To Whom it may concern,

Our youth are in crisis. From children left to raise themselves, to over-involved parents who unwittingly raise young adults unable to stand on their own, too many youth are failing the transition into adulthood. They are left susceptible to the all-too-many negative forces in today’s world and unprepared to step up and share in responsibility for the many challenges facing our diverse communities.

It’s time to change that story. Youth Passageways (YPW), a network of individuals, organizations, and communities is dedicated to doing just that.

We are uncovering and fostering some of the greatest work of our time – the work of supporting our youth in building the resiliency and creativity needed to face today’s many urgent and complex issues. Already more than 95 partners from around the world have joined together as Youth Passageways to transform the way that we raise young people.

This April 21st-24th we are bringing together rites of passage practitioners, community leaders and organizers, and youth in the Temescal Canyon just outside Los Angeles for our first official gathering. On Saturday, April 23rd, we will be hosting A youth-led effort by the Tia Chuchas Young Warriors, expected to reach approximately 150 youth serving organizations, government health and social services agencies and youth-serving foundations. We truly believe this gathering and public event can shine a light on some of the struggles and triumphs of youth, and some of the most innovative work available to support them as they grow into adulthood.

It is my pleasure to provide this brief PRESS KIT introducing you to our organization, what we’re up to in LA this April, and to provide some information about a few of the amazing partners who are helping us make it possible. Please take a moment to review the information included in this PRESS KIT. If you are as engaged and excited by what we’re doing as I surely think you’ll be, I’d be delighted to discuss our work further and any possibilities therein.

Thank you for your time and interest.

Sincerely,

Dane Zahorsky, Co-Coordinator | Youth Passageways
(816) 863-2230 | dane@youthpassageways.org
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WWW.YOUTHPASSAGeways.Org
For Immediate Release:

Youth Passageways Announces its 2016 Gathering in Los Angeles!

YOUTH PASSAGEWAYS (YPW), a network of individuals, organizations, and communities supporting the healthy passage of today’s youth into mature adulthood, in partnership with local host organizations and leaders, is thrilled to announce its first official Gathering, April 21st-24th in Los Angeles, CA! Sponsored in part by the Kailo Fund & The Kalliaopeia Foundation.

Over four days in the Temescal Canyon, YPW is bringing together approximately 75-100 rite of passage facilitators, changemakers, and youth from Los Angeles County, across the United States, and around the world to “listen to the ancestors, tend the circle, and amplify the movement.” The participants will do this through ceremony, dialogue, experiential activities, and small-group workshops.

Beginning Thursday evening with opening ceremonies and recognition of the indigenous peoples from around the area, YPW will engage leaders and youth in a collaborative process of looking at finding a common language among the many communities involved and finding sustainable ways to continue to build & support the youth initiation network after the gathering concludes.

Then on the Saturday the 24th, the final evening of the gathering, YPW & LA Partners will be hosting a public event featuring diverse approaches to youth initiation & well-being. This event will feature offerings by Luis Rodriguez, the Poet Laureate of LA as well as Street Poets, Inc. with the Rhythm Arts Alliance, & The Youth Justice Coalition. This event has been co-designed and will be lead by the Tia Chucha’s Young Warriors.
YOUTH PASSAGEWAYS 2016 GATHERING:
BUILDING THE FOUNDATION

TEMESCAL CANYON CONFERENCE & RETREAT CENTER
THURSDAY, APRIL 21 - SUNDAY, APRIL 24, 2016

YOUTH PASSAGEWAYS (YPW), a network of individuals, organizations, and communities supporting the healthy passage of today’s youth into mature adulthood, is about to have its first official gathering...

In the Temescal Canyon, just outside of Los Angeles, YPW is bringing together leaders from around the world in a multicultural, multidisciplinary, and intergenerational community. Approximately 75-100 rite of passage facilitators, changemakers, and youth are engaging in ceremony, dialogue, experiential activities, and small-group workshops. On the final evening of the gathering, YPW & LA Partners will be hosting a public event co-created by partner organizations from the LA area and around the world featuring diverse approaches to youth initiation & well-being.

