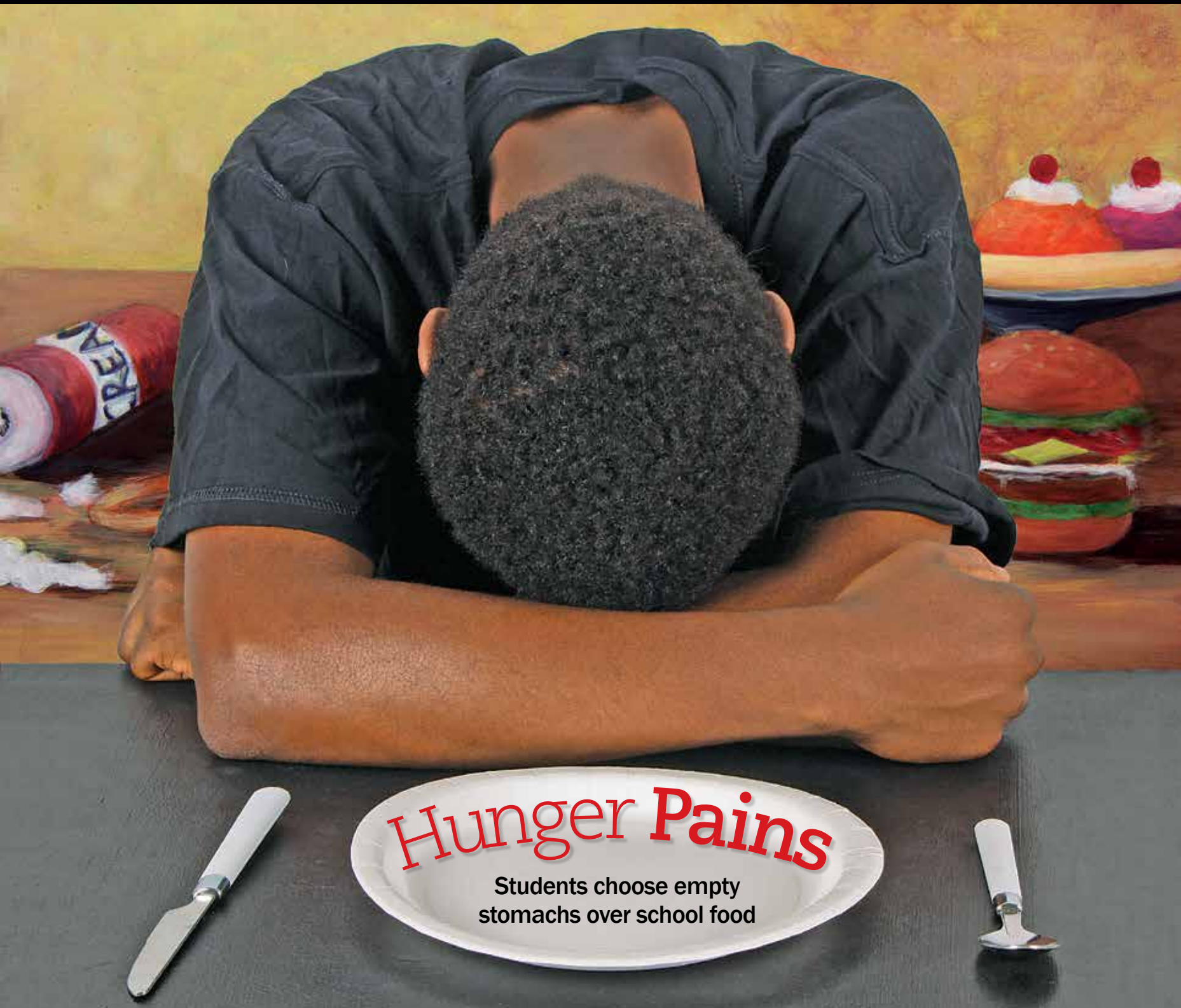


# TEENS **in** PRINT BOSTON

BOSTON TEENS IN PRINT SEPT/OCT 2013™



## Hunger Pains

Students choose empty stomachs over school food

HOOT DUNNIT? **PAGE 5** ■ HAIR APPARENT **PAGE 22** ■ SILENT STADIUMS **PAGE 24**

BOSTON TEENS IN PRINT is produced through a partnership between *The Boston Globe* and *WriteBoston*

## CONTENTS

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AFH art (clockwise from top) by Cassandra Lattimore, Nicole Baldner, Savanna McKay and photo by Miguel Fitzpatrick

COVER: AFH photo by Jennifer Thai, AFH painting by Kitauna Parker

### The injustice system 8

Not letting go of the Trayvon Martin case.

### Personality trades 14

Concealing the demons within.

### Bad connection 16

Loving that cellphone silence.

### Space face 19

It means I want to be alone.

### Cosmetology cool 22

Get your makeup tips online.

### The day the music died 23

Rock radio is hard to find.

### Celtic slide 24

Piercing the truth.

### sections

|                        |       |
|------------------------|-------|
| NEWS FEED.....         | 4     |
| CITY LIFE .....        | 5     |
| WASSUP IN SCHOOL ..... | 6-7   |
| ON POINT .....         | 8     |
| PICTURE THIS .....     | 9     |
| HEALTH IS WEALTH ..... | 10-11 |

|                        |       |
|------------------------|-------|
| MEET THE STAFF.....    | 12-13 |
| CULTURE CLUB .....     | 14-17 |
| FRIENDS & FAMILY ..... | 18-19 |
| RELATIONSHIPS .....    | 20    |
| FASHION FIVE-0 .....   | 21-22 |
| A&E .....              | 23    |
| THE SPORTING LIFE..... | 24    |

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AFH photos by Tatiana Ware, Sean Selter, and Jane Carper

# Hunger Pains

*Students choose empty stomachs over school food*

**By Andrew-Dave Simpson // Staff Writer**

Schooltime hunger. That aching feeling in your stomach that discourages you from wanting to do anything until you refuel your energy.

Then, having to find the limit of a mathematical sequence, figure out the molarity of a complex substance in chemistry class, remember the major conflicts of the 18th-to-early-19th century, and ruminate on why this book doesn't actually have anything to do with the killing of a mockingbird – all while the distracting and sometimes painful vacancy in your stomach urges you to eat something.

Many Boston public high school students go through this every day, complaining that school meals are unappetizing – even if they're now free for all students.

For starters, though advocates say there is a link between good nutrition and

good academics, many teens who rely on Boston Public Schools food to power them through the day say morning is such a scramble that they don't have enough time to gulp down cafeteria breakfasts. Meanwhile, with 78 percent of students having been eligible for free or reduced-price meals due to income, according to BPS, teens say they are not able to grab a good breakfast at home given tight family budgets, not to mention constant T delays.

Oliver Prudent, 15, a junior at the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science, talked about the feeling of being in class without a breakfast in his system.

"My stomach would hurt, and I would put my head down," he said.

In class, Simone McLaren, 17, would sometimes find herself daydreaming about a decent meal.

"By third period," said McLaren, who attends the O'Bryant, "I was only thinking about food and how I wanted to get out of there."

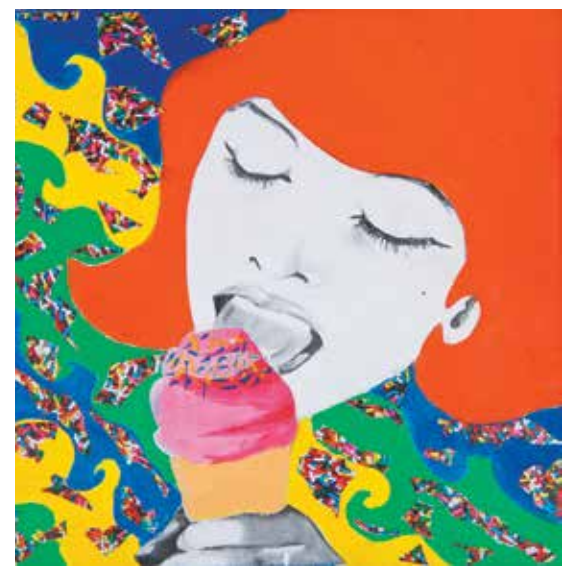
Student criticisms about school food – which has to be mass-produced on time and on budget – have been around as long as there has been cafeteria pizza that tastes like cardboard.

Over the years, BPS says it has upgraded school meals by adding more fruits and vegetables and tastier and healthier entrees; being in the vanguard of school districts purging ammoniated "pink slime" from their ground-beef inventories; better synchronizing food production and delivery so that dishes stay hot and flavorful; and generally putting a more sophisticated touch to its overall food preparation.

The school system also has pushed back against past allegations that it was storing foods past their expiration dates, insisting that students were not endangered.

"All of the meals we offer meet the nutrition requirements set by the [US Department of Agriculture] Food & Nutrition Service to support children's healthy growth and development," BPS says on its website.

Still, students at the O'Bryant, for exam-



AFH art by Destiny Young

ple, described lunchtime chicken that was dry as a bone and beef stew that looked like it was one solid clump of grossness.

Teens from other schools have voiced similar gripes, including those from Community Academy of Science and Health, Madison Park, and Boston Latin Academy.

"I don't really eat my school's lunch," said Hector Fajardo, 16, from the O'Bryant, who dines on a granola bar instead.

Some teens said that, never mind the recent focus on obesity, counting extracurricular activities they could go more than 18 hours between meals.

School food is apparently so unappealing that some teens said they would risk the wrath of teachers by sneaking snacks into class.

For them, school has become a never-ending battle between starvation and detention. ■

**"By third period, I was only thinking about food and how I wanted to get out of there."**

## Smart food

The US Department of Agriculture cites the many benefits of young people having a full belly to start the school day:

- They attend classes more often than those running on empty;
- They are more likely to have improved math, reading, and standardized test scores;
- They are better behaved and get along more smoothly with their peers. ■

# Critter cruelty

## Product testing saddens teens

By Yasmary Peguero // Staff Writer

Jose Feliz, 15, from Roslindale, is surprised that some of the products that he uses daily are tested on animals first to see if they are safe for humans.

"It is kind of sad how million-dollar companies could hurt animals to test new products," says Feliz.

According to The Humane Society of the United States, products ranging from shampoo and cologne to lipstick and nail polish are commonly tested on animals.

"It's estimated that thousands of mice, guinea pigs, rats, and rabbits suffer and die in these tests every year in the US alone," says the Humane Society, describing consequences such as convulsions, blindness, and paralysis.

As an alternative, the Humane Society says companies can use ingredients that are already known to be safe.

