

TEENS **in** PRINT BOSTON

BOSTON TEENS IN PRINT JAN/FEB 2013™



Brain (((Refrain)))

A trip inside a teenage mind
page 3

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TEENS
in PRINT

Volume VIII, No. 40

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There's no need.

COVER: AFH art by Khaleela Willingham



AFH art (clockwise) by Deanna Hillery, Arcadia Giron and Christian Dixon.

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AFH art by Chris Bolivar

Brain refrain

By Perla Lara // Staff Writer

The list never ends. Being a teenager is the hardest thing I've ever experienced. I know life isn't easy, but I feel as though I never have a minute for myself. I can't remember the last time I had a dream, zoned out into my fantasy life, or just had a blank thought.

There are constant questions running through my mind, most regarding the future. Many would say this is good: "You're organized and thinking about your plans – it says a lot about you." Right now, I see it as stress and overload.

Many of my thoughts are about school. What's my homework? When is this essay due? What are my grades like? Why is my teacher being so annoying? What other major upcoming assignments do I have? How can I improve my test grade? What time is soccer practice? How am I going to pass my AP test? When will I study? How can I plan out my homework/life to-do lists? What do I want to be when I grow up? Are there any scholarships I can apply for? What programs can I join? Oh, and by the way, what time is it?

Seems like a lot to be going through a 17-year-old junior's mind multiple times a day, every day.

Let's not forget about life at home. What's for dinner? Is my room clean? Are the dishes done? What needs to be added to the grocery list? Is my laundry finished? How come my mom doesn't understand?

Many adults say that teens shouldn't worry so much, that they should focus only on their educations. But it is difficult to ignore a situation when it affects your home life – especially when everyone is constantly in and out of the house. Someone has to be on top of the agenda, and in my case it's not always the parent.

As if I don't have a million and one things running through my mind already, my body still recognizes that I am a teenager with crazy hormones. One day – or maybe even one hour – I'm angry, the next I'm happy, then sad. Why is he ignoring me? Does he like me? Why is he sending me mixed signals? Does he prefer my best friend?

And then: When will I hang out with my friends? When can I go to the mall? Will I be able to go to a party if I have classes the next day? Why is my friend mad over something so petty? How come life is so hard? The list never ends.... ■

The teen brain: under the microscope

In adolescence, the brain develops dramatically, experts say. Here are four behaviors that youth experience during this turbulent time in their lives, according to scientists.

Teens:

1. Acquire new decision-making skills;
2. Feel intense emotions;
3. Seek peer approval;
4. Believe the world revolves around them.

Source: LiveScience.com

O, yes!

A teen's view of Obama 2, which begins this month

By Dennis Membah // Staff Editor

I am very pleased that Barack Obama is still president of the United States. To me, Obama's victory wasn't a surprise, knowing that Romney only favored 53 percent of America. To lead a country, you have to be at least supportive of the people already living in it.

Obama winning the presidential election benefits students and middle-class families. Romney made a statement of how students should borrow money from their parents for college. If Romney had won, I would never be able to pay for college tuition, based on the fact that my parents aren't rich enough.

I also wouldn't have voted for Romney if I was able to because many Republicans want to eliminate food stamps, which a lot of people of all races use to survive. Romney's campaign was devoted to mostly the wealthy and white people.

Romney was over-confident. He was so sure he was going to win the election that he didn't even write a concession speech. Romney thought he'd already won the battle because, after all, he could read the minds of a whole nation.

Romney also made a preposterous statement that the reason Obama won was because he handed out "gifts" to different

To lead a country, you have to be at least supportive of the people already living in it.

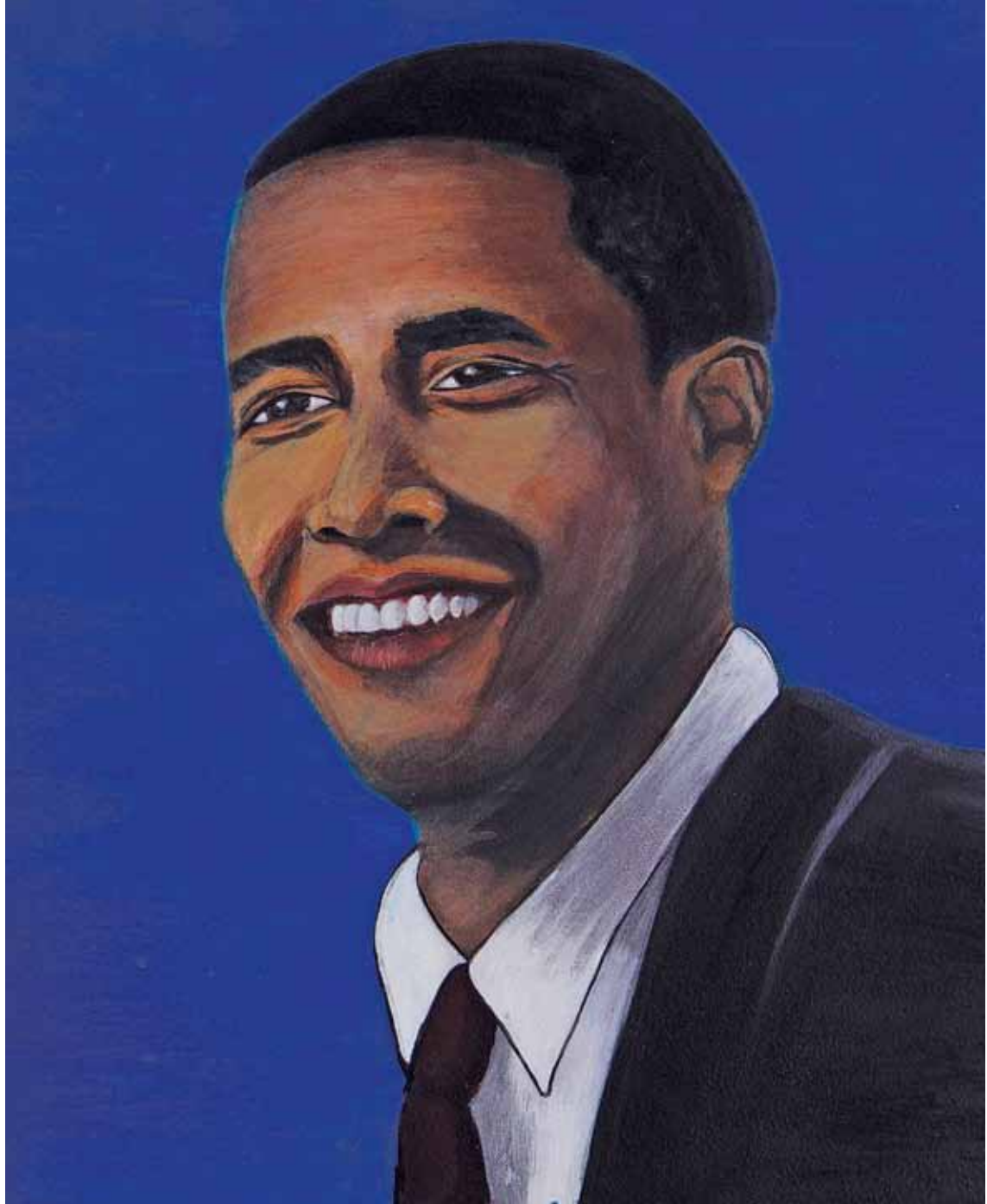
groups. I mean, think about it, no disrespect, but how childish is that? It's like saying to someone that he won a basketball game because his teammates made baskets in their own hoop, which is impossible, because they wouldn't count. No, Obama won because of his plan to

make America a better nation in all forms. Romney would have had a better chance of winning the election if he was truthful to the people of America.

If presidents could serve longer terms, I guarantee Obama would be re-elected, again. ■



AFH art by Marvin Bynoe



AFH art by Arcadia Giron

"I really don't think voting will count or change my life."

Voting "no" on voting

By Shanae Saddler // Staff Editor

For the 18-year-old student from Boston Community Leadership Academy, voting is not a priority.

"It's something I just don't believe in," says the student, whose name, like others in this article, is being withheld to protect her non-citizen status.

She comes from a country in Africa where voting is not a way of life. Plus, she says her denomination of Christianity discourages participating in voting on political issues.

"I would have voted for Obama," she says, "because he had more passion for the people."

Should teens feel bad because they don't have a voice in our democracy?

Another 18-year-old from BCLA would love to vote but can't because she is not a citizen.

"I want to have a say in what goes on in government," says the teen, who watched the presidential debates and talked with friends and family to get their points of view.

Meanwhile, a 19-year-old from BCLA has no desire to vote.

"I don't really care about voting because I don't think my vote will count," he says. "Even if I become a citizen, I will not vote. I really don't think voting will count or change my life."

This teen says that part of his position was forged by the experience he had in his native South Asian country.

"It's hard to always trust someone that's never really going to help the poor," he says, "but helps themselves first." ■

Scoring goals:

Getting across life's finish line

By Ilma Golemi // Staff Writer

Claudia Gomes Barros, 15, feels that setting goals for yourself is good because it helps you achieve things in the future.

"One of my goals is to get good grades in school, and this goal motivates me to study



AFH art by Michelle Caban

hard and do my homework every day," says Barros, who attends the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science.

Choosing goals can be an important strategy for teens. You finish the goals one by one, teens say, and at the end you realize that you have attained the biggest goal you have. For example, teens say one common goal is to get a good job in the future. This can be accomplished first by getting good grades in school and then by going to a fine college.

Fifteen-year-old Judy Zhao says that if teens make a wrong decision now then the future is not going to be bright.

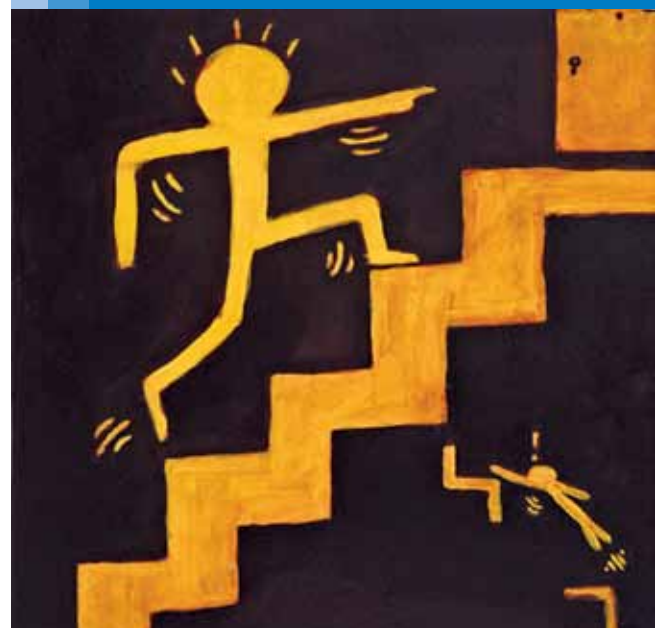
"Getting honor roll and going to a good college are the goals that I have," says Zhao, from the O'Bryant.

Eric Wong, 15, from the O'Bryant, says that he only follows the goals he truly believes in. One of them is to get rich.

"Those who achieve the goals," says Wong, "will achieve the future." ■



AFH art by Dishawn Webster



AFH art by Marcos Manuel Martinez

BSAC Buzz

By Audrey Ngomdou and Bill Zhou // Contributing Writers

Many students complain about school. Of course we would rather be sleeping, hanging out with friends, or playing video games. But school is important. If you find yourself doing the same thing every day and complaining about it, why not do something to improve school culture -- your attitudes and interactions with each other inside and outside the classroom. Here's a top-six list of the ways you can help -- and not one of them involves studying!

