

## **Naperville Youth **I**Nclusion Ambassadors Inaugural Newsletter (March 2022)**

As Naperville continues to work to be a more inclusive community, the value of youthful input becomes even more essential. Throughout the past two years, it has become all too apparent how necessary it is to unite our city and nation. Who better to ask than the students as to how to do so? Our youth are valuable not only because we are up to date with the latest trends and social media platforms, but also we are truly experiencing and paying the price for the lack of inclusion in our world.

Facilitated by Dr. Geneace Williams, the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Manager for the City of Naperville, the Youth **I**Nclusion Ambassadors (**YINA**) is a student-led group committed to creating an environment of unity and inclusion within our schools and city. As a diverse group of young leaders, we want to learn from the example and experience of our city's leaders and couple that with our own passion and understanding to advance the diversity, equity and inclusion mission in our community. A hopeful beacon throughout these past years has been the demonstrated responsibility by this city's youth to contribute to the growth of our city, in all aspects. Our peers have shown an inspiring drive to advance and advocate for justice and unity. As youth leaders, it is our duty to share and uplift the ideas and lived experiences of those around us, never resting until this vision for unity is achieved.

Our first initiative as a group is to create a visible symbol of this vision to spread our message throughout the city. As a group we sought to closely examine many words commonly associated with Diversity, Equity and Inclusion messaging, attempting to redefine these terms in a way that would resonate with our community. These meaningful messages are being showcased on banners displayed near downtown Naperville both on Washington and Aurora Ave. We hope they serve to further the conversation about Diversity, Equity and Inclusion among all - with input from the city's youthful voices.

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