

TEENS **in** PRINT BOSTON

BOSTON TEENS IN PRINT MAR-APR 2014™



Under their skin

Teens battle beauty barriers **PAGE 3**

GENDER MENDERS PAGE 9 • BILINGUAL BLISS PAGE 21 • ONLY A DREAM PAGE 23

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ART/PHOTOGRAPHY ARTISTS FOR HUMANITY

SENIOR EDITORS
SHANIQUE LEWIS
DENNIS MEMBAH
MARMARIN NASIRAHMAD
SHANAE SADDLER
MUSSUBA SAMATI

STAFF WRITERS
ADAMAJAN BAH
CHARLENE BROWNE
SARA CACHO
GRECIA CARTAGENA
MIREN CHENEVERT
BENSLEY S. DORNEVAL
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ILMA GOLEMI
MARCOS HERNANDEZ
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KRISTIANA MBRICE
MORELIA MORALES
CHRISTINE NGUYEN
LIZANDRO NOGUEIRA
FARMATA SAMATI
PENDA SECK
TENNEH SESAY
JAMES WHITTER
JAMAL YOUNG

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
AIA ABBAS
RAYMOND BARREAU
MELINA CABRAL
SENDIE DORCELLY
FABIO GONCALVES
GERARD KASEMBA
HECTOR LAWRENCE
HERYKSON LOPES
YARA MENDES
JULISSA MENDEZ
ANDRE OTSHUDI
LEONAL A. PEGUERO
VANESSA ROSA
KYESHA SLAUGHTER
KENDELL SOLIS
EVETTE THOMPSON
JOSE DANIEL S. VELASQUEZ
ELIANNY VENTURA
BETSAIDA VICIOSO
DEMETRIUS WILSON
NISHAN YOHANNES

**TEEN VOICES RISING
STAFF WRITERS**
THATIANA BELLAMY
ANNIE CHENG
CABRICIA DIAZ
NICOLE DUBOV
JANICE HE
MICHELLE JENKINS
COLIESHA TURNER

THE BOSTON GLOBE
ROBERT M. POWERS, ADVISOR
CESAR MOLINA,
DIRECTOR OF PRODUCTION
STEVEN LUMB, DESIGNER

WRITEBOSTON
BETTY SOUTHWICK, DIRECTOR
LIZ TORRES,
YOUTH PROGRAMS ASSOCIATE
RIC KAHN, TIP COORDINATOR



AFH art (clockwise from top) by Princess Morris, Emily Lyons, Leilah Bitar, and Jesse Racusen
AFH cover art by Ammany Ty; AFH cover photo by Dominic Duong

Community service

No credit needed.

Reach school

Skipping college altogether.

Going the distance

Bouncing back from the Marathon bombings.

Long shot

Giving female hoopsters a better chance.

Lion king

From a position of strength.

Alone together

Just friends.

Step right up

Learning the Azonto dance.

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teen voices rising

Giving girls a platform to be heard



Under their skin

Teens battle beauty barriers

By Janice He // TVR Staff Writer

Beauty is an idea. It's subjective. It's the zenith of gossip and is so powerful that society's definition of being beautiful has the power to introduce flaws and faults within ourselves.

Sometimes, it even destroys us.

When girls lie under the knife, they don't always return with what they expected. Many have been left disfigured and suffering, and some even paid the ultimate price. Like the 18-year-old Florida cheerleader who died in 2008 after undergoing

a reconstructive breast procedure.

Today, specialists say, many teens are choosing cosmetic surgery as a response to the ugly effects of bullying. The mantra hounding them has always been: Beauty is the path to happiness. But there's not a day in my life that I've heard the phrase: Happiness is the path to beauty.

Yet who's to say what beauty is and how it works?

I polled 25 teen girls, asking them: "How confident are you about your body on a scale of one to 10." Not a single girl replied with a 10. In fact, it was rare enough to even get an eight.

That kind of sentiment holds true as they get older, too. A study released by the producers of Dove in 2011 found that only four percent of women worldwide consider themselves to be beautiful.

A lot of girls seem to be influenced by the airbrushed images they are fed by modeling agencies, magazine covers, surgeons, friends, family.

Society.

Indeed, the pressure to fit the stunning stereotype starts early. The Dove study found that 72 percent of 10-to-17-year-old girls surveyed said they felt a heavy demand to live up to the term beautiful.

No wonder. One 2013 app for phones and tablets that has come under heavy criticism targeted young people with this clumsy come-on to play doctor in a game called "Plastic Surgery for Barbara":



AFH art by Alicia McBride

"Barbara likes to eat a lot of burgers and chocolates and once she found out that she looks ugly. She can't make it up with this situation any additional second. And today plastic surgeon is going to make operation on her body and face in order to return cute Barbara's look. She is afraid of all of this, but I know you will check that everything is over normally."

In the real world, the top two cosmetic surgical procedures nationally in 2012 were breast augmentations (286,000) and nose reshapings (243,000), according to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons.

Only four percent of women worldwide consider themselves to be beautiful.

How many more surgeries and pounds of makeup do we need until we are finally satisfied with what we truly are?

How much farther away from natural beauty can we get?

Many teen girls wonder: "Why can't they put normal people in ads?"

The instant we fall under society's expectations – and then under a surgeon's scalpel – is truly the time we lose both beauty and happiness.

It's at the point when we are satisfied with our own appearance that we will actually achieve beauty through happiness.

And maybe, for you and me, happiness can be our own path to beauty. ■

For more Teen Voices Rising pieces, please see pages 8-11.



TVR collage by Cabricia Diaz

BSAC BUZZ

By Julissa Mendez // Contributing Writer

While John McDonough has been acting as interim superintendent upon the retirement of Carol Johnson, the system needs to find a permanent replacement to lead the Boston Public Schools.

In the district's search for a worthy candidate, students, teachers, and parents are looking for a say in who becomes the next superintendent. The Boston Student Advisory Council has very specific requirements for the new superintendent that we hope will not be overlooked by the mayor and the school committee.

BSAC calls for a superintendent who:

- Puts students first, is a diverse and culturally competent leader who reflects the BPS community, and promotes the campaigns that will make our schools more just and safe for students.

- Promotes the funding and development of traditional public schools. He or she should support measurements for school, teacher, and student quality that do not rely on high-stakes testings that can create stressful classroom environments and pressure teachers to "teach to the test."

- Supports the new Code Of Conduct that features a tiered system of progressive discipline and provides due process for students facing potential suspension or expulsion.

- Creates quality partnerships for afterschool programming, youth jobs, and internships to enrich out-of-school time, provide safe spaces after school hours, and supply students with the skills they'll need to succeed before and after graduation.

- Ensures access to a diverse curriculum at every school, including honors and advanced placement classes, culturally relevant coursework, and SAT preparation.

- Supports a student-driven, centrally-administered grievance process by which students are able to report infractions that will be investigated by the central office. ■

Yes, sir Teens salute the junior military

By Christine Nguyen // Staff Writer

Joshua Villanueva, 15, says that he likes the military knowledge he is being taught in school.

"It helps me with my leadership skills," says Villanueva, a member of the Navy Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps at the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science.

Times have certainly changed since even the mid-2000s, when anti-JROTC activists argued at a City Council debate on the issue that the program was sidetracking Boston students from more well-rounded activities.

"It helps me with my leadership skills."

Today, according to the Boston Public Schools, JROTC representing different military branches is present in 10 district high schools.

Many students can be seen proudly strutting around campus in their uniforms.



AFH image by Elizabeth Lee

Merari Reyes, 16, an NJROTC member from the O'Bryant, feels the military instruction promotes respect for the nation.

However, NJROTC member Kianah Moss, 15, is not a fan of the program.

"It takes up time that could be used for other activities," says Moss, who goes to the O'Bryant. "If kids want to join the Navy, they could do it after high school, right?" ■

The author belongs to the NJROTC program at the O'Bryant.



AFH art by Jesse Racusen

Zero tolerance in school A big zero?

By Vanessa Rosa // Contributing Writer

A recent article in the New York Times began: "Faced with mounting evidence that get-tough policies in schools are leading to arrest records, low academic achievement and high dropout rates that especially affect minority students, cities and school districts around the country are rethinking their approach to minor offenses."

As teen advocates at the Boston Student Advisory Council have argued, the so-called

"zero tolerance" policies for small stuff force kids out of classrooms and back to the street.

This can lead to lower academic achievement and higher dropout rates. In the long run, students who are suspended or expelled from schools will have a harder time getting a job or going to college, and won't receive necessary in-school counseling.

This will only make it easier for gangs to recruit disengaged teens – leading to far worse crimes than students were originally banished from classes for. ■

Community service: A hard-and-fast requirement or given from the heart?

