

# Mockingbird Times



Recipient of 2005 Congressional Angels in Adoption Award  
Building a world class foster care system while serving our neighborhood youth.

March 2007

Foster Care and Homeless Youth Speak Out Across the Nation

Volume VII, Issue 3

Visit us online at [www.mockingbirdsociety.org](http://www.mockingbirdsociety.org) or call 206-323-KIDS (5437)

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SAMUEL MARTIN

*Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any other one thing. - Abraham Lincoln.*

Ambition is what brought Youth Advocacy Day upon us: the will to change and make change. It was ambition that brought everyone to come and participate in Youth Advocacy Training, and Youth Advocacy Day. On February 6, 2007, The Mockingbird Society put on its 5<sup>th</sup> annual Youth Advocacy Training Day. Youth Advocacy Training Day is a day where we educate all the people who will be going down to Olympia about the legislative process, learn who the legislators are, and prepare them to meet, greet, and speak with representatives, and senators.

First, we had a great lunch, which is the best way to start training. Then, The Mockingbird Society went into explaining a few of the previous bills that have been passed, for example allowing 50 foster youth to stay in care until the age of 21 to pursue higher education which was House Bill 2002. We have also passed many others. After that we went into the process of a bill and how it goes through several committees, until it reaches the House or the Senate. Once it goes through either, it has to go through the same process in the counterpart. Soon after that, we had a few skits done by The Mockingbird



MISTY LOU COOK

There are many theories about where the cultural roots of Hip-Hop truly are and the origins of this socio-cultural musical phenomenon. A lot of people disagree about who really founded Hip-Hop, and who has significantly contributed to the Hip-Hop movement and massive underground culture. Some say the true roots of Hip-Hop are in the heart of Africa, others say it is an artistic product of Black resistance to oppressive White culture and centuries of American slavery.

Many people suggest Hip-Hop started when early African-American slaves would get weary of their (unpaid, unjust) work and start to express themselves through speaking out, singing "phrases that would cheer them up."<sup>1</sup> A lot of the time these words were "accompanied with claps or beats."<sup>2</sup> Mixing these traditional African poly-rhythms with universal "voice instrumentals"<sup>3</sup> must have created quite the sound during the years of American slavery, no doubt a sound that resembles what we now call Hip-Hop.

However, this does not mean that Hip-Hop is necessarily exclusively Black, per se, although it has definitely been highly influenced by Black American culture. These roots helped create and shape what many people call the true origins of Hip-Hop, or at the very least, the early formation stages of this amazing and resilient culture.

Hip-Hop culture, including the five elements of Hip-Hop, discussed later, emerged from New York City in the Bronx at 1970s block parties. These large parties, originally outdoors, were thrown by community mem-

## Youth Advocacy Day

Society's own **Raquel Granath** and **Misty Lou Cook**. They demonstrated how to act and how not to act in front of legislators. After that we watched the movie *School House Rock*, which also explained the legislative process in a funnier more cartoonist way. Then **Jamica Henderson**, and some youth from **Seattle King County Coalition for Homeless Youth (SKCCH)**, spoke on a panel about their youth advocacy day experiences. We spent the rest of the time making posters and signs to display at the actual Youth Advocacy Day.

On February 9, 2007, Youth Advocacy Day took place. It was a wonderful experience and it was my first time ever being there. I was co-facilitator with Jim Theofelis, Executive director of The Mockingbird Society. It was a new experience but it turned out to be a great one. It was quite eye opening to go and experience the legislative process in action. We opened the day with introductions. Soon after we had a few speakers, who came and gave personal testimonies from Youth Advocacy Days in the past, and how they were affected by not having something like SB 1201.

Then the people who made posters got a chance to go on a march around the Capitol campus, holding their signs high. During this time we could also go into the capitol building and watch the session to see exactly how bills are debated and how the whole legislative system works in action. I took the liberty of going into the House, but unfortunately they were "at ease." This was an amazing opportunity for a

lot of people who have no idea about how certain bills are made and how people's lives are affected by the laws that are made.

