

Theresa Lee

Who are world-affecting people? To me, the world can be as big as the entire earth but also as small as an individual. A group of strangers who help rebuild homes after Katrina, an anonymous person who secretly submits your name for a prestigious award, or even a Locks of Love donor. These examples might not seem world-affecting, but to the individuals it affects it can make a world of difference. With these kinds of small acts I want to help change the community around me, and hopefully be able to impact the world.

I am one of the leaders of an organization that helps students in my community: The Peer Tutoring Club, a club in which high school students give up their free time to tutor middle school students. The club has inspired me in more ways than I can count, mainly inspiring me to decide what I want to do for the rest of my life: change the worlds of future students as a teacher.

Many of the middle school students that I tutor do not want anything to do with school. However, after a couple weeks of peer tutoring I can see the attitudes and motivation level in those middle school students' change noticeably. They try harder with their homework, excitingly share new math "tricks" with classmates, and become confident in their participation in class due to the help they receive from older, "cooler" peers. Conestoga's Peer Tutoring Club changes the world of individual students who may have been struggling on their own but are now able to have a positive impact on themselves and their whole school.

We have all seen one person change the world by going against the crowd: Martin Luther King Jr.'s speech for racial freedom, Jane Addam's struggle for better conditions for the underprivileged through her creation of the Hull House, and Nelson Mandela's

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fight to end apartheid in South Africa. These individuals experienced much pressure from going against the crowd, yet, despite such barriers, kept audaciously persevering with their goals.

These three heroes, initially with the intention of helping out their community, ended up inspiring citizens past their community into the world population. The Peer Tutoring Club, which I initially joined from a counselor's suggestion, ended up changing my world, inspiring me to want to impact the world of others with the role of a future teacher.

Seeing the eyes of a school-loathing student light up as he starts to understand concepts from the work of just a small, committed group of tutors has made me realize that I want to be that impressive influence to cause change. I want to be the inspiration that makes student's want to try and be a better citizen, through their school and community. Henry Brooks Adams says: "A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops", just as citizens in our community can affect the world with simple perseverance and commitment, never knowing where their influence will end.