

Mockingbird Times

Building a world class foster care system while serving our neighborhood youth



June 2005

Foster Care and Homeless Youth Speak out Across the Nation
Visit us online at www.mockingbirdsociety.org or call 206-323-5437 (KIDS)

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Voices of Mockingbird: Meet the Young People Leading the Mockingbird Times

Join us as we take a moment to embrace the tremendous growth we have experienced at Mockingbird in the recent months. It is especially important to recognize the contributions of the youth whose voice, passion and commitment make the Mockingbird Times such a success. In this issue, we want to give our readers a chance to meet our new reporters, as well as reintroduce you to some familiar faces. Enjoy!

HELLO, MY NAME IS ASHLEY GRANT AND I AM AN 18 YEAR OLD SENIOR at Cleveland High School. I am also a Satellite Reporter here at the Mockingbird Times.



ASHLEY
GRANT

I think that I bring sunshine to the environment at Mockingbird because everyone here loves to see me smile and adores my positive attitude. I ended up working at Mockingbird through my old high school principal and I have been here ever since.

My younger siblings and I have been in kinship care for over four years. Mockingbird has helped me overcome issues that I face with my experience in the foster care system.

Working at Mockingbird is so inspirational to me because the whole cause of being advocates for young people is beautiful. I am glad that our paper is sent throughout the country. My boss Shannon is very influential to me because she understands my style of writing and how to help me put it to make the best article possible.

Mockingbird is the kind of job everyone should hope for because [the environment] is supportive and understanding. Working here enables you to learn life long skills and allows you to use them on your personal journey to success. 🐦

I AM 18 AND GO TO SHORELINE COMMUNITY COLLEGE. I am a funny, motivated person who enjoys swimming and doing things with my brothers. I have been in foster care since I was two years old. I have been in and out of a lot of homes. I think overall it was a hard but good experience for me. It made me a stronger person and prepared me for a lot.



RICO EVANS

Mockingbird is like my safe house. When I go to work there is nothing but good vibes coming my way and everyone is so understanding. Shannon and Jim have been my inspiration for coming to work and loving it. Jim came from almost the same background as me and he made something good out of himself. That inspires me to keep going. Shannon is so loving and cares about us more than what she is supposed to.

I am grateful for the experience I had with FPAWS in Wenatchee (as part of a panel of young people from Mockingbird speaking about their experience in foster care to foster parents in WA state). It was good to have older people asking for our help—usually it's the other way around. My advice to your out there is to live life to the fullest and always think positive. If you think negative you will see nothing but negative all around you. 🐦



MBT Reporters Jasmine Caldwell, Jamica Henderson and Larishica Asher.



MBT Volunteer Emil Redmond, MBT Reporters Princess Hollins, Courtney Konietzko, Echo Speed, Rico Evans.



MBT Reporters Rico Evans, Jamica Henderson, Anthony Guess.

I CAN BE A VERY COOL PERSON. I like to speak my mind and I like to be heard. I consider myself a leader and am a very outgoing person. I love listening to music and dancing. I love going to dances and to parties but I don't drink or smoke.



LARISHICA
ASHER

My history of being in foster care has been somewhat good because I have been in some bad and good foster homes, and I have ended up in a good home. I don't think that anyone should be in foster care because they should live with their parents unless their family has some problems or has abused them.

Mockingbird is a place where foster youth or youth who have been homeless or misunderstood go and get a job and let the world know what foster care is like and what youth go through. My organization (Mockingbird) is very good and my experience here has been really good. Being at Mockingbird has taught me the qualities of a job and how to keep one. 🐦

I WAS PRETTY MUCH BORN INTO THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM. I spent my first five years in state care, later moving in with my grandma. While growing up I suffered from a lot of abuse. At the age of twelve I decided that I couldn't handle it anymore so I left. I was placed in two group homes and one foster home. I was lucky in a way because usually if you are "born" into the system, it's rare that you have contact with your biological family and stay in only two group homes. I'm sometimes asked, "how that is you only spent time in two group homes, compared to six or seven that many teenagers in the system go through?" I simply say that I looked at the bigger picture, my mind was never focused in the moment, it was always two to three years ahead. So in other words, I never let my situation bring me down.



