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Get Inspired at New Gates Foundation Exhibit 'We The Future'

Displays amplify the work of activist youth leaders

BY GEMMA ALEXANDER (/AUTHOR/GEMMA-ALEXANDER)

PUBLISHED ON: OCTOBER 21, 2019



PHOTO: "We The Future" exhibit at the Gates Foundation Discovery Center. Credit: Nancy Chaney

Special exhibitions at the [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Discovery Center](https://www.discovergates.org/) (<https://www.discovergates.org/>) always focus on the inspiring work of people who

are making a difference in the world. For this reason, it's a great spot for family learning and inspiration.

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The Discovery Center's current exhibition, "[We The Future](https://www.discovergates.org/exhibition/wethefuture/)" (<https://www.discovergates.org/exhibition/wethefuture/>)," highlights youth activists who are working to build the better future they want to live in.

The exhibit was inspired by an education campaign from Seattle-based nonpartisan design lab [Amplifier](https://amplifier.org/) (<https://amplifier.org/>), the same group responsible for the "[We the People](https://amplifier.org/campaigns/we-the-people/)" (<https://amplifier.org/campaigns/we-the-people/>)" campaign. Amplifier produced the iconic poster of a woman in an American flag hijab for that campaign.



Gates Foundation youth ambassadors helped curate the "We The Future" exhibit. Credit: Gates Discovery Center

Using research and artwork by Amplifier, "We The Future" was co-curated by the

Discovery Center's Youth Ambassadors (<https://www.discovergates.org/program-type/youth-programs/>). Youth Ambassadors were involved in every aspect of the exhibit's development (<https://www.parentmap.com/article/interactive-exhibition-your-young-activists-and-future-leaders-cant-miss>), from exhibit design to public programs.

We The Future

The exhibit features ten youth activists, ranging in age from 13 to 27. Each one is a national leader in a movement working for social change. The featured youth are:

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Xiuhtezcatl Martinez: the 18-year-old indigenous Youth Director of Earth Guardians (<https://www.earthguardians.org/>)

Amanda Gorman: the first Youth Poet Laureate of the United States, who founded One Pen One Page (<http://onepenonepage.org/>) to promote literacy and youth activism

Leah the Activist: a youth leader with Families Belong Together (<https://www.familiesbelongtogether.org/>), fighting to end immigrant family separation

Ismael Nazario: Peabody award-winning, formerly incarcerated advocate for prison reform working with numerous advocacy projects, including Performing Statistics (<https://www.performingstatistics.org/>)

Winter BreeAnne: youth advocate who founded Black Is Lit and Just Active (<https://www.justactive.org/>), she spearheaded National School Walkouts against gun violence and works on several campaigns to encourage youth civic involvement

Lydia X. Z. Brown: advocate for disability justice who founded the Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network's Autistic People of Color Fund (<https://autismandrace.com/autistic-people-of-color-fund/>)

Lindsay Amer: created the all-ages LGBTQ+ educational web series Queer Kid Stuff (<http://queerkidstuff.com/>)

Amanda Nguyen: founded Rise (<https://www.risenow.us/>) to advocate for sexual assault survivors' rights and to help citizens write and pass legislation

Isra Chaker: advocate for refugees and asylum seekers who serves as Refugee, Migration, and Protection Campaign Lead at Oxfam (<https://www.oxfam.org/en>) and fights against discriminatory policies such as Muslim bans

Paul S. John: social justice advocate working to end anti-Black racism as Manager of Mayoral Outreach at Mayors Against Illegal Guns (<https://everytown.org/mayors/>)

Each activist is featured at a station displaying their Amplifier poster, information about their work, and a tablet with related videos. One corner of the exhibit highlights local youth-led groups and local points of connection with national groups that local youth can get involved in themselves.



The center of the “We The Future” exhibit at the Gates Discovery Center. Credit: Nancy Chaney

Parents Should Know

We the Future is appropriate for all ages with parental guidance. However, it is text-heavy, so older kids and teens are more likely to appreciate it. Besides the videos at each station, interactive components include a “We the Future” selfie wall; “You Are the Amplifier,” a space where visitors can write and post their own ideas for and commitments to change; and an art lab where visitors can develop their own self-identity portrait. These interactive elements will especially appeal to kids and families.

