

THE IMAGINE SOCIETY

JUNE 1, 2023

THREE YEAR NEWSLETTER ANNIVERSARY!



SPECIAL ISSUE CELEBRATING **Holding the World!**
KIDS SPRING EDITION VOLUME 37!



“Young people must have their voices heard at all times.”

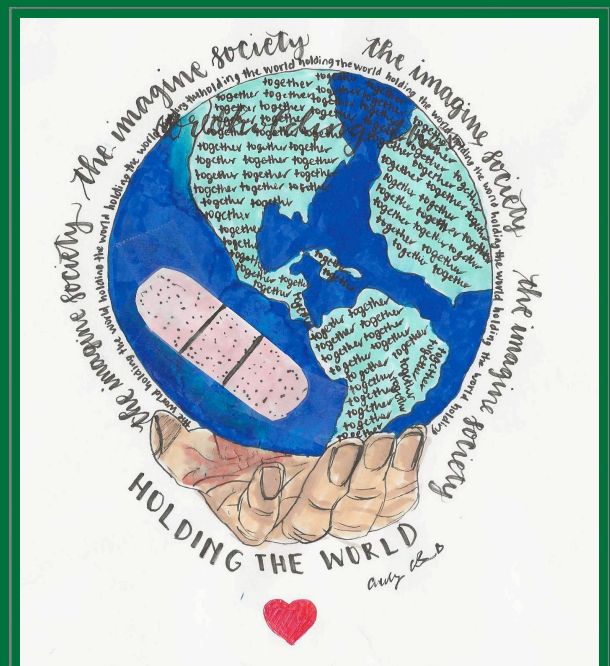
- Edem Agbana

Understanding How to Make an Impact

by Paul Bloom

As I have grown up and become an official adult -- despite my best efforts to avoid this -- I have recognized the role that gratitude plays in the lives of everyone I meet. I have seen a plethora of ways in which people I know express gratitude (saying grace before a meal is one example).

For me though, as I continue to grow up, I try to remove myself from the rigors and anxieties of work and school as much as I can (though in practice, I admit this is rare) and be attentive to what I have to be thankful for and what I have to improve. The most crucial part of this experience is comparing where my mind was when I last reflected to where it is now.



Artwork by Youth Leader Audrey Cho (14) - check out more from Audrey on pages 3 and 4!

...continued from page 1

My goal is to always feel like I have intellectually or emotionally grown because material changes may be a result of circumstance as much as it may be personal growth. Typically I find that I have learned something (no matter how small), or gained a deeper connection with some people around me.

There are times when I feel like I have regressed too or not matured as quickly as I 'should have,' but even amidst this doubt, I can always find pieces of my life that have meaningfully changed. In these situations, I find that developing patience when assessing my own progress is necessary, and I realize that I am kinder to myself with each passing setback (a growth in and of itself).

For a long time, I largely attributed my personal doubts and shortcomings to my youth. I didn't understand how I could make an impact without an income, without experience, and without a platform. I always wanted to give back to the community, and I meant it in a more meaningful way than just including that sentence in a college essay.

Any reflection on the progress I have made as an individual is meaningless without acknowledging how **The Imagine Society** helped me grow. My time with **The Imagine Society** has been a rewarding experience because I realized that my impact was not stifled by my age as much as it was my inaction. It is easy (and relatively commonplace now) to say that there should be positive change. Everyone says it, and most people feel totally content stopping at the declaration of our world's imperfection. However, expressions of the wish to grow, or the wish to make change are effectively meaningless for the things we want to change. Proclaiming my need to reflect on my own life and my impact on my immediate surroundings, no matter how many excuses I can find when it comes to work or school, is not an action.

The Imagine Society was crucial to my growth because it gave me the means and the confidence to make the wish for change regarding my life and my community into an actionable goal. Although I only realized it after many years and many reflections, many insecurities came from my inability to translate my goals into effects. **The Imagine Society** gave me a way to actively participate in my own life and the life of my community in the way I always said I wanted to (but did not fully believe I could).