6. Try sitting at a new table at lunch time

Don't worry about social awkwardness. Instead, think of this as a chance to make new friends. After all, there's no way you could've met your old buddies if you didn't talk to them first when they were just strangers to you.

5. Join different clubs at school. Learn more about various cultures and hobbies while you make new friends. Even if you decide not to become a member, trying out several clubs will open your eyes to the diverse interests of students at your school. Can't think of a club to join? Do you and your friends love something but need a place to gather and discuss it? Then start a new club. Chances are there are other students who will be interested.

4. Join a sports team. Physical activity is good for the body, but participating in sports and having school spirit is good for the school's soul. You might even be the next athletic superstar.

3. Hand out appreciation-grams to teachers and staff. Is there a teacher or staff person you look up to? Someone who taught you something cool? Someone who helped you when you needed it? Say thanks by making them a small postcard telling them why you think they are awesome and to keep up the good work.

2. Report all types of bullying to administrators. If you ever witness bullying, online or in real life, tell someone immediately. You can also encourage other students to do the same, and if everyone works together, you can help reduce bullying at your school and make it a better place.

1. Inform students about their rights and responsibilities. All Boston Public Schools students have 12 basic rights that schools must uphold. You can find a copy of the Student Rights & Responsibilities flyer under BSAC goals & projects on bsaconline.org, the group's homepage. ■

For more information, contact BSAC at bsac@bostonpublicschools.org.



AFH art by Toni Jonas-Silver

A plea to treat immigrants right

By Mouctar Diakite // Staff Writer

There are many reasons why people come to America. It's not because they hate their country or have a boring life there. They come because of war, or poverty, or political unrest. I feel sorry for many of them because this is not their country and they do not feel comfortable here.

Immigrants are incredibly important in this country; I came from Africa in 2010. Immigrants often do low-end jobs that American people do not want.

How would you feel if you had no green card to show that you can work in this country? Or you had no parent here you could talk to or turn to if you are in trouble? Or you could not continue with your education because you do not have the money and can't get loans?

This is the way that many immigrants live in this country. If you think it is very hard, please treat them fairly and try your best to help them. Acting badly toward them is not going to make you feel better. Immigrants just want to have a better life. They should be considered as if they were part of your family. ■

Life is hard

By Mouctar Diakite // Staff Writer

My neighborhood back in Ivory Coast, Africa, was full of poor kids. I never made fun of them even though I had a better life than them. I always tried to help them.

The first time I went to my best friend's house, I saw his family sharing one burger. That made me cheerless. It taught me that it is not good to make fun of poor kids. That was when my beliefs began. I started dreaming of working for the Red Cross to help poor people.

One day, I told my mother to cook a big meal. She said, "I don't have any money to cook a big meal." I took \$50 out of the money that I was saving to buy games. I gave her the money to make the big meal.

After she finished cooking, I went

outside and called all the poor kids in my neighborhood to come eat. My mother was very proud of me that day, and she gave me a big hug. I was only a teenager but I was respected as an adult.

It gave me motivation to work hard and attend a great college and go back to help my country. I came here in 2010 for a better education.

When you see someone in the street who needs support -- food or a place to live -- please try your best to help.

Helping people is a great thing, but giving them the tools they need to get out of poverty is even better. Showing heartfelt humility and sincerity in assisting those in need is the best way to get their attention, and to help them help themselves. ■



AFH art by Nancy Nyamunda

Mission Malawi: a burning desire to see the light

By Patrick Burke // Contributing Writer

To my left was an oversized canvas bag sitting in Malawi, Africa, that was one of my only connections to the United States, and to my home. To my right, however, was an equally oversized white bag that held four candles, matches, and mosquito nets for the area I would call a bed. I stared at that white bag longer than I would have had I been home. To me, this bag represented everything that I was afraid of. I stared at this bag for what seemed like hours, hoping that it would come to life and reveal its contents to me on its own. I stared and stared, confused and afraid, waiting on some miracle or divine intervention that would move me from my paralyzing fear of the uncertainty that came with this wonderfully terrifying bag. Somehow, I worked up the courage to open it and pull out a candle and a box of matches.

That first candle seemed to weigh more than it should have. I rolled it around in my hand for a minute, allowing my eyes to adjust to the darkness in the room. What took place next seemed to happen over the course of a thousand years. I had struck a match, but what I had done a million times before seemed so foreign this time. It may have been the smell of the sulfur in the air stinging my nostrils, or the heat of the flame searing my thumb, but I began to become aware of what was so familiar, yet so new this time.

It was the first time I noticed the sparks coming off a newly lit match. The first time, really, that I saw a match burn with that brilliant saffron glow, illuminating the peaceful darkness that once was. I stared as it burned all the way down to my thumb, flickering in and out until what was once a ravenous life force was now ash falling to the ground.

It may have been the adrenaline coursing through my body, or the sheer amazement of something that I'd seen thousands of times, but I remained mesmerized as this match singed the tip of my thumb. I felt the sting of flame on flesh for what seemed like the first time in my life.

The rush of heat against skin snapped me back to reality. For an instant, this place was the focus of the world, and there I was sitting in a tiny room, barely able to see my hand in front of my face, in a house no larger than a classroom, in a country that I was only visiting but I would be attached to for the remainder of my life. ■



AFH art by Christina Vivada

Guatemala: missing my country

By Morelia Morales // Staff Writer

When I came to the United States from Guatemala several years ago for a better education, everything changed in an enormous way. The culture of people from the United States was so different from the one that I knew in Guatemala. Here, I saw mothers working and fathers taking care of babies. I couldn't believe it. In Guatemala, I grew up in a family where the women did the chores of the house while the men worked hard to get money and buy food for the family to survive. I felt like I was in another world.

For me, Guatemala is the most beautiful country in the world because it was where I grew up. In Boston, I couldn't go out and play hide and seek; there was no space or big trees where I could be out of sight. In my country, I could go outside with the nice weather and all my friends together to play. My grandmother's house was big like the White House where President Obama lives. In the U.S., it was just an apartment where I couldn't make any noise or the neighbor would get mad and call the police.

In Guatemala, my mother and grandmother were the ones who served the food for the family, but now it was only me, my father, my stepmother, and my two sisters. The others are back in Guatemala. Sitting at the table now isn't the same as sitting with the people who saw me grow.

Although the United States teaches me how to be an independent girl, I miss my country – not only the beautiful places that it has but also how the family was all together living in the same place where they could say hi to each other every morning.

At night here was the only time I had the freedom to cry and not have to worry that my father would see me. The only one I trusted was God. I could tell Him how I was feeling and He would not say anything, but He would help me. He was the only support I had. ■

CALLING ALL TEENS:

THE PHONE
BILL IS DUE

Pay what?

The price is wrong

By Brianna Bannister // Staff Writer

"Heck no, I'm going to get my money back; they better give me back my refund!" says Heaven Chapman, 17, from New Mission High School, after she finds out she's been paying too much for some items, such as her earring bar and eyeliner. She will also pay two dollars for fancy bottled water. Meanwhile, she passes on other expensive things like Jordan sneakers. What's the difference?

"A new pair of Jordans, they might be nice, but I will have to spend all my money to buy them," says Chapman. "I would pay two dollars for water because water keeps me alive."

Many common items that teens purchase are very pricey. For example,

an article on dailyfinance.com says that one cellphone text message costs three-tenths of one cent, but users can actually be paying 20 cents per text.

Teens will ignore certain costly merchandise yet indulge in others.

"Yes, I like accessories that are overpriced and sometimes snacks because sometimes they're necessary and I need them," says Brianna Eason, 17, from New Mission.

Kairiana Perez, 17, says that Gucci and Louis Vuitton are lavish brands that she wouldn't buy.

However, other dear names are a different story. "Shoes, such as UGGs," says Perez, from New Mission, "because they are cute." ■



AFH art by Edward McColgan



By Marmarin Nasirahmad // Staff Editor

It's 2013. Therefore, almost all teenagers have their own phones.

Buying the phones may be the easy part. How do teens pay their expensive bills?

Some have money from working while others depend on their parents.

"Teenagers should be able to pay for their own phone bill because I believe that's around the time you start taking real life responsibilities," says 17-year-old William Bonilla, who attends East Boston High School. "I'm currently looking for a job so my mom won't have to pay for my phone bill anymore."

Jobs may be scarce but teens are forever on the lookout because the bill is always due.

"Honestly, I work and pay for my own phone bill because I hate asking my parents for money," says 17-year-old Judith Evelyn Hernandez, who goes to East Boston High. "I'm responsible enough to pay for my own stuff."

On the other hand, some kids have packages with their parents but still try to chip in.

"I have a plan with my dad and I pay half," says Manuel Lazo, 15, who goes to East Boston High. "It was my decision." ■



AFH photo by Jennifer Thai

Girl talk

By Jamal Young // Staff Writer

Girls. To the average teenage boy they are everything. Inside, teens may go crazy over them but some guys might have trouble talking to them.

Here are some tips:

Carlos Acosta, 17, who attends the Community Academy of Science and Health, says that approaching girls has always come naturally to him.

"I never get nervous or have to think about what I have to say to them," Acosta says. "If I like a girl, the first thing I do is start out friends. Then I ask her if she wants to take our relationship to the next level."

Nohely Velasquez, 17, from CASH, says that she wants a guy to be romantic while asking her out.

"He has to be special in order for me to be his girlfriend," says Velasquez.

Daniel Ortega, 15, says the idea is to act naturally. "Everyone should know how to approach girls," says Ortega, who goes to CASH. "They're not aliens. The trick is simply to be nice to them, and they will fall right into the palm of your hand." ■



AFH art by Casey Hudson

FIRST PERSON SINGULAR

Driving me crazy

By Shanique Lewis // Staff Editor

When I turned 16, a major goal I set for myself was acquiring a driving permit. In my head, all I was thinking about was driving as soon as possible. I used the idea of driving as motivation to getting my permit. To do that, I knew I was going to have to study because I loathe failing. The only problem was that I have never really studied in my life. For this, I knew I had to.

To get my permit, I went with a close friend who already has his. He made sure that I was calm and well-prepared by reviewing a few things about the speed limits and regulations. This gave me more confidence, and I passed. I screamed and jumped on my friend. It was a relief to get step one out of the way.

Then it was time for a driver's ed course to prepare me to get a license. I paid several hundred dollars for the course as soon as possible because the sooner you pay the earlier you begin to practice driving.

In the class there were a lot of teens. We read the driver's manual and watched videos about car crashes and demonstrations on how to drive the correct way. I passed that, too.

Next up was to get behind the wheel.

The instructor told me to get in the driver's seat. I really didn't know anything about actual driving.

"If I crash," I told him, "it's on you."

"It's okay," he said. "I have a brake on my side."

At 17, after doing well on the road test, I'm officially a licensed driver. Now all I need is a car and I'm on my way. ■



AFH art by Christina Huang

Do you believe in love?

By Alexandra Zuluaga // Staff Writer

“Love” has been used for centuries as an expression of profound emotion. Love has become a universal aspiration: We see it, we want it, we think we need it. But love is not tangible, not necessary for the evolution of humans. So why do teens believe so fiercely in its existence?

Lauren Anderson, 17, who attends Boston Latin School, says: “I believe in love because there’s hate in the world, and the only force to stop hate is love. Every other emotion on the spectrum is a variation of them.”

While many believe that love is undeniably evident in our everyday lives, others argue that it is merely a level of comfort that develops between people.

