

THE INAUGURAL

# TED<sup>x</sup>Youth@Lancaster

x = independently organized TED event

***MOVING  
FORWARD***



June 17, 2017 Winter Center - Millersville University

# THANK YOU!

Without these generous partners and supporters, this event could not exist. We greatly appreciate their support of our youth and ideas worth spreading!

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## PARTNERS

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## SUPPORTERS

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Atomic Design, Goggleworks, Herr's Foods, Kegel's, Kleen-Rite, Livin' in the Rhythm, Marshmallow MBA, North Museum, Organ & Tissue Donation Awareness, 4imprint

# Welcome to TED<sup>x</sup>Youth@Lancaster

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You are a part of TEDxLancaster history! You have the distinction of attending the inaugural TEDxYouth@Lancaster! Once you hear our speakers, I think you'll agree that their "ideas worth spreading" pertain to adults as much as youth. That is what makes these youth special. It's challenging enough to be a student. Add in social media, politics, world events, and more and it can become quite daunting. Instead of focusing on distractions, they are Moving Forward, which is the theme for this event.

I hope this event inspires, educates, and motivates you to change your mindset, yourself, your community, or the world. You are surrounded by like-minded people today that want to grow and change. Introduce yourself to someone you don't know. Ask them what brought them here today. Discuss today's talks with them. Think of how you can take these ideas and make a change for the better. Most of all, keep Moving Forward. You are officially a part of our TEDxLancaster family. Welcome, and enjoy our very first youth event!

Bob Vasile, Executive Director

## SUICIDE PREVENTION

One of our talks today is about suicide prevention. If you feel the need to reach out for help, we encourage you to contact the following resources. You are not alone. Please stay alive and ask for help.

**Crisis Text Line:** Text "HOME" to 741741

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

**Locally:** Samaritan Counseling Center (717) 560-9969 [www.scclanc.org](http://www.scclanc.org)

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**TEDxLancaster.com** Official Hashtag #TEDxLancaster



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## SUPPORT IDEAS WORTH SPREADING AND MORE

The Vasile Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit entity whose mission is to elevate individuals to a level beyond which they thought they were capable of attaining, through inspiration, motivation, and education. The Foundation has no paid members and all proceeds from events simply further the Foundation's mission. The Foundation produces TEDxLancaster and TEDxYouth@Lancaster events. It also conducts a Deliberate Success Program, which has been presented to dozens of gifted students through IU13, and is an on-going program with the Millersville University cross country and track & field teams. It is the aim of the Foundation to inspire, motivate, and educate people of all demographics. Ticket sales cover less than one-third of this event's expenses. We rely on the support of partners whose mission and vision align with ours. Want to help support the Foundation or become a partner at one or more of our events? Email us at [TEDxLancaster@gmail.com](mailto:TEDxLancaster@gmail.com)



# Elizabeth Raff

Emcee

Elizabeth Raff is an innovative, passionate, and enthusiastic educator, who sparks excitement and creativity in her classroom. A 6th grade teacher in the Penn Manor School District, Elizabeth propels students to be lifelong learners by using unique classroom engagement strategies. She creates a model classroom with high expectations and a student driven culture where students are encouraged to ask tough questions and think outside of the box.

When she is not in the classroom, Elizabeth develops comprehensive curriculum, leads energizing professional development workshops, and supports preservice teachers. An inspiring educator, Elizabeth's classroom techniques are being utilized around the world and most recently gained the attention of Pennsylvania's Secretary of Education, Pedro Rivera. Elizabeth received her Master of Education in Curriculum & Instruction from Penn State University and continues to pursue research and writing opportunities. Elizabeth resides in Lancaster with her husband, Jeremy.



# Akash Banerjee

## Stereotyping: It Makes Us Human

Akash Banerjee is a freshman at Warwick High School. Growing up in the rather conservative town of Lititz, he has encountered stereotypes and prejudice almost everyday of his life. He is part of Warwick High School's choir and band, and has a passion for drama. He also practices Taekwon-do, a Korean martial art. He has a strong passion for public speaking, and is also an advocate for Muslim rights, especially on social media.



# Shohini Banerjee

**Nandi Padam**  
**(Indian Classical Dance)**

Shohini Banerjee is a senior at Warwick High School and an Indian classical dancer. She has been training in the traditional Bharatnatyam style for twelve years, and graduated as a classical dancer in 2012 after vigorous training culminating in a two-hour solo performance. She continues to share her love of dance through teaching, choreographing, and performing. She also enjoys playing the flute, conducting scientific research, reading, and playing chess. She is a meticulous student in her studies and maintains her position in the top three in her class. Shohini will attend Schreyer Honors College at Penn State for biomedical engineering and wants to become a better person everyday by adopting more altruistic ways of life.



