

TEENS **in** PRINT

BOSTON

BOSTON TEENS IN PRINT NOV/DEC 2015™

BACK TO THE FUTURE

A TEEN VISION FOR
BOSTON IN THE
YEAR 2030

LEGACY PLACE **PAGE 6** • HELP ME, I'M LOST! **PAGE 15** • URBAN DESIGNER **PAGE 22**

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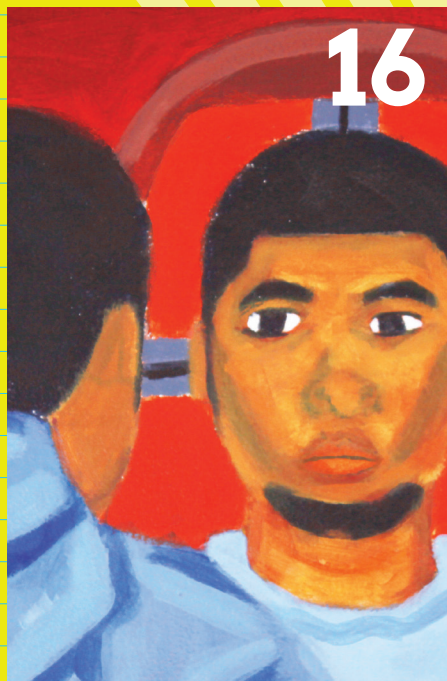
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21



16

MIND-NUMBING EQUATIONS

Wasting our school day away.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Till death do its part.

A HIGHER POWER

Learning the cosmic creed.

FAIRNESS DOCTRINE

The justness of give-and-take.

SUPERHERO WORDSHIP

Might makes right.

DRAWING BLOOD

Spilling my ink onto the page.

AFH artwork (clockwise from top) by Dominic Duong, Leo Gambino, Gaida Alzobier, and Miguel Fitzpatrick
Cover artwork by Diego Lasso

sections

COVER STORY	3-4
WASSUP IN SCHOOL	5-8
ON POINT	9-11
MEET THE STAFF	12-13

CULTURE CLUB	14-15
LITERARY JOURNALISM	16-20
A&E	21
FASHION FIVE-0	22
SKETCHPAD	23

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BACK TO THE FUTURE

A TEEN VISION FOR BOSTON IN THE YEAR 2030

How's this for a grandiose invitation to a non-Kardashian birthday bash? "With input from all who live, work, and play in our city, Imagine Boston 2030 will define a vision for the future of Boston leading up to its 400th birthday," the city writes. "Under the leadership of Mayor Martin J. Walsh, we will work together to create the first citywide plan in 50 years. Imagine Boston 2030 will guide our approach to preserving, enhancing, and growing the city's neighborhoods in a way that promotes shared prosperity, sound public investment, and a healthy environment and population."

From treacherous street violence to time-consuming T troubles, Teens in Print staff members offer an inventory of concerns they believe the city needs to address by the year 2030.

To register your own ideas, please visit the website <http://imagine.boston.gov/> or <http://imagine.boston.gov/smslaunch/> to text.

A BUSLOAD OF WORRY

One thing I would like the city to focus on as it plans for 2030 is the efficiency of public transportation. I notice that there are many cases in which buses are often delayed. Passengers have to wait a long time before a bus shows up. This is becoming an issue because people often can't get to their destinations in the expected time.

-- Katy Zhen // Staff Writer

GREEN TEAM

In the year 2030, I would like the city to focus on making Boston greener. It's important that we protect our environment now before the damage we've done gets to the point of no return. Enforcing laws on littering would help fight pollution. I would like the city to build more windmills and plant more trees. Let's keep our home clean!

-- Sela Winder // Staff Writer

A VOTE FOR DEMOCRACY

The city of Boston should focus more on educating young people about politics and its structure. Besides the fact that I think young people should be able to vote at 16, I also feel that we should at least know about the ins and outs of the beliefs and values that laws are built on. We need to be educated in political science

starting in the seventh grade. That way, by the time we are 16 we will have a better knowledge of why certain events take place in history and we'll know if people really have the rights everyone thinks we do.

-- Caesar Loving-Manley // Staff Writer

AMPING-UP SCHOOL BUDGETS

I would like the city to work on its funding of public schools. As a student in the system, I have always noticed things that require fixing. Sports teams are also in need of financial support. I would like to see help for all kids, regardless of gender, race, immigration status, or financial standing.

-- Princell Feliz Franco // Staff Writer

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

As it plans for the year 2030, I want the city to focus on renovating the poorer neighborhoods. Some people are afraid to pass by because they look dirty and old. This not only affects the passers-by but also the residents. Many of them have struggles in their lives and turning the areas around them into more productive sites might be a help.

-- Osman Fofanah // Staff Writer

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

By 2030, I would like to see the city help its residents become more engaged in their community. I think that many citizens are unaware of what is happening in the city, and that is what's causing them not to be active. An effective system that ensures that all of its citizens are aware of what's occurring is vital to establishing safeguards against negative activities like violence, damage to the environment, and poor people being displaced from their homes.

--Antiah Thornton // Staff Writer

TECH VS. DRECK

In the year 2030, Boston should focus on improving the city's infrastructure. Eventually the landscape will get old and technology will come a long way in the next 15 years. We should create better buildings, lighting, and roadways.

-- Ambrose Fernandez // Staff Writer

HAVEN HELP THEM

In the year 2030, it would be awesome if the city could focus on making shelters for most, if not all, the homeless and less fortunate people living on the streets. Before these people were without homes, the places where they lived actually had meaning to them. Once homeless people

enter a shelter, they should be treated with the utmost respect -- as if they were a guest at your own home. Counselors should be provided, too, so the homeless have the correct support and motivation to want to get back on their own. But while they are in these shelters, the homeless should not feel either oppressed or belittled by the staff working there.

-- Jamillat Doumbia // Staff Writer

A LESSON PLAN FOR LEADERS

I would love the city to focus on schools. Compared to other countries, America is behind when it comes to education. When our system fails, it disables our economy and country from growing. Students are not allowed to really explore their interests. Many drop out or don't go to college. Parents need to pay attention to the schools their children attend and make sure they are providing the appropriate environment. School plays a major role in success, and if not given the right conditions, students are prone to fail. I really hope the city of Boston, as part of the first colony to give public education, can contribute to the reformation of schools in the US.

-- Elebetel Assefa // Staff Writer

AIMING FOR CHANGE

By 2030, let there be no guns on the street.

-- Katherine Bernardez // Staff Writer

A GRIMY TIME

The year 2030 can be filled with marvelous technology, fashion, and maybe even social acceptance. Yet even if all these things come to light, there will still be a lack of beauty in this city without clean streets and fresh air. This city has everything a young man like me could want: a decent educational system; different clubs, programs, and opportunities. Yet if my surroundings are dirty and moldy what's to stop me from being a product of my environment? How positive will my future be?

-- Evens Louis Jean // Staff Writer

FOOD STAMP OF APPROVAL

By the year 2030, I'd like to have expanded economic support for all the groups that feed the hungry. I want to see developed inexpensive, easily mass-produced, nutrient-rich and calorie-dense food to provide to the homeless and those who cannot afford to subsist. I'd also modify the food stamp system so that healthier foods are cheaper than fast foods. To lower the cost of living, I would provide incentives for landlords to lower their rents.

-- Sabiel Sanz // Staff Writer

TORTURED BY THE T

In the near future, I wish to see the public transportation system improved. I want to see the MBTA mature. Right now, it's sloppy and expensive. Many people who use this mode of transportation do so because they're on a budget. I want to see my generation not have to struggle to get to school or back home or not go anywhere because they don't have enough money for their bus passes.

-- Melanie Baez // Staff Writer

STUDENT GROANS

By 2030, I want the city to work on making college free for low-income families. There are students from all over the world who want to go to college but can't afford it. On top of tuition, students have to pay for books, food, and other necessities.

-- Janelle Rodrigues // Staff Writer

GANG PEACE

I would like the city to focus on stopping all gang violence.

-- Devon Spears // Staff Writer

A BREAK FROM PRISON

If we want the year 2030 to be better, we should begin by changing ourselves and then these around us. We should make more places that support this young generation -- like afterschool programs, youth centers, and jobs -- instead of sending them to prison for committing minor crimes. Many become criminals to survive and support their loved ones.

-- Rosa Sanchez // Staff Writer

STRAIGHT FROM THE ART

The city needs to focus on creating a place for people to do more public art. Since graffiti is illegal, they should make a space for these artists to put up their work and then clear those walls after a certain amount of time.

-- Christine Freeman // Staff Writer

SUBSTANCE ABUSED

I think the city should focus on drug information centers. Our youth are constantly being introduced to new drugs. They need to be informed so they can be prepared if they ever encounter any of these substances.

-- Marley Pusey // Staff Writer

ON THE BUS TO NOWHERE

The mode of transportation could be better so that people could get to where they need to at the right time. Some MBTA buses aren't consistent, which causes students and employees to be late.

-- Shanyka Charles // Staff Writer

STREET SAFE

In the year 2030, I would like the city of Boston to focus on providing safer streets.

-- Tyesha Marius // Staff Writer

STRESS RELIEF

By 2030, I would like the city to focus on equality. I feel that people here are always stressing about how they are perceived due to certain characteristics. We should

all be met with the relief of not being intimidated because it will make people more comfortable with who they are and with those around them.

-- Yvonne A. Dunkley // Staff Writer

PROJECT: EXODUS

The city should change the public housing system. They should allow people to stay in the projects for a limited time. This way, young people don't grow up in a bad neighborhood and eventually become influenced by the gang life. If they continue to stay there, they will never leave and get other opportunities to succeed.

-- Abdou Bah // Staff Writer

CRITICAL CONDITION

Approaching the year 2030, the condition of public schools is a major issue. More funds are necessary for the betterment of education quality. We need improved textbooks, upgrades to the already-obsolete technology, as well as more nutritious lunches for students.

-- Jialin Zhen // Staff Writer

WHERE THERE'S SMOKE, THERE'S IRE

As I stand in the bus stops, what bothers me the most is when people start to smoke. One thing our city can do to help non-smokers like myself is to create a public building near every neighborhood with machines that purify the smoky air and release it outside. Although this might encourage smoking by providing such a place for the cigarette crowd, it won't harm others that are choosing to be healthier.

-- Anilda Rodrigues // Staff Writer

F FOR SCHOOL FOOD

One thing the city should focus on is better school lunches. Maybe half the students eat these lunches while the other half starve. This is a major issue because good nutrition is an essential part of a student's academic performance.

-- Rose Koumbassa // Staff Writer

MBTNAY

The Boston transportation system needs some serious help.

