Unions play a crucial role in positively impacting workers’ lives. Unions, as democratic entities, actively negotiate and uphold fair wages, affordable healthcare, job security, stable schedules and other essential rights. Various professions have established unions to safeguard these job-related benefits, and in the United States, numerous artists have embraced unionization to advocate for improved benefits.

For instance, a motion picture actors’ union was created in 1933 as an attempt to establish actors’ independence from “Hollywood studios and producers.” The Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television Radio and Artists (SAG-AFTRA) is a union representing around 160,000 media professionals, including actors, announcers and broadcast journalists. According to its mission statement, SAG-AFTRA is committed to “negotiating the best wages, working conditions, and health and pension benefits; preserving and expanding members’ work opportunities; vigorously enforcing our contracts; and protecting members against unauthorized use of their work.”

If you’ve been following the news or social media, you’ve likely come across the SAG-AFTRA strike that took place in the United States and wherever films are being produced. The strike began July 14, 2023, and persisted for 118 days before ending on Nov. 9, 2023. The primary cause of the strike, as reported by The New York Times, was an ongoing labor dispute, significantly impacting film productions. High-profile movies such as Spider-Man: Beyond the Spider-Verse, Dune: Part Two and Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom were among films affected.

While the strike had various impacts on such film projects, its primary goal was to secure fair compensation for the work performed and to prevent the predominant use of artificial intelligence (AI) in films at the expense of actors. Many actors, especially those with prominent roles in TV sitcoms like Friends, would receive paychecks each time the show aired after its initial premiere; these are commonly known as residual checks.

Artificial intelligence has become a valuable resource for studios to avoid paying actors entirely. If an actor had previously worked on a project, they might have been contractually obligated to relinquish their rights to film studios, allowing the use of their faces on screen in subsequent projects without the actor’s consent.

The resolution of the strike was marked by notable changes such as “above-pattern” minimum compensation increases, unprecedented provisions for consent and compensation that will protect members from the threat of AI, and … a streaming participation bonus,” per the union’s tentative agreement announcement. Other aspects of the agreement involved pension and health caps being raised, which improve overall healthcare plans. These agreements ended the 118-day strike on Nov. 9, 2023, making history as the longest strike in actors’ union history.

Unions safeguard the fundamental rights of workers, fostering improved wages, safer work environments, health benefits and more. On the picket line, actor Ike Barinholtz from The Mindy Project emphasized to The Wrap, “This is the fight. We have to keep this industry that we’ve been entrusted to be stewards of alive.”
Security Check: Think Twice Before Submitting your Saliva to 23andMe

BROOKLYNN THEN • age 9

Have you ever wanted to learn more about your genetic background? A private biotechnology company, 23andMe, has provided many people with insight into their genetic information. They do this by analyzing a saliva sample you send to them. 23andMe has claimed they are a trusted site. This seemed accurate until October 2023, when 23andMe’s data was hacked. The most impacted by this hack were predominantly Chinese and Jewish individuals, but the data of approximately 6.9 million users, nearly half of 23andMe customers, was accessed. Not only did hackers gain access to their data, but what is even more severe is how much of this personal data was leaked and posted on the dark web.

“The dark web is the internet’s darker, deeper, more hidden parts, hence the name. It’s also a known home for these types of hackers. This leak of personal information not only puts those specific individuals in danger, but their family members, as well. Because 23andMe utilizes its database to share information about potential relatives and overall ancestral reports, more people’s private data, including name, birthdate, gender, and much more, is in danger of being stolen and sold on the dark web. "23andMe is in the business of collecting and analyzing the most sensitive and irreplaceable information about individuals, their genetic code," states Connecticut Attorney General William Tong in an inquiry letter to the company. "This incident raises questions about the processes used by 23andMe to obtain consent from users as well as the measures taken by 23andMe to protect the confidentiality of sensitive personal information."

The 23andMe data breach exposes genetic information vulnerabilities, prompting broader concerns regarding security and ethics in genetic testing companies. A reevaluation of consent processes and data protection measures is essential in this fast-advancing biotechnological environment.