“Being with another person is just feeling more at ease with them than with other people,” says Nicole Catubig, 17, of BLS. “It’s accepting their flaws and being with them anyway. Love is a made-up concept; it’s all about being comfortable with your peers.”

During teens’ critical years of development, maybe they’re just too young to know.

“I see love all around me, but I’ve never felt it for anyone other than my family,” says Daniel Roberts, 17, of BLS. “Maybe I’m just not old enough.”

Whether you side with the sappy or the cynic, one thing is for sure: The idea of love has started and ended more relationships than can be counted. For many years, humans have molded this four-letter word to encompass affection between individuals, and even if it’s a figment of the mind or of the heart, love is still ever-present in today’s troubled era. ■



AFH art by Beatrice Agosto



AFH art by Eleanor Wong

First love

By Mussuba Samati // Staff Editor

Your first love is someone you can stay up all night thinking about. It can be current or a past relationship. Having a first love can be an experience that has outcomes of extreme intensity – painful or pleasurable.

“My first love is my current boyfriend,” says Suany Perez, 16, from Boston Community Leadership Academy. “He is caring...and told people that he loved me.”

She says that in the fourth grade she spotted him and thought he was adorable, so she asked him out. At the time, people said it was “little kid love” that was not going to last.

“I’ve technically been with him for [over] seven

years,” says Perez, “and I think we are going to go far together.”

First loves are definitely more fierce and memorable in teenage years compared to those in adulthood because they will always be the ones who started their young hearts beating, youths say.

But what’s so powerful and special about a teen’s first love?

“His smile! It was so beautiful,” 17-year-old Carolina Forty, from BCLA, says about her boyfriend of two years. “He had a very nice personality, was a leader, cares for me, was respectful, and we did everything together.”

Forty believes that they will go off to college together and be the happy couple that they already are.

Writing on psychologytoday.com, relationship columnist Nancy Kalish says this about first loves: “The age of puberty...has dropped. Whatever the reasons for this, reaching puberty influences the age of first love and first sexual experience. It is rare now to marry a first love. Today’s teenagers date not for mate selection but for fun. However, the first love experience is no less powerful than it was in the 1940’s.”

Still, some remain skeptical about how easily teens can embrace the whole first love phenomenon.

“To me, some teens consider anyone they like by saying they love them,” says Sabrina Abanoor, 14, from the John D. O’Bryant School of Math & Science. “But in reality, it’s just not love. It can just be a crush.” ■



AFH art by Sandy Bui

In search of the perfect relationship

By Jalene Sanchez // Staff Writer

Kimberly Huertas, 15, from Boston Community Leadership Academy, describes her idea of a perfect relationship.

"The type of relationship where we can both act like lovers and best friends, and someone who likes me for me," says Huertas.

Surprisingly, some guys want the same things as girls.

"I want a girlfriend where she can be my best friend and we can talk about anything, make jokes about each other, and not take it seriously," says Xavier Brodie, 18, from BCLA. "We can tell each other our secrets and play fight and just be ourselves."

When it comes to a great relationship, 16-year-old Alejandra Bautista is in the same place as many other teens in talking about trust and love.

"I just want a relationship where I can feel secure," says Bautista, from BCLA, "and we can talk our problems out and treat each other equally."

She adds: "I mean, who wouldn't want a relationship like that?" ■

FRIENDS & FAMILY



AFH art by Pierre Andre Pascal

Besties

Teens explain how you can have more than one "closest" friend

By Ilma Golemi // Staff Writer

Brian Vong, 15, believes you can have more than one best friend.

"I have five best friends, and I am close to all of them," says Vong, who attends the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science. "All of them can help you out in different ways in difficult times."

A best friend used to be that one special person with whom you shared your strongest bond, and your most precious secrets. These days, many teens say you can have more than one best friend – maybe you hang out with one but confide in another.

Fifteen-year-old Cedric Mendes agrees that you can have more than one best friend.

"People who have just one best friend just follow the society

because the society thinks that you can have only one best friend, which means that people try to have only one," says Mendes, who goes to the O'Bryant. "This is not true, because you can have more than one best friend."

Anthony Henderson, 15, from the O'Bryant, knows that to be right. He says he has four best friends.

"You have the choice to have more than one best friend," says Henderson, "and talk to all of them at the same time." Carla Rodrigues, 16, says she doesn't get the concept.

"You can have only one best friend," says Rodrigues, who attends the O'Bryant. "The other friends that you have are considered as close friends, but not as best friends." ■

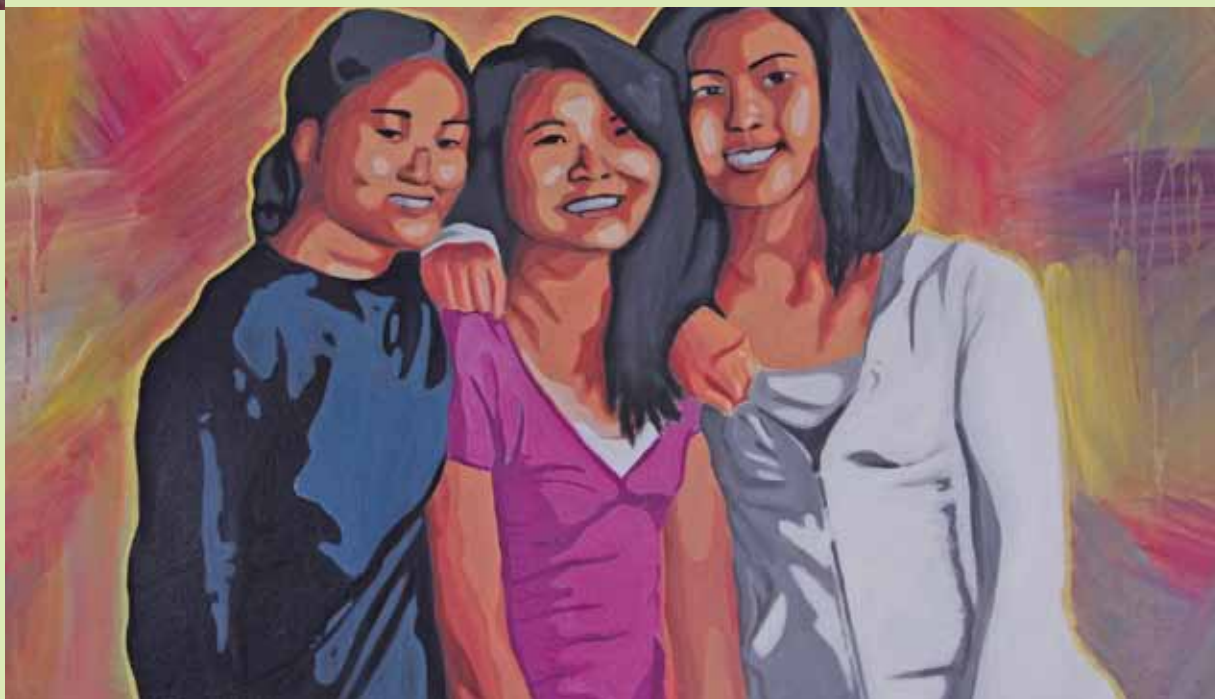
The mom vs. dad debate

By Lizandro Nogueira // Staff Writer

Caren Vaughn, a 16-year-old junior at Brighton High School, said she is closer to her mom than her dad. "The fact that I am a female does make an impact on my choice," said Vaughn. "I'm closer to her because she relates to me and knows what I go through as a teen."

Many teens have preferences when it comes to choosing who they feel more aligned with, mom or dad. Parents do what they can to acquire their kids' love. Teens say that you can't buy love or trust; you have to earn it with time and patience.

Guerlandy Laguerre, a junior at Brighton High, said she's more in tune with her mother because she's been with her longer. ■



AFH art by Eleanor Wong

**HIBO ABDULLAHI**

Celebrity crush? Ian Somerhalder.
iPhone 5 or Galaxy S III? iPhone 5.
Go to college or be rich? College.
Wish for the new year? Join lots of spring sports.

**ADAMAJAN BAH**

Celebrity crush? Liam Hemsworth.
NY or Cali? Cali.
iPhone 5 or Galaxy S III? Galaxy.
Wish for the new year? To be nicer.

**MARIAM BAH**

Celebrity crush? Chris Brown.
NY or Cali? Cali.
iPhone 5 or Galaxy S III? Galaxy.
Wish for the new year? Meet Chris Brown.

**BRIANNA BANNISTER**

Celebrity crush? Zac Efron.
Home school or high school? High school.
Go to college or be rich? Be rich. I'd rather win the mega lottery than go to college.
Wish for the new year? To pass my driver's license test.

**LA'NEECE BYRD**

Celebrity crush? Dricky Graham.
iPhone 5 or Galaxy S III? Galaxy.
Go to college or be rich? College.
Wish for the new year? To just have a good year.

**MOUCTAR DIAKITE**

Celebrity crush? Jessica Alba.
NY or Cali? NY.
iPhone 5 or Galaxy S III? Galaxy.
Go to college or be rich? College.

**BENSLEY S. DORNEVAL**

Celebrity crush? Kim Kardashian.
iPhone 5 or Galaxy S III? iPhone 5.
Go to college or be rich? College.
Wish for the new year? New Jordans.

**KELVIN FREIRE**

Celebrity crush? Emma Watson.
NY or Cali? Cali.
Go to college or be rich? Be rich.
Wish for the new year? A new laptop.

TEENS in Print

MEET THE STAFF

Boston **Teens in Print** unites the city's teens to create an outlet to inform, communicate, and provide **positive change through written expression.**

Write for Teens in Print!

➡ **SEND** your essays, letters, articles, commentaries, poems, pen-and-ink drawings or cartoons, and photos.

- ➡ EMAIL submissions to ric.kahn.jcs@cityofboston.gov
- ➡ Send them as either MS Word attachments or email messages.
- ➡ Provide your name, age, grade, and school. You must attend one of the Boston public secondary schools.

FORMAT your writing

- ➡ Double-spaced.
 - ➡ Times New Roman, 12-point font.
 - ➡ In the upper left corner, put your name, Contributing Writer, and a title or headline.
- Whatever you submit has to be

➡ **YOUR OWN CREATION.** We only print original work. Please write "this is my own creation" next to your name. You will not get your work back. **KEEP A COPY** for yourself.

➡ Teens in Print reserves the **right to EDIT** your work for length, content, or appropriateness.

Next issue: March/April 2013

Send submissions by mail to:
Boston Teens in Print
c/o WriteBoston
7 Palmer Street,
Roxbury, MA 02119

Contact us:

WriteBoston 617-541-2651

FEEDBACK !

➡ **Was it something we said? Or didn't say? Something with which you agree – or disagree?**

➡ Let Teens in Print know what's on your mind by sending us an email to ric.kahn.jcs@cityofboston.gov Please include your full name, neighborhood, and your date of birth (this won't be printed but is just to verify your age at the time of publication) and we may run your letter in an upcoming edition. **Thank you.**

➡ **To join the Teens in Print staff, please visit our websites and download the necessary paperwork.**

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about us

Boston Teens in Print is the only citywide youth newspaper written by and for Boston public high school and middle school students. Launched by WriteBoston and The Boston Globe in 2004, and published five times a year, TiP is a platform for student journalists, essayists, poets, and artists. It is delivered to Boston high schools, libraries, and community centers. But it is not just a newspaper — it is also, for urban teens, an afterschool program and summer journalism institute, both free. TiP gives a voice to Boston's youth, a voice that bellows from one end of the city to the other, across the boundaries of neighborhood, class, and ethnicity.

bostontip.com

**ILMA GOLEMI**

Celebrity crush? Channing Tatum.
iPhone 5 or Galaxy S III? iPhone 5.
Go to college or be rich? College.
Wish for the new year? Get all A's on my report card.