After that, there was time to eat some lunch and, listen to personal testimonies from a few Senators and Representatives. I had the honor of meeting the representative for my district, **Rep. Eric Pettigrew**. I was even offered an internship to become a page. A few other legislators came, like **Rep. Mary Helen Roberts**, the sponsor of HB 1201. **Rep. Maureen Walsh** spoke and she is a Republican, which I think was perfect because there should always be a good mix of the political presence. We also got a chance to hear from **Senator Rosa Franklin** sponsor of SB 5305. **Rep. Ruth Kagi** came to speak also. There was a great mix; it was a very unique experience.

Ambition is what makes this happen. This awesome experience would have never come to be if it wasn't for people taking initiative and taking control of their future, and others who have not discovered a voice yet. It is about people helping others and making a difference, one step at a time. I would like to give a big thank you to all those people who came out and supported youth advocacy day. The people who helped create, Youth Advocacy Day, and the people who are going to help keep Youth Advocacy Day here. It is amazing the power one collective group can have, and you can see it through Youth Advocacy Day. Giving people a voice, that is what matters most.

## The Cultural Roots of Hip-Hop

bers who shared their loud equipment for the entertainment, inspiration and joy of other people. "In the 1930s, more than a sixth of Harlem residents were from the West Indies, and the block parties of the 80s were closely similar to sound systems in Jamaica."<sup>4</sup>

It's not shocking, then, that people began to lyrically speak over the sound systems, rhyming in a style that closely resembled a traditional African-American and Afro-Caribbean entertainment style called "toasting." During a "toast," people would tell "long, rhymed tales of great heroes." However, Lil Rodney Cee, of Funky Four Plus One More and Double Trouble, will tell you that Cowboy, of Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five, was the first emcee (MC) to really talk about the DJ.<sup>5</sup>

Afrika Bambaataa is a DJ/community leader/poet who was one of the founders of the Hip-Hop movement and often credited for being the first well-known rapper.<sup>6</sup> He was instrumental in the developing stages throughout the 1970s and often played shows with Grandmaster Flash, the first DJ who recognizably "scratched" records and invented the "break" in records at house parties. Afrika Bambaataa has been dubbed the "Godfather of Hip-Hop culture, Father of the Electro Funk sound, a visionary and a historian." He is also the founder of the Universal Zulu Nation, a "group of racially and politically aware rappers."<sup>7</sup>

The five elements of Hip-Hop are break-dancing (b-boying), emceeing, DJing, graffiti and beat-boxing.<sup>8</sup> Hip-Hop is a positive artistic means of expression for many and its culture can be essential to survival in urban life, especially if you are associated with street life and working class culture. It is an effective way for a lot of people to express themselves artistically and, through art, resist an oppressive, domi-

nant, capitalist culture that can seem smothering, depending on your race, class or gender in America.

Laura "Piece" Kelly was one of the original female emcees in the Hip-Hop movement in Seattle. The other day, we were discussing these elements of positive street life and struggles, and the art form of resistance to the negativity associated with street life and working class struggle, during an interview. We were talking about city environments and how if you were "on the streets" in any urban neighborhood, when you heard people playing good, positive, meaningful music, or free-styling over beat-boxing or whatever, you pretty much always knew that you were safe on that particular "block." Piece went on to explain that "Hip-Hop is an urban culture, it is a positive art..." and I have to say that I agree with her. She also said, in regards to life and her personal philosophy, "If You Believe It...then Be It...and Live It...or Leave It Be."

Countless teenagers living in America with poverty and heartfelt struggle find solace, sanctuary, and infinite inspiration in expressing themselves through the written word (emceeing), beat-boxing, graffiti art, break-dancing and, more and more, DJing, since cheap digital computer technology is now relatively easy to get a hold of, even for the most impoverished populations.

Hip-Hop is multi-cultural in its roots, in its core, in its essence. In fact, TAKI 183, the world's first well-known graffiti artist, was "a Greek teenager from Washington Heights named Demetrius."<sup>9</sup> One of the first graffiti groups ever was founded by TRACY 168 in 1972, a "white kid that was so tough

**HIP-HOP, CONTINUED ON PAGE 3**



**JIM THEOFELIS**

### Letter From the Editor

Happy Spring! First, let me begin by expressing my appreciation to all of those youth, professionals, community members and organizations who participated in this year's Youth Advocacy Day. What an amazing day with over 100 of us converging on the Capitol campus! I am especially proud of the young people from The Mockingbird Society who planned and implemented so much of this year's event. It was so inspiring to listen to youth from Seattle, Everett, Pierce County and Olympia attend Youth Advocacy Day and participate in such an extraordinary way.