The U.S. Government Faces Shutdown as Political Turmoil Escalates

KEVIN MCCARTHY • age 11

Kevin McCarthy was ousted as speaker of the House of Representatives on Oct. 3, 2023. The new speaker, Mike Johnson, is one of the leaders of a far-right Democrat party, is considerably more conservative than McCarthy and supported Trump’s attempt to overturn the 2020 election. The role of the speaker is significant within the framework of the U.S. Constitution because the speaker leads the major political party in the House. According to the National Constitution Center, the speaker also “controls the order of all institutional business on the House floor.” Also, the speaker is second in line to the presidency, after the vice president.

Rep. Matt Gaetz and a small group of Republicans worked in coordination to get McCarthy stripped of his role as speaker. According to television news source KCRA 3, McCarthy’s spokesperson, was opposed by some far-right Republicans because he “struck a deal with Democrats in May to raise the debt ceiling to avoid economic calamity.” Gaetz also accused McCarthy of making “secret side deals” with President Biden to secure more aid for Ukraine in its war with Russia. Gaetz and the House Freedom Caucus believed that using legislative gridlock and creating chaos would allow them to have more power to bring about their goals.

Fast Fashion Creates Fast Problems

CHELSEA COLEY • age 9

Even though plenty of people like fast fashion, it is bad for the environment and for the workers who make it. The fashion industry makes these clothes quickly and cheaply, following the trends. People like to buy the clothes because they’re cheap and cute, and they want to be on trend. The problem is that making these clothes wastes a lot of water and the dyes that are used to pollute the water. Fast fashion became a huge issue in the 1990s and the 2000s, and it’s still a huge problem. Most of the workers who make fast fashion work in Asia, and 80% are women. They get very low pay and work in very bad conditions. For example, a factory collapsed in Bangladesh in 2013, killing 1,000 workers. Many work from home and are not protected by labor laws. To help solve this problem, customers could stop buying fast fashion from brands like H&M, Shein, Zara, Temu and Topshop. Instead, they could buy high-quality clothing and start reusing their clothes, by shopping at thrift stores and trading clothing with friends. Donating clothes may seem like a solution, but half of donated clothes go to richer people, and the rest end up in poor countries but are used by factories to produce fast fashion. People have the power to make a difference by opting for sustainable shopping alternatives, such as investing in high-quality clothes and Thrifting at second-hand shops. By rejecting cheap, trend-driven garments and accessories, and advocating for ethical practices, consumerism can contribute to a positive shift in the fashion industry, fostering a future style that does not come at the price of our planet or the well-being of workers. Through informed choices and collective action, everyone can work together toward a more sustainable and equitable fashion landscape.
A Behind-the-Curtain Look at America: Israel’s Forever Friend
RAYA EL-HAJJAR • age 16 and INDYKIDS STAFF

On Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas fighters broke through the Israeli siege on Gaza. The attack resulted in the largest loss of Jewish life since the Holocaust. Since then, the Israeli government has responded by carpet-bombing the Gaza Strip with the equivalent infrastructure destruction of two nuclear bombs. Conveying these events to the public, the U.S. mainstream media has adopted a deliberate approach. Conor Powell, a former Fox News Middle East correspondent, points out that “American and Israeli officials only want to discuss violence in the Holy Land when Israelis are killed or injured.

America has maintained a high level of support for Israel since its founding, including more than $130 billion in military grants. Axios reported that Israel receives 80% of its weapon imports from the United States. Israel does its best to reciprocate this support. According to Open Secrets, an independent political money tracker, many political figures receive significant paychecks from pro-Israel lobbies. The highest-paid leaders from 1990-2024 are President Biden and Sen. Bob Menendez, having accepted more than $4 million and $2 million respectively. Pro-Israel lobbying has a wide reach. 67% of the House of Representatives have also received money.

Bipartisan political support for Israel leads to overwhelming support in U.S. media. This coalesces in an effort to defend the state of Israel by downplaying Israel’s violence in Gaza to ensure public complacency for unconditional support of Israel.