ANTHONY
GUESS

Now that I'm a senior in high school and have two jobs, I look back at my life and wonder what I would be like now if I didn't go through the system. I think that my life would be really different. I think that I would have less patience and care for people. I wouldn't really take life as seriously as I do now, because I know that I have to do every thing for myself. Working for Mockingbird is really exciting and I feel like I'm almost ready to make a big step up into another role. Right now I'm a Satellite Reporter and as the program grows I would like to grow also. One thing I want to tell readers is that the present never defines who you are—it's always the future. 🐦

Bend-It! Extravaganza

The Bend-It! Extravaganza is an absolutely amazing queer youth arts festival led by and for queer young people. This year, the Bend-It! Extravaganza is taking place in Seattle, WA, from June 24th through June 26th. Incredibly talented bands like The Gossip (from Olympia) are opening for our Friday night kick-off event, and I'll be hosting the spoken word event on Sunday. Go to www.bend-it.org or e-mail me at misty-lou-cook@yahoo.com for more info!

VOICES OF MOCKINGBIRD CONTINUED ON PAGE 3...

Letter from the Editor

This issue of the *Mockingbird Times* provides us with an opportunity to introduce you all to our reporting staff, and to bid farewell to a few staff members who are moving on. **Erin Daniels**, an intern from the **University Of Washington School Of Social Work**, has been with Mockingbird the past year. Erin holds the distinction of being our first intern and has set a high standard. We will miss her.



JIM THEOFELIS

Shannon Barello has been with Mockingbird Society since January of 2003 and has been instrumental in the success and growth of this organization. I've met many professionals over my nearly thirty years of serving children, youth and families and Shannon is truly one of the best. Her passion, compassion and commitment to the young people we serve is extraordinary. Shannon has become a trusted colleague and a dear friend. I wish her the best in her future endeavors and hope that our paths will continue to cross.

On the other side of the transition is the welcoming and re-introduction of Mockingbird Society staff. Our *Mockingbird Times* reporting team is an amazing and talented group of young people who are able to articulate their life experiences of being homeless and/or in foster care. I am also pleased to welcome **Najja Taylor**, who has been hired as the **Youth LEAD (Leadership, Employment-education and Advocacy Development) Coordinator**, of which the *Mockingbird Times* is her primary responsibility. Najja brings a wealth of experience, skills and wisdom to the position and we are very fortunate to have her onboard.

Mockingbird Society is clearly in a "growth spurt" and we are feeling the pride and pains of such. We are excited to move into our new office located in the same amazing **2100 Building** in Seattle but with twice the space. We expect to grow the employment readiness and career development component of our program as well as increase the public speaking events youth participate in. I want to thank those of you who have supported our work; especially those who have taken the time to give feedback to our Youth Reporters. Happy June!

Jim Theofelis
jim@mockingbirdsociety.org

THANK YOU'S

Dr Alan Rothblatt,
Tobias Foundation

Dear Echo-

I really liked your review of Dave Pelzer's book and your description of your interview with him. He was treated horribly (assuming the stories are true) and you captured the bizarre nature of his family. But Pelzer seems to be using his experiences to help promote himself, and seems more concerned about that than helping the young people who have followed him. While there's nothing wrong with fame, or even enjoying seeing your byline, the thing I like about Mockingbird is that the writers are about helping others as much or more than they are about helping themselves.

I wish Mr. Pelzer had spent some time sharing his strategies for survival and success (other than self promotion) so you could have shared them with the readers. I feel like he missed a golden opportunity to connect with youth in care today. I am glad you tried, and showed us a bit about his character in the process. Keep up the good work. You're a wonderful writer.

Keith Hefner

PS: One of our adult editors at Youth Communication was a journalist for twenty years, but before that she was also in the Seattle foster care system.

Goodbye Mockingbird



MBT Reporters Jasmine Caldwell, Jamica Hendeson and Larishica Asher with MSW Intern Erin Daniels.

FOR THE PAST YEAR, I HAVE WORKED as the MSW Intern here at the Mockingbird Society. Now I am preparing to both graduate from the University of Washington School of Social Work and conclude my practicum at Mockingbird. I have really enjoyed my time at Mockingbird. When I started interning here last summer, despite having worked with several foster and homeless youth in the past, I knew very little about the youth homelessness and foster care systems. I have had a great time and learned a lot by being part of the Mockingbird Youth Video Project (watch for the video - it's coming soon!), ASK-Y, Youth Advocacy Day, and everything else.

Mockingbird is a very positive and energy-filled environment, and I have learned a good deal from all the staff here. I have learned the most, however, from the intelligence, creativity, and strength of the young people working at the Mockingbird Society. I feel really honored to have spent the year with such truly gifted people. My puppy Zoe, rat Phoenix, and I will be staying in Seattle after graduation, and I am thrilled to be able to stay on at Mockingbird as a volunteer.

