

Contact: Jamie Allison

Walter & Elise Haas Fund 1 Lombard Street
press@haassr.org San Francisco, CA 94111
Phone: (415) 398-4474 haassr.org

PRESS RELEASE

Bay Area Youth Award \$1 Million in Possibility Grants to 10 Bay Area Organizations

Recipients are working to dismantle systems of oppression through cultural education, Black liberation values, and community-based care, healing, and art

San Francisco, October 1, 2024: The Walter & Elise Haas Fund announces 10 Possibility grants to organizations deemed essential to building a more just and equitable society and actively working to challenge systems of oppression. Through a program designed and managed by Bay Area Youth (BAY) Community Fellows, youth advisors to the Walter & Elise Haas Fund grantmaking team, grants provide \$100,000 in general operating support to ten organizations using cultural education, Black liberation values, community-based care, healing, and art to advance their missions. Recipients foster intergenerational connections to uplift youth, center collaboration, and seek a strong intersectional impact in their work. "Listening to the insights of young people is one of the most powerful levers that philanthropy has for shaping the future that young people will inherit," said Jamie Allison, Executive Director of the Walter & Elise Haas Fund. "Their perspectives not only enrich our understanding of current challenges but also help us build solutions that are sustainable for generations to come. We understand that the decisions we make today will impact the lives of young people in both the short and long term, which is why it's essential that young people have a seat at the table in shaping those decisions."

About the Grantees

Possibility Grant awardees represent a diverse cohort of small, grassroots and nonprofit organizations doing intersectional work in Bay Area arts, youth development, legal services, human services, environmental justice, and policy advocacy. Each organization is distinguished by its commitment to youth leadership. With operating budgets ranging from \$220,000 to \$4.4 million, these organizations exemplify the significant impact that small, community-driven efforts can have in shaping the future of Bay Area youth and creating lasting change in their communities.

- **The Anti Police-Terror Project** is an Oakland-based, Black-led organization that seeks to rapidly respond to, interrupt, and, ultimately, eradicate all forms of state violence in communities of color.
- **The Arab Resource and Organizing Center**, fiscally sponsored by Tides Center, is a grassroots membership-based organization working toward racial and economic justice and the dignity and liberation of Arab and Muslim communities.
- **The Center for Empowering Refugees and Immigrants** is a community-led mental health organization caring for the healing and livelihood of Cambodian, Burmese, Laotian, Vietnamese, Nepali, Tibetan, Indian, Rwandan, Filipinx, Latinx, Afghan, Iranian, Indonesian, and other deeply neglected immigrant and refugee communities.
- **Dads Evoking Change** is an Oakland-based, Black-led nonprofit organization that supports children, youth and families. Its mission is to empower fathers and families by providing comprehensive support and resources that foster positive parenting and strong family bonds.
- **EI/La Para TransLatinas**, fiscally sponsored by Community Initiatives, is committed to self-determination, harm reduction, and trauma-informed care for trans, intersex and gender diverse Latinx people in the San Francisco Bay Area and surrounding region, including transitional-age youth.
- **Feed Black Futures**, fiscally sponsored by Inquiring Systems, envisions a future where all people experience their inherent right to fresh, culturally relevant, and nutritious food, and access to land.
- **Freedom Forward** collaborates with San Francisco Bay Area youth, ages 14-24, to transform foster care, juvenile justice, housing and economic systems that impact them and prevent their exploitation.

- **Legal Services for Children** is a nonprofit law firm providing free legal representation and social work services to children and youth, training to the next generation of youth-serving lawyers, and policy advocacy for changes that benefit youth throughout California.
- **Oakland Leaf** cultivates community transformation through creative education for youth and families in daily afterschool programming at seven high-need East Oakland elementary and middle schools, paid internship programs for high school students, and a summer camp.
- **Vital Arts** seeks to transform the conditions in the Bay Area so that artists can not only survive but thrive in their communities. The organization advocates for those historically excluded from conversations concerning housing – particularly, Queer and Trans, BIPOC, and disabled artists.

About BAY Fellows

BAY Community Fellows are dynamic young leaders, ages 18 to 24, who identify as BIPOC with lived experience. They are united in their collective pursuit of a more abundant and just future. Beyond their integral role on the Walter & Elise Haas Fund's grantmaking team, BAY Fellows are also active organizers within the Bay Area, steadily growing their leadership and deepening their impact in their communities.

The 2024 Fellows are **Hawi Desta**, Northern California Organizer, YO! Cal; **Cecilia McLellan**, Poeta, Community Organizer, and Youth Lead, All Youth Are Sacred; **Bria Woodland**, Community Organizer, Urban Peace Movement, California Alliance for Youth & Community Justice, Sueños of Sisterhood, and BAY-Peace; and **Zitlalli O.**, Field Leader, YO! Cali and Case Manager, Bay Area Community Resources/CHALK.

Applications were reviewed by a panel of BAY Fellows with **Mebaot Atnafu**, Youth Lead, Urban Peace Movement and **Veronica Cañas**, Community Organizer.

About Possibility Grantmaking

The Walter & Elise Haas Fund's Possibility Grantmaking is proudly youth-driven, with young leaders at the helm of program design, open proposal calls, and review panels. This initiative deepens the Fund's commitment to fostering the health and self-determination of Bay Area communities by placing youth at the center of decision-making and *funding nonprofits to win*, i.e., investing in organizations to fully realize their mission, with the agency to determine the path to drive better outcomes for communities they serve, and prioritize the well-being of their staff.

About The Walter & Elise Haas Fund

The Walter & Elise Haas Fund is a 72-year-old family foundation enacting its belief that another world is possible, envisioning a Bay Area where all people can reach their fullest potential and live with a sense of purpose, dignity, and joy. Making trust-based grants to organizations advancing justice across the Bay Area, the Walter & Elise Haas Fund is a committed partner to organizations that resonate with its values:

- **Family.** To care for each other as a human family, forging connections, creating continuity of culture and practice; to learn from the past and to protect, care, and plan for future generations today
- **Shared Responsibility.** To do our part to heal the world (tikkun olam), leading when necessary and joining when possible; to acknowledge our shared fate; to embrace collective action that strengthens our community
- **Belonging.** To seek equity and justice; to embrace and celebrate our differences; to be in community with others, building trust that makes a “we” possible
- **Possibility.** To embrace what could be; to dream big, aspiring to foster a society in which we all thrive.

###