“It is a civic duty”

By Demetrius Wilson // Contributing Writer

Serving the community is a crucial component for a healthy society. It is a civic duty. It is up to the people who live in these communities to make sure they are well nourished for years to come.

Currently, many high schools are thinking about mandating community service as a graduation requirement. Many who do community service are motivated by altruism. Community service can be extremely

valuable in the development of both character and academics, but the negative effects of forcing students to participate outweigh the benefits.

When students are given a free choice to participate, they will be more likely to actually enjoy it. It molds you all around: mentally, intellectually, and maybe even physically.

If students have this requirement forced upon them, they will lose the ethical understanding of what it truly means to serve the community. ■



AFH art by Massiel Grullon

“The rewards are a lot more fulfilling”

By Hector Lawrence // Contributing Writer

Community service is an activity most Americans do every day. It might not be as complex and large-scale as organizing a food drive or starting a non-profit; sometimes it's as simple as picking up a soda can on the street and placing it inside a trash can. It makes a difference.

It's within our human nature to help others; it comes naturally and the rewards are a lot more fulfilling. Forcing students to do it takes away from their moral values. It teaches them that you should serve your community because you will later be rewarded either by a grade or a college admission, rather than for the purpose of helping others and improving a community.

Denying students who worked hard throughout their high school years a diploma because they failed to complete a certain number of community service hours is outrageous. ■



AFH art by Jeniya Ramirez

“It is part of a school's job”

By Kyesha Slaughter // Contributing Writer

Is mandated community service really that bad? It is part of a school's job to help students become better citizens.

Community service exposes you to different viewpoints of the world. It is an excellent way to gain a range of skills. It bridges gaps between different types of people and preserves our neighborhoods. And it teaches the new generation about giving.

If students already participate in community service, there must be something they find enjoyable about it. So why would a few more hours hurt? ■



AFH photo by Idalmis Cirino



Photo by AFH

College free-for-all: free for all

By Kendell Solis // Contributing Writer

College should be free for everyone. It would make the economy stronger because more people would be able to get more education. They could innovate things that would help create new products and jobs.

Every single person has something to offer. They should have the opportunity to discover what they're good at. Right now, the high cost of college prevents many from doing that.

Maybe you could come up with the next vaccine – but you might not know it until you do a project for your science class. You'll need the insights and critical thinking skills you gain in history and social studies to fight poverty and homelessness, crime and discrimination, and make the nation more fair and free. ■

A college decree: It's not for everyone

By Melina Cabral // Contributing Writer

In the current rush of students heading to college, it's a good time to ask: why?

I've seen successful people in life who did not go. It is because they took advantage of opportunities that life offered them and thought about how their jobs would help them in the future.

For instance, in the Dominican Republic there was a neighbor who did not go to college. Instead, he started working in a bank until he had enough money to build his own. Then, he became owner of numerous small banks throughout the city.

Forcing students to go to college knowing they don't want to is not going to take them anywhere.

I believe teens should be aware that it is not mandatory for everyone to attend college to succeed. ■



AFH photo by Alice Tran

Motivational speakers

Teens tell what gets them going to school

By Kelvin Freire // Staff Writer

It's hard staying up late to finish hours of homework and then getting up early to hop trains and buses to get to school. What motivates you?

For 19-year-old Ziqui Zhang, from Brighton High School, it's pure fear.

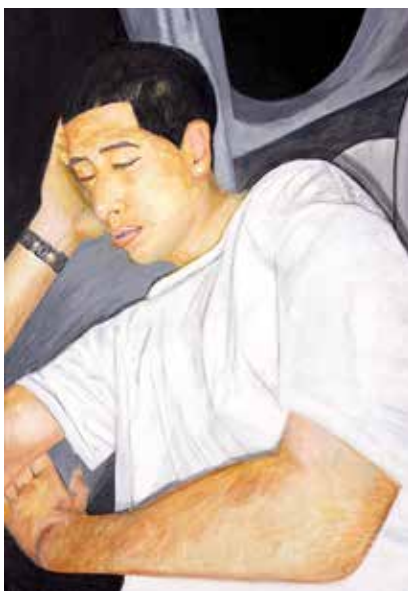
"If I don't go to college," says Zhang, "my life is ruined."

Ariane Silva, 17, says her mother gets her up every day.

"To be successful in life, I need to go to school," says Silva, from Brighton High. "My mother taught me this."

Jalen Campbell, 18, from Brighton High, gets a certain joy from going to school.

"I just like learning," Campbell says, "and I like spending time with my friends." ■



AFH art by Arcadia Giron



AFH art by Lucas Poles

The new Jim Crow

By Raymond Barreau // Contributing Writer

One day at West Roxbury Academy, a book screamed out at me in large, bold print: "The New Jim Crow," by Michelle Alexander. It stopped me from rushing down the stairs during class transition. The paperback sat in the student teacher's palm as if it were on display. The subtitle read: "Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness." The cover photo was of an African-American behind bars. I thought to myself, "What in the world does this mean?"

I remembered the term "Jim Crow" thanks to freshman year in history class. The Jim Crow era involved the official separation of blacks and whites in the late 1800s to mid 1900s in the US.

The book seemed interesting. So I bought it.

The first few pages exposed the main idea that African-Americans are imprisoned in massive numbers in this country. In fact, this means that an extraordinary percentage of black men in the US are banned from voting today – depending on the state.

I thought the civil rights movement changed things for us.

But Alexander argues that the historic racial caste system never ended. If anything, she says,

Uncle Sam merely redesigned it by keeping blacks down through the criminal justice system.

Many of the blacks in jail, Alexander says, are by-products of the War on Drugs.

According to the NAACP's criminal justice fact sheet, five times as many whites use drugs as do African-Americans, yet African-Americans are sent to prison for drug offenses at 10 times the rate of whites.

Once these African-Americans join the felon class, Alexander says, many can't get the money for an education. They can't find good jobs. They end up stuck on food stamps and relegated to a subordinated existence.

"If current trends continue," says the NAACP, "one in three black males born today can expect to spend time in prison during his lifetime."

One in three. That's messed up.

I've talked to friends about this. They're aware of the continuing injustice but feel they can't do anything about it.

Every time we try to improve conditions, they say, something seems to get in the way. ■



AFH photo by Ping Zeng

AFH photo by Briahna Omorogbe

The Boston Marathon bombings: one year later

By Evette Thompson // Contributing Writer

It is hard to believe that it has been a year since the Marathon bombings. I can still remember it like it happened yesterday. My heart beating faster than it ever had because I was stuck in a commotion caused by two explosives. Horror written all over the faces of those who were there, shaken from the tragedy that still does not seem to make sense.



AFH art by Jesse Racusen

On that fateful Monday morning, my family had decided to go see the Marathon, which had attracted both elite and amateur runners from all over the world. My mom, brother, and I cheered as runners both young and old made their way to the finish line.

I decided to take a picture of the international flags that represented the countries of the different runners. The Marathon was a Boston tradition but people from around the globe came to participate. They all had the same goal, to cross the finish line. As the late reggae singer Lucky Dube once said: "Different colors, one people."

Just when I was about to snap the picture, I heard a loud bang. The ground shook. For a second, I felt dizzy. I looked around. There was smoke everywhere. My first thought was: "Oh my God, that's a bomb or something." Then I felt a hand pulling me away.

It was my mom. She was pushing my brother and me through the crowd, which seemed confused and shocked and frozen in place. Parents hugged their children to comfort them. As we moved through the throng, we heard a second bomb go off in our direction. That was when things got crazy. There were people screaming and running around, and there was blood everywhere, like something out of a horror

movie. We were close to Lord & Taylor and were able to escape through the store's back exit.

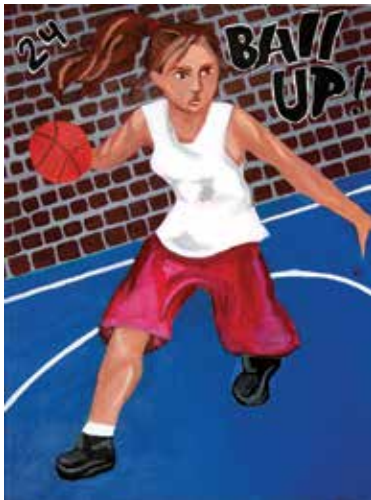
When we got home, the first thing I did was turn on the television for updates. The eventual toll was four dead – including a police officer later fatally shot, allegedly by the suspected bombers – and more than 260 injured.

Through this heartbreaking period, the goodwill of Bostonians overcame the bad. Boston stood strong and showed that in a world full of wickedness and evil, good people still exist: the first responders who rushed to the scene; the people who donated blood and money to the relief efforts.