- Erin Daniels, MSW Intern



MBT Reporters Franisa Johnson, Jasmine Caldwell, Larishica Asher, Rico Evans, Anthony Guess and Jamica Henderson with MFFCP Coordinator Shannon Barello.

I HAVE BEEN A PART OF MOCKINGBIRD for two and a half years. In this time I have had the opportunity to work with some of the most resilient, talented, intelligent, hilarious and absolutely amazing young people I have ever had the pleasure of knowing. I am constantly surprised, inspired and proud of their strengths and achievements and am honored to have had the opportunity to work with an agency so dedicated to giving young people a real voice in the community.

While I am moving into a new position outside of the Mockingbird Society, I plan on continuing to be involved as a volunteer, as I cannot imagine not working in some capacity with this incredible organization, and the incredible people—young and not so young—who I have had the pleasure of working with.

Thank you readers for continuing to support the work we do, and thanks to all the Mockingbird staff who made my experience so worthwhile. A special thank you to Jim, whose passion and vision continue to inspire me everyday. Goodbye for now!

-Shannon Barello, MFFCP Coordinator

ABOUT US: The Mockingbird Society is a private non-profit organization dedicated to building a world class foster care system and improving the other systems that serve children and adolescents involved in homelessness and foster care. The *Mockingbird Times* is a monthly newspaper written and produced by youth who have experience in foster care and/or homelessness. All youth employees of Mockingbird Society are paid between \$7.50 and \$8.50 an hour. Additionally, youth from across the country submit articles, art work, poetry and are compensated up to \$25 per published piece. The *Mockingbird Times* has a monthly circulation of 40,000 copies being distributed across Washington State and the U.S.A, through a private distribution list and as an insert in *Real Change*, a Seattle-based community newspaper. Youth involvement is the key to the philosophy, values, and success of The Mockingbird Society and, as such, youth are involved in all aspects of organizational development and decision-making. Donations to The Mockingbird Society may be tax-deductible and are greatly appreciated. No part of the *Mockingbird Times* may be reproduced without the written permission of The Mockingbird Society. All contents copyright 2005 The Mockingbird Society.

A Mockingbird Inside Your Mailbox

Make a difference in the lives of our most vulnerable youth and support the Mockingbird Society!

Donations may be tax deductible and all donors receive the *Mockingbird Times*. Enclosed, please find my check made payable to Mockingbird Society in the amount of: \$ _____

Suggested Donations:

\$ 1,000+..... Protector \$500-999.....Caretaker \$250-500.....Organizations
\$50+.....Supporter \$25.....Foster Parent

- Please bill me for the amount indicated.
- My employer will match my gift; enclosed is my matching gift form.
- I am interested in receiving information on the advantages of planned giving.

NAME _____ PHONE _____
ADDRESS _____ EMAIL _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Please do not include my name on published donor lists.

Please fill out and mail this form with a check or money order payable to: The Mockingbird Society, 2100 24th Ave South Suite 350, Seattle WA 98144

MEET OUR STAFF

Executive Director
Jim Theofelis

Youth Lead
Najja Taylor

Operations Manager
Ros Ghan

Administrative Assistant
Lauren Frederick

MSW Intern
Erin Daniels

Senior Staff Reporters
Dennis Fisher, Courtney Konietzko

Satellite Reporters
Rico Evans, Ashley Grant, Anthony Guess, Jamica Henderson, Echo Speed, Misty Lou Cook, Jasmine Caldwell, Franisa Johnson, Larishica Asher, Terasa Asher, Leona Bill, Shay Doney, J.Eboh, Hollis Riggins, Shakura Felder, Princess Hollins.

Contributing Writers
Fred Thurmond, Jay-son Foreman

Volunteers
Anna Trombley, Patricia Gray, Shannon Barello

...Voices of Mockingbird Continued...

HELLO MY NAME IS COURTNEY KONIETZKO and I am a writer, artist, student, and all around weirdo. Gotta keep it all balanced. I am an aspiring freak who would love to join the Jim Rose Circus Side Show, become an aspiring surgeon, or an aspiring lawyer. I am hoping to figure out what I want to do by completing career testing, talking to people, and life experience. For now I'm just trying to get my Associate's Degree and figuring it out in the process. I would like to learn how to surf, dance, play a musical instrument, and turn my poetry into music.