-- Adamajan Bah // Senior Editor

A MISSION TO LOWER TUITION

I'd like to see the city create lower costs for state colleges. The high price of tuition is a major reason many high school graduates do not pursue their dream careers. We should be putting tax money toward making college more affordable. This would essentially lead to many jobs being made and a rise in national income.

-- Clinton Nguyen // Staff Writer

MENDING BOSTON'S BROKEN BOND

The city is a marvelous one. But I feel there is a lack of community, an absence of the sense that something bonds us Bostonians together. It seems like the only things we share is our love for Dunkies and occasional trips Downtown. Boston needs to establish an awareness of what once united us. Its communal vibe has been diminished by separation. Copley Square is for the wealthy to shop, Chinatown for Asians to work, and so on. But before we set goals for 2030, we must be prepared to face them. It seems like we are only #BostonStrong when someone decides to tear us apart. Or show us that we're broken.

-- Kawtar Bannani // Staff Writer

REAL CHANGE? GET REAL!

There is nothing here that we can change. We still haven't put homeless people in shelters; we haven't put recycling in their proper places. If we want change, we need to start with the small things and if we can't do that, then how can we move onto the bigger things?

-- Djibril Conte // Staff Writer



AFH ART // ADRIANA DALICE



BSAC BUZZ

BY NATHAN TRAN-TRINH // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

One issue you may not have heard about in the constant conversation about climate change is the gas leak crisis we currently face.

According to environmental activists, there are over 3,000 such leaks in Boston. They can have a serious effect on many fronts:

- Wasting money;
- Sending potent greenhouse gases into the atmosphere;
- Increasing the risk of explosions;
- Aggravating asthma and other respiratory issues;
- Harming city trees.

As part of the Boston Student Advisory Council's growing concern about green issues that can hinder teens' futures, BSAC recently testified in support of two legislative bills relating to the problem: one would transfer the financial load of paying for the leaks from residents to the utility companies. The second would push the utilities to better repair the leakage from underground pipes.

If you would like to be involved with BSAC, Steering Committee meetings occur two Mondays a month at the Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building in Roxbury, located next to Dudley Station at 2300 Washington Street. For more information, feel free to contact Caitlin Donnelly (caitlin@youthonboard.org).

TRYING TO STEM THE TIDE OF MALE-DOMINATED SCIENCE CAREERS

BY INA DODOVECI // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Anthony Ruiz, 18, is enrolled in advanced mathematics classes for his senior year at the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science.

Although fearful of his overloaded schedule, Ruiz has one goal in mind. He wants to become an engineer.

"Career choices involving science, technology, engineering, and mathematics together account for a lot of the paying jobs around the world," says Ruiz.

While back in time, artisanship was a major source of job



AFH PHOTO // KIM HAN

flow, art is now put to the side, and STEM has taken over. The city is currently working to increase middle school students' exposure to STEM learning.

For now, many college-bound students are making their life choices based on the profitability of STEM pathways.

Kripa Thapa, 18, from Roslindale, wants to become a nurse but says the underrepresentation of women in STEM fields would not deter her from pursuing a different career arc.

"If you want to be a doctor, you can -- men or women," she says. "It's just what you want and what you work for."

TEENS REBEL AGAINST USELESS SCHOOL SUBJECTS

BY MELANIE BAEZ // STAFF WRITER

A course like AP Calc may sound great to college officials but how useful will it be in life? There is a growing movement among teens to push for more practical subject matter.

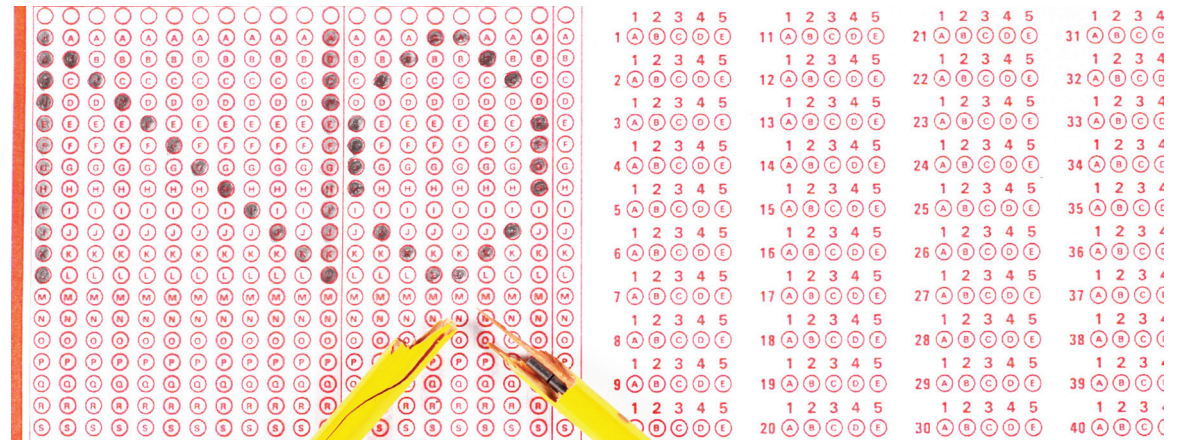
Which is why the YouTube music video "Don't Stay in School" is taking hold in popularity. Many teens say they can relate to the message -- except the dropping out of school part, which they say is as hopeless as the school topics themselves.

"All this math is useless in the future," says Musa Mohammed, 19, from Dorchester. "Saying don't stay in school is too extreme, but the schools should change their methods and subjects so that it's more relatable."

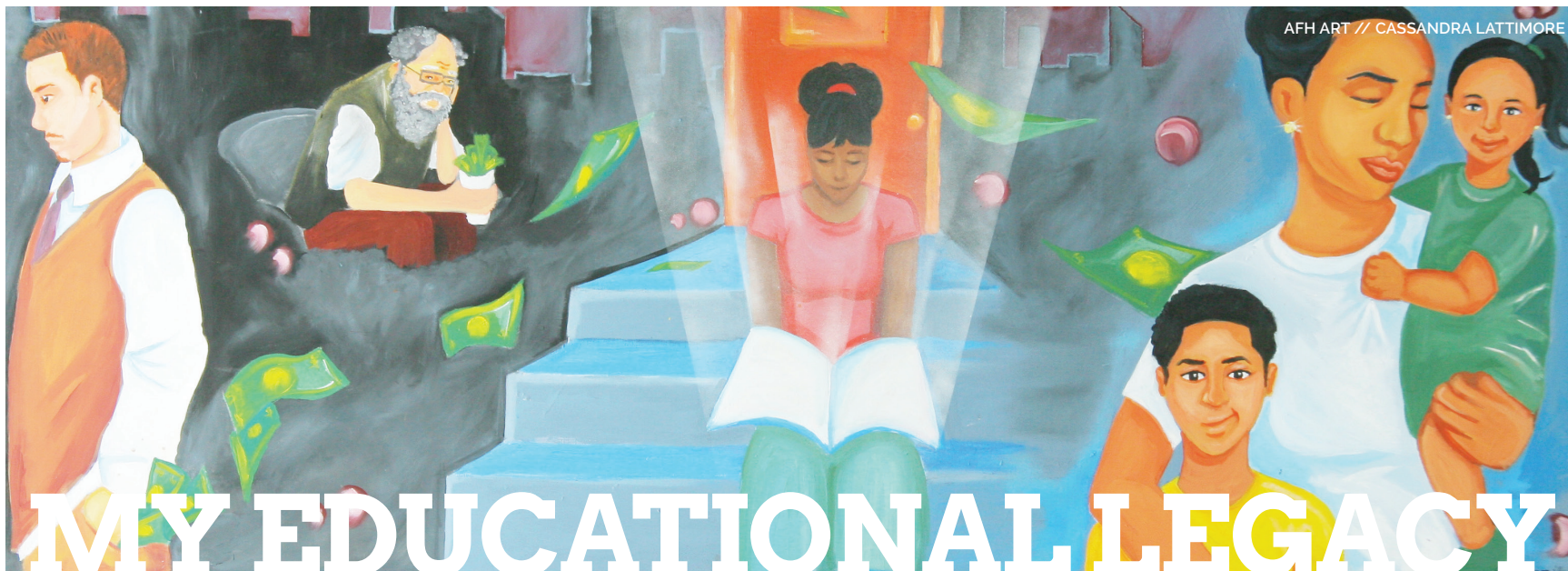
Seventeen-year-old Jenny Hoang, from TechBoston Academy, is on board with that.

"The things we learn are going to be pointless in the future if it's not in our profession," says Hoang, "but we still need to go to school."

As the creator of the video raps: "I wasn't taught how to get a job but I can remember dissecting a frog" and "I know igneous, metamorphic, and sedimentary rocks. Yet I don't know squat about trading stocks. Or how money works at all -- where does it come from? How does the thing that motivates the world function?"



AFH PHOTO // ABRAHAM ROSA



"EDUCATION IS THE LIGHT THAT CAN ILLUMINATE ALL YOUR PATHS"

BY ALI SATTAR // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

When you walk in a dark path, all you want is a light. Education is the light that can illuminate all your paths.

I grew up in Jordan. The first day in my school was like being in a garbage can where no one cares about you or whether you learned or not. There was food on the floor and broken desks and tables. All the teacher did was sit on his desk, drinking coffee and hitting anyone who was late or forgot their homework.

I woke up every day at six in the morning -- not because I was excited for school but because I couldn't afford the bus. I walked two miles to school and would get there late. That was like hell. I would find the teacher standing outside holding his cigar and his long stick and he would be so happy to hit me. He didn't hit me once or twice and he didn't stop when I started to cry. He only stopped when he felt tired.

I started to skip school every day and went to work illegally as a trash picker. Trash picking might sound like a disgusting job but it paid me good money and helped support my family. All I needed to do was take the things that rich people threw out and that could be sold to scrap collectors, like metal or furniture.

At the end of the day, I would go to the river to wash off the bad smell. When my parents asked me where I got the money, I always said I found it or borrowed it because they might have a heart attack if they knew their son was picking trash instead of going to school.

One day in 2012, I remember my father telling me that we were leaving for the United States tomorrow. I collapsed on the floor.

Today, I'm excited to go to school. I'm living a beautiful life. I'm finally on my way to achieving my mother's dream of me going to college.

When you are educated, the doors of happiness will open for you.

"THE TEACHERS CALLED US BY NUMBER, NOT NAME"

BY CELESTINA VAZ ANTUNES // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

I grew up in a small town in Cape Verde with only one school and 42 kids in the classroom. The teachers called us by number, not name. I was number seven.

When the teacher asked a student a question and it was answered wrong, they would have other students beat you up. I vividly remember one student beating another until he bled. Only then did the teacher stop it.

I remember a teacher yelling at me when I said I didn't understand something. I started to feel scared to ask questions. I became terrified to speak in public.