It is during these times when I wish we could get the general public to witness the courage, passion and tenacity demonstrated by the youth who get up and speak to the group. Their willingness to come before their peers, legislators and others to give their testimony to the struggles they have endured is so moving. I want to thank each of the groups that attended and especially the young people.

As many of you know, our primary legislative agenda this year is Extending Medicaid to Age 21 for youth exiting foster care.

HB 1201 and its companion, SB 5305, have traveled through the legislative process with a few bumps but continue forward. In fact, HB 1201 has passed out of the House of Representatives and will advance to the Senate very soon. Please continue to check our Web site for updates-your support has been instrumental in moving this legislation along. If you are interested in getting our Advocacy Alerts please contact Lauren (323-5437/lauren@mockingbirdsociety.org) and ask her to add you to the ASK-Y Advocacy list.

Finally, let me share with you that we have received the preliminary evaluation from the University of Washington for the 2006 implementation of the Mockingbird Family Model. In the spirit of transparency and accountability we will put the full evaluation on our Web site as soon as it is finalized. Let me close in the same vein I began-by wishing you all the best of Spring and by thanking the young people who each and every day become stronger leaders through their work at The Mockingbird Society. Together, we are all building a world class foster care system.

*Jim Theofelis*  
jim@mockingbirdsociety.org

### Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

When today's *Mockingbird Times* arrived, with its four pages of good news and award-winning youth journalism, writing to you became a priority. I was especially delighted to read the article "The Mockingbird Society: The Story Behind the Name." The name is perfect for your organization. My students and kids always loved that book. I always will.

Student contributions to the paper are consistently heart-warming and touching: Freedom Writers, One Night Count, and Passport to Promise Program. The poetry in the Creative Corner always fascinates me. I appreciate the straight journalism articles as well.

I would be elated to hear more about this organization that is doing so much to make all children feel that there is an "Atticus" who values and protects them.

Sempiternally,

Trudy

Dear Mockingbird Society,

We want to sincerely thank you all for an amazing experience in Olympia on Youth Advocacy Day. It was an incredible and empowering day that not only made a difference in our lives but in the lives of so many others. We value having the opportunity to collaborate and communicate with you and hope to be able to join you again next year. We understand that our work is not over and we are committed to continuing to help make positive changes for all youth in the system and who are living on the streets. Again, thank you for this wonderful opportunity and for keeping us informed about HB1201/SB5305 each step of the way via e-mail.

Pierce County Alliance youth and staff

### Thank You!

Anne Beischline; Beverly Deckelmann; Boo & Brent Turner; Brooke Stout; Elizabeth Barr; Elizabeth Little, William & Mary Little Foundation; Jean Gorecki; Karen Cowgill; Kathryn Brooks; Laura Pritchard; Margaret-Ann & Mark LeRoy; Silvana Bruxel; Rep. Mary Lou Dickerson; Virginia Blayney; Anna Trombley, Sarah Benton and Friends of Youth, Marlon Henderson and the Orion Center. YMCA Young Adult Services for the donation of office furniture. Laurie Lippold, Kari Burrell and the Governor's Office, Johnny Ohta, Rep. Mary Helen Roberts, Rep. Ruth Kagi, Rep. Maureen Walsh, Rep. Mary Lou Dickerson (Dist. 36), Rep. Eric Pettigrew (Dist. 37), Katie Kolan and the office of Rep. Ed Murray, Amelia Logen, Sen. Rosa Franklin Bellevue Square Sephora staff: Tia Decker (Director), Keena, Anne, and Ann!

### Photo Gallery



Photos, clockwise from upper left: Misty Lou Cook prepares a sign for the Youth Advocacy Day rally in Olympia; Jamica Henderson excitedly picks out makeup at the Sephora counter; Youth Advocacy Day attendees rally before marching around the Capitol campus; Rep. Eric Pedigrew is greeted by Advocacy Day cohost Sam Martin; Raquel Granath works diligently on her partner at the Sephora event.



