



JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT OF ARIZONA PRESENTS

18 UNDER 18

The Best and The Brightest of 2022





Entrepreneurial Spirit
Leadership
Making the Community Better
Extraordinary Skillset

A Note

From the JA President



Dear JA Family,

Even in our wildest imaginations, we likely couldn't have scripted the realities of 2022. We are in an age of incredible refinement, reflection, innovation, hurt, healing and trailblazing. As I think about the next few decades, I am excited to imagine not only what today's students have in store for us, but what our futures hold because they are among us.

Our JA 18 Under 18 awards are an opportunity to hit pause and showcase the incredibly resiliency, commitment, tenacity and spirit of our next generation. The aggregate impact of these 18 students rivals that of people decades older. Today, we recognize 18 young leaders who represent the vibrant youth in Arizona – they will give you confidence that our tomorrows are in the right hands.

Who are these young leaders? Each year, we set out to determine the young people who represent the future, changemakers and innovators throughout the state. At Junior Achievement, we get to see this young potential in action every day. During this school year alone, we will have played a part in the futures of 90,000 AZ students and we were rewarded by the gift of their ambition, limitless thinking and capacity to step into their potential. We have the privilege of equipping them with the skills and education they need to succeed in work and life, and the belief in the possibilities of tomorrow. What an honor it is to play a role in creating a more equitable and just future for the next generation! And a joy to highlight these young teens who will surely harness those future opportunities.

As we recognize the 5th annual JA 18 Under 18 Awards, we want to give particular emphasis on their accomplishments amidst the greatest uncertainty of their lives. Every year, the caliber grows and they go on to inspire the students behind them (and the adults as well!). In fact, this year, we are recognizing a sibling or two from previous recipients! With now nearly 100 recipients moving on into adulthood, their impact magnifies by the day!

To this year's 18 recipients – congratulations! You give us hope and confidence in the future. We commission you to be better, do better and lead us into a fruitful, innovate future where everyone is afforded opportunity.

Without further ado, we are very excited to share this year's amazing JA's 18 Under 18. We encourage you to read on and learn about each of them. Thank you for caring about Arizona's future and supporting our youth. We are so grateful you are part of the JA Family.

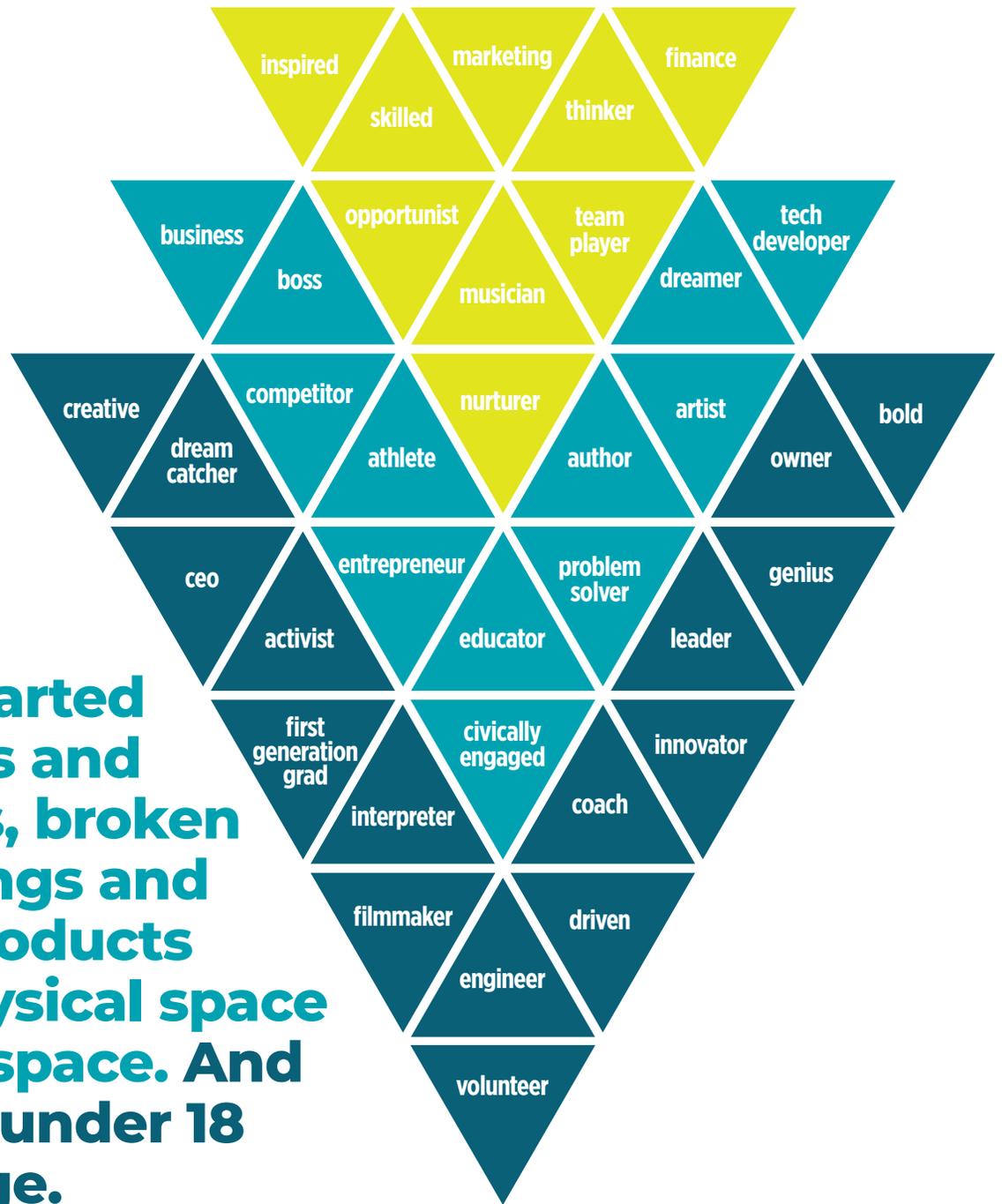
Katherine K Cecala

President, Junior Achievement of Arizona

Thank You

To our generous sponsors for believing in the next generation of leaders and supporting JA's 18 Under 18.





They've started businesses and nonprofits, broken glass ceilings and created products for the physical space and cyberspace. And they're all under 18 years of age.