Some scientists, however, argue that eliminating animal testing would halt innovation, meaning improved ways to fight things like dry skin and dandruff would not be developed.

Tulia Farias, 15, from Excel High School, says that so many practical goods are tested on animals that it's hard to avoid them.

"We are kind of forced to use them, regardless," Farias says.

Charyn Gonzalez, 14, from Roxbury, says she will look into a company's testing history before she uses its merchandise.

"Where do people find the heart to do that to animals?" she asks. ■



AFH art by Ammany Ty



## Boston bomber guilty as charged?

### Some teens skeptical

By Shanique Lewis // Senior Editor

Even with overwhelming evidence against him — including his own reported zealous admissions — some teens are still not convinced that Dzhokhar Tsarnaev is guilty of the Boston Marathon bombings that left three dead and more than 260 injured. His older brother and alleged co-conspirator, Tamerlan, 26, was killed in the aftermath that resulted in the capture of Dzhokhar, a/k/a Jahar.

Tayla Spencer, 19, from Dorchester, still doesn't think the evidence is solid.

"How did they know that it was them?" Spencer asks. "Do they have video footage of them planning and acting-out the whole thing?"

In this high-tech age of instant street surveillance snapshots, some teens are demanding visual lockdown proof before they are ready to take somebody's word about things.

As one Twitter user using the hashtag "free-

jahar" wrote: "da lack of evidence they hve mkes me angry bc they r meant to be pros @ investiga-tions but no they investigate like 2 yr olds smh."

In addition, there is a set of young females

who believe that Dzhokhar — 19 years old at the time of the bombings — is simply too good-looking to have committed such a ruthless act.

La`Neece Byrd, a senior at Boston Community Leadership Academy, is not among them.

"He's a terrorizer," says Byrd. "He wanted to see Boston suffer. But something good came out of it. The citizens of Boston were able to unite as one and stay strong." ■

**"How did they know that it was them? Do they have video footage of them planning and acting-out the whole thing?"**

# Catcall it off

## Stop the street hooting and harassment, teens say

By **Genesis Coplin Marti** // Staff Writer

"Excuse me beautiful, can I talk to you for a minute?"

"Hey girl!"

"You got a boyfriend?"

All a girl wants to do is get to her destination without being harassed, young women say. But nowadays, they say, they can't even go to the corner store without being heckled. The taunting takes place in many neighborhoods, teens say, and can grow more belligerent in areas near liquor stores.

"Being approached by a guy on the streets can really be a turnoff and I consider it to be creepy," says La`Neece Byrd, a senior at Boston Community Leadership Academy. "I much rather be left alone."

Byrd says that when she ignores the hooting, some men become more verbally aggressive.

Some guys have progressed to touching. Shayla Carranza, 16, from BCLA, says she was walking one day when she felt someone grab her elbow while trying to hit on her.



AFH photo by Dominic Duong

"I felt so uncomfortable," she says. "I told the dude, 'Can you not?' I had to raise my voice because I felt so creeped out."

Ivana Guity, 16, from Boston Arts Academy, says that she doesn't respond to the come-ons.

"I don't say anything back," she says, "because if I do I would...make guys believe I'm easy."

Instead, she says, she puts on her headphones and keeps walking.

"I just want to go where I'm headed," she says. ■

# For Lance

By **Eboni Owens** // Staff Writer

Light Skin. Nice eyes. Bright smile. Fifteen years old, he was just starting his life.

"That was my baby," Towanda Kellam, Lance "Duke" Hartgrove's mother, was quoted as saying after the death of her son last summer.

The flashpoint, as often happens these days, was a festering Facebook feud that ended on the street. Hartgrove's days were ended by a stab wound to the chest, piercing his left lung and heart, allegedly committed by Rula Jones, 19, that caused Hartgrove to collapse and die in a parking lot on Malcolm X Boulevard, in Roxbury.

At press time, Jones and his brother, IIm Jones, 20, who allegedly assisted him in the attack, were both awaiting trial on manslaughter charges, according to the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office.



AFH art by Beatrice Agosto

This young teen, Hartgrove, of Dorchester, was very much known in the city of Boston. He got along with most people who came his way, and was friends with teens from across many neighborhoods.

"He is a good boy to be around and he is caring and a loving person," said an 18-year-old from Dorchester whose name – like other teens in this article – is being withheld for safety reasons.

Hanging out and living every moment like it was his last was Hartgrove's way of the game, teens say. Always around to put a smile on someone's face.

"Even on your worst day," said an 18-year-old from Dorchester.

In the little time Hartgrove was here, he made his imprint on people's hearts.

"He's really cool," said a 16-year-old from Dorchester. "And he's not one of those people that tries to check you [out] if he doesn't know you. He's an awesome person to hang out with."

After Hartgrove's death, teens and others tattooed his name on their bodies. They put up visuals on YouTube. They recorded songs in his honor.

Hartgrove will always live in these streets of Boston, teens say. Every July 10, the anniversary of his death, will be a hard time for them. ■

## Convenience store inconvenience

By **Jennifer Le** // Staff Writer

A group of students crowds the door to a Brighton convenience store in frustration, urgently waiting for the owner to let them in. Kenshey Johnson, 16, from Boston Community Leadership Academy, says he tried to enter but there were other teens already there.

"I felt confused when he kicked me out, when all I just wanted to do was buy some chips and a juice," says Johnson about the incident last year. "I was also mad because I really wanted to eat some snacks and I was forced to wait outside until the kids were done."

As another school year starts, many teens again don't feel trusted, in part due to unwritten rules – and sometimes written signs – that only allow a certain number of them in a business at one time. Just because some young people shoplift doesn't mean all of them should be branded as troublemakers, teens say.

"It's stereotypical and judgmental because before you go into a store they already have an assumption of how you are and it's not right," says 16-year-old Markiyah Bullard, from BCLA.

Bullard suggests that storeowners use cameras instead of their own critical eyes to capture the offenders.

Clerk Bao Tran, at the Fields Corner Store, in Dorchester,

**Just because some young people shoplift doesn't mean all of them should be branded as troublemakers, teens say.**



AFH photo by Emily Tieu

says he uses cameras but they can only do so much to protect a shop's livelihood.

"When I feel like there are too many kids in the store and they're too loud I ask them nicely to leave," he says. "A lot of kids steal. I would catch them and they would be embarrassed and not come back."

MD. Mainul Islam, a clerk at the Fields Corner Supermarket, says he has had to call police several times a month to report stealing by large groups of youth.

"I don't want troublemakers in my store," says Islam. "The parents and the community should take care of the children and teach them better, to not steal and make good decisions." ■

# Freshman orientation

By Digna Castro // Staff Writer

*Dear Freshmen,*

The transition from middle school to high school isn't always easy. You have to deal with academics, home situations, and relationships – and somehow balance all this and get through high school with passing grades. Here's some advice:

**Put your academics before everything else.** In high school there will be drama but don't let it get to you. Your grades are more important than everything going on around you. You don't want to let your grades slip away because soon it will be too late and your GPA won't look so great. This will catch up to you when you apply to colleges in the future.

**Don't give into what others are doing.** It sounds cliché but it's true. If the people around you are careless about their academics, you are bound to end up like them. Try your best to be your own person.

**Finally, don't procrastinate.** In middle school you probably got away with waiting until the last minute because you were able to catch up with your work later. But if you do this in high school the quality of your work will be very poor. Also, teachers will notice; they're not as easy on you as they were in middle school. You're on your way to adulthood, anyhow. Just complete your assignments before the last minute so you'll be free of stress.

Sincerely,

*A Concerned Junior*



AFH art by Jourdan Freeman

# Students dig the buildOn experience

By Jamal Young // Staff Writer

Despite hours spent in the hot desert sun making cement bricks, digging through the hard-cracked ground, and manipulating steel bars to reinforce a school's foundation and infrastructure, students from Boston Community Leadership Academy, Community Academy of Science and Health, and Excel High School were still smiling.

This year, a group of more than 20 students from select Boston schools traveled to Senegal for some eight days in June to help construct a school as part of the buildOn program.

"The work was intense. But it all paid off when we saw the villagers' smiling faces," said Fabiola Michel, 17, who attends CASH.

The nonprofit organization buildOn allows teens and adults to help spread education throughout the world by erecting schools. So far, buildOn says it has helped put up over 520 schools in developing countries.

"This is the best experience I've ever had," said Ngoc Vu, a 17-year-old student from Excel. "The feeling you get when you are helping people is the best feeling in the world."

To prepare for the job, volunteers had to go through various workshops throughout the school year, including volunteering at a homeless shelter and cleaning parkland.

"The workshops were very fun, and they helped us get involved with the community," said Manica Thelusca, 17, who attends CASH.

After hours on the work site in Senegal, students were allowed to explore the village. During this time, they could get henna tattoos, play games with the local children, wash clothes, and take showers.

"The bond that we built with the villagers was unbreakable," said Michel. "This was definitely a once-in-a-lifetime experience that I will cherish forever." ■

*Jamal Young was a participant in the buildOn program.*

## Beyond academics

*For college bound, extracurriculars provide an extra boost*

By Ligia Zayas // Staff Writer

Good grades and a sign of interest in a school aren't enough to get into college. Colleges and universities seek well-rounded students who can balance academics with other activities.

"[Softball] looked like fun and it would help me get into college," says Rebecca Santiago, 17, from Excel High School. "I think activities are a big deal to colleges."

For example, locally, The College Board ranks extracurricular activities second on Merrimack College's list of important non-academic factors in gaining entry. At Bentley University, extracurriculars are number three, The College Board says.

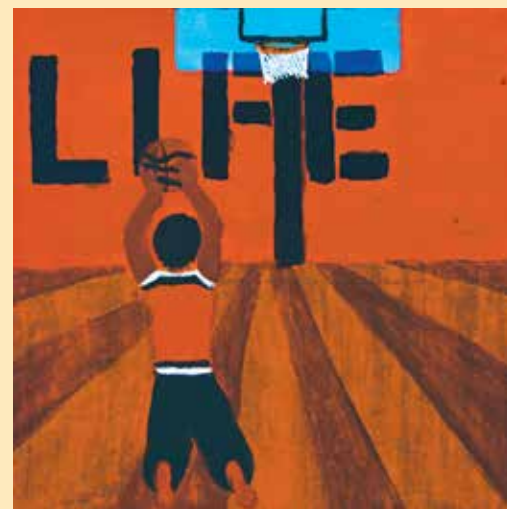
Grades and SAT scores are often looked at together. A 4.0 GPA, for example, could make up for poor SAT scores and vice versa. A third part

is added to the mix when extracurriculars are involved. Whether it's sports, community service, a job, or other programs, colleges look at them all.