### Become a Member of The Mockingbird Society

We welcome you to join us in making a difference in the lives of our nation's most vulnerable children, youth, and families. As a supporter, you'll receive a monthly edition of *The Mockingbird Times*. Thank you for your contribution.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY STATE ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 PHONE E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed, please find my check made payable to **The Mockingbird Society** in the amount of (please note amount on appropriate line):

\$1,000 +	Protector	\$
\$500 - \$900	Champion	\$
\$250 - \$500	Advocate	\$
\$50 - \$250	Supporter	\$
\$25	Contributor	\$

- My employer will match my gift; enclosed is my matching gift form.
- I am interested in receiving information on the advantages of planned giving.
- Please do not include my name on published donor lists.

Please mail this completed form and your check to: The Mockingbird Society, 2100 24th Ave South, Suite 240, Seattle, WA 98144. For questions or more information, call (206) 323-KIDS (5437) or visit [www.mockingbirdsociety.org](http://www.mockingbirdsociety.org).

**ABOUT US:** The Mockingbird Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation developing innovative models for improving the outcomes of foster care, while advocating with decision makers for system reform. All contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Please consult your tax advisor regarding your specific tax situation. 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 The Mockingbird Society are paid between \$7.63 and \$8.50 an hour. Additionally, youth from across the country submit articles, art work, and poetry and are compensated up to \$25 per published piece. The Mockingbird Times has a monthly circulation of 50,000 copies being distributed across Washington State and the USA, 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 ©2006, The Mockingbird Society.

### MEET OUR STAFF

- Executive Director**  
Jim Theofelis
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Ros Ghan
- Public Relations/Fund Development**  
Darcie Gray
- Executive Assistant**  
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- Programs Manager**  
Dr. Wanda Hackett
- Youth LEAD Coordinator**  
Najja Morris
- Administrative Assistant**  
Juan Ramirez
- Youth Lead Alumna**  
Jamica Henderson
- Senior Youth Representative**  
Misty Lou Cook
- Youth Representatives**  
Zahra Abasheikh, Jessica Garcia, Raquel Granath, Samuel Martin, Andrea Roldan, Melissa Stringer
- Contributing Writers**  
Chereese Phillips, Janelle M.
- Volunteers**  
Chrissie Jackson
- Layout**  
Kelly Hawkins



ANDREA ROLDAN

## The Importance of Models

Models, we see them all the time: on billboards, magazines and commercials; why are they important? They're not. Unless you're a designer or photographer, they would be significant but generally speaking, models serve the purpose of making us feel insecure and below social standards. Well then, what am I talking about, right? I'm talking about each and every one of us as individuals. We are all models whether we know it or not, not "industry" models but role models.

A role model is "A person who serves as a model in a particular behavior or social role for another person to emulate." When we were young, we all had role models. They may have changed over the years but there is always someone that we have genuinely told, "You inspire me," or "I admire you." Our role models have an influence on the way we behave, what we believe is important, and even, sometimes, are an inspiration as to the kind of person we want to become. When we choose our role models, they don't necessarily know that we look up to them, just like we might not know who looks up to us.



JAMICA HENDERSON

## A Visit to Sephora

On February 19th, The Mockingbird Society made a trip to Sephora for a work experience event. Sephora is a "top-of-the-line" make-up store that first opened in Europe. Our visit was from 9-11 AM at the Bellevue WA location. Although we didn't have much time, it was really fun and everybody enjoyed themselves.

When we got there, breakfast was waiting. After we were done, we entered a room that was filled with all kinds of make-up. All of us became excited. After we entered the room they took us to the area where you apply make-up. There were four Sephora make-up artists that were there to train us. The lesson for the day was to learn how to apply make-up to our eyes, lips, and cheeks. The idea was to learn how to apply make-up and look natural with some "jazziness".

The influence that we have on people that we are role models for, whether we realize we are or not, is very powerful. For that reason, being a good role model is important. Our actions and words, our ideas that we share with people, both young and old, should reflect our own positivity because sometimes we don't even realize we are influencing our younger siblings, other children and even our peers. Children are more vulnerable to inheriting our behaviors and beliefs so it is especially important to make a positive impact.