Meet the Junior Achievement 2022 18 Under 18. These Arizonans distinguish themselves with their creativity, passion and drive.

What unites the Class of 2022 is their almost singular ability to find inspiration and motivation from hardship. Whether it was the pure isolation that came from COVID-19, the death of a pet, or the recognition that they were unlike others around them; the Class of 2022 has used their creativity, generosity and entrepreneurial spirit to make a difference in Arizona and beyond.

Read their stories, and don't be surprised if you feel a little inspired yourself.

Meet Arizona's 18 Under 18



Jessica Burke
Chandler



Ashley Nevison
Scottsdale



Hurshneet Chadha
Peoria



Theresa O'Connor
Tempe



Claira Chong
Phoenix



Eduardo Rangel
Phoenix



Sonya Colattur
Glendale



Eden Sapien
Phoenix



Karasi Colter
Phoenix



Prisha Shroff
Chandler



Charlotte Gould
Tempe



Sripriya Srinivas
Phoenix



Mihira Karnik
Chandler



Mallika Sunder
Tucson



Jenna Lee
Chandler



Ivanna Viloría Enciso
Tucson



Arun Moorthy
Scottsdale



Radia Wong
Scottsdale



Jessica Burke

Age 16 | Sophomore
Hamilton High School | Chandler

An aspiring food scientist, Hamilton High School sophomore Jessica Burke is discovering that some of our most valuable and most meaningful interactions come over our shared love of food.

There's a certain thrill that comes from getting reader responses to your blog but for Jessica Burke, this might have been different. Her cooking blog, Otium Eats, was her outlet for talking about her passion, cooking. But the reader questions? They tapped into something special.

When someone across the globe asked, "Why do onions make you cry?" a simple Google search wouldn't suffice for Burke. She really wanted to know why – what the chemical reaction was, how that physically took form. She was, at heart, a scientist.

"I've always loved to cook," said Burke, 16, a sophomore at Hamilton High School. "Most specifically, what I love about cooking is food science."

Otium Eats now gets about a half-million visits a month from readers in 90 countries. Her first post was about a chicken marinade. And while the posts might educate her audience, Burke says the give-and-take she's getting from her readers might be the most rewarding part.

"The questions' part is what drives me to keep writing; it's always been the inspiration," she said. "Recipes can be very complicated. There's a lot of different vocabulary. I think what's really interesting is how different ingredients interact – emulsions, how to create them."

During the pandemic, Burke reached out to Native Health, a group that works with the Navajo community, to see if she could be of help. She discovered that while food donations were plentiful, many donations were food ingredients that people didn't know how to use. So, Burke did some research and wrote recipes using the commonly donated ingredients.

Her creativity didn't stop there. Burke said her favorite recipe creation is her air-fried pumpkin shakarparas, an Indian diamond-shaped cookie. She's trying new recipes out on her family, too, before she publishes.

"I just cooked a meal last night," she said. "I made teriyaki salmon and my own recipe for a cabbage slaw salad."





Hurshneet Chadha

Age 16 | Junior
Mountain Ridge High School | Peoria

With an army of volunteers helping to spread his message of positivity, Mountain Ridge junior Hurshneet Chadha is getting a firsthand lesson in the power of positivity.

There was a lot to be depressed about in 2020. But rather than dwell on all the sadness, Hurshneet Chadha saw the pandemic as an opportunity. His infectious optimism has ignited a movement of positivity across the world.

“In the spring of 2020, we had the pandemic,” said Chadha, 16, a junior at Mountain Ridge High School. “My parents are both doctors. We got a very intimate experience dealing with the problems doctors and healthcare workers and patients experienced. And we wanted to help.”

Chadha’s solution was Project Smile AZ. It started small: Chadha and his family, at home, using the craft supplies they had available, to make cards (“smiles”) sending well-wishes to those affected by the pandemic.

“Over time,” he said, “it expanded exponentially.”

The smiles begot more smiles, and more and more people wanted to contribute to uplift their communities. Chadha and his brother

have committed themselves to the Project Smile AZ mission. They’ve now established the organization as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

“We have over 1,000 Smile-Makers around the world,” Chadha said. “We’ve grown the project from that vision to make everyone smile. We started getting all these calls and emails and we realized we’d built something. We realized how much of an impact positivity could have. We haven’t strayed from that original project.”

Chadha has received feedback from everyone ranging from patients to hospital management, all sending gratitude for the acknowledgement and kindness.

Now, Chadha is working on digital smiles over social media – he calls it his “smile army.”

“We’re building up people and inspiring them to make a difference in the world around them,” Chadha said.





Claira Chong

Age 17 | Junior
Xavier College Preparatory | Phoenix

Realizing that there was a dearth of practical, life-skills education for girls, Claira Chong decided to create her own forum. EmpowHerX, the high school junior’s creation, holds monthly meetings on topics ranging from personal finance to safety.

Reading, writing and arithmetic are all important – there’s no denying that. But Claira Chong saw that the everyday curriculum high school students received wasn’t providing the practical knowledge students really needed when they entered adulthood.

Together with a friend, Chong founded EmpowHerX in 2010. The club for girls has monthly meetings on topics ranging from personal finance to self-defense, all covered by annual dues of \$75.

“We realized that there was a pretty significant gap in practical knowledge, life knowledge,” said Chong, 17, a junior at Xavier College Preparatory. “We’re doing this totally independently. This is a community-wide organization, so we have a wide variety of members, girls from different schools. This is important information for our lives.”

Past sessions have offered guidance on college finances, understanding consumer credit and professional networking. Based on member feedback, the group also has expanded monthly topics to include cultural and societal topics.

“Most recently we spoke with a woman who emigrated to the United States when she was 15. She’s from Montenegro,” Chong said. “She talked to us about her experience getting adopted to the American culture.”

EmpowHerX currently has 45 members and accepts new members throughout the year.

“There have been a lot of great things coming out of being able to start an organization from the ground up, having a dream and making it a reality,” Chong said. “Now we’re seeing the needs of our members and adapting to that.”





Sonya Colattur

Age 15 | Sophomore
Xavier College Preparatory | Glendale

Supporting a pet on a fixed income can be a challenge. Sophomore Sonya Colattur founded GrandPaws Pantry to make sure seniors have a way to feed their beloved pets.