A New York Times article titled “At Least 24 Killed in Strike on Gaza School Run by the U.N.” leaves out the identity of the perpetuator. Israel’s actions are similarly omitted in articles by CNN, the New York Times and Fox, subtly detaching Israel from the war crimes they commit in Gaza. Powell underscores how government opinions can bleed into the media. “There is an over-reliance on what the White House and the Pentagon say to us,” he said. “If a White House spokesman makes a claim, many Washington journalists are reluctant to publicly push back on that.”

The Mass Disappearance of Snow Crabs
NOEL FERNANDEZ • age 9

Did you know that there is more than one type of crab species? There are over 4,500 known crab species today. We are focusing on one specific type: the snow crab. Snow crabs live in icy cold waters in the Bering Sea of Alaska, with temperatures as low as 2 degrees Celsius (35 degrees Fahrenheit). However, a large marine heat wave has caused 10-11 billion crabs to starve to death.

It is necessary for snow crabs to live in cold water because if they are in hot water, it could be fatal. In warmer temperatures, they need to eat more because their metabolism increases. Since their metabolism has increased, the snow crabs must keep up with their caloric demand. As a result, the expected annual revenue for Alaskan fisheries plummeted from a whopping $500 million to a mere $24 million in the 2021-2022 crabbing season.

Researchers are studying the effects of temperature and other conditions on snow crabs, such as their development and survival, as mentioned in the article “Why billions of snow crabs disappeared from the Bering Sea” by Kirsten Dobroth, KMXT. They are using trackers and cameras to keep an eye on the crabs’ movements and also study blood samples. They use little tanks to see how crabs react to the sea-like floor in colder temperatures. Scientists “are hopeful that lessons learned from snow crabs might provide insight into how other marine species handle climate change as the ocean warms,” Dobroth says.

During significant world events like the siege on Gaza, the media landscape becomes divided, with major cable networks such as CNN and Fox witnessing declines in recent quarters. MSNBC, in particular, has observed a notable decrease in viewership since Oct. 9, registering an 18% drop in total-day viewership, as reported by Forbes. The recent fluctuations in viewership may be a contributing factor to the unfortunate mass atrocities unfolding in Gaza.

Ultimately, the media plays an important role when it comes to shaping public perception and the dynamics that impact international support. As more events take place in Gaza, it becomes crucial to be critical of media narratives and foster comprehensive understanding of conflicts to contribute to a just and lasting resolution for territories like Gaza.
How Living Expenses Are Burning Through American Pockets
LUCA CANTAGALLO • age 14

You may have noticed the frequent use of the word “inflation” in recent years. Inflation has evolved into a serious issue that spans across generations, races and socioeconomic classes alike. This escalating cost of living affects everyone.

Millennials, aspiring to start families and build their wealth, are increasingly excluded from the real estate market due to a shortage of affordable housing. For most of them, this adds to the already crippling debt from college loans. Those who are retired are also quickly realizing that their pension isn’t enough to carry them through the rest of their lives. Most are already burning through their retirement funds at an alarmingly fast rate. The current market particularly burdens families as they struggle to keep up with basic necessities such as food, healthcare, and sometimes education for their children. All this and more still don’t include housing for their families.

Children living in low-income households are often negatively impacted by their living conditions. A study by the Children’s Bureau of Southern California states, “In addition to brain development and health risks associated with holding low-socioeconomic status, a child’s mental health is at risk of being greatly affected as well. Low-income parents and children are more likely to be affected by challenges with mental health and mental illness.” The high cost of living in the United States can be a vicious cycle that can surpass generations, sometimes ceasing upward economic mobility and generational wealth. This is what allows the rich to maintain their social status and force low-income families further into debt.

Some solutions to combat high living costs in low-income housing include improving housing voucher programs, administered by public housing authorities throughout the United States, which assist low-income renters in making their payments and reduce housing instability, and supporting nonprofit community land trusts, which purchase and maintain land for affordable housing, sharing ownership of land and home value, and reducing the cost of homeownership for occupants. These are just two of the many ways that we can help combat the pressure of the high living costs on low-income U.S. households.

