

# AAAED Announces the 2021 Emerging Leader Award Honoree

*Maya Valcourt, a student at Jerome High School, Dublin, Ohio, will be recognized at the AAAED 47th National Conference and Awards Ceremony, October 15, 2021*

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, September 23, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The American Association for Access, Equity and Diversity ([AAAED](#)), an organization of equal opportunity, diversity and [affirmative action](#) professionals, announced that Maya Valcourt, a student at Jerome High School in Dublin, Ohio, will be recognized for her activities to support

AAAED and its efforts to promote equal opportunity through affirmative action. The AAAED Annual Awards Ceremony will be held on Friday, October 15, 2021 during the AAAED's 47th National Conference and Awards Ceremony (October 7 – 15, 2021), themed “Reflect, Reset and

Move Towards Justice, Equity and Inclusive Excellence.” The program will be held virtually from 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm ET and will be open to the press. “We are delighted to honor Maya Valcourt, a courageous and conscientious high school student who learned about the benefits of equal opportunity through affirmative action and took the initiative to support AAAED and its work,” said Dr. Richard Anthony Baker, president of AAAED.

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Maya is a role model for all of us and we therefore recognize her as an Emerging Leader of 2021.”

*Shirley J. Wilcher, AAAED  
Executive Director*

The AAAED Emerging Leader [Award](#) is presented to a rising trailblazer who demonstrates leadership in the workplace and/or community. This is the third year that the award will be conferred. Previous honorees include Dr. Nicholas D. Hartlep (2020) and Taylor Dumpson and Karina Garduno (2019).

Maya Valcourt, a student at Jerome High School, located in Dublin, Ohio, enrolled in a program called the International Baccalaureate Diploma. One of the included classes is called IB Global



Politics. This class inspired her to start her project about Affirmative Action when students were tasked with writing an essay about any political issue of their choosing. As a Haitian-American, diversity in schools and workplaces has always been important to her, and after some research, she landed on the topic of Affirmative Action. While writing her essay, she realized she wanted to actively spread more awareness in addition to simply learning about it.

She conducted a survey at her school and found that only about half of high schoolers know what Affirmative Action is. Learning this made her realize that there needed to be more emphasis on spreading awareness about increasing diversity and the programs used to do that. She applied the information she obtained to create a newscast about Affirmative Action, which was shown to the entire school district. Maya stated:

“After completing this part of my project, I realized that there was so much more I could do, so I started researching organizations that directly contribute to Affirmative Action programs. That is how I found out about the American Association for Access, Equity, and Diversity and realized that its goals and missions aligned perfectly with what I wanted to do. So, I sent letters to friends and family asking for donations to this worthy cause. In the end, I raised \$1,125.00, which I donated to the AAAED.”



AAAED Logo



Maya Valcourt, AAAED Emerging Leader

“AAAED is deeply grateful for Maya’s dedication and commitment to the principles of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and for her appreciation of the importance of affirmative action to promote equal opportunity for all,” added President Baker. “We were so touched by her activism and

generosity. Maya is a role model for all of us and we therefore recognize her as an Emerging Leader of 2021," added Shirley J. Wilcher, AAAED Executive Director.

The AAAED 47th National Conference and Awards Ceremony is open to the press. For more information or to register for the Conference, go to:

[https://www.aaed.org/aaed/Conference\\_Agenda1.asp](https://www.aaed.org/aaed/Conference_Agenda1.asp).

To purchase a ticket for the awards ceremony, or to be a sponsor, click here:

<https://www.aaed.org/aaed/Sponsorship.asp>

There is no charge for news media, but they are asked to register at

<https://web.cvent.com/event/b3824076-d018-4321-81ee-a0acb1498131/summary>

Founded in 1974 as the American Association for Affirmative Action (AAAA), AAAED is a national not-for-profit association of professionals working in the areas of equal opportunity, compliance and diversity. AAAED has 47 years of leadership in providing professional training to members, enabling them to be more successful and productive in their careers. It also promotes understanding and advocacy of affirmative action and other equal opportunity laws to enhance the tenets of access, inclusion and equality in employment, economic and educational opportunities. AAAED is the longest-serving organization for the Equal Opportunity Profession. Its tagline is "Advocate. Educate. Activate."

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American Association for Access, Equity and Diversity  
1701 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 200 \* Washington, D.C. 20006  
202-349-9855 \* 866-562-2233 \* Fax: 202-355-1399 \*  
[www.aaed.org](http://www.aaed.org)

Shirley J. Wilcher  
American Association for Access, Equity and Diversity  
+1 240-893-9475

[email us here](#)

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