The Imagine Society was instrumental to my personal growth (knowing I could make a difference) and the growth of my community (forging real connections with those around me).

I will always be grateful for this.



Dear Paul, We are so proud of you and are honored that you are a part of The Imagine Society!

Paul Bloom (19) is a rising Junior at The University of Rochester. He's been a frequent and valued contributor to The Imagine Society Newsletter for many years.



A Poem Without Words

by Audrey Cho

For all of us, the pandemic was a major setback. I know it was for me. When I started watching “Dinner With the Gaffigans” every night with my family, I was grateful for it, but I didn’t even know what **The Imagine Society** was at the time and that I would later become a part of its amazing community.

For all of us, art can be a beautiful method of connection. As the Roman poet Horace said, “A picture is a poem without words.” We were, and still are, living in a time where there were too many words, not of joy but of strife, disappointment, and disunity. The words surrounded us, filled our ears with things we didn’t want to hear on the news, and filled our heads with despair. Never, we felt, had there been so many news articles and obituaries. However, I also felt we needed words, words that would combat the terrible things we were constantly forced to hear about. That’s why when I heard that **The Imagine Society** was taking art for their newsletters and as donations to nursing homes and hospitals, I decided to use my calligraphy skills to combine words with visual art.

I never got to see the people who received my art, but I like to think that it brought a smile to their faces, warmed their hearts a little bit, and gave them the comfort they needed. Our world struggled so much then, and I guess it’s still struggling. But I think it’s all our responsibilities to contribute our gifts and talents to those in need, whether yours is visual art, like me, or something else. Words felt overbearing during the time of the pandemic, so my calligraphy pieces typically used only one or two words. Art is something very hard to define, whether it’s visual art, music, or something else. But it is powerful beyond words – it can determine whether someone laughs or cries, whether their day is a good day or a bad one. During that traumatic or “unprecedented” time, as people liked to call it, we needed art to make us smile, to hope for something, to have faith that we would come out of this triumphant. Sometimes something simple like art is the only way to combat inexplicable sadness and grief, and the only way of bringing people together during a time where hoping is the only option.



Thank you Audrey for sharing this essay and using your gifts to help give so many people hope.

Audrey Cho (14) is in the 9th grade at Dwight Englewood School. She has been a collaborator of The Imagine Society Newsletter since its inception!



Special 3 Year Anniversary Artwork

by Audrey Cho

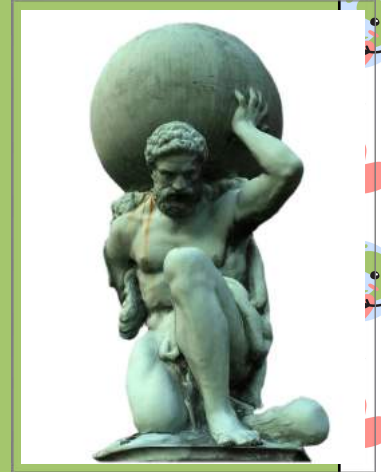
Dear Audrey, from everyone at **The Imagine Society**, thank you for your creativity, your artistry, and your dedication. The Imagine Society Newsletter would not be as beautiful without you!

GLOBAL CHANGE

by Louis A. Craco III

In 4.5 Billion Years ago, the Earth was formed by the Original Founder who started this Global Life.

In the history of Greek mythology, Atlas was the Titan who held the World to rest on his shoulders physically. Right now the World is falling down in disgraceful ways. So, here I am, making a stand, to see if I can hold the World as well. Welcome everyone - to a new way of holding the World.



There is destruction in Ukraine. Wars like this are in other countries as well. The Russian President's dream is to make his own Empire, but expanding is also poisoning his own country. When the bombs hit part of your city people become victimized - without shelter, food, clothes or a clean environment. Imagine if your house or apartment was hit by a bomb. You might survive, but others might not. The Truth is that even if you lived, parts of your life are gone, permanently. Without Peace people lose their Freedom and the Hope of their Dreams.