Some things we can do to become good role models are: spending quality time with our loved ones and our peers to let them know that they are loved and worthy; participating in activities that they enjoy and let them know what you enjoy; reading and helping them with their homework; always encouraging them to do good things; and, when they have a problem, listening and giving quality advice. Being aware and active is the key to making a difference.

Realistically, for every positive there is a negative quality. We must know whether we want to be positive role models, or negative ones. Only then, we are enabled to act in the ways of that which we have chosen.

The staff showed us what to do, how much to apply and secrets to make-up. Once they showed us the basics, we were paired up and we practiced on each other. Once we were finished, they took a picture of all of us in a Sephora mirror with our new beautiful selves. I really liked how everyone still looked natural even with the make-up on.

This was a very fun event for me because I am truly not a make-up person. I never wore make up of any sort. I've always wanted to wear make-up because it "brings out your beauty," but I never knew how to do it so I never wore it. After this event, I will always wear eye shadows and a little blush now that I know how easy and fun it is to put it on.

It was really nice to get the chance to learn how to apply make-up with the help of professionals and look beautiful and natural at the same time. I want to thank Sephora for giving us this opportunity and showing us another way we can bring out the beauty in ourselves.

## Meet the Staff: Zahra Abasheikh

Hi, my name is Zahra Abasheikh. I am seventeen years old and I am from Somalia. I go to Cleveland High School. In my spare time, I like to write poetry, read, play volleyball, hang out with my friends, write stories, and talk on the phone. I love cats. I used to have a cat when I was living in Texas. My cat died the same day I left Houston to come to Washington.

Although I would still rather live in an independent living home than a foster home, so far, my experience with foster care has been fun and it did help me get this far in life. I mean, I really do love my old foster parents as if they were my own biological parents. I just tend to have a better relationship with them when I'm not in their home, under their responsibilities.

One of the issues I feel is important in society today is how there are not a lot of good foster placements. I mean, as a former foster child, I had been placed nine different times before I got placed in an independent living home. The reason for this was that my previous social worker had not checked out the home/placements she had put me in, meaning there was not enough time for her to check out the foster home and the foster parents before she placed me there. I believe that this is still going on with kids who are in foster care and that's why they end up either running away or wanting to commit suicide.

If I could change one thing in the foster care system it would be to have the kids

in foster care make their own decisions. I know you probably think, "They already do make their own decisions right?" Well, you're wrong; some foster kids only say things that sound good to their foster parents or case workers. It's not that they don't know what they want, it's just that we don't want to disappoint the foster parent or case worker. I mean, some kids have probably never been told that it's okay to say what they think or what they want, but every kid knows that they have to say to something.

The reason I want to be a part of The Mockingbird Society Youth Lead program is that I believe I have a voice and the only way I can get my ideas and success out is by writing. So, I believe that not only I can help The Mockingbird Society but The Mockingbird Society can help me. I love to write and I'm working on finishing my book called "The Last Star." I do believe that I can do a lot for The Mockingbird Society. I have perfect English and love to write interesting stories, and I also believe that every story has an interesting part in it, and a very important part at that.

### News Flash!

March 6 WA State Representatives voted on House Bill 1201, Extending Medicaid to Age 21 for Foster Youth Aging Out of Care and passed it, 95 to 1! Please see our Web site for more information.



MELISSA STRINGER

## The Scariest Day of My Life

I just thought I had to be strong for my family, but I was wrong. What they needed was someone to be there fully not halfway. I always felt like I had to hide my tears from the world and when I was sitting there I was hiding my pain inside. I wouldn't let my family see me in pain.

Sitting in that waiting room, I actually started to see something I was always afraid to see. I saw love that couldn't be broken. There was a bond in that room that was so strong. I realized at that moment Ben would pull through for his family and for himself. I think that sometimes we forget how precious life really is and when something like this happens it often catches us by surprise and the only thing we can do is cry.