**RALPH T. KARNUAH**

Celebrity crush? Keke Palmer, Cat Deeley.
NY or Cali? NY.
Go to college or be rich? College.
Wish for the new year? Accomplish every goal I set. #DreamChaser.

**PERLA LARA**

Celebrity crush? Jacob from "Twilight."
NY or Cali? Cali.
Home school or high school? High school.
Wish for the new year? Wishes don't come true.

JALAYAH LAWRENCE

Celebrity crush? Michael Ealy.
NY or Cali? Cali.
iPhone 5 or Galaxy S III? iPhone 5.
Home school or high school? Home school – get all A's.

SHANIQUE LEWIS

Celebrity crush? Chris Brown.
iPhone 5 or Galaxy S III? A phone is a phone. It doesn't matter.
Go to college or be rich? College.
Wish for the new year? I hope that I can fly.

KRISTIANA MBRICE

Celebrity crush? Mario Casas.
NY or Cali? Cali.
Go to college or be rich? College.
Wish for the new year? Get a high score on the SAT's.

DENNIS MEMBAH

Celebrity crush? Taylor Swift.
NY or Cali? Cali.
Go to college or be rich? College.
Wish for the new year? Get honor roll for the rest of the year.

MORELIA MORALES

Celebrity crush? Jesus.
iPhone 5 or Galaxy S III? Galaxy.
Go to college or be rich? College.
Wish for the new year? To see my mom and sister in Guatemala.

MARMARIN NASIRAHMAD

Celebrity crush? Cristiano Ronaldo.
iPhone 5 or Galaxy S III? iPhone 5, of course.
Go to college or be rich? College.
Wish for the new year? Peace.

LIZANDRO NOGUEIRA

Celebrity crush? Ariana Grande.
iPhone 5 or Galaxy S III? Galaxy.
Go to college or be rich? College.
Wish for the new year? Jordans.

**SHANAE SADDLER**

Celebrity crush? Trey Songz, Chris Brown.
Home school or high school? Home school.
Go to college or be rich? College.
Wish for the new year? To become a better student.

**MUSSUBA SAMATI**

Celebrity crush? Ne-Yo.
Home school or high school? High school. I'm social.
Go to college or be rich? College!
Wish for the new year? Straight A's, leading to my dream career as a lawyer.

**JALENE SANCHEZ**

Celebrity crush? French Montana.
NY or Cali? NY.
Go to college or be rich? College.
Wish for the new year? That my mom can get the house she wants.

**PENDA SECK**

Celebrity crush? Chris Pine.
NY or Cali? NY.
Home school or high school? Home school so I can focus on my daily achievements.
Wish for the new year? Get home schooled and publish the books I am writing.

**TENNEH SESAY**

Celebrity crush? Big Sean.
Home school or high school? Home school.
Go to college or be rich? College.
Wish for the new year? I hope this year will be a better year.

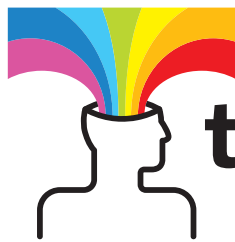
**JAMAL YOUNG**

Celebrity crush? Miley Cyrus, Hayden Panettiere.
iPhone 5 or Galaxy S III? Galaxy.
Home school or high school? High school.
Go to college or be rich? College.

**ALEXANDRA ZULUAGA**

Celebrity crush? Joseph Gordon-Levitt.
NY or Cali? Bawston.
Home school or high school? High school.
Wish for the new year? Health.





For teens, what is the purpose of school?

To help them overcome hardships

By Patricia Bello // Contributing Writer

You might think that figuring out the purpose of school is simple, but it is not. Is it just to get a job? Is it to grow as individuals?

Back in my country, Dominican Republic, I was taught that only by getting a good education would I be able to succeed. I remember being taught core knowledge only. I never learned analytical skills. How were we supposed to develop our minds that way? Maybe that is the reason why I never thought about the purpose of education. I was not used to analyzing arguments or topics. Therefore, I went with what everyone else said: “You need to go to college so you can get a job.”

After many years, through readings and discussions, I started to think of what the purpose of education is to me.

Now, having a clear idea of what education can do, I believe its purpose is for us to become smart human beings who are able to face difficulties and overcome them.

People who are smart are those who can make their own decisions as well as find solutions to problems – instead of causing them. ■

To make them more powerful

By Marina Boskovic // Contributing Writer

Going to school and being educated is something that makes us more powerful and forces us to think about our futures. At least, it should be like that.

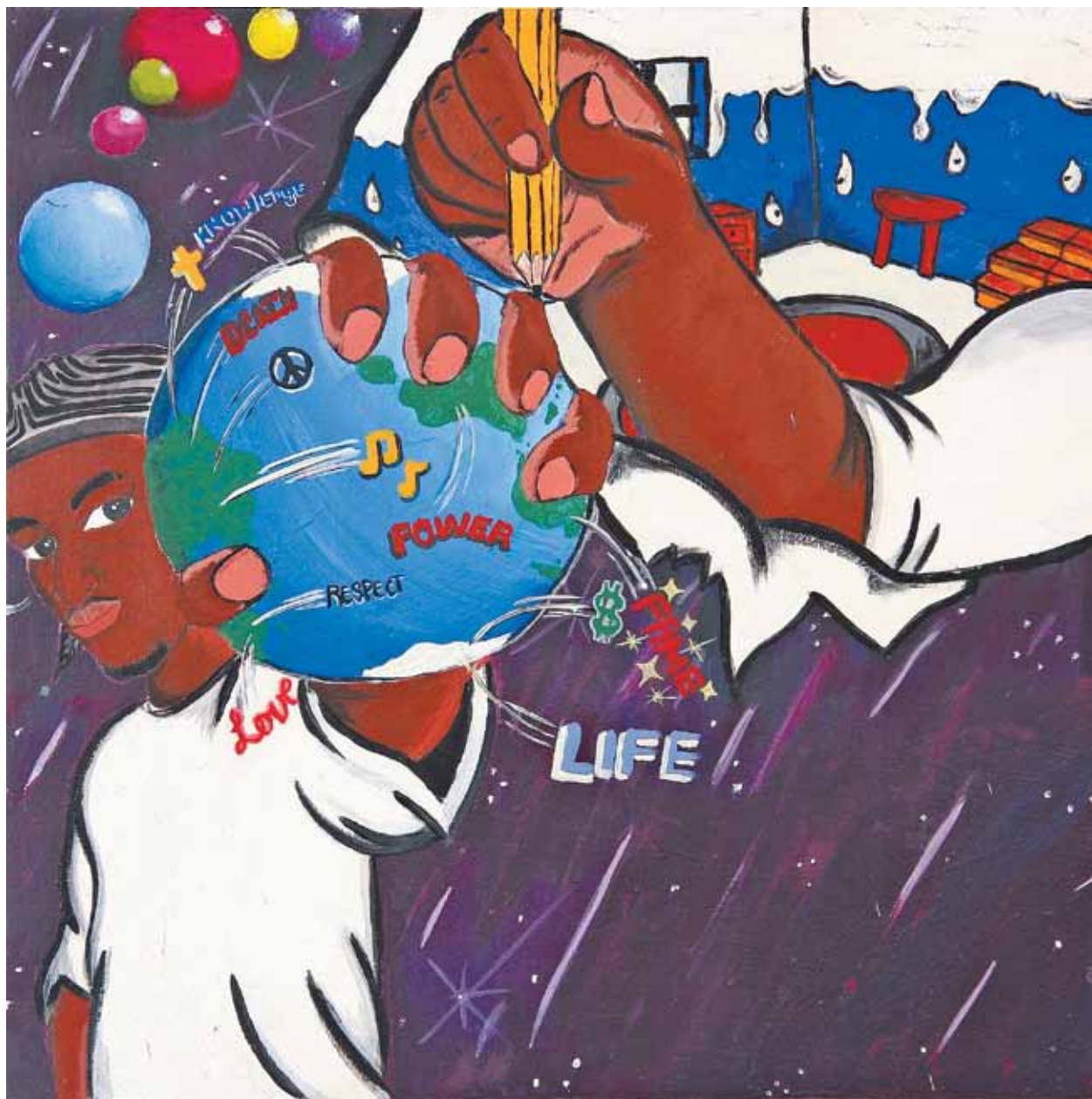
However, many teenagers do not take school seriously. In my opinion, the purpose of education is to develop skills which will make us learn to think critically, and make us powerful in changing our society by contributing our talents.

Each of us in this world is here for some reason. If we have talents, why should we waste them? Our talents are here to be contributed, change our society, and make it better.

With skills in math, we are making our economy more prosperous, and giving opportunity to others in finding jobs. Getting skills in science, chemistry, and biology is leading us to discover medicines for sicknesses. We can contribute in many different ways.

One way of reaching our goals is by learning what we are good at. One person’s talent cannot make any change, but if we all unite, we will get huge power in changing the world.

Education makes us more intelligent people with the ability to question our society, understand why inequality still exists, and make life more equal, joyful, and bright. ■



AFH art by Christian Dixon

To assist them in acquiring 21st century skills

By Rummah Himat // Contributing Writer

Why do we go to school? Is it to get an education? But what does it even mean to be educated? Is it to learn core knowledge? To know about history and world wars? Is it about developing 21st century skills and applying them in the real world? Or is it just simply getting a diploma and having a degree? Getting a good job and building a family?

I have worked in many different places and have been involved with many organizations. I never used the content that I learned in school. However, what I used are the skills that I developed. For example, last summer I worked at a local hotline. It was all about solving parents’ problems. The two skills that helped me the most were being an active listener and a critical thinker. That job required real-world skills.

We can’t have only core knowledge without developing 21st century skills because then we won’t be able to think beyond the classroom. We won’t be able to make connections between all those things that are around us. ■

AFH art by Derek Jesus



AFH art by Samantha Li

To prepare them to change the world

By **Maridenny Saldana** // *Contributing Writer*

Schools in the U.S. tend to be like a second home to students. Kids feel safe and comfortable there. They receive support from their teachers and mates that inspire them later to succeed in life. From school we get our doctors, lawyers, business people, etc. Moreover, students begin to build their independence and explore the world through knowledge, meaningful experiences, and hard work.

I believe that the purpose of school is to help students become independent so they can try to change the world for the better. When you gain confidence in yourself, you are able to make good decisions that benefit others, too. You can encourage others to follow your example, and help new generations to take responsibility for their educations and set goals for themselves.

In my first years of high school, I didn't pay attention to school too much, because I didn't find the sense of it. After I got more mature, I realized that many people my age who dropped out didn't know the reason why they did it. And even though they were talented people, they didn't have the time to discover it. Now I know that going to school is worthy, and I can see the fruits of my hard work.

Going to school and getting educated is the best thing that students have. It's the feeling of satisfaction, going everywhere and getting smarter every day, trying new things even if you fail on the first try.

Failing does not mean you won't succeed; it just means that you need more practice, and that you have the courage to admit that you didn't know something at first. ■

To guide them toward their full potentials

By **Jose M. Occellin** // *Contributing Writer*

Public schools were established to provide moral, social, intellectual, and even physical education and training for the masses. I believe every society needs an education system to achieve its full potential in all fields of life. Education builds intelligent citizens who can make wise decisions and take responsibility.

