



## Impact Report 2016





## Our Mission

RHI believes that social change to overcome systemic inequities begins with empowered youth. In partnership with community adults, we nurture young people in Red Hook to be inspired, resilient and healthy, and to envision themselves as co-creators of their lives, community and society.

[www.rhicenter.org](http://www.rhicenter.org)





# RED HOOK INITIATIVE PROGRAMS

Middle School • High School • Young Adult • Community Building • Technology

This report demonstrates the impact of RHI's five program areas on the lives of program participants during our 2016 program year (July 2015–June 2016). True to our community-centered approach, we engaged in participatory research, involving youth and adult participants as well as staff members in designing and carrying out our evaluation.

# MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

85 Middle  
School  
Participants

## Enrichment

- tutoring
- science club
- robotics & tech
- coding
- media production
- literacy

## Engagement

- drumming
- choreography
- chess
- arts
- cooking
- music production
- sports & recreation

## Leadership

- anti-bullying workshops
- social media safety
- conflict resolution
- community improvement projects



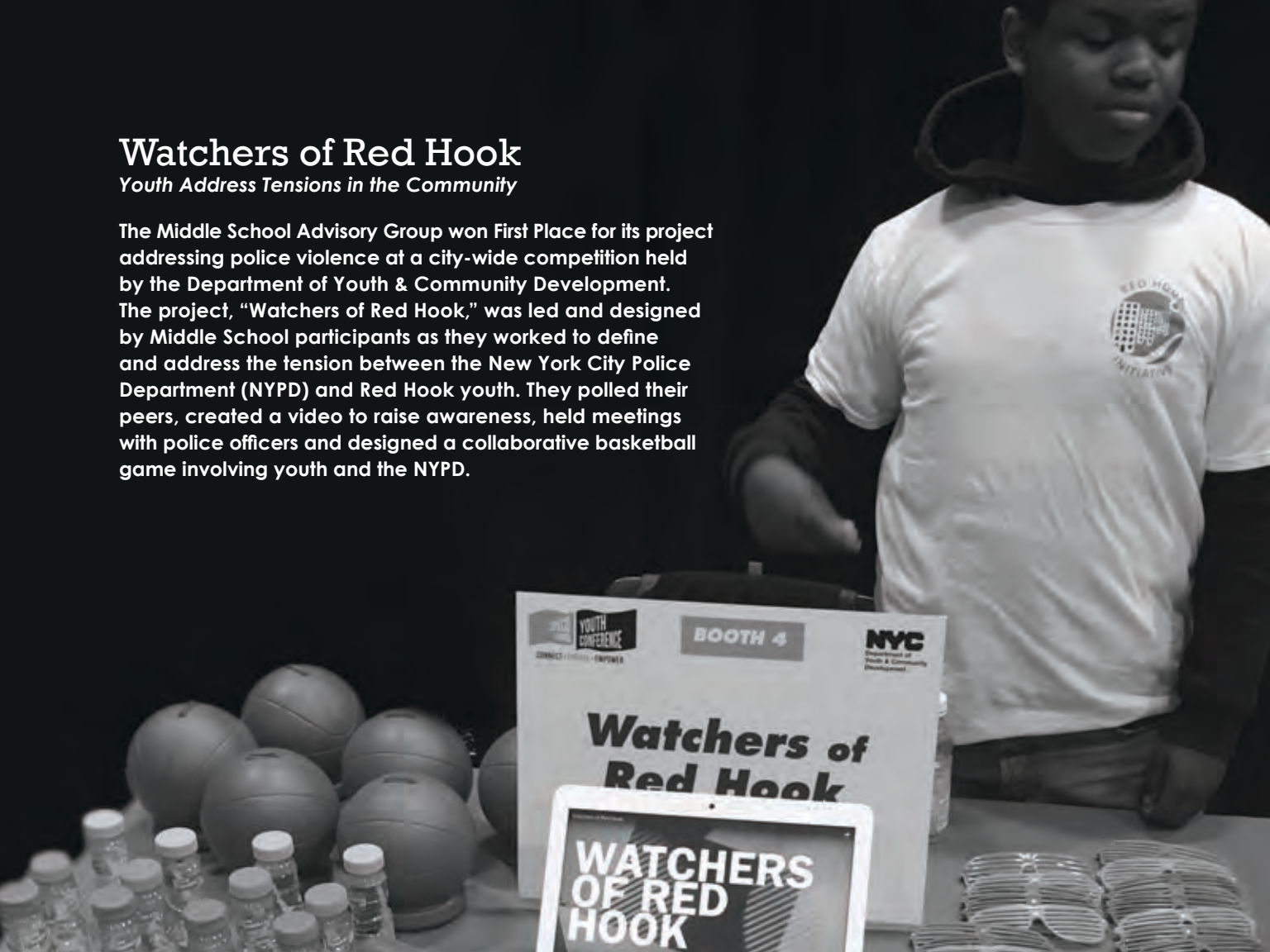
“There are trustworthy people  
here at RHI—they have your back.”