There's a reason man's best friend got that nickname. Pets are an inextricable part of our lives – some might say indispensable. But for seniors living on a fixed income, the costs of owning a pet can become prohibitive.

Xavier College Preparatory sophomore Sonya Colattur has a solution. Her creation, GrandPaws Pantry, provides free dog and cat food for seniors so they don't need to decide between their pets' health and their own.

Colattur says her nonprofit steps in where the math simply doesn't work.

"One of the seniors that I know in a facility is named Carol," said Colattur, 15. "After paying for her medical expenses, cost of living, et cetera, she only has \$19 a month to provide additional care for herself and her cat. One box of Friskies is \$22."

Colattur founded GrandPaws Pantry in 2016 when she was only 10 years old. Today, it's earned official 501(c)(3) nonprofit status and has an annual budget of approximately \$30,000.

Colattur estimates that 57 seniors currently receive benefits from the pantry.

"Because of the amount of pet food, which is the largest expense, I do a lot of fundraising," Colattur said. "In the last few months there's been over 1,000 pounds of pet food that we've pushed out. It's definitely expanded a lot."

The next stage for GrandPaws Pantry? Expansion and innovation.

"The pantry itself is completely operated out of my house. The size of it consists of my parents' garage," Colattur said, chuckling. "I've explored the idea of paying for a storage facility."

Along with the pantry, she is currently working on multiple other projects, including one where she creates an online platform that provides a safe place for multi-cultural youth called The Color of Us.

Colattur is also simultaneously raising money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society and has raised over \$2,500 already!





Karasi Colter

Age 17 | Senior
Betty H. Fairfax High School | Phoenix

Where most citizens look away, Karasi Colter dives in. Her work to bring assistance to and raise awareness about homelessness in the Valley makes this Phoenix senior one of the state's rising youth leaders.

The economic consequences of the coronavirus pandemic have made the challenges of homelessness more pronounced and evident. Karasi Colter, a senior at Betty H. Fairfax High School in Phoenix, is reaching out to the homeless community, one "Dignity Bag" at a time.

Through her volunteer work with DSquared Homes for the Homeless, Colter has become a leading advocate for the homeless in south Phoenix and the greater Valley despite being only 17 years old.

"I got started at quite a young age, 6 or 7 years old," Colter said. "That was through my mom explaining what homelessness is, explaining it all to me. All I could understand was being hungry."

Colter sees her mission as two-pronged, and parallel: to personally get assistance to the homeless in Phoenix while also raising awareness and erasing the stigmas associated with homelessness.

"The most common stigma that I hear is that

everyone who's homeless is on drugs," Colter said. "It's important to know that a lot of people who are homeless are seriously mentally ill. Or, they're working and homeless – they simply have a housing issue. I met a man who couldn't pay his housing bill after a hospital discharge."

Ultimately, Colter's goal is seeing the humanity within all of us. Through her volunteer work with DSquared, she organizes groups to assemble and distribute Dignity Bags. About the size of a grocery bag, the Dignity Bags can be carried on your back and contain soap, lotion, shampoo, toothpaste, a toothbrush, sanitary pads, wet wipes and snacks.

Colter has recruited volunteers as well as corporate involvement, including donations from United Healthcare, Bombas and Hanes.

"Although these people are on the street, when you pass them every day it can become easy to see them as another thing on the road," Colter said. "Acknowledge these people as a human, see the humanity in this person. Your generosity never goes unnoticed."





Charlotte Gould

Age 14 | 8th Grade

Kyrene Aprende Middle School | Tempe

With a simple needle and thread, children across the globe are getting an important boost of confidence. They have Tempe middle-schooler Charlotte Gould, and her creativity, to thank for it.

We think of them as having two very distinct meanings, but when you really think about it, the words “different” and “special” kind of mean the same thing. Not of the norm. Imagine having a child who bears the physical and emotional scars of a birth defect or an injury. How do you get them across the bridge from “different” to “special”?

Charlotte Gould can speak from experience. An eighth-grader at Kyrene Aprende Middle School, Gould isn’t just another 14-year-old. She’s not just another child who was born with a cleft lip and palate. She’s not just another entrepreneur, either. She’s special.

“I got a sewing machine right before I turned 7 years old,” Gould said. “It was, in truth, a complete surprise. But it was one of the best gifts I’ve ever gotten.”

Gould tried a starter pattern for beginner-sewers. It was for a rag doll. She followed the pattern, built the body, added braids and glasses, and then decided on a final flourish to complete the personalization.

“I thought to myself, ‘What if it looks exactly like me?’” Gould said. “So, I embroidered my scar. And that’s how it came to be!”

Charlotte added a small pink scar above the doll’s smile, and she knew she had something special. Her doll, boasting the same perfect imperfections that she did, came with her everywhere. When Gould learned that her dance teacher was about to have a baby with half a heart, Gould had an idea: She would make the baby a doll.

“But this time, the stitches were on the chest,” Gould explained.

It caught on. Other kids at the hospital wanted a doll that looked like them, and Stitches by Charlotte was born. Today, children can buy a doll from Gould and then, when it arrives, customize it with their own stitches (with an included, kid-safe needle and thread). To date, Gould has sold approximately 900 dolls for kids across the globe.





Mihira Karnik

Age 16 | Junior

Arizona College Prep High School | Chandler

What happens when you combine a talented chef and a scientist? You get Mihira Karnik. This junior at Arizona College Prep High School doesn't just want food to be delicious, she wants to know when it has reached its peak nutritional state.

Teenagers are not exactly well regarded for their culinary pursuits. Mihira Karnik is special, not only for her affinity for – and talents with – cooking, but also her scientific approach to cooking and nutrition. She just might change the way you eat someday.

“When I was in sixth grade I noticed a lot of food problems with my family,” Karnik, 16, said. “Me and my mom had really weak stomachs. I wanted to see why this was happening. Basically, as you cook your food, cell walls break down and vegetables become easier to digest but you don't get nutrients from it.”

Karnik, a junior at Arizona College Prep High School, got to work developing a smart cooking device. She worked with a professor at ASU, filed for a patent and co-founded the company, MAAI Health.

