

2018 NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
 Human and Civil Rights Award Winner

◆ Colin Kaepernick/ Know Your Rights Camp ◆

NEA President's Award



When Colin Kaepernick sat during the National Anthem at a San Francisco 49ers pre-season football game in 2016, he made a profound non-violent statement about the treatment of black people in this country. A social justice activist and human and civil rights leader of his own time, Colin Kaepernick's lone action sparked a movement.

Kaepernick took a seat, and then a knee, in order to advance the racial and social justice agenda. He is the motivation for the #TakeAKnee campaign that has spread throughout the National Football League (NFL) forcing the conversation about the treatment of African Americans by law enforcement to another level.

"To me, this is bigger than football and it would be selfish on my part to look the other way. There are bodies in the streets," said Kaepernick when interviewed and asked about #TakeAKnee, and the number of unarmed people of color, Black men and women specifically, that have been victims of police brutality and killed by law enforcement.

Kaepernick jeopardized his career and his endorsements because he needed to stand up for what was right. After the 2016 season, he was let go by the 49ers and has not played professional football since. Despite this, Kaepernick did not waiver in his commitment to racial justice.

Kaepernick continues the fight for justice through The Colin Kaepernick Foundation; the mission of which is to fight oppression of all kinds globally, through education and social activism. The Foundation launched the 'Know Your Rights Camp' campaign as a grassroots effort to raise awareness and provide resources to black, brown, and poor youth to ensure that they know about their rights as human beings.

Already staged in New York City and the Bay Area, the Know Your Rights (KYR) Camp offers full day seminars to underserved youth from the local community to educate them about their history, nutrition, legal rights and financial literacy. Said Kaepernick about the Camp, "Every city has grassroots resources. Our goal is to raise awareness about those resources and help young people access them to empower themselves and the people around them." The Know Your Rights Camp is committed to investment in the youth and community supports as volunteers from across the nation fly-in to participate in supporting the seminars in whichever city they be hosted in next. This team of volunteers is multicultural and diverse in background and passion for the youth they serve. Every seminar with the Know Your Rights Camp starts with a free breakfast and engages youth around a 10 point plan of fundamental rights; rights that the students get to know and wear proudly on shirts given to them. The free breakfasts and the 10 points both derive, intentionally, from the political legacy of the Black Panthers. The Know Your Rights Camp is fully funded by Colin Kaepernick, and has the goal of helping to build a stronger generation of people that will create the change that is much needed in this world. Kaepernick also donated one million dollars, plus all of the proceeds of his Jersey sales from the 2016 season, to organizations working in oppressed communities. Kaepernick also donated one million dollars, plus all of the proceeds of his jersey sales from the 2016 season, to organizations working in oppressed communities.

"No matter what you have to sacrifice," Kaepernick said when addressing a student group in East Harlem, "if you see wrong in the world, you must say that it is wrong."