Based on what I have learned, I believe that the purpose of education is to teach young people about the importance of democracy, helping them to become independent, critical thinkers. By receiving a well-rounded education, many have been able to change our country and the world for the better.

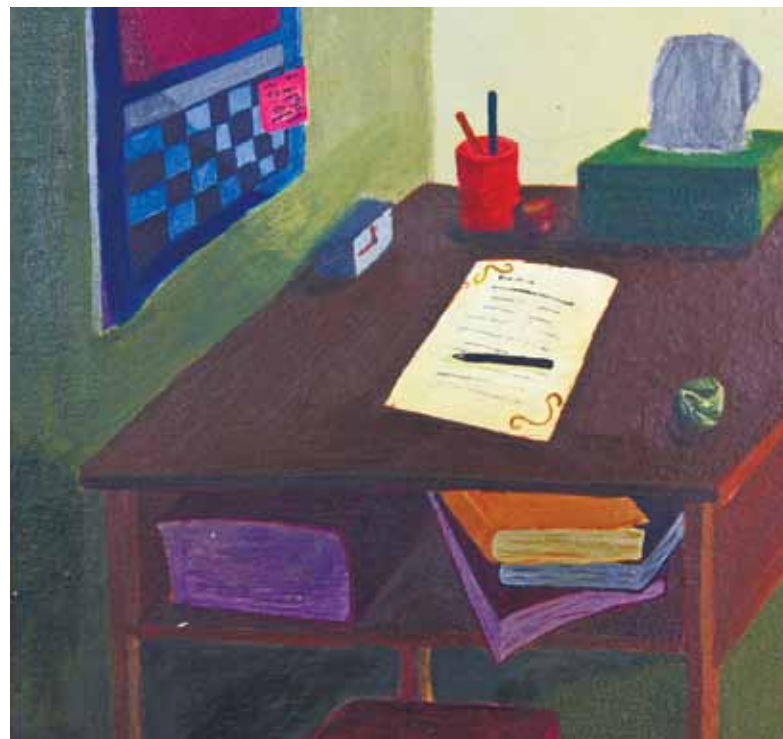
Character is the mental and moral qualities distinctive to an individual. You might be intelligent but if you do not have good morals, you might not be considered an educated person.

You can become anything you want to be in this society, come up with good ideas and good changes for the society, if your character is built.

I remember when I was growing up in Haiti. I was only given a core-knowledge education, sitting with 25 students in class and memorizing a word or idea without even understanding the concepts.

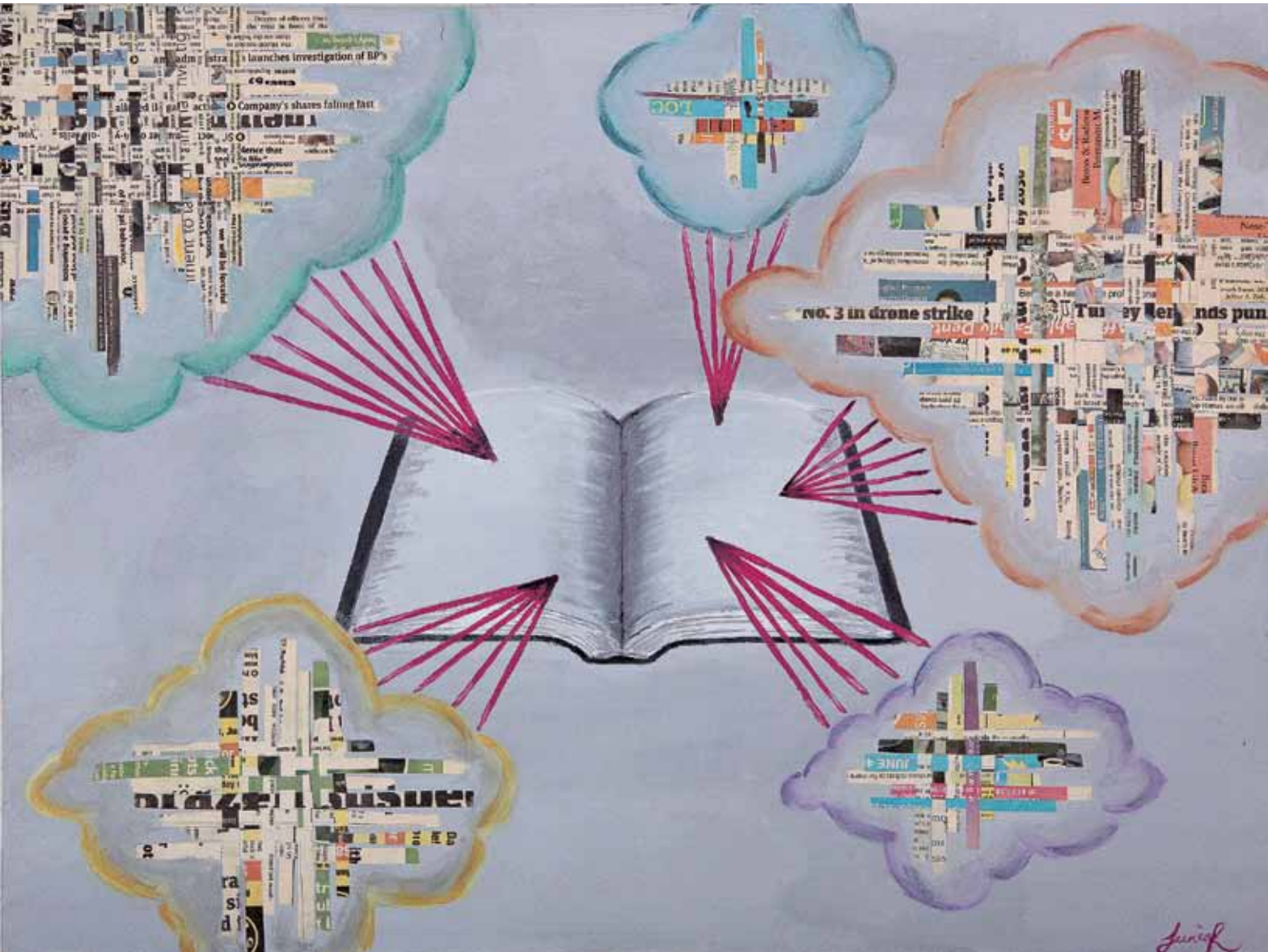
The purpose of school is significant to any and all societies. I believe if there were no schools to provide students with an education, there would be no leaders and defenders of societies. ■

AFH art by Xin Liu

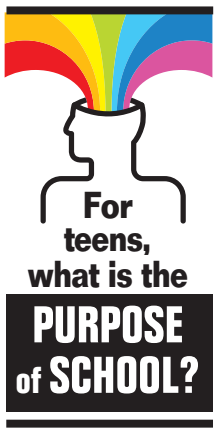


AFH photo by Christina Vivada





AFH art by Junia Ryan



To equip them to take on big challenges

By **Nelida Teixeira** // **Contributing Writer**

Education does not have a single purpose. In some cultures, kids learn since they are young that education is the key to one's success in life.

I believe that the purpose of education is for all to find out what they like to do and do their best at it. Doing something that is not your passion is like doing something that you are forced to do. For example, I see people doing what they don't like, and all they do is count the hours and wait for the weekend.

I used to have the same idea of education, that its purpose was to help find a good job and make money. But now I understand that life is not all about money.

Whatever your education is, it should make you a unique individual. It should provide you with an orientation that will help you deal with big challenges. It should allow you to find values that will guide you through life. It should make you a person who loves whatever you are doing, wherever you are, and whomever you are with. It should teach you what is important – how to live and how to die. ■

To train them as leaders

By **Georgina Louis** // **Contributing Writer**

Have you ever thought about where you want to be after you finish school? It's not only about what profession you want to take. Do you want to influence others towards the achievement of a goal? Are you a leader or a follower?

There's a reason we spend all these years in school. The purpose of school is to learn how to be active and engaged in your community and become a leader and make changes.

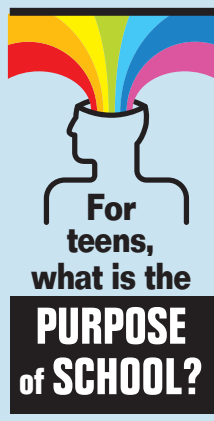
I used to think that the purpose of school was all about economics. I used to think that after college I must get a splendid job where I would gain a lot of money. What I didn't think about was, for what?

I believe that we should grow up caring about what happens in the world, caring about others. Then we would be taking good care of it, just like protecting your phone or computer – all those material things that feel so valuable.

In the U.S., school has allowed me to participate in community service and to create clubs that can help bring people together. With what we learn, we need to put it into action and show others the right way. We need to set the example and be passionate about it.

I want to be a leader that people can look up to. ■

PHILOSOPHICAL DEBATE



To pass on democratic values

By Eric Martins // Contributing Writer

I believe that education is the empowering key to equality because we live in a world with racism and prejudice. Living in a democratic society means having freedom, equality, and responsibility. You don't feel oppressed by anything.

The goal of school is to pass on democratic values because, without them, you are in a society where there are many injustices. Although America is a wealthy country, there are still many homeless people and criminals. No matter where you go, it is important to feel comfortable and know your rights so you can do a better job.

Living without injustice will only motivate you because you feel like you belong there and you are not an outsider. It will lead to a community where more people can feel equal and ready to pass on these democratic values. ■

To coach them to fight wrongdoing

By Celly Gomes // Contributing Writer

Education gives us knowledge of the world around us. It is not only important for survival; it is also a key to open many doors. When I say doors, I'm referring to experience, knowledge, discovery, the future, and more. The purpose of school is to find out your talents, focus on them, and benefit from them.

Students should be able to choose what they want to do, or what they are mostly comfortable with. They must think freely so that they will revolt against everything that is wrong with society – and that will make them change society. If we didn't have people who revolted, there would be more injustice and we wouldn't have freedom, rights, or privileges like we have today.

Parents should care more about what their kids want for themselves instead of choosing what they want them to become.

I am in school for a reason, which is to learn and find out what I like to do and not care about the money. I want to become a nurse. You still need to work hard, even though it is something you like, so you can be successful.

Today, I'm trying to get into college and realize my American dream. ■

True believers

By Jamal Young // Staff Writer

Kay-Anna Joseph, a 16-year-old junior at the Community Academy of Science and Health, says she's a faithful Christian.

"Sometimes," she says, "my friends [try to] tempt me to do things that conflict with my religion."

There are a million religions in the world. But what if those religious beliefs conflict with the lifestyles of your friends?

Teens often follow in their parents' footsteps religion-wise, which can make it hard to choose friends that have other ways of thinking.

Brittany Grayson, 16, takes a practical view of the issue.

"I am a Christian," says Grayson, from CASH. "But in today's age, you can't really find many teens devoted to their religion as much as they're supposed to be. This is why it doesn't really bother me if I find friends who are of other religions."

Daniel Ortega, a freshman at CASH, says he's not religious and is open to different kinds of friendships.

"I hang out with all sorts of people and I don't really care what religions they practice," says Ortega. "You have the right to do whatever you want." ■

Race, religion, and relationships

By Kelvin Freire // Staff Writer

Religion and ethnicity used to be important factors in deciding who a person would befriend or become closer to. According to teens, this is no longer the case.

