

Unleashing the
Unique Influence
of
Young RP Advocates
in the Movement !

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IIRP World Conference
Expanded version of October 28, 2015 Presentation

YOUNG PEOPLE TEACHING RESTORATIVE PRACTICES TO . . .

- PEERS
- YOUNGER PEERS
- PARENTS
- and POLICYMAKERS

POTENTIAL IMPACT:

- REAL WORLD LEADERSHIP
- ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP
- ADVOCACY ENGINE

**The CIRCLE
offers an ideal OPPORTUNITY to INVITE
THINKING about SYSTEMIC CHANGE
beyond one's CLASSROOM or SCHOOL.**

- **What restorative practices would you like your brothers and sisters to experience at school?**
- **What restorative practices would you like every student in the school district to experience?**
- **What restorative practices would you like to see in youth groups and other community organizations?**

Here are just a few examples of students
--often collaborating with adults--
leading multi-year campaigns
asking their decision makers
to stop the school-to-prison pipeline
& fund restorative practices
to replace punitive discipline policies.

Interviews & Research by Wendy Lesko
of the Youth Activism Project

ALEXANDRIA UNITED TEENS



Photo by [Vernon Milles](#)

These young advocates in Northern Virginia...

Convinced School Board to
fund restorative practices



Meetings with
Superintendent to push for
RP pilot program



Continue to advocate for
RP implementation

Students meeting with Superintendent and waiting to testify before School Board



Photos by Wendy Lesko

High School Advocate Glancy Rosales with Alexandria United Teens:

“Please make sure youth and community, the people who are most harmed by suspensions, are very involved implementing restorative justice. We ask you to make sure we get to work with the District to implement restorative justice. As we know, school systems are strongest when we work in partnership and when the voices of youth and community are heard and respected.”

Article by two other AUT leaders in
[**EBONY** magazine](#) (April 2015)

ORLANDO ARMSTEAD

Washington, D.C.

Orlando experienced multiple suspensions and then dropped out. This recent graduate of an alternative high school has testified before both the City Council and the Schools Chancellor to push for full funding for restorative practices.

In addition to advocating in the public policy arena, Orlando did an “Emergency RP” at home after his mother's arrest which he describes as “my first conversation with her.”

ORLANDO ARMSTEAD

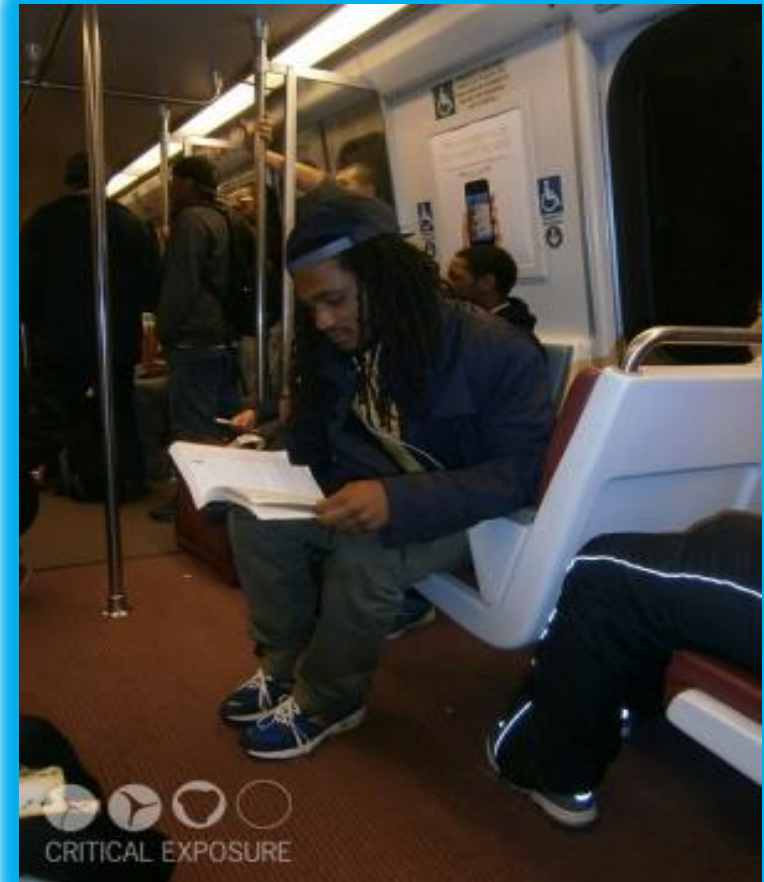
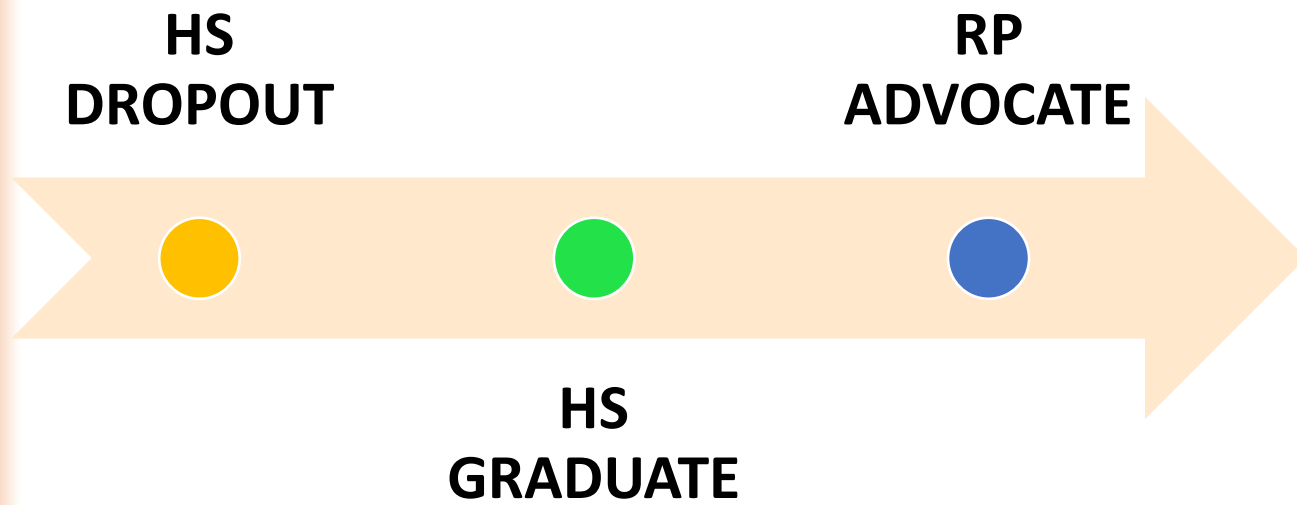


