



A platform centered on youth exploring anti-racism and racial justice issues, via speakers' presentations & discussions.

### Programme

Contact us: [YouthConferenceCommittee @ gmail.com](mailto:YouthConferenceCommittee@gmail.com)

#### About this Event

Due to Covid-19, the **Youth Conference Committee** presents the **2020 Youth Racial Justice Digital Panel**, *taking place on the unceded and ancestral territories of the Coast Salish Nations of Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish.*

This committee has come together to host an online panel centered on youth, in order to **explore anti-racism and racial justice issues**. The purpose of this event is to bring diverse students together, hear their voices, and celebrate their identities. The day will include three keynote speakers by discussion on how this pandemic affect them and the racism experiences around in the communities. This panel is hosted **via Zoom on May 9, 2020**.

After careful consideration, due to the event's online format and constrained time frame, we would only organize to have the land be acknowledged at the beginning by a youth committee speaker. We have intentionally designed the entire event to last only 90 minutes, given this is a long period of time to be in front of a screen for youth audience. We are still planning an in-person conference for the near future, where we have always intended to invite an indigenous elder for an opening prayer

#### Guest Speakers:

- Ruby Smith-Diaz, moderator
- Golsa Golestaneh
- Brandon Yan
- Sammie Jo Rumbaua

## Who is the Youth Conference Committee (YCC)?

We had been inspired by the 2019 Multi-Dialogue Project (← link to highlight video) that focused around the theme of Displacement & Solidarity. We are inspired to work together to organize youth friendly platforms to learn together, speak up, express ourselves, and advocate for social justice issues that are close to our hearts. We are a group of sponsor teachers and youth in various grades, who are connected through our different backgrounds and identities.

## 2019 - 2020 YCC at Byrne Creek Community School

### Youth Members:

- Amy B.
- Charissa W.
- Hamrin M.
- Kim O.
- Madison T.
- Maide A.
- Maryam H.
- Muhammed B.
- Sana A.
- Silvia B.
- Tooba S.
- Tsion D.
- Zehra T.

### Sponsor Teachers:

- Ms. Denise Ferreira
- Ms. Sara LaBrash
- Ms. Shanee Prasad
- Ms. Yu-Han Chen



## Shape of the Event (90 mins total)

10 mins – intro/welcome/housekeeping/acknowledgement

10 mins – Speaker #1 presenting + 5 mins Q&A – Golsa Golestaneh

10 mins – Speaker #2 presenting + 5 mins Q&A – Brandon Yan

10 mins – Speaker #3 presenting + 5 mins Q&A – Sammie Jo Rumbaua

10 mins – Body break: Zuma Dancing – Instructor Thais Cabral

15 mins – Dialogue and discussion with all speakers – Moderator Ruby Smith-Diaz

5 mins – Final Questions and Answers

5 mins – Wrap Up

# 2020 Youth Racial Justice Digital Panel

## Bio of moderator, speakers, guest, and sponsor teachers

### Ruby Smith-Diaz (moderator)



Ruby was born to Chilean and Jamaican parents in Edmonton – amiskwacyi and graduated from the University of Alberta with a degree in Education with distinction. Since graduating, she has found her passion working as a body positive personal trainer, multi-disciplinary artist, and by using art and popular education as tools for organizing, empowerment, and community building. She is the founder of her own arts-based facilitation business, Tierra Negra Arts, and body positive personal training business, Autonomy Fitness.

Ruby has been living on unceded Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil Waututh Territories for the last seven years, and is currently involved in several projects, including launching an arts-based Black Histories & Futures Workshop series for youth in schools, and creating haunting dissonant soundscapes through her musical project, Eclipse. In her free time, Ruby enjoys dancing, bike riding, connecting with friends, singing, and reading.

### Golsa Golestaneh (guest speaker)



Golsa is a former refugee from Iran who has been living on the unceded Coast Salish Territories for 5 years. She is a Political Science student at SFU who is finishing her degree in the summer and plans to study constitutional law after a much needed break from academia. She is passionate about social justice and focuses on issues surrounding racial and gendered inequity, decolonial activism, and the political climate in Iran.

