



Impact

MissionSAFE: Where Hope Thrives



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Note from Nikki

Dear Friends—Happy New Year to you all! We are happy to have 2020 in our rearview and are all looking forward to light and hope in 2021! Thanks to all of you—our individual, corporate and foundation supporters—MissionSAFE not only made it through 2020 but have already begun more of our exciting programming for 2021.

With our partner, **Boxing Power & Fitness**, we are offering boxing lessons to over 25 youth weekly, with a waiting list of over 70. We do this in our new **donated 4000 sf, ventilated space** in Mission Hill, which we have for a year. Also, in this space, youth participate in art programming in small groups as we make sure young people can maintain fitness and socialization in small, masked and socially distanced activities during this tough time.

Youth are **exploring civic engagement, the arts, and educating their peers** in how to stay safe during the pandemic. We have begun a corporate Mentoring Program with some of our partners, including **State Street Corporation**. And we have begun an ambitious partnership with **National Grid** called **Grid for Good** which trains youth for jobs in the energy sector!

We continue our work with violence- and gang-involved young people not only in our job programs but also in mediating and intervening when needed. Our **grassroots Community Ambassadors**, with roots in five different neighborhoods, are on the ground to help motivate and guide young people. And we continue to work with young people one to one, helping them to navigate issues in their daily lives, solve problems, feel connected, and overcome trauma.

Importantly, in these hard times, we are **still delivering food** to our families and are partnering with **Fair Foods** to assure that those grocery bags include fresh produce.

Finally, a longtime funders, the **Amelia Peabody Foundation** has issued, along with its own grant to us, a \$15,000 challenge grant to be matched by individuals donations! We look forward to unlocking that match with help from you! We anticipate accomplishing much this year and working with all of you to make it happen! —Best, Nikki



N. Flionis

Nikki Flionis
Executive Director, Founder
MissionSAFE

Futures partners with National Grid

MissionSAFE is pleased to announce our partnership with National Grid around career exploration, training, and placement. Called "**Grid for Good**", this partnership exists between National Grid and a variety of Community Based Organizations across the United States and United Kingdom who serve under-resourced communities. We are truly honored to be **one of the two organizations from Massachusetts who have been selected** to provide this pathway for employment, training opportunities, mentorships, and job placement within National Grid for the New England sector.

Through this project we will work with **250 young people annually** who have experienced chronic unemployment, are affected by the criminal justice system, or who face socio-economic disadvantages.

The virtual trainings we jointly deliver offers insight into the energy industry, allowing young people to visualize opportunities and learn skills relating to jobs and careers in the energy sector. In addition, National Grid provides a twelve-week mentorship opportunity, and two-week paid internship following the initial training. In fact, MissionSAFE is proud to announce

that **we are the launch** for Grid for Good's **first Mentoring Kick-Off in Massachusetts!** Mentees in this program will have the



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www.missionsafe.org

opportunity to grow their professional networks, identify aspirations and goals, and map those goals while learning additional skills directly from their mentor to increase employability.

MissionSAFE continues to **provide safe and trauma-informed support** to these young people during and following their work with our Grid for Good program! **We are thrilled to be a partner with National Grid and excited that young people are being offered this practical and far-reaching opportunity!**

Our Board of Directors

Ronald Koning Jr.	Florence Koplou	Solange Blanchard
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Please join us in support to provide critical programs and services to youth in great need.

MissionSAFE is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization (federal tax identification number 04-3457195), gifts are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.



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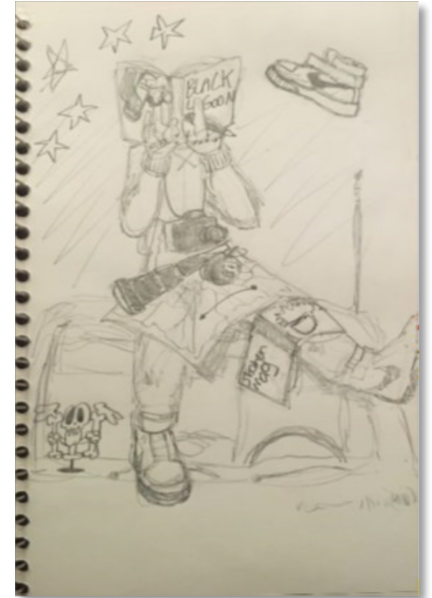
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Youth Leadership Services Corp

Happy New Year from our Youth Leadership Service Corps (YLSC) and Explorers Academy (EA) participants! As the country ushered in a new president on Inauguration Day 2021, YLSC staff, Brandi Artez, Adeline Torres, and Amanda Shea, were continuing to **lead youth in activities to learn about the election process** as well as discuss issues relating to the pandemic, Black Lives Matter, and other civic engagement issues. There were two ultimate goals: to allow youth to process their feelings in this difficult time and to work with them **to learn how government works** and the importance of **grassroots engagement**, including how to improve their own communities.