Being so close to the finish line made me realize that I had taken things for granted. It taught me how precious life is and that I have to use the opportunity of being alive to make a positive impact on society. ■



Photo by AFH



AFH art (clockwise from top) by
Dylan Dos Santos, Eric Bullard,
Adriana Dalíe, Gabriela Cruzado,
and Leilah Bitar



Girls deserve a shot

By **Cabricia Diaz** // TVR Staff Writer

There's a thin line separating tradition and misogyny.

When thinking of high school basketball, do you see tall, uniformed guys running in packs and drenched in pride? Or do you see the girls' basketball team practicing for the semifinals?

At many schools, there seems to be a passive discrimination in terms of which games – or gender – to support. Though the games may be equally announced to the student body over the intercom, girl athletes say they can hear a pin drop on the court when it comes to game day.

The silence is not surprising.

According to the Women's Sports Foundation website, girls still play under poorer conditions when compared to their male counterparts and have 1.3 million fewer sports opportunities at the high school level.

It doesn't stop there.

Girls receive more than \$190 million fewer scholarship dollars annually than guys when they play college sports, according to the Women's Sports Foundation.

So the question is: Are you part of the lack of having the female athlete's back? ■

Shy no more

By **Michelle Jenkins** // TVR Staff Writer

Growing up, I was one of those girls who was always smiling, a joy to be around. But behind my beautiful smile was my shyness. As the years went on, I noticed that my shyness grew.

In school, I would always sit in the back of the class. I was safe there. If I sat in the front, I would be in the spotlight. I never wanted to raise my hand. I was fearful that I would be judged if I did not know the answer.

"You are nice and quiet," my classmates said. I would just smile.

In sixth grade, some of my teachers pushed me to come out of my shell. One day in social studies our teacher told us that we had to research a state we had learned about. I was excited about the project until she said we would have to present to the class and that it counted for 20 percent of my grade.

I had no choice.

On the day of the presentation, I was nervous. So many things were going through my head. I thought I was going to mess up and get laughed at. "How am I going to start? What if the class asks questions?" I wondered.

But I did it.

I aced my presentation and I felt good about myself. I realized that as long as I know what I'm capable of doing that I can be successful.

Now, I am feeling stronger than ever. The advice I have for other shy students is to be open to different opportunities. You will build confidence in yourself and feel like you have achieved something new. My self-confidence was hidden behind a wall, and now it has broken through. ■



Teen Voices Rising staff members wrote about gender roles in their families and whether or not sexism plays a part.



AFH art by Latonia Elliott

On the agenda: gender

Welcome to a sexist-free home

By Janice He // TVR Staff Writer

I didn't know sexism existed until I first encountered the topic when reading a history book. My parents have always been really far from holding the typical gender roles depicted of women being housewives and inferior to men.

To start off, my father has a deep passion for cleaning -- sometimes a little too much. He constantly picks up after me and my siblings and notices every little crumb as if he had installed surveillance cameras around the house. The difference with my mom is that she cares more about the ambiance and less about the detail, and always maintains a comfortable and fresh atmosphere.

It's very peculiar, but my parents always had this very competitive nature in them. They tended to see each other as opponents trying to outwork the other by pleasing all our guests and spoiling me and my siblings.

One day, we had guests over and both my parents saw this as an opportunity to really impress them with their cooking skills. My brother and I would giggle because every time a guest took a bite, my parents would ask what he or she thought and whether it had beaten the rival's dish. And to their disappointment, the guests would always reply very politely: "They're all very delicious."

In a sexist household, one gender overlooks the value of the opposite gender. Thankfully, my parents raised their children in a sexist-free home. The only thing to fear now is everywhere else. ■

The tables did turn

By Cabricia Diaz // TVR Staff Writer

I remember my mother moving frantically in the kitchen. Yelling at my father who went shopping for a chicken. My mom wanted a turkey and so she sent my dad back to the car. Preparing six hours before the party was apparently a bad time to start. My dad was annoyed because he would much rather be sleeping. Too tired to pay close attention to the grocery list he was reading. The seasoning had to be made and potatoes needed peeling. There weren't words to describe the frustration my mother was feeling. Me and my sister took over the side jobs to get back the time we had lost. The kitchen was the workplace and my mom was the boss. Dad's behavior was typical, but quickly we learned. That it was never too late for the tables to turn. My brother, who lived in Worcester, arrived shortly after. He calmly asked my mother if he could take her place in the kitchen. It was no joke -- but there was laughter. By cook, I thought it meant he could restrain from burning the house down by trying. But he sent my mother away for a nap as she claimed she was "this close" to dying. My brother, a guy, was in charge of pots and stoves. He finished the rest of the meal in two hours or so. I was agog, I was aghast, at my brother's sudden ability. He showed way more promise compared to my dad's vulnerability. My mom jokingly took credit for the entire delicious meal. We all knew it was courtesy of my brother. Embarrassment was all that my father could feel. As we all talked with our mouths full at the same time, it was hysterical. That's the story of my big dinner where there was quite a miracle. ■



AFH photo by Dominic Duong
AFH art by Laura De Los Angeles



Mommy issues

Teen Voices Rising staff members wrote about the complexities of their mother-daughter relationships in shaping their identities and how they view a female's role in society.



TVR art

Dear Head of Household...

By TVR Staff Writer

Where do I begin? I know that in this letter I will not say all that is on my mind, but I guess I'll start with this: For a long time, you were the person that I tried so hard to impress. You were the one I wanted to make smile.

After that turbulence in our lives, everything changed. My grades dropped, my weight rose. My best friend wasn't there. I had no one to turn to. You pretty much made it clear that you didn't want to be that person, that type of mom. I don't even call you my mom anymore because I have acknowledged that she left a long time ago.

After all you have put me through, I will never look up to you. I will never want to be you. I will never want to be by your side.

Do you not realize that I've hated myself for so long because of the power I gave you? I have tried so hard to become something other than that little girl who allowed others to get to her and who

felt worthless. But you make me feel like all that work was for nothing. Every time I look at you I see failure and disappointment – in both me and you.

You make me feel so alone. Do I matter to you? All I ever hear out of your mouth are complaints and orders. Why is it that you've hated me? What did I do to you?

But now you come out of nowhere trying to be my friend. When I tried my best to impress you, I was invisible. Now that you see I'm happy and have friends who care, you want to talk to me about your petty problems. Well, it's too late to build a relationship with someone who takes and never gives.

Being your daughter is something I'll never be able to do because I can't grasp the idea of the person who brought me down seeing me rise up – and being able to brag about it.

I will respect you as the head of the household, but that is it. ■

But I didn't think of that...

Fragile

By TVR Staff Writer

Paint-dipped marigolds wave in the sun.
Fingertips graze my heart.
Hand-picked violets decay in their vase.
Touch like ice, the death washes over me.
Don't touch, fragile.

Voices waft through the atmosphere.
Disembodied dandelions.
Soft sounds muffle as they escape reality.
Heartless desires.
Don't touch, fragile.

Roots sunk deep into the earth.
Hands reach out from beneath me.
Muddy waters glinting in the sun.
Eyes roll open and shut.
Don't touch, fragile. ■

By TVR Staff Writer

Mommy issues?

When I first heard that term, I immediately began listing all the wrongs and flaws of my mother.

Like how she never spent enough time with me.

Or never bothered to check on how I was doing in school. She never took the time to appear at my performances. She never seemed to care.

But as I reached deeper down the list, it ended – quicker than I would have hoped.

Because it would have been so much easier to complain about everything I disliked.

But when it did, a wave of new thoughts washed over my mind. And then I felt guilt and anger towards myself, Because I was so focused on everything my mom did that didn't satisfy me, that they nearly began to disguise, Who my mother really was. See, if there was a spectrum of motherhood, she would be on the opposite end of

A bad mother. She works constantly, two to three jobs every time.

That's why she cannot spend every minute of her life with me.

But I didn't think of that. Because when she comes home from work, Exhausted, she cooks for me and my siblings in addition to all her Other priorities. Which also explains why she was not there to watch Me perform.

But I didn't think of that.

And because she is so proud of me, she never needs to check My grades. Or worry the slightest bit about me. Because she trusts me. But I didn't think of that.

And until I began writing this, did I realize how wonderful and strong My mother is? And how much more grateful I am to be her daughter? ■



TVR art

My mother is a flower

By TVR Staff Writer

My mother is a flower. She had been handpicked by whoever is the one who picks flowers. But we all know what happens to a flower when it's picked. It begins to deteriorate. It begins to fall apart right before our eyes.

My mother is a flower. She fell apart, petal by petal. Petal by petal. She wasn't given enough water, or sunlight, or love, to grow. She was picked too early.

I will never be a flower. My mother showed me what it was like to be a flower and I will never be anything that needs to rely on other things to keep me going. I will be strong. I will not be susceptible to the harsh realities that are known to kill flowers. I will be indestructible. I must not be a flower. I will be untouchable. I cannot be a flower. I will help myself. I will not be a flower.