The Earth has a Diet of its own that cannot be abused by chemicals. I have Celiac Disease, I cannot have gluten. Neither me or the world can be Inflamed. My diet is called Gluten-Free. With the world, it is known as Pollution-Free. Presidents and Leaders in different countries have Responsibility to encourage Ukrainians in winning the war, but they also have Duties to end poisoning the world with pollution. Neither war or pollution should thrive in the world.

The people in the world are using bad habits to kill our Planet. It's time to Wake Up and make major changes. Not just me, but all people have the ability to hold the world. We can take charge and nothing will be an interference. To make the Earth better I suggest people worldwide to make a work together. We can all help as One. We fight for our lives when things are hard to accomplish. The World deserves Harmony and Freedom. Instead of engaging in War, we can engage in Friendship. We can work together!



Louis A. Craco III
Cooke School, 9th Grade
Self-advocate for Down syndrome

Louis would like to share the link to this very special song sung by an amazing group of inspirational singers!

"I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing"
by The King's Singers & Soundabout
Inclusive Choirs & Friends

Superstar Newsletter
Staff Member Louis!

Louis A. Craco III (14) is a 9th grader at Cooke School and also on the Youth Editorial Staff at The Imagine Society Newsletter!



Alex Fierro from Rick Riordan's series
"Magnus Chase and the Gods of Asgard"
by Hava K.

Hava K. (11) is a rising 6th grader. This is Hava's second contribution to the newsletter and we're so happy to have this special artwork in the anniversary issue!

Thank
you Hava!
We love your
creativity!

Holding On

by Olympia Hall

A mind holds dreams
A mother holds a baby

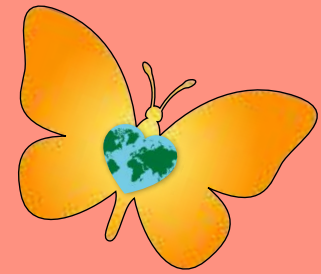
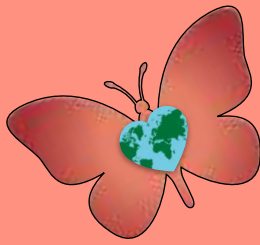
We hold the earth

A house holds a family
A school holds friends

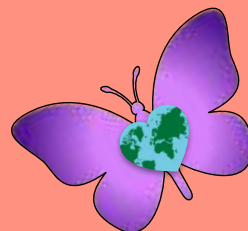
We hold the earth

A sky holds clouds
The ocean holds life

We hold the earth



Artwork by Zuzu Hall



Olympia Hall (10) is in the 4th grade at Sacred Heart and she is also on the Youth Editorial Staff at The Imagine Society Newsletter!

Zuzu Hall (8) is in the 2nd grade at Sacred Heart



Sisters, artists and youth activists Olympia (left) and Zuzu (right)!

I Am From

by Patrick Gaffigan

I am from my mama and dad
I am from trampolines and parkour
I am from strictly limited screen time
I am from loud noises, siblings and ADHD
I am from computers, machines and video games
I am from bad luck, screaming people and obnoxiousness
I am from anatomy, anthropology and physiology books
I am from learning what is being funny and what is being annoying
I am from anger issues, raging, screaming, crying, throwing and hurting
I am from all the beatings, falls, pain, fighting, knocking, punching
and kicking with my siblings
I am from the memes, posts, funny videos, cringe videos, funny people,
cringe people, cringe people who think they are funny
and funny people who think they're annoying

Thank you
Patrick for
sharing who
YOU are
with us!