## **Brandon Yan (甄念本) (guest speaker)**



Brandon is a community activist, human rights educator, and an LGBT2Q+ advocate. He is currently the Deputy Executive Director for Out On Screen, an organization that illuminates, celebrates, and advances queer lives through film, education, and dialogue through its two core programs, The Vancouver Queer Film Festival and Out In Schools. He has collaborated with the Ministry of Education, BC Teachers' Federation, and other stakeholders to address the needs of LGBT2Q+ youth through policies and practices that foster inclusive and more supportive school environments.

Brandon understands that representation of diverse and complex intersecting identities is important, and it is this conviction and his experience that led him to run for Vancouver city council in 2018 with OneCity. His campaign focused on amplifying the voices of renters, the arts community, young people and other groups who are underrepresented in our local government. Though he didn't win, it brought forward important conversations on representation, sexuality, and race. He has a Masters in Urban Studies from SFU and served on the City of Vancouver's City Planning Commission from 2014 to 2016.

## **Sammie Jo Rumbaua (guest speaker)**



Sammie Jo has over 15+ years of experience as an advocate, facilitator, community organizer, youth worker and entrepreneur. She is part of a grassroots community powered organization called Tulayan (meaning 'to bridge the gap' in Tagalog). Tulayan cultivates opportunities for new connections and community building, through dialogue around our collective history and fostering positive cultural identification.

She is a trained facilitator for the City of Vancouver's CitizenU Initiative: The Anti-Racism, Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Bullying Leadership Training For Vancouver Youth. To Sammie Jo, giving voice to the vulnerable and empowering youth is the greatest way for us to make a difference in our community. It is the pathway to creating strong leadership and socially sustainable growth. Empowering others is one of the most important acts of leadership and growing. Sammie Jo believes in always learning and sharing ideas, thoughts, resources, networks and experiences.

### Thais Cabral (Zumba instructor)



Thais is a BC Social Studies teacher who is originally from Brazil. Her passion for dance started when she was very little as she has Indigenous and African roots. When she immigrated to Canada, teaching dance was a way to stay connected with her identity. She believes dancing is liberation and healing, one of the best ways to allow our bodies and spirits to be themselves.

### Yu-Han Linda Chen (sponsor teacher)



Yu-Han currently teaches Mandarin and ELL (English Language Learning) at a secondary school on the ancestral and unceded land of the Coast Salish people. Yu-Han is an educator and a community connector who immigrated to Canada from Taiwan with her family when she was 12 years old. Yu-Han worked for 5 years as a Youth Settlement Worker at the Neighbourhood Houses in Vancouver to support the integration of newcomer youth. Yu-Han has also been a part of Fresh Voices' 2014 & 2016 Youth Forum and worked with the Surrey LIP Refugee Youth Advisory Group to host a leadership conference in 2017.

In all her works, Yu-Han is dedicated to supporting young people to speak up and to stay connected with their cultural roots and languages. Yu-Han is the founder of Little Lantern Cultural and Heritage Society, a grassroots non-profit society that engages with high-school youth, especially youth identified with diverse Hua-Chinese heritages, to build bridges with peers and all community members. Yu-Han is passionate in creating an inclusive multilingual space for young people of diverse backgrounds to collaborate and explore their cultural belongings and personal identities.



### **Denise Ferreira** (sponsor teacher)



Denise is a teacher of students and English at Byrne Creek Community School in Burnaby, BC. She is an avid reader, writer, mother, and passionate educator, who believes that justice begins in our classrooms. She also believes that, when we educate students about POC's complex identities and human experiences, and confront racism through the exploration of diverse texts and voices, we are taking the first steps towards truer equity. Mostly, she wants, little by little, to help dismantle oppressive systems. She is learning to be an ally to POC and the issues they face in and out of schools. Being part of this Panel is a start.

### **Shanee Prasad** (sponsor teacher)



Shanee is a first-generation South Asian woman, born in Vancouver to Fijian South Asian parents. Shanee teaches at Byrne Creek Community school, in senior alternative education. She has bachelor's degree in political science, an education degree and special education degree from Simon Fraser university. She recently completed a Master's degree in Equity Studies in Education (SFU) with a focus on anti-racist education. Shanee is the elected worker of colour rep with the BC Federation of Labour. Shanee is passionate about making public education accessible for all, and inclusive of equity and diversity.