In 2012, when I moved to the US, I was afraid to talk to the other kids. But once I started to learn English, I felt like I belonged.

I saw that the teachers here are different. Whenever I don't understand something, I always ask questions and they seem happy to answer them.

Now I am eager to learn new things. I have friends that I can count on, people who accept me for who I am.

I even learned how to accept myself for who I am.



AFH PHOTO // ABRAHAM ROSA

"EVERY MINUTE IN HER CLASSROOM MADE ME FEEL TORTURED"

BY CRISMEIRY MEJIA // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

February of 2013 was a time that my life radically changed. It was my first day of middle school in Boston.

My dad and aunt were by my side. The bell rang and that was a sign that class was about to start. As students were walking in the hallway, I lost sight of my family. That was the moment I realized I was all by myself in a totally different world.

As I looked around my classroom, one of the students asked: "Are you from Dominican Republic?"

I didn't understand. Then she asked me in Spanish. Hearing this gave me a little more confidence. Yes, I am from DR.

The class started and I felt an urge to go to the bathroom. But I didn't know how to ask permission. I started to feel a desperation that took power over me and almost took out a tear.

I spent what felt like hours in a class trying to learn English. The teacher knew how to speak Spanish but didn't want to. I didn't know how to say a single word in English. Every minute in her classroom made me feel tortured.

This pushed me to learn English on my own.

During the summer, I went with my aunt every day to work. I heard people talking. I wrote all the words I could understand on a little piece of paper and translated them when I got home.

When I started high school, I was assigned homework that I didn't know how to do. But my teacher helped me with it.

I started to feel supported. That feeling self-motivated me to keep up the hard work.

I began to think about my future goals: go to a four-year college and then obtain a master's degree so that can I get a job as a psychologist that I will enjoy and also help my family.

I now know that no matter what challenges I have in life, I can overcome them.



AFH PHOTO // ABRAHAM ROSA

"I HAD TO REBUILD MY LIFE FROM SCRATCH"

BY MINERVA VOLMAR // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

In Haiti, I always had to fight to succeed. In my culture, people look at you at a different angle if you are not educated. But how can a young soul succeed when it can be who you know, not what you know?

My parents and I made the decision to come to America.

When I came to the United States, four years after the devastating earthquake of 2010, I felt lost. I had to rebuild my life from scratch.

However, I had come to a place of acceptance and made the decision to press forward. I had to learn the meaning of perseverance.

In America, education is different. It is not based on memorization but on comprehension.

But more resources are available here. Teachers make you understand.

No more hours of trying to remember several pages. No more fears of not having a better future.

I want to be a businesswoman and also start an organization that helps students in Haiti. I am determined to obtain success no matter how long it takes.

"THIS CLASS HAD A SENSE OF PEACE"

BY MELANIE MORA // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

I was four years old when I attended my first day of kindergarten, in Ecuador. Tia Meche, my dark-haired kindergarten teacher, was at the door receiving her students with jokes to cheer up the crying children.

I was not one of them.

For me, this class had a sense of peace.

One day, several years ago, my dad decided to come to the United States, seeking a better life. In my heart, there was an empty space that belonged to him.

He was providing money for us, but it was still not enough. My mom began to work, washing other people's clothes. I tried to pitch in by skipping school and going to the streets to sell bracelets that I learned to make from a free course.

Nobody forced me to do this. I felt good that I could buy food and not let my family

sleep with nothing in their stomachs.

One day, after school, my mom opened the door -- but without her usual smile. She said she needed to speak to me and my siblings.

"I talked to your dad," she said. "It hurts that I can't give you a better life....Going to the United States, you guys will have different opportunities."

In May of 2012, my siblings and I came to the US. After seven years, I was going to have my dad in front of me. My mother stayed behind.

Now I'm a senior in high school.

I am working hard and I am not giving up on me. Selling bracelets taught me that you have to fight for what you want. I started taking challenges and following my dreams to become a pediatrician and bring the rest of my family here.

Every morning I take the bus, I look at the sky and think about my family. I am here for them.

In Boston, I have met people who are like my second family. I have recovered the happiness I felt when I was back in kindergarten.

"I COULD SEE THE EAGERNESS OF LEARNING IN EACH STUDENT"

BY MASHRUL AMIN // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

As I nervously walked into class on the first day, the teacher instantaneously told us in his deep, loud voice to take a seat and get our notebooks. As my eyes snuck a peak around me, I could see the eagerness of learning in each student.

While the breeze of a robust atmosphere was gently blowing through me, I was having a flashback to my old memories. Everything was totally different in my previous school.

I still recall getting struck by a sword-like stick for making a silly excuse for unfinished homework or for leaving books at home.

I used to attend school only because my parents wanted me to.

In the new school, my parents left me to live in a dorm by myself at the age of 11. I felt lonely and scared of the new environment.

Coming from a small village in Bangladesh, where modern education was given less importance than traditional education and farming, my uncle was a pioneer in helping to develop a cultured society. My father believed that I should have an advanced education.

I challenged myself to adapt. My friends at the new school taught me to be emotionally stronger and independent. I felt motivated to study hard, realizing how much sacrifice my parents were making for me financially.

My goal was to progress into the advanced class. One day, in the middle of a lesson, the principal entered and told me to follow him and bring all my stuff. My heart was pounding and my hands were flooding with sweat, thinking that I did something wrong.

Instead, he invited me to enter the advanced classroom. I was boiling with pride inside.

And now, after my family moved to the United States of America in 2013 seeking an even better learning environment for me and my siblings, I value education more than ever.

The mentality to accept challenges that I built starting from the sixth grade has taught me to never look back. Breaking the language barrier in this country, and having the boost of "I can do better," I am confidently heading towards the Everest.

"I HAVE GONE A LONG WAY TO DISCOVER WHO I AM"

BY P. VANESSA SYLVESTRE // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

While staring at my geography teacher, I took a quick glance at the clock: 10 more minutes before class ends.

I was feeling dizzy. So I could hardly resist the temptation of opening the romance book that I was hiding under my notebook.

In this class in Haiti, I was surrounded by nearly 50 students. But I couldn't feel more isolated.

I counted every single minute that I spent in school. I could already envision myself changing out of my white and red uniform. Then I would grab my diary and start to write while slipping into my personal bubble until I felt blood running through my veins again.

Now, here I am as part of a new community, surrounded by a new crowd of people, living in a new city, trying to learn a new language.

After the first day of school, I returned home in tears, desperately whimpering to my mom about how stressful it was to be trapped in your mind for nearly seven hours straight, incapable of expressing one single word among the race of thoughts that crossed your mind.

However, walking down the street, I could almost read through people's eyes: "Welcome to the land of opportunity; here is the guideline to great achievement" as they handed me an education.

I am now confident in the years to come. I have gone a long way to discover who I am, and why I belong.

Every day, I go to school, eat some breakfast, and long to learn new notions that I can incorporate into my general knowledge. I imagine that I am carefully placing each brick that is going to construct my future.

And when I raise my hand, I take a triumphant stand over all feeling of inferiority. I speak to make my voice heard. I speak to let people know that what I think matters. And foremost, I speak because it's the only way to remain faithful to who I am.



AFH ART // SAVANNA MCKAY

"I WAS TAUGHT THAT LIFE'S A RACE AND THERE'S ONLY ONE WINNER"

BY TARANNUM RAHMAN // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The bench I was sitting on was a little squeaky. It felt extremely uncomfortable to move even the slightest bit as it would start making noises like that of a rat's tantrum at night. So I tightened the grip on my pencil, trying not to move my body. I did not want to be the one to disrupt the exam.

The room was quiet; there was a pin-drop silence. If you listened closely, you could hear the students exhaling and inhaling nervously.

It was the first exam of the year and I needed to show my teacher that I was the best student in the first-grade class.

It wasn't the first time I strived to be above my classmates. Even during summer vacations, when the heat would be so intense that it made people feel as if they were standing a few inches away from the sun, I would be studying.

Being ranked first was the only way I could have proven my intelligence in Bangladesh. All my life, I was taught that life's a race and there's only one winner.

When I moved to the US in 2009, I still had the same mentality. Even when no one else wanted to take part in a race, I ran anyway. Whether it was a science test or a class discussion, I studied the previous night like my life depended on it. Although my school environment changed, I did not. The Bengali culture did not leave me.

People might say that striving to be the best is not healthy, but while I was in the race, for example, I learned how to draw. I was able to acquire the skills of the SAT.

I will always be trying to give my parents something to be proud of.

"BEING EDUCATED CAN TAKE YOU FAR IN LIFE"

BY VENEZA MONTEIRO // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Listen to all the advice; take the best and leave the rest. My parents told me that being educated can take you far in life. They always tell me to never give up.

Going to elementary school in Roxbury, I was nervous because I didn't know English. I spoke Cape-Verdean Creole.

But I soon found out that by going to school, I was starting to learn English along the way.

In middle school, I hated Mondays because it meant taking a vocabulary test. But I would make flash cards to remember all the words, and I recall getting A's.