2023 Clara Lemlich Awards Ceremony Featuring The Imagine Society Youth Leaders!

The Imagine Society is honored to be involved for the fourth year in the **Clara Lemlich Awards** hosted by our friends at **Labor Arts** - a non-profit whose mission is "to document and celebrate the artistic and cultural heritage of working people and the labor movement, and encourage understanding of their often-overlooked contributions to our society." The awards honor female social activists in their 80s, 90s and 100s. On May 19th, **The Imagine Society** Youth Leaders gathered at the historic **Museum of the City of New York** for an inspirational event. Youth Leader **Dayelin De La Cruz** prepared a speech (see page 10) expressing her gratitude at having the opportunity to interview past honorees and follow her own activism path. Youth Leaders created moving artwork honoring the incredible 2023 honorees which were part of a special exhibit at the museum! Join us as we celebrate Black and Latino cultural correspondent **Angela Fontanez**, quality of life activist **Olive Freud**, civil rights and UFT organizer **Velma Hill**, Chinatown union leader **Alice Ip**, prison reform advocate **Barbara Martinsons** and Holocaust educator **Anita Weisbord**. Congratulations to all the incredible honorees and all the Youth Leaders part of this extraordinary event!



Shining Light

by Dayelin De La Cruz

My name is Dayelin De La Cruz, I am a 20 year old rising junior at **Fordham University**, and have been a part of **The Imagine Society** in my role as a youth leader/member at **The Ascension Church Parish** with **Robin Klueber** for the past 7 years of my life. Let me begin by saying congratulations to all of the honorees, you have led a life of activism that inspires the future generations and certainly myself.

Interviewing former honorees since 2020, when everything was virtual because of Covid, to now being able to finally be in person celebrating the success of all these women has been transforming to say the least. Back in 2020 I interviewed **Doreen Wohl**. She asked me what subject I wanted to pursue in college and I had no idea. I knew I wanted to stay involved and continue participating in the food pantry at my local parish, and continue being a youth leader, but college was new for me and I had not given any newfound form of activism within it any thought. Now, in 2023 I am a double major in philosophy and sociology under the pre law track. I live by Wohl's words as she once said, **"My advice is always stay involved. Stay involved, stay talking to friends, not the television. Stay in touch with friends face to face, do things together too and just always smile, always smile."**

I have discovered that I can be a part of multiple groups and build my social life while still continuing what started my passion for social work. Activism is very diverse; you can give back to the very own people around you by something as simple as your presence and energy. Extracurricular activities have been my go to, aside from academics, which have allowed me to take on other roles where I am learning while helping incoming students. A club I am most proud of is **Active Minds**, a club which presents a space for students to come together and debrief over stresses of the world and interact with one another through activities like letters, painting, talks, etc. Doreen's words always come to mind when I participate in the club because there's more to life than just media and technology, interactions with one another allow us to help each other in ways unimaginable. Someone once said laughter is the best therapy. In constantly keeping positive energy and maintaining a smile on my face, I remind myself I am in control of my life and my potential. These very interviews remind me of how much we can do as women, as one.

I also interviewed **Suleika Cabrera Drinane** who once said, **"Never be ashamed of who you are and where you come from."** She participated in many activities in her community as she knew what she wanted to do. In staying involved, Cabrera stayed true to her roots and carried her passions out. People feel it is hard to embrace their background in such a socially contracted society, but we must acknowledge the beauty of who we are despite how others depict us. The reason I am in college and am who I am today is due to my father, who blessed me with opportunities he never had. My family was not fortunate enough to have lived the same life I have, so it is up to me to represent our identity through my successes and endeavors. The food pantry at my parish and my youth group, especially Ms. Robin, became my safe haven, a home where I felt internally and physically happy giving back to my community, people who shared the same culture as me and even those who did not but were full of gratitude, and interacting with others who had mutual feelings of helping. It is something I will always value and be an essential part of.

The Clara Lemlich Awards interviews have helped remind me of the places I can take my love for activism to, and how I can turn life challenges into rewards. Thank you for all you honorees have done, for those who organized this beautiful event, and for everyone taking the time to listen.



The brilliant Dayelin (right) with another extraordinary Youth Leader Sofia (left) at the Clara Lemlich Awards - future compassionate leaders of tomorrow!