“The sweet spot in cooking is ‘Give me your vegetables but let's make sure you get nutrients,’” Karnik said. “I've kept researching this idea until now, basically. It started with looking into onions. Now I'm

looking at other vegetables.”

Karnik's prototype alerts a user when their vegetables are properly cooked, maximizing the nutritional value while also finding that “sweet spot” for those folks who have sensitive stomachs.

Karnik has started creating videos offering nutrition tips and other information about food and health. She's also thinking about developing and marketing her cooking pot.

“I do want to market my product,” she said. “Right now, I'm most focused on creating the videos. Starting to market my product, that's my ‘What's next?’”

What's next indeed. Karnik, a student of many talents, is also the lead on a project called EcoClamp. This project has a technology-based program that would detect items that are recyclable before being thrown away.

Karnik plans to use her love for science to ultimately, change the world.





Jenna Lee

Age 18 | Senior
BASIS Chandler | Chandler

Talk to Jenna Lee about leadership, and you'll hear stories about listening, collaboration and sacrifice. This senior from BASIS Chandler looks back fondly on the opportunities her city and community provided.

Jenna Lee is one of those students who would have difficulty listing all her activities on a single sheet of paper.

With a dedication to spread kindness and compassion, Lee took to her school board and created a project that promotes courage called "Bathroom Beautification Project". Not only is she involved in school, but she founded a community initiative and raised money for underfunded high schools in Arizona.

While working three jobs, being involved in school, she is simultaneously interning for the City of Chandler as one of the first youth interns who is running the "State of the City" update. With all the projects Lee has worked on, she found a passion for government and policy.

Families who recently emigrated to the United States from Korea consult Lee for advice on the transition to American schools. Administrators at BASIS Chandler, Lee's school, select her for tasks that require diplomatic-caliber communication skills.

When Lee, 18, looks back on it, she sees a resume with a common thread: Listening.

It's the foundation she says, for any leader.

"I feel like I have a different approach to leadership and the way I approach the different aspects of my life and clubs I join," she said. "I take a lighthearted, friendly approach. Instead of being the loudest person in the room, I want to be a friend, a positive influence on people. I try to prioritize listening to people, understand what they're saying to me. I don't know a lot of people who prioritize listening over being the loudest person."

After attending college on the East Coast, Lee is planning on a career in immigration law. After seeing first-hand the struggles families experience during the immigration process, Lee said she'd like to be someone who could improve the process.

"I have a friend who doesn't have access to leave the country yet because they still haven't gotten their green card," Lee said. "It's been 10 years since they requested it. Her entire family was aching at the fact that they can't leave to go see a relative who has cancer. The struggle, the fact that they're waiting so long, this is a flawed process."





Arun Moorthy

Age 17 | Junior
BASIS Scottsdale | Scottsdale

With each medical appointment, we see how technology and healthcare are inextricably linked. BASIS Scottsdale junior Arun Moorthy isn't just aware of the connection between tech and health, he's helping make those innovations happen.

The COVID-19 pandemic created a variety of hurdles. Anyone making a medical appointment in 2020 can remember, perhaps not fondly, of the routine list of questions from someone in their doctor's office. Do you have a fever? Have you been exposed to anyone? On and on. While the questions were important for assessing risk and protecting a doctor and office staff from possible infection, they were logistically frustrating for both patient and physician.

Arun Moorthy saw an opportunity.

A junior at BASIS Scottsdale, Moorthy had an already established history of finding technological solutions for healthcare-related issues. He'd already co-founded a company, HealthAI Global, to build, market and improve healthcare-related apps. When Moorthy's mother, a physician, began implementing the COVID screening procedures in her office, Moorthy knew he had a new project.

Rather than have a staffer call and manually interview a patient over the phone, Moorthy created an online screening profiler that

patients could fill out independently. Then, Moorthy began to iterate.

"Then over time with isolation because of COVID in general there was a spike of mental illness and depression," Moorthy said. "One of the adjustments I made in the app was to add questions to the survey to look for depression as well."

Now, 40 physicians use Moorthy's COVID-19 Risk Profiler. He's estimated that by shifting patients to the app instead of phone screening, the app has saved 93 business days in staff time.

Moorthy now wants to take the back end of the COVID-19 Risk Profiler and adapt it for other purposes – expanding its reach, making it smarter, and helping more people.

"I want to make the collection of apps more open-source and available," Moorthy said. "That relates a lot to marketing. If people can see the idea, it can spark ideas for them to improve it."



Ashley Nevison

Age 15 | Freshman
ASU Prep Digital | Scottsdale



Ashley Nevison channeled her grief and turned it into inspiration. Thanks to her nonprofit, Sargeant’s Army, this high school freshman has raised more than \$50,000 and helped more than two dozen homeless organizations.

It could have been the end of a sad story, but Ashley Nevison decided to let her saddest day, the death of her beloved cat Sargeant, become the start of something truly remarkable.

“It was unexpected when he died,” said Nevison, 15, a freshman at ASU Prep Digital. “He was and will always be my favorite cat. I loved him with every single part of my heart. To keep his memory alive, I decided to do amazing things to honor him.”

Nevison founded Sargeant’s Army in 2018. The plan then was for Nevison to make cat toys and blankets and donate them. But then 2020 happened, and she realized that her skills and energy could do much more.

First, Nevison used her sewing skills to create masks for healthcare workers. Then, she started making masks for an event for the homeless – and got an idea. What if, beyond the mask, Nevison did a bit more?

“I wanted to use my sewing skills to help not just animals but humans, also,” Nevison said.

“I realized how hard it would be to be homeless in this horrible heat. And that’s when I decided to get hygiene items and create Hope Bags. And I was able to apply for grants. And it took off from there.”

Before the end of 2020, Sargeant’s Army was a designated 501(c)(3) nonprofit. To date, Sargeant’s Army has raised more than \$50,000 and Nevison has assembled and donated more than 22,000 Hope Bags.

“We’ve donated bags in 12 of the 15 counties in Arizona,” she said. “My goal is to get to all 15.”

Nevison decided to give back more by helping the youth in her community. She became an author and wrote books like *The Monsters Give Back* which encourages the youth to give back to their community. Along with her writing and sewing skills, her compassion didn’t stop there.

Nevison is on a mission to make a difference and will continue working on her many projects to ensure the well-being of her community.