COURTNEY KONIETZKO

I like (this is embarrassing) films and books about vampires (for some reason I am riveted by the movie *Queen of the Damned*), a good work out, the moon, visiting my parents (this took a long time!), going to the ocean (I'm a Pisces), industrial music, eating phad thai, drawing pictures, the smell of cloves, vanilla, pine, and Tommy Hilfiger Tommy Girl perfume, and the feeling you get after overcoming something hard. I don't like not knowing how to drive, hamburgers, hatred, war, lies, and very hot weather.

I like working at Mockingbird because I feel like I am making a difference. I like learning how to write non-fiction, put my story into a format where it can reach out to others, and feeling like my experiences are validated. I work with great people who really care. I am exposed to other cultures that force me to look at myself.

I enjoy public speaking and hope to do more of it. I want people to understand how Mockingbird is a tool for social change. I want people to understand the foster care system needs help. I want people to be prepared for when they exit the foster care system. I want less kids ending up living on the streets, addicted to drugs, selling their bodies, living with HIV/Hep C, with no hope. I want to see my friends come up, not fall down.



MBT Reporters Dennis Fisher and Courtney Konietzko



MBT Satellite Reporters Larishica Asher, Terasa Asher, Ashley Grant

HELLO, MY NAME IS JAMICA HENDERSON. I have been working at Mockingbird for 1 and a half years now. I am 18 years old and am one of four siblings who is the first to go to college. My younger siblings look up to me. I am graduating from high school in June and have received three different scholarships. One I received my junior year which is the **Washington Achiever's Scholarship**. My senior year I received two more: the **Mt. Baker MLK Scholarship** and **African American Dollars for Scholars**. What I want to do with my life is become a Nurse Practitioner. I am going to Highline Community College in the fall.



JAMICA HENDERSON

I am going to go there for my first two years, then I want to go out of state for my next two years. I will be a Registered Nurse by that time. I am going to take a break so I can get used to my field before going back to school to get my Master's Degree.

I am a fun person to hang around. I am comfortable with meeting with new people and learning in new environments. I have good leadership skills. I like to talk on the phone with friends, go shopping, and just hang out. I am an outgoing person willing to jump on the next thing moving in my direction.

HI MY NAME IS FRANISA JOHNSON and I was born in Seattle, WA in 1987. I am a junior at Rainier Beach High School. I work at the *Mockingbird Times* and live with both of my parents. I have four sister and 2 brothers. I am a very calm, respectful and hard-working in everything I do. I don't get into a lot of trouble but as a teen trouble is very hard to stay away from, which is why I stay to myself most of the time.



FRANISA JOHNSON

Peoples' first impression of me is that I'm quiet. I used to think that I had a problem with communicating with others, but I don't. I just like to sit back and relax and enjoy myself. Like people say, actions are louder than words. I feel that I don't have to talk all the time but I will talk when I have something to say about anything—whether it's good or not. Once you get to know me you'll see what type of person I am.

I feel that *Mockingbird Times* is a real nice place to be. Ever since I've been working here, I feel as if I had to work anywhere else I would want it to be just like this. *Mockingbird Times* has given me a place where I can express my feelings, opinions and facts on whatever topic I want to write about. *Mockingbird Times* is a great place for anyone who likes to write and express themselves.

My experience at *Mockingbird Times* has been fun. I haven't really written my first article yet but I am looking forward for my article to be out in the July issue. I hope you like it.

HI MY NAME IS JASMINE CALDWELL I was born in Montgomery, Alabama but raised in Seattle. I have five brothers and three sisters. I'm a hard working student at Rainier Beach High School and maintaining a 2.7 GPA. After High School, I plan to go to Renton Technical College to further my education in culinary arts. My goal is to own a restaurant before I'm 30 years of age. I love to cook, dance, sing, write, shop and just have a good time. I'm a very energetic



JASMINE CALDWELL

"ENJOY LIFE AS YOU MAKE IT AND DON'T EVER LET ANYONE TELL YOU THAT YOU CAN'T DO ANYTHING, BECAUSE YOU CAN— AS LONG AS YOU PUT YOUR MIND TO IT."

person and usually nice and kind to those who do the same. I'm the type of person who loves a challenge and never takes no for an answer. I try my best at everything I do and no matter what the situation may be, I never give up. I would love to make it through life without the struggles and the heartache from a man or from anyone but that's not how God made it so I just have to live my life the way I'm suppose to and that way is God's way.