Photo by Orlando Armstead

Orlando & Other Students Testifying D.C. City Council Education Committee



Photo by [Critical Exposure](#)

**ORLANDO and other young advocates
with Critical Exposure convinced city officials
to fund RP programs in D.C. schools.**

**“We show up at budget hearings.
We were the only youth.
We are still in high school.
Our testimony was more powerful.
We are living it every day.
Speaking—our testimony—that’s what keeps me
moving for personal and systemic change.”**

Voices of Youth in Chicago Education

[http://voyceproject.org/
research-findings-
solutions/](http://voyceproject.org/research-findings-solutions/)



VOYCE

**First Participatory
Action Research
Report**



VOYCE @ Mayor's Office

Each advocate holds a poster of a student who was suspended.
Media attention contributed to this victory by VOYCE to get the Student Code of Conduct changed to ban out of school suspensions for non-violent offenses.



Photo by VOYCE Project

VOYCE Press Conference & Rally



Photo by VOYCE Project

Grounding Principles of Restorative Justice (Chicago Consortium)

**“Recognizes the
capability of those
most impacted by
conflict, especially
youth, to lead the
change.”**

Victorious Student Activists with State Legislator after many trips to Capitol



Photo by VOYCE Project

Illinois Governor Signs Sweeping School Discipline Bill Championed by Students

(August 2015)

**[Read more about new state law in
Education Week](#)**

“All of VOYCE’s work is driven by the belief that the people most directly affected by the problem must be the ones to develop meaningful, long-lasting solutions.”

VOYCE receives **2015 Power of Community Award** **from Chicago Neighborhood Development**



Photo by VOYCE Project

RP ADVOCATES IN ACTION

2-Minute Video about VOYCE

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V9rC_eFDTyU&feature=youtu.be

Core Principles for Engaging Young People in Community Change:

“Adult change makers focused in shaping policy, improving services and building demand need to do more than engage young people in focus groups or invite a select few to offer advice...

They should make sure that young people are engaged not just for the experience but for the results. They need to find effective ways to involve large numbers of youth in their core work.”

Forum for Youth Investment (July 2007)

Mobilizing this Movement “with” Youth

- 1) EXPLORE STRATEGIES TO AMPLIFY YOUTH VOICES & STORIES WHICH WILL INSPIRE OTHERS TO TAKE A STAND**
- 2) ENCOURAGE MEANINGFUL—NOT TOKEN--YOUTH ENGAGEMENT WITH SCHOOL BOARDS, LAW ENFORCEMENT AND OTHER POLICYMAKERS**
- 3) DEVELOP SCHOLARSHIPS, GRANTS & OTHER INCENTIVES TO RECOGNIZE THEIR UNIQUE & INFLUENTIAL IMPACT**

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