

Freedom of Expression praised at social event aimed at supporting youth music participation

Promoting music as a program to invest in as a deterrent to street crime, speakers urge others to support programs for young jazz musicians

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, October 5, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- With soaring crime rates in Washington, DC, a social and service group called The Moles and their significant others, affectionately referred to as Mules, organized an event to enjoy each other's company while supporting a good cause. The Moles is a 70-year-old African-American social group which was originally formed when African Americans in the US often were not allowed equal access to restaurants or social venues. They went underground, thus the name The Moles, to create their own entertainment and social affairs. The men, who helped share life's burdens, were named the Mules.



Jazz great Davey Yarborough playing with youth musicians

“

We can't save every child but we can do something... We can help get them involved in programs which give them focus and hope for a good life.”

Dr. Sandra Lawson, Moles and Mules

Davey Yarborough and Esther Williams, founders of the [Washington Jazz Arts Institute](#), performed with three youth from their program. The Washington Jazz Arts Institute holds a jazz mentorship program, free of charge to youth participating, where participants receive hands on instruction on their instrument and basic instruction on being a successful artist.

The event featured a Moulin Rouge theme with red and black decorations.

A presentation from Youth for Human Rights was done by Ms. Beth Akiyama, the Executive Director of the Church of Scientology National Affairs Office and a former board member of Youth for Human Rights International (YHRI). She spoke about the Youth for Human Rights campaign which promotes the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). In this 75th anniversary year of the UDHR, Ms. Akiyama urged attendees to read the booklet published by YHRI detailing each of the 30 human rights. Public service announcements on three of the rights were also shown. Amongst the 30 human rights under that document, the right to [freedom of expression](#) is included: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers." ("Frontiers" means "borders" in this sense.)

In 2021, the Youth for Human Rights DC chapter and Art Impact International held an art contest on the theme "War or Peace?" to raise awareness of human rights. The art was exhibited in an on-line gallery for the International Day of Peace and afterwards the catalog of the art gallery was turned into a hard cover book. At the [Moles and Mules](#) event, a special edition of the book honoring the 75th Anniversary of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights was previewed. Art Impact International founder, Carolyn Goodridge, presented the book, which features the exhibit's 91 pieces of art by 78 artists from 13 countries and includes the entire text of the UDHR. The book is available at www.artimpactinternational.org/war-or-peace-catalog. Proceeds from the book help fund the educational activities of the Youth for Human Rights chapter.

Ms. Akiyama encouraged the freedom of expression occurring with the event, explaining, "Freedom of Expression is one of the 30 human rights and this being the 75th anniversary of the



Singer, Esther Williams, and recording artist, Davey Yarborough, playing with youth jazz musicians



Sandra Lawson, DC host for the Moles and Mules event introducing the jazz performers for the day

UN UDHR, it is only fitting that we exercise these rights. Among them the right to freedom of assembly, and that we are all born free and equal. We want to teach people these rights so they can teach others."

Dr. Sandra Lawson, PhD, host of the DC chapter Moles and Mules event spoke about the importance of art and opportunities for youth, telling the audience, "We can't save every child but we can do something. When we read about car jacking and crimes being committed by young people, we can do something about it. We can help get them involved in programs which give them focus and hope for a good life. I urge you to support the Washington Jazz Arts Institute."

About Youth for Human Rights International (YHRI):

YHRI materials and booklets are available for free in 17 languages. Materials include compelling public service announcements for each of the 30 rights in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as a free online course and a free package for educators on this subject are available at www.youthforhumanrights.org.

The Youth for Human Rights DC chapter does trainings and seminars for youth as well as adults interested in human rights. Those attending learn their rights and how to use the tools to educate others on the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

Press Office

Youth for Human Rights International - National Office



Beth Akiyama and Carolyn Goodridge showing the special edition Youth for Human Rights art contest book promoting the 75th anniversary of the UDHR



"What Are Human Rights?" educational booklet provided free of charge by Youth for Human Rights International

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