

Respondent



6

Anonymous



1577:31

Time to complete



## Nominator Information

The following section is applicable to nominators completing this form.

1. Your Name: \*

Niranjana Sankar

2. Your Email: \*

3. Your address: \*

*Only Cupertino residents may nominate an organization. Your answer below will only be used to verify residency, and it will not be shared with anyone.*

4. Are you self-nominating your organization or an organization you are affiliated with?

☒ Yes

☐ No

5. Do you have a personal or familial relationship with anyone on the Teen Commission? If yes, please disclose the name of the Commissioner and your relationship with them. \*

My friend, Lauren Kim, and I are the founders of the Teen Organization, WAI.

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## Organization Information

Please answer the following questions regarding the Youth-Led Organization you are nominating.

6. Name of the Youth-Led Organization you are nominating: \*

WAI (Wildfire Awareness Initiative)

7. Primary Contact Name and email for the nominated organization: \*

*We will be using this information to contact recipients for follow-up if they are selected. Please inform them of your intent to nominate as City staff may be contacting them if they are selected.*

8. Please share all websites and social media handles associated with this organization. \*

*If none, please answer 'none'.*

Instagram: @waiforchange

9. How long has this organization been established?

*Organizations that are nominated must have been active for at least six months and be active at the time of nomination. Only active Youth-Led Organizations will be featured.*

This organization has been established for about two months.

10. Please describe why you think this organization should be highlighted on the City's social media platforms. Please include how they are positively impacting and helping members of the Cupertino community.

*Limit your response to 500 words or less.*

WAI, Wildfire Awareness Initiative, is a student-led organization dedicated to spreading awareness on how to prevent and prepare for wildfires. Right now, our organization started by Niranjana Sankar and Lauren Kim has a team of over 20 people. Nearly all members of our team are eighth-graders from Kennedy middle school and some are highschoolers from southern California. Our organization is only two months old, but we have 1K followers on Instagram. WAI should be highlighted on the city's social media platforms because we are a new, different, and needed awareness initiative. Wildfires greatly impact our community for at least a few weeks each year. For example, the CZU Lightning Complex Fire last August burned 86,509 acres, including Big Basin Redwoods, California's oldest state park. About 97% of the park was burned and much of its historical value burned with it. Many people, including our friends and family, had to evacuate while others were forced indoors due to the smoke. From our personal experience, many people do not know how to prepare for a wildfire or its causes/effects. WAI will change this. Our team of about 20 students works hard on creating informative posts on Instagram, holding events to further spread awareness, and volunteering at places affected by wildfires. WAI has and will continue to positively impact and help the members of the Cupertino community by providing them with the necessary information on wildfires. The information will include how to prepare for a wildfire, what to watch out for, safety kits, causes of wildfires, effects of wildfires, statistics, etc. WAI has also greatly impacted the Cupertino youth. It has given many students an opportunity to reconnect with friends during meetings every other week while learning about wildfires. Students now have something productive, fun, and impactful to do over quarantine and learn many important skills for the future. Some of these skills include leadership, time management, art, research, and marketing. Once quarantine is over, we plan on doing presentations in elementary schools, daycares, and boy/girl scout meetings to inform children about the dangers and what to look out for regarding wildfires. From there, we will look into volunteering in areas that have been affected by wildfires and

hosting conventions with speakers who are well-educated regarding the topic. Ever since we started, our main goal has always been to positively impact everyone around us, and with more publicity, we can make a larger difference.

Respondent



4

Anonymous



02:48

Time to complete



## Nominator Information

The following section is applicable to nominators completing this form.

1. Your Name: \*

Rohit Malhotra

2. Your Email: \*

3. Your address: \*

*Only Cupertino residents may nominate an organization. Your answer below will only be used to verify residency, and it will not be shared with anyone.*

4. Are you self-nominating your organization or an organization you are affiliated with?

☒ Yes

☐ No

5. Do you have a personal or familial relationship with anyone on the Teen Commission? If yes, please disclose the name of the Commissioner and your relationship with them. \*

No

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## Organization Information

Please answer the following questions regarding the Youth-Led Organization you are nominating.

6. Name of the Youth-Led Organization you are nominating: \*

Learn In Shelter

7. Primary Contact Name and email for the nominated organization: \*

*We will be using this information to contact recipients for follow-up if they are selected. Please inform them of your intent to nominate as City staff may be contacting them if they are selected.*

8. Please share all websites and social media handles associated with this organization. \*

*If none, please answer 'none'.*

1) learninshelter.org 2) Instagram/Facebook/LinkedIn: @learninshelter

9. How long has this organization been established?

*Organizations that are nominated must have been active for at least six months and be active at the time of nomination. Only active Youth-Led Organizations will be featured.*

Over a year

10. Please describe why you think this organization should be highlighted on the City's social media platforms. Please include how they are positively impacting and helping members of the Cupertino community.

*Limit your response to 500 words or less.*

March 2020: schools across the nation shut down, but only temporarily, so it seemed. However, by April, we realized we weren't going back anytime soon. That's when Learn in Shelter was born. Created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are a student-run nonprofit that was originally intended to help students who were struggling with the transition to remote learning. At first, we recruited local high school and college volunteers who had extra time on their hands and paired them with students across the Bay Area to help them finish out the school year strong despite the challenges of online instruction. By providing free, online tutoring, we not only offered students personalized help, but also exposed our tutors to a variety of educational backgrounds. We soon discovered that our services were in demand across the nation and decided to expand our reach to increase our impact. Through intensive outreach, with the help of a team of 12 Public Relations Specialists, we successfully connected with underfunded school districts and minority parent groups in over 40 states. Now, Learn in Shelter encompasses a network of 2,000 students and tutors. The words of appreciation from parents confirmed that the program was effective; people thousands of miles apart were able to create a lasting connection that not only supplemented each student's schoolwork but also provided them with a role model, completely digitally. Learn in Shelter is just one of many organizations contributing to addressing the inequity of the education system. Providing a personalized learning experience for the students in our program, Learn in Shelter offers the individual attention that has been especially lacking due to remote learning. Now, we still facilitate daily pairings between volunteers and students while ensuring that the quality of tutoring meets or exceeds parental expectations. Moreover, we maintain partnerships with various schools across the nation and streamline communication between the vast network of school administrators, parents, students, and tutors. We are hopeful for the future of Learn in Shelter. Even as students return to the classroom, the need for individual attention will not go away. We want to continue tackling the problem of a "one-size fits all" education system, which cultivates competition

instead of curiosity, particularly in the Silicon Valley. The core of Learn in Shelter is and always will be in the Bay Area. Being highlighted on Cupertino's social media platforms would help us reach parents who are looking for assistance for their children and young adults who are searching for ways to give back to their community. During a time of social distancing, we hope that Learn in Shelter helps bring people a little closer together.