— Middle School Program participant

# Watchers of Red Hook

*Youth Address Tensions in the Community*

The Middle School Advisory Group won First Place for its project addressing police violence at a city-wide competition held by the Department of Youth & Community Development. The project, "Watchers of Red Hook," was led and designed by Middle School participants as they worked to define and address the tension between the New York City Police Department (NYPD) and Red Hook youth. They polled their peers, created a video to raise awareness, held meetings with police officers and designed a collaborative basketball game involving youth and the NYPD.



The Middle School Program employed two former RHI participants.

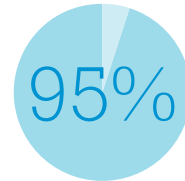
One designed and facilitated a Rites of Passage program for young men, while the other taught coding and web design.



# HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH LEADERS PROGRAM

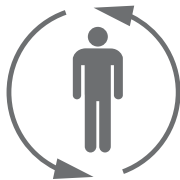
# 105

High School Participants



Retention Rate

## Personal and Collective Transformation



Youth Leaders are employed year-round by RHI and receive paid training and work experience. After a four-month training, High School Youth Leaders work for RHI as Peer Health Educators, Peer Counselors, Youth Organizers, Teen Chefs, Youth Researchers, Entrepreneurs and Photojournalists.



# 91%

of Youth Leaders graduated or are on track to graduate high school.

Former youth participants were hired to manage the High School Program, and to design and facilitate the Youth Organizers Program.



OVER 80%

of Youth Leaders agreed that RHI offered the resources they needed to succeed academically.

80%

of RHI high school seniors are college-bound.

96%

of Youth Leaders indicated that they gained access to resources to secure future employment.

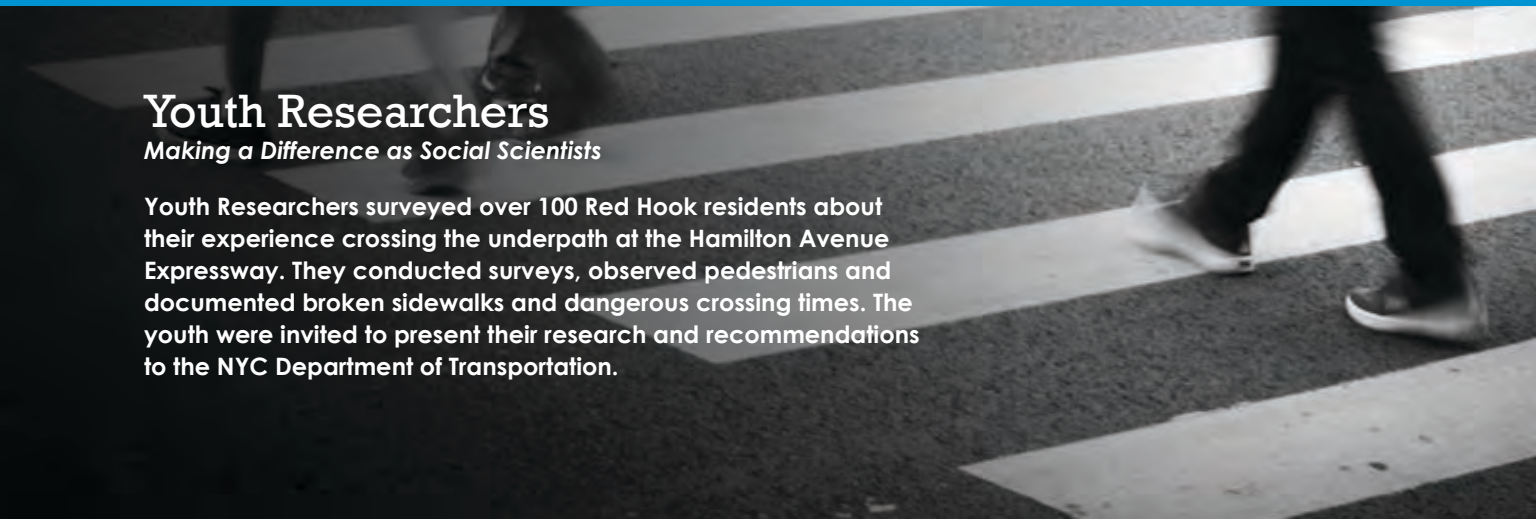
“It was inspiring to see that many people at Career Day started the same way I did, so I know I can be successful too.”

