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## **MCW's Young Leaders Access Program Sees Continued Growth, Celebrates 21 Retreats**



**New York, NY, Summer 2018** – MCW brought together twenty-seven participants and sixteen mentors from around the world to participate in the 21st annual Young Leaders Access Program Retreat (YLA) at Champlain College in Burlington, Vermont and New York University in New York City from July 24 to August 2.

“I’m eternally grateful to MCW for the opportunity to participant in the Young Leaders Access Program, that has offered me the opportunity to meet leaders from around the world who are transforming their communities,” said Lucas Martins Carvalho, a participant from Brazil. “Every day that passes is a new stage in discovering my own leadership potential and hope that things can change, for the better, with the right people and tools.”

Participants entered the program wanting to make change in their communities in areas such as education, human rights, gender equality, the environment, and health. At the retreat, facilitators, speakers, MCW team members, and mentors helped participants develop their ideas for a “vision plan” by participating in sessions focusing on a range of topics, including relationship building, social media strategies, multi-culturalism, budget planning, storytelling and elevator pitching.

Thought-provoking presentations were given by Norma Loeb and Liz Graydon-Gannon of What Better Looks Like, Jon Budreski of Airshark, Tomer Weil of Playtech BGT Sports, Autumn Williams of the African School for Excellence Foundation, Jonathan Hakakian of SoundBoard Angel Fund, Inbar Fruchsad Weil, MCW 2006 YLA alumna, Dr. Charles Robbins, MCW Board Member and

Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and Dean of the Undergraduate Colleges at Stony Brook University and the HeforShe Campaign, and Eddie Bergman, MCW Co-founder and Board of Directors President.

Established in 2001, the retreat has grown alongside the MCW alumni network. It stands as the signature annual event for new and past participants to come together, make connections, and facilitate change. Over 800 participants from 50 countries have attended the retreat to date.

The 2018 participants and mentors came from 30 locations, including Albania, Algeria, Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, Egypt, Haiti, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Iraqi Kurdistan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Montenegro, Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestinian Territories, Panama, Peru, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia, the USA, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe.

JC Soto, Director of the Young Leaders Program, said, “The participants at this year’s retreat are the truest definition of global citizens. In just a week, they learned to define leadership as an action rather than a position. They also expanded their social awareness by understanding modern global issues and leadership in the context of globalization, and producing actionable vision plans.”

Anmol Zehra, a participant from Pakistan said, “Belonging to diverse cultures, speaking different languages, and handling different community challenges, we came together to learn and step up for a better world.”

The retreat concluded with Open Doors at the Edwin Gould Foundation on August 2. The event featured remarks from Norma Loeb and Liz Graydon-Gannon, Co-Founders at What Better Looks Like; Dr. Charles Robbins, MCW Board Member and Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and Dean of the Undergraduate Colleges at Stony Brook University; Charmaine Peart-HoSang, Director of Program Quality and Delivery (Student Services) National Program at Year Up; and Laurette Richin, Executive Director at Long Island Bulldog Rescue.

[The 2018 Roberta Richin Vision Plan Memorial Award](#), now in its second year, was awarded to Sharon Matongo of Zimbabwe. Sharon plans to use the \$500 grant to organize a program advocating for the protection of children’s right through human rights education and youth development.

MCW received in-kind donations from New York- and Vermont-based sponsors, including Ben & Jerry’s, Chipotle Mexican Grill, Ben's Deli, NYU School of Professional Studies, Synergos, Fairway Market, Joe Coffee, Third Rail Coffee, and Trader Joe’s, as well as the Edwin Gould Foundation.

To view photos, visit [MCW’s Facebook page](#).

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## **About Us**

MCW (Miracle Corners of the World) is a non-profit organization with a mission is to address communities’ pressing needs by empowering current leaders and readying leaders of tomorrow. Based in New York and founded in 1999, with partner organizations in Africa (Rwanda, Tanzania, and Zambia), MCW focuses on Community Development, Oral Health Care and Young Leaders programs, alongside Partner Initiatives. [www.mcwglobal.org](http://www.mcwglobal.org) | [@mcwglobal](https://www.instagram.com/mcwglobal)