

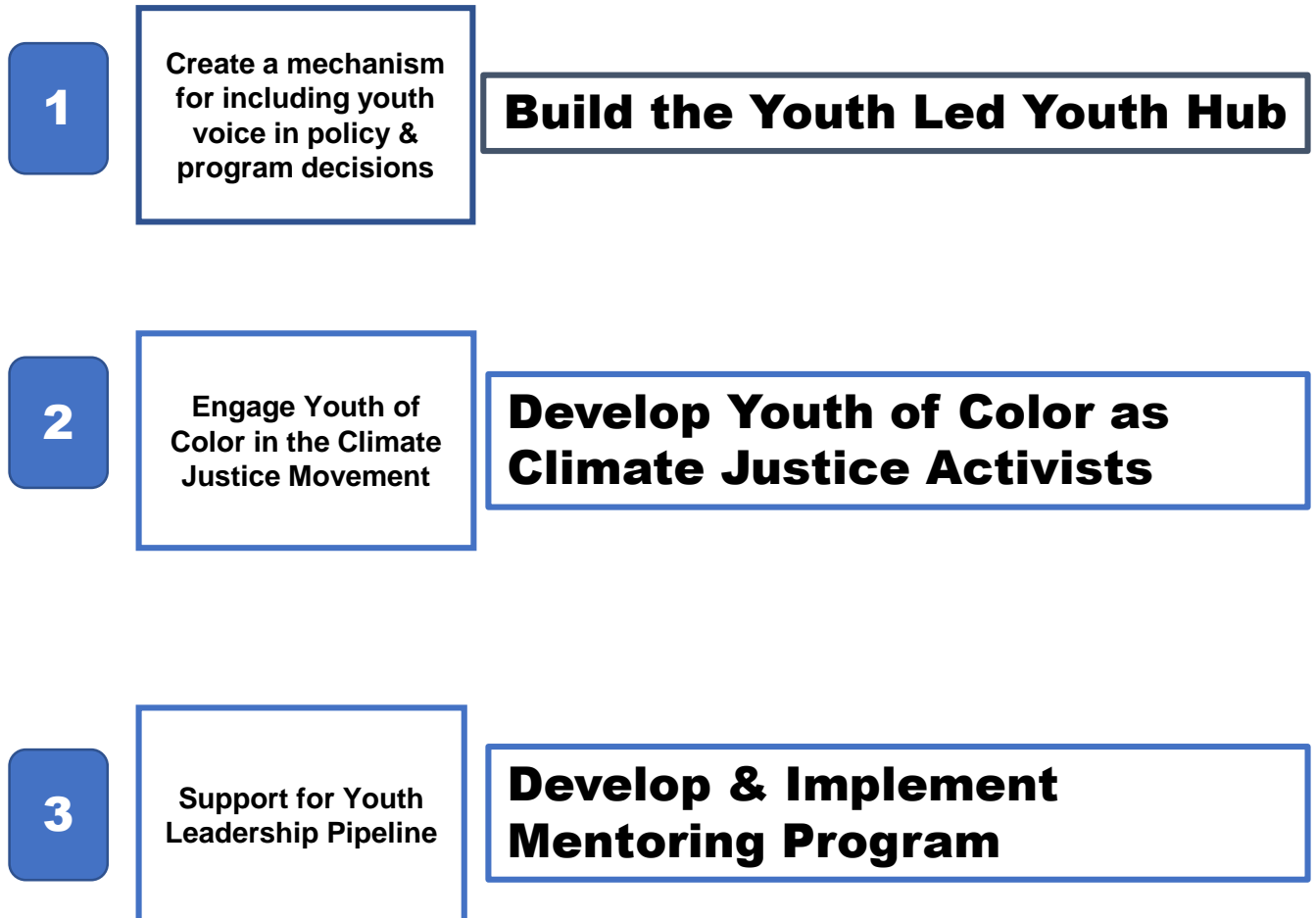
# **City Heights Youth for Change 2020**