The following letter and artwork is from a resident at the **Green Hill Juvenile Detention Center** in Chehalis, Washington. **The Imagine Society** has been partnering with Green Hill's Extraordinary Librarian **Julie Forbes** to find ways to help support, uplift, and provide meaningful opportunities for the young people there.

B.M. is an exceptionally talented student and artist who was able to create artwork and submit a statement honoring **Barbara Martinsons**, Prison Reform Organizer, and honoree of the **2023 Labor Arts' Clara Lemlich Awards**. His artwork was on display at **The Museum of the City of New York**.

We are honored to be able to showcase this young man's talent, passion, and perseverance.

A Statement from the Artist to Barbara Martinsons

From the football field with a million dreams, to a jail cell looking at life in prison. When I was 16 I was given 26 years to do behind bars. In my young mind I thought all my hopes and dreams were gone until I started reading and learning. I have seen that the only thing that I would always have was my mind.

Since I've been incarcerated I've made the most of the education available to me. I'm only a few credits from graduating with my Associates, I've become a certified flagger and fork lift driver, and I'm getting my personal trainer's certificate soon.

I will always learn no matter how old because while behind bars the physical barriers are apparent but only after a lot of thought do the mental barriers become so. Whether barriers are mental or physical we have the choice to free ourselves from them.

"Education, the means of Liberation."

Thank you for giving people their hopes and dreams again.

Sincerely,

B.M.
Resident
Green Hill Juvenile Detention Center



Congratulations to the Graduating Class of The Imagine Society 2023!

"The Imagine Society has truly opened my eyes about to how we can each make a difference. It has given me truly incredible opportunities to connect with real change-makers, and is a large part of the reason I want to go into journalism in the future and report on social justice. It's so important as young people to recognize how we can help make the world a place we want future generations to live in. "

- Nora Toscano



"Serving my community has shaped the person who I am today. I've learned about many people's stories and backgrounds; when attending Syracuse University, I will serve my new community."

- Jesus Tiburcio-Zane

"Service for me was an opportunity to help those that don't have as much. It was an experience to allow me to work with the community and give back."

- Daniel Garcia



Nellie (right) during a service project with friends and fellow Imagine Youth Leaders!

"I love community service because it's something tangible to show the compassion that exists in this world."

- Nellie Fitzpatrick

“Working with The Imagine Society for so many years has truly been an honor and has exposed me to so many incredible people and opportunities around me. Participating and leading service projects is a crucial part of who I am, and the Imagine Society has taught me that service can be innovative and collaborative. I am so thankful for the other imagine teen leaders and adults that have guided me and inspired me along the way. As I ‘graduate’ from The Imagine Society I will be majoring in global health, and plan to continue community service through a lens of healthcare. I can’t wait to see all of the great things that the next generation of Imagine Teens will do! Thank you Imagine Society ❤️❤️”

- Alessia Turner



Special Shout Out to Graduating Senior **Jahleer Carlos** from the **High School of Economics and Finance** who also completed a very special **Eagle Scout** project with **Troop 664** for our friends at **The Ascension Food Pantry!** Jahleer contacted his school, friends, neighbors and fellow scouts, telling them about the pantry and educating them about food insecurity. Through his Jahleer’s hard work and dedication, he donated over 120 pounds of food to the pantry!



Youth Leaders Dedicated to Service!



At The **Ascension** Food Pantry, the only 100% Youth-Led and Youth-Run Food Pantry in NYC, young people serve hundreds of food insecure neighbors every month. It's not only their dedication that is so inspirational, but it is also the joy, friendship, and community that is formed within these young people from diverse neighborhoods, schools, and backgrounds. Under the tireless direction of the amazing **Robin Klueber**, these Youth Leaders are making a real difference in our city. Even more special, there are two Eagle Scouts currently helping the pantry with their projects! Thank you to **Joseph Gomez** from **Boy Scout Troop 520** and **Jahleer Carlos** from **Boy Scout Troop 664** for putting together impressive projects leading to massive donations to the pantry! Thank you also to the generosity of **Woolco Foods** for your critical donations and inspirational support.