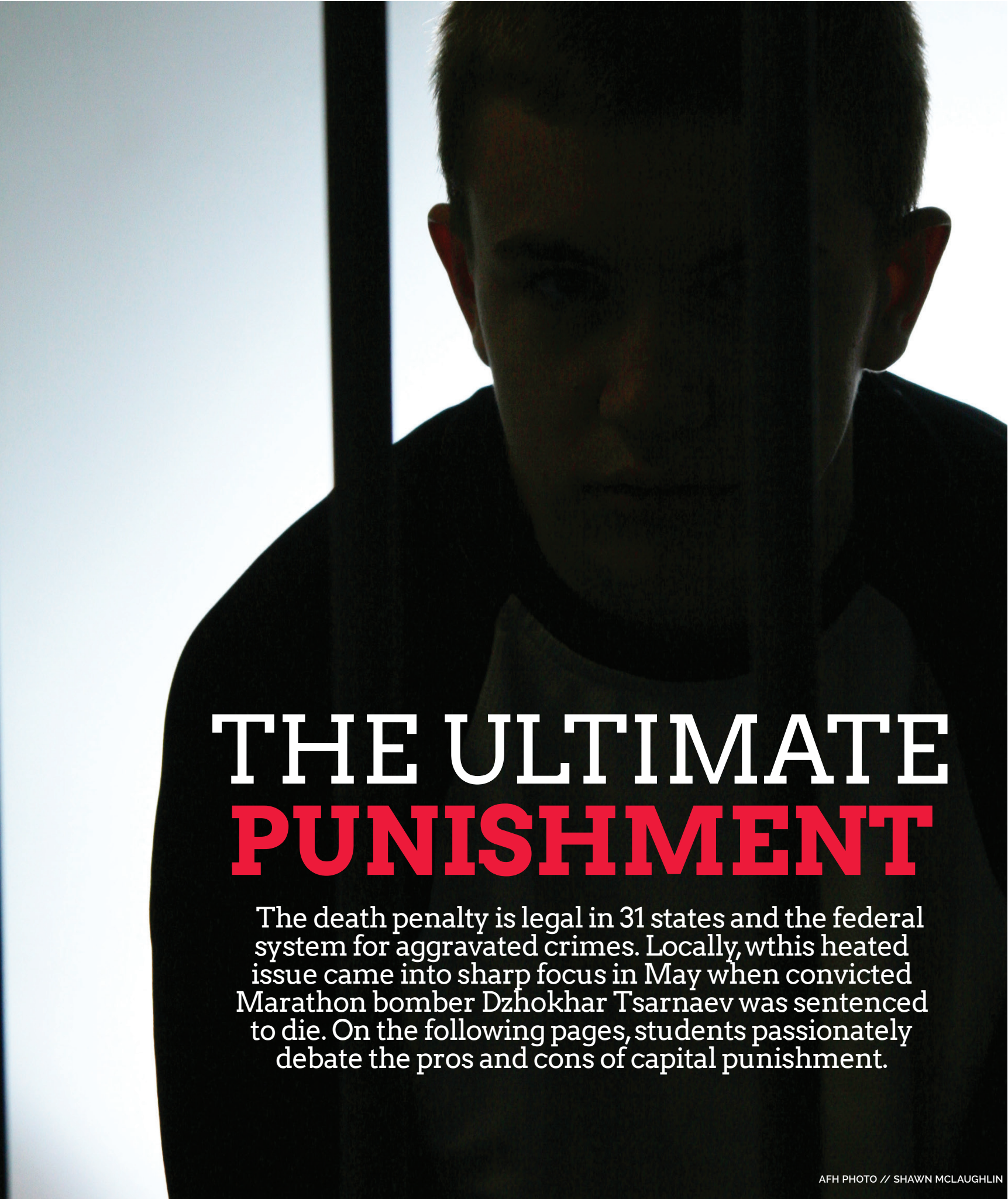
In high school, I was meeting new people day by day. I got comfortable with the school and the students.

My school is very diverse. I love being around different ethnicities.

Even though I am older, I won't forget the words my parents told me: Education is the way to success.



AFH PHOTO // ABRAHAM ROSA



THE ULTIMATE PUNISHMENT

The death penalty is legal in 31 states and the federal system for aggravated crimes. Locally, this heated issue came into sharp focus in May when convicted Marathon bomber Dzhokhar Tsarnaev was sentenced to die. On the following pages, students passionately debate the pros and cons of capital punishment.

AFH PHOTO // SHAWN MCLAUGHLIN

"WE CAN'T GIVE PEOPLE LIFE, SO WHY SHOULD WE DESTROY IT?"

BY ROOBY DENAUD // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

If killing is a crime, the death penalty is, too. It's unethical because innocent people die. The legal system makes a lot of mistakes. Life is a precious gift from God, so why should we end it? We can't give people life, so why should we destroy it?

The government could keep the millions of dollars spent on executions to help society. It can improve construction, education, police, roads, public safety, and increase child abuse prevention and alcohol and drug treatment.

Keeping killers in jail is more helpful because there they will have time to think about what they did. They're still human beings so that after a while they will find out that what they did is not right and they will change. If they ask God for mercy, He will accept it and forgive them. Even though they make us suffer, killing them is not the answer.

DEATH PENALTY? NO.

"ONCE A CRIMINAL, ALWAYS A CRIMINAL"

BY LAURIANO BARROS // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

If we are hiring more police officers on the street risking their lives, why give criminals more privileges than they deserve?

Even though there are systemic problems in the US justice system, we now have more accuracy in finding the real criminals with the help of DNA evidence.

God sent humans to earth, not cannibals and criminals addicted to pulling the trigger. Life is not like water. They don't sell it at the corner store.

Some people might say that criminals deserve a second chance. But if God doesn't give a second chance, who are we to do it?

Once a criminal, always a criminal. A cat cannot turn into a pig.

Instead of focusing on exonerating criminals, we should focus on convicting more of them.

DEATH PENALTY? YES.

"IT WILL PROVIDE VICTIMS WITH THE JUSTICE THAT THEY DESERVE"

BY TARANNUM RAHMAN // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Every human being should have the right to a life. Even a criminal who committed as grave an offense as murder should be given a chance to live. That's what many people foolishly believe.

But what about the offenders who are incapable of reforming themselves and only live to harm us? Capital punishment will execute the criminals and make sure they are no longer a threat to our society. The death penalty is ethical not only because it will preserve the safety of our community but also because it will provide victims with the justice that they deserve.

Keeping a criminal alive in prison is like trimming a weed; no matter what, it'll grow back. To make sure that the culprit never commits a crime again, we need to demolish it from the root.

If we let these people live, it won't be fair to the victims as they will be the ones being punished. Although victims can't state their desire once they're gone, they would've wanted the same consequence for the criminals that their families want. They live through them.

We cannot foolproof our justice system; it will always have some systemic problems. But that doesn't mean we banish it. We try to improve it over time.

The death penalty is no different. But as it is already on its way to a revolution with modern technology, we should give it a chance. This form of punishment will keep order in our world.

DEATH PENALTY? YES.

"HOW DO WE MAKE CAPITAL PUNISHMENT BETTER?"

BY JERRY CORREIA // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

There will always be crimes, there will always be criminals. Our world is not a utopian place as much as we want it to be. Our justice system has a weapon to decrease the horrific crimes, capital punishment. Society will never be perfect but executing the one who wronged the innocent is a great way to keep it safer.

Capital punishment is not perfect. Innocent people will end up on death row and it will be biased. But you will risk abolishing a solution that takes away more bad than good.

The question shouldn't be, "Is capital punishment ethical?" but instead, "How do we make capital punishment better?"

DEATH PENALTY? YES.

"THE DEATH PENALTY IS APPROPRIATE FOR THE WORST OF THE WORST"

BY MARY-KEY DENAUD // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Have you ever imagined a society where people are dying for no reason, and criminals are killing, bombing, and running free. Where is the justice? If criminals are willing to murder, they are essentially saying that they would like others to do it to them.

The death penalty is appropriate for the worst of the worst, people who have committed crimes so atrocious that they are no longer fit to live among us. This is the case of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev.

Criminals will never change; they are getting pleasure when lives are brutally taken away. Life in prison will not do anything.

Killing a person in cold blood is the most horrible, despicable, heinous crime that exists. This is unforgettable; these evil killers do not deserve a life.

The death penalty is not killing a person in cold blood. It is what a killer or torturer deserves. It is what a person who is inhuman enough to steal someone's life should get.

DEATH PENALTY? YES.

"WE CANNOT ALLOW CRIMINALS TO TAKE CONTROL OF THE WORLD"

BY CARLA DOS SANTOS // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Killing criminals will deter crimes in our society.

Second chances should not be allowed for them. Why keep the devils alive?

Some argue that we are human and we all make mistakes. But mistakes can be accepted once -- not millions of times. Then, it is no longer a mistake; it is a choice the person made.

We cannot allow criminals to take control of the world. Keeping them alive is a huge mistake. Sometimes they are released and commit the worst crimes ever, while we are the ones who pay.

We need to protect the lives of innocent people -- not those of the miserable monsters.

DEATH PENALTY? YES.

"REVENGE IS WRONG"

BY ANA PAULA DE PINA // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The death penalty won't bring our loved ones back.

Some people say the death penalty is ethical because when you hurt someone, he or she has to hurt you. However, I believe that revenge is wrong. Instead of revenge, we should come together to stop the violence.

The government has sent so many innocent people to prison or death. Humans are not animals that you can kill because they had killed.

DEATH PENALTY? NO.

"PEOPLE WHO KILL NEED TO BE IN JAIL"

BY FRANK ROSARIO // CONTRIBUTING
WRITER

If people kill someone else, they need to go to jail to pay for committing murder. Having them in jail forever is the best way to get revenge. It makes them feel what society feels -- sad and confused.

The states can use the execution money instead to help people who need medicine, or students who need classroom materials.

We should focus, not on death penalty politics, but on keeping the peace between everyone.

DEATH PENALTY? **NO.**

"WE NEED TO MAKE SURE THAT WE ARE LIVING IN A PEACEFUL PLACE WITH NO CRIMINALS"

BY PROMA KAZI // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Getting rid of crime is a big question now. Terrorist, murderer, and rapist need to be taken away to bring peace to society.

Some say giving them life in prison without parole is the best solution. After destroying human life, do they deserve to breathe? Getting rid of the death penalty would be the cruelest thing we could ever do to our society.

To ensure safety and wipe out criminals, we should continue the death penalty.

Life is short. We cannot spend it worrying about violence. We should enjoy it. To do that, we need to make sure that we are living in a peaceful place with no criminals.

DEATH PENALTY? **YES.**

"THE COLOR OF YOUR SKIN CAN PUT ON YOU THE LABEL OF KILLER"

BY ADONAY BRHANE // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

In this cold world, a man awaits his death.

In this cold world, a man can die for someone else's sin.

In this cold world, the color of your skin can put on you the label of killer.

In this cold world, people will stand watching in an act of complicity because they find the need to end your life.

The death penalty is not a solution to heinous crimes and should not be used as a form of punishment. Since there are systemic problems and a better alternative in the criminal justice system -- life in prison -- we should abolish the death penalty.

Some argue that capital punishment deters crime. From this point of view, the cure for the current crisis is to get the death penalty. It's assumed that in this way the criminals will get the message. In the criminal underworld, the discussion will go like this: If you kill, you will get the death penalty and this will scare other criminals. Criminals will put their guns down and start looking for work the next day. Crime just doesn't pay anymore!

When you see the problems of crime and violence in these simplistic terms, you begin to develop solutions that are also simplistic. This not the way to shape our society.

DEATH PENALTY? **NO.**

"INSTEAD OF LOOKING FOR BETTER WAYS TO KILL PEOPLE, WE SHOULD LOOK FOR WAYS TO IMPROVE OUR SOCIETY"

BY CRISMEIRY MEJIA // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

We are imperfect humans who, unfortunately, make mistakes. The criminal justice system is made up of such imperfect human beings, so it doesn't always fulfill its role of convicting the true criminal. Instead, sometimes it makes people pay for something they didn't do. With such a fallible system, do you think the government should decide whether or not a person should live or die?

Some people argue that now that we have DNA analysis, it is possible to accurately know if a person is guilty or not. But wait a minute. Since DNA analysis is a human invention, it can be altered or imprecise.

Aside from the problems of proving guilt or innocence, capital punishment is also unethical because it promotes the ideology in society that it is permissible to react violently. Do you want to live in such a dystopian world?