February 2020

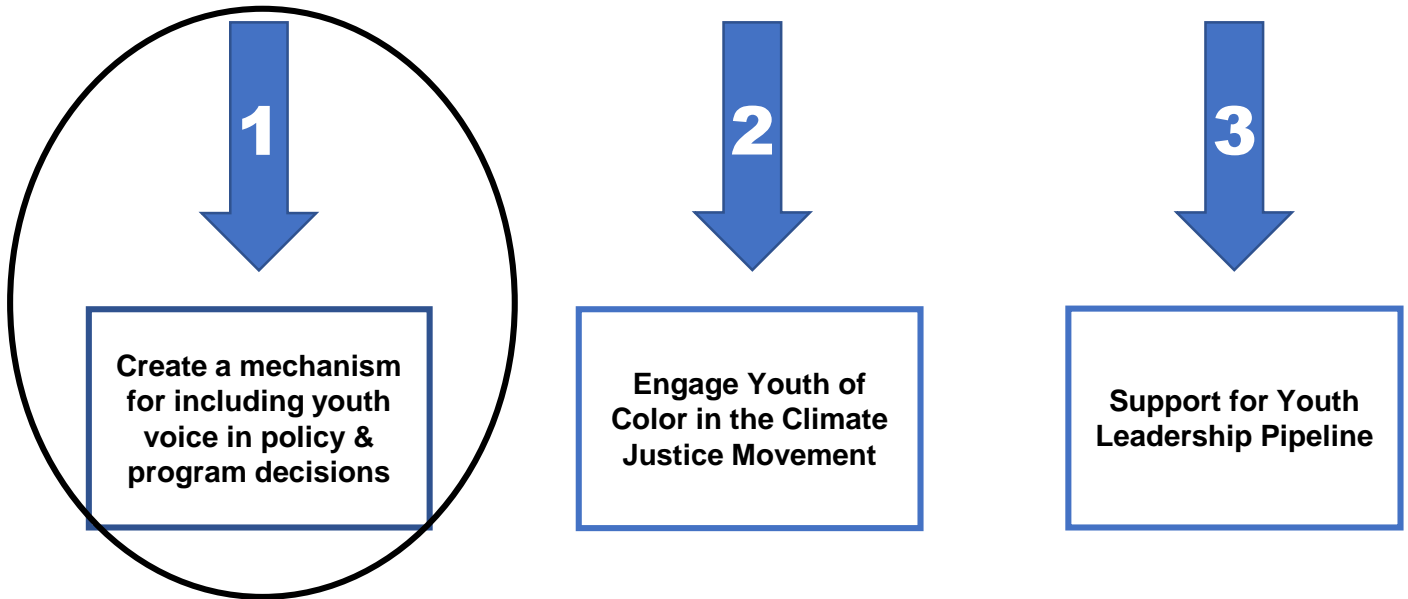
# City Heights Youth for Change 2020

2020 is a year of transition for City Heights Youth for Change as it sees its fourth generation of youth leaders begin to emerge. The group will take three paths as they continue to evolve.

## Three Paths



# City Heights Youth for Change 2020



## Build the Youth Led Youth Hub

### Why, Purpose (Goal), How and When?

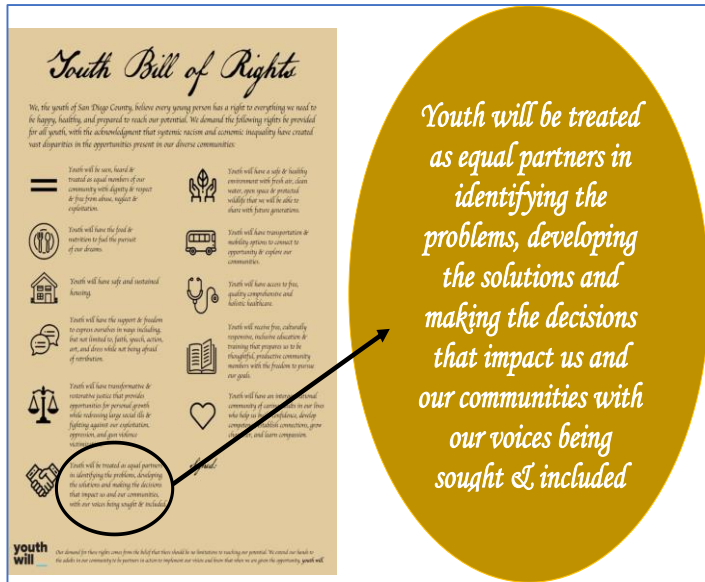
#### Why?

City Heights Youth for Change has been focused on *telling their story before someone else does* since the Youth Power Summit held in the fall of 2017. The first step they took to achieve this goal was to develop and implement a survey of 300 City Heights Youth on how they saw their community. Once completed, the group spread the results of their survey by holding a press conference, presenting at conferences, sharing their findings with other organizations, being interviewed on KPBS, etc. While showing the youth perspective on their community is important to them, the group wants this survey to be a catalyst for change – change that creates an authentic place for the youth voice to be included in the policy and program decisions that impact them now and in their future.

In May of 2019, Youth Will unveiled the **Youth Bill of Rights** - a list of eleven demands crafted over the course of several months by young people from across San Diego County, including university students, disconnected youth who are not working or in school, elementary students and young professionals including several members of City Heights Youth for Change).