# Brye Balla

## The 7 Minute Principle

Brye Balla recently graduated from Pequea Valley High School. He works at Black Rock Retreat center as a Program Assistant. In September, he will go to Costa Rica with YWAM to do missions work. In high school, he was involved with marching band, the fall play, the spring musical, the concert choir, and the Chamber Singers. He served as the choir program president this past school year, and choreographed and assistant directed the middle school musical. He enjoys eating, hiking, travelling, singing, dancing, acting, playing piano, ukulele, and guitar, and hanging out with his friends (four-legged friends too!).





# Lauryn Chotiner

**YOU Make a Difference**

Lauryn Chotiner, 12, just finished 6th grade at Linglestown Middle School, although her passion for volunteering started at a much younger age. She began visiting elderly residents at a local nursing center as a toddler. In second grade, she donated her hair to Pantene Beautiful Lengths to make wigs for cancer patients. In 4th-6th grades, she created and sold gift boxes to raise money for AFMDA, a red cross affiliate. She has worked in a soup kitchen, baked treats at Ronald McDonald house, and created crafts for hospitalized children through Caitlyn Smiles. She continues to be inspired by volunteers in her community. At school, she's an active runner on the Girls on the Run team. She enjoys playing piano and tennis, in which she has won bronze medals two years in a row at the Jr. Maccabi games.



# Annie Dickinson

## Seeing Sound: How Synesthesia Can Change Our Thinking

Annie Dickinson is a sophomore at Lower Dauphin High School. She plays violin in her school orchestra and in the Hershey Symphony. She has been fortunate to play in some unique events, including a Lincoln Center concert with the Hershey Symphony, the NAFME All-Eastern Convention, PMEA festivals, and alongside the Piano Guys at their concert in Hershey. In addition, she is the pianist for her school jazz band and sings in her school chamber choir. Annie serves as President of her school's Tri-M chapter. She has also self-released an album entitled "Synesthesia" under the artist name "Annie Elise". In her free time, Annie enjoys dancing ballet and jazz. Annie is also focused on academics and is a part of her school's honor societies and STEM team. In the future, Annie hopes to major in a music related field and continue to speak about synesthesia.



# Drake Gooding

**Age: How We Use it to  
Hold Ourselves Back**

Drake Gooding, age 15, is a senior at Ephrata Senior High School. He spent much of his education (2nd grade - 8th grade) cyberschooling in order to graduate three years ahead of schedule. Drake is very interested in mechanical engineering, but plans to become a serial entrepreneur. He wants to get right out of high school and into the business world. Drake believes that as a society we tend to use age as an excuse to hold ourselves back, and he would like to change this.



# Sarah Hafiz

## How We Can Empower Refugees From Feeling Alone To Being at Home

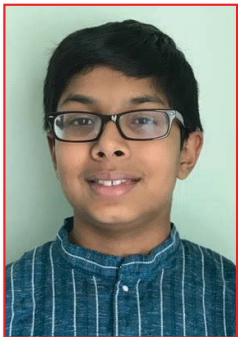
A rising senior at Franklin & Marshall College in her hometown of Lancaster, Sarah's interests in how medicine intersects with policy and access to health care drew her to pursue a Public Health major. Having been highly involved with organizing and serving as a counselor at Muslim Youth of North America (MYNA) retreats, Sarah was eager to help strengthen the Muslim community at F&M by joining the Muslim Students Association, where she is currently president. Sarah tutors McCaskey middle and high schoolers through the Squash ACES program at the Ware Institute for Civic Engagement. In addition, Sarah got to spend some time this past summer in Jordan, where she worked with Helping Hands for Relief and Development to provide aid to the Syrian and Palestinian refugees seeking asylum. Sarah hopes to provide some insight into what youth can do in their own town to help alleviate the global refugee crisis.



# Elaina Kreider

## Give Me Truth

Elaina Kreider is an eighth grade student in Solanco School district. The biggest thing anyone should know about Elaina is that she loves Jesus. She is the eldest of five siblings, two of whom are adopted from China and Bulgaria. Elaina enjoys spending time with her family as well reading, writing, dancing, horseback riding, swimming, and traveling. She has been to China, Ireland and France and hopes to add more countries to her list in years to come. At school she is involved in NJHS, the gifted program, and has competed in Odyssey of the Mind and Math 24 competitions. Elaina is not sure what she wants to do when she grows up but is thinking about pursuing something in the teaching field.



# Sanjith Narayanan

**Peace, Calmness, and Joy**

Sanjith is an eighth grade student in the Kingsview Middle School in Germantown, MD. Sanjith always believes that there is lot of commonalities between Indian classical and Western music. Sanjith is learning Indian classical music from Mr. Kamalakiran Vinjamuri (George Mason University student) in Violin for past 7 years and won many awards in prestigious music festivals. Sanjith always enjoys accompanying his teacher Kamalakiran in violin concerts both in US as well as in India. Sanjith will be performing quick raga elaboration with a short song (krithi) followed by on the spot creation of various mathematical musical patterns and musical jingles (called kalpana swaras).