Instead of looking for better ways to kill people, we should look for ways to improve our society.

DEATH PENALTY? **NO.**

"HE CAN NEVER KILL AGAIN"

BY STEPHEN JAGBA // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

What if a person killed one of your family members? Do you think he deserves a second opportunity of life? Many innocent people have been murdered by criminals. We want them to be punished for their bad choices the way they killed others.

Jail? Why should we keep more criminals in our society? We are trying to protect the sanctity of innocent people. If murderers are sentenced to death and executed, potential murderers will think twice before killing for fear of losing their own lives.

When a criminal gets out of jail, do you think he or she will learn a lesson or do the same thing? Why should we be afraid of not taking the risk to end these brutal criminals?

Our society has had enough of these people.

If a person commits a crime and receives the death penalty, he can never kill again.

DEATH PENALTY? **YES.**

"IT IS AN ILLOGICAL PUNISHMENT THAT PLAYS WITH OUR RIGHTS TO LIVE"

BY KATHERINE URBAEZ // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Imagine how painful the life of a convicted innocent person would be. A person who never committed a crime, who is in peace with society and has a humble job, all of a sudden being convicted of a crime he or she didn't commit and is then sentenced to the death penalty.

A punishment that consists of executing a criminal in a legal way ignores the natural time people are supposed to die. Because we must uphold our human morality, we should abolish the death penalty. It is an illogical punishment that plays with our rights to live.

How can capital punishment expect to prevent killing by killing? Our society isn't a game that we can play with.

Life doesn't come with instructions. Humans are imperfect beings. Our world will never improve if mistakes are made and we don't learn from them.

Many believe that if you kill, you should be killed. But this is demonstrating to our society that provoking deaths will never stop.

DEATH PENALTY? **NO.**

"YOU DO NOT CARE ABOUT HUMAN LIFE"

BY JUAN MANUEL URENA // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Can you imagine a world without the death penalty -- where people feel free to kill whoever they want?

If the death penalty doesn't exist, the police don't have the same control over people. People know that they can go to prison but will continue killing. If we keep the death penalty, they will be afraid to kill.

I know that a person never changes. If you killed someone, you will do it again because you do not care about human life.

DEATH PENALTY? **YES.**



ELEBETEL ASSEFA
Halloween or Christmas?
Christmas.
Orange or red? Burgundy.
Best advice you ever received at home: "A smooth sea never made a skilled sailor."



MELANIE BAEZ
Halloween or Christmas?
Halloween.
Orange or red? Orange.
Best advice you ever received at home: "It's OK to be weird because all the best people are."



ABDOU BAH
Halloween or Christmas?
Halloween.
Orange or red? Red.
Best advice you ever received at home: "Even your friends can turn on you."



ADAMAJAN BAH
Halloween or Christmas?
Halloween.
Orange or red? Orange.
Best advice you ever received at home: "Take care of the people who have taken care of you."



KAWTAR BENNANI
Halloween or Christmas? Every day is a gift.
Orange or red? Burgundy.
Best advice you ever received at home: "Go outside."



KATHERINE BERNARDEZ
Halloween or Christmas?
Christmas.
Orange or red? Red.
Best advice you ever received at home: "Always come to family first when in a situation."



SHANYKA CHARLES
Halloween or Christmas?
Halloween.
Orange or red? Red.
Best advice you ever received at home: "The best way to get through it is to get through it."



ISABELLA CISNEROS
Halloween or Christmas?
Groundhog Day.
Orange or red? Yellow.
Best advice you ever received at home: "(Too personal)."



DJIBRIL CONTE
Halloween or Christmas?
Christmas.
Orange or red? Red.
Best advice you ever received at home: "Don't get mad at the little things."



JAMILLAT DOUMBIA
Halloween or Christmas?
Sabbath.
Orange or red? Purple.
Best advice you ever received at home: "Don't let anyone who is angry at you cook your meal or get your beverage."



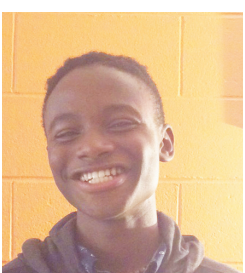
YVONNE A. DUNKLEY
Halloween or Christmas? Every Friday.
Orange or red? Orange and orange and blue.
Best advice you ever received at home: "Wash your clothes."



PRINCELL FELIZ FRANCO
Halloween or Christmas?
Christmas.
Orange or red? Red.
Best advice you ever received at home: "Pick a career you like but consider whether this profession will also pay the bills."



AMBROSE FERNANDEZ
Halloween or Christmas?
Christmas.
Orange or red? Red.
Best advice you ever received at home: "Keep your friends rich and your enemies rich and find out which is which."



OSMAN FOFANAH
Halloween or Christmas?
Halloween.
Orange or red? Orange.
Best advice you ever received at home: "When people talk too much and you don't listen, just laugh and it'll end."

TEENS in Print

MEET THE STAFF

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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.

EMAIL submissions to ric.kahn@boston.gov

CALL US: 617-541-2651

Please provide your full name, grade, and school.

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.

FEEDBACK!

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

Let Teens in Print know what's on your mind by sending 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

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.



CHRISTINE FREEMAN
Halloween or Christmas?
Halloween.
Orange or red? Crimson.
Best advice you ever received at home: "Just be yourself and you'll be fine."



JACKY HANG
Halloween or Christmas?
Christmas.
Orange or red? Red.
Best advice you ever received at home: "Communication, advocacy, and self-respect will always get you to the right path."



ROSE KOUMBASSA
Halloween or Christmas?
Halloween.
Orange or red? Orange.
Best advice you ever received at home: "Face your studies."



EVENS LOUIS JEAN
Halloween or Christmas?
Christmas.
Orange or red? Red.
Best advice you ever received at home: "Never think something is too good for you."



CAESAR LOVING-MANLEY
Halloween or Christmas?
Christmas.
Orange or red? Red.
Best advice you ever received at home: "Take initiative! Be the voice for the people. Do you."



TYESHA MARIUS
Halloween or Christmas?
Christmas. You can bond with family and friends.
Orange or red? Red -- the color of love.
Best advice you ever received at home: "Be you and don't forget where you came from."



CLINTON NGUYEN
Halloween or Christmas?
Thanksgiving.
Orange or red? Black.
Best advice you ever received at home: "You have to go through the thunderstorm to get the sun."



MARLEY PUSEY
Halloween or Christmas?
Christmas.
Orange or red? Orange.
Best advice you ever received at home: "Be yourself."



ANILDA RODRIGUES
Halloween or Christmas?
Christmas.
Orange or red? Cyan-ink.
Best advice you ever received at home: "Study first, love second."



JANELLE RODRIGUES
Halloween or Christmas?
Christmas.
Orange or red? Red.
Best advice you ever received at home: "Stay in school. Knowledge is always more powerful than many other things in life."



ROSA SANCHEZ
Halloween or Christmas?
Halloween. You get to dress up and pretend you're someone else for a couple of hours.
Orange or red? Red.
Best advice you ever received at home: "Concentrate on your studies and don't hang out with the guys."



SABIEL SANZ
Halloween or Christmas?
Christmas.
Orange or red? Red.
Best advice you ever received at home: "Never eat yellow snow."



DEVON SPEARS
Halloween or Christmas?
Halloween.
Orange or red? Black.
Best advice you ever received at home: "Don't be afraid to be yourself."



ANTIAH THORNTON
Halloween or Christmas?
Halloween.
Orange or red? Red.
Best advice you ever received at home: "If someone talks about you, just laugh and say 'It's nice to know that I'm so important to you that you have to talk about me.'"



SELA WINDER
Halloween or Christmas?
National Sisters Day.
Orange or red? Red.
Best advice you ever received at home: "Don't follow the crowd."



JIALIN ZHEN
Halloween or Christmas?
Christmas.
Orange or red? Red.
Best advice you ever received at home: "Go outside your door and embrace the air."



KATY ZHEN
Halloween or Christmas?
Christmas.
Orange or red? Red.
Best advice you ever received at home: "Always be willing to take risks and try new things."

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Send submissions by mail to:
Boston Teens in Print
c/o WriteBoston
2300 Washington Street, Floor 6
Roxbury, MA 02119



BY JAMILLAT DOUMBIA // STAFF WRITER

My dream is to go to Panama. Why Panama? I've wanted to go to Panama ever since I saw the FOX TV series, "Prison Break," which had episodes set in that Central American country. The fact that Panama is neither in the news a lot nor is it in people's daily conversations makes me want to go even more.

When I arrive in Panama, the first thing I'm going to do is check-in to the Panama Golf & Beach Resort so that I can just settle my things and immediately go off and view the sites.

From my research, I know that Panama can be a busy environment so I would have to get used to being in an intense setting. Also, I might need to learn how to swim, climb tropical trees, and speak Spanish. Later, I want to go see the sloths, eat mango, shop in the street markets, walk on the trails, meet indigenous Panamanians, and finally, slurp cashews straight from the shells.

My trip to Panama will not only make me the semi-most-happiest person of my generation, but it will also give me bragging rights. The idea is to stay there for about a week and come back to America rejuvenated and ready to plan my next trip -- to Colombia.

AFH PHOTO // JANNA MACH

RUMOR HAS IT

BY SHANYKA CHARLES // STAFF WRITER

Sixteen-year-old Samenta Dorce believes that teenage rumors are fueled by jealousy and revenge.

She says she once was the target of false gossip that she was dating a friend's boyfriend.

"Although rumors bother me, it didn't affect my schoolwork because school was a great distraction for me," says Dorce, who attends Community Academy of Science and Health.

Many conflicts in high school are caused by rumors and misconceptions, which can escalate into bullying. Gossip can be attention-seeking entertainment for some but can ruin the reputations of others.

Fourteen-year-old Hyde Park resident Jolynne Limontas says that loose talk can be a complication for her at school.

"How can you be around people who think they know something about you that isn't even true," she says.

Christina Novembre, 16, from Boston Latin Academy, says the best way to deal with negative chatter is to ignore it.

"People are just looking for a reaction," she says. "If you are unbothered about it then it'll die down quickly."

RELIGION: THINK GLOBALLY

BY ROSE KOUMBASSA // STAFF WRITER

Fourteen-year-old Rosauri Lara, from Dorchester, thinks that teens need to study about world religions so they can help lessen tensions between people.

"We need to learn to be culturally literate in order to tolerate others," Lara says.

From sociology to political science, many of a student's subjects use religion as a focal point for learning.

