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We Raise New Jersey Announces Students Selected for New Leadership Program

Thirteen New Jersey high school students have been chosen to launch the coalition's first ever Youth Leadership Ambassador Program.

Trenton, NJ (October 9, 2020) – Under the leadership of member organization Parent Impact, the We Raise New Jersey coalition proudly announces the selection of thirteen outstanding high school students to participate in the Youth Leadership Ambassador (YLA) program. Parent Impact, alongside other coalition members and New Jersey parent and family volunteers, conducted a rigorous recruitment process to find a diverse, thoughtful, and transformative group of high school students from across the state. These students will serve as advisors to We Raise NJ and provide ongoing student input regarding educational and civic engagement issues, policies, and programs.

The seven students chosen to be YLAs will receive training and mentorship in civic engagement and education policy and will provide input and ideas to inform the coalition's advocacy agenda. As a result of the large pool of exceptional student applicants, Parent Impact developed an extension of the program for six additional students to act as Junior Ambassadors (JAs). Although Junior Ambassadors' commitment differs slightly, their input and contributions will be equally valued.

Congratulations to the following YLAs and JAs and thank you to all of the students who took the time to apply for this exciting new experience. We Raise NJ and Parent Impact are confident that this group of talented and inspiring students will contribute towards lasting improvements in policies and programs that help all New Jersey students.

Youth Leadership Ambassadors (YLAs)

- Kelly Wei, Sewell
- Lailah Berry, Irvington
- Leo McCartin, Jersey City
- Phanisree Akshinthala, Plainsboro
- Sejal Patel, Green Brook
- Stephanie Gonzalez, Newark
- Zackary Brown, Camden

Junior Youth Leadership Ambassadors (JAs)

- Joan Jatto, Newark
- Judith Jatto, Newark
- Katherine Lester, Jersey City

- Kofi Oduro-Manu, East Orange
- Omodesola Ademoye, Newark
- Saeed Bashiru, Newark

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About We Raise New Jersey: We Raise NJ advocates for the high-quality education every student deserves to be prepared for success in college, career, and community by harnessing the collective strength of New Jersey's influential education, business, and civic organizations. Coalition members include: African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey, Association of American Educators, JerseyCAN, New Jersey Business & Industry Association, New Jersey Chamber of Commerce Foundation, New Jersey Public Charter Schools Association, New Jersey Council of County Colleges, New Jersey PTA, Parent Impact, and Teach For America-NJ. For more information, visit <http://www.werajen.org>, and follow @WeRaiseNJ and <https://www.linkedin.com/company/we-raise-nj/>.

About Parent Impact: Parent Impact is a non-profit organization, led by Chief Executive Officers Tafshier Cosby and Jamilah Muhammad, who work to create opportunities where parents are partners and leaders in their communities. They achieve this by growing the number of parents and students engaged in advocacy to create greater outcomes for all children. For more information about Parent Impact, visit <https://www.parentimpact.org/>, and follow @parent_impact on Twitter.