Boston Latin Academy student Christopher Perez, 17, says he takes full advantage of basketball because it's a great stress reliever and keeps him active. Plus, Perez says, "It looks good on a college application."

Along with basketball, Perez says he has other extracurriculars like National Honor Society, Student Ambassador, and community service.

Students often go on to continue these activities in college. For instance, those involved in student government throughout high school commonly go on to be a part of the student government at their new schools, too. Colleges seek students who cannot only flourish academically



AFH art by Dylan Dossantos

but also contribute to their school communities in other ways.

Valeria Duarte, 16, from Boston Green Academy, has been involved with volleyball since she was little and says she has plans to play in college. ■

# Life lessons

## Coming to terms with high school

By **Jalene Sanchez** // Staff Writer

As a sophomore at Boston Community Leadership Academy, I have noticed that high school comes with so much responsibility.

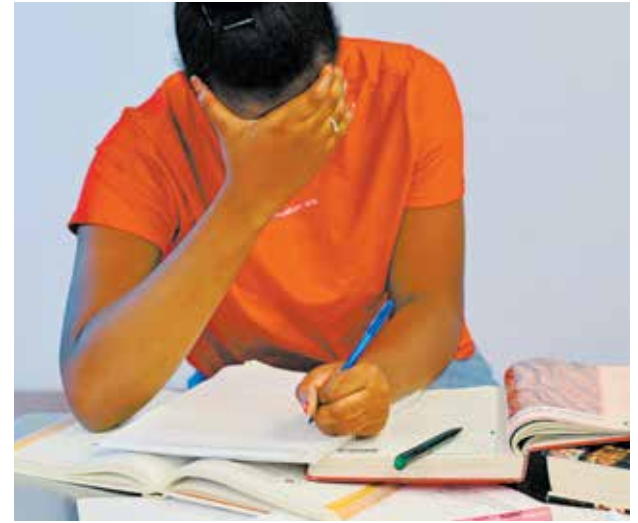
It's not always easy waking up early in the morning, having to make it to all your classes on time, writing notes as fast as you can and still being able to understand them, and then staying up late doing homework and studying for upcoming tests.

Still, my short time in high school has taught me a lot. You have to be prepared for all this

because things will only get harder. I learned that you can't just give up in the middle.

I always thought going into high school was going to be like it was in the movies; everything was just chill and not so complicated. But my perspective has changed. Now I know what I have to do: work hard and never stop trying.

There will always be circumstances scheming to bring you down, but that's another thing I learned from high school. Life won't give you what you can't handle. ■



AfH photo by Dominic Duong

# Dream college: dream on

By **Lizandro Nogueira** // Staff Writer

Losangela Batista says that her dream college has to be in a rural area.

"I love nature and I don't want it to be in the city," says Batista.

The 17-year-old from the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science also wants the college to have a biology major since Batista wants to study pre-med.

Not to mention this: "My dream college has to have culture clubs, student organizations....and help students find internships in order to make money and learn about different professions."

With more and more students facing the difficult transition of going from high school to college, dream-school desires are getting longer and more specific.

Sara Dossantos says her ideal school has to be small and located far outside of Massachusetts.

"My dream college needs to be next to a beach located in Miami or Hawaii," says the 17-year-old from Madison Park High School. "SAT scores shouldn't be required, and you could live on campus or your house."

Dossantos adds: "If you want, you can take classes on the Internet."

Seventeen-year-old Sedny Alves of Madison Park would like her school-of-choice to be medium-sized and in a less urban area, where everyone knows everyone.

It has to fit her personality.

"My dream college," says Alves, "has to offer activities on the weekends, such as dance or gathering together with your mates, do karaoke or something everyone can enjoy." ■



AfH photo by Rayshana Jenkins

# Teacher Appreciation Week

By **Perla Lara** // Staff Writer

They tell us what to do, help us, teach us, and deep down somewhere under those annoyed, stern looks is a kind, loving heart. Teachers! They take their time to plan out a curriculum for the entire year for students to be prepared for the next level in their lives.

Still, some students think that teachers don't do enough or don't have the best classroom styles.

Alisha Baez, 16, of West Roxbury Academy, feels as though some teachers don't look like they want to be at school.

"Kids are rude, too, but they are the adult and they signed up to deal with teens, so I don't really appreciate the attitude that comes with their teaching," Baez says.

Teenagers' vision often becomes blurred, only seeing the workload a teacher assigns rather than also noticing the extra time a teacher puts into class, field trips, homework help, and casual individual conversations. Many don't accept that teachers want to feel appreciated.

"I feel like teachers treat us based on our attitude, but then again, we also treat our teachers based on their attitude," says Tamari Washington, 17, of New Mission High School.

High school teachers have a lot to deal with, filling multi-dimensional roles of teacher, friend, disciplinarian, mentor, and shoulder to cry on.

Jeff Georges, 17, of Brighton High School, knows about all the responsibilities that teachers take on.

"Teachers do what they can for us," Georges says. "I appreciate them because it is not really their fault how students feel about them. They're just doing their job. If they really wanted to, teachers could just go home after school, but most stay after to help kids." ■



AfH art by LanVy Tran

# TRAYVON LIVES ON



In August, the country's first African-American Secretary of State, Colin Powell, made the case that the shooting of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin, black and unarmed, would not become an historic racial rallying cry, that it would likely fade away.

But two months after George Zimmerman was acquitted of murder, the incident still stirs deep anger in the hearts of young people.

AFH photo by Miguel Fitzpatrick

## "Every black teenager in America was shot that night"

By James Whitter // Staff Writer

I was terrified. I had no idea how to react. I mean, what was I supposed to do? I was praying for help but not even God heard me this time. I was walking down the street, Skittles and Arizona in hand. Next thing I know I am being followed. Why did my life have to end like this?

Sorrowfully, the real victim of this heinous crime is not alive to tell you what happened. You won't ever get to hear his side of the story. I am just one of the many voices who speak for Trayvon Martin.

Trayvon was a 17-year-old black male who was followed on his way home from the store on February 26, 2012, and killed by a man who is not black. That description of what happened is short and plain. There is honestly no other way to describe it. I know you're wondering why he did it. You and everyone else in the world. George Zimmerman, that is the name of the man. I am disgusted to even say it.

He was brought to trial over a year later, in June. The jury eventually came to a verdict that Zimmerman was not guilty of murder. The jury was made up of all women. Five out of the six were white. That is not a ratio that I happen to be comfortable with. How about you?

What kind of world do we live in where a black woman who fires warning shots to stop an abusive husband gets sentenced to 20 years in prison? A black man is protecting his son on his own property from a gang of white kids, says he accidentally shot one of them after a teen lunged for his gun, and gets convicted. Zimmerman shoots an unarmed black teenager and nothing happens?

Don't talk to me about the justice system because it doesn't exist. Don't talk to me about a post-racial America because it doesn't exist. Trayvon wasn't the only kid who was shot. Every black teenager in America was shot that night.

They say that Zimmerman is always going to have to watch his back now. So will every black kid in America. I am just another Trayvon Martin with a hoodie. I am looked at no differently. When the law is not enforced, that starts a ripple effect and lets people know that crimes like this are OK.

So the next time you are standing in the elevator with a white lady and she clenches her purse extra tight, make sure you tell her that you want nothing to do with her and what's in her purse, so she can relax. The next time you are followed around the convenience store, make sure you tell them that you are planning on paying for your items so they can leave you alone.

Don't forget about Trayvon. We may never get justice for the young man. All we can do is "stand our ground." Let's all put our hoodies on and take a walk with Trayvon Martin. ■

**Don't talk to me about a post-racial America because it doesn't exist.**

## "Apparently, Trayvon's appearance killed him"

By Dennis Membah // Senior Editor

On July 13, George Zimmerman was found not guilty in the death of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin.

Myriad people tried to dirty Martin's reputation by talking about things like his reported marijuana use in attempts to make him look like a thug.

How does this justify the fact that he was killed, unarmed, by a man who happened to be stalking him? Well, if we are talking about criminal behavior, let's take a step back in time and describe a man who got in trouble with the law and still rose up to become successful.

As others have noted, this man was charged with driving drunk, paid a fine, and later became president of the United States: George W. Bush.

I believe I would have made a better argument than the prosecutors in the Zimmerman case. Zimmerman was caught in a lie when he explained that Trayvon Martin jumped out of the bushes. That should have been a bigger deal in the trial. In his heart, Zimmerman knew he had done wrong.

It would take me a very long time to believe that race did not have anything to do with this case. Apparently, Trayvon's appearance killed him, because he looked so suspicious in a hoodie that Zimmerman felt he could only live to see the next day by following him like some twitter bird or an animal stalking its prey.

What would have happened to the whole neighborhood if Trayvon had walked home that night without a chaperone? Was he going to do something drastic like adjust his hoodie? ■

## "Even now, I sometimes catch myself thinking about why and how he got free"

By Adamajan Bah // Staff Writer

The verdict came as a complete shock to me. When I saw it on the news, I cried and cried. I didn't know him but who wouldn't get all teary-eyed hearing that. Even after all these months, one question still circulates through my head: "How can someone justify killing a 17-year-old?"

Of course, my initial response was to express myself on social media. I didn't write threats or hurtful comments to the defendant. I just expressed my condolences to the Martin family.

Online, I happened to stumble across a letter written to the defendant. What stood out to me was the line: "I bet you never thought that by shooting a black male you'd end up inheriting all of his struggles. Enjoy your 'freedom.'"

This was signed at the bottom, "A black male who could've been Trayvon Martin."

As I read this I started to get teary, for it expressed how what he did will haunt him for the rest of his life.

Even now, I sometimes catch myself thinking about why and how he got free. Then, all the things from the trial go through my mind and I have to stop myself because once again I am crying.

In the end, I hope that Trayvon is up in heaven and that his family is coping with the loss of their child and trying to move forward with their lives in the healthiest way possible. ■

**The verdict came as a complete shock to me. When I saw it on the news, I cried and cried.**



THE BRIDGE



GOVERNMENT CENTER



THE SOCCER FIELD



FROM THE NORTH END

# Alone time

**Text and photographs by Marmarin Nasirahmad // Senior Editor**

When you're down, spending time on the North Washington Street Bridge that links the North End to Charlestown is the best. The sound of water calms your brain. Then, the rumble of the cars speeding by brings you back to reality.

