



UTAH GLOBAL DIPLOMACY

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LOCAL YOUNG LEADERS TO BE RECOGNIZED FOR GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AND IMPACT

Salt Lake City, UT - Utah Global Diplomacy will recognize seven young leaders in Utah for their outstanding contributions in promoting sustainable development. The 7 for 17 Award recognizes exceptional youth, aged 14-32, who are actively addressing critical issues such as climate change, social justice, poverty, economic growth, and health and wellbeing. The awardees will be honored at the Utah Global Diplomacy Changemakers Symposium held at the Miller Conference Center in Sandy, Utah on October 7, 2023.

The 2023 honorees include (honoree bios attached):

- Eliza Hunter, Brigham Young University student and student ambassador at Utah Period Project
- Anika Rao, University of Utah political science student
- Jakey Sala Siolo, YWCA Utah senior engagement & major gift officer
- José Manuel González Vera, Utah State University doctoral student
- Gabriella Miranda, Rowland Hall High School student
- Daniel Romer-Guerrero, community health worker and Alliance Community Services COVID equity & health literacy program supervisor
- Ruby Vejar, Weber State University student

Each 7 for 17 Award recipient has a proven record of leadership and dedication to sustainable development goals. This year's honorees are pioneering research and driving movements that impact and improve lives in Utah and across the globe.

"Young people have an incredible energy and desire to help their communities," said Kara Vail, Utah Global Diplomacy youth program director. "The Global Changemakers Symposium brings youth together to share ideas and inspire action. It also provides an opportunity for youth to learn how to turn an idea into action in their communities and across the globe"



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The 2023 symposium theme is The Ripple Effect, which highlights the transformative power of small actions. Just like ripples on water, youth can effect change in their environments. The symposium will empower youth to share their stories and inspire innovative projects while connecting with business and nonprofit leaders as well as elected officials, and entrepreneurs working to address sustainable development in Utah.

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About Utah Global Diplomacy:

Utah Global Diplomacy is committed to promoting respect and understanding between the people of Utah and other nations. This is done through citizen diplomacy - the concept that every individual has the right, even the responsibility, to help shape U.S. foreign relations by connecting with each other one handshake at a time. Utah Global Diplomacy applies citizen diplomacy efforts through its International Exchange Programs (in partnership with the U.S. State Department), World Affairs Lectures, Dialogues, & Conversations, and its Young Diplomats of Utah program. You can join Utah Global Diplomacy's community and conversations at www.utahglobaldiplomacy.org or by emailing info@utahglobaldiplomacy.org.



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7 for 17 Award Honoree Bios:

ANIKA RAO - QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Anika Rao is a first-year student at The University of Utah studying Political Science and Quantitative Analysis of Markets and Organizations. As a first-generation Indian immigrant to the United States, she has observed systemic inequity in developing and developed nations. Her interest in social and economic justice stems from these observations. Anika believes that solving the multifaceted issues of inequity requires not only interdisciplinary knowledge and collaboration but also a clear articulation of these complex concepts.

JAKEY SALA SIOLO - NO POVERTY

Jakey Siolo is a Queer Sāmoan community & political organizer and advocate. Jakey oversees case management and advocacy for Pacific Island Knowledge 2 Action Resources (PIK2AR) and has made an impact working with NHPI survivors of domestic violence and trauma. Their approach violence prevention from a cultural lens, navigating culture, gender, and identities as pathways to find healing. In addition to their work with the Pacific Islander community, Jakey is the Senior Engagement & Major Gift Officer at YWCA Utah, leading efforts in fundraising & events to support YWCA Utah's mission of eliminating racism and empowering women and all marginalized communities. Jakey is also the Director of Nuanua Collective, Utah's only organization for LGBTQ+ Native Hawaiian & Pacific Islanders, whose focus is creating an ocean of opportunities, support, and empowerment for LGBTQ+ Pacific Islanders in Utah.

JOSÉ MANUEL GONZÁLEZ VERA - REDUCED INEQUALITY

Jose Manuel Gonzalez Vera is a doctoral student at Utah State University, working under the mentorship of Dr. Melanie Domenech Rodríguez. His research interests involve improving the psychological well-being of undocumented people. Through his research, Jose Manuel plans to make psychological interventions more accessible to undocumented people. His passion for working with the undocumented community stems from his work with the Latine community, his review of literature on undocumented Latines, and his own experience as an undocumented Mexicano.

GABRIELLA MIRANDA - GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Gabriella Miranda is a Senior at Rowland Hall High School where she works with advocacy centers around reproductive justice, racial equality, gender equity, and cultivating empowerment



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through education and intersectionality. Within her community, she works as an educator for Planned Parenthood as a member of their peer-led sex ed council, serves on the American Institute of Research national "Youth Engaged 4 Change" editorial board, creates content for other youth advocates, and is a member of the United Nations "Girl Up" Teen Advisory Board. Gabriella has served on the Attorney General's Youth Advisory Committee, worked for the Library of Congress and for Alliance for a Better Utah.

DANIEL ROMER-GUERRERO - GENDER EQUALITY

Daniel is a trans-masculine immigrant from Guadalajara, Jalisco, living in Salt Lake City, pursuing Gender, Ethnic, & Disability Studies. Passionate about community service and community-facing efforts, he uses his knowledge and access to resources as a consultant developing Conexion Consulting. Daniel is also a community health worker with Alliance Community Services, primarily serving the Hispanic/Latine population, overseeing COVID equity and health literacy programming through outreach, prevention, and client navigation. Partnering across multiple agencies, he is developing connections targeting identified gaps in services. Additionally, Daniel sits on the Board of Directors for Utah's LGBTQ+ Chamber of Commerce as the Ambassador Chair, where he serves LGBTQ+ and allied small businesses with a focus on leadership and economic empowerment.

RUBY VEJAR - ZERO HUNGER

As a first-generation student and elected student senator at Weber State University, Ruby has impacted many lives through her commitment to art and community service. Ruby's involvement spans a broad spectrum of clubs and initiatives, where she offers free art classes, family photos, music lessons, and scholarships to support low-income families and even strangers. Growing up, Ruby experienced firsthand the hardships of food insecurity and its toll on families. This personal experience has fueled her determination to ensure that no one she encounters has to endure the same heartache her family faced years ago. She collaborates with the Center for Community Engaged Learning, contributing her time serving in the college pantry, acting as a mentor to her peers, and serving on the Utah System of Higher Education Student Advisory Council, with a specialization in addressing accessibility and poverty-related issues. Her dedication also led to an invitation to join the UServe Utah College Council.



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ELIZA HUNTER - GENDER EQUALITY

Eliza Hunter fights to combat period poverty in Utah through her service as a Student Ambassador with the Utah Period Project. Working with school administrators and Utah legislators, she promoted Utah House Bill 162: Period Products in Schools, which passed unanimously. This bill was a public-private partnership that required Utah public schools and other public entities to supply free menstrual products in restrooms. She received an honorable mention for her work with the Period Project and currently attends Brigham Young University.