The exhibit offers numerous take-home items like stickers, patches, postcards and informational fliers from the projects led by the featured activists. Visitors can also take home one of the posters created by artists [Shepard Fairey](#)

(<https://amplifier.org/team/shepard-fairey/>), Kate DeCiccio (<http://kdeciccio.wixsite.com/k8deciccio>), Rommy Torrico (<http://www.rommytorrico.com/>) and Munk One (<https://munkone.com/home/>), each featuring one of the activists.



Credit: Gates Foundation Discovery Center

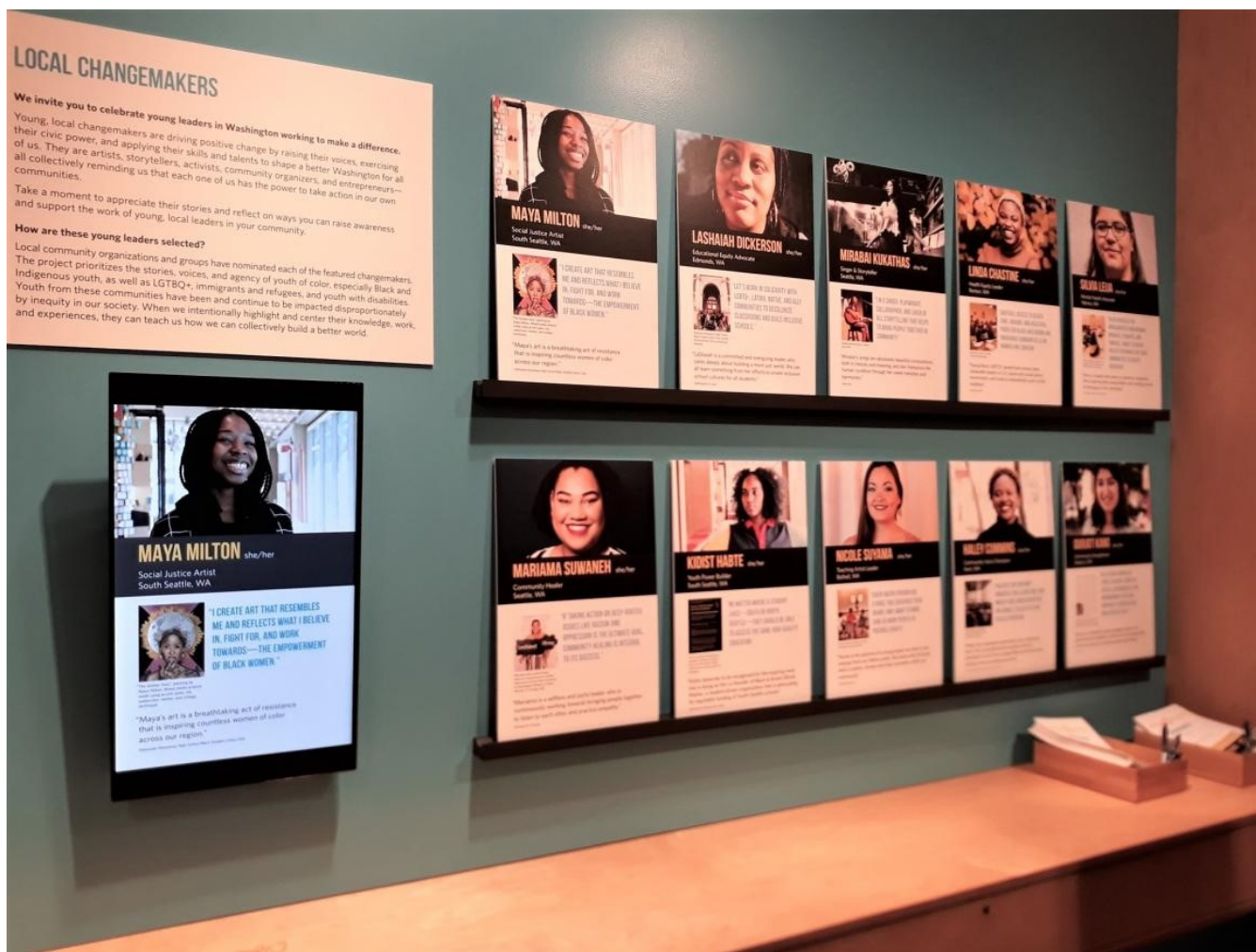
Special events

Numerous special events are scheduled throughout the exhibition, including “Queer Kid Stuff” a 45-minute performance, sing-along and story time for families on Nov. 9 at 11 a.m. (see below). Hosted by featured activist Lindsay Amer, “Queer Kid Stuff” is an all-ages LGBTQ+ and social justice web series that presents gender and sexuality concepts through songs, metaphors and stories.

That afternoon, Amer will join a youth-led gallery discussion. The discussion is one of a regular series of discussion sessions that will be held on Saturday afternoons,

roughly twice per month during the exhibition. Each discussion will focus on an issue addressed by one of the featured activists and will usually be led by one of the Youth Ambassadors involved in developing the exhibition. Keep an eye on the Gates Discovery Center's Facebook page for more events.

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Local youth changemakers featured at "We The Future" exhibit. Credit: Nancy Chaney

Teachers can bring their classes to the Discovery Center for [field trips](https://www.discovergates.org/exhibition/wethefuture/for-educators/) (<https://www.discovergates.org/exhibition/wethefuture/for-educators/>), and can register with Amplifier (<https://amplifier.org/call-for-educators/>) to receive lesson plans about the social movements featured in the exhibit.

If you go...