Understanding the Landscape and Gentrification in Urban Areas
SARANYA ZAVERI • age 10

Gentrification is the process whereby impoverished communities are displaced by wealthier individuals drawn to a neighborhood’s amenities. This phenomenon occurs globally. Additionally, housing discrimination can involve differential treatment of buyers and renters based on race or religion.

Gentrification has distinct advantages and disadvantages. Sometimes gentrification can significantly improve neighborhoods by enhancing neighborhoods with vacant properties, low property values and elevated crime rates. However, the disadvantages are often more consequential. Gentrification may also lead to increased living costs, housing rates becoming unaffordable, closure of small businesses, diminished diversity, escalated pressure on public services, loss of green spaces and the complete transformation of a neighborhood’s historical and cultural character.

In the 1950s, Americans of European descent began abandoning more racially diverse urban regions in favor of the racial homogeneity of the suburbs, in a process referred to as “white flight,” while banks denied people of color suburban homeownership opportunities by denying access to mortgages—a form of housing discrimination known as “redlining.” Suburban development and deindustrialization in American cities led to decreased investment in neglected urban spaces. The devalued land then presents developers and landlords with profit opportunities, driving reinvestment in the inner-cities.

According to the Seattle Times, Seattle is the third most gentrifying city among 100 large U.S. cities. Other studies from the National Community Reinvestment Coalition show that from 2013 to 2017, New York City was the city with the most gentrified neighborhoods, with Los Angeles close behind.

Furthermore, gentrification also contributes to rising houselessness and has a profoundly negative impact on schools. Rent has gone up so high that many people who aren’t able to afford it are forced to relocate to cheaper neighborhoods. Housing discrimination is unjust because every person, regardless of race or religion, should have access to affordable housing.
What is inflation? One definition is “a rise in prices, which can be translated as the decline of purchasing power over time” (Investopedia). Why does the word “inflation” make most people’s eyes glaze over, and why do they try to think of—literally anything else? How is it that something with so much power over our well-being is a concept most of us cannot even define? Who determines what inflation is? And how does inflation control whether or not we get to live and eat indoors?

Let’s first start with houselessness. The general consensus is that increased housing prices have forced a crisis in affordable housing for many people worldwide. According to researchers from The Pew Charitable Trusts, “allowing more homes to be built keeps housing costs down.” Their conjecture is that permitting the construction of more housing—whether subsidized or unsubsidized—can reduce houselessness. The Pew researchers posit that making housing available to vulnerable people is more effective than requiring those same individuals to participate in substance use or mental health treatment programs to secure housing.

However, an issue often overlooked in discussions of houselessness is population growth. There are too many of us now, and that growth is exponential—and has been for decades. Housing prices are increasing, and we are charging more as a result of the old law of supply and demand—but, in part, that has to do with how many of us there are to house now. Currently there is an overwhelming surplus of people, and this trend is projected to intensify in the future. The focal points of the houselessness discussion should include population control and affordable housing.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey; NAEH analysis. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.
The Power of Animal Companionship Can Improve Human Health

Do you want to know how animals can improve your mental and physical health? Animals can help people with disabilities, and if someone feels down, animals can cheer them up.

Some benefits of pet ownership are that they can keep you company, they can decrease the stress you have, improve how you feel, and help with social and emotional skills. Pets can also help decrease how lonely someone feels, help lower blood pressure, help increase feelings of social support, and boost someone’s emotions. According to NIH News in Health, when reading to dogs, children exhibited better cooperating skills than when they read to puppets that looked like dogs.

