



Part 5: Experiments and Possibilities

In the portal held by Ruth Wilson Gilmore's hands, there are several silhouettes representing different organizing efforts across New Haven. One small illustration represents the Citywide Youth Coalition's (CWYC) walkout of the city's high schools to demand police-free schools and investment in real mental health support, calling for more counselors and social workers over cops. CWYC has also organized marches, rallies, and teach-ins alongside Black Lives Matter New Haven calling to defund the police and instead invest in public education and affordable housing. Their demands included "moving \$30 million from the police budget into the public schools, replacing school resource officers with counselors, and ending the city's "triple occupation" by the New Haven Police Department, Yale Police Department, and Hamden Police Department." Read more [here](#).





Students marching downtown as part of CWYC's walkout. People hold signs reading "Care Not Cops," "Police Free Schools," and "Listen to Students." / Nora Grace-Flood Photos

- New Haven Independent article on walkout linked [here](#)
- CWYC's principles and complete list of demands linked [here](#)
- From [A Black, Indigenous, and Latinx Peoples' History of New Haven](#) and CWYC.org : Located just off of the Green in downtown New Haven, the Black and Brown Power Center houses CWYC, "a nonprofit organization focused on youth-led, peer-led organizing." Since 1976, CWYC has been organizing around and providing "a free breakfast program, expanded summer programming, and more comprehensive transportation for students." Today, CWYC holds weekly Radical Wisdom and Revolutionary programming, and during the summer months, Black and Brown Queer Camp and Citywide Abolition Bootcamps.

The silhouettes also represent a student walkout in 2018 for an immigrant father, Nelson Pinos. Over 250 students from Wilbur Cross, Common Ground and James Hillhouse High Schools and Yale and Southern Connecticut State Universities (SCSU) marched with 300 sanctuary city advocates, members of Unidad Latina en Acción (ULA), and faith leaders to First & Summerfield United Methodist Church. In the basement of this church, Pinos had been in sanctuary for 281 days at the time. In 2021 (now after more than 1330 days in sanctuary) Pinos won a one-year stay of deportation from the federal Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Read more [here](#) and [here](#).



Lastly, while not represented in the silhouettes, it is crucial to acknowledge the work of the Intergenerational Abolitionist Project and its contributions to this mural. Nataliya Braginsky, a former Metropolitan Business Academy teacher who is a founding member of ARTLC, ran the project and its book club/working group out of Possible Futures. She did this with James Hillhouse High School senior Elsa Holahan; their work, paired with the Black, Indigenous, and Latinx studies curriculum Braginsky helped create for and alongside NHPS students, became the core of the mural project.



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