Sitting on the ledge near City Hall in Government Center is relaxing. Especially on the weekends, Government Center is full of people and activities like singing or dancing. Looking down, you can see how beautiful Boston is. One minute, the streets will be filled with people and happiness. The next, everything will be quiet and peaceful. These big structures build a wall around you, and protect you.

When you're upset at night and don't feel like talking to anyone, you head for the soccer field near the high school in Charlestown. You can kick your soccer ball against the wall and nobody will care. That's the best way to get your anger out. No one gets hurt.

The smell of rain makes you feel alive. Most people hate it so it's just you standing there – anywhere – and it's like you are in the middle of the ocean, swimming by yourself. Nobody is around to say anything. Nobody is there to judge you. You are so free and sometimes you just scream because it makes you feel better.

In the day, the North End is so busy. Nobody has time for anybody. Everybody's just running around. In the middle of this city rush, you can find your own quiet zone and reflect upon life.

End of the day. Work is done. No more phone calls. No more customers. Waiting for the bus home outside Haymarket is a good place to chill and think. The moon seems to follow you and look out for you.

It's alone time. ■



RAIN (TOP) AND HAYMARKET AT NIGHT

# High voltage

## Advocates warn of energy-drink overexposure

By Iris Peña // Staff Writer

She often walks into her local CVS, needing a little pick-me-up after a long night. Heading straight to the refrigerated aisle, Natalie Nuñez is feeling for an energy drink. She leaves the store and takes a swig of the caffeinated beverage. Surely, she will crave the taste and may get another one later in the day.

"I usually drink energy drinks because it gives me a zing and keeps me up," says the 17-year-old from Dorchester.

Nuñez is one of many teens who turn to energy drinks when looking for a boost. These drinks are now consumed by 30 percent to 50 percent of adolescents and young adults, according to "Health Effects of Energy Drinks on Children, Adolescents, and Young Adults," a 2011 article published in the official journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Popular energy drinks like Monster, Rockstar, and Red Bull are known to target young people, but health advocates ask: at what cost?

According to critics, side effects of these drinks include high blood pressure, heart-related problems, and seizures.

In the worst cases, a caffeine overload can lead to death.

Of 5,448 caffeine overdoses reported in the US in 2007, 46 percent occurred

in those younger than 19, according to the 2011 article.

"I'm aware of the health risks, but despite that, sometimes I feel like I need it for a boost if I can't find coffee," says Nuñez. "The taste is kind of addicting, too."

Energy drinks are available to minors in local beverage cases. Energy-drink companies defend their products as safe, but also note the warning labels.

"Monster has a commitment to being responsible and wants to be transparent about the ingredients in their products," Monster Energy spokeswoman Tammy Taylor told CNN in March.

Furthermore, Taylor said, Monster does not recommend children, pregnant women, or those sensitive to caffeine consume its beverages. "That recommendation is on the labels of all Monster products," she said.

Despite the lurking dangers of energy drinks, teens are still drawn to them.

For Justin Cruthird, a 17-year-old at the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science, the appeal does not lie in any extra oomph.

"They don't usually make me feel like I'm getting energy," says Cruthird. "It's really more for taste, and they're easily accessible when I want them." ■



AFH photo by Emily Tieu

# Eating healthy can cost a lot of green

By Cabrícia Diaz // Staff Writer

Why might teens prefer a McDonald's McDouble over a head of broccoli?

The Dollar Menu, maybe.

"I blame the owners and even the government for strategically lowering fast food prices," says Antonio Banrey, 17, who goes to the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science.

Low-income neighborhoods rely on fast food chains more than wealthier areas that have easier access to healthier alternatives, according to better-eating advocates.

McDonald's even tells consumers on its website: "Your stomach is empty – and so is your wallet. Good thing there's the Dollar Menu."

Teens say that reforms are needed to make healthy eating attainable for all regardless of their location or financial status.

"Fast food should cost more," says Greta Gaffin, 15, who attends Boston

**Latin Academy.**

Latin Academy. If this were the case, many might switch to a healthier lifestyle that can be costlier than a quick fix.

On the flip side, Diaundra Santos, 15, who goes to Another Course to College,



AFH art by Lovenso Arindal

says fruits and vegetables should be more affordable. A burger might be around the same price as broccoli – hardly a full meal.

"Fast food eaters wouldn't have an excuse to not eat or buy healthy foods," Santos says.

That's the great quandary: whether to blame their eating decisions, or the costs of these foods, for the poor diet of many young people.

Any future changes might be aimed at teens, the easily influenced, who surround us all, but, especially, who surround the nearest Burger King and the company's latest all-in-one-on-a-bun dollar French Fry Burger. ■



AFH art by Su Qin Yu

AFH art by Stephany Natal-Vega



## Secondhand smoke

### Choke. It's no joke

By Eva Wu // Staff Writer

Sixteen-year-old Joyce Huang, from Dorchester, knows firsthand the effects of secondhand smoking.

"Every time I'm out of the house, at the parks and bus stops, I encounter it," she says. "I don't think the smokers are aware of the matter because they smoke for their own need."

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines secondhand smoke as smoke from a burning cigarette, cigar, or pipe. According to the CDC, secondhand smoke contains more than 7,000 chemicals, including about 70 that can cause cancer. Secondhand smoke can also be responsible for heart disease and severe asthma attacks, says the CDC, as well as ear infections.

"I think it's gross," says Vanessa Tse, 16, who goes to the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science. "I don't think they notice and care how it affects others."

Teens know that people are under a lot of pressure and that smoking is a way to get relief, but some smokers don't realize the consequences.

Catherine Tsang, 16, lives in Chinatown, where smoking is rampant on the street.

"Secondhand smoke affects the people around the smokers," says Tsang. "I would persuade them with facts to make the smokers stop smoking."

Huang, meanwhile, says she tries to avoid the cigarette smoke of others as best she can, sometimes just crossing the street. ■

## Puff times

### Why teens still smoke

By Lizandro Nogueira // Staff Writer

Edmilson Barbosa, 17, from West Roxbury Academy, knows why teens still smoke.

"They find it fun, they think it's cool, and they are motivated to do it especially if their friends do it, as well," says Barbosa.

He also says that some teens are unaware of possible harms from smoking tobacco.

"They probably don't have someone to educate them or the school they attend doesn't inform them," he says.

Today, spotting a teenager with a cigarette is still common – despite years of anti-smoking campaigns that have included graphic images of deformed lung cancer victims.

According to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 88 percent of adult daily smokers say they started with cigarettes before they were 18.

While the CDC says cigarette use by teens has declined in the last decade, the agency reports that every day in the US about 4,000 young people under 18 take their first puffs.

Teens say they are constantly targeted by tobacco companies with products that seem hip.



AFH photo

Junior Correia, 15, from Dorchester, says that teens are influenced by what they see in the media, and he portrays the tobacco companies as villains.

"They are the ones who make advertisements," says Correia. "They have the power to control who sees the ads and how they are going to expose the products."

But Jose Mata, 17, from Brighton High School, says that teens are not forced to smoke – they do

it because they want to.

"Teens smoke because they want to fit in and to impress other people," says Mata.

Mata says that families can help kids quit cigarettes but that often the motivation has to come from within.

"If you want to do something for your own self-benefit," says Mata, "you should take it upon yourself to do it." ■

# Pretty cool

## Teens choose personality over looks

By Mariam Bah // Staff Writer

Fourteen-year-old Matty Jobarteh, from Hyde Park, thinks someone's appearance makes an impression but personality keeps it going.

"If someone looks pretty, people are going to make them memorable but if the person is arrogant and irritating, it doesn't make any sense," says Jobarteh.

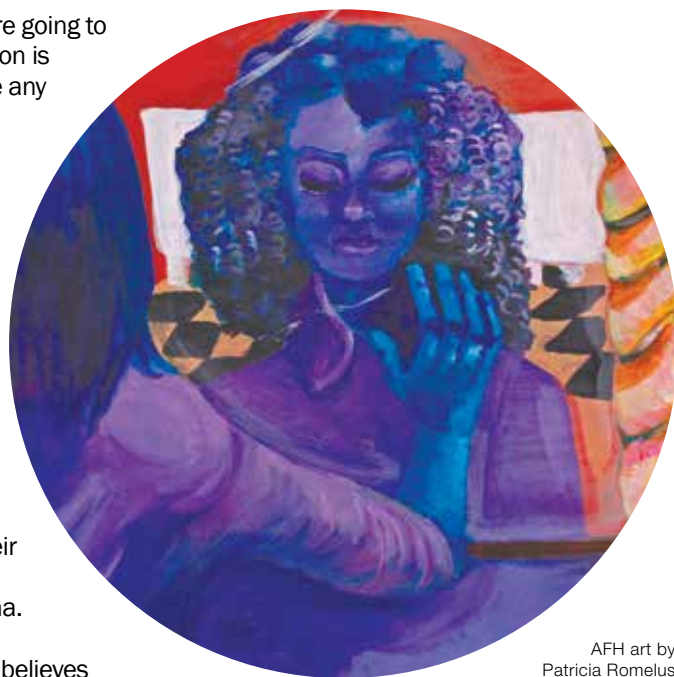
Even though we all want to look good and are attracted to physical beauty, many teens say that personality is the more important asset. Someone with great features may turn heads in a crowded room, but, teens say, it's those whose personalities draw us to them who will win our deep affection and esteem.

Lansana Fofana, 15, from Dorchester, thinks physical appearance is a very shallow thing.

"For example, someone can get into a terrible accident and destroy their looks and also people grow old – their good looks start to vanish," says Fofana. "What is left? Personality."

Bintou Conte, 16, from Mattapan, believes that looks do matter at some point because if you're going to marry somebody, appearance counts.

On the other hand, she says: "Those who have the best personalities are the winners in life." ■



AFH art by Patricia Romelus



AFH art by Cassandra Lattimore

## Discovering your dark side

By Ilma Golemi // Staff Writer

Fifteen-year-old Marinela Seiti believes that everyone has a dark side.

"Sometimes, the nicest people are the meanest," says Seiti, who goes to Boston Community Leadership Academy. "There comes a day where they explode."

Seiti knows there is a give-and-take to this dynamic.

"I am nice to the people who are nice to me, and I am mean to the ones who are mean to me," she says. "If someone bullies me, I bully back."

Psychologists say that good people can become evil at their most vulnerable times, when friends and family and tight controls may not be around to keep their bad behaviors in line.

Wendy Zheng, 17, believes in the overall good in people.

