



Who is one of your inspirations besides Malala and why?

Zainab Tahir: One of my inspirations besides Malala has been and will always be my mother. Malala is a prime example of the effect one person can have in promoting change on a global scale, but a mother has the power to create an impact of their own. My mother has shaped my personality and my determination to succeed. She continuously inspires me through her bravery and decisions on a daily basis.

Grete Truong: My current inspiration has been Lin-Manuel Miranda. The way he uses words, rhythms and harmonies to convey complex stories is just astounding. I still find intricacies every time I listen to the *Hamilton* soundtrack. He's creating a cultural phenomenon that shares a voice and perspective like we've never seen on stage before. This version of the revolution will revolutionize theater and will inspire others to not throw away their shot.

Zi Ying Cao: Ziauddin Yousafzai. He was born with a speech impediment that would have discouraged others from even talking, but he was determined to overcome his disability and eventually became a powerful speaker. Moreover, he was able to set aside his own safety and fear of the Taliban and to advocate for girls' education.

Another person who inspires me is my mom. She wakes up an hour before me daily in order to prepare a nutritious and filling breakfast for me and my sister. She encourages me to take advantage of opportunities and gives me insightful advice when I feel discouraged. She is the driving force behind all my accomplishments.

It's incredible to see parents and students so well-versed and involved. Can they come out to schools and spearhead more youth-led activities and organizations?

One of the greatest factors in inspiring change is to be more involved and be active in fostering discussions in schools with children and parents alike. For more information on how to get involved with organizations that were mentioned at the event, check out [Girl Up](#), [Free the Children](#), [The Malala Fund](#), and [Rosie's Theater Kids](#) and find out more information online.

How did Malala's family get through all of their hard times and come out strong?

Going through adversity is never easy, and that applies in this situation as well. Malala and her family prevailed because of their decision to constantly strive for change and never surrender to cowardice and fear. For more in-depth stories, pick up a copy of ["I Am Malala"](#) at your local library or bookstore.

Why are the women where Malala comes from oppressed and not allowed to have their own opinion?

When Malala was shot in 2012, the Pakistani Taliban, a radical extremist group exerted great power and control in parts of Pakistan and among other things prevented girls and women from going to school to preserve the chastity and dignity of women. As of today, the Taliban no longer maintains the sort of presence they once did, and literacy rates amongst young women and girls are steadily increasing. Read more about the history of the Taliban in Pakistan in The Malala Fund's [Curriculum Guide](#).

Did Malala ever go back to Pakistan? Do they still have schools in Pakistan? Are things different? Are girls allowed to go to school now?

Malala has not gone back to Pakistan since 2012. A great review of the culture, history and conflict in Pakistan is available in the “He Named Me Malala” student guide [here](#).