My mother is a flower. My mother has let her last petal drop to the ground. Her fragrance is no longer there. Her leaves have shriveled up.

Flowers are dependent. Flowers are easily stepped on by those careless enough not to watch where they're going. Flowers require a lot of attention. Flowers have a temper like you've never seen, a temper you wouldn't think existed. But they're constantly upset by the change in weather and the lack of sunlight. They are easily bent by the strong winds of the world.

**Petal by petal.
She wasn't given
enough water,
or sunlight, or
love, to grow.**

Now, one may say I am too harsh on my mother. One may say that I don't understand. And they wouldn't be completely wrong. I do have harsh judgments because I know what my mother was like before. Before everything. Before life got a little more difficult than usual. If she were not a flower, she would have been able to handle things when they got tough and wouldn't have dragged me into it. She would have been able to stand up against the harsh winds of the world and wouldn't get angry about things she could not control. She wouldn't need to rely on artificial strength. She would be able to allow me to depend on her, but I can't, because she can't even depend on herself. ■

Three wishes

By TVR Staff Writer

1. Lose weight

I never really had problems with my body until middle school. One day I came home from a long day of school and piled food onto my plate like I hadn't just eaten three hours ago. You walked into the kitchen and looked at the mountain of food in disgust. Suddenly, I wasn't so hungry anymore. Seeing something like that from my mom, of all people, hurt worse than the actions of bullies at school.

2. Be worthy of you

If there is anything I learned, that even school could not teach me, it is that money brings out the worst in people. I just came home with money in hand, ready to use it for food, clothes, and other frivolous things teenagers spend their dollars on. It was not on my itinerary to give you my only source of income that I worked hard for— as you demanded.

That night, in big, fat letters, I wrote in my diary that I hated you. I quickly scribbled it out and silenced those thoughts. But what I could not stifle is the voice in my head that tells me you don't love me.

3. Be one of the objects of your true love

I hate hugging people, and that is because of you.

Every time I hug you, you shrug out of my embrace like I burned you. Now I've become an anti-sentimental person. I don't do hugs, kisses, or I-love-yous so that I'm not reminded of all the fake ones you gave me. ■



TVR art



TVR art

Stay

By TVR Staff Writer

I think I found a way to love you.
But I learned to keep it all in.
And learned to never trust a soul again.

I learned that I could live without it.
When I took everything you said to heart.
I know that family's everything and everything can feel so dark.

Tell me lies before you say goodbye.
Don't say goodnight 'cause the sun won't come back again.
You know exactly where I've been.

Oh, sticks and stones didn't break your bones.
But did you know that me breaking down is still okay?
Before you rot away,
Are you here to stay?

I already know that you raised me.
So don't tell me who or when to love.
Don't tell me to appreciate what I have when you were never enough.

Did you know your warmth could have saved me?
Your touch used to make me smile.
So don't ask me, "Why are you cold?" when you know it's been a while.

Oh, sticks and stones didn't break your bones.
But did you know that me breaking down is still okay?
Before you rot away,
Are you here to stay?

You know you broke your promises.
And you killed my every dream.
Please stay with me.

You know I still have faith in you.
I find new ways to keep my strength.
I still check if you're breathing.
Please stay, please stay, please stay, don't be leaving.

I told you lies before you said goodbye.
I won't say goodbye 'cause the sun won't come back for me again.
I know exactly where you've been.

Sticks and stones did break my bones.
I didn't know me breaking down was still okay.
Don't want you to rot away.
I want you to stay. ■

The authors' names have been withheld due to the sensitive nature of the content.

**ADAMAJAN BAH**

Your astrological sign? **Libra**.
The sign's characteristic that most describes you? **Grace and charm when helping others**.
The sign's characteristic that least describes you? **Forgetting to take care of my own needs**.

**CHARLENE BROWNE**

Your astrological sign? **Aquarius**.
The sign's characteristic that most describes you? **A visionary**.
The sign's characteristic that least describes you? **Unemotional**.

**SARA CACHO**

Your astrological sign?
I don't believe in it.
I am: **Generous**.
I am not: **Selfish**.

**GRECIA CARTAGENA**

Your astrological sign? **Sagittarius**.
The sign's characteristic that most describes you? **Talkative**.
The sign's characteristic that least describes you? **Quiet**.

**MIREN CHENEVERT**

Your astrological sign? **Libra**.
The sign's characteristic that most describes you? **Hospitable**.
The sign's characteristic that least describes you? **Unreliable**.

**BENSLEY S. DORNEVAL**

Your astrological sign? **Cancer**.
The sign's characteristic that most describes you? **Good memory**.
The sign's characteristic that least describes you? **Moody**.

**KELVIN FREIRE**

Your astrological sign? **Aquarius**.
The sign's characteristic that most describes you? **Humble**.
The sign's characteristic that least describes you? **Shy**.

**ILMA GOLEMI**

Your astrological sign? **Aquarius**.
The sign's characteristic that most describes you? **Friendly**.
The sign's characteristic that least describes you? **Rebellious**.

**MARCOS HERNANDEZ**

Your astrological sign? **Scorpio**.
The sign's characteristic that most describes you? **Passionate**.
The sign's characteristic that least describes you? **Resentful**.

**IRIS HUERTAS**

Your astrological sign? **Aries**.
The sign's characteristic that most describes you? **Curious**.
The sign's characteristic that least describes you? **Quiet**.

**RALPH T. KARNUAH**

Your astrological sign? **Leo**.
The sign's characteristic that most describes you? **Generous**.
The sign's characteristic that least describes you? **Self-centered**.

**ALEXA LARA**

Your astrological sign? **Leo**.
The sign's characteristic that most describes you? **Determined**.
The sign's characteristic that least describes you? **Melodramatic**.

**JENNIFER LE**

Your astrological sign? **Gemini**.
The sign's characteristic that most describes you? **Inquisitive**.
The sign's characteristic that least describes you? **Quick-witted**.

**SHANIQUE LEWIS**

Your astrological sign? **Cancer**.
The sign's characteristic that most describes you? **Loyal**.
The sign's characteristic that least describes you? **Clingy**.

TEENS IN PRINT

MEET THE STAFF

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 news articles, feature pieces, opinion essays, poems, or editorial cartoons.

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Please provide your full name, grade, and school. You must attend one of the Boston public secondary schools.

CALL US:
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► Whatever you submit has to be **YOUR OWN CREATION**. We only print original work. You will not get it back, so please **KEEP A COPY** for yourself. Teens in Print reserves the right to **EDIT** your work for length, content, or appropriateness.

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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 an email to TiP coordinator Ric Kahn at ric.kahn@boston.gov. Please include your full name, school, and grade and we may run your letter in an upcoming edition. Thank you.

► To join the Teens in Print staff, please express your interest in an email to the TiP coordinator at ric.kahn@boston.gov

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writeboston.org

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

ABOUT US

Boston Teens in Print is the only citywide 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.

**KRISTIANA MBRICE**

Your astrological sign? **Aries**.
The sign's characteristic that most describes you? **Fearless**.
The sign's characteristic that least describes you? **Confident**.

**DENNIS MEMBAH**

Your astrological sign? **Pisces**.
The sign's characteristic that most describes you? **Kind**.
The sign's characteristic that least describes you? **Non-leader**.

**MORELIA MORALES**

Your astrological sign?
I don't believe in it.
I am: **Kind**.
I am not: **Selfish**.

**MARMARIN NASIRAHMAD**

Your astrological sign? **Sagittarius**.
The sign's characteristic that most describes you? **Honest**.
The sign's characteristic that least describes you? **Sensitive**.

**CHRISTINE NGUYEN**

Your astrological sign? **Capricorn**.
The sign's characteristic that most describes you? **Stubborn**.
The sign's characteristic that least describes you? **Patient**.

**LIZANDRO NOGUEIRA**

Your astrological sign? **Taurus**.
The sign's characteristic that most describes you? **Determined**.
The sign's characteristic that least describes you? **Stubborn**.

**SHANAE SADDLER**

Your astrological sign? **Capricorn**.
The sign's characteristic that most describes you? **Ambitious**.
The sign's characteristic that least describes you? **Selfish**.

**FARMATA SAMATI**

Your astrological sign? **Aquarius**.
The sign's characteristic that most describes you? **Humanitarian**.
The sign's characteristic that least describes you? **Rebellious**.

**MUSSUBA SAMATI**

Your astrological sign? **Sagittarius**.
The sign's characteristic that most describes you? **Straightforward**.
The sign's characteristic that least describes you? **Inconsistent**.

