

Muriel Matters Awards Launch - Jasmine Baker

Why should we recognise and encourage young people in our schools for being active citizens?

From a young age, we are taught to explore, try new things, and we interpret the world in a miniscule way. As we grow older, we develop interests, and many of us form passions. As our interpretation of the world expands, so does our knowledge of past and present issues, communities and causes yearning for support, however many of us continue to go about our lives.

Those of us who do not choose the simplicity of going about their lives, choose to be changemakers. They see the need for change, and they have the passion and determination to develop ideas and directions for change, all upon their own back. These people are devoted to shaping the world into a better place for everyone, and to these people - their actions are second nature.

These amazing individuals do not seek any reward, any recognition for their work, as they are truly committed to their chosen causes. The reward for their work is seeing the change they've laid the foundations for, or even watching as this change is built, as we all know - change does not happen overnight.

So even though these individuals do not expect rewards nor need incentives, their work should not go unrecognised. We are very aware that these individuals are a minority in our society. It is not easy to be an active citizen, and be devoted to changes you may not even be able to see. If we begin to uplift these individuals, commending them for dedication, commitment, and loyalty to their passions, we will likely see a domino effect. Those who were too nervous, too proud, too carefree, will notice the work of the changemakers as they are recognised. They may find passions, causes, and communities that are meaningful to them, and follow in the footsteps of one ordinary person, with extraordinary values, doing extraordinary work.

Encouraging more young people to become active citizens, and to encourage change, is the best way of shaping our world into a more peaceful, equal, and better place. These people are the future, and we should be encouraging them to shape theirs.

The purpose of the Muriel Matters Awards is to identify and recognise the work and endeavours of the young active citizens in our community, as we value and wish to acknowledge the importance of their actions, and the dedication that they show.