Theresa O'Connor

Age 17 | Junior

Tempe Preparatory Academy | Tempe

Tempe Preparatory Academy junior Theresa O'Connor has learned an important lesson about leadership at a young age: The output from a group is exponentially more than that of an individual.

There are busy high school students, and then there are students like Theresa O'Connor. A junior at Tempe Preparatory Academy, O'Connor, 17, has a resume of academic achievements, club participation, and community involvement that would rival the highest achievers in Arizona.

But what sets O'Connor apart isn't the volume of her achievements, it's the multiplier: By encouraging so many classmates in different grades to join her causes, O'Connor isn't just maximizing the good she can do now, she's creating a legacy for far beyond graduation.

"I had a lot of opportunities that were given to me all at once," O'Connor said. "It was a lot at first, going into my junior year. Definitely overwhelming. But I had organizational skills and that really played a big part."

When she wasn't working on the newspaper, or the yearbook, or speech and debate, O'Connor was volunteering at a no-kill shelter, promoting gender equality, or tutoring. O'Connor found

that she could create the most value for the community when she could plan events or organize drives that involved the attention from not just a few friends, but entire grades of her student body.

One such project, a drive to collect bottle caps for MeHug Destapitas, would help children with cancer. Specifically, this program helps cancer patients by paying for medical insurance, and other expenses that could relieve the parents, of these patients, of financial stress. O'Connor rallied the energy of students and propelled the drive, collecting more than 26,000 bottle caps.

"Coming up with a plan, making sure someone is involved with promoting it, it was really cool to see all the grade levels come together," O'Connor said. "It's hard to say I have a favorite project, because there are a lot that have been really impactful. But seeing the smiles on people's faces when we dropped off the bottle caps made it so meaningful. It was very inspiring."





Eduardo Rangel

Age 18 | Senior

Phoenix Union Wilson College Prep | Phoenix

The concept of “building blocks for success” is more than a metaphor for Eduardo Rangel, a senior at Phoenix Union Wilson College Prep. Thanks to a hands-on internship, he’s focused on a career in construction.

Opportunities don’t mean much if they’re wasted. Conversely, they can change your life when you savor them. Eduardo Rangel is making the most of the opportunities he’s been presented with. At only 18, he sees a future in construction management ahead of him.

“Ever since I was a kid, my dad has been involved in construction,” Rangel said. “I like the idea of building something from nothing, into a beautiful structure that helps a community.”

Through a leadership program called New Pathways for Youth, Rangel was introduced to an internship with DPR Construction. The time he spent took him beyond the day-to-day trades of framers or electricians. Instead, Rangel studied drawings and blueprints, talked to site managers and planners, and saw construction from the planning side.

“I like how everything comes together,” Rangel said. “It’s more behind-the-scenes.”

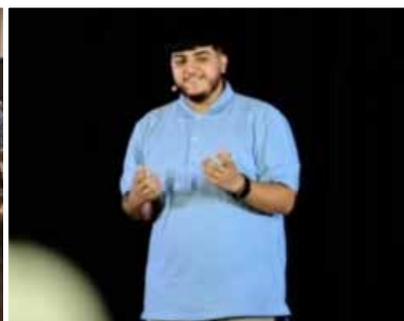
The work transcended the studies he already had at Phoenix Union Wilson College Prep.

One day hoping to use these newly learned skills, to help his community, Eduardo has proved many times over that you are capable of anything you put your mind to.

“I shadowed a construction estimator, and she taught me about the math skills, the communication skills you need,” Rangel said. “It’s about all the materials that go into a budget, all the meetings with the departments. I couldn’t be more grateful for the opportunity.”

Rangel encourages other students to take advantage of their opportunities.

“You have to be bold with your opportunities,” he said. “I was going through a tough time during my freshman year, and I realized that I couldn’t be in that position forever. I learned about New Pathways, and I signed up. It gave me skills for being a leader, for going outside my comfort zone. It’s given me amazing opportunities.”





Eden Sapien

Age 16 | Junior

Sandra Day O'Connor High School | Phoenix

As the saying goes, one man's trash is another man's treasure. Eden Sapien found a slightly different interpretation of the adage – this junior at Sandra Day O'Connor High School realized that the things we forget about in our junk closets could save someone's life.

Like most good ideas, Eden Sapien's a-ha moment came when something didn't make sense to her.

"When my brother broke his arm, he got put on one of those braces that are pretty expensive. It cost \$700," Sapien said. "When he was done with it, my mother asked the doctor where she could donate it. And they basically told us you can't donate it. No one can have it. And it was in perfect condition. Nothing was wrong with it."

Saving Supplies Saves Lives was born. Rather than throw away that perfectly good brace and toss it in a closet, Sapien saw a greater purpose. Someone could use that brace. And wouldn't there be hundreds, thousands of other medical devices destined for a landfill that still had purpose?

Sapien, 16, a junior at Sandra Day O'Connor High School, found local organizations, including Esperanca and Ryan House, that were looking for donated medical supplies and devices. Sapien stepped in as the bridge between the

junk closets of the Valley and those charities.

"These people know it has value, so they don't want to throw it away. But they also don't know where to take it so it can be used again," Sapien said. "One guy had broken both of his feet, both of his ankles, and his kids had broken a couple of feet. This family had eight boots. We got eight boots."

The project became the basis for Sapien's Gold Award project for Girl Scouts. She carefully inventoried everything she collected and redistributed. It took over the family garage on occasion. One of the things that struck her was how many people knew the medical items had value; they just didn't know where or how to donate it.

"A lot of people told me how they had these supplies sitting in their closet for literally years on end," Sapien said. "I found that in all communities. They were so appreciative to get rid of it and also to do something that would help someone."





Prisha Shroff

Age 15 | Freshman
Hamilton High School | Chandler

Prisha Shroff encountered a devastating wildfire during a trip to California that made her wonder: What could we do to better prevent them? Her ideas might give us hope.

It's one thing to watch a news story on tv, or to see a posting on social media. It's completely different to experience a wildfire in real life. Just ask Prisha Shroff. The moment her family had to turn around and try to find a different route home from Los Angeles changed her life. The air was acrid. The city was uninhabitable. The problem was unsustainable.