Pets can help people with certain disabilities, as well. Service dogs are trained to help people with disabilities and perform several tasks for them. Therapy dogs make bonds with human handlers and provide animal-assisted therapy. Service dogs are especially helpful to those with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). PTSD is caused by “experiencing or witnessing a traumatic event,” according to the therapy animal welfare organization Pet Partners. Service dogs are specially trained to effectively reduce the severity of PTSD symptoms because of their bonds with humans. Animal-assisted therapy programs help to decrease stress by decreasing the frequency of nightmares and by increasing one’s ability to cope with flashbacks and anxiety.

Animals can help people with mental and physical health by cheering them up during times of sorrow or assisting them in navigation. Specifically, animals can also play a crucial role by lowering cortisol hormones and providing individuals companionship. These benefits exemplify how positive it can be for people when deciding to adopt a pet. If you’re considering getting a pet and have the time and money, go for it!

EARTH’S FINAL WARNING FROM A NASA SCIENTIST

Did you know that a NASA scientist called Dr. Kalmus chained himself and other scientists to a building due to the severity of climate change?

Peter Kalmus became involved in climate activism because the financing of fossil fuels posed a significant challenge to addressing climate change. In protest, he chained himself and other scientists to a JPMorgan Chase building in Los Angeles, leading to his arrest. Dr. Kalmus emphasizes that he wants the public to recognize the climate crisis as an emergency primarily caused by burning fossil fuels.

Burning fossil fuels is detrimental to the environment because it increases atmospheric temperatures and leads to a limited supply of resources on Earth. Instead of relying on fossil fuels, there are alternative natural resources available, such as water power or wind power. Some cars are even powered by electricity rather than gas.

Dr. Kalmus said, “Every day that we continue to expand the fossil fuel industry and add more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere is going to lock in additional levels of heating in the future.” This is why, as individuals and problem solvers, we need to start utilizing natural resources. In addition, NASA released a statement supporting Dr. Kalmus’s concerns, asserting that global temperatures will keep rising. If average global temperatures reach 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, people around the world will experience multiple impacts of climate change.

Dr. Kalmus protested so that people can understand the importance of climate change and why we need to stop burning fuels. We need to take action to solve this problem, because it can and will get worse each day. We can use renewable energy, refrain from using gases and avoid burning fuels. Every day, we should contemplate what is happening in the world and how it can impact our lives and the environment.
PERSONAL ESSAY
From Nakba to Now, a Palestinian Teen’s Journey of Resilience and Resistance
AIDA EL-HAJJAR • age 14

My name is Aida, which translates to “the return” in Arabic. I was given this name because, even though my parents are refugees, they were confident I would return to Palestine someday. This year marks the 75th anniversary of the Nakba, and the hope of returning to Palestine burns brighter and stronger in our hearts now more than ever before.

The word “Nakba” means “catastrophe” in Arabic. However, the catastrophe didn’t start or end in 1948. This term “Nakba” has become synonymous with the settler-colonial apartheid project of Israel, which encompasses the systematic processes of ethnic cleansing and occupation of the indigenous Palestinian people and their land. The Nakba has persisted for the last 75 years, but global awareness is growing.

I’m Palestinian, not a symbol of violence or a political statement; I am a testament to the endurance of people with a rich history and a longing for justice. Being a teenager in America, especially during these times, I often grapple with the challenge of articulating my identity in a world that may not fully comprehend the Palestinian experience, or even consider me fully human.

Oct. 7 was a critical turning point in Palestinian liberation and resistance. It is imperative to understand the broader context of this attack and to recognize that historical oppression breeds resistance. Gaza has been under complete siege for 17 years and is consequently considered an occupied territory. Israel controls everything that enters or exits Gaza, including its airspace, water and borders. According to international law, occupied people are justified in resisting such brutal occupation.

As of the publication of this article, Israel has killed more than 24,000 Palestinians (including over 10,000 children) since Oct. 7, destroyed more than 60% of the homes in Gaza, and dismantled vital infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, water desalination plants, bakeries and United Nations shelters. Israel has committed war crimes including, but not limited to, the use of white phosphorus on civilians, collective punishment, starvation of civilians, breach of medical neutrality, and targeting of journalists.