For more information about the gathering or how to attend the public event, visit www.youthpassageways.org/gathering/

CONTACT YPW
(503) 816.4829 or info@youthpassageways.org

THANKS TO OUR L.A. & CALIFORNIA HOST PARTNERS
Youth Mentoring, Street Poets, Tia Chucha’s, Youth Justice Coalition, The Ojai Foundation, Spreading Seeds Wellness Center, & Council in Schools
YOUTH PASSAGeways & PARTNERS PRESENT

Blessings and Beauty

April 23, 2016 | 6:00 to 9:00 pm | Temescal Retreat Center

The Ojai Foundation

YOUTH PASSAGeways
Youth Justice Coalition
STREETPOETS
SPREADING SEEDS WELLNESS CENTER
Youth Mentoring
Golden Bridge Council in Schools

Blessings and Beauty

April 23, 2016 | 6:00 to 9:00 pm
At Stuart Hall, Temescal Retreat Center

You are invited to a special event hosted by
YOUTH PASSAGeways & Partners.
This youth designed event will feature
offerings from:

LA Poet Laureate, Luis Rodriguez
Street Poets, Inc. | Rhythm Arts Alliance
Golden Bridge | Youth Justice Coalition
And many more!
Led by Tia Chucha’s Young Warriors.

$5 to 15 Suggested Donation,
no one will be turned away.

Space is limited, to RSVP please email:
dane@youthpassageways.org

Or for more info visit:
www.youthpassageways.org
YOUTH PASSAGEWAYS (YPW) is a network of individuals, organizations, and communities supporting the healthy passage of today’s young people into mature adulthood during a time of global transition. This cross-cultural network includes a broad and diverse range of rites of passage, education, youth and community development efforts. YPW offers a place for mutual support, collaborative learning, resource development, and cross-pollination, in order to gain wider visibility and influence, and ultimately, to foster the development of whole, healthy human beings who will bring healing to our human and earth communities.

Here are just a few things we’ve done over the past few years:

“It is easy to feel alone in this work. YPW gatherings are an affirmation that the work is not only alive and well, but flourishing along with the needs of the time. As we move from a culture of separation to one of interconnectedness, such gatherings help us walk the talk by building alliances that will be the foundations of the web that is weaving our work.”

ZAMIR DHANJI

BUILT A GROWING NETWORK OF

95 PARTNERS IN

16 STATES

19 COUNTRIES

14 CONTINENTS

WITH SEARCHABLE PROFILES ON OUR WEBSITE

MADE AVAILABLE

200 ORGANIZED RESOURCES SPANNING

20 CATEGORIES INCLUDING: ARTICLES, AUDIO, BOOKS, VIDEO, WEBSITES & BEST PRACTICES

WWW.YOUTHPASSAGEWAYS.ORG
DARCY OTTEY, CO-COORDINATOR (YPW)
Darcy Ottey (British/Ukrainian descent) has been with Youth Passageways as Co-Coordinator since its inception. She previously served as the Executive Director of Rite of Passage Journeys (Journeys) from 2006 – 2011. While at Journeys, she developed relationships nationally and internationally with many individuals and organizations engaged in similar work. She currently serves on the Board of Directors of Global Rites of Passage, and is a member of the Wilderness Guides Council and the National Rites of Passage Institute.

DANE ZAHORSKY, CO-COORDINATOR (YPW)
After a long and sordid adolescence, Dane (Hungarian/Slavic descent) found himself at 15 taken in by a family of Highland Maya, in San Lucas Toliman, Guatemala. It was here that he fell into a passionate kinship with initiation, indigenous wisdom, and the nature of simple graces. He has experience creating and implementing programing and curricula, direct service to youth and communities, and consultation for institutions and organizations such as The Kansas City Academy, Warrior Films, and Pacific Quest. In 2014, he founded the Make Trybe Center for Transformative Design.

KRUTI PAREKH, COMMUNITY ORGANIZER
Kruti Parekh has been working with young people and families in the most marginalized communities in both NYC and LA for 18 years. Kruti’s experience includes: adult ally at the Youth Justice Coalition; director for youth programs, including YouthBuild, Teen Court, and Workforce Investment Act Programs as well as domestic violence accountability, workforce development, and youth empowerment. Kruti has a BA from Brandeis University, MA in Social Worker from Hunter College and a self-proclaimed PhD (People’s health Degree) from the Youth Justice Coalition.