**PENDA SECK**

Your astrological sign? **Leo**.
The sign's characteristic that most describes you? **Ambitious**.
The sign's characteristic that least describes you? **Stubborn**.

**TENNEH SESAY**

Your astrological sign? **Sagittarius**.
The sign's characteristic that most describes you? **Independent**.
The sign's characteristic that least describes you? **Lazy**.

**JAMES WHITTER**

Your astrological sign? **Taurus**.
The sign's characteristic that most describes you? **Clever**.
The sign's characteristic that least describes you? **Frugal**.

**JAMAL YOUNG**

Your astrological sign? **Virgo**.
The sign's characteristic that most describes you? **Strive to be extraordinary**.
The sign's characteristic that least describes you? **Conservative**.

Our well-rounded staff
is represented in
all 12
of the astrological signs.

Working class

Teaching teens on-the-job safety

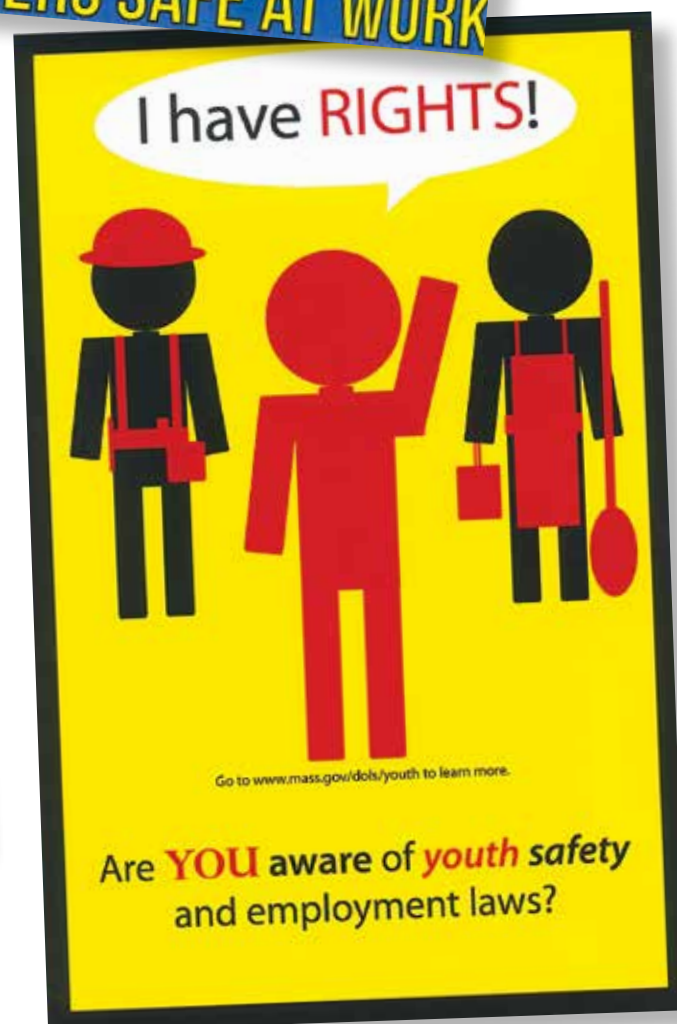
It's hard enough for teens to find jobs. Then, many of them end up getting hurt in the workplace. State stats show that Massachusetts teens average over 700 work-related emergency room visits every year, according to safety advocates.

As part of an effort to promote on-the-job awareness, officials and activists have announced winners of the fourth annual statewide Safe Jobs for Youth poster contest, designed to help educate young people about dangers in the workplace.

Below are the entries judged by 88 youth to be the top posters out of a batch created by the 154 teens who participated in the competition, sponsored by state and federal agencies along with the Massachusetts Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health, headquartered in Dorchester.

Liz Otero, from Worcester Technical High School, won first place and a cash prize of \$500. Nicholas Horvath, from Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School, took home second place and \$300. Evelyn Lourie, from Newburyport High School, came in third and received \$100.

On the opposite page are posters from among those awarded honorable mention. They were produced by Alexander Begin, from Diman Regional Vocational High School; Josephina Lin, from Wellesley High School; and Julia Murphy, from Greater Lowell Technical High School. ■

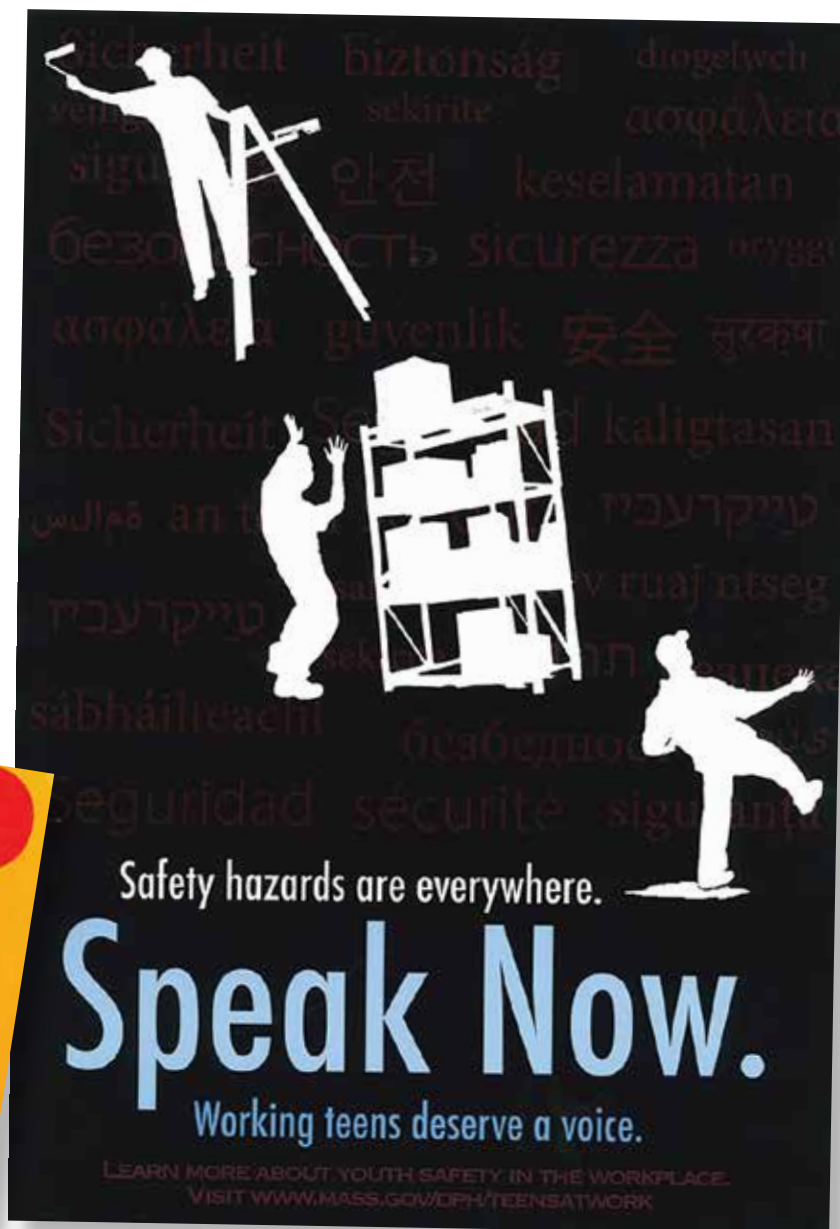
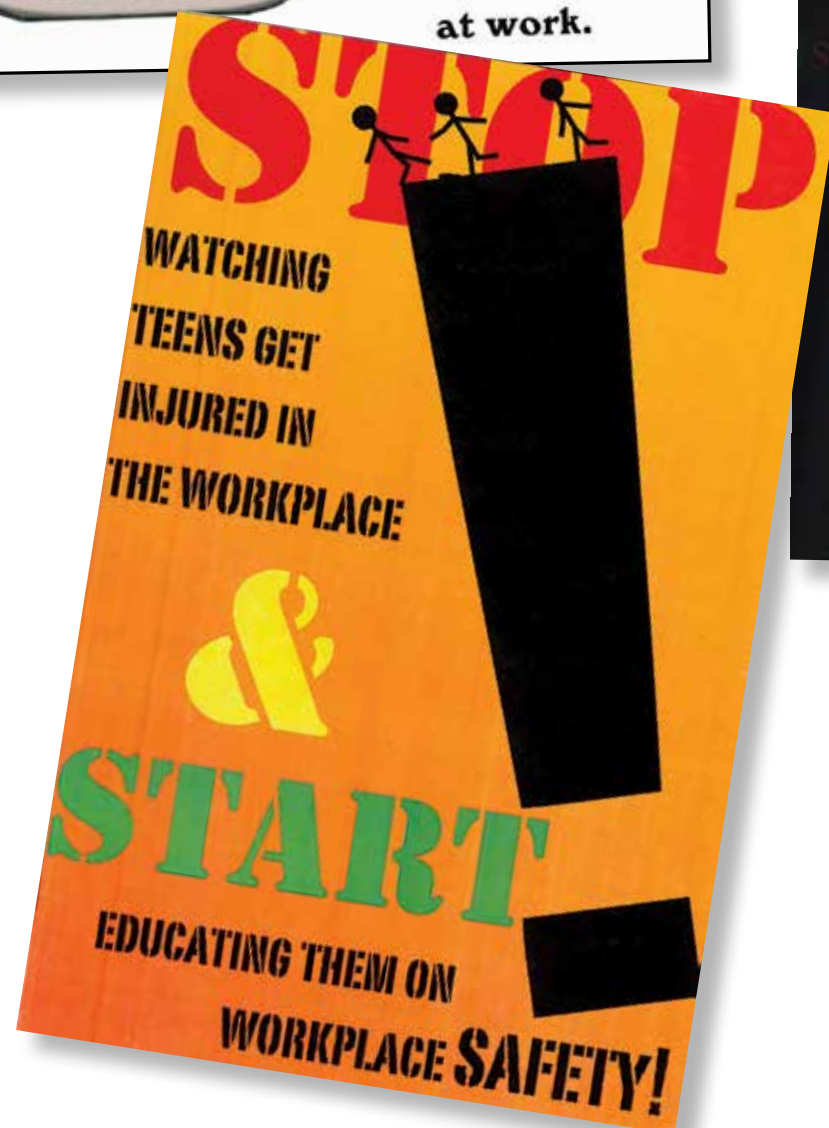


