

Dear Ayana Najuma,

6/25/2026

At seven years old you did sit-ins in your community of Oklahoma City to protest when blacks and whites were segregated. Your group acted after visiting New York and seeing that life could be different at home. You saw what equality could look like and when you got home refused to go back to the way things were, segregated. You acted because it was unfair that the whites had more rights and freedoms than African Americans. You showed up sitting there as people were mean to you and it took courage because you could have been hurt. You and other civil rights activists used non violence even when it was done against you. You were all determined to make a difference and kept showing up until you saw results. Our country is better because of sacrifices like yours and people like you.

When some people think of Civil Rights Activists they think of Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks. While they are important, there were many more people like you who may not be as famous but together all of your work paid off to make the changes that were needed. You inspired people like me because you showed that kids can make a difference. Some people think that you have to be an adult to make change but kids can do it too. You and your friends did not let them get to you, you continued to show up because you wanted the freedoms you knew you deserved and that inspires me to act. When I see an injustice I can speak up for what I believe is right. I may only be nine but my voice matters too.

Parents need to support kids and encourage them to stand up for what they believe in, the way your parents did. Too many parents do not allow their kids to take actions in fear that they could get hurt, but like you did sometimes you have to take risks if it is the right thing to do.

Otherwise, things could continue, get worse, or never change. So I will find my voice to stand up for people who immigrated here to find a better life who face racism, or be kind when I see someone being bullied, or do my part to protect the environment as the polar capsules melt. I

will remember that I am never too young to make my world better. Our Democracy is not perfect but it is up to us the people to fix and keep working to make it better, even us kids.

I will carry on your ideas,

Eleanor Porter