At **The Imagine Society**, our mission is to nurture youth service and volunteerism, while serving some of our most vulnerable communities and neighbors.


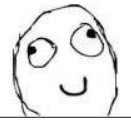
We are 100% volunteer driven, and committed to help foster the future compassionate leaders of tomorrow. Please check out this link to **DONATE** to help support our work and programming!

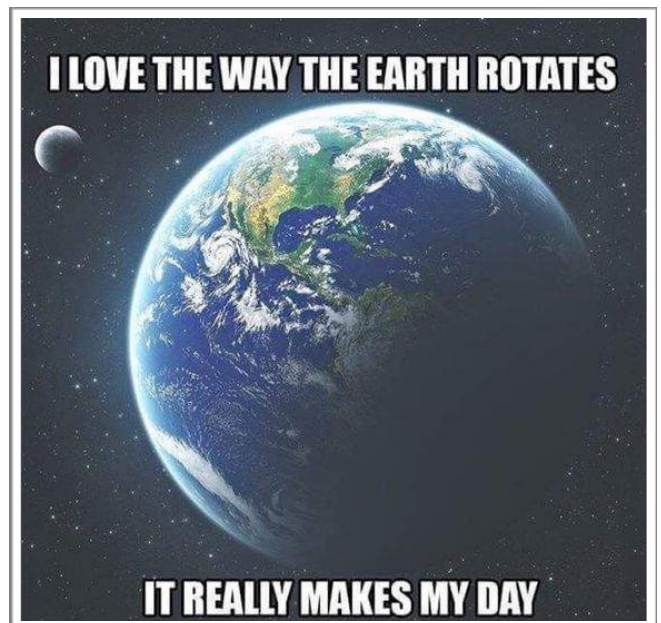
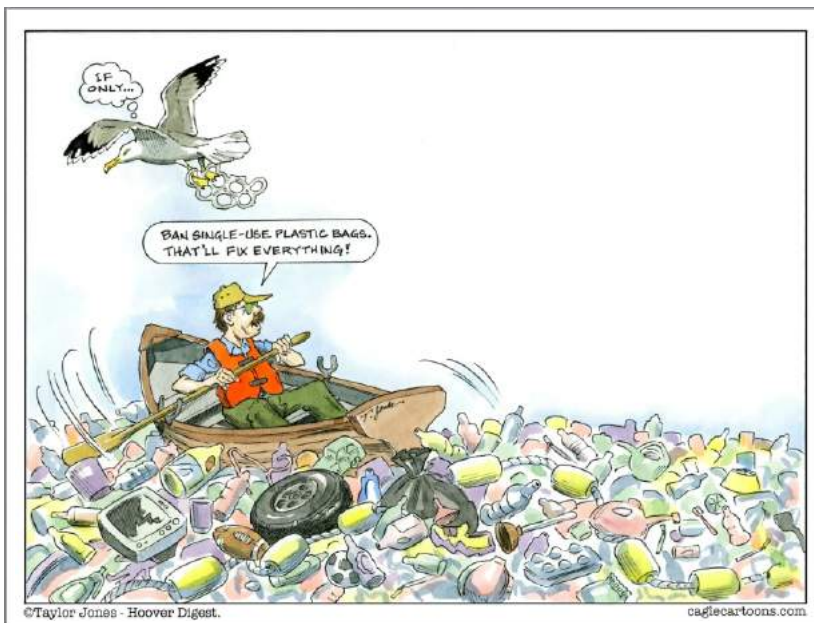


FUN PAGES



Edited by
Youth Leader
Katie Gaffigan
(14)

What my teacher says	The turtles are a symbol of our indifferent and selfish society 
What the poet meant	I like turtles 