SAFETY at your fingertips.

It's not just for texting.

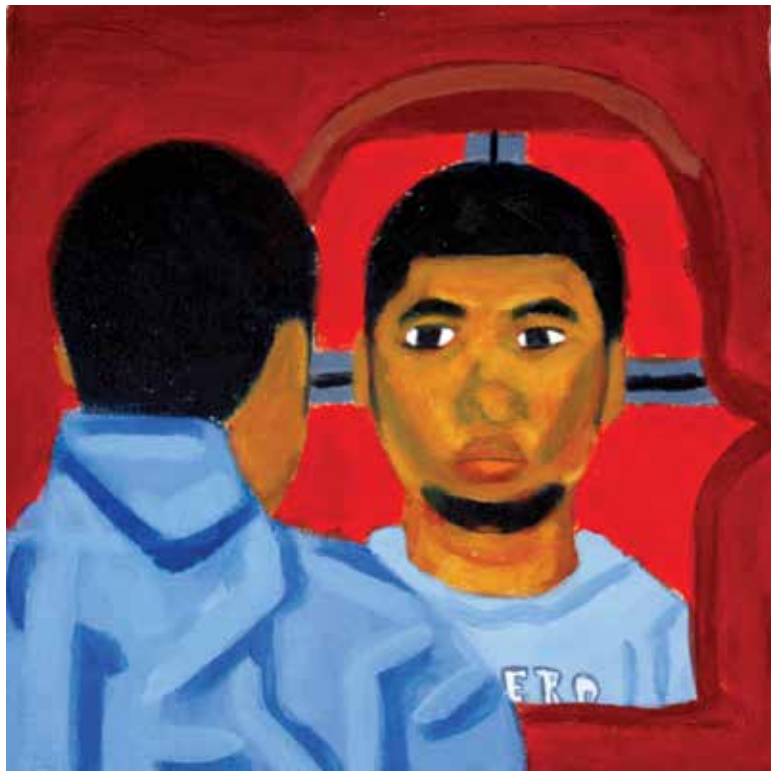


You have the **RIGHT** to be safe and healthy at work.



Posters opposite page (clockwise from top) by Nicholas Horvath, from Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School; Evelynne Lourie, from Newburyport High School; and Liz Otero, from Worcester Technical High School.

Posters this page (clockwise from top) by Alexander Begin, from Diman Regional Vocational High School; Josephina Lin, from Wellesley High School; and Julia Murphy, from Greater Lowell Technical High School.



AFH art by Leo Gambino

“Looking at the world from the inside out”

By Herykson Lopes // Contributing Writer

Who is Herykson Lopes? Well, where can I begin? I'm the type of person who knows it all but is afraid to speak his mind. I feel like I'm looking at the world from the inside out.

I struggled a lot when I first moved to the United States from Cape Verde. I tried to fit in with the popular crew – even if that meant getting into trouble. One time, we went to the convenience store and my so-called friends tried to pressure me into shoplifting. Being the dummy I am, with no hesitation I started stuffing snacks into every pocket. The owner caught me, locked the doors, and called the police. While I was emptying my pockets, I noticed my friends had fled. Luckily for me, I got off with a slap on the wrist.

When you are young, you can make some bad choices.

One positive I can take from this is that true friends are the ones who accept you for who you are. I also came to realize that it is better to be a leader than a follower.

I feel it is an honor to be educated in the United States, especially Boston. Boston has some of the best schools and colleges in the world. I hear other immigrants say they were heartbroken about being torn away from their families, but I consider it an opportunity and a blessing to come to a country where, with a little backbreaking work and determination, you can become anything you desire. ■



AFH photo by Dominic Duong

Who am I?

“You will be proud of what you did and thank me later”

By Fabio Goncalves // Contributing Writer

I was an ambitious young boy with the desire to come to Estados Unidos one day and be an American. My amazing mom left me before I knew her to follow her destiny to come to the US and help us survive.

My grandparents became my parents, and I had to follow what they expected me to do. I was seven years old and I did not want to be in Cape Verde digging land to plant, feeding the goats, or milking the cows. But I had no choice. My grandfather and I worked five hours straight, sweating and breaking our backs until I went to school.

In 2004, my grandpa suffered a heart attack on the farm and died. It was a struggle because I had to encourage my grandma and myself to overcome his death. Then we received a visa to America. I didn't care that I left behind my animals, land, and friends because I was coming to the US.

When I put my foot on US land, I felt like I was in a different world. Everything seemed huge and beautiful, just like paradise.

When I put my foot on US land, I felt like I was in a different world.

Then reality hit. When I got home from school after that first day, I told my mom I was going to quit because I could not read, speak, or write English. I would get a job instead. She said, “Are you out of your mind? OK, you will get a job at McDonald's, but you will work there for the rest of your life. Why don't you get yourself back to school. You will be proud of what you did and thank me later.”

Today I am a senior and will hopefully graduate in June, then go to college. Anywhere I go, I will bring my teachers and my family in my heart because they put me on the right track. ■

“I am not who I think I am”

By Gerard Kasemba // Contributing Writer

Who am I? I don't have the right answer because I am not who I think I am. I am what others think about me. One thing I have always kept in mind is that I won't try to argue against the judgments that others may have about me.

I have always been fascinated with computers. If there is one thing that I want to study, this will be computers. I did research and started to read books until I learned how to develop websites.

I believe that one day I will transmit what I know to others because programming is something very fun. I hope that they will feel the same way as I did the first time I developed a website. ■



AFH photo by Cynthia Ginnett

"I love helping people"

By Aia Abbas // Contributing Writer

I was born in Iraq. Iraq is almost the center of the world, and also rich with oil. We were happy all the time. My dad took us every Friday to visit famous places, and he cooked for my mother and me.

After the war, though, my life was destroyed. My dad died; my grandmother, too. My friends were all gone. I was torn away from every single thing I loved in my life. Sometimes I felt lonely and broken.

Then my mother decided to leave the country. Too dangerous. When we got to Boston, we didn't know anyone and we didn't speak English. It was like a bomb exploded because students were making fun of me.

In America, the teachers were always there to help me. Year after year, I started meeting new students. I began to feel a connection with them; we stuck together like family.

Now, my future is something I choose. I want to become an X-ray technician because I love helping people. ■



AFH art by Joel Diaz



AFH art by Maya Chin

"Being educated in Boston is a huge part of my life"

By Leonal A. Peguero // Contributing Writer

When I was a little kid in DR, I did not like school at all, and I did not do well. I used to go to school early in the morning. Unfortunately, I used to go to bed late at night.

I worked at an early age with my father, repairing cars. I earned my own money and gave some of it to my mother.

In Boston, I am living with my aunt. I love her and I am grateful about what she is doing for me but she will never love me or understand me as well as my parents.

Being educated in Boston is a huge part of my life. I think it will decide if I succeed or I fail. ■



AFH photo by Genesis Perez

"I'm just a hurt lion"

By Betsaida Vicioso // Contributing Writer

Life is not fair at all. People do you a favor, waiting to get it back. Family? What is it?

At the age of two, my parents got divorced. My mother remarried and moved to the United States from DR. My brothers and I got separated from each other.