Presently there is no established pathway for youth to have their voice heard. The establishment of a Youth Led-Youth Hub provides that pathway. Consisting of youth and their allies, the Hub provides a space where issues important to youth throughout the county can be brought to a network of youth focused organizations and agencies for the purpose of developing comprehensive strategies to address those issues.

# Purpose



The purpose of this project is to support the enactment of the YOUTH BILL of RIGHTS by establishing a formal mechanism for the youth perspective to be “sought and included” in all decisions that impact their lives now and in the future.

Two core principals guide this project, i.e., being Place-Based and the importance of the project being a Youth-Adult Partnership. The Place-Based approach is rooted in the understanding that healthy communities tend to produce healthy people while unhealthy communities tend to produce unhealthy people and that one’s zip code is a better predictor of longevity than DNA. A key learning from the California Endowment’s ten-year Building Healthy Community Initiative was that “it is by working on a local scale that change happens at a broader level and that it is by reshaping ‘the places that shape us – our neighborhoods’” that we create healthy communities. For this approach to be successful it must be community led. A review of several community initiatives concluded that, in most cases, success was the result of “people from the community taking action, rather than waiting for an expert solution or a top-down government or foundation program.”

The second core principal, Youth-Adult Partnership, comes from the awareness that to be fully community/resident led youth must play a leadership role in partnership with the adults. Efforts to create a healthy community cannot be successful without an authentic youth voice. The goal of this approach “is to integrate youth into existing forums of decision making that have traditionally been reserved for adults, *while also creating new structures for youth to influence important decisions.* Youth-Adult Partnerships are both a practice and a strategy, not a ‘new’ program. Additionally, Youth-Adult Partnerships are a collective construct. The primary purpose is not to help individual youth make better decisions about their personal lives (although this may occur). Rather, it is about engaging groups of youth and adults in organizational change and community building over a sustained period of time.

The Hub would be governed by a Steering Committee selected from members of the Hub with Youth Organizations holding the majority of seats. Once formed, the Global ARC will serve as the Backbone Organization that oversees and manages the Hub while City Heights Youth for Change would become a member of the Hub.

## How & When

**Building the Youth Hub is happening in three phases.**

- Phase I: Youth Participatory Action Research Project – Surveying 300 City Heights Youth
- Phase II: Participatory Photography Project & Theater as basis for a Community Conversation on the role of youth in policy and program decisions that impact their lives now and in the future.
- Phase III: Using consensus from the Community Conversation to build the Youth Hub

**Phase I:** Survey completed and released March 2019

**Phase II:** Participatory Photo Project-Theater and Community Conversation

Agreement with the Aja Project	November 2019
Identify participants in Photo Project	December 2019
Create Marketing Material	January-February 2020
Identify and reach out to important media outlets	February 2020
Send out targeted invitations	February 2020
Personal follow-up to invitations	February - March 2020
Facilitator Training	March 2020
Completion of the Participatory Photography Project	March 2020
Creating the Exhibition	March 2020
<b>Exhibition, Theater &amp; Community Conversation</b>	<b>MARCH 27, 2020</b>
Vision Statement completed	April 2020

**Phase III:** Building the Youth Led Youth Hub

One-on-One meetings with potential Hub Members	April-May 2020
Draft of Hub Agreement Developed	Week of June 1, 2020
Distribute Draft Agreement for feedback	June 2020
Incorporate Agreement feedback - recirculate	July 1, 2020
Identify original list of Hub members	July 31, 2020
Hold “Founding Meeting” of the Hub	Week of August 3, 2020
Complete Strategic Plan	Week of August 24, 2020
<b>Official Launch of Hub</b>	<b>Week of September 14, 2020</b>



# City Heights Youth for Change 2020



## Develop Youth of Color as Climate Justice Activists

### Why, Purpose (Goal), How and When?

#### Why?

Estimates are that the world has about ten to twelve years to stop what it's doing in order to prevent irreversible damage to the planet – damage that will endanger the lives of millions of people. While the world has been aware of this crisis for several years and scientists have figured out how to stop and reverse the destruction, there seems to be very little political will to take necessary actions. The energy to create this political will is coming from our young people. The Climate Justice Movement is a youth led movement where the leaders are people in their teens and twenties. This Movement needs to spread.

In San Diego the Climate Action Campaign is working to push local governments to enact green policies and practices. In pursuit of this goal it brought together more than 150 Climate Activists from throughout the County over three Saturdays to develop a strategic plan to bring the Green New Deal to San Diego. As impressive as this show of concern and commitment was, it was a narrow group with few youth and/or people of color in attendance – less than 3%.