"The fire was blocking the entire freeway and we were forced to turn around," Shroff said. "My friends were forced to leave their home. The pollution was so bad I couldn't step outside, anything like that. It wasn't that it affected one person, it affected everyone in the area."

Shroff began thinking, and planning, which led to emails and phone calls. She's developing an AI-based wildfire prevention system that would leverage satellite data from NASA, use environmentally friendly fire retardant developed by a Stanford researcher, detect current and active wildfires, and manage all of it using drone technology.

"I realized we need to do not just prevention, but prevention, detection and suppression all in one," Shroff said. "I want to make the drone

deployment solution an actual thing"

The wildfire prevention system isn't Shroff's first invention. She's also developed self-cleaning solar panels. Many of her ideas lie at the intersection between climate change and technology.

"We can improve our world today for future generations," Shroff said. "Climate change is a pressing issue. I've seen disasters like wildfires. I want to do what I can to reduce climate change. I want to be an inventor who's creating solutions to real-life problems. That's my long-term goal."

Along with the compassion for the environment and technology, Shroff also has a passion for education. She worked with a legislative aid and proposed the "Day One" bill to a senator for incorporating the Chief Science Officer program in every school, which makes STEM a priority.

Whether that is creating new technology or educating others in the world of environmentalism, she is determined to make this world we live in, a better place.





Sripriya Srinivas

Age 17 | Junior

Horizon Honors Secondary | Chandler

COVID couldn't get in the way of Sripriya Srinivas and her volunteer work with memory care patients. When we started social distancing, this junior at Horizon Honors Secondary, came up with new ways to inspire creativity.

The arrival of the pandemic in 2020 changed nearly every aspect of life, but some areas were more profoundly hurt than others. Seniors who live in care centers were physically shut off from the world for their own protection. That separation halted the volunteer work of Sripriya Srinivas, a student at Horizon Honors Secondary who enjoyed working with memory care patients.

“We started out gardening, but when it got too hot outside, we'd go indoors and do arts and crafts,” Srinivas, now a junior, said. “Arts and crafts help relax the mind and improve mental capability.”

Srinivas' Saturday mornings were part of her routine. When they abruptly stopped in 2020, she wanted to figure out a way to continue her volunteer work, even from afar.

“Even for me, it was very tough being alone, shut out from the world,” Srinivas, now 17, said. “I wanted to make their isolation period a little

more tolerable and was thinking of things I could do to help out.”

That's why Srinivas started Gift of Giving, an effort to make seasonal cards for residents, and Craft Legends, a craft-project-in-a-box program for memory care patients. The routine cards were welcome in the centers, while the craft projects helped accomplish the in-person experience Srinivas couldn't provide during COVID.

Srinivas reeled about how memory-care patients needed stimulation and how they would be severely impacted by isolation. She recruited volunteers and friends to help create these craft activities to distribute.

“We'd put paint, brushes, little ribbons and craft items, and make it into a kit so they could do a project,” she said.

Srinivas plans to expand her projects and provide these resources to several memory care patient facilities.





Mallika Sunder

Age 17 | Junior

Catalina Foothills High School | Tucson

Mallika Sunder doesn't need to wait until she's eligible to vote to use her voice. This 17-year-old Tucson resident is inspiring her classmates and youth around the world through her activism.

While the country moved indoors and tried to figure out a world of social distancing and telecommuting, Mallika Sunder discovered her inner activist.

It started when she and friends circulated a petition to demand that their teachers at Catalina Foothills High School in Tucson receive permission to teach remotely from their homes during the initial COVID school closures.

“We essentially said that we should stand up for these teachers,” Mallika, 17, said. “If they had to go to the school, it put them at risk of getting the coronavirus. We got over 1,000 signatures. It just kick-started my activism journey.”

A spark was lit. Soon, Sunder established a chapter of March for Our Lives at her high school. She volunteered with the broader national March for Our Lives organization and learned more about community activism. Then, she became the editor-in-chief of The GroupChat for Change, a youth-authored and managed online magazine focused

on social justice issues.

Through all these activities, Sunder said she's learned that her voice – and the voice of youth – has tremendous power.

“It's given me confidence that I can make a difference,” Sunder said. “What I've noticed in myself, and others is that people tend to categorize a lot of the ideas that we have for the future and hopes we have for the future – even things we hope for currently – as too idealistic. But that idealism, that young dream we have for the future, it's a superpower for us, not something we should be criticized for.”

Sunder an activist by nature, is now currently working on two very important projects that include petitioning for change in the school's dress code. She feels as though in many schools, that dress code can target women and people of color. Sunder plans on using all she learns to make changes like this and many others.





Ivanna Viloría Enciso

Age 14 | Freshman
Catalina Foothills High School | Tucson

That sound you hear is a glass ceiling shattering into a million pieces, thanks in part to Ivanna Viloría Enciso. A freshman at Catalina Foothills High School in Tucson, she became an Eagle Scout in October 2021.

Timing, they say, is everything. For Ivanna Viloría Enciso, the timing could not have been better.

Right around the time that the Boy Scouts of America announced that they would admit female members, 11-year-old Viloría Enciso and her family moved from Mexico City to Tucson. She made a pronouncement: Not only would she become a Scout, but she'd also become an Eagle Scout, the highest rank within Scouts BSA.

"I've always said that I was incredibly lucky to move when I did," Viloría Enciso, now 14 and a freshman at Catalina Foothills High School, said. "Since then, the point when I joined Scouts BSA, my goal was always to get to Eagle."

Viloría Enciso received some pushback. Initially met with a sarcastic "good luck with that" when she'd tell people about her goal, she kept pushing toward completing the required seven stages of development. Her final project was a gaga ball pit installation at a local school, designed to allow kids of all ages and physical

abilities to participate and play in the area. She reached the rank of Eagle Scout on October 15, 2021.

Ivanna recounted a time, where she was told "she couldn't do it" because of the simple fact of being a girl. She used that to fuel her fire and has been determined ever since.

While her time in Scouts BSA might have started as an outsider, Viloría Enciso said she learned about gaining consensus and empathy from the experience.

"So many adults were used to just seeing the boys' side. That's how the boys did it, that's how it should always be done," she said. "Then the girls came in and the adults were kind of freaked out. The advice that I would give is to look from both perspectives. Try to see where someone's coming from. Most important, keep your mind open and try to look at it from a perspective of what someone else could be doing."





