**[Nurture Nature Center](https://facebook.com/129902717041777%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)**

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The American Association of University Women (AAUW) Easton Branch has presented the Gateway To Equity Award-2021 to Nancy Walters (Easton Hunger Coalition), Emmarose Biason (student, Lehigh valley Charter School for the Arts) and Keri Maxfield (Nurture Nature Center, Art Director) for their collaborative efforts to create "20/20 Vision: Eyes on Hunger."

This award was established by AAUW-PA to recognize an individual, group, organization, or business that has shown by action and philosophy the promotion of equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, or research. The award was given by AAUW branches in Pennsylvania in recognition of International Women’s Day, which is celebrated annually on March 8th.

"20/20 VISION: Eyes on Hunger," invited teen artists to explore their understanding and response to local hunger issues under the guidance of Easton artists and food activists, with the program being held at Nurture Nature Center (NNC).

The project provided participating students with materials and the opportunity to expand their understanding about local hunger issues and experience the use of art as a social justice/environmental influencer, receive professional guidance and have an opportunity to exhibit their work. Partnering artists from NNC’s programming volunteered their time in mentoring the student artists through the creation of their work. Mentoring artists were: Anna Kodama, Jackie Lima, Tom Maxfield, Aine Freeman McDevitt and Don Wilson.

The project opened with a mixer at Nurture Nature Center in Easton where the students and artist mentors gathered for an overview and to meet each other. Nancy Walters from the Easton Hunger Coalition provided information on local hunger issues and impacts. With Keri Maxfield, the students learned about key elements of art that can be used in an artistic response to environmental and social justice issues. Open studio workshops were held at Nurture Nature Center to give the students an opportunity to work in a collaborative environment.

“Art can be a very effective tool in helping someone not only get to know something, but also to feel it physically and emotionally. It can express our relationship with the world, it can help you walk in someone else’s shoes, help us to define values and it can motivate you to take action,” explains Keri Maxfield.

Students who created works for the project are: Emmarose Biason (also project coordinator), Rokia Whitehouse, Sophia Lynch, Zachary Nye, Benny Stinson, AJ Lao, (all of Lehigh Valley Charter school for the Arts), Raven Blake (Easton Area High School), Ophelia Le Fay (Parkland High School), and Kaia O’Brien (Easton).

“The teen artists showed tremendous insights with their portrayal of hunger in people’s lives.” – remarked the AAUW

When faced with the fact that the planned exhibit of student work would not be possible due to the pandemic, Walters, Biason and Maxfield decided to create a video about the project showing the finished student works. The video can be seen here: [youtu.be/d1AhcnPQtzo](https://youtu.be/d1AhcnPQtzo)

"Eyes On Hunger" will continue with a repeat program this fall for up to 15 teens from the Lehigh Valley who will explore using collage and assemblage during in-person workshops at NNC that illustrate the issue of wasted food and how food recovery can be utilized to share excess or available local food. For more information, contact Nancy Walters at nancywalters@rcn.com or Keri Maxfield at kmaxfield@nurturenature.org