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GREENEST #PGC 2025 DAY 9

THE GOLDMAN PRIZE AND THE BROWER YOUTH AWARD

These prizes and awards are given to honor and support grassroots environmental heroes who work courageously often at great personal risk to protect the environment and their communities and also to celebrate young environmental leaders (ages 13–22) who are creating innovative, practical solutions to environmental problems.

2025 GOLDMAN ENVIRONMENTAL PRIZE WINNERS

Honoring grassroots leaders for bold environmental action:

-  Laurene Allen (USA) – Tackled PFAS chemical pollution in drinking water
-  Mari Luz Canaquiri Murayari (Peru) – Secured legal rights for the Marañón River
-  Semia Gharbi (Tunisia) – Exposed illegal waste trafficking between Italy and Tunisia
-  Besjana Guri & Olsi Nika (Albania) – Protected the Vjosa River from dam projects
-  Batmunkh Luvsandash (Mongolia) – Opposed destructive mining in the Gobi desert
-  Carlos Mallo Molina (Canary Islands) – Stopped a harmful marine port project

2024 BROWER YOUTH AWARD RECIPIENTS

Recognizing young leaders (ages 13–22) for environmental justice and innovation:

-  Vishruth Dinesh – Youth self-sustainability through gardening
-  Raina Maiga – Youth-led climate policy advocacy
-  Asa Miller – Coral reef restoration in Cuba
-  Austin Picinich – Art activism for salmon protection
-  Yuki Qian – Radon gas awareness and remediation
-  Amelia Southern-Urbe – Equitable climate education

These awardees show that ordinary people, both adults and youth, can challenge pollution, development, and injustice in their own places.

Their strategies include legal action, community organizing, policy change, education, restoration, and combining science with activism.

RAINA MAIGA: MOBILIZING YOUTH FOR CLIMATE EQUITY

WHO is Raina Maiga?

Raina is a 16-year-old high school student living in Indianapolis, Indiana. She was born in Burkina Faso, a country in West Africa, and came to the U.S. seeking asylum. That means she had to leave her home country for safety reasons and start over in a new place. Despite these challenges, she has become a powerful voice for climate justice.

WHAT does she do?

Raina leads a youth-run group called “Confront the Climate Crisis”. It consist of students who want to change laws and policies to better protect the environment. She helps young people especially those from underrepresented communities get involved in politics and make their voices heard.

What she has accomplished:

- ✚ Helped write and promote two climate bills in Indiana’s state legislature (2022 and 2023)
- ✚ Organized yearly youth climate summits at the Indiana Statehouse, where students meet lawmakers and learn how to advocate for change
- ✚ Raised \$20,000 every year to help students from across the state attend these events
- ✚ Supported teens in passing local climate resolutions through city councils, making sure their towns take action on climate
- ✚ Worked with Earth Charter Indiana, a nonprofit that helps amplify youth voices statewide

WHEN did she start?

Her leadership really took off between 2022 and 2024, and in 2024, she won the Brower Youth Award, one of the biggest honors for young environmental leaders in North America.

WHERE does she work?

Most of her work happens in Indiana, but her influence is growing across the U.S. She’s part of national youth networks and speaks to lawmakers about climate and youth issues. She also serves on the Indiana Legislative Youth Advisory Council, helping adults understand what young people care about in the community.

WHY is she doing this?

Raina knows what it feels like to be left out of important decisions. As an asylum seeker, she has experienced exclusion firsthand. That is why she fights to make sure young people especially

those from marginalized backgrounds have a say in shaping the future. She believes youth are not just future leaders but they are leaders right now.

WHY Raina Maiga Inspires Us

A woman, a leader, a first inspiration in another land. At just 16 years old, Raina Maiga stands as a beacon of courage and impact. Born in Burkina Faso and now based in Indiana, USA, she did not wait for permission to lead, she created space for youth voices in places where they were often ignored. Her journey as an asylum seeker makes her story even more powerful: she turned exclusion into empowerment, and uncertainty into action.

Raina's impact is not just impressive it is transformational.

Her leadership is rooted in justice, inclusion, and the belief that youth especially those from marginalized communities deserve a seat at the table. She challenges the idea that leadership has an age limit. She shows us that action begins with belief, and change begins with courage.

We see her not just as a climate advocate, but also as a model of what is possible. Her footsteps are bold, and we are ready to follow them with our voices, our stories, and our actions.

Raina Maiga inspires us because she reminds us:

You do not have to be older to be powerful. You just have to care enough to begin.