Radia Wong

Age 16 | Senior

Notre Dame Preparatory | Scottsdale

Radia Wong’s passion for synchronized swimming caused a literal ripple effect: This 16-year-old Scottsdale senior now puts her energy toward coaching, recruiting and gender equity in the sport, and finds time to help the community, too.

Radia Wong’s affinity for synchronized swimming is singular. But simply swimming wasn’t enough for this senior at Notre Dame Preparatory. She’s created an entirely new path for herself in the sport.

“I started synchronized swimming when I was 8 in California,” Wong, 16, said. “I started with a summer camp, and I really enjoyed it because it combined all my passions – dance, music, the water.”

Wong ascended rapidly in the sport. By 2020, she made the top 12 in her age group and qualified for the Olympic Development Team. But she wanted more than her own achievement. She founded a nonprofit, the Tiger and Minky Synchro Foundation, to raise funds and bring awareness to the sport. To date, she’s raised more than \$5,700, but the impact she’s had on the sport overall can’t be measured in dollars.

“Now, I’m not so much swimming as coaching,” Wong said. “Synchronized

swimming is pretty small nationally, only a couple hundred girls. There isn’t a lot of general funding and awareness. I want to reach a greater, wider audience to bring more teens – girls as well as boys – to start synchronized swimming. The boys are also coming to join – it’s going to be more gender-inclusive.”

Beyond her athletic pursuits, Wong also has dedicated herself to brain tumor research as well as projects to help get critical supplies to the Navajo nation during the peak of the coronavirus pandemic.

“I’m an advocate for the National Brain Tumor Society,” she said. “We’re lobbying and trying to gain more attention and policy-writing to get more support for patients and their families. Last year, we were able to persuade both Senator Kelly and Senator Sinema, their offices, to sponsor the Credit for Caring Act, which increases the financial aid given to patients and their caregivers.”



This is JA

How does JA shape the future of Arizona? By preparing today's students to be successful in their tomorrow.

For the last 65 years, Junior Achievement of Arizona has been empowering the futures of millions of students by giving them the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in work and life, no matter the challenges they'll face.

And, we will be here for the next 65 years, meeting students wherever they are learning and ensuring they receive JA's critical education so they are prepared to manage their money, succeed in their future careers and to think innovatively.

We will continue to launch high-impact programs that directly meet the needs of students, educators and businesses in Arizona. We will ensure students graduate with a vision and pathway for their future, and the knowledge of how navigate important complexities of adulthood.

Junior Achievement is an important part of our community and economy's future. The students we reach today will go on to fuel our community for decades to come.

Skills + Knowledge + Potential =

Dreams



Our Mission



To inspire and prepare
AZ young people to
succeed in work and life.

JA Impact

JA is shaping the college- and career-readiness conversation, and we play an important role in Arizona's workforce and economic development.



JA students are **30%** more likely to get a Bachelor's and **67%** more likely to get a Master's.



JA students demonstrate, on average

A knowledge gain of **35.8%**

JA Students, as Compared to Non-JA Students

HAVE



34%

higher critical thinking skills

EARN



20%

more in the workforce

ARE



143%

more likely to start a business



99% of teachers would recommend our JA programs to a fellow teacher.

Graduation

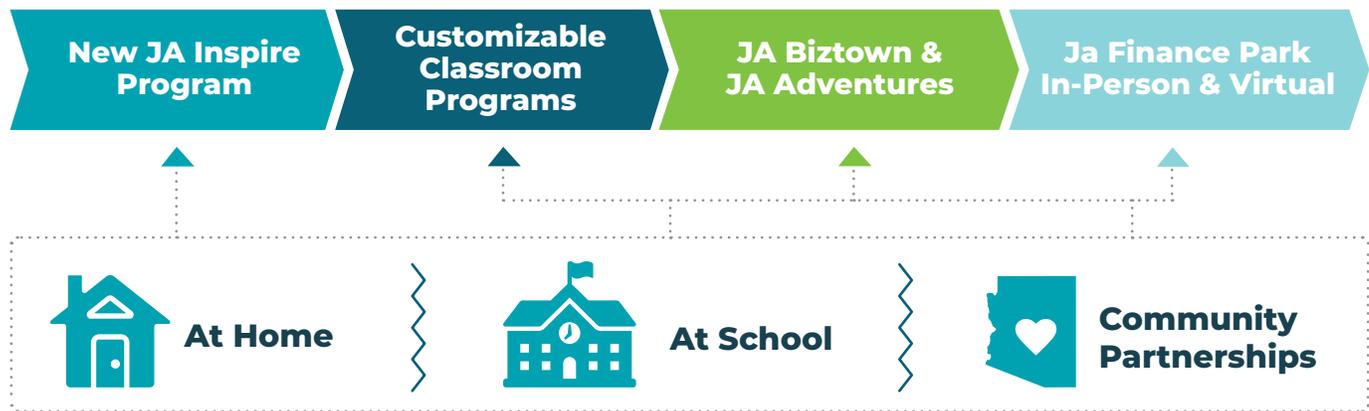
93% JA ALUMNI **vs. 88%** AVERAGE

93% of JA Alumni have graduated with a High School Diploma or have a GED, compared to the national average of 88% according to the U.S. Census data.

Career
51%

of Alumni will work in the same career field as their JA classroom volunteer.

Reaching Kids Wherever They Are Learning



4 in 5

Alumni credit JA for influencing their career path

53%

of JA Alumni have started their own business

JA students now see their future potential and are equipped with the critical skills needed to achieve that potential.



65%

Nearly 65% of the students we serve are from low income households.

Support AZ's Youth

ARIZONA CHARITABLE TAX CREDIT

Impact Today



Sponsor a Classroom \$1k

Goal: 1,000 Classrooms/year



Sponsor a School \$10k

Goal: 300 Schools/year



Impact Tomorrow

Invest in Priority Initiatives

Goal: \$2.5M



CIRCLE OF CHANGE

1 @
\$500K

2 @
\$250K

5 @
\$100K

10 @
\$50K

10 @
\$25K

25 @
\$10K

Impact Forever

Leave a legacy gift that will impact youth and our community forever.



You are inspiring students for the careers of the future and unleashing their potential.