### **Sara LaBrash** (sponsor teacher)



Sara LaBrash is a settler on the unceded and ancestral territories of Qayqayt, Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil Waututh where she enjoys living and working. Sara teaches at Byrne Creek Community School where she throws things a lot. Two of her prime objectives are to help people understand that gravity works and that everything is a wave – these goals are pursued both inside and outside the physics classroom. Sara is working to understand the world beyond herself and to support journeys of revelation, realization, and reconciliation. Sara is an enthusiastic learner, walker, knitter, and seeker.

## Thoughts from YCC Members

### Tooba S.

My name is Tooba. I am currently in Grade 11. The languages I speak are English, Urdu and Sindhi. I joined the Youth Conference Committee because I wanted to raise awareness with others on racism because we all need to know that everyone is precious in their own ways, no matter their skin colors, what countries they belong to or what their identities are. Being a part of this group is an honor, since it is filled with amazing people who have a mindset to change the world into a better place and who want to raise awareness for social and racial justice issues happening around the world.

### Silvia B.

My name is Silvia. I am currently in grade 10. I can speak English and Mandarin. I have never even thought of organizing a conference before, but, thanks to our four sponsor teachers who have provided us with such a great opportunity and who have shared their leadership skills with us, this conference was made possible. I would also like to thank my other “family members” in the Youth Conference Council. Without you folks, amazing ideas and voices could not have been shared. Thank you all for making this conference possible!

### Hamrin M.

I'm Hamrin. I'm from Syria and I can speak 3 languages, which are Kurdish, Arabic, English and a little bit of Mandarin. I'm in grade 9 and I have learned a lot from this group, because I never thought I would be able to do certain things by myself. This group helped me to realize that we should ask for help/support when we need it. Thank you to all the teachers and group members that have helped and supported me.



Thank you  
for  
attending!



by Youth Conference Committee  
from Byrne Creek Community School

**2020 Youth  
Racial Justice  
Digital Panel**

**Free! Door Prizes!**

Sat. May 9  
Zoom Opens: 12:45 PM  
Event Starts: 01:00 PM

**Current Racism Issues  
Around the Pandemic**

Panelists:  
Sammie Jo Rumbaua  
Golsa Golestaneh  
Brandon Yan

**All high-school age youth welcome!** Moderator: Ruby Smith-Diaz  
Register @ <http://2020-youth-digital-panel.eventbrite.ca>

### Charissa W.

In Mandarin we say, “你好”(nǐ hǎo), which means “hello”! I am fortunate to be able to be part of an ethnically diverse group who value inclusivity, compassion and awareness. Being a member of the Youth Conference Committee has allowed me to befriend special people who choose to embrace differences and who strive to let others feel the same way. We have worked closely together to organize this conference, and, in the future, we hope to hold a bigger and better in-person conference with similar topics surrounding racial justice. Together, we have taken on leading roles and I am grateful to have made friends with overlapping values.

### Sana A.

My name is Sana. I'm a Byrne Creek student, currently in grade 11. I speak Arabic and English. I'm originally from Syria-Damascus and arrived in Canada in 2016. I chose to be part of the Youth Conference Committee because I'm interested in spreading awareness and making this world a safe place for everyone, regardless to who they are. Racism doesn't only affect one group of people; it affects the entire world. Being a part of the Youth Conference Committee has given me an opportunity to express my thoughts and opinions as well as work hard towards getting my voice and other youth's voices heard. I believe that it's our responsibility to advocate for anti-racism and racial justice issues. We cannot avoid it; we need to face it head on.

**SAT, MAY 9**  
**ZOOM OPENS**  
**@ 12:45PM**  
**EVENT STARTS**  
**@ 1:00PM**

Join us with

**Moderator:**  
Ruby Smith-Diaz

**Panelists:**  
Sammie Jo Rumbaua,  
Brandon Yan  
&  
Golsa Golestaneh!

**2020 YOUTH  
RACIAL JUSTICE  
DIGITAL PANEL**

**FREE FOR ALL  
HIGH-SCHOOL AGE YOUTH**

**REGISTER NOW**  
**@ 2020-YOUTH-DIGITAL-PANEL.EVENTBRITE.CA**

**YOUTH CONFERENCE COMMITTEE  
BYRNE CREEK COMMUNITY SCHOOL**

See you next time!

Stay tune  
for more updates!

Thank you to  
the Burnaby School District &  
Anti Oppression Educators Collective  
for their financial contributions.