags that included *Health*

Happens Here water bottles donated by The California Endowment and Youth Media Forum—The Story Is You—t-shirts.

The Third Annual Youth Media Forum for Social Change drew young people and mentors from across the Sacramento Region to celebrate and showcase the efforts of tomorrow’s digital content producers and the media projects they created for the event. Held at the offices of The Sacramento Press, an on-line publication that mainly relies on community contributors to supply the majority of its content, this year’s forum sparked a rigorous discussion not only on location, but also at a local high school campus that served as a “virtual” host-site and worldwide via a live video stream on www.AccessLocal.TV.

At 11 a.m. the nearly 100 youth and adults at SacPress prepared for the Access Sacramento camera and production crew to count back from one to three



indicating the start of the “live” on0line streaming of this year’s forum. Opening the forum was Jessica Lari, 16-year-old Yreak High School student (Figure 1) with a poetry piece

that included the words “Here I stand... I don’t have much but I have more than I use to have,” filling the room with the value of the youth voice. Following Jessica, event host Dahlak Brathwaite and co-host PJ

Wellington, made their way to center stage in front of the audience to welcome not only those at SacPress, but also students’ at a local high school who joined the forum via *Google Hangout*. Dahlak and PJ kept the forum moving and the audience pumped with their energetic interactions and lively banter. Viewers from the digital realm offered their reactions to the forum through Twitter by inserting the forum’s custom *hashtag* #ymf2012 into their tweets. Isaac Gonzalez moderated discussions from Twitter by reading tweets such as “Youth panelists are inspiring in their commitment to contribute to others – family, community, future generations’ well-being” and “hearing how youth in Sacramento are using new media for social change. Hot!” Isaac encouraged all the participants to take advantage of the power of the Internet to share their perspectives and personal stories throughout the forum and beyond.

The first panel of youth media producers focused on the areas of health and environmental justice and well-being. Following the viewing of their media projects,



Figure 1: Jessica Lari, opening the 3rd Annual Youth Media Forum for Social Change.

the youth producers spoke of their projects titled: *The Social Impacts of Substance Abuse*, *The Jackman Juicers Show*, *Cultivating Community*, *Captain Save-A-Tree*, and *BOMCOMM*. In addition, the panelists responded to questions from the hosts, audience and also questions from Twitter such as, “What change are you hoping will come out of people watching your media project?”

As one of the forum’s host, Dahlak, wrapped-up the first panel, audience members’ attention was directed to the TV screens in which students from Kennedy High School’s Black Student Union joined the forum via *Google Hangout*. Shuntae Campbell, Kennedy High School host and community partner from the Sacramento City Unified School District moderated as the nearly 30 students’ highlighted and share photos captured using their own cell phones to tell their story about the assets and challenges student’s experience at Kennedy High School.

Cameras positioned throughout Sacramento Press (Figure 2) set to capture even the slightest movement or sound, repositioned



Figure 2: Panel 1 featured at the 3rd Annual Youth Media Forum for Social Change.

from students’ at Kennedy High School back to the audience at SacPress now preparing to hear from the panel of youth

producers with media projects focused on advocacy, race/ethnicity, culture, and gender. The panelists that included students from Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School, spoke avidly about their projects: *Life of A Cyber-bullied Teenager*, *LGBTQ*, *Think Before You Act*, and *Texting and Driving: It Can Wait...* after the audience viewed short clips of each video project.

The third panel of youth included as special premiere of The California Endowment’s South

Sacramento Building Healthy Communities Youth Block Report (YBR) project documentary. Youth from the YBR team at C.K. McClatchy High School, Will C. Wood Middle School, and the youth documentarians’ from SacYES told of their experiences doing walk audits throughout their communities. Glennie Pacheco from People Reaching Out, helped facilitate questions for the panel such as, “Can you tell us about one of key findings from the walk audits and why was it important?” The SacYES youth were asked questions such as, “What did you notice about the community as you were behind the camera?”

Emphasizing the purpose of the forum: to showcase and support a Sacramento Capital Regional effort for youth-led community change through social media, Community partners from



Figure 3: Sacramento Press Editor-In-Chief, Jared Goyette.

CanFIT lead by Program Director, Lloyd Nadal, energized the audience with a brief physical activity and then presented on a new statewide efforts promoting healthy eating and physical activity policy through use of online advocacy strategy tools. Jared Goyette, Sacramento Press Editor-In-Chief (Figure 3) then gave a few words of acknowledging the power and potential of using media for social change. In closing, Jared invited Isaac Gonzalez to share a short personal story of empowerment. “The videos you’ve produced and shared here today is just the beginning of the process,” Gonzalez told the audience. “If we’re really to effect social change, we must change the conversation to reflect the things that matter to us, to make the world into the place we want it to be.”

The Youth Media Forum for Social Change is rooted in the belief that youth-led social media is a powerful process of youth sharing and telling their stories through their own lived experiences and environments. Communities

in which youth live, impact their lives, politically, socially, educationally, emotionally, and physically, yet inspire and motivate them in a real way. With the support of community partners UC Davis Center for Community School Partnerships, Access Sacramento, Sacramento City Unified School District, The Sacramento Press, KCRA Channel 3, and a host of other community organizations, we look forward to the continuous efforts of encouraging and supporting youth-led social media for social change!

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2012 FORUM Evaluation Highlights:

According to the survey of Forum Participants:

100% of forum audience members polled stated that they believe that social media is a good way to have youth voice heard by adults

92% of forum audience members polled stated that they would like schools in their area to offer more ways to learn about using social media

100% of forum audience members polled stated that coming to the 2012 Youth Media Forum for Social Change made them feel like they could make a difference in their communities using social media tools.

96% of forum audience members polled stated that there are things they would like to change in their neighborhood that they could talk about using social media

95% of Audience members polled said that they would be interested in submitting a social media project to present at the next forum

54% of Audience members polled said that there are not enough opportunities for youth to learn how to use and produce social media in their community

81% of Audience members polled said that if there was a social media for social change project in their area they would participate

The one thing I would keep the same is:

Continue to support youth voices

Videos, youth panels, twitter

Panels with film makers and host

The categories

The atmosphere

The goal

The last speech from the host!!!!

The one thing I would change is:

Make it bigger

More videos shown

It was problematic to not have audio working

Pass the mic through the audience and include a synopsis of each film in the program

Nothing

Describe what kind of social media project you would produce to bring about social change in your neighborhood or community:

Documentary

Bank robberies

Play, music, poetry, anything!

YBR

Video

Teen dating violence, sexually exploited youth

Fads

Video/radio

Cyber bullying, unprotected sex

** Data on the 2012 Youth Media Forum for Social Change Evaluation Highlights are based on post Forum audience participant surveys*

Annual Youth Media Forum for Social Change: Methodology and Approach