I encourage anyone who's going through something to stay strong. If you live your life focusing on your past you'll never make it. Live your life with enjoyment and happiness because that's what will make your life longer. Don't stress yourself about the little things that may occur in the future or what has happened in your past. Life is full of adventures so enjoy while you can. Life isn't just about responsibilities; it's about having fun and being a kid and not having to worry about a light bill or groceries. You don't want to grow up too fast because nothing is going on but drugs and violence and that's not a road you want to take. So, enjoy life as you make it and don't ever let anyone tell you that you can't do anything, because you can— as long as you put your mind to it.

MISTY LOU COOK IS A POET, blue collar scholar, activist, artist, writer, self-taught musician, organizer and lover of freedom and humanity, and not necessarily in that order. She grew up in Bellingham, WA, and has been coming around Seattle all of her life. She refuses to answer the little sheet with questions on it (AKA the "survey" that was handed to her) because she is free spirited and bends all rules that do not apply to her. She doesn't always speak in third person, but will for her bio due to the basic convenience of the situation and circumstances.

This particular writer has been off and on the streets, in other words, homeless, since she was 14 years old. She has been homeless all over the West Coast and you'll have to buy her book she's writing to find out why. She chooses to remain mysterious at this time but will disclose some very exciting information for all of the radical readers out there: The Bend-It Extravaganza is coming to Seattle SOON and I am hosting the Spoken Word Event!

Misty started working at the *Mockingbird Times* in June of 2004 and wants to let every reader know that Shannon will be missed. She was a great editor and supervisor, and this is not an obituary column so Misty won't make it sad, but Shannon was a really fun supervisor and a great person to work with. *Mockingbird Times* and Misty Lou Cook wishes her the best that life has to offer and hopes she has fun on this crazy journey called life.

~*HEY YOU*~



Calling all Writers, Artists and Young People With Something Important to Say...

We are looking for articles, poetry, artwork and photography from our young readers who have experience in the foster care system and/or homelessness. If you want to be published in the *Times*, contact us at 206-323-5437 or newspaper@mockingbirdsociety.org. For more info and to check us out, go to www.mockingbirdsociety.org.

All incoming Letters to the Editor should be addressed to Mockingbird Editorial Staff and will be opened by Editorial Staff. All incoming correspondence to reporting staff under 18 years of age will be opened first by Mockingbird Editorial Staff.



CREATIVE CORNER

Dear Mockingbird Times,

My name is Fred Thurmond and I am 17 years old and in group care. My mother abandoned me when I was two years old. I have only seen her once since she abandoned me. I was living on the streets from age two to five with my sister until my father found us and we lived with him. Then in August, my father died. My whole life I have been in and out of state care and jail. Since my last trip to jail, I have been writing poems and would like them published. People say they are good enough so I am going to try.

Wishes

FRED THURMOND

My wishes flapping in the wind but none accepted cause they won't mend. Mixed feelings in every situation, I am a one man army with only one formation. Can't love myself or anyone, not till my most extreme deed is done. Having no one to love or care for, is it my life I have to spare. My mind shows dimness of death, with an exasperating of one breath. To show faith and courage, pure strength like a full grown marriage can't act like an animal no more cause every mental and physical aspect goes to the core. Unintroduced feelings no need to know for culture and spiritual don't even show. Making people believe me but not wondering about the corrupt ways of seeing. Not having a family to care for. What is life if you don't want no more. But having one person it may show beauty, for inside it shows duty. Got to fight for my independence and freedom

But now my life is filled with greed (om). I might show my skin, but from my bacterial tissues or from withinnot knowing who I am or where I am from

Not fighting for my family or people to come

For I'm a useless piece of space. And not looking in it's face but hiding on the outside. Just like when my father died. My insides churn with resentment and hatefulness. The eyes show a bad test. Truth may feel extremely cold

Until the night it has been told. Not knowing when it's going to stop cause the knife has penetrated too deep. My heart aches with pain no one can bear.

Stereotype

JAY-SON FOREMAN

Walking down the street looking in the air

It seems like no one cares

They look me up and down like I am some animal up for display

It's just another black guy, ya he's probably going to spend his life selling drugs

I want to be something, not hanging out with thugs

Everything you want you have to work for

Blood, sweat and tears

I listen to everything, my mind is open and my ears pay attention

Anybody who speaks down on me is nothing

If the tables were turned how would that person feel?

Would he or she lose their emotions or blow everybody off for the

Cold consuming dollar bill?

When people judge other people it's a sin in God's book Everybody doesn't know everything so how can they judge?