From the age of four, I bounced around from house to house like a nomad.

At the age of 12, I got the news that my three brothers and I were coming to the United States to finally live together with my mom. It made my heart beat faster than it ever did. The dream of having a real family was going to come true.

But instead of my family coming together, it broke apart. Everyone took their own path.

In my school, there are teachers who help you, who want to see you succeed in life. That's the only part I could say is positive for me coming to the United States. The love you can't always find is there at school.

Having the support of friends and teachers is what motivates me to move forward, go to college, become a lawyer, and build the family that I never had.

Some people think that I'm an emotionless person and have a dark heart. But in reality, I'm just a hurt lion who needs to be strong on the outside so the other animals in the jungle don't put me down. ■



AFH art by Emily Lyons



“Gold must pass through the fire to shine”

By Elianny Ventura // Contributing Writer

Reaching the US and facing another side of the world is the dream of many people in my country, Dominican Republic, because in some way they think life here is better. But it wasn't for me. I always felt the way I used to live was enjoyable, and having my mom and my family around made life feel absolute. Then I had to say bye to my family, the people that I grew up with, and my country – a beautiful island where life is full of blessedness, even when you don't have anything to eat. America took me away from my family.

My mom had to stay in my country.

At first, I wasn't capable of understanding that gold must pass through fire to shine. Now I recognize how strong this situation has made me.

I never thought I could take care of a teenager, my brother, when I'm a teenager myself. I never saw myself able to help take care of a house, pay bills, and try to be a perfect role model to my brother, who became my motivation to keep going to school and to work at the same time.

Here, I've gotten to know other teenagers who had to leave their family and childhood just like me. This is not going to resolve my problems. But it helps me understand I'm not the only one facing them and that we can support each other along the way in our journey to graduate high school and build a greater future.

This future involves helping teens face the real world as a psychologist or counselor. ■



AFH photo by Abraham Rosa; AFH art by Thornton Nguyen

“I am the most lucky person”

By Nishan Yohannes // Contributing Writer

I was raised in Eritrea by a single mother who sacrificed her life for her kids. She was a powerful woman. She always made sure we had food, clothes, and also her love.

I left my country for a better education. It was really difficult to go without my mom. She did not have her papers. I could see the pain on her face. I miss everything that she did for me: her food, our friendship, the way she spoiled me.

It is really hard to stay away from the person that you love, but sometimes in life you have to make sacrifices. We talk on the phone every day.

In Eritrea, education is not that important. The government gives more attention to the military. Many end up dropping out of school. I want to be a better person.

I can say I am the most lucky person because not everybody has the opportunity to be educated in America.

I want to be the first person in my family to become a nurse. In my country, we don't have a lot of doctors and nurses and you see people losing their lives really easily. ■



AFH art by Kitauna Parker



AFH photo by Idalmis Cirino

“I felt like I was starting a new life”

By Sendie Dorcelly // Contributing Writer

For many years I considered Haiti the most lovely country. Every Sunday the neighborhood kids went to the playground for games. I learned to collaborate with others.

Then a disaster cyclone hit. It destroyed the playground and more: people, pets, homes.

But there was something I will never forget: God saved my family; every single person was alive.

When I came to America, I felt like I was starting a new life. I cried almost every day because I couldn't speak the language.

All the time when I went to class I took my dictionary to find words that I didn't understand. When somebody was talking, I listened hard. I always put my head outside the car when my aunt was driving so I could read the words out there.

After two years, I learned how to speak English. ■



AFH photo by Miguel Fitzpatrick



Happy Meals

Photographs by Marmarin Nasirahmad // Senior Editor



Social media: help or hurt?

Boosting or crushing confidence levels online

By **Charlene Browne** // Staff Writer

Janeille Edwards, 16, from Boston Latin Academy, believes that social networks affect people's confidence levels in a positive way.

She says that Twitter increased her self-assurance from a six to a seven on a scale of one to 10. On Twitter, it is easy to find people from all over the world and begin talking to them from behind a screen. Users are bound to find people with common interests and therefore can form a group of friends that makes them feel less alone.

"They can find people who are just like them," says Edwards.

The lives of teenagers often seem to revolve around social networks and this may be affecting the way they view themselves – for better or for worse.



AFH art by Chianne Arthur

Andriana Harris, 17, from BLA, says that there are posts that can push teens to become the best they can be.

"The Internet is not all bad," says Harris. "There are some inspirational sayings and motivational quotes that can help boost someone's self-esteem."

On the other hand, creating pages on social media may take a toll on one's confidence. Teens like to post pictures of themselves on sites such as Instagram and Facebook – for all to see. While some come off looking impeccably beautiful, others feel their looks are not up to par.

Another factor is the number of "likes" one receives, since getting them seems to be associated with being attractive.

Maddie Montgomery, 17, from Boston Latin School, says that Facebook has put a dent in her confidence.

"It was seeing other people's pictures," says Montgomery, "and comparing myself." ■

Let's face it: Facebook is for adults

By **Andre Otshudi** // Contributing Writer

Facebook should have an age limit for users, 18 and older. Most of the statuses, pictures, and videos are for adults. Too many young people are on Facebook 24/7 instead of doing something productive.

Instead of facing the notebook at school, too many teens are on Facebook. When they miss an explanation about a topic, they blame it on the teacher.

If Facebook was just made for you to communicate with others, why are there numerous advertisements on the site?

When I am using Facebook, I deactivate it immediately if my mother or father are there because I don't want them to see inappropriate things. I pretend like I wasn't doing anything.

I manifest hypocrisy just by using Facebook. Do you see how Facebook is affecting us negatively? ■



AFH photo by Genesis Perez



"Social media is destroying our social skills"

By **Hector Lawrence** // Contributing Writer

Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Vine, YouTube, Snapchat. People are able to share every moment of their lives through these social media tools.

Interacting with others has never been this easy, and we should praise social media for providing this opportunity. However, I believe that social media is detrimental to the growth of our society.

Our youth are addicted to social media and lack focus on important matters such as school. It has turned privacy into an almost mythical creature, something we've heard of but aren't really sure exists. And lastly, it will soon strip from us our social and communication skills.

We live in a smartphone era. Cellphones are our calendars, clocks, personal assistants, as well as our centers of entertainment. We constantly check on our devices to see if we have notifications. Youth find it hard to study because of the constant distractions social media causes.

Meanwhile, privacy is something that should remain sacred. But the Internet makes our personal business available to anyone with online access.

In addition, social media may soon become the only way people communicate. Social media is destroying our social skills.

Interacting with others is so important. Ideas and emotions can be exchanged accurately when physically having a conversation with another individual; text messaging and Facebook statuses can't replace that. Words on a screen will never have the power of dialogue. If we continue to abuse social media, people will no longer be capable of eloquently saying what is on their mind. ■



AFH photo by Dominic Duong

Bilingualism is best

By Yara Mendes // Contributing Writer

When I was in Cape Verde, I was a bilingual child who spoke Portuguese and Creole. Mostly everywhere in my community I used Portuguese, so my parents made sure that I spoke Creole at home so I wouldn't forget the language.

Now I live in Dorchester, which has a very diverse population. I have seen parents who are bilingual but their children can speak only English. I want to persuade parents who are bilingual to teach their children their first language.

When you teach your heritage language, your children will keep your native culture alive. They will be able to explore your customs and traditions. In addition, they will be able to maintain a better

relationship with family members who live in your native country.

Also, being bilingual makes your children stand out in a positive way. They will be unique from others. A monolingual person will be wondering about their background. Your children will have many things to say about themselves and have different experiences and lifestyles. Lastly, being bilingual, your children will have wider choices of jobs in various fields.

My sister and my cousin both applied to work at Boston Medical Center. My sister was bilingual but my cousin wasn't. So the hospital hired my sister. She worked as a medical assistant and also translated for those Cape Verdeans who couldn't speak English. ■



AFH art by Ammany Ty



AFH photo by Abraham Rosa

A world of frustration

By Penda Seck // Contributing Writer

Frustration is one thing that is an obstacle in life. Frustration shoots down the light of our humanity and makes us immune to feelings. Because not only do we think that we have nothing to lose, but the anger that is destroying the hope of the future converts the love that we have in us to hatred.

We become lost in a world that we are trying to fix but are actually destroying. Once you get frustrated, it sends you the message that you don't exist and that nothing matters. We turn against those we love.

This is one of the many reasons that young people go over to the wrong side. They believe they will find there what they had surrendered – their faith, family, hope, and acceptance. ■



Caught in the friend zone

By Iris Huertas // Staff Writer

Fourteen-year old Mercedes Paulino knows about the dread when someone ends up in the friend zone.

