



# La Voz de Esperanza

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- We advocate for a wide variety of social, economic & environmental justice issues.
- Opinions expressed in La Voz are not necessarily those of the Esperanza Center.

## La Voz de Esperanza

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Articles due by the 8th of each month

## Policy Statements

\* We ask that articles be visionary, progressive, instructive & thoughtful. Submissions must be literate & critical; not sexist, racist, homophobic, violent, or oppressive & may be edited for length.

\* All letters in response to Esperanza activities or articles in La Voz will be considered for publication. Letters with intent to slander individuals or groups will not be published.

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**M**alala Yousafzai accepted the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize on December 10, 2014 with words that reinforced her commitment to continue fighting for the education of every child throughout the world and for the right of girls to attend school. She noted that when the Taliban appeared in her home in the Swat Valley of Pakistan —“Education went from being a right to being a crime. Girls were stopped from going to school.” She found herself at a crossroads: “When my world suddenly changed, my priorities changed, too. I had two options: one was to remain silent and wait to be killed and the second was to speak up and then be killed. I chose the second one...” The Taliban tried to silence her by shooting her in the head in 2012. This act of terrorism catapulted the teenaged Malala to worldwide fame. During her recovery a global movement declaring *I am Malala* began — and continues to grow. Now 17 years old, Malala is keenly aware that she represents the children of the world, particularly girls. She brought five other girls from Pakistan, Nigeria and Syria to the ceremonies saying, “We are here to tell children... You need to speak up for your rights. It is you who can change the world.” With her award Malala intends to build schools in Pakistan and hopes to one day become prime minister in order make changes in her country.

The 2014 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded jointly to Kailash Satyarthi and Malala “for their struggle against the suppression of children and young people and for the right of all children to education.” Of the joint award, the committee said it “regards it as an important point for a Hindu and a Muslim, an Indian and a Pakistani, to join in a common struggle for education and against extremism”. Mr. Satyarthi founded Bachpan Bachao Andolan, the Save the Childhood Movement, in 1980 and has protected the rights of 80,000 children. He said that despite a rapid period of globalization, governments and citizens still lacked empathy for others around the world and urged: “Let us inculcate and transform individual compassion into global compassion...” He recalled rescuing an eight-year-old girl from slavery: “When she was sitting with me in my car, she asked me — ‘Why did you not come earlier?’ — Her angry question still shakes me and has the power to shake the whole world. What are we doing? What are we waiting for?” He dedicated his prize to children in slavery saying, “I refuse to accept that the shackles of slavery can ever be more stronger than the quest for freedom.”

As we finish out the year 2014 amidst marches, demonstrations and die-ins, we must remember that it is precisely this lack of compassion that Mr. Satyarthi talks about that lies at the root of the killings of Michael Brown, Eric Garner, Trayvon Martin and other unarmed people of color in the U.S. These crimes of impunity are accepted from the highest ranks of our enforcement agencies —the CIA, FBI, and Border Patrol— to the lowest ranks of our state and local police. The 2014 Nobel Peace Prize awards are a small, but bright light in the darkness of our humanity that tends to look towards violence as a ready answer in all situations.

I urge everyone to begin 2015 with a commitment to becoming more vocal and more involved in making our communities just and sustainable for everyone regardless of creed, color, age, ability, gender, size, or any other difference. We must learn to be respectful and loving before we destroy ourselves. Send articles and letters to: [lavoz@esperanzacenter.org](mailto:lavoz@esperanzacenter.org)



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**VOZ VISION STATEMENT:** La Voz de Esperanza speaks for many individual, progressive voices who are gente-based, multi-visioned and milagro-bound. We are diverse survivors of materialism, racism, misogyny, homophobia, classism, violence, earth-damage, speciesism and cultural and political oppression. We are recapturing the powers of alliance, activism and healthy conflict in order to achieve interdependent economic/spiritual healing and fuerza. La Voz is a resource for peace, justice, and human rights, providing a forum for criticism, information, education, humor and other creative works. La Voz provokes bold actions in response to local and global problems, with the knowledge that the many risks we take for the earth, our body, and the dignity of all people will result in profound change for the seven generations to come.