— High School Youth Leader

## Youth Researchers

*Making a Difference as Social Scientists*

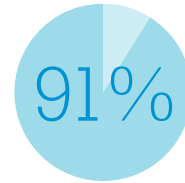
Youth Researchers surveyed over 100 Red Hook residents about their experience crossing the underpass at the Hamilton Avenue Expressway. They conducted surveys, observed pedestrians and documented broken sidewalks and dangerous crossing times. The youth were invited to present their research and recommendations to the NYC Department of Transportation.



**YOUNG ADULT  
PROGRAM**

149

Young Adult  
Participants

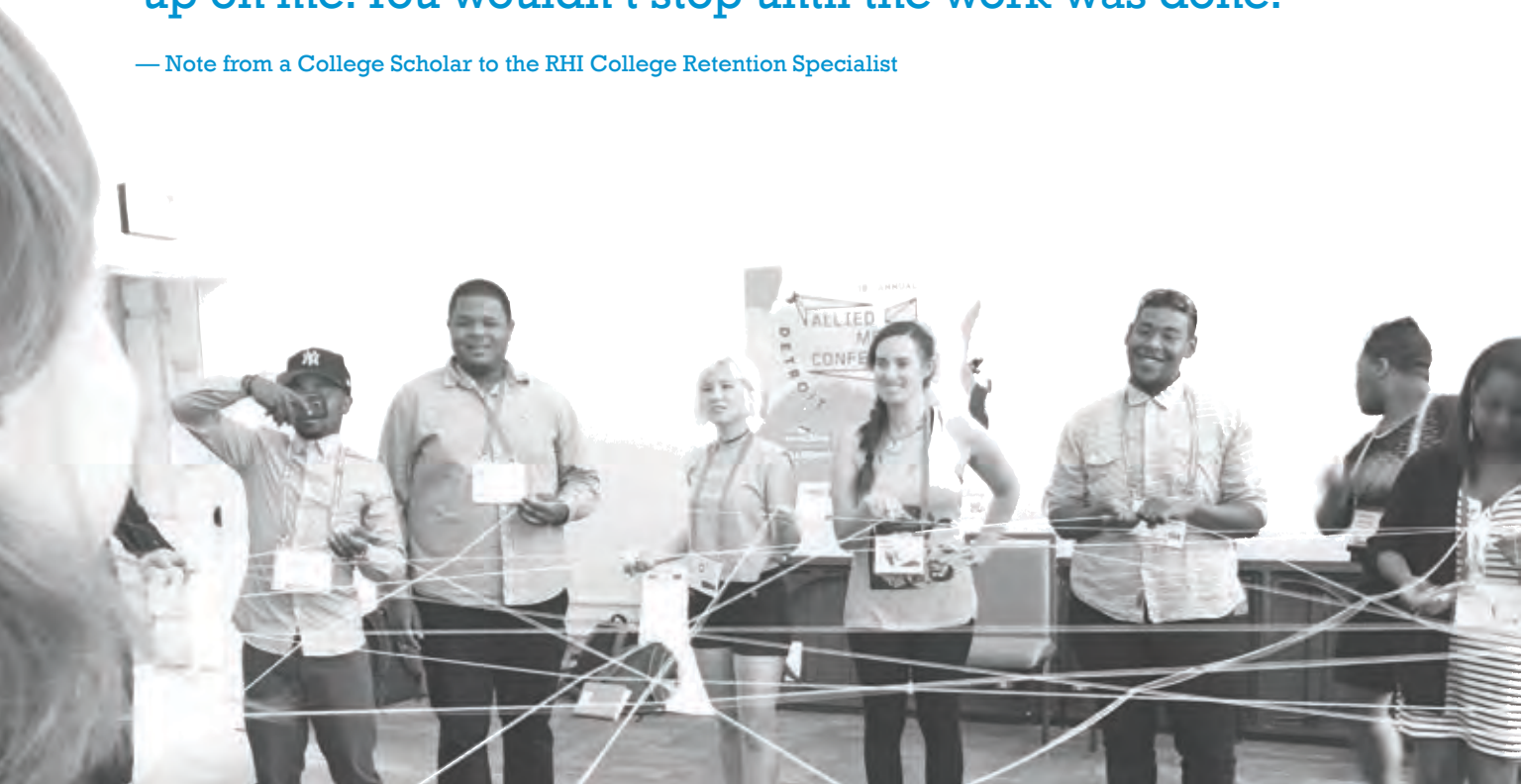


Retention Rate

## Securing a Path to the Future

**“Thank you so much for believing in me and not giving up on me. You wouldn’t stop until the work was done.”**

— Note from a College Scholar to the RHI College Retention Specialist







### Job Readiness & Subsidized Work Training Program

72 Young Adults participated in job readiness training. Of those who obtained jobs, 96% retained them three months later.

## COMMUNITY HIRING



90%

of RHI's staff live in or are from Red Hook.

OVER \$4M

was paid to Red Hook residents through salaries in the last four years.

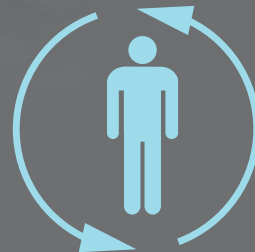
## College Scholars

18 actively working toward college enrollment

+

59 supported in persisting toward a college degree

77 College Scholars supported during the year



One of our key values is our belief that community members have the power to create their own social change.

Whenever possible, priority in hiring is given to a Red Hook resident. Extra coaching, professional development and supportive supervision ensure that local residents are given opportunities to serve their community with an insider's insight that is invaluable.