Youth held a **mock presidential debate and election**. They explored various policies and stances of the Democratic, Republican, Green, and Libertarian parties. After a rousing debate and nail-biting election, the Democratic candidate, **Daica Simola, was elected** as the new YLSC president! With a platform promising better healthcare and education, as well as support for immigrants and stricter gun control, we're sure President Simola will do a fantastic job.

YLSC youth also played **"Mayor for a Day"**, **building their own cities from scratch, complete with maps and even a national anthem!** This activity allowed them to learn about assets, resources, and programming within their own communities. **They created resource maps to show what services, strengths, and as-**

sets their communities have, and what is not available, so they can discuss strategies to change the situation. They and the staff are looking forward to going back out into the neighborhoods soon to make some of these strategies happen.

In two related activities, **youth are using art to educate peers about COVID 19 safety and to learn to express their emotions in positive and self-care ways.** Through a social media and flyer campaign as well as contests and events, **YLSC youth are educating their peers in how to stay safe during COVID-19** and encouraging them to practice the safety tips! This activity is funded by a grant administered by **Health Resources in Action**. Learning to express emotions in positive and productive ways that bolster youth's self-care knowledge and self-esteem is what our other art activities are all about. Led by our Arts Coordinator, Amanda Shea, her every Wednesday sessions with young people use a variety of art mediums including **poetry, film, podcasting and photography** to give youth the tools **to express themselves and to learn to share their responses within their peer group.** Amanda leads the youth through prompt writing exercises covering topics from self-care to social justice issues and self-reflection. The youth are guided through these processes and learn to recognize different forms of poetry, how to structure written poems, and create haikus. In February, a group of them, **working with the Amplified Film Project, will begin 12 weeks of learning to create a short film** on state-of-the-art software.

When our community stands together, we are all uplifted.

Contact George.Richardson@missionsafe.org for any questions. You can make a donation by clicking the **DONATE** button or the link below. Please consider making your donation a sustaining gift by selecting the monthly option.

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We Thank you!



Staff Highlight: George Richardson



George Richardson joins MissionSAFE as our Acting Director of Development. George brings unique experience and insight to the role: as a donor, volunteer, and former intern supervisor. Utilizing those experiences and his prior work with the FDIC, TechLaw and MetLife, he hopes to put MissionSAFE into an even stronger position to maximize visibility and outreach to current and new donors.

Before joining our team, George created a database for our staff in order to have a single tool to enroll new youth, track progress, and avoid creating a paper blizzard. This system also provides metrics for the ever-important task of reporting our results, and freeing up staff to interact with our young people.

"I've been aware of MissionSAFE's efforts for years. In my role at TechLaw, I had the opportunity to engage one of MissionSAFE's young people in a fast-paced deadline-driven project which required focus, diligent effort, and attention to detail. When I asked Nikki [Flionis, Executive Director] if she had anyone who might be up for the task, she introduced me to a young man who showed up to the job every day with a shirt and tie (not required), early, and worked hard throughout the project. As I learned more about this young man and the support he received from MissionSAFE, I knew they were doing

something right. When I learned that the Director of Development was moving on, I thought I could help fill the gap. I knew I would enjoy being a bigger part of this great organization and the wonderful work they do."

With COVID-19 still keeping us mostly remote, we are confident George's creativity and technology skills will help us find new ways to promote MissionSAFE's important work and further engage our donors in providing support for the highly at-risk young people with whom we work.

"I am writing to ask for your support for MissionSAFE, a wonderful organization I care deeply about and on whose Advisory Board I sit. MissionSAFE works with high-risk young people, the bulk of whom are from economically poor families, often with a single head of household. Please consider helping MissionSAFE continue its mission during this uniquely challenging time with as generous a gift as you can afford. We are so grateful for your support." 1

-Geoff Lamont, MissionSAFE Advisory Board

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Donate today to be a part of the solution by clicking the box "Make this a monthly donation"

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