"Some people go through depression, family issues, stress, and can act a bit mean at times," says Zheng, who goes to the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science.

Angie Miranda, 17, however, feels that even so-called sweet people have their bad traits.

She says she was surprised how mean a friend had become. She was in a bad mood and wouldn't talk, wouldn't answer questions.

"In order to find out their dark side," says Miranda, from the O'Bryant, "you have to find their weakest point." ■

## Twitter, Facebook, Instagram...

### Pushing the perfect relationship

By Christine Nguyen // Staff Writer

Kianah Moss, 14, from the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science, often sees dispatches about perfect relationships on her Instagram feed.

"I believe that those kinds of posts are real," says Moss. "When I am in a relationship I want something like that to happen to me. However, I do not expect it to happen."

Some teens feel that social media pressures them to live up to a certain storybook standard in their relationships.

A few of the popular sites that feed the images are Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, and Facebook.

Kharliyah Ortiz, 14, from the O'Bryant, has Twitter, Tumblr, and Instagram apps on her mobile phone.

"I go on social media every day," she says.

Ortiz figures that about 25 percent of the

time she is on Twitter she sees tweets about perfect relationships. Still, she says she's never felt the need to meet somebody else's expectations.

"I don't want a boyfriend that does what a picture on social media does or says," says Ortiz. "I just want a relationship that will have both mates be able to work with what we have and not live up to what the Internet says."

A popular picture trending on Twitter showed a text message a boy had sent to his girlfriend containing a Victoria's Secret bag outside her door.

Meryl Bantefa, 14, said she does not want to live such a fantasy life.

"I don't want a relationship where my boyfriend has to buy clothing for me before we go out on a date," says Bantefa, who attends the O'Bryant. "I do not expect anything like that to happen to me because it isn't real." ■



AFH photo

# Obsessions: the weirder the better

By Adamajan Bah // Staff Writer

Eighteen-year-old Matena Barry, from Edward M. Kennedy Academy for Health Careers, has some weird and some, OK, over-the-top-weird obsessions.

One of Barry's many obsessions is that she cannot sleep without the sound of an air conditioner. No matter how cold it is she has to have it on before she can doze off.

It gets so bad that, during the winter, Barry says she takes the AC out of the window so it won't get damaged by the snow and just sets it down on the floor and plugs it in.

Meanwhile, Nadia Singh, 16, is fixated on food.

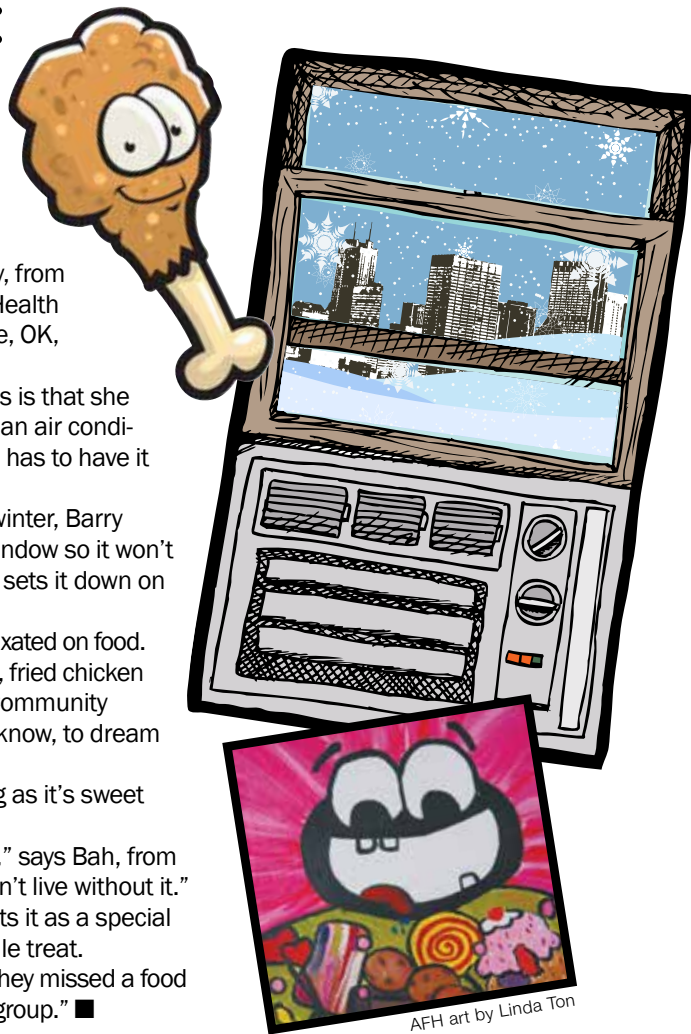
"I even dream about food – well, fried chicken mainly," says Singh, from Boston Community Leadership Academy. "It's weird, I know, to dream about food, but I do."

For Kadidiatou Bah, 15, as long as it's sweet and edible she is quite all right.

"Candy will be the death of me," says Bah, from Health Careers Academy. "I just can't live without it."

Bah is stuck on candy and treats it as a special food instead of just a once-in-a-while treat.

"I'm telling you, in health class they missed a food group," says Bah. "Candy is a food group." ■



# Death toll The sad state of grief

By Harrienne Errie // Staff Writer

Julia Malita, 16, from Boston Latin Academy, lost her great grandmother a few years back. This death was prepared for; the great grandmother was 107 years old. Knowing that she'd die, the great grandmother asked her family to wear colorful clothes to her funeral. Of course, no one did.

This was Malita's first funeral and recalling seeing her great grandmother in the casket, she says, "I remember she looked like an angel. I know that sounds corny."

Now that the time has passed, Malita has moved on. She takes comfort in knowing that her great grandmother is in heaven and is still alive in memory.

Grief: Intense sorrow caused by loss of a loved one. It's the stress that comes with death that gets to teens. There are many ways of dealing with loss, and one of the best ways is to just release it, specialists say. It's never good to keep things trapped inside, they say.



Sometimes, just crying is the best way to get over death, teens say.

Pamela De Jesus, 14, from Boston Community Leadership Academy, hasn't lost anyone close to her. She believes that when you die, you just die.

"Death isn't good because you could lose someone loved or have feelings for," she says. "I thank God that hasn't happened to me personally."

Jeff Hines, 18, from Dorchester, lost his cousin to cancer last summer and isn't over the death yet. He continues to think about him.

"It's been really hard but getting better," says Hines. "I loved him." ■

AFH photo



# Shading the truth Skin-color mythology

By Toiell Washington // Staff Writer

Cesilia Bwahama, 15, says she has never been insecure about her dark skin. She believes many teenagers prefer lighter skin because of pressure from society and from peers.

"Features are what make people attractive, not shade or color," says Bwahama, from Brighton High School.

The idea that light skin is superior to dark skin has been around for years, and, for example, was used to divide people of color during slavery.

Today, many teens of color are insecure about their skin, some even refusing to date people with darker tones.

Emyliana Rivera, 16, says she's always been comfortable with her light skin. Although she believes every shade is equal, she has her own theories on why people would think differently.

She thinks people are too influenced by images promoted by the media.

"The media almost never includes dark-skinned people and very uncommonly advertises them as beautiful figures," says Rivera, from McKinley Preparatory High School.

Anna Ngyuen, 14, feels teens also learn from their parents to favor the lighter-skinned.

"You are born loving every kind," says Nguyen, from English High School, "and die loving a few." ■

**"The media almost never includes dark-skinned people and very uncommonly advertises them as beautiful figures."**



AFH photo  
by Mary Nguyen

# Life without a cellphone

By **Sahanty Nawa** // Staff Writer

Jeanean Brown, a 14-year-old from Jamaica Plain, says she's fine with not having a cellphone.

"I don't have to check my phone every minute to see if I receive a new text message or a notification," she says.

Today, 78 percent of young people ages 12 to 17 have a cellphone.

Brown is not one of them. No worries, she says. It saves her money.

Plus, she says, "If I do need to contact someone for something important, I use my house phone."

The teen world might be better off without so many cellphones in hand, Brown says.

"When I'm talking to my friends about something important, I notice that they're always taking out their phone to check if they got a new text message," she says. "I think it's really rude because I feel like they're not listening to what I have to say." ■

**"When I'm talking to my friends about something important, I notice that they're always taking out their phone to check if they got a new text message."**

# Cellphone ferocity

By **Diana Barbosa** // Staff Writer

Audreyana Washington, 15, of the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science, says she spends about eight hours a day on her smartphone, checking social media websites and reading.

"My phone is interesting and it keeps me connected to the world," says Washington.

In 2009, teens spent an average of two hours and 15 minutes on their cellphones, according to a Kaiser Family Foundation study.

But some of today's teens more than double that. It can depend on whether they have Internet, cable, or a smartphone.

Fifteen-year-old Jasmine Cruz, from West Roxbury Academy, says she's on her phone some 10 hours a day, browsing social networks and playing the game Candy Crush.

"I use my phone a lot," says Cruz, "because it's easier and faster than the computer."

Nautica Mosby, from the Harbor School, says she uses her smartphone about four hours a day. Mosby, 16, says she does not have a



AFH photo by Lena Yee

television in her bedroom, nor the Internet at her house. She uses her phone to play games, watch videos, read, and go on Instagram.

Mosby says she limits the time on her phone. "It's boring and I get tired of it," she says.

She prefers, she says, to draw and write. ■

# Games in the back of the bus Pushing the limits

By **Jamal Young** // Staff Writer

On a field trip to Six Flags, Xena Joseph, 16, from Community Academy of Science and Health, sat at the back of the bus to play a game of "Truth or Dare."

Many teens have played them: "Truth or Dare," "Would You Rather," and "21 Questions." These games were originally used by many as icebreakers to get to know others better.

But now, there is an added twist – teens use them to discover just how far they will push themselves, says

18-year-old Akeem Barrows, from CASH.

Daniel Ortega, a sophomore from CASH, says he gets involved with these games a lot with friends.

"I just play to pass the time," he says. "But sometimes it can get out of hand."

Like the last time he played "Truth or Dare."

"I ended up eating ice cream mixed with hot sauce, chicken broth, mayonnaise, and tuna fish," Ortega says. "Let's just say it ended bad." ■



AFH art by LanVy Tran

# Haitian destination

## Education is key

By Rosana Belizaire // Staff Writer

Lidzt Gaelle Lubin, 17, from Hyde Park, knows how her parents would react if she pursued her goal of becoming an actress.

"They would be mad," says Lubin, who may study medicine instead.