# Palak Patel

## Loving Life Starts with Loving Yourself: BodyLove

Palak Patel, the youngest of three, was born in New Jersey and moved to Lancaster when she was eight. She is an upcoming senior at Conestoga Valley High School where she is the Vice President of National Honors Society and an officer in Students against Destructive Decisions. Palak loves to be involved in her school through Student Council, Link Crew Leadership, Math League, and more. She has a passion for tutoring students, volunteering at North Museum of Nature and Science, and promoting positive mental health. When she's not volunteering or doing things with her school, she can usually be found doing yoga, playing badminton, or eating way too much cheese. Palak has been to England, Scotland, Ireland, India, and she hopes that the list will continue! Her academic interests lie in math and science and she hopes to pursue biomedical engineering in the future.

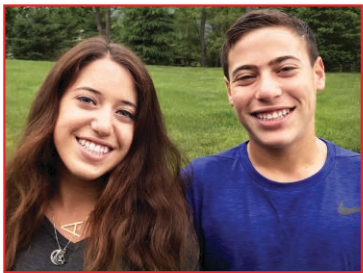


# Sadie Penn

## Shattering the Silence: Youth Suicide Prevention

Sadie Penn will soon be graduating from Penn Manor High School. She is planning on studying psychology and working with youth. She's passionate about educating others on the importance of suicide awareness and positive mental health. Sadie enjoys writing, going for hikes, and hearing others' stories.





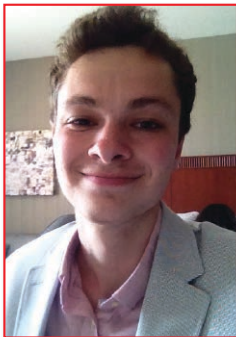
# Alexa & Sammy Schwab

## Take Action!

Alexa Schwab, 16, and Sammy Schwab, 14, are both big believers in “Taking Action!” Along with their sister Madison, they co-founded the MAST STEM Center in Harrisburg City Schools. Their STEM Center (named M-A-S-T, after Madison, Alexa, Sammy, Tina-the gifted teacher) was a labor of love. The Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation heard of their STEM center and agreed to partner with them to open up a minimum of 9 more MAST STEM Centers around the country (4 are already open). Because of their work, Alexa was the first ever recipient of the Youth in Philanthropy award from the Foundation for Enhancing Communities. Alexa also is Vice-President of her class and Regional Vice-President of BBYO, a Youth Leadership organization.

Sammy, an avid sports fan, created his own Sports show, Sammy’s Sports Kids Network. He took action and his shows now have had over 1 million views. Due to the success of his show, he has been asked to announce minor league sporting events, interview Hall of Fame athletes, and has been interviewed on Fox, ABC, NBC and CBS, including a feature on Super Bowl Sunday. Sammy recently gave a class lecture to 48 business students at Dickinson College on “Following your Passion, Take Action!”

Both are distinguished honors students at Central Dauphin and truly pride themselves on tutoring and volunteer work at many different organizations. Family, friends, sports (especially tennis) and community are what Alexa & Sammy consider their “passions”.



# Brennan Stark

## Building Sustainable Lives: Asking the Right Question Matters

Brennan Stark is a recent graduate of Archmere Academy in Wilmington, Delaware as well as the CEO of Y Innovations, a nonprofit organization that uses natural building techniques to create affordable and environmentally-friendly housing for homeless and low-income citizens in the Delaware area. Brennan has been featured in several publications for his work with Y Innovations, including most recently, USA TODAY. This summer, Brennan will travel to Denmark as part of the 2017 UNLEASH Innovation Lab in order to pitch his work in sustainable development to government officials and international investors. Brennan is also passionate about education and renewable energy and is currently working on a venture to promote and expand options for young people after graduating high school. In his free time, Brennan enjoys reading, backpacking in the woods, and spending time with his loving family and his girlfriend, Maureen. Brennan plans to study Entrepreneurship and Technology Innovation with a focus in computer science next fall at the University of Delaware.



# Marissa Witmer

## Time Well Spent

Marissa Witmer, age 18, is a recent graduate of Solanco High School, where she served as Class President and President of Spanish Honors Society. Marissa has had the honor of going to the 2016 International Science and Engineering Fair as a Finalist for her project "Reducing the Risk of Alzheimer's in Type II Diabetes Patients. Marissa is currently continuing her research at Hershey Medical Center and working as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) for Lancaster EMS. Marissa will be attending Franklin & Marshall College this fall, and plans on eventually attending medical school to become a surgeon. Marissa finds joy in challenging herself to make meaningful change and in inspiring others to do so.

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## SCHEDULE

**1:00 pm**

**Event starts**

**1:00-2:45 pm**

**Session #1**

**2:45-3:30 pm**

**Exhibits in lobby area**

**3:30-5:00 pm**

**Session #2**

**5:00 pm**

**Event concludes**