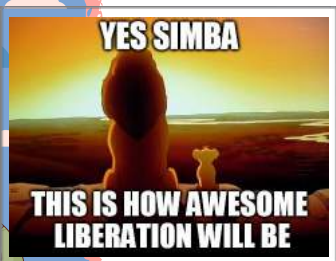
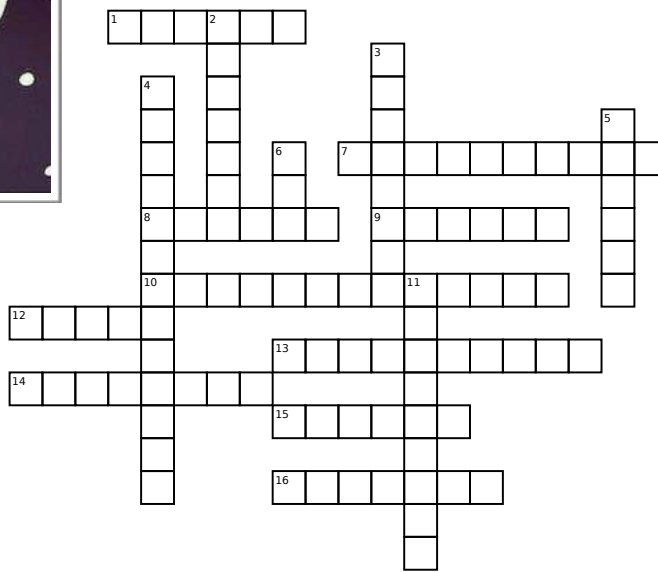
WORD PLAY



Edited by
Youth Leader
Katie Gaffigan
(14)



Holding The World Crossword Puzzle



Down:

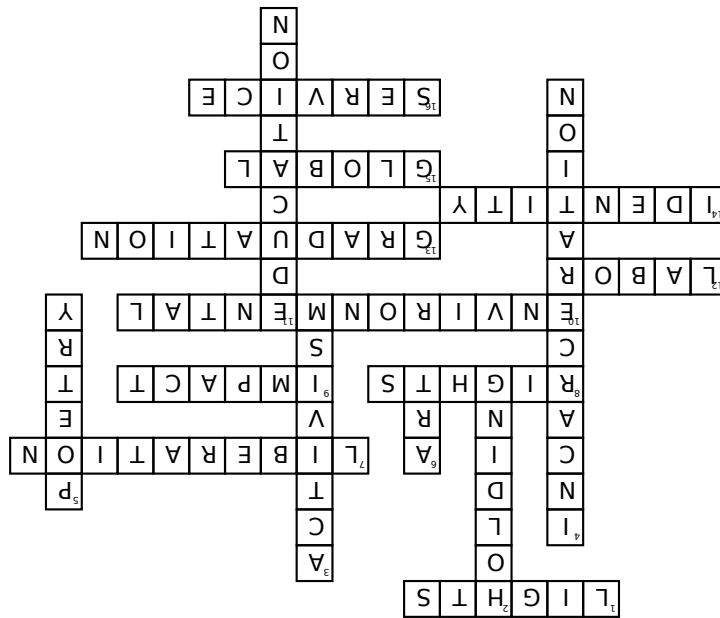
2. to cradle
3. direct vigorous action
4. the state of being confined
5. stylish expression of feelings and ideas
6. application of human creative skill and imagination
11. an enlightening experience

Across:

1. A source of illumination
7. release from oppression
8. that which is morally correct, just, or honorable
9. have a strong effect on someone or something.
10. relating to the natural world and the impact of human activity on its condition
12. to make great effort
13. the culmination of a journey and the attainment of a goal
14. a close similarity or affinity
15. embracing the whole of something
16. giving of yourself for good

ANSWER KEY

- Down:
- to cradle
 - direct vigorous action
 - the state of being confined
 - stylish expression of feelings and ideas
 - application of human creative skill and imagination
 - an enlightening experience
- Across:
- A source of illumination
 - release from oppression
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 - a close similarity or affinity
 - embracing the whole of something
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Holding The World Crossword Puzzle