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Scientologist Spearheads Youth Group Human Rights Documentary Project

The premiere of a new documentary produced by a team of San Gabriel high school students was the culmination of a project conceived and launched by Tim Bowles, Human Rights Director of the [Church of Scientology Pasadena](#).

A yearlong human rights project culminated December 8 with the premiere of [Finding Our Voice](#), a 20-minute film documenting the work of the team of San Gabriel Valley high school students who participated in the project.

The film premiered at the Education and Responsibility Human Rights Day Forum at Pasadena City College, commemorating the 64th anniversary of the adoption of the [United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#).

The student human rights project was conceived and carried out by Tim Bowles, Human Rights Director of the Church of Scientology of Pasadena, who served as the students' chief advisor along with Joseph Jay Yarsiah, [Youth for Human Rights](#) program director for Africa.

The 20-minute film, directed by award-winning filmmakers Bayou Bennett and Daniel Lir of Dolce Films, documents the students' search for answers to declining trends in California public education: Once a national leader in education, California currently ranks 47th in spending per student and is ahead of only Mississippi, Alabama and the District of Columbia in student science proficiency. This trend is a barrier to California students' realizing article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, "Everyone has the right to education."

In looking for answers to this issue, the students sought to define their own roles in reversing what they found to be the most critical crisis of all—how to get the bulk of classmates to care about school.

Introducing the film, Marshall High School junior Cheyenne Smith said, "We hope the film will help the community to support us in our quest to enhance education. This is what we have worked so tirelessly and passionately to achieve."

Khadejah Ray, leader of the Pasadena High Schools team, said, "We will only be able to improve our society if we take responsibility now, if we lead now, to help each other achieve the great success of which we are capable."

The students were each presented certificates of Congressional recognition signed by U.S. Congresswoman Judy Chu.

Pasadena Mayor Bill Bogaard said, "The Pasadena High Schools team has certainly earned our respect and thus our trust that their campaign is but a milestone for them and for those they inspire toward ever greater humanitarian service to our community and our world."

Pasadena Chief of Police Phillip Sanchez told the students, "Within two or three years, you will represent the largest voting bloc in America. You must understand and support human rights or you will fail. You must respect yourselves and your peers as well as the authorities. Human rights education is vital to the future."

Dignitaries attending also included Theresa Lamb Simpson representing Congressman Adam Schiff; Liz Reilly, City of Duarte Mayor pro tem; George Brumder, Chairman of the Board of Pasadena Educational Foundation; Pastor Nicholas Benson, President of the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance of Greater Pasadena; Joe Brown, President of NAACP Pasadena; Paul Little, President of the Pasadena Chamber of Commerce; Nat Nehdar, chair of Pasadena Human Relations Commission; Yuny Parada of the Pasadena Latino Foundation; Dr. Mohammed Khalid Ejaz, Consul General for Pakistan; and Maria Hellen Barber De La Vega, Consul General for the Philippines.

Bowles based this pilot project on the success of the African Human Rights Leadership Campaign, a project he launched in 2008 to empower youth in impoverished and wartorn African countries and educate them on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Acknowledging what the San Gabriel Valley students have accomplished, he said, "Today, these team members come of age as true leaders in and advocates for their community."

Scientists on five continents engage in collaborative efforts with government agencies and nongovernmental organizations to bring about broad-scale awareness and implementation of the 1948 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the world's premier human rights document.

The Church of Scientology has published a new brochure, *Scientology: How We Help—United for Human Rights: Making Human Rights a Global Reality*, to meet requests for more information about the human rights education and awareness initiative it supports. To learn more, visit the [Scientology website](#).

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L. Ron Hubbard wrote, "Human rights must be made a fact, not an idealistic dream." The Code of a Scientist calls on all members of the religion to dedicate themselves "to support true humanitarian endeavors in the fields of human rights."

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San Gabriel Valley high school students who participated in the yearlong human rights leadership program were awarded certificates of recognition signed by U.S. Congresswoman Judy Chu.



At the Human Rights Day forum, Pasadena Mayor Bill Bogaard acknowledged the San Gabriel Valley students for inspiring others "toward ever greater humanitarian service to our community and our world."



Pasadena Chief of Police Phillip Sanchez at the Education and Responsibility Human Rights Day Forum at Pasadena City College December 8, where he urged the students to assume leadership roles in the community.



San Gabriel Valley high school students at the Human Rights Day Forum at Pasadena City College December 8, 2012



Khadejah Ray (center) with a certificate of recognition signed by U.S. Congresswoman Judy Chu in acknowledgement of her work, with two of the human rights leadership mentors, Joseph Jay Yarshia, Youth for Human Rights program director for Africa (left), and Tim Bowles, Human Rights Director of the Church of Scientology Pasadena (right) at the Education and Responsibility Human Rights Day Forum at Pasadena City College December 8, 2012.