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Caledon students equipping youth with the tools they need to change the world

By ZACHARY ROMAN

For example, 17-year-old Yash from Jharkhand, India, used a CMHQ Initiative to bring Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education to his community.

Yash used curriculum that CMHQ developed to lead a science experiment at a local school. It was the first time students at the school had ever done a science experiment.

Lidder said CMHQ's materials are easily accessible and that the non-profit will help anyone who wants to lead an initiative.

?It's one way we stick to our mission of empowering youth-led initiatives around the world,? said Lidder.

An example of another initiative supported by CMHQ was a youth-led beach cleanup in Ghana.

The Passion Project Accelerator came out of a desire to help youth who want to develop their own initiatives. Through zoom calls and behind-the-scenes support, CMHQ helps youth make their initiatives a reality.

For example, CMHQ recently helped a young person who wanted to run support programs at a senior's residence. They helped the youth make connections and develop their program, and they were able to successfully implement it.

Ochuba said with CMHQ's support, the youth was able to run a program at a senior's residence near them within two weeks.

?We have a group chat with each of the people who are within that Passion Project Accelerator? that allows us to answer any questions that they have, 24/7,? said Ochuba.

There are currently around 50 passion projects that CMHQ is supporting.

Lidder said ultimately, he and Ochuba hope CMHQ will leave youth feeling like they can change the world.

?When youth finish their journey at CMHQ, they'll have the framework and experience to go out and start their own initiatives? if you're passionate, you can go and change the world,? said Lidder.

Ochuba said getting started with CMHQ gives youth confidence they may not have even realized they had.

?If you're running sessions at retirement homes at age 15, who's to say you can't help fix the biggest issues in the world at 25?? said Ochuba. ?We're trying to give people confidence early on so they can go out into the world and solve the biggest problems because ultimately that's what we need? people who are confident innovators and changemakers.?

CMHQ has a website, cmhqglobal.com, and Ochuba and Lidder are encouraging youth to check it out and get in touch with them to learn how they can make an impact.

?We'll support you and help you get your idea off the ground,? said Ochuba. ?CMHQ is so unique because it allows youth to do service that they're actually interested in, that they're genuinely passionate about, because they're able to start something themselves.?

Lidder said youth are often in the best position to help change the world because they have time that adults don't have. He said today's teens are often very passionate about making the world a better place, and that CMHQ wants to tap into that potential.

?We're two teens trying to help youth change the world,? said Lidder.

Ochuba said giving opportunities to youth will make the world a better place.

?Everybody deserves an opportunity to pursue what they want and an opportunity to change the world,? said Ochuba.

Two Caledon youth are on a mission to empower youth around the world and change it for the better.

Chisom Ochuba and Sehaj Lidder are the co-founders of ChangeMakersHQ (CMHQ), a non-profit who's goal is to equip youth to lead impactful community service initiatives worldwide.

Ochuba and Lidder first met in middle school. Before starting CMHQ, they each had attempted to start their own non-profits ? Ochuba wanted to help people from minority populations get into the tech field and Lidder wanted to bring financial literacy to all.

They both found that as youth, it was very hard to get a non-profit up and running.

?A lot of people said, just leave it to adults to make that impact, you don't need to worry about doing something like that,? said Ochuba. ?I think because Sehaj and I both had that experience wanting to start something and not having the ability to do it, it lit the spark to want to create CMHQ.?

Now in Grade 11, Ochuba and Lidder have built CMHQ into a successful non-profit that's garnered the support of companies like Google, Microsoft, and Ernst & Young ? and big non-profits like Movember.

CMHQ accomplishes its goals through CMHQ Initiatives and the Passion Project Accelerator.

Lidder explained CMHQ Initiatives are ready-to-implement plans that youth around the world can take from CMHQ and use in their community. Over 2,000 youth volunteers from around 80 countries have used the service.