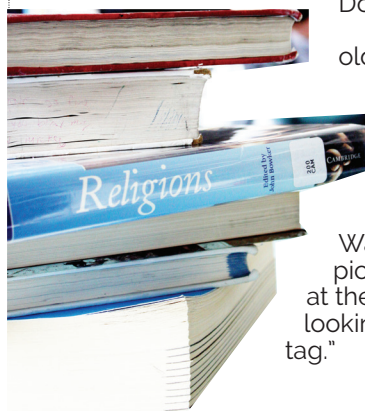
Still, Ashley DePina, 13, feels it is not necessary to know about the many religions worldwide.

"It doesn't benefit us in any way," says DePina, from Dorchester.

Fourteen-year-old Kayin Walker, from Mattapan, disagrees.

"Not learning about other religions,"

Walker says, "is like picking out clothes at the store and not looking at the price tag."



AFH PHOTO // JOHN GLASCOCK

FIVE FOR FIGHTING

BY WIDENTZA PACOMBE // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Wilkinson Fortilus, 16, from the Community Academy of Science and Health, understands why, for teens, fighting seems to be a solution to settling disputes.

"If you fight and you win, you will get respect from the person you had drama with," says Fortilus.

You might also get arrested, kicked out of school or your parents' home, or even lose your life, teens say, so best to think twice before you engage in fisticuffs -- or the use of more serious weapons.

In fact, last month near the Jackson Square T station, angry words turned into a physical clash, which escalated into one teen fatally stabbing another.

Christaline Lorjuste, 17, from TechBoston Academy, says that some teens are easily influenced by media images that seem to promote the use of belligerence.

"So many people are following what others are doing in this world," she says.

Kenderline Mene, 16, from Boston Green Academy, says that unfortunately, nobody wants to be called a punk for backing away from a battle.

"Others say just fight and get it over with," she says.

THREE GENERATIONS, THREE DIFFERENT VIEWS OF THE WORLD

BY ROSA SANCHEZ // STAFF WRITER

Fekadu Assefa, 15, from Mission Hill, says that the past should be a lesson; we should learn and try not to make those same mistakes again. But for our glory days, it shall be repeated.

History is a never-ending puzzle: appreciate and understand it and maybe it will show mercy on our souls.

"Society needs to change how we view each other. We should be more open-minded about crimes," says Assefa, adding that we should consider only sending people to prison for serious crimes and not minor ones.

As time changes, our view of the world changes along. Many think the past was better but there are also those who believe that it's best to be in the present. Now we're going to see by comparing different views by different people from Boston of different ages.

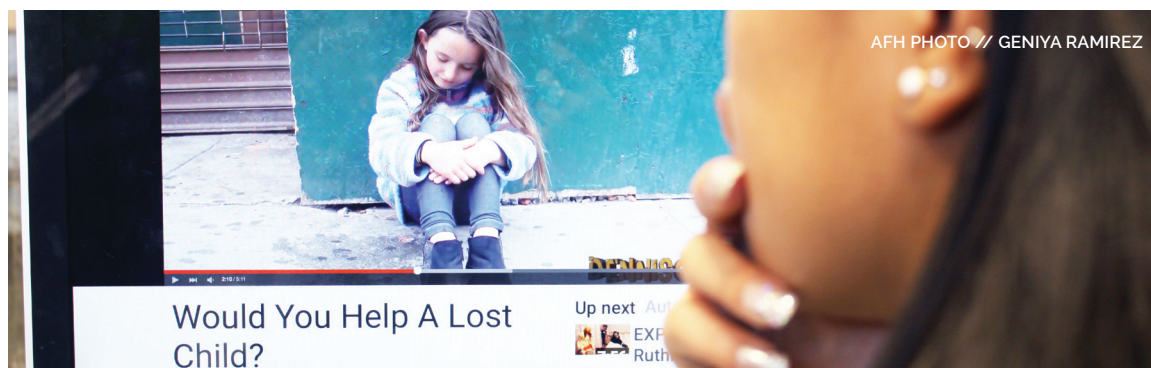
Teacher Michael Roper, 40, says that we don't know how to accept our differences. And that's causing our society tremendous harm.

"Sometimes we clash in what we believe is right for our world," he says.

Our world is full of variety, teens say, so we must try to comprehend and embrace our diversity to create a society in which we respect each other as brothers and sisters, not enemies.

Teacher Albert Maldonado, 60, says that society has become somewhat decadent due to a misinterpretation of ethics. He also believes that we haven't changed much from our ancestors because we're committing many of the same errors they did.

"Don't look back, look ahead," he advises, "and try to make every day better."



YOUTUBE SCENARIOS IN WHICH ART IMITATES LIFE

BY KATHERINE BERNARDEZ // STAFF WRITER

Sixteen-year-old Kianah Moss was watching a YouTube video of a test that featured a 10-year-old girl walking up to random people and asking them if they could help her find her mother. The goal of this invented circumstance was to test people's empathy.

But Moss's jaw dropped when the process went awry: A random man called out to the young girl, saying that her mom was looking for her. He claimed to live in the same building as her mother, grabbed the girls' wrist, and tried to take off with her.

These social experiments have become a growing Internet sensation, where people record their concocted scenarios to see how society reacts. It is the same ethical premise used in the TV show, "What Would You Do?"

But the unscripted turn of events on this

YouTube video proved that art really does imitate life -- often a dangerous proposition.

"[This experiment] is disturbing as it is, so imagine what else could happen," says Moss, who attends the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science.

The attempted abduction was eventually staved off by at least one person in the area who passed the compassion quiz, but not before reality intervened.

Destiny King, 15, from Dorchester, feels that such soul-searching research isn't worth the risk.

"[The little girl] could've gotten seriously hurt and could never be seen again," says King.

Fifteen-year-old Malik Rise, from Roxbury, was also not amused after watching the video.

"It's not funny what happened to the little girl," says Rose.

COLD LEFTOVERS

BY JAMILLAT DOUMBIA // STAFF WRITER

Seventeen-year-old Karla Ramires-Diaz, from Boston Community Leadership Academy, says she'd rather be dropped than forgotten.

"I would want a person that is really special to me to remember me always," she says.

As high school is nearing the end for seniors, many teens are bound to part ways one way

or another. How they disentangle is a matter of debate.

Zachary Luckett, 17, from Roslindale, says he would hate not being remembered.

"What is the point of them knowing me at all if they will just forget me?" he asks.

Emili Ramires-Diaz, 17, from Dorchester, agrees that being forgotten is cold.

She says: "Memories are important."

TRUMPING TRUMP ON IMMIGRATION

BY JAMILLAT DOUMBIA // STAFF WRITER

KO is now 18 and came to the US from Colombia when he was two in search of a better life.

Now he sees that Republican frontrunner for the presidency, Donald Trump, wants to take it all away from him and millions of other undocumented immigrants by sending them back home.

"I feel overwhelmed knowing that I will be affected as much as everyone else if he

becomes president," says KO, who lives in East Boston and whose name is being withheld to protect his immigration status. "The American Dream' will not be a dream anymore for a lot of people."

KO says it is not only his immigration status that is misunderstood -- but also his country.

Whereas many teens think of violence and drug cartels when they hear the words "Medellin, Colombia," KO sees a far different place.

"The weather is always beautiful," he says.

Being in the US for a good amount of years, KO

has heard some unfriendly racial comments, like "border crosser."

"Those people are the very ones who have yet to understand the struggle that a family or person has to go through in order to get to their country of destination," he says.

While KO wants to stay out of Trump's way, he wouldn't mind experiencing his country again -- on his own terms.

"If I could go back to Colombia for even one day," he says, "I would have fun, play soccer, and most importantly spend time with my family."

HE SAID,

SHE SAID

It's part of the reporter's code: There are two sides to every story. Here, these students give voice to this journalistic mantra.

18 OR 8?

BY ASHLEY PHILIPPE // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

I really don't know why my mom can't just let me do some stuff on my own because I'm 18. In my mom's mind, I'm still a baby.

A teenager is often on the phone talking with friends or listening to music. I need to be calm and focused before I do my homework.

My mother thinks I'm acting like a child. But I am 18 -- not 8 years old. I have to make my own choices to learn the difference between good and bad.

I know my mom wants to protect me from trouble but she has to know I'm not a kid anymore. I have to experience things to be prepared for life.

She should be proud of me. I could be a drug addict or in prison, but I'm not.

As this girl's mother, I want to keep her out of trouble. I don't know what kind of friends she has, but the street is really dangerous.

I know she's 18 but sometimes I think she's my 8-year-old baby. She gives her phone the most important place in her life -- more than studying.

I know she always thinks I'm on her, but I just want to protect her and help her to have a better life. To realize her dreams because for a mother that's the big thing.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

BY LEYLA GAYLE // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The problem I have is getting my fiancé, Marcos, to keep his part of the room clean. I know that some people don't like to clean. I don't like it, either.

A dirty room can have a lot of dust. I feel suffocated when our bedroom isn't clean.

But Marcos throws everything on the floor. There are shoes and dirty clothes everywhere.

His answer is always: "Yes, I know what I have to do. You don't have to tell me every day."

And then he just doesn't do it.

I do a lot of work. When Leyla is sick, I clean and cook for her.

Leyla is bossy. I feel the room is clean and organized, but she wants it perfect. I don't know why -- nobody else sees it.

It's true I don't like to clean, but I do my best to be organized and make Leyla happy.

But Leyla acts like she's my mom -- always upset about cleaning.

ALL FOR ONE, ONE FOR ALL?

BY JAILSON TEIXEIRA // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

As the coach of a soccer team, I believe that everyone must have a chance to play.

But Jailson feels he has to average 80 out of 90 minutes per game. He only thinks about himself.

I worry that if he plays too much, he will get injured.

To be a coach is not easy because there are so many players to satisfy. I'm trying to help the team in general but everyone complains.

The true story is about a boy who really loves soccer and doesn't want to see his team losing when he can do better. But the coach plays others -- including those who don't even show up for practice.

Me? I can dribble through any defense and score a goal real quick.

My coach always says that I'm selfish, but I'm not.

I just want to see my team winning trophies.

SELF DEFENSE

BY ADEBOLA MAYOKUN //
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Once upon a time, there were these two guys who had a conflict: Wasiu and Akeem.

"Wasiu, the guy over there took my ball," a young boy told him.

"Okay, let's go" Wasiu says. "I am gonna punch the guy."

Wasiu broke Akeem's nose and got the ball.

Instead of Wasiu talking to the older guy nicely, Wasiu hit the guy immediately. They started fighting and both got suspended from school.

Here's the other side:

A boy was playing with a soccer ball when an older kid snatched it and told him he had to pay for it. The boy didn't have money so he called for his older brother.

It was the older kid who started things by hitting the big brother in the face. They began tangling. Both got suspended from school.

The big brother knew resorting to violence was not right, but he was struck first and felt he need to defend his younger brother -- and himself.



