

REAL STORIES REAL IMPACT

Inspiring Youth To Succeed



What does LIVE UNITED mean to the Gregg House Youth Venture Kids?

“That even a kid can create real change in our community.”

– C.J., age 12

In a quiet corner of the Gregg Neighborhood House in Lynn, a group of bright-eyed 8-12 year-olds are brimming to speak about subjects that they've grown passionate about: entrepreneurship, volunteerism, community activism, working on a business plan with young professionals from Boston and their very, very ambitious plans for the future.

“The Open Hands project is aimed at beautifying our community,” says Michad, age 12. “We are creating trash barrels with beautiful designs on them to make people keep our city clean.” “It’s a way to get kids involved in doing something good, while making the rest of our community take notice and take pride,” chimes in Ariana, age 8. More than 70 kids from different Lynn schools are participating in Open Hands.

“The people from Deloitte have been so wonderful working with the kids,” says Micheal, Team Ally from Gregg House, referring to the young professionals from United Way’s Emerging Leaders group who are mentoring the group.

Each year, through Youth Venture, United Way solicits grant applications from young social entrepreneurs wishing to launch their own community service projects. The selected teams work closely with mentors from Emerging Leaders to write a business plan which they later present to area business leaders and United Way Board Members. The Venture Advisors provide ongoing support and guidance as the kids put their plan into action. Twelve youth-run community projects are currently underway in Lynn, Malden, Chelsea and Boston.

“I get to do something good, but I am also learning a lot about how to run a business or work with lots of other people to get something done,” says C.J., age 12. Juneé, age 12, adds to the thought. “You need a lot more than just good grades to get into Harvard or Yale, which is where we want to go,” she says.

As the rest of the group smiles in support, it’s clear that Youth Venture has yet another positive result: showing kids that if they set their mind to it, there’s no limit to how far they can go.

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