



VoyageLA

An Inspired Chat with Sydney Assil of Los Angeles

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We're looking forward to introducing you to Sydney Assil. Check out our conversation below.

Good morning Sydney, it's such a great way to kick off the day – I think our readers will love hearing your stories, experiences and about how you think about life and work. Let's jump right in? What are you most proud of building — that nobody sees?

I am proud of my support system. Through everything I've accomplished, I have had some form of help: a guiding hand, shoulders to lean on and stand upon, and a village behind me at all times. Some of this help finds me by luck. My family and our large circle of loved ones show up for me like no one else. Other bridges I have worked to build, made of both professional relationships and personal friendships. When I complete a project, this web of aid may go unseen to most, but they are at the forefront of my gratitude, always.



Can you briefly introduce yourself and share what makes you or your brand unique?

I am a high school senior with a passion for supporting education worldwide. I built **The Honey Project**, a nonprofit organization, on the belief that a child's education is the foundation of success and upward mobility. We aim to break cycles of poverty in highly disadvantaged communities by enhancing education and providing critical resources to schools in need. Our work began in Olmos, a resource-limited region in the desert of Northern Peru. We support the schools in the area by providing them with school supplies and learning tools, such as books or even an entire library, as well as basic necessities like a roof to shelter, and an incredibly sunny playground. We are currently working to bring technology to the schools in Olmos and teach computer literacy to their students. We own bee boxes that produce locally sold honey in Olmos, which provides much of the funds for the project, combined with fundraising and collection drives. With the honey, we have a stable and sustainable system of financial support for the schools that also helps protect the environment and the bee population in the region. Collectively, these factors come together in the hopes of changing the area's deep-rooted poverty cycle and creating opportunities for upward mobility while also protecting the environment.

As The Honey Project grows, so does its reach. We piloted a peer-mentoring program in Los Angeles in partnership with the Boys and Girls Club in May 2025, and plan to launch an expanded program in the fall. With this focus to foster connection in educational spaces in mind, I am also launching an app called Tandym to connect at-risk students with free tutoring globally. Tandym partners young students with graduate students majoring in education who are required to complete volunteer tutoring hours for their degrees. It will provide students in need with educational support and connection, something equally vital to proper learning.

Great, so let's dive into your journey a bit more. What's a moment that really shaped how you see the world?

Years ago, three days into my third visit to Olmos and second visit to the local elementary school, San Marcos de Mocape, a small, unexpected tap on my arm set me on the path I walk today. I turned to see two boys, no older than ten. With eager eyes and fast-paced Spanish, one asked for my phone number. I was confused about what they meant, and thought I might've misheard them. Quickly, one of them explained that he wanted my number so I could help him learn English. I felt surprised by their excitement to learn, and then ashamed I hadn't seen their ambition sooner: learning English is statistically their best chance at securing higher-paying jobs. This was the first time I witnessed children with such enthusiasm about their own education, and it fueled me more than anything had up until that point to fight for their futures as hard as I could.

Was there ever a time you almost gave up?

I've been lucky to have enough constant support and motivation that giving up has never felt like an option for me. Knowing that there are young children relying on me to whom I've made promises of a better education and a brighter future, I could never give up on the work I do. It would feel horribly selfish.



Sure, so let's go deeper into your values and how you think. Whom do you admire for their character, not their power?

I admire both of my parents. My father has been a perfect model of hard work and determination. He is a self-made doctor who worked to put himself through college and medical school, providing the life my family has today. My mother is a constant reminder to spread love and positivity. She has the biggest heart I've ever known. Together, they urged me and my brothers to begin The Honey Project's work over six years ago. I would be nowhere without them, and nothing without the examples they set for me every day.

Thank you so much for all of your openness so far. Maybe we can close with a future oriented question. When do you feel most at peace?

When I am in a routine, I find that peace and rest aren't always synonymous for me. Sometimes they are even antonyms when I worry that prolonged rest might come at the expense of accomplishment and growth. Staying organized, meeting goals (big or small), and moving forward while allotting time for fun is what keeps me grounded and at peace.

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