The dominant narrative perpetuated by mainstream media outlets tends to oversimplify the struggles of Palestinians, reducing it to either standing with the state of Israel or standing with Hamas. However, to tell our story, one must understand that it is not solely a narrative of victimhood, but one of resilience, resistance and the unwavering determination to reclaim our identity and homeland because we will return.

Meet Esteban Guerra, a 12-Year-Old reporter at IndyKids for an impressive four years. From writing about issues like deforestation to exploring the aspects of the first bionic arm, Esteban is set on creating a more informed and curious generation. When he is not breaking news, you can find him indulging in his hobbies of drawing, watching anime, playing basketball, or showcasing his musical talents on the saxophone and piano.

Indykids: What sparked your interest in journalism, and how did you decide to become a kid reporter?
Esteban: I wanted to become a reporter because I wanted to share and inform others on issues we need to change, so that this world could eventually be safer for future generations.

Indykids: As a young journalist, what topics or issues are you most passionate about covering, and why?
Esteban: I enjoy covering topics such as deforestation, global issues, and new engineering discoveries.

Indykids: Can you share a memorable or exciting experience you’ve had while reporting for IndyKids?
Esteban: I think writing my latest report about the first bionic arm, which was extremely cool, how it looked very similar to an actual arm, and that the person could actually feel what they were touching.

Indykids: How do you think being a kid reporter contributes to raising awareness and promoting positive change in your community or the world?
Esteban: Being a kid reporter raises awareness and informs people about global issues. Kids are aware of the issues that are happening, which should give people a wake-up call and inspire them to take action and address challenges in their community and worldwide.

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Someday You Could Be... An Actor and Humanitarian Like Shakira Barrera!

Shakira Barrera is a Nicaraguan-American actress and humanitarian. You can catch her playing a role in the upcoming Marvel series, Ironheart. You can listen to the extended interview on our podcast, IndyKids Voices.

CJ: How do you feel about representation in Hollywood?
Shakira: To be honest, I’m kind of sick of talking about it, because I feel like with people, you know, in the Black community and the Latinx community, and even in the Asian community, there aren’t many. I think that if you’re going to take on a role, you always ask the representation question. And it’s like your responsibility to represent all of these masses of people that look like you. But I think it is just so difficult, especially for me as a Latina. I’m Nicaraguan, but as you know, there are so many (Latinos). There’s Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, Argentinians, Uruguayan… There’s so many. So I think that’s such a difficult question to answer. I feel like sometimes you could put the pressure on your shoulders. But in terms of representation in Hollywood, I think we can do better. Our stories should translate to everyone. And I find that there’s a lot of stories that just haven’t been told yet. And that’s what I’m excited to do, is kind of to write my own stuff and produce stories that are interesting to you and interesting to me, and just in general, that you can connect to and something that you’ve never seen before.

CJ: You made headlines when you wore the Nicaraguan flag at the Screen Actors Guild Awards in 2019. What encouraged you to do that?
Shakira: At the time, there was a big war in Nicaragua, and 500 people had died. And at the time, they can’t wave their flags proudly. There is no freedom of speech. You would be put in jail. You would be killed by the government… I wanted to make a statement. And I wanted it to just be bigger than just like one night at an award show. I want it to just be real. And then I really didn’t even know if we were going to win or not. I didn’t really care. I wanted to merge my acting and the humanitarian side of me and make a statement and do something important. And after that, a lot of the Nicaraguan community came to me. That’s actually how I found my Nicaraguan community. I wasn’t really close to my Nicaraguan community. I didn’t grow up there. I actually grew up in Jersey. So when they see me come out with this flag, I think there was a lot of emotions. And back to your representation thing, that was extremely cool, how it looked very similar to an actual arm, and that the person could actually feel what they were touching. And I wanted to be part of something that was important to them, so that it was possible that someone who looks like them, someone from that background, that type of Latino was represented. And it was important to people, and I’ve worked with so many Nicaraguan organizations since that decision, so it was honestly one of the best decisions I’ve ever made.

