

Young Changemakers Case Series

A New *PM World Journal* Series for Youth Voices in Project Leadership

Introduction to the Series ¹

Evelyn R. Chao ²

Around the world, young people are already leading projects that address challenges in their schools, neighborhoods, and communities. They organize food drives, launch nonprofits, advocate for environmental sustainability, develop educational initiatives, create technology solutions, preserve cultural heritage, and improve the well-being of others. Although these youth-led efforts often begin locally, they demonstrate many of the same leadership, planning, collaboration, and problem-solving skills required in professional project management.

Yet these stories are rarely documented through the lens of project management.

The Young Changemaker Case Series was created to provide a platform for young project leaders to share not only what they accomplished, but also how they planned, adapted, collaborated, reflected, and grew throughout their projects. Each case elevates the voices of young changemakers by capturing their perspectives on the questions they explored, the decisions they made, the challenges they encountered, and the leaders they became. To foster intergenerational learning, every case is accompanied by a Professional Perspective contributed by a project management professional, educator, or recent graduate, followed by a reflection question from the series editor that invites readers of all ages to continue the exploration.

Each case will follow a consistent format:

- Young Changemaker Case (1,500–2,000 words)
- Expert Perspective (150-200 words)
- One Question to Keep Exploring

The series is envisioned as an ongoing feature of *PM World Journal*. New cases will be published periodically as submissions are received and selected. Over time, the collection aims to represent

¹ How to cite this work: Chao, E. R. (2026). Introduction to the Series; Young Changemaker Case Series, series article, *PM World Journal*, Vol. XV, Issue VIII, August.

² The creator and coordinator of this series is **Ms. Evelyn R. Chao**, a high school senior at Sidwell Friends School in Washington, DC, USA. At age 14, she earned the Project Management Ready Certification from the Project Management Institute (PMI). She has now published two books - *Project ABCs for Aspiring Changemakers* (2024) & *Youth Voices of Change: Case Studies of Impactful Student-Led Projects* (2026). Learn more in her author profile at the end of this article.

a diverse range of youth-led projects from different countries, cultures, and communities, creating a growing body of knowledge on youth project leadership.

The series welcomes submissions from middle school, high school, and university students, as well as other young changemakers around the world who are leading meaningful projects in service of something bigger than themselves. Featured projects may include civic engagement, public health, education, environmental sustainability, entrepreneurship, technology, arts and culture, humanitarian service, and many other areas where project management helps youth transform ideas into meaningful action.

Beyond sharing inspiring stories, the series has several broader goals.

First, it provides many young authors with what may be their first opportunity to publish in an international professional journal. By documenting their experiences through thoughtful reflection and analysis, young authors develop professional writing skills while contributing to the growing body of knowledge in project management.

Second, the series seeks to increase the visibility of youth-led initiatives and demonstrate that meaningful leadership can begin long before one's professional career. These cases invite experienced project professionals to recognize young people not only as future project leaders, but also as current contributors creating measurable impact in their communities.

Third, the series hopes to encourage collaboration among project management professional organizations, educators, schools, nonprofits, and youth organizations by showcasing practical examples of youth-led project work. By making these stories publicly available, we hope to inspire more young people to take initiative, lead projects, and learn from one another across communities and cultures.

Perhaps most importantly, the series encourages a broader and inter-generational perspective of project success. While project management traditionally emphasizes scope, schedule, budget, and deliverables, these youth cases remind us that projects also shape the people who lead them. In many cases, the most lasting outcome is not only the completed project, but also the changemaker who emerges through the experience.

We hope the Young Changemaker Case Series becomes more than a collection of youth project stories. Our vision is an international learning community where young changemakers, experienced professionals, educators, and project organizations learn from one another through shared experiences, thoughtful reflection, and intergenerational dialogue. Each published case is both a story of a completed project and an invitation for the next young changemaker to begin one.

How to Participate:

Young Changemakers: [Submit Your Case](#). Professionals: [Sign Up to Be a Commentator](#).

About the Author



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Evelyn R. Chao is a high school senior at Sidwell Friends School and passionate about learning, practicing, and advocating project management. At age 14, She earned the Project Management Ready Certification from the Project Management Institute (PMI). Since then, she has channeled her enthusiasm for civic engagement into championing project management education and empowering young changemakers to serve.

Believing in the transformative power of education, Evelyn took the initiative to establish the nonprofit organization PM Ready Inc., accessible at www.pmready.org. PM Ready serves as a unique platform for fostering intergenerational conversations about project leadership and inspiring youth of diverse backgrounds to apply project management learning to achieve their full potential, take actions to promote community and global development goals. She published two books - *Project ABCs for Aspiring Changemakers* (2024) & *Youth Voices of Change: Case Studies of Impactful Student-Led Projects* (2026).

Beyond her academic pursuits, she is an active member of the U.S. Naval Sea Cadets and a coxswain with TBC Rowing Club. Outside of school, she enjoys playing the violin, drawing, reading, watching movies with her family, and hanging out with her friends. A loving older sister to Elaine and Elise, Evelyn takes pleasure in nurturing their curiosity through fun, hand-on projects. Evelyn can be contacted at evelynchao.r@gmail.com