With this practice, RHI has emerged as an engine of economic development for Red Hook. Youth and adults alike have used RHI as a professional stepping stone to employment opportunities both within the organization and beyond our community.



80% of eligible students graduated college in spring 2016.

# COMMUNITY BUILDING PROGRAM

694 Residents Engaged in 12 Community Resource Events

97 Local Leaders Trained in Emergency Preparedness

Individuals Can Only Be as Strong as the  
Community in Which They Live





# Our Approach to Community Building



Facilitate Authentic  
Participation and  
Leadership

Build Social  
Capital

Create Positive  
Institutional Change  
in Red Hook

## Local Leaders

*Advocating for Public Health*

RHI took an active stance on the mold crisis in New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) Red Hook Houses. Local Leaders trained residents to gather data on mold and leaks and surveyed 280 residents. The Community Building team held a public meeting with the court-appointed Special Master of Mold, attended by 54 Red Hook residents committed to advocating for an effective solution.



Through the Participatory  
Budgeting process led  
by RHI Youth Organizers,  
RHI collected

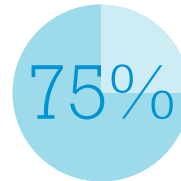
750 VOTES

—more than any  
other voting site

# TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM

42

Digital Stewards



Retention Rate

Creating Opportunities and Tech-Centered Solutions  
for the Red Hook Community



A key component of the Technology Program is Digital Stewards, a program through which young adults maintain and promote the Red Hook WiFi network, coordinate tech-related projects and events, and gain tech skills and knowledge through an 8-month paid job training.



Since the program started in 2013...

89%

of Digital Stewards secured further employment or returned to school.