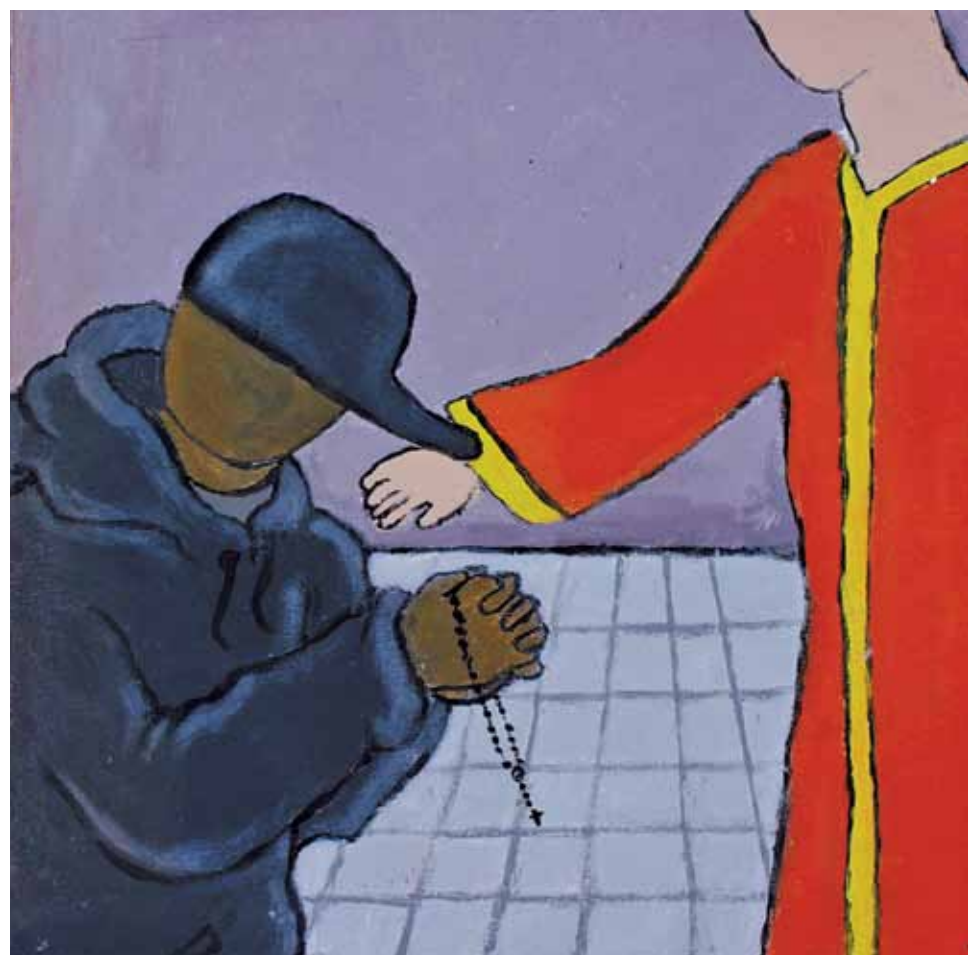
"I don't choose friends based on that because that is not how I was raised," says 16-year-old Myntah Morris, from Brighton High School. "I grew up around different ethnicities."

Daniel Henderson, 16, from Brighton High, says he is open to all kinds of people.

"It does not matter race or religion," says Henderson.

Jessica Phung, 17, from Brighton High, says she finds common ground with people of different backgrounds.

"I don't judge people based on race or religion," says Phung. "It depends on the person and how they act, their personality." ■



AFH art by Elson Fortes

The confidence quotient

By Ilma Golemi // Staff Writer

Confidence. For Klea Hima, 16, having that quality is really important. “I define confidence as believing in myself and supporting myself in every decision I make,” says Hima, who attends the John D. O’Bryant School of Math & Science. “I get confidence from the events that happen in life, or the people I am around.”

Being confident can help you become successful in the future. But building self-confidence is a hard thing to do. Many teens struggle to find a balance between being over-confident and taking too many risks, and having low self-esteem and not being willing to take any chances.

The first step to gaining self-confidence, teens say, is to set goals for your life, and try to achieve each of them.

Rosana Cardoso, 16, says confidence is the ability to do things without any problems.

“Being confident about yourself is important because it will help you get through life,” says Cardoso, who attends the O’Bryant. “The only way you can gain confidence is by pushing yourself to do things you don’t see yourself doing.”

Fifteen-year-old Yaritza Arias, from the O’Bryant, believes that confidence is having faith in something or in someone.

“If you don’t believe in anything, you have nothing to motivate you, nothing to strive for, and if you don’t believe in yourself, you will never make any progress in life,” says Arias. “You have to build your self-esteem and learn to believe in yourself and in your ideas.” ■

AFH art by Damon Butler



Gum cracking and other pet peeves

By Kristiana Mbrice // Staff Writer

Marilyn Machado, 17, says her pet peeve is when people crack their gum. “It irritates me and I can’t stand it,” says Machado, from Boston Community Leadership Academy. “A lot of people smack gum in my school and I tell them to stop, but it doesn’t work.”

Many teens have one or more pet peeves, little things people do that constantly bug them. Unfortunately, many don’t realize that they are bothering those around them. Sometimes this leads teens to become aggressive with people they love, including friends. When they complain, some might think that they are being mean, but they just cannot stand it no matter what.

Sixteen-year-old Chahana Patel says that her pet peeve is people who eat with their mouth open.

“I don’t want to see them chewing their food,” says Patel, from BCLA. “I can’t eat around them because it is disgusting and I can’t eat my own food.”

Once, when Patel was out to eat with friends, she says she had to move because someone next to her was chewing with an open mouth.

Luirka Rivera, 16, says that her pet peeve is when people laugh too loudly.

“It’s annoying,” says Rivera, who attends BCLA. Her reaction to this over-the-top laughter is: “These little kids these days.” ■



AFH art by Helen Yung

Slang is my thang

By Ralph T. Karnuah // Staff Writer

Jerica Em, 16, of Brighton High School, believes that it is unnecessary to use slang in any kind of communication when you have a large variety of formal words to choose from. Meanwhile, her schoolmate, junior Guerlandy Laguerre, feels it’s a much quicker and simpler way to exchange ideas.

The ever-growing use of slang by students is starting to find its way into their academic work.

“I’ve become so accustomed to using slang through social media and texting that I tend to unwarily write slang on my assignments,” Laguerre says. “But I always catch myself and correct it.”

According to a 2011 article in US News & World Report online, slangy text terms such as IDK, SMH, and BTW have become more common in student assignments all over the country.

Melanie Pizarro, 16, from Brighton High, believes that slang can be good because it allows people to communicate without having to deal with school grammar.

Still, she says, teens need to be careful when using certain terms. “A slang word could mean a lot of things,” says Pizarro.

Em says there’s no chance of slang creeping into her schoolwork. “I don’t text or communicate in any kind of way using slang,” Em says. ■

Overcoming obstacles

By Penda Seck // Staff Editor

The hopes of tomorrow and the great work to achieve these dreams that reflect pain on our faces become a storm of destruction whenever we start to think we are doing well. In other words, whenever we are on the right track to building up our lives there is always an obstacle that is ready to flip our worlds upside down.

When we try to find ourselves in school, for example, there is often a wall of disappointment between our goals and our accomplishments.

To overcome these barriers that we face is a great triumph in life because at the end of the day there is a concrete wall that blocks every desire inside us.

This year, after so many obstructions that have frustrated me, I started to discover who I am and what I want to become in life – an author and actress. I decided to start fresh and focus on school. But every expectation and plan that I have seems to be met by more obstacles.

Now I realize that all I am facing is a way to get me ready for life and to make me strong against those who don't want me to succeed. ■



AFH photo by Jennifer Thai

Dress to express

By Tenneh Sesay // Staff Writer

Fashion designer Betsey Johnson famously said: “Girls do not dress for boys. They dress for themselves and, of course, each other. If girls dressed for boys, they'd just walk around naked at all times.”

Who do you dress for?

Taika Lamy, 16, from Boston Community Leadership Academy, says she dresses for herself but sometimes for boys if she likes them.

Batouli Sheriff, 16, from New Mission High School, says she dresses for herself because she doesn't feel like she needs to impress anyone else.

“I don't dress for others because their opinions don't matter to me,” says Sheriff.

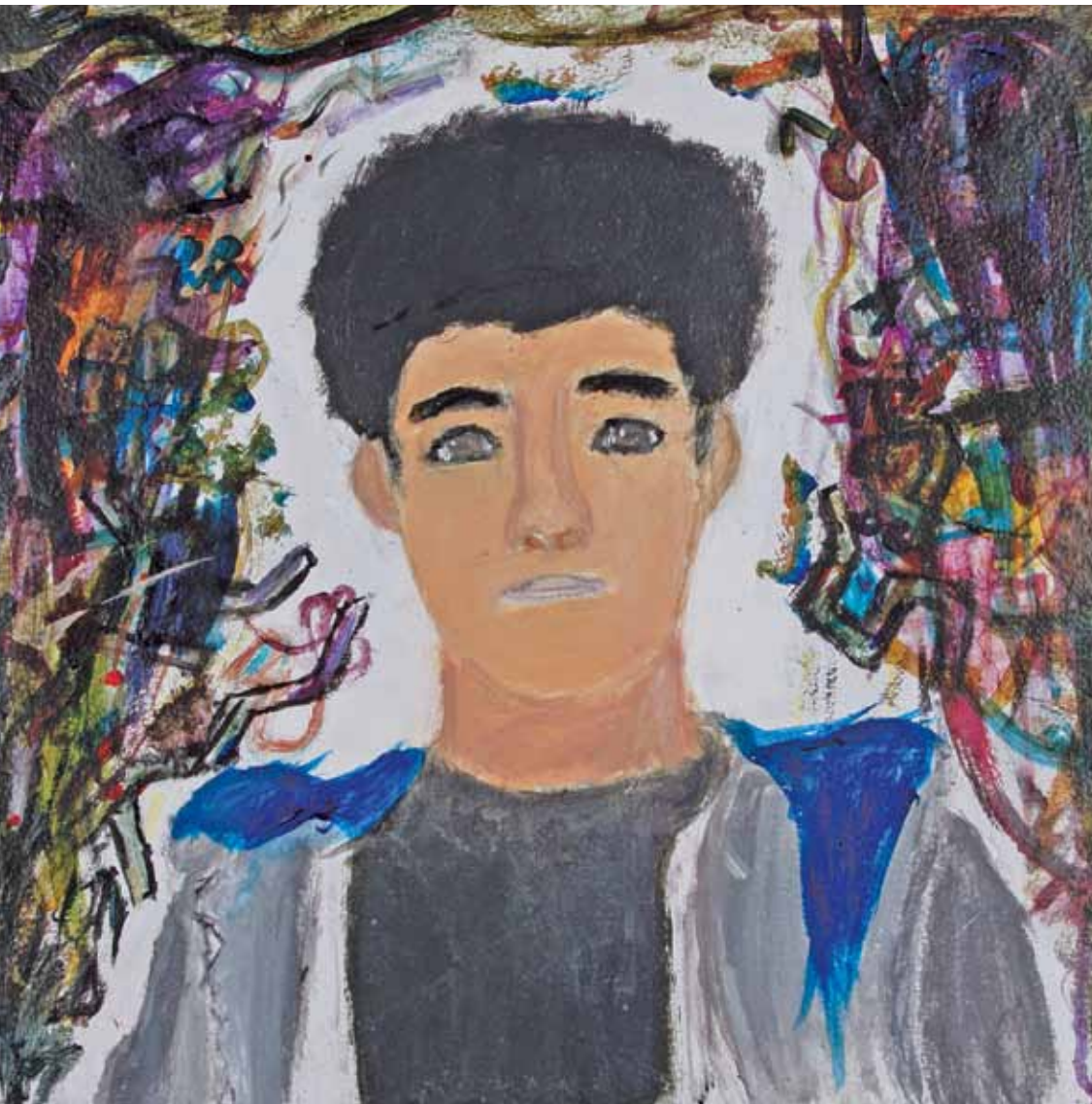
Mayaba Sillah, 14, from West Roxbury Academy, agrees.