AFH ART // AMY YANG

FAKE FRIENDS?

BY SMERLIN PAREDES // **CONTRIBUTING WRITER**

It all began when we went to high school together, me and my best friend. Then he began spending time with his new friends -- and not me.

I am a person who likes to pay back with the same coin. So I began to play volleyball, which got me new friends.

He approached me one day and said that I was spending all my time with others.

"You started leaving me for your new friend," he said to me.

"You're the one who began to leave me for your little friend," I replied.

Finally, we went our separate ways. We haven't talked since.

That makes me feel bad. I want to be his friend again, to laugh and have fun together like before.

But I don't think it's going to be the same because he cares more about his new friends than his old one.

...

She was my best friend. Then she kicked me out to be with her new boyfriend.

Seriously, that made me upset. So I just decided to let her feel how I feel. She has a boyfriend and, me, I have my friend.

She must have been a fake friend because I was there before the new boyfriend and she replaced me.

Sometimes I miss her, but I think that she doesn't think about me and our memories. But I'm cool with that because one day she's going to need something from me and that's when she's going to talk to me.

I really hope we can be friends like before.

THE LATE ESCAPE

BY CLEUSA RODRIGUES //
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Last year, I was in English class with my best friend. She is a very funny person.

But she never did her work and was late almost every day to class. She got suspended for a week because she was disrespectful to a teacher.

One day, we came to school at the same time.

"Hi. How are you?" she asked.

"I'm good," I said. "We have seven minutes before the bell rings."

"I have to go to the bathroom first," she said.

"But we don't have much time."

"I will be fast."

"I'm not going to wait for you," I said, and left.

I don't think she heard me.

She came running from the bathroom.

"Why did you not wait for me?" she asked.

"I don't want to be late to class," I said.

I don't think she cares about school and I'm afraid that she won't be successful in life.

...

Everyone knows the story about the girl who is always late to class. The one who doesn't do her work.

Or they think they do.

Well, every morning I wake up at 6:30. I go to the bathroom and wait for the shower water to get hot. I brush my teeth and get dressed.

Now, it's almost 7:20. I take the train. I get to school at 7:50.

I see one friend, go to the bathroom, and then see two more.

I'm late to class again.

People are trying to make me look like a villain. But I can't help it -- I'm a friendly person.

YES, MOM. OK, MOM. I UNDERSTAND, MOM.

Using Jamaica Kincaid's famous 1978 short story, "Girl," as a jumping off point, these youth put a modern twist on the age-old back-and-forth between children and their parents and other authority figures. It doesn't take reading between the lines to fathom the timeless, complicated relationships that exist between young people and their elders.

"YOU ARE IN SCHOOL TO STUDY HARD"

BY DANIELA OLIVEIRA // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Wash the dishes. Take care of your brother. Cook the dinner. Give him food. Don't leave your room dirty.

Don't walk with people who are bad influences on you. Learn English and go to college. Get a great job. You are in school to study hard. *But I do work hard and pay attention in my classes.*

Here we have more opportunities than in Portugal. In America, it is free education. *I know. I feel so busy sometimes but also happy because it shows you how much responsibility I have.*

AFH PHOTO

"YOU NEED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITY THAT THE UNITED STATES GAVE US"

BY ANA MARIA ARIAS TEJEDA // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Ana, do your homework and clean your room. *Yes, I know that I need to do this.* Ana, you need to cook and take care of your little sister. *OMG, mom. I need to do this every day?* You need to pay attention. I don't like to repeat things every two seconds. *Yes, mom, I know. I'm always paying attention.* This is for your future. *Yes, mom, yes.*

You need to go to school every day, get good grades, and respect your teachers and friends. You need to take advantage of the opportunity that the United States gave us. *I know mom, that's true, because I want to be a judge or a doctor. For this I need to work hard and follow my dreams.*

You know that when I tell you something, it is for your own good. I want you to be a good girl.

Yes, mom, I know. Thank you. That's why I love you. You always give me advice. I have the best mom in the world.

"YOU ARE NOT A BABY ANYMORE"

BY QUYEN BUI // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Do your homework and don't play games if you are not done. Clean your room. *But I do it every week and I did all my homework.*

This is how to clean the bathroom. This is how to clean the dishes. This is how to clean the house. This is how to cook for the family. *But I know how to cook, clean the bathroom, clean the house, and clean the dishes. Why do I have to do so much work? I'm tired.*

This is your responsibility. You are not a baby anymore. *I feel like I don't have any freedom at home.*

You have to work hard. You have to learn more vocabulary and get A's. *But I do work hard and get A's.*

You have wake up early to go to school. *But I do wake up early every day I have to go to school. Don't remind me too many times!*

"DON'T GIVE UP ON THINGS"

BY YORSALEM BRHANE // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Be kind to people. Be a better person. *What if they are mean to me?* Just be the bigger person and let it go.

Help me around the house. Do your chores. This is how you cook. This is how you iron. This is how you talk properly. This is how you sit properly.

Pay attention to your teachers. Do good at school and get A's. Get a scholarship. Make sure you use every opportunity you find and don't waste them. Be successful and become a doctor.

Be nice to your brothers and sisters. *I will, but will they be nice to me, too?*

Get up every Sunday morning and go to church.

Leave the living room when guests arrive. *But the TV is in the living room and I want to watch my movies.*

Don't let anybody tell you that you can't because you're a girl. Don't give up on things. *I won't give up.*

"RESPECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS"

BY CHRISTELLE NARCISSE // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Focus and work hard in school. You're not a stupid girl -- that's why you should make good choices.

Learn how to do your own laundry. Take care of your little brother. Make sure that he eats and does what he's supposed to do. *But he never listens to me.* Respect yourself and others; if you don't respect yourself then how are you going to respect others? *I do respect myself and other people.*

Learn how to cook your own meals instead of eating junk food every day. *I know how to make healthy food to have a good diet.*

We came here for you to have better opportunities than you had in France so don't let these chances escape from you. You can be whoever you want. *I want to be someone successful and achieve my goal of becoming a newscaster.*

"DON'T GET INTO TROUBLE"

BY MILENA ANDRADE // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Go to school and study as hard as you can. Respect people older than you. Do your homework. Don't get into trouble.

Respect your teachers. *But I always respect my teachers.* Don't be a doctor. Don't be a singer. Don't be a scientist. Be a teacher. *But I don't want to be a teacher. When I grow up, I want to be a singer.*

Go inside when it is 10 pm. *But I'm always inside when it is 10 pm.* You are not allowed to go everywhere you want to go.

Be sure not to get a boyfriend until you are 16.



"BE THE LEADER IN YOUR LIFE"

BY SHERLANDY PARDIEU // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Hey, Sherlandy: Be respectful to us as your parents and to people you don't know. I taught you how to pray to God when you need help. *I know you're trying to make me have a better future than you had in Haiti because there were fewer opportunities.*

You are a cute, young boy. Don't get any girls pregnant.

Don't be the follower, Be the leader in your life. Be the example to everyone. *You say the same thing every day, mom.*

You have a great opportunity in front of you, son. Graduate high school and go to college. *I don't want to let you down. I want to put that big smile on your face again. Mom, I love you.*

"THIS IS HOW YOU BEHAVE IN SCHOOL"

BY RICARDY SAINT VIL // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Ricardy: Go to school. Do your homework. Respect your teachers. Talk to them. *I always talk to them.*

This is how you behave in school. Don't never insult people who are older than you. *I never insult people older than me.*

Go clean the bathroom. *But I always do.*

You are going to be punished if you don't do your homework. *But I always do my homework.*

"FOLLOW YOUR DREAMS"

BY JOYLSOON TAVARES // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Wake up! You are going to be late for school. You are not five years old anymore. Don't answer back.

While cleaning your room, make sure you do the bed first, then sweep the floor. If there is trash near your bed, clean it. *Okay.*

Don't be friends with people who are bad influences -- smoke, rob, involved in gangs. Don't follow in their bad footsteps. *I know that. I don't want to get arrested.*

Follow your dreams. Don't give up. Stay in school. You are very smart. You can have a lot of opportunities here in the US after coming from Portugal, like having a good job and earning a good salary, but you need to persevere and have determination. *Thanks for the advice.*

"DON'T WASTE YOUR OPPORTUNITY IN AMERICA"

BY MOHAMED SOMANE // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Wash the dishes -- they don't wash themselves.

This is how to make some rice so you don't burn down the house and yourself. *But I don't burn down the house.*

Be nice to your neighbors so that they are nice to you. *Mom, I am always nice to my neighbors.*

Don't waste your opportunity in America. If you are on the streets, you are not going to have a good life. *But I am always concentrating on my work.*

School is not a game. *I know that mom. You will only succeed if you try your best. I am doing the best I can.*

AFH PHOTO // CRISTAL FELIZ

ANDY BIRSACK OBSESSION DISORDER

BY ARIYANA BOZEMAN // CONTRIBUTING
WRITER

Teen girls everywhere have been coming down with a mysterious illness. Parents are reporting that their daughters aren't themselves.

Apparently, they've been stricken with Andy Biersack Obsession Disorder. These females think the Black Veil Brides lead singer is sweet and cute --and terribly interesting.

For instance, here's what he told the online music magazine Loudwire back in 2012 about the essence behind the name of his rock band's third studio album, "Wretched and Divine: The Story of the Wild Ones."

"I think on any given day somebody could help out a homeless person and cuss out somebody that cut them off in traffic and I think that everybody has that inside them, it's just how you live that balance -- so I think everybody is 'Wretched and Divine.'"

Regarding a single on the album, "In the End," Biersack said to Loudwire: "I'm not a religious person but I grew up in a religious family. I went to the funeral for my grandfather, a person that I love very much and everyone is speaking about how he went to heaven and how he's in heaven. I always fight with that because I would love nothing more to believe that my grandfather is in the clouds playing Xbox 460 or whatever awesome stuff they have up in heaven but I can't."

"I remember sitting around in my grandmother's house afterwards and everybody's doing what you do after -- you all go back somewhere and you talk about the great stories of the person that died and that came to me very clearly. Whether you believe or don't believe in an actual physical afterlife, you can't deny that there is a certain element of an afterlife in the legacy that someone leaves."

"A bunch of people sitting around a room talking about how wonderful this person was and how positively they affected their lives is always going to, in a sense, be heaven -- heaven on earth."

INTERPLANETARY PRAISE FOR "STEVEN UNIVERSE"

BY MELANIE BAEZ // STAFF WRITER

Swordfights, space warriors, and great music -- "Steven Universe" is about all that and much more, a magical show about a magical boy.

The Cartoon Network program has many reasons behind its huge audience. The fan base not only includes kids, but teens and adults, who are charmed by this funny, cute, surprisingly deep, and LGBTQ-friendly offering.