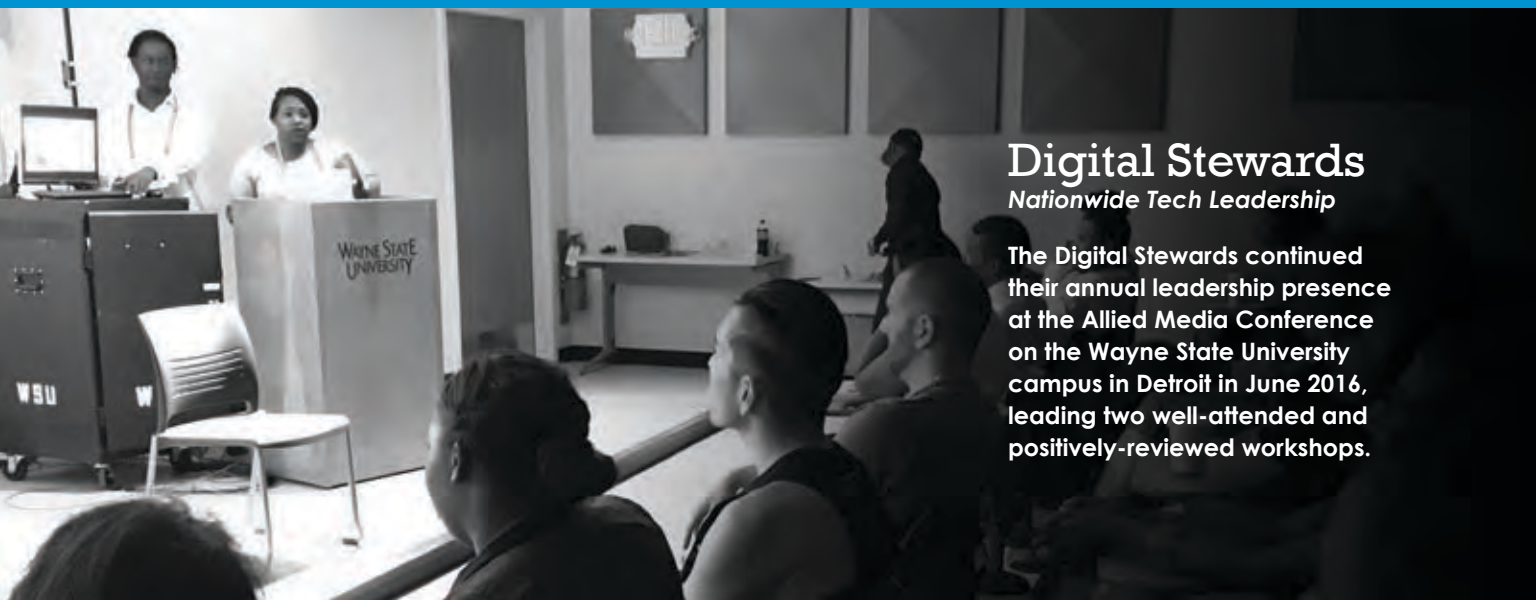


From January through June 2016, Red Hook WiFi was accessed **15,624** times by over **3000** individual users.



“Tech is taking over the world and replacing things everywhere. It’s a different world and I have a new outlook. I know what to do.”