Building on our youth base in City Heights and our relationship with UCSD's Bioregional Center for Sustainability Science and Design, we have the capacity and connections to develop a space where young people can be educated, motivated, recruited and trained to be Climate Justice Activists/Leaders within their own communities.

On an organizational level, City Heights Youth for Change is in transition with the largest number of participants by far being middle-school aged and younger. Meaningfully engaging this age group requires two things, i.e., 1) have a singular focus; and 2) projects must be hands-on. Focusing on Climate Justice projects focused on Natural Solutions meets both requirements.

## **Purpose**

The need to “think globally, act locally” is at the base of this project. We know that saving the planet requires us to build the political will to take the necessary steps. We also know that it will take a large and broad-based coalition for that political will to be strong enough to overcome the resistance to change. Building this movement will take investing in long-term strategies rather than “one-off,” short-term projects. This project is such a strategy. It creates a pipeline that focuses on actively engaging youth of color in the Climate Justice Movement and supporting their development as activists and leaders.

The project creates this pipeline by:

- Providing youth with training on the science and politics of Climate Justice as well as on organizing and popular education techniques and strategies for Movement Building
- Providing youth with opportunities to work on actual projects creating Natural Solutions to Climate Change through organizing group projects, internships and/or placements with environmental groups, etc.
- Providing youth with the training and support needed to effectively influence policy decisions as that relate to Climate Justice
- Connecting youth with other Climate Justice actors and the broader Climate Justice Movement and providing ongoing mentoring and support

Training and support for youth would be available for individual youth as well as existing groups such as a class and/or school-based group, a community-based organization, church and/or ethnic group, etc.

## **How?**

- Global ARC develops its Young Community Scientist Project with UCSD students
- UCSD students develop list of projects suitable for Middle and High School students that fit into the following categories
  - Public Health (NAFLD, TASH)
  - Water (Water Harvesting, Grey Water)
  - Clean Energy (Cultural Shift, Transportation, Economic/Business)
  - Nature-Based Climate Solutions (Compost, Urban Agriculture, Tree Canopy)
  - Community Environmental Monitoring (Air Quality, Water Quality, Soil Quality)
  - Built Environment (Parks, Green Spaces, Alleys, Walkability, etc.)
- Youth receive an introduction to and overview of the Climate Justice Movement with an emphasis on it being a Youth Movement.
- Youth discuss the role of youth –particularly Youth of Color- in the Movement and how they can take action (think globally – act locally). Group reviews list of potential projects and selects one.
- Youth receive education on the climate science related to their project – how it is affecting the problem and what the policy implications are.
- Youth develop a strategic plan for carrying out the project and developing a policy agenda

**Political Education:** The political education of the youth [why things are happening – or not happening, who is responsible, what resources are needed-available to address the issue, what is the role of youth, etc.] is built into all education, training and activities

The Project also serves as a recruitment tool for engaging new youth in the group's activities

**Internal Process:** Halima, Hajia and Omar will lead the project requiring additional leadership training/support for them. In addition to Famo, this support will come from their mentors [Halima, Isha, Sahara, Sumaya].

## When

The younger members (below high school age) will be finished with their role in the Hub project after the event on March 27<sup>th</sup> and can begin to transition into the Climate Justice project. Ramadan begins on or about April 23<sup>rd</sup> and runs until May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Little progress on the project is likely during that time. A potential timeline is as follows:

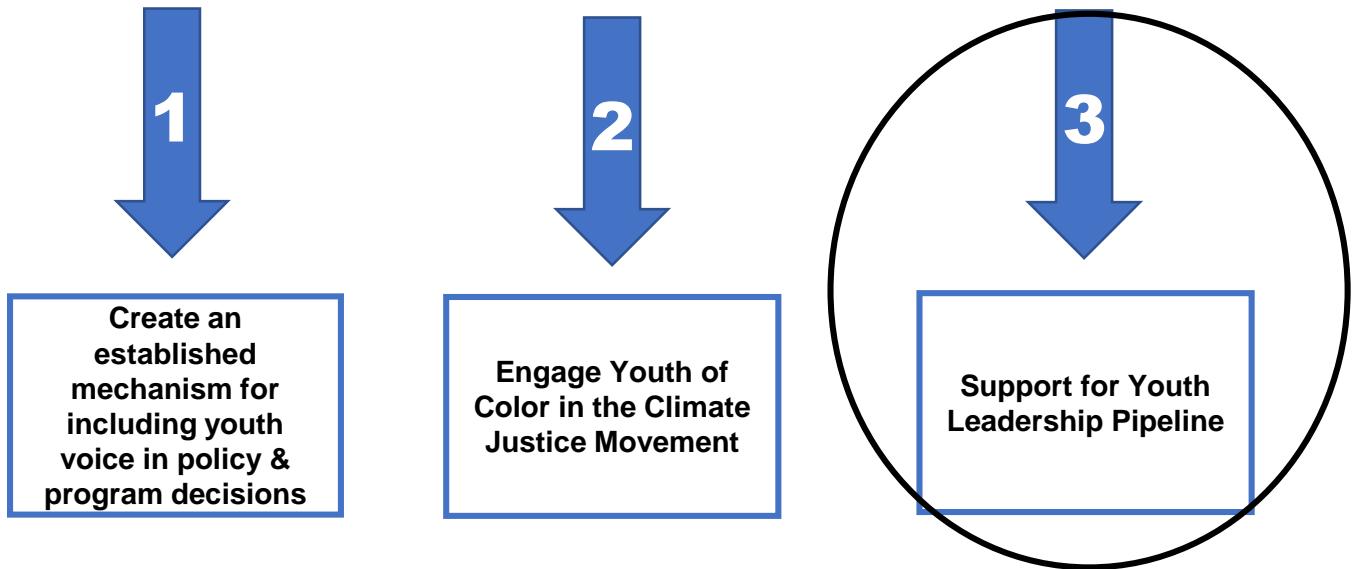
- Meet with high school members to discuss this transition and their role as leaders during 2<sup>nd</sup> week of April (4/6 to 4/11)
- Meet with younger members to introduce transition into Climate Justice the week of April 13<sup>th</sup>
- Hold first meeting with high school and younger students June 3<sup>rd</sup> to launch project

## Green New Deal Strategic Planning Sessions





# City Heights Youth for Change 2020



## Develop & Implement Mentoring Program

### Why, Purpose (Goal), How and When?

#### Why?

From its inception in 2013 City Heights Youth for Change has striven to be a pipeline for the development of community activists/leaders by engaging youth (with training and support) in real social change campaigns as activists and leaders. A formal pipeline addresses one of the realities of working with youth, i.e., they are in a constant state of development and are often ready to move on from the group just as they are hitting the peak of their skills. A successful “pipeline” creates a cycle where those leaders, rather than moving on, shift their role to that of mentor. By taking what they learned from their experiences and passing them on to the younger members they not only further develop their own skills and establish themselves as leaders, but they also strengthen the group’s emerging leadership and maintain continuity in the group’s development.

City Heights Youth for Change has four levels of membership at this time (i.e., Group 1 - college students, Group 2 -high school seniors, Group 3 - high school students and Group 4 -youth below the eighth grade) and is in the midst of a transition. The oldest members are finding less time for the group as they move on to four-year colleges while the second group is in the midst of applying for college and preparing for graduation that also limits their time. The remaining two groups are the future of City Heights Youth for Change and would benefit greatly from a formal mentoring relationship with the older youth.

A formally structuring the mentoring process will strengthen the relationships among the older and younger youth, facilitate the passing on of knowledge and skills from older to younger and strengthen City Heights Youth for Change.

## Purpose

The goal of this project is to develop and implement a mentoring program within City Heights Youth for Change that can provide structure to the progressive community activist/leader pipeline it is working to create.

The project would be structured as follows:

- Group 1 – College Students: These members will support the high school students (Group 3) as they lead the younger members (Group 4) in their Climate Justice projects. Using their mentor training and their experiences as youth leaders, these students will provide guidance and support to the high school students in their task as leaders.
- Group 2 – Graduating Seniors: These members will serve as mentors to the youngest group (Group 4), supporting them in their transition as they begin to move from elementary to middle school or middle school to high school.
- Group 3 – High School Students: These members will serve as the leadership of City Heights Youth for Change as it joins the Climate Justice Movement. Their role will be to motivate and guide the younger members (Group 4) as they focus on the group's project.

## How

- Staff researches youth-to-youth and peer mentoring programs
- Drawing on the research, the staff develops a model for the program and a training curriculum
- The college students (Group 1) and high school seniors (Group 2) receive mentoring training
- High School students receive leadership training
- Older youth are assigned mentees and begin working with them, meeting at least monthly

## When

- Researching programs, developing the model and training curriculum – Late April – May 2020 (during Ramadan)
- Meet with older members and confirm participants in the mentoring program - Mid-June 2020
- Begin Leadership Training – June 2020
- Mentor Training - July – August 2020
- Launch mentoring program – September 2020