"Their reaction is that they are usually disappointed and ask why and you tell them that you do not like them that way and that you only want to be their friend," says Paulino, who goes to Boston Community Leadership Academy.

The friend zone is when someone wants to be in a relationship but the other person only

wants to be friends.

Charlestown High School freshman Luis Urbaez says that when it comes to the friend zone, you have to be sensitive.

"To let them know you just want them as a friend, you have to be kind and do it a nice way," says Urbaez.

Teens say it's best to let the other person know straight up. "You have to be honest and tell them the truth so they won't get more hurt," says Yaribel Lora Valencia, a freshman at Brighton High School. "I just tell him that I want him as a friend, I don't want anything with him, and I don't want our friendship to break." ■

Money is the root of all evil

By Alexa Lara // Staff Writer

Moolah. Bread. Dough. Guap. Money.

It's the root of all evil, right?

Right! many teens say.

Andy Severino, 17, is one of them.

"Money turns people greedy and it also turns them prideful and that's already two of the seven deadly sins," says Severino, who attends the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science.

Lately, this is a hot topic of conversation as the gap grows between rich and poor and the need for greed seems to intensify.

Nickson Niclas, 17, from the O'Bryant, says money means power.

"If you have money," says Niclas, "you control media, government and...you can advertise evil in a sugarcoated way or you can do it through music."

Stevelyn Desire, 16, says too many people believe that money makes the world go 'round.

"In most world problems," says Desire, from the O'Bryant, "money seems to be the big issue and to better this world, we need to stop." ■



AFH photo by Briahna Omorogbe

No, people are the root of all evil

By Jamal Young // Staff Writer

The philosophy that money is the root of all evil has manipulated mankind's mind for centuries. However, that philosophy is not true. Although money has ruined many individuals, the truth is that money did not cause that disruption – humans did.

This is shown in many instances in society. It happens with celebrities who abuse their money and ultimately throw their lives into a downward spiral. It occurs when common people win the lottery and are so overwhelmed with joy that they end up losing all their money in a matter of years.

But the most prominent reason why money is not the root of all evil is described in the biblical story of Adam and Eve. Adam was the first human created, and as a companion for Adam, God made Eve. God instructed Adam and Eve not to eat from a tree he placed in the Garden of Eden. But the serpent tricked Eve into eating fruit from the tree. The sin came from a breathing being. So it goes that money is not the root of all evil. We are. ■

True religion

Christian girls who don't wear jeans



By Sara Cacho // Staff Writer

Linoshka Rosado, 15, from the Dever-McCormack School, wears skirts all the time. No jeans.

Rosado says she feels no different than any other teen. Some people make fun of her, she says, but she tries to ignore them.

Still, if they ask: "Aren't you cold?" her response is always the same: "No, are you?"

These days, jeans remain part of a teen's unofficial uniform. Yet some Christian girls wear skirts instead, for the Bible tells them: "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man."

Sela Winder, 15, from Boston Community Leadership Academy, says she understands why some girls won't wear jeans as a sign of their faith.

Sara Mendez, 17, from BCLA, says she respects those girls who don't wear jeans. Still, she believes that wearing a skirt doesn't make you more or less holy; after all, it's just a piece of cloth.

At the end of the day, says Mendez, it's your heart that really matters. ■



AFH photo by Abraham Rosa; AFH denim inset by Chris Rogers



A FH art (clockwise from bottom left) by Daniel Pham, Sandra Chen, Takii Samuels, José Guadarrama, and photo by AFH

Dream scheme

By Ilma Golemi // Staff Writer

Sixteen-year-old Anna Quan had an unforgettable dream: She scored a zero on the SATs because she had left her pencil and calculator at home.

"In my dream, I couldn't get into college and my parents would look at me disappointed," says Quan, who attends the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science.

Even though it was just a dream, she dwells on it since there is great pressure to succeed on the test.

"This dream is one of my motivations to do well on the SATs," says Quan.

Dreams are a connection to the subconscious mind. Even though they are just images in our heads when we sleep, people still look for what their dreams mean in their real lives.

Alex Lei, 18, had a dream about possessing all the shoes he wanted in his closet.

"I love collecting kicks," says Lei, from the O'Bryant.

Mu Xian Chen, 17, had a scary dream of dead bodies.

"I told it to other people and they believe my dream is weird," says Chen, from the O'Bryant.

She thinks about the dream at night when she is alone. ■

Discovery channeled

The next invention generation

By Farmata Samati // Staff Writer

There was a time, believe it or not, when cellphones and the Internet were only ideas on a drawing board. Here are some inventions that teens would also like to see transform from dream to reality.

Samantha Valdez, 16, from Boston Community Leadership Academy, wants someone to invent cellphones that would fly to the person you are communicating with.

"This helps mankind," says Valdez, "because it saves more time and you don't need service."

Naomi Rivera, 17, from BCLA, is interested in seeing a teleporter come to be.

"This invention is important to me because I want to get home faster and get a chance to do my homework," says Rivera.

Mayra Martinez, 17, from BCLA, envisions a hover car -- a vehicle that would travel about 10 feet off the ground and produce fewer emissions.

"The technological advancement of hovering would raise a new era of scientific development," says Martinez, meaning the same technology could be applied to other heavy objects.

"The innovative glory it would hold is what inspires me." ■



AFH photo by Briahna Omorogbe



AFH art by Princess Morris

Azonto, Azonto: making dance waves

By **Evette Thompson** // **Contributing Writer**

“Nobody wanna see you rising, and when they do it they don’t like it. They just wanna see you deep in crises, drive yourself you don’t need a license.”

A few words from Fuse ODG, one of my favorite Azonto musicians. Okay, so if you don’t know what Azonto is then you’ve missed out. However, it’s not too late to catch up on some fun.

Azonto is a Ghanaian dance that is making waves all over the world. Most people love it because of the simple steps it involves and how easy it is to get a message across just by making a few hand gestures – from boxing to eating.

What makes the Azonto dance so different is the growth it has undergone since its emergence in late 2011. It started out as mostly the twisting and moving of the hands and legs. However, new steps and styles were added over time. It has received support from celebs ranging from Keri Hilson to Kevin Hart.

Enough with the talk about Azonto. It’s time for you to take on the challenge and learn a few moves. What’s with that face? It’s no big deal. Just log on to YouTube channel WuMaame, search Azonto dance tutorial, and you will be ready to boogie. ■



AFH photo by Taela Downie

Music to their ears – and minds

By **Elianny Ventura** // **Contributing Writer**

Music has been used throughout history to express and affect human emotion. Music is a universal source of pleasure and we use it to modulate our moods.

Teens use music as a distraction from their troubles and as a means to bond with their tribe.

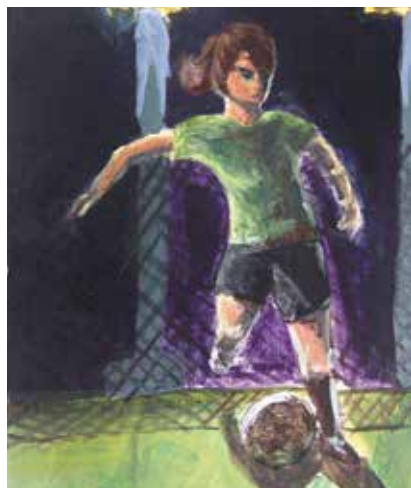
Listening to music has great health benefits, but making your own helps you the most. Creating your own music lets your brain connect with your feelings and helps you express yourself.

At the age of 15, I had to separate from my mom because she had to stay in DR. During those years, I didn’t have somebody to talk to about it. Music was my support.

By writing songs, I could tell myself my feelings; by singing them, I could hear myself crying even when there were no tears in my eyes. ■



AFH art (clockwise from top right) by Edward Gonzalez, Tercia Mota, Laura Torres, and Laura Torres



AFH art by Laura Torres

Soccer for the masses

By **Jose Daniel S. Velasquez** // **Contributing Writer**

Soccer has become the most popular sport on the planet. According to worldsoccer.about.com, soccer dates back to the Chinese game of “Tsu-Chu,” or “kick ball.” During the Tsin Dynasty (255-206 BC), soldiers competed in a training exercise in which they kicked a leather ball into a net hung between two poles.

When conquering countries colonized different parts of the world, they brought soccer with them.

Many people think soccer is easy, but to play

THE SPORTING LIFE

at professional levels requires special techniques and strategies to make decisions in seconds to pass or shoot the ball because one play can change the course of the game.

The World Cup, played every four years, is the biggest sporting event on earth. The World Cup is an event where people show patriotism and love for their nations. Internal conflicts in a country can get resolved as everyone comes together to support the national team.

Soccer is a sport that doesn’t require a lot of equipment; you just need a soccer ball and a bunch of people to play it. Many people see it as a way to escape poverty. ■