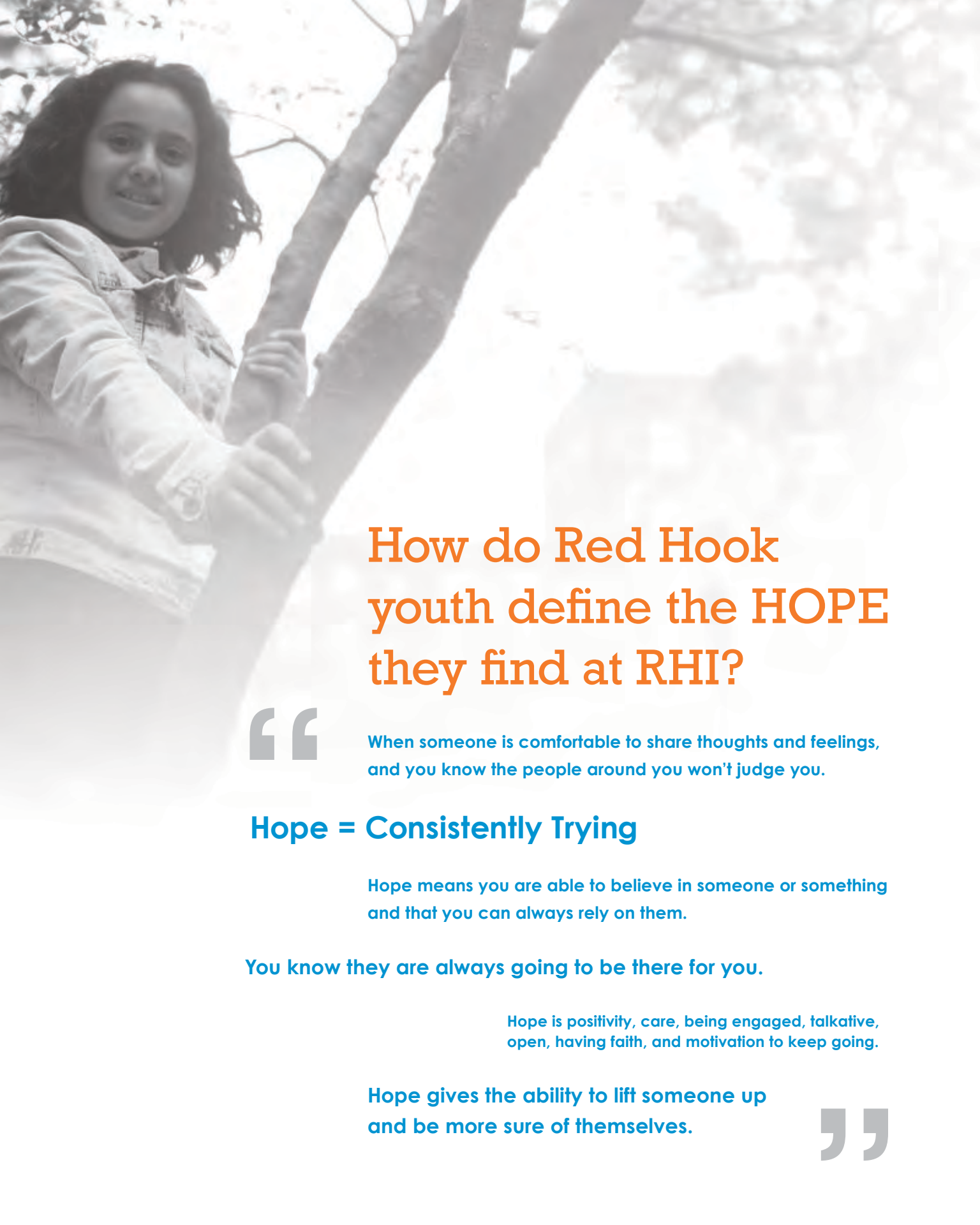
— RHI Digital Steward



## Digital Stewards

*Nationwide Tech Leadership*

The Digital Stewards continued their annual leadership presence at the Allied Media Conference on the Wayne State University campus in Detroit in June 2016, leading two well-attended and positively-reviewed workshops.



## How do Red Hook youth define the HOPE they find at RHI?

“

When someone is comfortable to share thoughts and feelings, and you know the people around you won't judge you.

### Hope = Consistently Trying

Hope means you are able to believe in someone or something and that you can always rely on them.

You know they are always going to be there for you.

Hope is positivity, care, being engaged, talkative, open, having faith, and motivation to keep going.

Hope gives the ability to lift someone up and be more sure of themselves.

”





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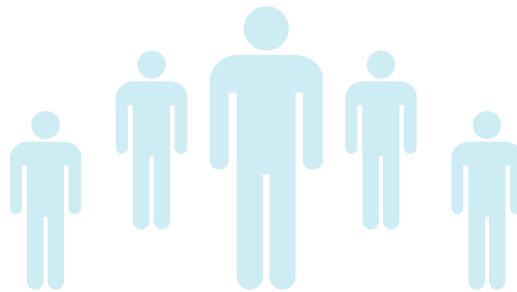
Andrew Strauss

Jennifer Wheary

Eden Wurmfeld

“I learned how to communicate with others and got them hooked into caring about their neighborhood.”

— RHI Youth Organizer



#### Executive Director

Jill Eisenhard

CREATING CHANGE FROM WITHIN

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