Alexis Werner says she wakes up every morning wanting to be Wonder Woman, not like the star of the blockbuster Hollywood movie, but by using her own real powers to change the world.

“We all have superpowers and can use them to help others and learn about ourselves. The world has the ability to be a loving, kind, and fair place- we just have to be the change makers on the ground changing it.”

That sense of confidence did not come easy to Alexis who was born to teenage parents. After they split up, her mother joined the military, and her father was off working to make ends meet, so a wide assortment of family, neighbors, and friends helped her parents supply the love and encouragement she needed.

“I had a bedroom at every house in Pittsburgh. As a young person I was told I could be whoever I wanted to be. Coming from a low-income family with an unstable household would not limit my possibilities.”

When Alexis was a teenager, her mother met and married a soldier who had returned from the war suffering from severe Post Traumatic Stress (PTS). It turned Alexis’s world upside down. Like so many young people, Alexis needed someone she could turn to as she struggled to cope with the difficult new realities at home. Luckily, she found an incredible mentor named Gregg.

“Gregg told me I could continue to be mad and turn to drugs and alcohol when things got bad, or I could change my narrative and become powerful and an agent of change for people in my situation. This was the beginning of my journey.”

Within three months of her conversation with Gregg, Alexis, who was still in high school, created a non-profit organization called Seeds of Hope.

“I needed something positive in my life that was crumbling in shambles around me. I felt that if I didn’t help to change the world, who would? Social change became my coping and my passion. It was my escape from things happening at my house. It became my identity.”
Her Seeds of Hope team created 15 national victory gardens at community organizations, VFW locations, and Fisher House Foundation houses nationwide. This resulted in the production of over 3,000 pounds of vegetables and herbs for veterans and their families. In 2012, with the help of two of her peers she produced a children’s book called “Beginning Hope” which teaches elementary school students the importance of nutrition, volunteering, and appreciation of veterans.

She has also produced a documentary about Post Traumatic Stress called “Our Way Home” which premiered in late 2015. Currently, Alexis is Development Coordinator with Bunker Labs in Philadelphia, a non-profit dedicated to helping new veteran entrepreneurs start their own businesses.

“I don’t see limitations on anyone when it comes to creating change because we all have so much to give. If we all do our part, it makes a significant change.”

Alexis Werner is a 2018 graduate of Temple University and was the teen founder of the Pittsburgh-based non-profit Seeds of Hope to help veterans cope with PTSD. Currently, Alexis is Development Coordinator with Bunker Labs in Philadelphia, a non-profit dedicated to helping new veteran entrepreneurs start their own businesses.