Many parents have great expectations for their children's futures. For Haitian parents, the hopes can be especially high for their kids to become successful professionals – doctors, lawyers, or engineers – even if it is not the child's choice.

According to cultural specialists, Haitian parents want their children to help support the family financially in the US and not waste the educational opportunities they came here for.

On a larger scale, such prestigious jobs are viewed as an important way for offspring to one day bring wealth and knowledge back to the Haitian homeland, and raise the country up.

Now, many Haitian teens find themselves caught in the middle: between pleasing their parents and following their own dreams.

Kimberly Cajuste, 15, from Urban Science Academy, says that if she tells her parents that she wants to be a dancer or a singer, they would have a simple question:

"Why not a doctor?" ■



# Sitting in judgment

By Ilma Golemi // Staff Writer

Edward Velazquez, 16, says he's been judged for his beliefs.

"People have told me: 'I don't know how you can pray and believe in an invisible God,'" says Velazquez, who attends Brighton High School.

Often, people make decisions about others and create wrong opinions about teens without even knowing them. Teens say that just because some don't like the way a person dresses or acts or what they believe in doesn't mean they should be treated rudely.

Seventeen-year-old Mu Xian Chen, from the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science, says she's been called short and skinny.

"You should think before you act," she says.

Amal Egal, 16, thinks that judging people without knowing them is unfair.

"Everyone deserves a chance, because as cliché as it sounds, we are all the same," says Egal, who attends the O'Bryant. "I don't think we can stop society's judgments. However, if everyone individually reflects on themselves, we might be able to change." ■



AFH art by Mary Nguyen

# Bucket lists do exist

By Liraniz Colón // Staff Writer

Miguel Martinez, 17, of Boston Arts Academy, says that if he were given the opportunity to do anything on his bucket list, he'd do it right away.

"The thing I want to do the most on my bucket list is to swim with dolphins," he says.

Martinez believes that it would be a memorable experience.

Teens want to live like there is no tomorrow, freely with no regrets or fears. Like others, they have a mental list of the most interesting things they want to do before they die, ranging from the simple to the more daring.

"If I got to dunk over Michael Jordan – that would be pretty amazing," says Melvin Gonzalez, 17, of Lower Roxbury.

Anjelique Casiano, 16, of Boston Green Academy, says she is determined to get everything on her list checked off.

"I don't really have anything extreme on my bucket list," says Casiano. "I have many simple things, but I do want to go skinny dipping in a nice lake or go drag racing." ■

# Bucket lists of the stars

By Liraniz Colón // Staff Writer

For a movie star, Matt Damon has a very down-to-earth entry on his bucket list.

"If I had a bucket list, I'd say raising my four girls to be strong, good women would be number one," Damon was quoted as saying in Parade magazine.

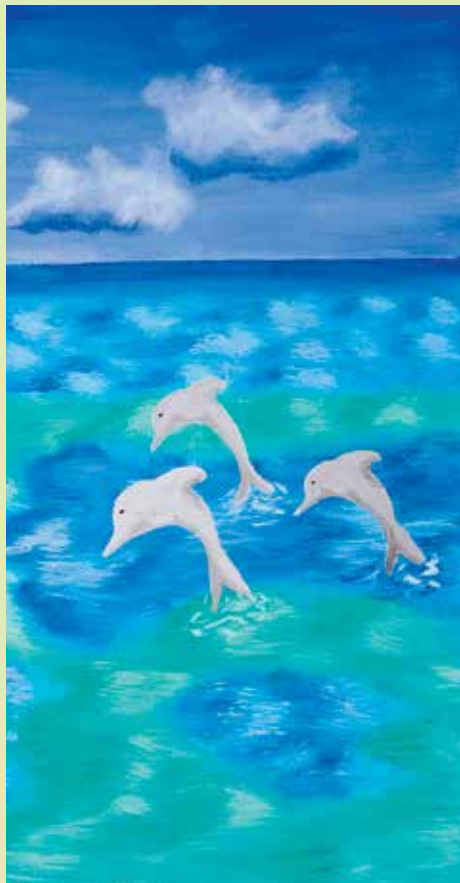
It may be surprising to hear that celebrities have their own bucket lists, since they seem to get whatever they want on a regular basis.

However, child star Lil' Romeo – who now goes by the more grown-up name "Romeo" – was quoted on SI.com as saying that

going to the Super Bowl was on his bucket list.

He explained that he was too busy with school and other things to attend.

As for me, my bucket list is filled with adventure. Before I die, I would like to go diving – skydiving, cliff diving, and scuba diving. ■



AFH art by Samantha Davern



AFH art by Juan Chen

## Loyalty test

**By Morelia Morales // Staff Writer**

Which comes first for teens: family, friends, or faith?

For 17-year-old Darlene Matos, of Dorchester, the answer is faith.

"I believe in God not only for what He has done in my life but for who He is," says Matos.

Teens can show their love to family, to friends, or to faith by watching each others' backs, and/or having love in their hearts.

Stevie Torres, 17, from Boston Community Leadership Academy, says that family takes priority because they provide support.

"They can give you advice," says Torres, "and they can talk to you about your problems and they can help you to solve them."

Jose Lainez, 19, from East Boston, says that faith is primo.

"God has helped me to have more strength," says Lainez. "He will always be there for me and He will love me no matter how I am. Family can't be there for you all the time because they have things to do."

In the best of times, love between each other will be constant no matter if teens choose family, friends, or faith. ■

## When stepparents step in

**By Morelia Morales // Staff Writer**

Zusex Romero, 17, of Boston Community Leadership Academy, has advice for teens who are not comfortable living with their step-parents:

"Don't worry. You can leave when you are 18. But to look at the positive side, they are not mean because they took you into their home to raise you and provide what you need as a young adult."

These days, an increasing number of teens are finding themselves living with a stepmother or stepfather. Often, conflicts ensue.

Sara Mendez, 17, from BCLA, says her parents are together. Still, she sees the value of having a stepparent step in.

"I think it's good to have them if one of the parents is missing," says Mendez, "because the children might find support...or look upon them as role models." ■



AFH photo by Dalena Thai

## Who make better friends: guys or girls?

**By Ilma Golemi // Staff Writer**

"Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another: 'What! You too? I thought I was the only one.'"

— novelist C.S. Lewis

Nedjie Thompson, 17, believes that a guy and a girl can just be best friends with no feelings.

"Having a girl as a friend and having a guy as a friend have their pros and cons," says Thompson, who attends the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science. "Some girls can have better connections with other girls, since they have someone to talk to about the same thing, and maybe they can relate more to you. Still, having a guy as a friend can be helpful because they can actually listen and everything you talk about is new to him."

There are girls who think that they cannot have friends of the same gender since they may be jealous. Others think that a friendship between a guy and a girl cannot exist, that one may catch feelings for the other.

Kristiana Mbrice has a best friend who is a girl.

"Since my best friend is the same gender as me, and I have never had a boy best friend, I would say that stronger friendships exist between two people with the same gender," says Mbrice, a senior at Boston Community Leadership Academy.

Wendy Zheng, a junior at the O'Bryant, says that she's had best friends who are guys and best friends who are girls.

"When you are sad and you just want to talk about your emotions and other things that are bothering you, your girl friends always will support you and talk you through," says Zheng.

Meanwhile, she says, "Some guys are trustworthy and they could keep secrets." ■



AFH photo by Emily Tieu

# Senior moments

## Appreciating the good old days

By **Morelia Morales** // Staff Writer

Kevin Rodriguez, 17, who attends Boston Latin School, believes that older folks are very important for society, that they are filled with wisdom, and that they also keep traditions alive.

"I have seen myself in my grandparents because we have some similar ways of doing things," says Rodriguez. "There are many things we young people can do to help them, but I think the most important one is just spending time with them."

Often, some teens say, what elders want is just someone to talk to. So being an audience to their life stories is a great way for teens to show their appreciation. Other youth, however, simply can't be bothered. They see the older generation as burdens who, for example, walk too slowly and clog up the supermarket aisles.

Bonnie Ramos, 19, strongly disagrees. She says she has a great relationship with her grandparents, especially the grandmother who gives her advice.

"I think elders should be respected and it is good to give them help in any way because they might not be as capable as a younger person to get what they need," says Ramos, who lives in East Boston.

Juan Lopera, 17, appreciates the history and knowledge in those who came before him.

"Old people for me are great people because they are our ancestors," says Lopera, from Boston Community Leadership Academy. "They have been through life in more difficult situations than us. They have become more wise." ■



AFH art by Vannarith Chhay

AFH art by Nicole Baldner



## Hey, I need my space

By **Farmata Samati** // Staff Writer

Miesha Lopes Tavares, 14, from the Dever-McCormack School, is direct when telling a friend she needs space.

That happens, she says, when a person is being fake or she is tired of arguing or she has too much going on inside her head.

"I have trust issues," she says.

Asking others for space is something some teens have trouble doing, believing it could shatter a friendship.

Marlene Jondoh, 16, from Charlestown High School, says she would be delicate – telling a friend that she loves to hang out but sometimes needs to be alone.

At those times, Jondoh says, she would go to her room to listen to music or read a book.

Kripa Thapa, 16, from West Roxbury Academy, says that if she wanted some breathing room she would let people know something was up.

"I would tell them to leave me alone or I would just stop talking to them," Thapa says.

Then she would go into a dark room and put on some music. ■



## Oh, brother

### The ups and downs of being a big sista

By **Ligia Zayas** // Staff Writer

One second I'm the center of my parents' attention, and the next I'm stuck sharing my favorite cereal with my new brother. At least that's how I imagine it went when I was three years old and my first (and only, I expected) brother was born.

I am now 17 with two younger brothers, ages 14 and six. Not only do I bear the responsibility of being a good role model, I also have to offer unlimited babysitting at any given time regardless of any plans I've made.

Still, as hard to believe as it may be, little brothers do have beneficial assets.

Recently, I found a very much unwanted eight-legged guest on the ceiling of my room. When neither of my parents came to help, my

brother Kevin saved me from losing my sanity and rid the spider himself.

The younger of the two, Yalvin, helped me laugh the whole thing off by causing a scene himself as he apparently also has inherited the spider-phobia gene.

I may have to help with homework that I thought I finally had outgrown. But now that I'm entering my senior year of high school and will soon be off to college, I realize I won't see these two as much.

I won't laugh hysterically with them as often, or be able to make pancakes for two hungry monsters on Sunday mornings, either. I also understand that the most bothersome two little people I know are the ones that I may miss the most. ■

AFH art by Amy Jiang



## Date or wait?

**By Xhorxhia Papa // Staff Writer**

Losangela Batista, 17, from the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science, believes that people should start dating when they feel like they are mature enough to be responsible for their actions.