Donate Today:
jaaz.org/support



AZ Charitable Tax Credit

It's not too early to donate and apply against your 2022 AZ taxes!

Donations to Junior Achievement of Arizona qualify for a dollar-for-dollar AZ charitable tax credit, up to \$800!

And, it's stackable with standards school tax credits, too!



How It Works

- 1 Donate to JA to help students succeed
- 2 File your taxes and claim the credit
- 3 Receive the tax credit in the form of less taxes owed or bigger refund in 2023

Past Recipients

2018 Recipients

Aleena Valdez
Anthony (AJ) Aguilar
Charles W. Hall
Christopher Whitmeyer
Joseph Ross
Karlina Riggs
Kellen Vu
Kira Householder
Kylie Hunts-in-Winter
Maximus Smith
Nikhil Dave
Prateek Piniseti
Rocco Gump
Saul Ontiveros
Tatum L. Stolworthy
Taylor Veschio
Trinity E. L. Peters
Vanessa Strait

2019 Recipients

Addie Daniels
Alexis Hatch
Anissa Ferris
Caillou Pena
Catherine Broski
Colton Cagle
Dash McDonald
Dylan Baca
Elisa McRae
Emma Suttell
Fatima Bitheri
Grace Dietz
Jackson Bukata
James Daniel Lacno
Jordan Young
Marcus Chavez
Nadira Mitchell
Priscila Romero Guevara

2020 Recipients

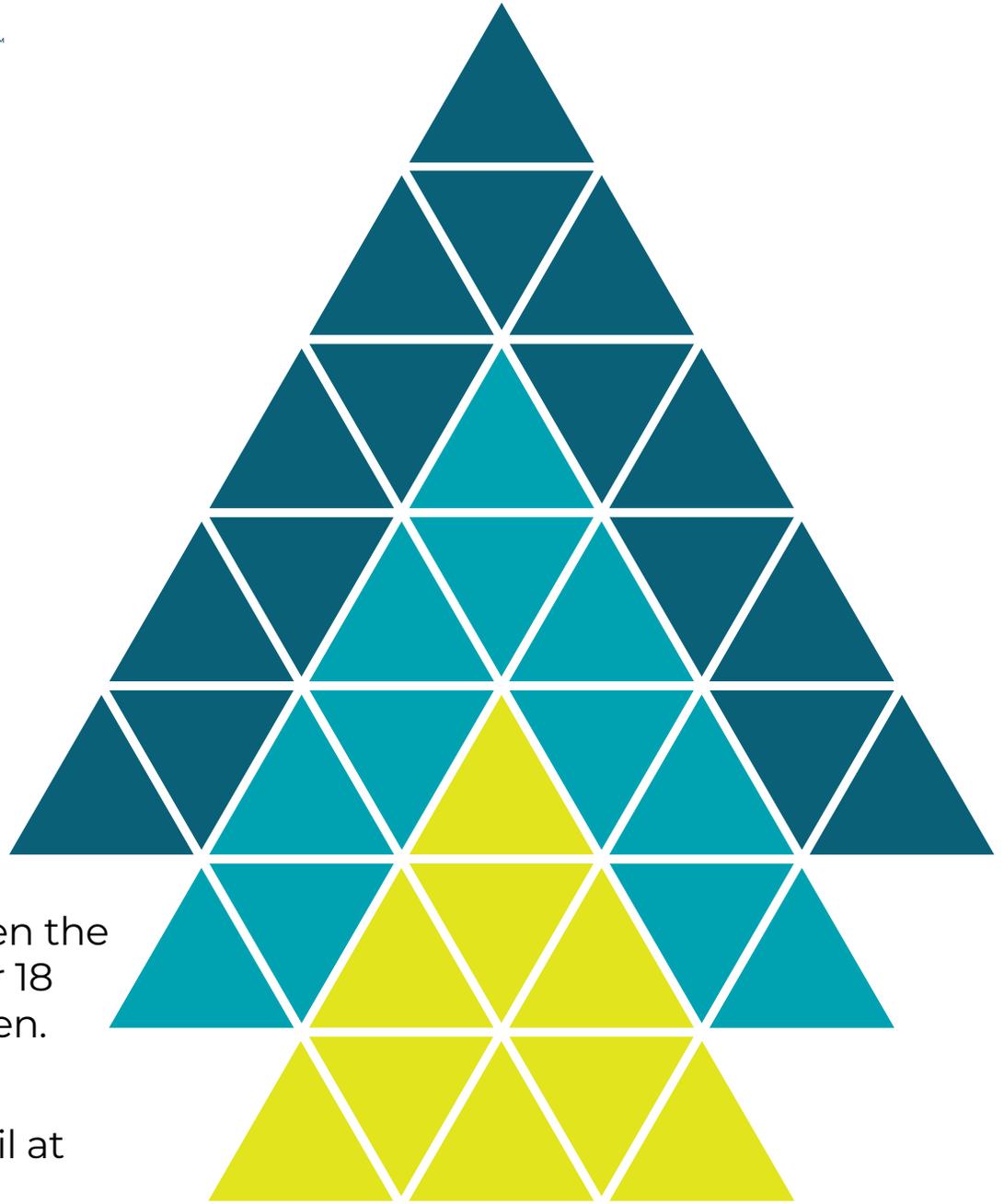
Elaina Ashton
Kayli Battel
Alexander Burt
Viveka Chinnasamy
Jordan Davis-Wiley
Cameron Deal
Laura Dunham
Heather Jensen
Leila Khan
Dominique Luna
Jonathan Martinez
Hannah Mason
Arjun Moorthy
Chandler Plante
Suraj Puvvadi
Ethan Scher
Grace Schlenker
Ryan Vakil

2021 Recipients

Mostafa Afr
T.J. Borowski
Katelyn Cai
Ximena Camacho
Reva Chaudhry
Lorelei Cook
Joshua Fink
Ella Hamer
Arin Khanna
Bhavya Makkar
Aryan Mathur
Viraj Mehta
Clara Moffitt
Ayden Schure
Riti Singh
Josephine Taylor
Steven Ugol
Audrey Wood



18 UNDER 18



Get notified when the next JA 18 Under 18 nominations open.

Sign-up for email at **18under18.org**.

2023 nominations will open in November 2022.

jaaz.org | 18under18.org

480.377.8500 | 520.792.2000