The one thing I can do for him at this point is be there like I have been and just pray for him. I guess the only thing that really gets me is that with all this going on my aunt and uncle still have the strength and the courage that they have always had. I envy them. I envy my cousin because he is the strongest little boy I know.

*This article is dedicated to you Ben Ben - I love you tons.*

Have you ever felt as though the whole world was coming crashing down on you? I have. I was recently faced with something that has affected me in a lot of ways. My cousin was diagnosed with a brain tumor. My entire family was totally thrown off by this because he was as healthy as a horse then all of the sudden he had a brain tumor. I never really thought I would have to face something like this in my family. But now, all that really runs through my head is whether or not he is okay. I wish there was some way I could just run away with him and make all the pain go away just so he would be okay. I really don't like to see him in this pain every day.

The day my cousin went into surgery I was lost. I didn't know what to think or do. I wish I could have been a little less strong that day. When someone you love goes in for brain surgery, the only thing that runs through your mind is, "Will they be okay? Are they going to be the same?"

### HIP-HOP, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

that he was allowed to hang out with the Black Spades."<sup>10</sup> CORN BREAD and COOL EARL were other famous writers ("taggers") from the sixties with roots in Philadelphia, who helped start the graffiti "bombing movement."<sup>11</sup>

People all over the world enjoy Hip-Hop, regardless of race, class, gender, religion, spirituality, background or age. Davy D is an acknowledged and well-known Hip-Hop historian whose Web page features an independent writer by the name of NyceStylez, who explains, "Hip-Hop has always been its own culture"<sup>10</sup> and "the original breakers were Black and Hispanic."<sup>12</sup> "Hip-Hop was composed of different races, different styles, different cultures."<sup>13</sup>

DJ Kun Luv, born Chukundi Salisbury, grew up in the Central District in Seattle with his mother and three brothers. Salis-

bury went on to become one of the world's first well-known house DJs and a unique urban entrepreneur currently running four separate and distinct companies, with an extended hand to non-profits and struggling youth. He also recently won the title of "DJ of the Year" in the Northwest. In my interview with DJ Kun Luv, he gave me some advice that he lives by and that he wanted me to share with struggling young people: "Don't give up," and "Persistence is the key to success."

(1,2,3) [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roots\\_of\\_hip\\_hop](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roots_of_hip_hop)  
(4,5) David Toop (1984/1991). *Rap Attack II: African Rap To Global Hip-Hop*. New York: Serpent's Tail.  
(6,7) [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Afrika\\_Bambaataa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Afrika_Bambaataa)  
(8) [www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Elements+of+Hip+Hop](http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Elements+of+Hip+Hop)  
(9,10,11) [www.b-boys.com/classic/hiphoptimeline.html](http://www.b-boys.com/classic/hiphoptimeline.html)  
(12,13) [www.daveyd.com/hiphopblackart.html](http://www.daveyd.com/hiphopblackart.html)

## The Center

*A community resource center for young adults ages 17-25 who have experienced foster care or homelessness.*

Monday 10am-5pm

Tuesday 10am-7pm

Wednesday 10am-7pm

Thursday 10am-5pm

Friday 10am-5pm

Saturday 10am-2pm

### OpenHouse

March 27th  
3-6pm

YMCA Center for Young Adults  
2100 24th Ave S #250  
Seattle, WA 98144  
[thecenter@seattleyymca.org](mailto:thecenter@seattleyymca.org)



We build strong kids, strong families, strong communities.

## Who

BY ZAHRA ABASHIEKH

Who would I miss,  
If I didn't miss you.  
Would he be as pretty,  
As gay, as true.

Would his smile be winsome  
His face as dear  
His wit so charming  
His eyes so clear?

Would the smell of his hair  
As I hold him near  
Cause a lump in my throat  
In my eye a tear?

Would the sound of him coming  
Lift me on high,  
And stir me about  
Like clouds in the sky.

I know who I'd miss  
If I didn't miss you.  
It couldn't be someone equal to you  
It couldn't be someone nearly  
As nice for none has been born  
With your sugar and spice.

I miss you and need you  
Now as I write,  
In the grey gloom of evening  
And still of the night.

I miss you and want you,  
And I'll pray that you'll want me  
To make life complete.