ENGAGEMENTS

LINK TO THE ARTICLE

<https://medium.com/@kwaobusiness/raina-maiga-mobilizing-youth-for-climate-equity-9954f8a7c1b6>

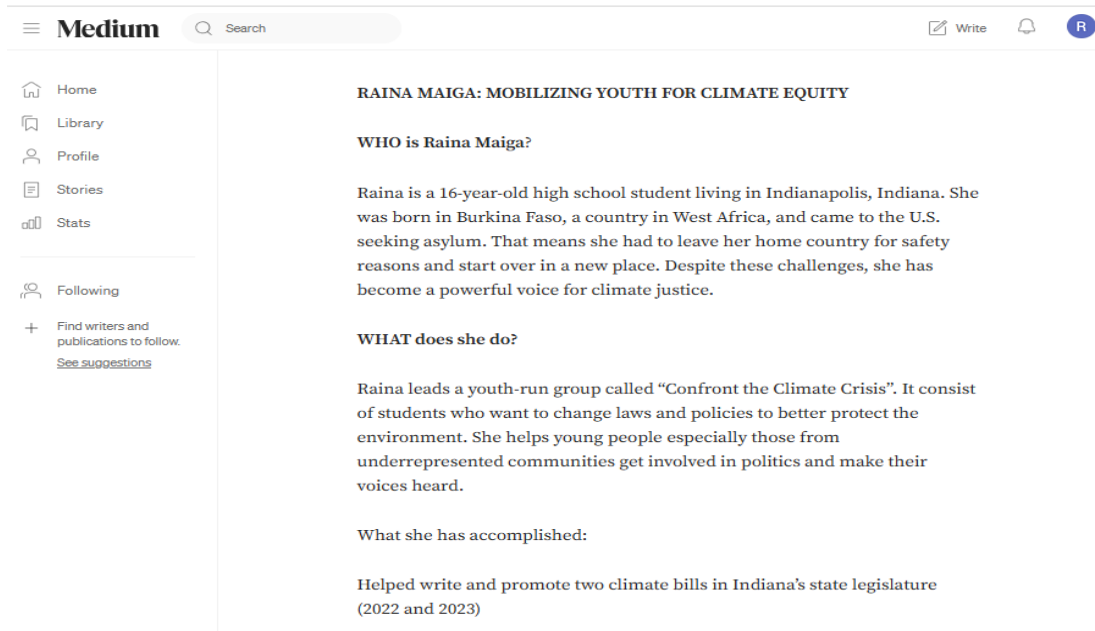


Figure 1 PUBLISHED THE ARTICLE ON MEDIUM.COM

SOCIAL MEDIA

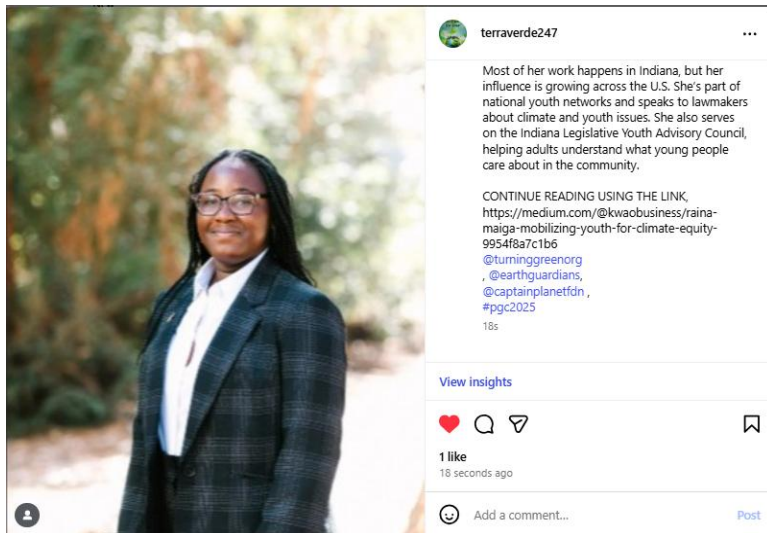


Figure 3 INSTAGRAM ENGAGEMENT

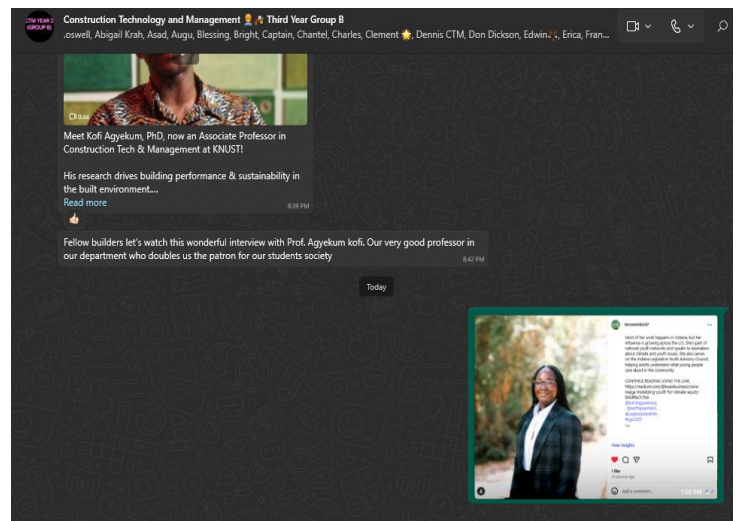


Figure 2 SHARED WITH CLASS GROUPS