

# National and Local Advocates for Children and Youth to Speak at the Symposium

*Advocates for children and youth will share inspiring stories at the Symposium on April 26, 2024*

TACOMA, WASHINGTON, UNITED STATES, April 11, 2024

/EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Symposium on Building a Child and Youth Centered Community](#) offers guests opportunities to learn from nationally renowned and local speakers on April 26, 2024. Calvin Mackie, PhD, is the Symposium's Keynote Speaker and will share the vital role people and resources play in the lives of children as they grow.

Joining him as event speakers are

Courtney Chandler, Maria Tobin, and Lindsey Hartman, who will present what their organizations do to support young people in Pierce County and provoke the audience to aspire about what actions they can take to make their neighborhoods better places for children and youth.

“

Pierce County is doing great work for children and youth!”

*Dr. Calvin Mackie of STEM NOLA*

The Symposium is a half-day conference that convenes community, business, and government leaders who are passionate about making positive changes in their city for children and youth. [Greentrike](#) has held the Symposium annually since 2014 to shine a spotlight on individuals and organizations that work with children and youth and engage guests with thoughtful activities.

“Pierce County is doing great work for children and youth,” said Dr. Calvin Mackie of STEM NOLA. “I’m eager to share my experience building programs for young people and communities and connect with and learn from passionate community members at the Symposium.”

Dr. Calvin Mackie is the founder and CEO of STEM NOLA, a non-profit organization created to expose, inspire, and engage communities in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics



(STEM) opportunities. STEM NOLA has engaged over 125,000 K-12 students in hands-on, project-based STEM activities.

The Symposium will also feature three 20-minute presentations, known as Lightning Talks, where audiences can draw inspiration from organizations that provide support and resources for children and youth in Pierce County. The following are the 2024 Symposium Lightning Talk Speakers.

Courtney Chandler is a Co-Founder of SUN Alliance, a community group focused on enhancing safety and connections in the South End Tacoma Neighborhood. Courtney also serves as the teen mental health first aid coordinator at the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department and has created and taught social-emotional learning programs in schools and trained educators on implementing restorative practices.

Maria Tobin is an Army Veteran, a military spouse, and the program coordinator with the South Sound Military and Communities Partnership (SSMCP). Tobin leads several working groups within SSMCP, convening local and state-level stakeholders within mental health care, social services, education, housing, and childcare.

Lindsey Hartman is a special education teacher by trade and the current Interim Executive Director at A Step Ahead in Pierce County. During her presentation, Lindsey will share considerations for inclusivity for children with developmental delays and disabilities.

Additionally, Pierce County students will lend their voices on issues important to young people during the Symposium Youth Panel. The Youth Panel includes students from middle school to college and will be facilitated by Elvin Bucu, event MC and founder of Bucu Consulting.

"Students from the youth panel will share inspiring examples of what it means to use your voice



Community members discuss ideas to improve their neighborhoods for children and youth



Guests create art at the symposium

to enact change," said Becca Schrack, child and youth centered communities manager at Greentrike. "Youth voice is an important part of this work. I look forward to hearing the panel's perspectives and empowering attendees to consider their opinions."

The Symposium is an event where people can learn how to make meaningful changes in their community and connect with influential leaders who share this vision. For more information, to register, or to support the Symposium visit [CYCSymposium.org](https://CYCSymposium.org).

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