The main character is a young and sensitive boy named Steven. And here we already see how different this show is: Steven is presented as pretty much anything but traditionally masculine. He is not afraid of showing his emotions in front of his friends and family. With all these gender norms built up in the media, it's good to see a cartoon protagonist who breaks those pesky stereotypes.

Steven is being raised with the help of three alien warriors called the crystal gems. Their bodies are actually projections generated by their stones -- think of it like holograms but with mass.

The crystal gems and his father take care of Steven after his mother, who was also a crystal gem, gave up her physical form to birth Steven. His mother leaves Steven with some of her gem powers. This makes Steven a gem/human hybrid.

At one point, Steven fuses with Connie, his human friend, and becomes "Stevonnie" -- a genderless being. In that episode, they even refrained from using gender pronouns for the time they were "Stevonnie."

This innovative show portrays many types of multi-faceted relationships and displays love in a unique and positive manner.

STEVEN
AND
CONNIE



TIP ARTWORK // MELANIE BAEZ

SUSSING OUT THE SUPERHEROES

BY DJIBRIL CONTE // STAFF WRITER

In the world of superheroes, there is much debate about which champion is best. For Ralph Lambert, 14, it is the Incredible Hulk.

"All Hulk has to do is get mad and beat everyone to a pulp," says Lambert, from Hyde Park.

Fourteen-year-old James Anderson, from Dorchester, is a Superman fan.

"This dude even has a lair in the Arctic and doesn't freeze up," Anderson says.

Meanwhile, 15-year-old Brooklyn Crowe has another superhero in mind.

"Batman would win," says Crowe, from Dorchester, "because he has all the technology to do it."



A FASHION GURU AT

17

BY TYESHA MARIUS // STAFF WRITER

At the age of 17, Dorchester resident Reginald R. Fils is already making his mark in the fashion world. He has his own brand – Urban Inspired – that also comes with a message: Being inspired by your community in a positive way creates positive changes.

Fils started at the age of 14 with help from his mom, Cheryl Jean, described on Fils' website (urbaninspired.co) as "an influential Boston-based fashion stylist."

Fils says he keeps up his style sense by being aware of his surroundings.

"When I take public transportation, that's a big thing I look at. I am always analyzing the new styles that are emerging and the ones that are disappearing," he says. "Everything comes back, so it's just a matter of what trend is here right now."

Fils says his favorite designer is Tom Ford and that he likes to shop at Sault and H&M.

Between going to school and staging fashion events on weekends, Fils says, it can be a hectic life. For example, Fils says preparing for a show – like a recent one at a hall in Dorchester – can entail attending meetings; traveling to pick up and drop off clothes; and having conversations with makeup artists, photographers, and hair stylists so his looks can be cohesive on the runway.

His advice to upcoming designers and stylists: Don't give up. Work hard and your enterprise will be seen sooner or later.

DESIGNING A FUTURE

BY ROSA SANCHEZ // STAFF WRITER

As a teenager, my mind is still trying to differentiate reality from fantasy. To me, every day is like a journey in which dreams and hopes come together to create a soul. That soul is who we are. We are who we choose to be -- not what we're told to be. Our journeys are often different from those of our parents. In this chapter of my life, I have discovered

my true passion: I want to be a fashion designer.

I don't know if it's the way the designs look on the clothing or how lovely it feels to see my imagination on paper, but I truly enjoy creating my own designs.

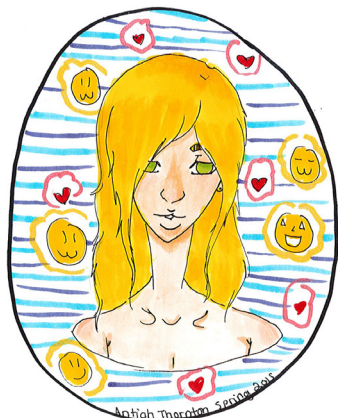
I also like seeing famous designers' masterpieces. They inspire me to make my designs even better. Drawing isn't my forte but I can manage to draw what I love.

That's why I can draw clothing but not actual people.

Designing has become my way of escaping reality. It helps me release my worries. Everything is reflected in my designs.

I waste a lot of money on clothing, especially dresses, for their cute or unique styles. These clothes are all locked away in my huge closet because I have no use for them other than looking at their designs.

I DRAW, THEREFORE I AM



TIP ARTWORK // ANTIAH THORNTON

"I CANNOT GO A SINGLE DAY WITH DRAWING"

BY ANTIAH THORNTON // STAFF WRITER

Drawing has long been a way for me to express the things that I couldn't explain in words. Through drawing, I am able to see my thoughts, emotions, ideas -- and improvement. The visualization of what manifests inside me provides coherent examples of what I need to do to make myself a better person -- like the time I drew a character who represented being a good friend.

I also draw as a way to cope with the many stresses that I encounter. I've used drawing to help deal with the loss of important family members and friends, my insecurities, and other negative thoughts. Drawing alleviates the harrowing pain I sometimes feel -- like ice would on a burn.

I cannot go a single day with drawing. At this point, it has become a part of me and I can't imagine holding onto my sanity without it.

My very existence has become adhered to the concept of art, and I can verily say that I am grateful for a dear friend who inspired me to start drawing again after I lost interest for about a year.

"I DRAW TO LET MY EMOTIONS OUT"

BY CHRISTINE FREEMAN // STAFF WRITER

I draw because it makes me happy.
I draw to get a different view on things.
I draw to let my emotions out.
I draw because it is simple...and hard.
I draw and then I can be recognized by others.
I draw because it's something to do when I'm bored.

I draw to show that I can get through a challenge by myself.
I draw because for every stroke of my pencil, pen, colored pencil, marker; for every line, dot, or color I put on a paper, it's like I'm putting a piece of myself there.

And who doesn't want to put a piece of themselves into everything they do?



TIP ARTWORK // CHRISTINE FREEMAN



TIP ARTWORK // MELANIE BAEZ

"DRAWING IS AN INSTRUMENT FOR ME"

BY MELANIE BAEZ // STAFF WRITER

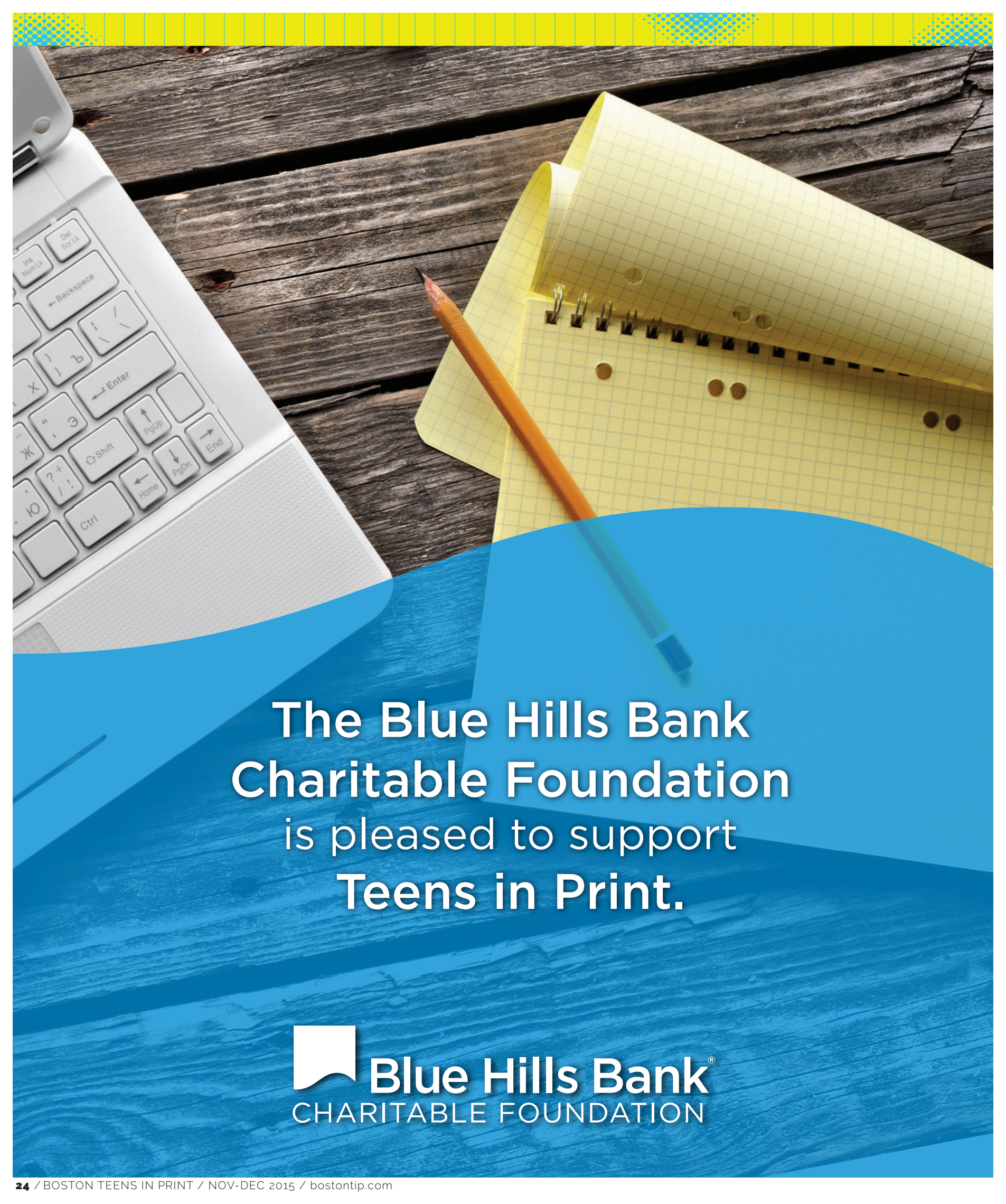
If someone asked me out of the blue why I draw, I wouldn't know what to say because there are so many answers.

One reason I draw is to make the stories in my head come to life. I can get inspired by anything -- a song, a quote, or a new piece of information -- and in my head it sparks characters and from that comes their very own backstories in their very own worlds.

Every time I draw those characters doing something different, or in unique poses or outfits, is another add-on to their personas and adventures. I could put them into words but drawing is way more fun.

Drawing is an instrument for me. I use it to distract myself. I use it to express myself and my inner-most thoughts and ideas. My emotions leak out onto the page -- whether I'm aware of it or not. Drawing is my stress reliever and I could do it all day. Drawing is all I want to do when I'm older. I want to incorporate it into my life in every way I can. My big goal is to have my own animation company and be there teaming-up with Pixar.

But for the near future, I just want to be a successful freelance artist. I want to market my art, do commissions, and make webcomics. I want to go to anime conventions and be able to sell things that I made.



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