



PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**15 South LA Youth Sponsored by March For Our Lives to Join Rally Against Gun Violence
in Washington, D.C.**

*Local Student Edna Chavez to Address National Audience
Community Coalition Premieres "One Shot" Call To Action PSA*

LOS ANGELES – [March For Our Lives](#) is generously sponsoring 15 students from five schools across South LA to join an expected 500,000 students, parents, teachers and allies on Saturday, March, 24 in Washington, D.C. from Noon – 2:00 pm (EST) to demand an end to gun violence and mass shootings in schools.

Edna Chavez, a senior at Manual Arts High School will be flanked by the fourteen other students on stage when she addresses a national audience about the impact gun violence has on the lives and safety of students in South LA. Youth traveling to The March attend *Crenshaw High School, Manual Arts High School, Fremont High School, Dorsey High School and Washington Preparatory High School.*

“Our lives are important and so are our voices. We've dealt with things for too long and ENOUGH IS ENOUGH. It's time to make our voices roar through the streets and make sure we get what we deserve and what we demand,” said Edna Chavez, a 17-year old senior, who attends Manual Arts High School. “We need more mental health resources in our schools that help us cope and overcome the trauma of gun violence. We need more programs in the community that offer guidance and support and that help us express ourselves and understand our power as young people.”

According to Community Coalition’s 2017 Public Safety Poll of 4,000 South LA residents and youth, 34% of youth said gun violence affected their safety “a lot.” South LA students attending The March participate in Community Coalition’s [South Central Youth Empowered thru Action \(SCYEA\) Program](#), which trains high school students to push for reforms that disrupt the school to prison pipeline, teaches them how to become agents for social change and prepares them for college. Parents and Community Coalition staff, including President & CEO Alberto Retana will travel with the youth to the event.

According to March for Our Lives and ABC News, 824+ “Sibling Marches” are being planned around the world in Los Angeles, Chicago, New York City, Boston, Ottawa, Buenos Aires, Madrid, Paris, Dublin, London, Berlin, Stockholm, Rome, Tel Aviv, Mumbai, Hong Kong, Tokyo and Sydney, among others.

Community Coalition has also released the PSA, [“One Shot,”](#) a poetry piece that vividly captures the impact that gun violence has on youth across the country. Through moving visuals, South LA youth put out a call-to-action to the entire nation to cease the senseless gun violence, especially in their schools, so that their futures can be bright.

“When the voices of South LA flood out the chaos in the streets that's when peace, love and unity will sprout and grow. I want us to break the cycle and tradition of violence. Gun violence is something our parents, siblings, and ourselves have been impacted by every day,” said 16-year old March attendee Hakim Johnson. “I want to see more young black and brown students treated with dignity instead of as super predators. I'm tired of being profiled and surveilled at school and in my community. I want to see more support for restorative justice practices to be implemented in our schools so we can begin undoing these cycles of violence and trauma in our communities.”

On Friday, March 23, students from across the country will have an opportunity to participate in several events before the March For Our Lives, including:

- 3:00 - 5:00 pm: [Shake Shack Sign Making Party](#)
- 5:00 - 7:00 pm: [Louder Than a Gun: Open Mic for Our Lives](#)
- 6:00 - 9:00 pm: [Rock the Vote Poster Making with Amplifier](#)
- 7:30 pm: [Concert at Anthem](#)

South LA students attending March For Our Lives are available for media interviews.

About Community Coalition:

For nearly 30 years, Community Coalition has provided a hub to elevate South LA's voice and empower residents to take control over the future of their neighborhoods. Community Coalition works with residents to build a prosperous and healthy South LA with safe neighborhoods, quality schools, and a strong social safety net. The Coalition continues to work on positive economic development that reduces crime, poverty and substance abuse in South LA through resident organizing, direct advocacy and community support services. www.cocosouthla.org

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