FIDEL RODRIGUEZ, LA COUNTY / SPREADING SEEDS WELLNESS CENTER
Fidel is a Human Relations Consultant and Violence Prevention Specialist for the County of Los Angeles’ Human Relation Commission where he facilitates and coordinates “Spreading Seeds: Body, Mind, Spirit” a rite of passage program which began at Homeboy Industries in 2008. Currently, Fidel is coordinating Spreading Seeds Healing Network, a support Network for regional community-based service providers in LA County.
TIA CHUCHA’S YOUNG WARRIORS

Young Warriors is a community project created by youth for the youth of the Northeast San Fernando Valley area of Los Angeles. The youth empowerment project provides arts awareness, performing arts, cultural awareness, mentoring and social consciousness to pre-teens, teenagers, and young adults (ages 10–25 years old).

Learn More [HERE](#) or see their Video Profile [HERE](#)

SPREADING SEEDS WELLNESS CENTER

An organization dedicated to teaching cultural wellness tools through knowledge, wisdom and understanding. Spreading Seeds introduces the necessary cultural tools for youth and young adults to live a healthy balance of the mind, body and spirit that results in overall wellness, self-awareness and self-mastery in order to develop the self-discipline to make mindful choices towards a more successful existence.

Learn More [HERE](#) or see their Video Profile [HERE](#)

YOUTH JUSTICE COALITION

The Youth Justice Coalition (YJC) is working to build a youth, family, and formerly and currently incarcerated people’s movement to challenge America’s addiction to incarceration and race, gender and class discrimination in Los Angeles County’s, California’s and the nation’s juvenile and criminal injustice systems. In 2003, at a series of three meetings attended by 62 people – who were or had been arrested, detained, incarcerated and/or deported, and/or who were leaders of groups working inside juvenile halls, Probation camps, jails or prisons came together to discuss the impacts of the system on Los Angeles and prioritized 4 organizing campaigns:

1: Exposing and Dismantling the War on Gangs as a War on Youth of Color. 2: Improving conditions of confinement for youth at LA County juvenile halls, County Jails, State Prisons and the Division of Juvenile Justice 3. Reducing the County’s use of detention and incarceration by 75% within 10 years. And 4: Pushing the County to develop community-based owned and operated alternatives to school suspension/expulsion, arrest, court, detention and incarceration

Learn More [HERE](#) or see their Video Profile [HERE](#)
THE OJAI FOUNDATION

The Ojai Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to fostering practices that awaken connection with self, others, and the natural world. The beauty of our 40-acre educational retreat center and sanctuary in Ojai continues to inspire, transform and nurture all who visit. Hosting our skilled and trained facilitators and guides weave retreats, rites of passage, ropes course programs, and land-based council programs with over 1,200 students each year along with hundreds of adults who come for transformation, reflection, and to honor the passages of life.

Learn More HERE or see their Video Profile HERE

YOUTH MENTORING

The Mission of Youth Mentoring is to awaken at-risk youth to their power, unique gifts and purpose by matching them with caring adult mentors and placing that “match” within a structured group dynamic that provides the resources youth need to reach productive, conscious adulthood. We further seek to awaken society to the needs, promise and value of this overlooked population. Our Vision is of a community where young people are truly seen and not just watched, where society understands and accepts its responsibility in meeting the needs of all young people, and where young people bring their gifts back into their communities as productive members of society.

Learn More HERE or see their Video Profile HERE

STREET POETS

A non-profit poetry-based peacemaking organization dedicated to the creative process as a force for individual and community transformation. Street Poets breaks the cycle of violence in the lives of at-risk and incarcerated youth, awakening them to their gifts. Builds creative community, bringing youth, adults and elders of diverse backgrounds into deep transformational relationship. And consults and collaborates with other organizations and communities to inspire both individual and systemic change, transforming our culture from one too often driven by fear to one that celebrates healing and the creative process.

Learn More HERE or see their Video Profile HERE
YPW GATHERING IN OJAI, 2013

YPW AND LA HOST PARTNER MEETING OCT 2015

YPW STAFF, STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL & GUARDIANS

CROSS CULTURAL PROTOCOLS RETREAT 2014

WWW.YOUTHPASSAGEWAYS.ORG