“I dress for myself and not others,” says Sillah. “I wear what I feel like wearing.” ■

WHO
DO YOU
DRESS
FOR?



AFH art by Rodline Louijeune



AFH art by Daniel Martin

“Sherise: Blind Trust” by Shay Jackson

Was Carlos really out of the thug life?

By Gilda Pena // Contributing Writer

This book is about a young teen named Sherise who thought Carlos, a guy from school, was cute – and she was falling for him. What she didn’t know was that he liked her, too. But he was sure she would never look at him. The only problem Sherise had was that everybody kept telling her that he was no good, that he was a troublemaker, and that he was a thug. She was so confused because Carlos swore that he was out of the game.

Carlos was very thankful that Sherise did him a favor one day by taking him to a house to get some money. Since that day, it turns out, their love story began.

The only bad part of this was that they skipped seventh period and Sherise got detention. Even though Carlos didn’t get detention, he turned himself in because he didn’t want Sherise to be by herself. I think that was really sweet of him. That’s how you know he really liked her.

After a while, though, Sherise became mad at Carlos because he lied to her all the time. She just couldn’t be with him. But something unexpected happened. Sherise found out that, yeah, he was selling drugs, but he did it because he needed to make some payments for a car he stole a long time ago.

Sherise was feeling so bad because she knew it wasn’t right for Carlos to sell, but he was doing it because there seemed to be no other way. Then she wanted to make things better with him again.

I really recommend this book because it reflects real life. ■

I really recommend this book because it reflects real life.

“No Way Out” by Peggy Kern

Stuck on the streets

By Christopher Louis // Contributing Writer

I think the book is an incredible story. It tells you how life is on the streets and how quickly they can take you.

The kid in the story, a high school freshman named Harold Davis, wasn’t really bad, but he needed cash fast to help out the grandmother that he lives with. She had gotten sick and needed medical attention. Harold saw the bills and was shocked how much they were.

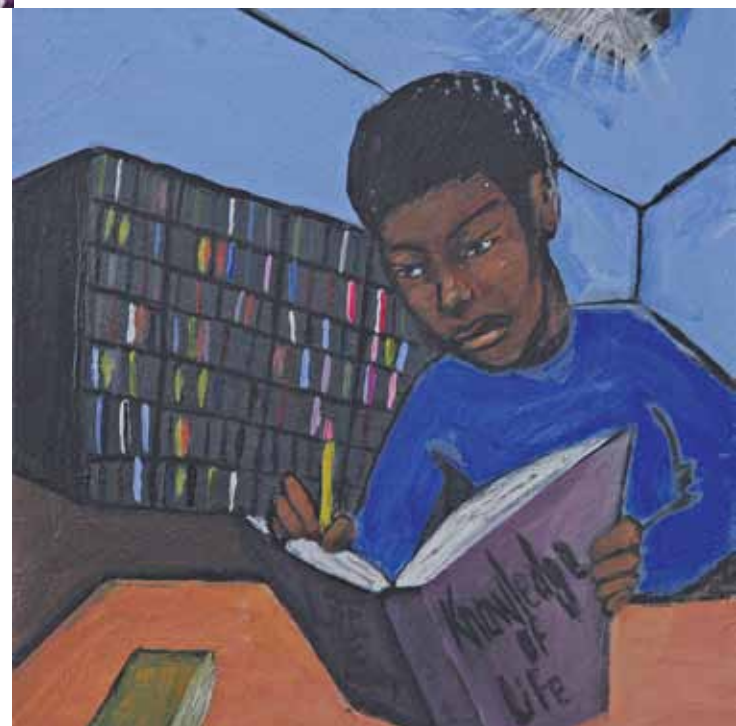
His grandma struggled to keep the house and take care of Harold, so she had very little cash. Then a social worker wanted to put Harold in a foster home, thinking it would be best for him since they couldn’t pay the bills.

Harold found work at a super-market, but the pay was puny. Harold had met this one man who sold drugs. He convinced Harold to sell drugs for him. He said it would be the best way to help his grandmother, that all he had to do was deliver the product and get the payment.

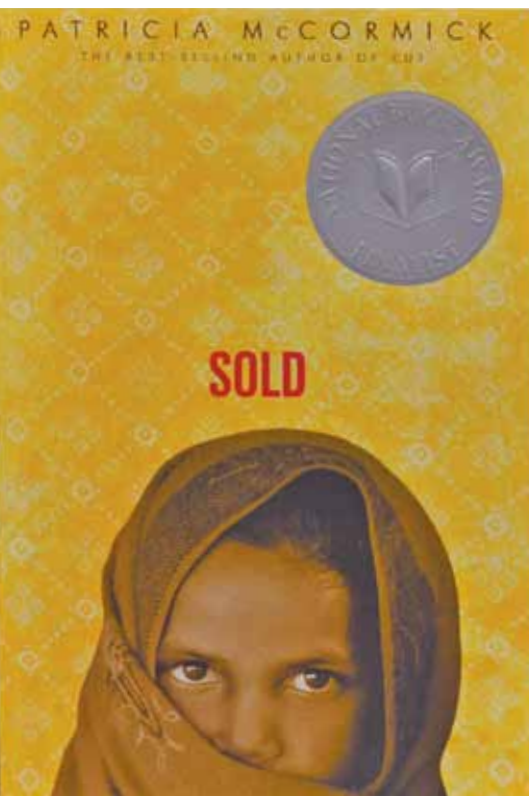
Once Harold got in the game, it was hard to get out. They knew all about him and threatened him if he told anyone or left.

I think this book is great. I give it five stars. It shows you that, eventually, there are other ways to handle things. Even though things may look bad, the world will tend to unfold as it should in the end. ■

Even though things may look bad, the world will tend to unfold as it should in the end.



AFH art by Richard Felipe



AFH photo by Michelle Nguyen

“A Child Called ‘It’: One Child’s Courage to Survive” by Dave Pelzer

Living with a mother he calls a monster

By **Kasandra Blanco Win** // **Contributing Writer**

The book is about a young boy named David who says he grew up in a terrible home with an awful mother. A mother, he says, who would abuse him and would turn punishment into discipline – hard, cold-blooded discipline.

Dave Pelzer, the author, wrote about himself as this child David, saying he was starved, forced to eat his own throw up, and put on a stove and burned because, to his mother, he was an “it,” not a human being.

“For months,” he wrote, “I slept under the breakfast table next to a box of kitty litter, but I soon learned to use the newspapers to my advantage. With the papers wrapped around me, my body heat kept me warm. Finally, mother told me that I was no longer privileged enough to sleep upstairs, so I was banished downstairs to the garage. My bed was now an old army cot. To stay warm, I tried to keep my head close to the gas heater.”

Later, he wrote: “For nearly ten days I had gone without food. I had just finished the dinner dishes, when Mother repeated her ‘you have two minutes to eat’ game. There were only a few bits of food on the plate. I felt she would snatch the plate away again, so I moved with purpose. I didn’t give Mother a chance to snatch it away like she had the past three evenings. So I grabbed the plate and quickly swallowed the food without chewing it. Within seconds, I finished eating all that was on the plate, licking it clean.

“ ‘You eat like a pig,’ Mother snarled.”

From the bottom of my heart, I give all my respect to Dave for being able to survive and to have the courage to share his life with the whole world. ■

“Sold” by Patricia McCormick

An interview with the novel’s protagonist

By **Nathalye Cruz** // **Contributing Writer**

Nathalye: Today we have a very special guest. Everybody please welcome the main character of the book “Sold.” Her name is Lakshmi.

(Crowd claps while Lakshmi walks in.)

Lakshmi: Hello. Thank you so much for having me here today on your show.

Nathalye: It’s so exciting having you here today. So I’ve read the book “Sold,” and I thought that it was very compelling. I also thought that the author gave us a very important lesson. Girls need to be careful. Human trafficking is very dangerous. Why don’t you go ahead and tell us your story.

Lakshmi: Well, I’m a 13-year-old girl. I live with my family in a small village in Nepal. I am very poor.

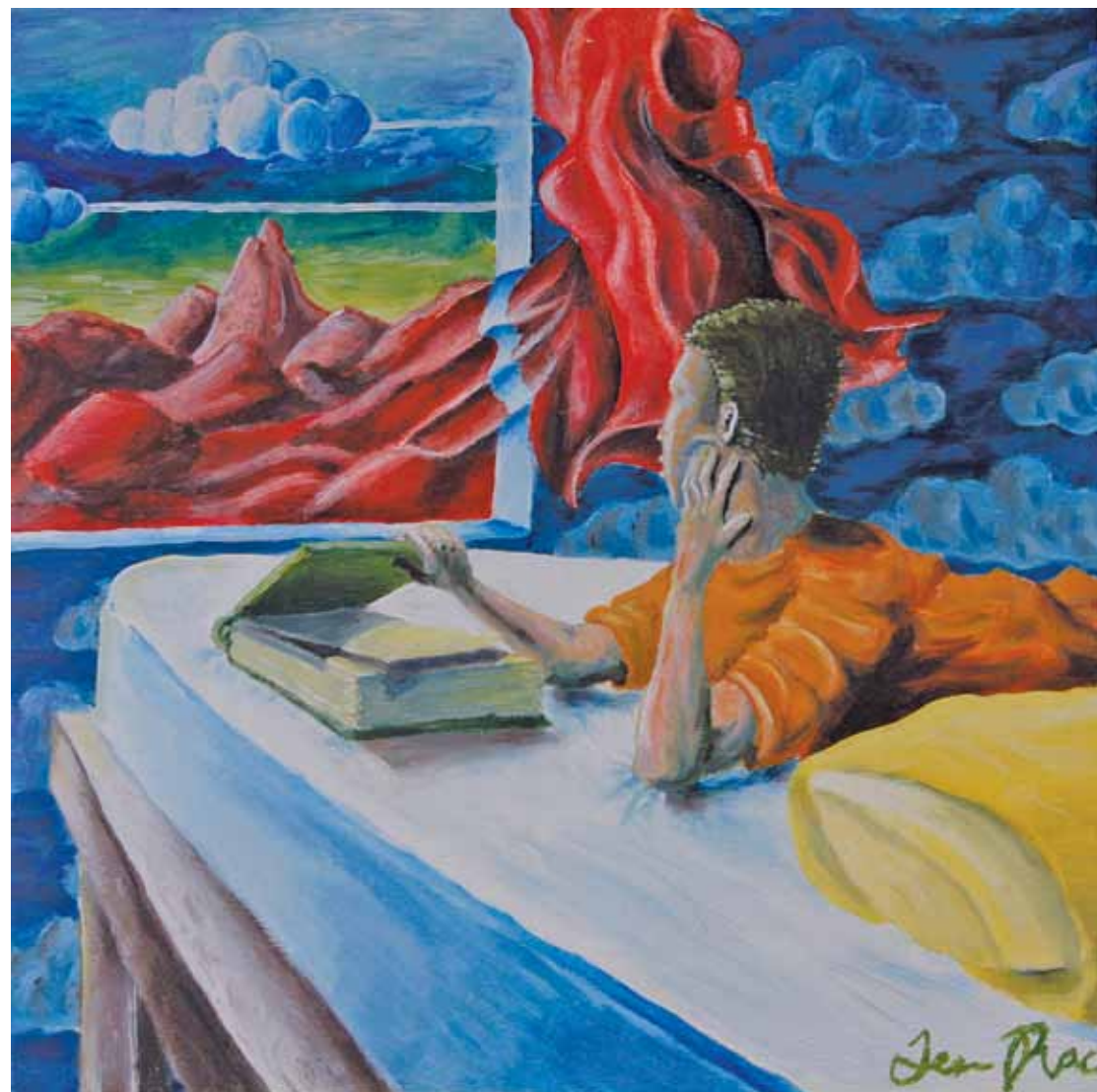
Nathalye: Why did your stepfather sell you into prostitution?