## Starz

BY MARCUS PARTMAN

A view spread grand & wide  
of dark blue skies  
complemented  
by a bright beaming sun  
leaving our depleted half of earth  
from time to time.  
In the distance  
white scattered clouds  
can only be described  
as feathery hints of heaven.  
Stars dot the sky  
as if appearing in a dream.  
Without warning  
light slashes  
right from the essence of heaven  
with a shimmer  
oh so euphoric,  
a vein of beauty  
gleaming bright yellow  
in a stand still,  
or so it seems,  
it's surely traveling at nearly  
the speed of light.  
Every ounce of energy  
in my body  
says this can only be  
a sign from the heavens,  
but science says  
it's a comet.

## Life's Complications

BY GABRIEL S.

One day I was home  
Next day it felt like Rome  
No place to run man, this isn't fun  
Like a bird in a cage with lots of rage  
Like ice that doesn't feel nice  
And now I pay the price

## Emotions

BY KATIEE H.

they run wild through my head  
sometimes they're easy to control  
but other times it's like i'm dead  
like i'm falling through a deep hole  
i try not letting the bad emotions show  
i cover them up with the good ones  
but there's days where i feel so low  
when those days appear i want to hide  
like the sun  
i have people who will always be there  
but i feel i push them away  
that's my biggest fear  
to my surprise they seem to stay  
that brings up the good emotions  
they make me feel alive  
there's no way to describe the good  
emotions  
you'll know they're there when you feel  
more alive  
just as i've said  
emotions run wild through my head.



*How will you*

make money  
prepare for college  
get an internship at a hospital  
apply for scholarships  
basketball camp  
find my first  
Be a star at theatre  
Learn a new language  
MAKE NEW FRIENDS AT CAMP  
improve my  
learn about nursing  
become a barista  
I live in a  
valleyball camp  
Feel  
train for a career  
grow flowers & sell them  
Practice my music  
make up credits to graduate  
catch up in  
become an  
get ready for school

Light dinner provided!  
Win raffle prizes!

Hear about terrific options at the  
**Summer Resource Fair!**  
Talk to someone about the following:

- Job Corps
- Youth in Focus
- FareStart Barista Training Program
- Seattle Youth Employment Program
- College Success Foundation
- TRAC Associates
- Treehouse's Summer Academy
- Summer Camps
- Seattle Youth Garden Works
- And more!

**2100 Building  
2100 24th Ave. S.  
Tuesday, March 27  
6 p.m.—8 p.m.**

Event sponsors: DCFS, the Mockingbird Society, Treehouse, YMCA, and Casey Family Programs

**Questions?** Call Maria, the Career Development Coordinator/YMCA Center for Young Adults at (206) 749-7586 or Erin, the Education Programs Manager at Treehouse (206) 267-5150

*Step into Summer?*

## The Mockingbird Society: The Story Behind the Name

The 1962 American classic *To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee is the inspiration for our name, **The Mockingbird Society**. Atticus, the widowed father of Jem and Scout, joins Miss Maudie in teaching his kids that it's a sin to kill a mockingbird because "... Mockingbirds don't do one thing but make music for us to enjoy. They don't do one thing but sing their hearts out for us."

What if we created an organization, a community, indeed a world, in which our most vulnerable children and youth were protected and valued with the same commitment that Atticus had for mockingbirds? Join The Mockingbird Society today and help us give young people a safe place to nest and sing.

*In our work and in our living, we must recognize that difference is a reason for celebration and growth, rather than a reason for destruction.*

~ Audre Lorde

## Women's History Month

BY MISTY LOU COOK



It's women's history month and so it's time for us to pay our respects and admire some of the amazing, resilient and phenomenal women who helped shape and define our history, or, should I say, "her-story". Great women leaders like Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Susan B. Anthony, Maya Angelou, Emily Dickinson, Gertrude Stein, Ella Fitzgerald, Mia Zapata, Kathleen Hanna, Lauryn Hill, Ani DiFranco, KD Lang, Joan Jett, Helen Keller, Rosa Parks, Angela Davis, Eleanor Roosevelt, Sally Ride, Gloria Steinem, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and so many other incredible women helped form the foundation of this, and many other countries and societies.

