

IT'S TIME FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

SHANEA

Shanea felt powerless during the pandemic, as she could not go out into her community and mentor young people, when face-to-face support was needed more than ever. Unemployment, poverty, and unfair treatment were plaguing young people in her area, especially young people of colour. The social enterprise that she had established had its launch date delayed, due to covid-19. In the words of Shanea, the pandemic was a 'huge set-back' for her efforts.

But Shanea was determined to put her hope and energy to good use. With Million Minutes' support Shanea was able to use the time to plan her social enterprise project more effectively, and was able to continue her peer-to-peer accompaniment with young people, meeting them online. Together, they have been able to research issues impacting the community and are now starting to find solutions.

Shanea has also been inspired and motivated to work closely with her local council to create their first ever Youth Advisory group. Shanea says 'Million Minutes empowered me to believe in the power I have as a young person, and the courage to find alternative solutions to the problems in my community in lockdown. I know there are so many other young people who could benefit from their support, and I wish their support was better known.'

We know that young people like Shanea are powerful – and we want to support them to change their lives, find their voice, and make a positive impact in their community. Pope Francis has called on young people to 'make a ruckus' in the Church and in their local communities – and that's what amazing young people like Shanea are doing every day.

Million Minutes is proud to support young people like Shanea every day, through our grants scheme, our awards of recognition, our networks, and more.



STAY siLENT. IT'S TIME FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Elliot faces prejudice and challenge every day, but he has a huge heart and his first thought is always for others. siLENT is supporting him and his fellow students with learning difficulties at St John Vianney school. They are dedicating themselves to helping refugee families seeking a new home in Manchester. Elliot and the other pupils have built an allotment from scratch and are tending it weekly. Not only are the young people growing together, the vegetables they are growing are being donated to refugees and asylum seekers in their local area. Elliot says "I love working with and meeting with the families. I love to support other people and motivate them when they really need it. I am a motivator."

Julie, the school chaplain, adds: "Everything the group says or does comes from the heart. They face their own struggles every day, but they want to do so much more to help others." The young people also hope that the project will inspire more people to see the need to care for the earth and see how small spaces can be a hub of growing activity!

Your silence will amplify the voices of young people like Elliot who are making a real change in their local communities.



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TOM

In Summer 2020, Tom was one of thousands of A-Level students negatively impacted by the pandemic. After working hard all academic year, Tom was not able to sit his exams. Like many students, the grades Tom was initially awarded fell far short of what he was predicted or expecting – with massive potential consequences on his future education.

Tom felt lost and upset that decisions made at a national level could so negatively impact his future. It was only after seeing fellow students take to the streets that he felt empowered to use his voice and make a change. Indeed, the activism of young people like Tom led to initial downgrading being assessed more fairly, enabling thousands of students to pursue the dreams they had.

Tom now has hope and optimism for the future. Tom is being supported by Million Minutes to use his voice and is creating a podcast to inspire social action across our local Catholic communities by interviewing fellow inspirational young people. Tom is passionate about letting other young people know they can build a better world, and has hosted a very-well received interview series which has received over 1000 views on YouTube on Spark Social Justice. Tom is a 'hero of hope'. Each young person we support changes their lives – showing young people their power – and the community around them.



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STAY siLENT. IT'S TIME FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

A group of university students realised the hardships faced by pregnant mothers when studying at university. Often when women find out they are pregnant, along with dealing with a whirlwind of emotions, they are left alone. Seeking funding or support can simply be overwhelming when faced with a mind-bending maze of confusing information. Deciding they wanted to do something about this, the students devised a project, Pregnant at Uni, to fill in all the blanks that studying mothers would need. Their aim is to show that with the right support, young mothers can continue with study with a baby and go on to change the world. The project, funded by siLENT and launching in 2020, will give young mothers access to the vital support they need so they don't feel alone.

By staying siLENT you will be giving a voice and empowering young women who can so often be overlooked.



INVEST IN
YOUNG PEOPLE
CHANGE THE
WORLD

IT'S TIME FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

CARL

Like many, Carl spent lockdown without access to a garden or a balcony. For Carl, the only chance to spend time outside came with his school's community garden project. With the help of Million Minutes' grants scheme, what was once an ignored patch of the playground is now a haven for plants and wildlife. And this was made possible because of the care and motivation that Carl and his friends put into the project. For Carl, the club is a safe space, giving him and his peers access to green space they would not otherwise enjoy.

A teacher who oversees the group said "...these aren't the kids who will sign themselves up for the football or sports club afterschool. The club is a space where they are respected and can be themselves. The transformation of these kids when they first arrived to now has been massive, and the [Million Minutes' supported] community gardening club has been instrumental in that."

In the new year, the club will be supported by Million Minutes with new resources to continue their amazing efforts.

Each young person we support changes their lives, the life of the community, and impacts on the lives of others. It also shows overlooked young people like Carl that they are powerful, and that they matter to society and to the Church.

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