Lakshmi: Well, at first he believed that he was selling me to be a maid. But it turned out that the people he sold me to forced me to become a prostitute. The whole experience was very scary for me. I didn’t know what to do. I was afraid to try to escape because I was so unfamiliar with the land. I wasn’t home. I was in a country, India, where everything was different. My surroundings, the people, and the fact that I was being beaten made me scared. I thought, “What if they catch me trying to escape? What would they do to me, you know?”

Nathalye: Well, that’s all the time we have, folks. You can get the rest of the story in “Sold,” which is available in any book store for a good price. Thank you very much for coming Lakshmi. It was a pleasure to meet you in person.

Lakshmi: Thank you again for having me. It was a pleasure meeting you, too.

(Lakshmi walks away with a smile while the audience claps.) ■



AFH art by Jesse Racusen

All thumbs

When texting is a pain

By Jamal Young // Staff Writer

Ryan Alves, a 16-year-old who attends the Community Academy of Science and Health, says he's on his cellphone all day, every day.

"I have a touch screen phone and can text really fast on it," says Alves, "but when texting long messages my thumbs start to hurt, so I usually keep them short."

Cellphones are a fun and easy way to stay in touch with all of your friends and family, and they are also a convenient mode to update Instagram and Facebook.

But there is also a downside: Their use can cause texting tenosynovitis, better known as texting thumb.

"Text thumb is really a technologically enhanced case of repetitive strain injury," according to icewraps.net "associated with texting for extended periods of time....The nerves get irritated and inflamed, and the thumbs begin to hurt."

Adina Romain, 14, from CASH, says that she spends about six hours a day on her phone.

"In the morning, I wake up and check my messages. At school, I text a lot, and at night I make sure I have checked all my messages and updates," says Romain. "Sometimes, though, when I text a lot I do realize that my thumbs start to hurt, but I don't really think anything of it."

Nathalie Faublas, a junior at CASH, says that she doesn't have to worry about that ailment.

"I use my phone, but not all the time," she says. "I have heard that if you use your phone too much that you will get texting thumb, but I don't really care too much about it because my thumbs don't hurt at all." ■



AFH photo by Cynthia Ginetti

BOOK 'EM, DANNO



AFH photo by Michelle Nguyen

"I will not be the victim of someone else's mistake"

By Jalayah Lawrence // Staff Writer

A person in writing who influenced me is Elie Wiesel from the book "Night." He saw a lot of things that no child should have to see. I feel that he is strong because he had a lot of things happen to him but he was able to survive his time in Nazi concentration camps.

This made me look at some of the situations I went through and realize that my problems are not anything compared to his.

For example, three years ago my family and I took a trip to Canada. We were there for three weeks. I met an 18-year-old named Jim. I was hanging out with him when some people walked by. He said something to them because they were looking at him. Before I knew it, they had shot at him, and I ran like my life depended on it, because it did.

I strongly believe that things happen for a reason. I'm not saying what went down was a good thing. But I feel it really did show me that I just cannot meet someone and hang out because something bad could happen.

I now take better control of situations and make them my responsibility. I will not be the victim of someone else's mistake. ■



AFH art by Deanna Hillery

Greed

By Harriane Errie // Contributing Writer

Greed is one of the seven deadly sins. This one involves selfishness, deceit, urges, and cravings. It is basically the desire for materials, money, or any other things that can be gained.

Greed is unambiguous. Greed is compelling, overbearing. Greed can cause people to do the worst of things.

Greed: A 19-year-old girl passed away. At her funeral, there were a lot of loved ones, plus a lawyer to announce who got money or other items from her will.

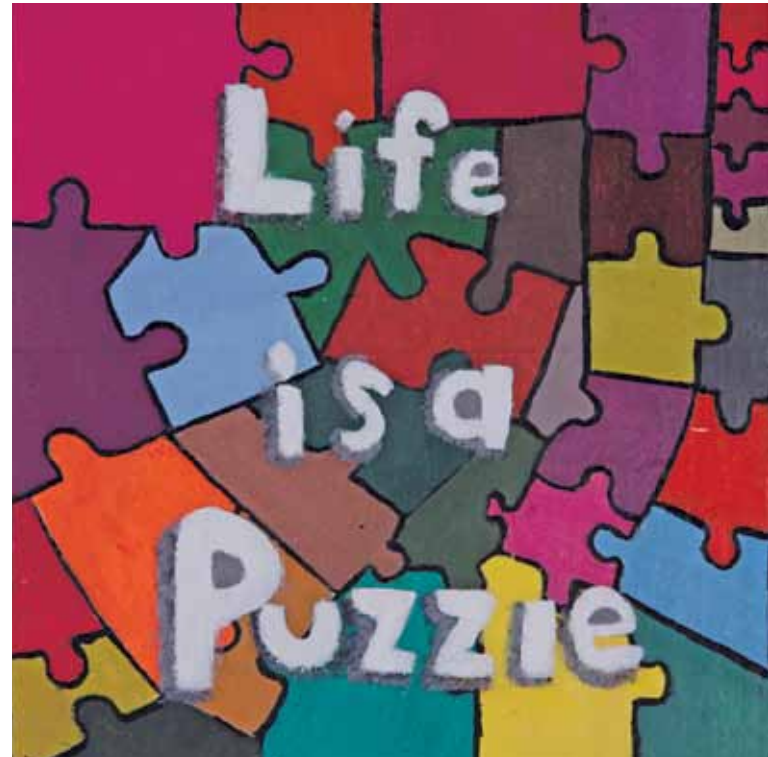
Her parents got her furniture and her life savings. Her boyfriend got her diary and her stuffed animals. He was so grateful to have the plush toys to make a memory of her.

Finally, the 19-year-old left her most prized possession to her sister. It was an extended Bible with prayers in the back and all her wishes.

At first, the sister was excited. But soon she grew a little angrier. She wondered why she'd only gotten "a book."

She was furious that her parents received the money and her sister's boyfriend got the stuffed animals.

She was overtaken by greed. Everyone else had been mourning the death of the 19-year-old, but all the sister cared about was the stuff in the will. ■



AFH art by Patricia Pimentel

Confusion

By Erick Guevara // Contributing Writer

Confusion is when you don't understand something in the place you are at.

For example, one time that I felt confusion in my life was when I was new in the fifth grade. I was curious to know people and meet new friends. Some accepted me for what I did and how I acted; others didn't.

One person who caught my eye was a girl named Katherine. She had green eyes. She was a very nice person to hang out with. We treated ourselves with respect. But one day she told me that she had a boyfriend. I was so confused because I just wanted to be friends. ■

Jealousy

By Jonathan Martinez // Contributing Writer

Jealousy is the feeling of watching someone have what you crave. This can be associated with close friends, partners, even family members. The desire of wanting something or not getting the attention you want causes acts of jealousy. These can lead to anger.

Last year, my friend got jealous. I used to chill with him after school every day. I'm talking about Monday through Friday.

Then I got a girlfriend and things changed. I started hanging out with her more than him. One day, I didn't want to hang out with her, so I asked my friend if he wanted to chill and come with me to the mall. He replied: "Why don't you ask your girl?" I got so mad.

I was kind of laughing, though, because why would he get so jelly? That episode made me realize that friends can get jealous. ■



My joy you cannot squish

By Mariam Bah

My joy you cannot squish.
I am a joyful being,
Some say I have too much of it.
I love a smile, a joke, a gag, a smirk of irony,
The ache of a well-laughed tummy.
Chuckle as I go down life's roads, singing excitedly.
Joy is something to embrace no matter the consequences.

On and on joy goes trail to trail with me.
Pshaw me if you wish,
My joy you cannot squish.
Life's rotten deeds have tried.
I look past that day,
I choose joy for all time.
Joy comes from the choice to love your life each day despite
The rocks in the motorway.

I like to say that those who matter don't mind.
So love them and those who mind, too.
Bird in the hand is grand,
I like the one in the bush, too.
If the glass is half full, fill it up and share.
There is always room for one more,
His friend, too.
Joy to the world, let heaven and nature sing loudly.

Cast this aside if you wish,
My joy you cannot squish.
Circumstance gave it a try. I want to be a soul
Who finds joy where the invisible leave it behind.

Let joy come in.
I promise you'll find it contagious.
Spreading a joy plague through the circle of life.
It could be your new calling for healing.
Bounce like Tigger,
Walk with me a while.
#Don't squish your own joy.

Real home

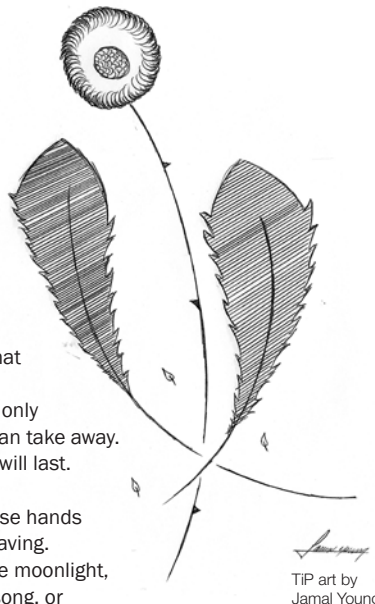
By Mariam Bah

Do you know
Where your real
Home is?
It's in
Your heart.

Who you are and what
You believe in is
Your real home, the only
Home that no one can take away.
The only home that will last.

There is nothing these hands
Hold that is worth having.
They cannot hold the moonlight,
Or the melody of a song, or
The beauty of love.
Only the heart can hold such things.

Time takes everything.
But your heart, your faith, and your character
Do not belong to time.
So build
Your home strong.
Then you will be safe.
And you will never be alone.



The way

By Shanae Saddler

It's the way you shut me down
It's the way you're picking two different sides
It's the way I think some of my feelings don't count
It's because you think
It's because I think
It's because we think
I want to be PERFECT!
It's how I didn't share how I really felt
It's how I was too scared to let go
It's how bad I want to cry
It's ALL because I'm
1, 2, 3, 4

So expect me to cry and whine
5, 6, 7, 8
So I will not make the perfect decisions
9, 10, 11, 12
And may want to act a little more mature
13, 14, 15, 16

It's because I'm all of me
All at the same time
It's all gone
It's all erased
The childhood intellect
It's hidden behind my façade
It's all treasures
Why did I hide?
Why did I grow up?
Why did I separate?

The words
MOTHER
DAUGHTER
In my mind
Can I open up?
Can I tell you all of it?
My dreams
My plans
My future
Can I believe that you will
Never
LEAVE?
Will I ever be like you?
Will you hold my hand through my
FUTURE?

I wish you held me in your arms
And whispered
IF YOU
FALL
I
WILL
CATCH
YOU
I have matured
I have dreams
I have a plan
But I need you