The Mockingbird Society would like to honor and extend our great respect for these women, the lives they lived, their accomplishments and their dedication to improving the lives of all of those around them. They cared about humanity, equal-

ity and rights for all people, and lived their lives according to their own self-established values. They went down in history for what they strove and fought for, socially, politically or otherwise. These women deserve to be honored, respected and admired, for they wrote the scripts to the future that has become our present, and it is indeed apparent that so many of them were (and still are, in some cases) brilliant, amazing, phenomenal, incredibly devoted and compassionate beings that brought new perspective, meaning and clarity to the world.

Get involved with women's her-story at these and other upcoming Women's History Month events:

Wednesday, March 14, and subsequent 2nd Wednesdays, 7:30 PM; Scan TV (cable) or streamed live at [www.scantv.org](http://www.scantv.org); *Community Women's Voices*, a monthly public affairs program bringing together diverse women around local and global issues.

Thursday, March 15, 7-9 PM; Bush School, 3400 E Harrison, Seattle; Bush School Diversity Speaker Series with Patricia Ireland, JD: "The National and Global Women's Movements: Past, Present and Future." Free; Open to the public.

Saturday, March 31, 1:30-3:30 PM; Douglass-Truth Community Meeting Room, 23rd and Yesler, Seattle; Women In World Religions Series. Women of diverse faiths will explore critical religious themes in monthly public discussions this spring. 206-325-7998, [joycemans@cs.com](mailto:joycemans@cs.com).

For more information on these and other events around the Greater Seattle Area, visit the National Women's History Project: [www.nwhp.org](http://www.nwhp.org) or [www.scn.org/activism/calendar/mar.html](http://www.scn.org/activism/calendar/mar.html).

## Adversity

BY ANONYMOUS

Three years ago I never thought I would ever make it through. I didn't believe in myself much less expect others to believe in me. I always thought somewhere along the way things were going to go wrong and I would disappoint not only myself but all of those around me that were also counting on me. I woke and lived with that thought always in the back of my mind. Back then my goals were different but in a way also alike to my goals of today.

I have passionately loved school ever since I can remember. For me school was a way out of an abusive home environment. I remember all the happy times and many learning experiences in the playground that have shaped my personality today. At the age of 16 many family problems along with other circumstances in my life forced me to drop out of high school. I had to choose between staying with my family and have their support or finishing school on my own. This affected me a lot. Today I know leaving school was one of the biggest mistakes I have made in my short life but in a way it is also one of the lessons that impacted me the most.

This experience became a motivation for me to continue forward. I knew I had to finish school with or without support. I left my house to pursue this dream. I didn't really have anybody to count on but I knew that no matter how hard it was I would finish High School. I had a full time job and many extra curricular activities. I was a leader at school and planned many events. I was also homeless. One of the greatest things that helped me through was being in transitional housing for a couple months. I graduated. I set new goals for myself and continued on.

Today, I am only twenty one. I have many new goals today. My biggest desire is that through my experiences I can help others overcome difficult circumstances like the ones I faced back then. Regardless of how much adversity we face with enough will power and hard work many more things can be accomplished. I believe this applies to everyone.

I have changed but deep down I'm still the same. Sometimes in the back of my mind I still believe that things might go wrong and I could disappoint someone but I now realize that it's the fuel that keeps me going strong. It encourages me to leave all the negativity behind and fight harder for all those things I want. Everything that I set out to do I know I can accomplish for me and for all others that have or will go through some of life's obstacles.

## HB 2002: Foster to 21 still has openings and is accepting applications NOW!

If you are :

- In foster-care
- Completing your education
- Want to remain in care while you attend college or vocational school

You are the PERFECT candidate for this program!

To apply, contact your social worker or ILP case manager. (You can also request an application yourself by contacting Rick Butt at [ilskids@dshs.gov](mailto:ilskids@dshs.gov).)

## Foster Youth Need You

Will you give them a safe home?  
Please call 1-866-958-KIDS

Foster Our Future is a contractor with Washington State Children's Administration. An experienced foster parent will answer your questions and mentor you through the foster licensing process.

*"Some children need a home for a day;  
others will need a family forever."*