Where: The [Gates Foundation Discovery Center \(https://www.discovergates.org/\)](https://www.discovergates.org/) at Ave. N., Seattle (<https://www.google.com/maps/place/440+5th+Ave+N,+Seattle,+WA/@47.6226034,-122.3489793,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x54901547abf658c3:0x9baf5ffbe8e0d152!8m2!3d47.6226034!4d-122.3467906>), across the street from the east edge of Seattle Center and next to the Foundation offices. Note that there is no public access to the Gates Foundation off

When: The Discovery Center is open Tuesday–Saturday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. (closed Sunday and Mondays). “We The Future” is scheduled to be on view through March 21, 2020.

Admission: Admission to the Discovery Center is free.

Age recommendation: This exhibit and the entire Discovery Center is appropriate for all ages with interactive elements that will appeal to kids.

Parking: There is pay parking nearby in the [Seattle Center Fifth Avenue Garage \(http://www.seattlecenter.com/transportation/parking/fifth.aspx\)](http://www.seattlecenter.com/transportation/parking/fifth.aspx), in surface lots on Fifth Avenue street. Rates vary depending on events at Seattle Center. Consider taking [public transit \(https://tripplanner.kingcounty.gov/\)](https://tripplanner.kingcounty.gov/).

Upcoming special events:

Thursday, Nov. 7, 5:30–7:30 p.m.: [A Conversation with Artist and LGBTQ+ Activist Lindsay Amer \(https://www.facebook.com/events/558237024921004/\)](https://www.facebook.com/events/558237024921004/). Along with other youth leaders, Lindsay discusses the LGBTQ+ community, identity, allyship and diversity in education and media. Free and all ages.

Saturday, Nov. 9, 11–11:45 a.m.: [Family Performance: Queer Kid Stuff \(https://www.facebook.com/events/655877631600858/\)](https://www.facebook.com/events/655877631600858/). Join Lindsay Amer and her friend Teddy for songs and stories about LGBTQ+ heroes. Free and recommended for all ages, kids and families.

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BY GEMMA ALEXANDER (</AUTHOR/GEMMA-ALEXANDER>)

Seattle-based freelance writer Gemma Alexander focuses on the intersection of parenting and the arts. When she's not writing for "ParentMap," she blogs at gemmaealexander.com (<https://gemmaealexander.com/>) and tweets at [@gemmaealexander](#).

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