

CHELSEA PHAIRE
Episode #14 Transcript
Written by Gabrielle Mirabella
Music by Ernie Bird

Hey everyone, Gabrielle Mirabella here! Before we begin today's episode, we want to give a HUGE shoutout to our newest Patreon sponsors, including Susan and Jim Burch. Your generous donations go directly towards the musical theatre artists you hear on our program. If *you* have an interest in becoming a sustaining member, head to our site at Patreon.com/whatwillshedonext. For as little as three-dollars a month *you* have the power to sponsor an actor on our program! That's Patreon.com/whatwillshedonext.

INTRO MUSIC.

GABBIE: Hello! And welcome to this month's special edition episode of #GivingTuesdaySpark: "Ladies Who Lead"! I'm your host Gabrielle Mirabella and together with composer Ernie Bird...

ERNIE: Hold it!

The music cuts out.

ERNIE: This intro needs more... *Spark! (SFX: Voice echo)*

GABBIE: Okay. But, how do we do that?

ERNIE: Easy. Like this!

NEW intro music begins!

GABBIE: On today's episode we follow the journey of #GivingTuesdaySpark Youth leader Chelsea Phaire, an Arts Activist seeking to empower kids through visual art. This episode was written & narrated by myself with music & production by Ernie Bird.

GABBIE & ERNIE: Enjoy!

THEME SONG PLAYS:

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*“What will she do next?
What will she do next?
Her aim is true but will she see it through?
Oh, what will she do... next?”*

GABRIELLE: Before Chelsea Phaire became an Arts Activist, a person who uses their skills as an artist to empower their community, she was just a regular kid.

From a young age, Chelsea had a great passion for painting, singing, reading and writing stories which she would then illustrate, or draw. While drawing and creating pictures Chelsea found herself feeling happy and relaxed, and she just loved her beautiful art supplies, like her paintbrushes and paper.

But, art wasn't the only source of inspiration in her young life. Chelsea was also inspired by what she calls her “three M's”; Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a great Civil Rights leader who courageously fought for racial justice, Malala Yousafzai, a young woman from Pakistan who stood up for women's education in her hometown, and of course, her Grandmother, Mimi.

Then one day, at the age of eight-years-old, Chelsea Phaire had an experience that took her love of art to the next level. And, whether she knew it or not, everything in her life was about to change...

TRANSITION MUSIC.

Chelsea Phaire was about to receive a very special present. A present that would completely change her life. Seeing her love of painting and the visual arts, a family friend bought Chelsea a beautiful new art kit. Chelsea's eyes grew wide as she looked upon her new tools, her mind racing with ideas and inspiration. But, as she was opening the kit, her Mother stopped her, asking Chelsea to be *very careful* with her new art supplies, and to handle them gently at all times. Chelsea was curious and a little confused- why did she have to be so careful with them? They weren't made of glass! Her Mother smiled and explained that art supplies were very expensive and not all children and families could afford them.

Not all children can afford art supplies? Chelsea repeated. But, Chelsea couldn't imagine a world without art. It would be so...so... *plain...*

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TRANSITION MUSIC.

Some families could not afford art supplies, Chelsea Phaire just learned. The activity that brought her joy and purpose was only available to a portion of her community, not everyone.

Chelsea remembered the times that art had helped her in her own life, it had helped her overcome the pains of bullying, it had helped her after the loss of her swimming instructor due to gun violence, and art gave her comfort after the passing of her beloved grandfather.

As Chelsea pondered her relationship with the arts, she realized something very important. If art could help her get through all of those difficult situations, then maybe it could help other kids too! But, first, she had to find a way to make art supplies accessible to everyone in her community.

TRANSITION MUSIC.

How can a kid buy art supplies for other kids? Where do you even start? Chelsea Phaire was now nine years old and she was ready to share her passion with her community. But, before she could begin, she was stuck asking herself some pretty BIG questions- Would I have to get a job to pay for the supplies? Even though I'm only nine? And, ugh, why do art supplies have to be so expensive? *Can't they just be free?*

But, then, Chelsea realized, she may have already had her solution. Her tenth birthday was coming up and she was bound to get presents. Perhaps instead of asking for gifts for her birthday, she could ask her family and friends for art supplies! She could then donate these supplies to other children!

