



Warm Winters

**Corrine, 16
11th Grade**

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Walnut Creek, CA

I remember clearly the day when I first noticed a homeless man, dressed in a T-shirt and jeans on a terribly cold day during the winter months on the streets near my house. I was eleven years old.

I vividly recall feeling horrified by how chilled he looked, and the fact that he had no jacket to shield him from the cold broke my heart. That was the moment when I gained clarity about my purpose in life. I knew that I had to help that man and others like him in any way that I could, and I had to figure out a way to help make their situation better.

A few days later, my best friend Katrine and I, both avid ski racers, were at the Lost & Found at my ski resort looking for a hat that I had misplaced. We were amazed to see a huge pile of warm coats, hats and gloves that no one had claimed. I asked the ski resort if we could take the unclaimed warm clothing to donate to the homeless in our community, and that was how Warm Winters was born. We quickly expanded our work to 4 ski resorts in northern California, and were overwhelmed with all of the donations! We wanted to expand Warm Winters to other states, and train teens around the country to work with us, but we had no idea how to do that. In 2013, we received a regional Jefferson Award in San Francisco for our work with the homeless, and we joined



The Jefferson Awards GlobeChangers Leadership Training Program. With this training, we began expanding nationally in 2014. By year-end 2014, Warm Winters was partnered with 17 ski resorts in 8 states, with teen leaders (WarmWinTeens) heading up our efforts at each resort. To date, we have distributed over 10,000 items of warm clothing to 6,500 homeless people, engaging 500 youth volunteers, and we are just getting started! Over the next five years, we will train 5,000 youth to help 50,000 homeless across America.

I was so thankful to receive a Power of Children Award from the Children's Museum of Indianapolis this November. The \$2,000 grant that I received from them will power our expansion efforts this year, as we work towards our goal of partnering with 60 ski resorts across the country.

I have learned that you are never too young to make a difference! At 16 years old, I have been able to impact thousands of lives, and I believe that each of us can accomplish anything if we put in the effort and stay motivated.

Favorite Quote? "Never give up, and always work harder than anyone expects you to. Fight On". This quote was given to me by a dear friend and mentor of mine, Ellen Wleklinski, and it motivates me every day to keep reaching for my dreams.



10th
Anniversary

the power
OF CHILDREN AWARDS:
Making a Difference