CJ: What changes do you hope to see in the world?
Shakira: I would love people to just be kinder with each other, and to understand all the information that’s out there. There’s so much. I feel like social media is so overwhelming. Sometimes we have all these apps. We see, we scroll, and we see things that are going on in the war right now. And then we see like a TikTok dance, and there’s so much information. So what I would like to see is for all of us to kind of study and gather all that information before making an opinion. It’s easy to just see something and react, and hide behind the phone or not have the conversation. What I would like people to do more is keep informed, have those conversations, and do the thing that’s just a little bit harder.
Getting Mystical with...

DRAGONS

The Year of the Wood Dragon

On Feb. 10, 2024, the Lunar Year of the Wood Dragon is ushered in. The dragon is the only mythical being in the Chinese zodiac within a group of 12 symbolic creatures and has been a prominent figure during the Chinese New Year. During celebrations of the New Year, the dragon can be seen on various kites, signs, flags and life-sized puppets. Among the 12 creatures are the boar, sheep, oxen, monkey and snake, and each year the zodiac rotates along with one of the five elements that speak to the relationship and interdependence of all things.

The symbolic representation of each Chinese Lunar Year also comes along with its specific characteristics, and this year is meant to bring growth, prosperity, abundance and good luck. Along with this, the Year of the Dragon is said to be the most popular for babies born into the world. Some attributes for children born in the Year of the Dragon include courage, power and ambition. But more than its symbolism, the dragon also has deep roots in Chinese history and is known to play a key role in the Chinese creation story.

As the myth goes, the dragon assisted the creator of everything, Pangu, in the making of civilization. However, the history of the dragon in Chinese culture does not stop there. Their prominence is also due to the association of dragons with bringing rain to grow crops, as well as the transportation of the human soul into heaven. As we ring in this new year, it is important to note that the dragon is not just a symbol, but also has had a huge influence on different aspects of Chinese culture.

A Snapshot of My Life, by IndyKids reporters

I want to be a doctor and dream of changing the world.
Valeria Hadrovic, age 10, Puerto Vallarta

I want to go to the Olympics for taekwondo, and earn a gold medal. Also, I want to be a game designer.
Colleyne (CJ) Daley, age 11, Maryland

I would like to become an author and create best-seller novels.
Brooklyn Then, age 9, Manhattan, NY

I want to be an artist and create children’s books.
Chelsea Coley, age 9, Queens, NY

I want to study current diseases, and I also want to study the inside of computers and code different robots.
Noel Fernandez, age 9, New York City, NY

I want to help the world through doing something I love.
Rayza El-Majid, age 11, Milwaukee, WI

I want to be an inventor so I can create the first bionic eye.
Esteban Guerra, age 12, New York City

I want to be a scientist who studies chemistry, physics and robotics. I also want to help people make medicine to cure diseases.
Farzad Wahid, age 9, Briarwood, NY

I want to create art that has the power to bring about change.
Aida El-Majid, Milwaukee, WI

I want to be a doctor that does surgery.
Kathyly Minays, age 10, Kingstree, SC

I want to be a doctor that does surgery.
Kayla Y. Moret, age 10, Kingstree, SC

I want to help the world through doing something I love.
Rayza El-Majid, age 11, Milwaukee, WI

Thank you for your continued support!

Now more than ever, we need sources of media for our youth that center the stories of people of color, immigrants, women, workers and LGBTQIA+ communities. IndyKids is the nation’s only social justice-oriented newspaper written by kids for kids. Now in its 18th year in print, IndyKids is distributed to classrooms and households in 35 states, helping thousands of youth think more critically about the news of the world. Plus, it’s free and ad-free! Subscription costs cover only the cost of mailing issues to subscribers. We rely on donations to cover all other costs of producing IndyKids and running our Kid Reporter Program, through which more than 800 youth have been trained as journalists. Can you contribute today to help us continue printing IndyKids and training the journalists of tomorrow? Thank you for your continued support!

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To donate via mail, send a check made out to “IndyKids” to P.O. Box 2281, New York, NY 10163

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