And that's exactly what she did. She asked those closest to her for help and boy did she receive! Thanks to these generous birthday donations, Chelsea was able to donate 40 art kits to a local shelter! And from there, Chelsea's Charity was born.

With the help of family and friends Chelsea's new charity, an organization to help raise money for those in need, was in full swing! Chelsea's Charity created art kits for youth in foster homes, shelters, and hospitals, and for children that have gone through traumatic experiences. Knowing how good and relaxed painting made her feel, Chelsea was inspired to help other kids find a path through their own difficult times. Chelsea was on the road, traveling to different sites,

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hand-delivering art kits and speaking with other kids her age. She encouraged them to use art to express themselves, and to communicate feelings that may be hard to put into words.

Watching kids use their brand new art kits left Chelsea with a profound feeling of happiness and gratitude. She felt lucky for the experience to help others and it only made her want to continue her work.

TRANSITION MUSIC.

In the early Spring of 2020, Chelsea Phaire was hard at work as an Arts Activist and as head of Chelsea's Charity. Everything was going just as planned! That is, until, one day, everything...stopped...

The COVID-19 pandemic had just begun, and like all of us, Chelsea now felt herself feeling "stuck". Gone were the days that Chelsea could travel, handing out art kits to kids in her community. She missed connecting with these new friends, she missed laughing and painting with them as well. As the days passed, Chelsea's happy, easy feeling was starting to turn into worry and anxiety. She felt unsure about so many things in her life: should she do in-person school or virtual? Should she continue her charity work or just call it a day? What would she do next?

But, instead of keeping all of these scary thoughts and feelings to herself, she decided to talk about them with her family. She also turned to her faith, to find comfort and inner strength. And she found that the more she talked about her feelings, outloud, with her trusted adults, she felt better. She was able to think more clearly and to feel happy again.

With this newfound feeling of relief, Chelsea decided to adapt to her new circumstances! She started to create online videos, and virtual art kit packing parties. That way she could now create art kits with folks from all over the country!

TRANSITION MUSIC.

Today, Chelsea is still giving, and Chelsea's Charity continues to reach out to those kids without access to art supplies.

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Remembering how art helped her through the most difficult times in her life, Chelsea is inspired to share this gift with as many kids and as many communities as she can.

For art, in all of its various shapes and forms, has the incredible power to heal. Drawing a picture can help us to concentrate and to communicate feelings that words might not be able to express. Learning special skills through sketching or painting sharpens our minds and opens us to new opportunities. And, in times of great fear and anxiety, art has the power to create happiness and a sense of calm.

And, what can we learn from Chelsea's story? What questions does her incredible journey raise? Perhaps we can ask ourselves if there is an activity that we love to do that perhaps not everyone has access to? And, once we pinpoint this, how can we share our talents and gifts or special supplies with others?

Today, we've learned all about Chelsea Phaire and her incredibly giving journey. Now, I wonder, what will you do next?

TRANSITION MUSIC.

If you would like to learn more about Chelsea's Charity, here's some information to get you started on your own giving journey. And, to help us out, here's our leading lady herself! Hey Chelsea!

Hey Gabrielle and Ernie!

TRANSITION MUSIC.

Just like Chelsea, women have a long history of giving.

Women like Oseola McCarty. Born on March 7, 1908 in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Oseola was a woman who worked hard her entire life and used her earnings to help others.

A laundress since her sixth-grade year, Oseola saved a portion of every paycheck she earned, as taught to her by her mother.

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So, by the time she had retired at age 86, Oseola had saved \$280,000 dollars! She used a major portion of that money to create scholarships for students at the University of Southern Mississippi.

Her legacy of giving is still remembered today, and the McCarty scholarship continues to create educational experiences for the students of Mississippi.

End of Episode.