



## Zoe Terry's Bio

Zoe Terry, 16 years old, is the CEO of Zoe's Dolls, a not-for-profit organization founded in Miami, Florida. She started Zoe's Dolls when she was just 5 years old. To truly understand the power of Zoe's Dolls, you must first know the story of Zoe Terry. When she was 2, Zoe suffered a stroke. While it left her with fine and gross motor skill difficulties, along with some speech impairment, she was unstoppable. After hard work and intensive physical, occupational and speech therapy, Zoe overcame most of her physical limitations.

When she was in Kindergarten, she was bullied because of her skin color and hair texture. She was the only one in her class who looked like she did. She was also bullied because she was a bit slower riding the tricycle than other kids and because of her physical limitations. Once again Zoe was unmoved. She decided to do something about how this made her feel. She decided to act.

Zoe's mother, who had always instilled in her the importance of paying it forward and giving back, had asked her to give away one of her gifts to a child less fortunate. Zoe complied. But after what she had gone through in Kindergarten, Zoe told her mother that she did not want to do that anymore. She knew she had the will and the power to do more. Zoe stated that she wanted to "start a company that gives free brown dolls to little brown girls in need at Christmas time." Zoe's reasoning for wanting to do this was two-fold. She wanted to give toys to little girls less fortunate than she was and she wanted to combat bullying letting little brown girls know that they were special, just the way they are.

### **This was the beginning of Zoe's Dolls.**

Since its inception, Zoe has given out over 50,000 dolls. She has impacted the lives of over 80,000 girls in South Florida, Texas, Mississippi, Georgia, New York, Detroit, Haiti, Jamaica, The Netherlands, Cuba, Trinidad and Africa. Zoe has chapters of Zoe's Dolls in Mississippi, Texas and Georgia. Zoe just completed two international trips to India and London where she gave out dolls and copies of her book *Simply Zoe*.

Zoe has not stopped at dolls. Her organization has developed and runs programs aimed at empowering little girls and young ladies, to let each one know that her image is beautiful.

*Loving the Skin I'm In Creative Expressions Contest* now in its sixth year is an annual competition open nationwide to girls 6-18 years old. The girls can submit a written or video

submission on why they love the skin they are in. Winning entries are awarded cash prizes for first, second and third place and honored at a culminating formal banquet.

***Love Letters to Black Girls*** is a program where Zoe's Dolls solicits the community to write inspiring, empowering and inspirational letters to Black girls. These letters are then given out to girls all

***Zoe's Dolls Girl Ambassadors*** program allows other little girls to join in on the Zoe's Dolls mission. Each year the program accepts 15 girls that work with Zoe throughout the year giving back through community projects, the doll giveaway and volunteering to read to little kids.

***Girlpreneur Program:*** Girlpreneur is a program that Zoe's Dolls debuted in January 2016. The program accepts 15 girls between the ages of 8-13 that have an interest in owning their own business. Girlpreneur works with these girls for six months, using a kid-based business curriculum designed to give these girls the foundation to starting their own business. During the program girls learn how to formulate their business idea, develop a business plan, incorporate their business and design marketing plans. The girls are also paired with business owners, whom serve as mentors. At the end of the program, each girl will have incorporated and started their business. Each girl also receives funds towards the development of her business.

**The Girl Fit Experience.** After a reading a report with her mother about The State of Obesity, in a special report called Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Obesity, where it showed that African American girls were more obese than any other ethnic group, Zoe decided she had to do something. The Girl Fit Experience is a fun, interactive day of fitness designed with girls in mind. Zoe had her first Girl Fit Experience, July 2016 and more than 80 girls came out to get fit. The program has now expanded to a full out afterschool fitness program.

**The Living Doll Experience (LDE)** now in its sixth year is the premiere, kick-off event to Doll Season. LDE features 15 girls that are transformed into "living dolls". They are cased in life sized doll boxes. These 15 "live" dolls represent all the beauty, grace and style that the little Black girl embodies. These "live" dolls represent the multitude of ethnicities, lifestyles and cultures of the African Diaspora. Once the show starts, an eclectic burst of fashion, music and dance will collide to bring to life the image of the powerful, beautiful and undeniable Black girl. LDE is free and open to the community. The event features live music, free food, entertainment, vendors offering free items and social service agencies.

Her philanthropic work has impacted the lives of many. Zoe has invested over 40,000 hours of her time since starting Zoe's Dolls. She personally donates \$500 each year that she collects from friends, teachers and her allowance to donate to various organizations in the South Florida community. She has given to The Miami Dade County Foster Care Association, Jeremiah Academy and The Resource Room. Zoe volunteers her time to speak at different events such as OIC of South Florida Youth Summit, Urgent Inc.'s Youth Economic Development Conference, City of Miami Gardens Money Matters Conference, Annual Foster Care of Dade County Banquet, churches, schools and community events.

Zoe has been recognized and honored for her philanthropic efforts in many arenas. Zoe graced the cover of the *June 2018 Teen Boss Magazine*. Zoe was featured in the *NAACP's quarterly magazine, TheCrisis*. Zoe appeared on *Good Morning America in February 2018* during a special segment with Robin Roberts called Black Girl Magic. She was named one of *Glamour Magazine's 17 Young Women Who Created Real Change In 2017*. She was featured in *Bloomberg Businessweek in their Game Changer* column. Zoe was a *2017 Nickelodeon HALO (Helping And Leading Others) Award Winner*, the youngest winner ever. She was one of 10 youth named as the *Hasbro Community Action Hero in 2017* and was honored in New York City during the 2017 Annual Toy Show. Zoe was selected among one of 14 youth to give a *TED Talk during the TEDx Youth Miami Event in February 2016*. She was given the first-ever *Miami-Dade Outstanding Youth in Philanthropy Award by the Association of Fundraising Professionals*. She was named the *MLK 2017 Trailblazer*. She was honored by the *Miami Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.* In June 2016, she was named one of *The City of Miami Gardens' Unsung Heroes* by Councilman Erhabor Ighodaro and honored by the *City of North Miami as Outstanding Youth in February 2016*. She was named the *Kohl's Cares Regional Winner in 2015*. Zoe was also featured in the book "*Why*" as a *Social Entrepreneur*, produced by Miami Country Day School, where she is currently in 10th grade. Zoe was a *keynote speaker at the Points of Light Service Unites National Conference and a keynote speaker at the United Nations in NY during the Nexus Global Summit*. In 2019 Zoe was also awarded a proclamation by The City of Opa-locka, proclaiming *October 19<sup>th</sup> officially Zoe Terry Day in the City of Opa-locka*. On October 19, 2022 Miami-Dade County Mayor Daniella Cava-Levin proclaimed *October 19<sup>th</sup> Zoe's Dolls & Zoe Terry Day in Miami-Dade County*. Recently, Zoe was selected as one of 29 youth across the US as a **Princeton University Prize in Race Relations Recipient**.

Zoe is the *author of the book Simply Zoe* and the *podcast*, by the same name, *P.O.V. with Zoe & Friends*. Zoe is an only child. She enjoys hanging out with her best friends doing TikToks and shopping. Some of her favorite things to do is swimming and taking photos. She resides in North Miami with her mother and Godmother.

For more information about Zoe or Zoe's Dolls, please contact Nakia Bowling at [info@zoesdolls.com](mailto:info@zoesdolls.com) or 305-726-3673.

Link to Zoe's Media Page: <https://zoesdolls.com/in-the-news/>