



Elevating Leadership through the Humanities

Jazz Thornton is a friend to humanity. Jazz is a global mental health advocate and co-founder of Voices of Hope, a mental health advocacy organization that has won recognition from the British Royal Family, including Queen Elizabeth herself. She runs this organization with a close friend, Genevieve Mora, whom she met while they were both patients in a psychiatric hospital in New Zealand. Jazz recently released a book, "Stop Surviving Start Fighting," about her struggles to overcome multiple suicide attempts and years of suicidal thoughts/mental illness. She also is the subject of a documentary planned to be released later this year, "The Girl on The Bridge," that follows Jazz for three years in her daily life in recovery and as a worldwide mental health advocate. To reach wider and younger audiences, Jazz utilizes the popular social media platform, TikTok, to not only share her story, but to also share positive, uplifting messages and resources for those struggling with their mental health. In a recent video, Jazz talks about actively choosing to "see" people. That is, she discusses her choice to notice how others may be feeling and to ask them if they are okay even if it means turning her car around and stopping on the side of a highway. She explains that this choice comes from once being that girl who would walk down the street with a goal to end her life and wishing someone – anyone – would see her. It is clear that Jazz's friendliness to humanity comes from her own experiences and the relationships she has with the people who recovered alongside her and who saved her life. Jazz is most definitely a philanthropist. She dedicates her entire life and every day to increasing access to mental health resources, talking individuals through a crisis, and sharing her story with the hope of encouraging someone else in a similar position to seek out the help they may need.

Julia Hark
July 3, 2020
Washington D.C.