When is a good age?

Many parents have strict rules about their kids dating. For example, some teens are not allowed to date until they are at least 18, when there are fewer distractions and more in common with someone else.

"I'm not sure if I would put a dating age for my child," says Ben Perez, a 15-year-old Boston resident.

Angie Miranda, 17, of the O'Bryant, thinks that parents should talk to their kids about dating and see if they are ready.

When Batista becomes a mother in the future, she says she would allow her children to date during high school so they can have fun.

However, when she becomes a parent, Batista will talk to her children about what to do and what not to do in a relationship. ■

## Flirtationship = More than friends, less than a relationship

**By Tenneh Sesay // Staff Writer**

Often, at least one teen in this state has an emotional or physical interest in the friend, but each still maintains an undefined role in the other's life.

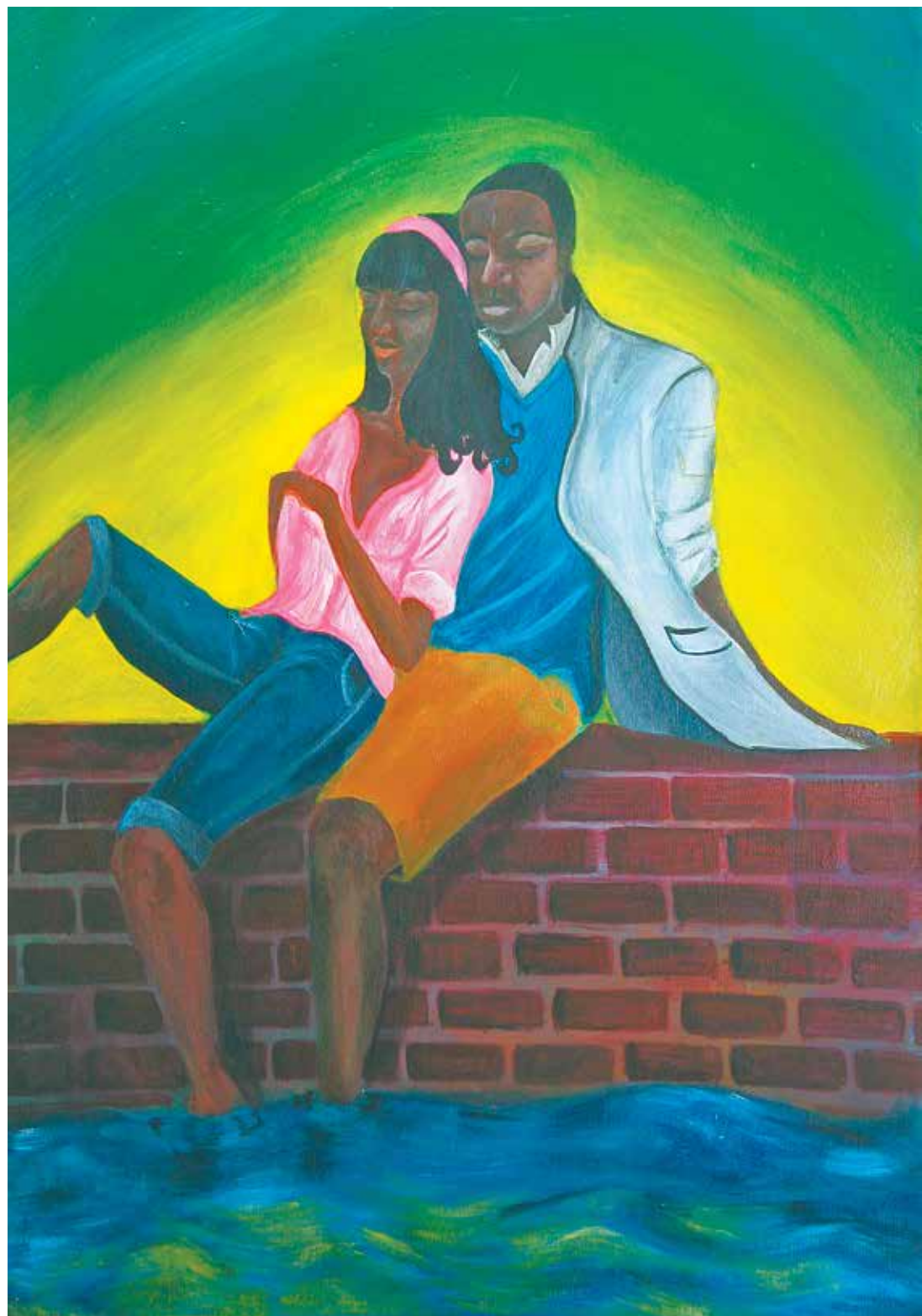
It's a complicated link. You're not really with the other, but you flirt a lot. It can remain harmless or it can lead to a relationship.

It starts off really simple, light, easy, fun, and uncomplicated. But as soon as one person

has more feelings than the other, or moves into a relationship with someone else, all the rules change and someone can get hurt.

Say you meet a new, cute guy and he asks you out. If the guy you're in a flirtationship with had feelings for you, this could cause jealousy between you two.

In the end, whether it's a friendship, relationship, or even a flirtationship, jealousy is the number one cause of break-ups out there. ■



AFH art by Ayanna Mack



AFH photo

# Kickin' around the pros and cons

## Heels vs. sneakers

**By Jalene Sanchez // Staff Writer**

Eva La Paz, 16, from Dorchester, says she prefers to wear heels over sneakers because they make her feel more like a girl.

"Heels are more feminine and attractive," says La Paz, who is five-feet and three inches. "They are stylish and, of course, give you a little height when needed."

Adam Torres, 16, from English High School, says he likes women with a sophisticated look.

"Heels make a girl look more like a lady," he says.

Glorelis Sepulveda, 15, from Urban Science Academy, says she likes to mix it up: class and comfort.

"Heels are more for special occasions and sneakers are more for an everyday case," she says. "A girl should just be able to wear whatever makes her feel confident and comfortable." ■

**"A girl should just be able to wear whatever makes her feel confident and comfortable."**

## Polo vs. Rugby

### Clothing brands, that is

**By Noelle Jacobs // Staff Writer**

Eighteen-year-old Nathaniel Budwah, from Dorchester, prefers Rugby over Polo.

"What's more unique about Rugby is the bright colors that stand out," said Budwah.

While both Polo and Rugby once competed for customers under the Ralph Lauren label, the company announced that it was ending the Rugby line this year.

Rugby clothing is still available online at places like eBay.

Rugby was considered the edgier shirt, often marked by skull and crossbones; Polo more upscale and preppy, identified by a man on a horse.

"Rugby is out of business," lamented 17-year-old Stephan Durrant, of Dorchester.

Jalisa Long, 18, knows a trend when she sees one – even one that has reached the end of the line.

"Popularity is not everything, but popularity is fashion and where you get it from," says Long, who attends Jeremiah E. Burke High School. "For teens, it's all about dressing cute, either for school, work, or going to parties with your friends." ■

## Knock it off

### LV: real or fake?

**By Eboni Owens // Staff Writer**

Zhane'a Williams, 17, describes a fake Louis Vuitton handbag.

"It feels like plastic. Cheap material," says Williams, from Dorchester.

Real: Sharp and clear. Soft. If it's stiff? Toss it! Funky stitching? You already lost it.

Lower than seven hunna – 700 dollars? Not real! Dust bag – which the LV comes in – isn't high quality? It's a dust rag.

Many teens are influenced by the material things they wear.

"Status," says Williams. "It shows or makes it seem like you have money and are well-off

compared to others around you."

You won't find teens in big box discount stores looking for something real to get their status up. It'll only bring them down.

"I think a name-brand bag will last longer," says Nijkah Morris, now 20, from Dorchester. "It's durable, and overall a better investment rather than buying a bunch of normal bags every couple months when they fall apart."

Morris says she would like a real one but, for now, has to settle for the imitation knock-off that can be had for \$45.

Tatianna Marie, 19, from Dorchester, goes for a pretty bag, real or fake. "Honestly, it really doesn't matter as long as the bag's cute," says Marie. "I'll take it name brand or not." ■



AFH photo by Nephthalie Dejeanlouis



AFH photos by Emily Tieu



## Urban fashion

### Style inspired by the street

**Alexa Lara // Staff Writer**

Tiffanie Ortiz, 17, loves to wear urban fashion because she gets to express herself through her clothing.

"I've been wearing it since I was 14," says Ortiz, from Urban Science Academy.

Urban fashion is a style born of the street. It's a look that emerges from neighborhoods as opposed to being ripped from the pages of fashion magazines. Yet it still has a classy appeal to it.

Think J.Lo – now a glamour girl but originally from the Bronx.

Ortiz is known for her unique way of wearing high-wasted pants and blazers to her place of employment – a sneaker shop.

Briannally Ortiz, 15, from Boston Latin Academy, likes urban fashion because it is spontaneous and fresh. She was in the South End recently when she saw a young woman walk by in a fall skirt with flower patterns.

She asked the woman where she got it: Forever 21.

Briannally Ortiz went and bought one for herself. ■

## Makeup test

### Video beauty gurus show the way

**By Miren Chenevert // Staff Writer**

From liquid to powder, lining your eyes is an art that is hard to master.

"Putting on eyeliner is pretty difficult because it takes a steady hand, practice, and attention for detail," says 15-year-old Jamie Weisenberg, from Boston Latin School.

To the rescue are the famed beauty gurus, fashion teachers who use YouTube as their classrooms, filming makeup, hair, and nail tutorials; DIYs; reviews; and beauty hauls.

These fashion "experts" range from professional makeup artists to common, everyday people. Among the faddy favorites are Michelle Phan, a makeup artist who now has her own cosmetics line; "Bubz" of bubzbeauty; and Leina of the MakeupByLeinaBaaaby channel, famous for her celebrity-look offerings.

The guru world is not exclusive to adults. Teens have become media stars for their beauty advice, including California girl Bethany Mota and the dearly missed Talia Castellano, cut down by cancer this summer at the age of 13.

The videos can aid beginners who are new to the makeup world.

"I never really knew how to do it before," says Frannie Murphy, a 15-year-old student from the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science. "It helped me figure out what goes where."

Murphy says the beauty-guru videos are not strict rules but rather a good source of inspiration.

"Whenever I do it, I watch it, take an idea from it, and do my own thing," says Murphy.

Weisenberg says that these videos have a positive effect on teen's creativity.

