



A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF  
THE EMPOWER YOUTH NETWORK

FEBRUARY 2022



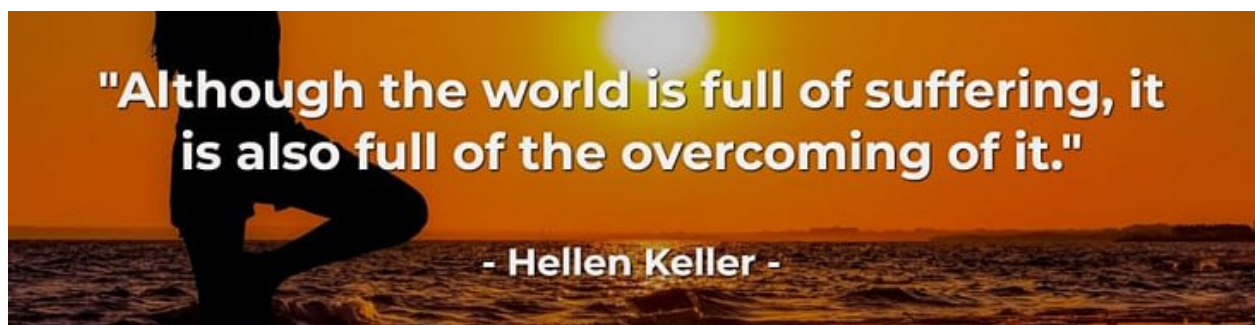
## Register Now for the Resilience Rising Conference

*Friday, March 25, 2022*  
*All day conference of classes*  
*beginning with check in at*  
*8:00 a.m.*

[CLICK HERE to register and see the full list of speakers and courses!](#)

The Empower Youth Network offers youth development programming throughout the Snoqualmie Valley. We are excited to launch our second annual conference on building resilience and becoming a trauma-informed community on March 25, 2022! We welcome people from all walks of life to this day-long learning opportunity: laypeople, parents, educators, social service providers, and you! Resilience Rising will be held entirely online in 2022, though we hope to return to in-person learning and networking once it is safe to do so in future years.

Please join us to learn and share together with speakers such as Dr. Shawn Nealy-Oparah of TrUTH Educational Consulting, Reba Meriwood of Be Possible, and Bella Bikowski of Restorative Circles. Up to five Washington State Approved Clock Hours are available for this event if desired.



# Youth Success! Mentoring

Youth Success! Mentoring (YSM) matches adult mentors with youth mentees throughout the valley. They meet weekly to share and learn about each other. YSM mentors discover their mentees' passions and interests and develop caring relationships.

This past holiday season, mentors and YSM gave books to 78 mentees so they could read over the holiday break. The mentees' handwritten thank you notes were so creative!

If you would like to become a mentor to a Snoqualmie Valley student, please email [BeAMentor@empoweryouthnetwork.org](mailto:BeAMentor@empoweryouthnetwork.org).



## Be The Change Summit

*Saturday, March 12, 2022*

*8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.*

*Chief Kanim Middle School*



Register today!

Join us for the 14th annual Be the Change Summit, empowering youth to make a difference by getting involved in their communities.

At the Be the Change Summit, middle school-aged students are invited to learn from Luis Ortega, public speaker and possibility coach extraordinaire, as well as several youth co-facilitators and adult presenters from the community.

Our goal is to hear from the youth in our community, help them discover inner strengths and build foundations for leadership. This event includes lunch, a t-shirt and door prizes. Come make new friends and enjoy a day of fun!

Scholarships are available. Don't let the price of the ticket keep you from attending this awesome event!

Please reach out to EYN staff member Sara Young at [sara@empoweryouthnetwork.org](mailto:sara@empoweryouthnetwork.org) with any questions.

## Sno Valley Volunteer Match



The Sno Valley Volunteer Match website is the best resource in the Snoqualmie Valley for matching volunteers with local organizations. The searchable nature of the website makes it possible for those wishing to volunteer to truly find volunteer opportunities that match their skills.

Sponsored by the Empower Youth Network, this site enables the Snoqualmie Valley community to better understand volunteer needs, and increases the likelihood that locals who wish to volunteer will find a great match.

Visit the Sno Valley Volunteer Match site at <http://snovalleyvolunteermatch.org/>.

## Meet New Staff Member Jerry Blackburn

Jerry Blackburn joins us as the Program Director for the Empower Youth Network. In addition to joining the EYN team, Jerry is an adjunct faculty member in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program at Seattle University. Jerry is a graduate of the University of Washington with a Master of Education and has been a certified Substance Use Disorder Professional since 1999. Most recently, Jerry served as the Executive Director for the Influence the Choice community prevention coalition as well as a faculty member in the recently sunsetted Substance Use Disorder Counseling Education Program at Bellevue College.

In the community, Jerry currently serves as a board member for The Garage - The Issaquah Teen Café, ParentWiser - the PTSA Council Education Committee, the Greater Issaquah Equity & Inclusion Group, as well as serving as a longtime steering committee member for the Counselor Camp - Adolescent/Young Adult Behavioral Health Conference.

In 2005 he was honored by the Washington State Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse with the Richard Rivera Passionate Youth Professional Award. The Issaquah Schools Foundation presented him with the Golden Apple Award in appreciation for his dedication to the health of young people in 2017 and in 2021 he received the Influence the Choice Vicki Hoffman Legacy Award for his work as an advocate for preventing substance use and promoting the mental, physical, and social wellness of our youth.

Jerry lives in Issaquah with his wife Val, a long-time middle school teacher in the LWSD and son Isaak, a student at IHS. Jerry is an avid runner, loves to cook and enjoys keeping their 100+ year-old house happy.



## Heart of the Valley Gala 2022

*Let It Be Hope!*



To learn more about sponsorship and item donation opportunities, contact staff member Helene Wentink at [helene@empoweryouthnetwork.org](mailto:helene@empoweryouthnetwork.org).

*Saturday May 7, 2022*

*5:30 p.m.*

*Snoqualmie Casino*

*Buy your tickets here!*

