

Following Their Lead: Bay Area Students Inform \$1.5M Investment in Youth Power Building

Shifting dollars and decisions to youth to catalyze student-centered systems change

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, USA, July 25, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Youth are “the future,” yet they often lack the financial and positional power to change policy and educational systems. At a time when students are advocating for change despite facing arrest and detention for their organizing efforts—from student encampments across college campuses nationwide calling for peace in Gaza to youth-powered movements for climate change—we must commit to funding organizations working to build student political power.

Stupski Foundation is providing \$1.5 million to five youth-led organizations dedicated to building student power in the Bay Area. Because students are the most knowledgeable about the supports they need, we want young people to inform the decisions about where the dollars go. As Malila Becton-Consuegra, Bay Area postsecondary program officer at Stupski Foundation, shared, “It occurred to us that we were making important funding choices with little input from young people. Recognizing the wealth of knowledge and insight that they have, we felt compelled to redistribute power and involve students, youth and young adults in the decision-making process.”

Through an [open request for proposals](#) and a collaborative grantmaking process co-designed with a student committee of nine Bay Area students and transition-aged youth that evaluated each grant application, the following organizations received funds:

- Black Organizing Project
- Energy Convertors
- East Oakland Youth Development Center
- My Other Brother
- Urban Peace Movement

Each organization works with youth in San Francisco and Alameda Counties and employs or is otherwise led by young people in the community. These organizations’ youth leadership work covers a range of systemic issues that disproportionately impact young people of color, including trauma and toxic stress, violence and mass incarceration, and economic and educational justice.

Malaika Parker, executive director of the Black Organizing Project (BOP), emphasizes that investing in youth power building and organizing makes schools more accountable to students.

“Oakland’s school system will be accountable to Black students when an informed base of young people organize together to demand their rights be upheld as decision-makers. BOP is proud to support Oakland’s Black students, families, and community as leaders, strategists, activists, and organizers who will make this vision a reality.”

The grantee selection process was a collective effort, with young people at the center. The student committee’s leadership was invaluable in creating a community-centered, accessible, and equitable grantmaking process. In addition, the [Youth Power Fund](#), a participatory grantmaking project investing in 32 youth power organizations, provided helpful guidance on the landscape of resourcing youth organizing movements. Its comprehensive example of investing in this space allowed us to build our grantmaking on the foundation the fund set. [Learn more about the Youth Power Fund.](#)

This cohort of youth power building organizations demonstrates the bright future that is possible when we fully invest in youth leadership. Learn more about each organization’s transformational work with Bay Area youth.

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Stupski Foundation is a private foundation returning its assets to the communities it calls home in Hawai‘i and the San Francisco Bay Area by 2029 to support just and resilient food, health, and higher education systems for all. Learn more at stupski.org.

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