"I think it inspires them to try something different," says Weisenberg, a loyal fan of beauty guru MissJenFABULOUS.

The videos also offer a venue for experimentation.

"If you want to try something new, it's easiest to learn online," says Anneli Merivaara, 14, from BLS.

Although popular, as with all YouTube videos there is a "dislike" button as well as a "like" one.

Teens say that some of the gabby gurus' tutorials are hard to recreate. After all, they say, not everyone has the same skills, products, or face.

"The people who do the tutorials," says Murphy, "make you think no matter who you are, it will all look the same." ■

AFH photo by Jennifer Thai



AFH photos by Cynthia Ginnett



## All tressed-up

### The long and short of hairdos

**By Dennis Membah // Senior Editor**

Ralph Karnuah, a senior at Brighton High School, believes in natural beauty.

"I think it enhances your looks, but there are girls with short hair that are just as beautiful as girls with long hair," says Karnuah.

The style or length of your hair definitely defines your appearance.

Seventeen-year-old Walae Hayek, from Brighton High, feels that the length of a female's hair is a style statement.

"Some girls may seem way more attractive with longer hair," says Hayek. "Also, the public perception favors long-haired girls into seeming more girly."

Joshua Morancie, 17, from Brighton High, thinks presenting hair in a fashionable way identifies one's looks more than how long it is.

"It's how they groom it," Morancie says.

Karnuah says there's too much emphasis put on locks these days.

"I think it is ridiculous," he says, "to go out with someone based on the length or style of their hair." ■

# What moves you: beats or lyrics?

By Karl Clement // Staff Writer

Ever since there was such a thing as music, it has always contained one or both components. That's right – a beat and lyrics to go along with it. Have you ever stopped to consider which of the two is more important?

"Lyrics are more important because they affect me on an emotional level," says 17-year-old Massa Dukuly-Bah, from the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science. "If you took out the beat I would still listen because the lyrics make the song poetic."

It is true that minus lyrics it would be very difficult to comprehend what the artist had in mind, says Boston Latin Academy sophomore Janaya Hewitt.

"Without lyrics," Hewitt says, "there is no song."

Beats have a strong advocate behind them in

Alex Lei, a junior from the O'Bryant.

"So many songs would not be as popular as they are if they did not have a nice beat," says Lei. "I mean, that's what makes me want to listen to a song multiple times."

Although they take different stances in the words vs. rhythm debate, these teens agree on one thing:

"You can't have one without the other," says Hewitt.

"The beat has to suit the lyrics and vice versa," says Dukuly-Bah. "They complement each other."

Dubstep and techno aside, not much of modern music separate beats and lyrics and most artists try not to treat them as separate parts but compound them to make a whole they call...music. ■



AFH art by Savanna McKay

## Old school rap: keepin' it real

By James Whitter // Staff Writer

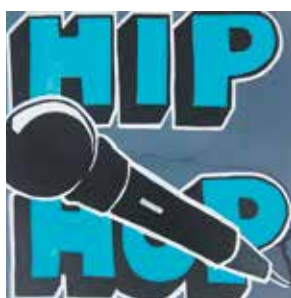
Music is definitely something that fuels and inspires the generation of today. Many people are influenced and molded by what they plug into their ears every day.

The rap industry is still alive and well, motivating people to do good and bad. Do the names Tupac, Biggie Smalls, Nas, Jay-Z, and Rakim ring any bells in your head? What about Lil Wayne, Kendrick Lamar, J. Cole, Drake, and Chief Keef? How has rap changed from back in the day?

Seventeen-year-old Kevin Lewis thinks that hip-hop has done a complete 180-degree turn.

The message used to tell kids not to grow up brainwashed by the world, some say, and now it targets college students who like to party.

"None of these rappers are the same, their style, their attitude, and their demeanor is all different," says Lewis, from the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science. "Rappers today can't even compare to those back then."



AFH art by Derick St. Surin

Lewis feels that rappers have tried to adjust to the new era we live in.

"Lil Wayne went from gangster rapper to rock star," says Lewis.

Julia Malita, 16, from Boston Latin Academy, thinks the

new-schoolers are getting a bad rap.

"I don't think that rap has changed much over the years," Malita says. "It's still pretty much the same."

Still, it isn't uncommon to hear adults complain about the music that kids are into these days, saying it causes them to act recklessly.

Chadrick Fennell, 16, from the O'Bryant, responds: "The music I listen to doesn't define who I am as a person." ■

## "Catching Fire" Hungry for the sequel

By Ilma Golemi // Staff Writer

Sixteen-year-old Judy Zhao watched the movie "The Hunger Games" and is excited about the sequel, "Catching Fire," due out in November.

"I think that the second part...is going to be better, since I already read the book," says Zhao, who attends the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science.

Zhao expects lots of action, including the main character, Katniss, entering the Hunger Games again.

Cyrus Kohistani, 17, from the O'Bryant,

thinks that the second part is not going to be as good as the first since the same ideas are going to be developed.

"I watched 'The Hangover' 1 and 2," says Kohistani, "but the second one was not as good as the first one."

As described in previews, the second installment's plot revolves around Katniss leaving friends and family to launch a Victory Tour.

Kripa Thapa, 16, from West Roxbury Academy, believes the November film will live up to its hype. ■

## Radio wasteland

### Rock'n'Roll music leaves the dial

By Cabricia Diaz // Staff Writer

**"There was a time a long, long time ago  
Chevys and levees played on the radio  
No cellphones, just 20,000 lights  
Swaying on a Saturday night, alright**

**Can you imagine that slice of time?  
Rock and roll was young, people stood in line  
To hear music that played into their lives  
That you could carry 'till the day you die"**

– "Slice" by Five for Fighting

These lyrics are just one example of how music has evolved since the '80s and '90s. Back then, music's messages were as salutary as oxygen itself.

Now, the ways songs are displayed and spread have evolved, and their sounds have shifted.

Instead of physical copies of the classics, there's now iTunes and loads of overplayed songs on mainstream radio stations. Rock'n'Roll radio, once a staple of the local airwaves, is very much consigned to spinning oldies and trying to reach people online or via paid subscriptions.

Pop and hip-hop dominate the dial.

"The fact is that the general public might be pretty blind to any other form of music," says Christina Daher, 16, of Snowden International High School.

Daher listens to heavy metal and rock, and feels that her favorite bands should have a chance in the audio limelight.

"The messages they give us are beautiful," says Daher. "They put their feelings and emotions into these songs."

With a few exceptions, punk rock, post-hardcore, and other alternative genres are largely silent on local non-Internet radio, except for some college stations.

Today, some teens say, it's all about an artist's looks, who's the next big thing, and just selling out.

"Radio has no standards or values. The best they do is censorship," says Ronnica Rogers, 17, of the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science. "If the radio were less biased towards genres of rock, they'd see that rock, too, is catchy, meaningful, and beautiful." ■

# Celtics future: bleak or bubbly?

By **Mouctar Diakite** // Staff Writer

Thirteen-year-old Boubacar Seck, of Dorchester, used to support the Boston Celtics 100 percent, but after a blockbuster trade with the Brooklyn Nets that was finalized this summer, Seck now calls himself a “bandwagon fan.”

The Celtics sent Paul Pierce and Kevin Garnett to the Nets (along with lesser pieces Jason Terry and D.J. White).

They’re old, Seck said of Pierce and Garnett, but they have a lot of NBA experience.

In return, the Celts received Gerald Wallace, Kris Humphries, Kris Joseph, Keith Bogans, MarShon Brooks – and three all-important first-round draft picks.

Seck thinks that Rajon Rondo is the only player that could help the Celtics earn another championship even though this season, coming back from a major knee injury, might be the toughest of his career.

Nineteen-year-old Hamidou Seck, of Dorchester, says he is sure the Celtics will end up in the playoffs.

“It will be very challenging, but they will make it,” he said.

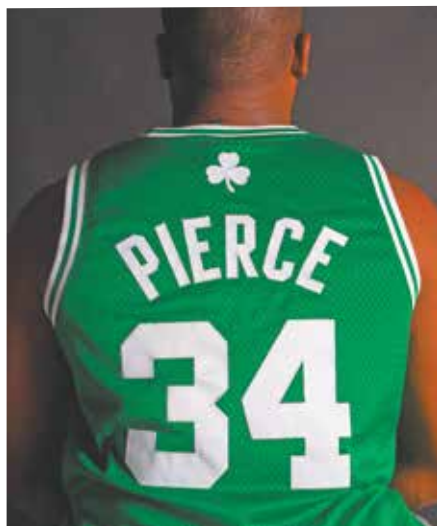
Sixteen-year-old Stephen Jagba from Dorchester believes the Celtics will do well this season but that the team won’t be as good as it was with Garnett and Pierce.

“Those two players have been in the league for many years and they have a lot of experience,” he said.

Jagba feels Celtics President of Basketball Operations Danny Ainge made the right decision in the trade because Pierce and Garnett were too old.

Jagba is a big booster of the Green, and says that no matter how good or bad they play this season, he will always be a Celtics fan. ■

AFH photo by Dominic Duong



## Crickets. That’s the sound many BPS athletes hear instead of adoring applause

By **Miren Chenevert** // Staff Writer

Barren bleachers and solemn stadiums are the backdrops to many Boston Public Schools athletic events.

“If you walk onto a field and no one’s there, it feels a little discouraging,” said Isabel DeLaura, 17, a captain of Boston Latin School’s girls’ soccer team.

Several BPS staffers confirm that fan presence can be scarce at high school games, with one saying that some teams entice fewer than 10 spectators a contest.

Unlike its suburban counterparts, Boston is made up of an array of neighborhood high schools rather than one big draw. As a result, time and location become critical to attracting fans.

With many schools having off-campus fields, fans are forced to travel a distance to see their teams play while athletes lose that all-important home field advantage. When location

isn’t driving fans away, time is also a problem because BPS teams often play in the afternoon before parents can leave work.

“It’s disappointing when no one shows because you put a lot of work in,” said BLS lacrosse player Connor O’Shea, 15.

Despite the hardships, some BPS staffers say that their games are well attended by prideful students and parents.

Still, some athletes say they try to use the absence of vocal boosters as a great motivator.

“It makes me want to do better because if we improve,” said Stephen Rezendes, 15, a BLS football player and wrestler, “more people will come and it will be a better experience overall.” ■

*Chenevert plays soccer at Boston Latin School.*

**“If you walk onto a field and no one’s there, it feels a little discouraging.”**

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IN COLLABORATION WITH  
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