This world was started over judging other races and culture

So sad it still goes on till this day

Racism, poverty, unemployment, childcare and family A lot of what this generation doesn't have

If we stop stereotyping maybe we can have world peace

And no more drama

No more wars and killing innocent American people We're all equal but the government doesn't tell you that

Drugs, jail sheets and prison's are all business to make money

Overseas slavery still goes on till this day,

Innocent people laboring for a messy couple of cents for just the right thing to wear

If no one knows, no one cares

It's all about having this and that

When the lights get dim and there's no one to help you

The things that you do to people affect you as well

Anything you do to someone comes back on you.

Constantine a Good Movie for a Rainy Day

COURTNEY KONIETZKO

I WENT TO SEE THE MOVIE *CONSTANTINE* on the first day of spring. It was pouring rain with cold gusts of wind that hurt when they blew through my coat. It was an adventure going to the Grand Cinema in Lynnwood and realizing how much each Loew's Cineplex looks alike...being surrounded by the welcoming smell of buttery popcorn, the weekend throngs of families and young people out on dates, and the hope to be entertained.

Keanu Reeves won my respect with this movie. He's not a bad actor, he just takes some time to get used to. *Constantine* is a pleasantly dark story of Heaven and Hell and the half-breeds (angels and demons) that walk the Earth, the realm between the two. Jon Constantine is heard talking about how in the beginning, God and the Devil made a deal to see who could get the most souls. However, direct contact with humans was not allowed, only influences.

The story unfolds as somebody/something violated that deal and broke through the barrier into Earth.

I wasn't unhappy about spending money on *Constantine*.

However, you know how some films would have been better if they just ended rather than trailing on to hint at a sequel? Well that's what *Constantine* should have done;

it would have made it stronger. The redeeming part about the end is the scene where Mr. Constantine is chewing

gum (watch to understand what I mean). My other gripe is that *Constantine* isn't really that original. The special

effects were mediocre, not horribly bad but they seemed like they were borrowed from other films. And there

were times my brain yelled "Neo!" I guess that's what happens when you watch the Matrix one too many times.

The good things about *Constantine*? The main characters Jon Constantine and Angela Dodson are both

easy on the eyes. Neither character falls head over heels for the other, turning the ending into a sappy love story

like so many bad films do, the typical boy meets girl, girl plays hard to get, boy learns lesson, girl softens, they

draw together like magnets, strife, honeymoon, conflict, blah, blah, blah, they kiss, the end.

There's some good shots (whoever was shooting the film knew what he was doing) and some pretty things in

the shots (like some of the places people live.) The beginning is strong and grabs your interest quickly. Oh,

I almost forgot the shock- value- fast-movement- loud- noise thing horror movies do to startle you; they only

did it once in *Constantine*. Instead they relied on a brooding darkness that is kind of pleasant, if that makes

any sense.

Constantine is not a horror movie but it is dark. Everybody in *Constantine* can act and I was wrapped up

in the story, wanting to know what happens next. *Constantine* also moves at a good pace and things make

sense, except for one spot somewhere in the middle when you wonder what she is doing in the pool (there

was nothing leading up to make you think that). Everything explains itself pretty well and introduces each

part nicely up until the pool scene. Then it gets kind of scattered and you are left with some unanswered

questions.

Constantine is based on the comic book *Hellblazer* by DC/Vertigo comics, directed by newcomer film director Francis Lawrence. Lawrence is known for his previous

work directing music videos for the likes of Britney Spears, Will Smith, Sarah McLachlan, and Aerosmith.

Constantine is rated R and has a run time of two hours. 3 out of 5 birds because it was a totally neutral experience with mild flashes of amusement. 

WA State Governor and DSHS Honor Foster Parents and Kids



WA State Representative Ruth Kagi; Department of Social and Health Services Assistant Secretary Cheryl Stephanie; Washington Education Foundation Independent Student Services Officer Mary Anne Herrick; Foster Parent Tony Anderson, Governor's Scholar Martin Sepulveda; Foster Parent Deb Anderson and Secretary of the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services Robin Arnold Williams

ON MAY 17, FOSTER PARENTS WERE RECOGNIZED for their work by Washington State Governor Christine Gregoire and the Department of Health and Human Services (DSHS). Governor Gregoire has proclaimed May as Foster Care Month in Washington State and is participating in Casey Family Programs national Blue Ribbon campaign, a campaign designed to bring attention to the need for more foster parents throughout the nation. For more information on how to become a foster parent, visit www1.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/be_FosterIntro.asp

Quote of the Month

"Do all you can, with what you have, in the time you have, in the place you are."

**Nkosi Johnson
1988-2001
AIDS Activist**