



# Poetry Contest

Honorable Mention

## Please

Jasmina Tang  
Grade 8

Through classes, lessons, and the day  
It's far too easy to let my focus go astray  
I'm not thinking about theorems or historical dates  
I'm thinking about the future and college acceptance rates

My mind is caught up on whether or not I'll be on the streets  
Because mistakes in life don't come with receipts  
My friends think I'm stressed, my parents think I'm worried  
But going to school means keeping those emotions buried

My head holds skills and thoughts that I cannot sort  
It's so blurry sometimes, I require some support  
Please  
Just help me go to sleep at ease

I feel as if my heart belongs on the stage,  
in someone else's shoes  
It takes away the daily fears I must face,  
every cut and bruise  
Yet too many times I've been told that to  
take that path in life  
Means so much time will be spent caught  
in misery and strife

Maybe I've always been too old, too  
mature, for my age



Is that why whenever my friends laugh I feel a strange rage?  
That they do not share the turmoil our shared classes give me?  
That I am drowning and they sail peacefully at sea?

My head holds skills and thoughts that I cannot sort  
It's so blurry sometimes, I require some support  
Please  
Just help me go to sleep at ease

Every exam, every test of how much my brain can hold  
Always takes such a mental toll  
My head hurts from trying to keep my mind in check  
Because no one's ever admitted they're a psychological wreck

I am told that I must carefully choose something to learn  
That in the future will make me satisfied over every dollar I earn  
I am told that I must dwell in extracurricular activities  
So that it perfectly balances out my academic productivity

My head holds skills and thoughts that I cannot sort  
It's so blurry sometimes, I require some support  
Please  
Just help me go to sleep at ease



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## College Is

Hareth Andrade  
Program facilitator, Liberty's Promise

College is  
navigating  
many do's and a few don'ts  
an ineffable journey  
do seek to finish  
do plan to work  
listen and appreciate the spaces  
to learn and grow  
you are the lesson the world needs  
be the outlier  
believe it is happening  
don't  
turn back





# Poetry Contest

Honorable Mention

## The Big Three

Ajani Wilson  
Grade 8

No fun for me,  
All fuss from me,  
This exhausted me,  
Struggling to get from point A to B.  
There were people that I wanted to see,  
But I couldn't because I had a purpose,  
And somewhere to be.  
But I'm glad I didn't quit,  
Because only fools quit,  
And I ain't one,  
Cause I work for what I want,  
My school work needed me,  
My chores wanted me,  
Work was calling me,  
Balance is what I need.  
Peace is for me,  
School, Work, and Home,  
Tough enough for me,  
But what you need to know,  
Is just what you see,  
That I am here right now,  
I ain't quit back then,  
And I will not quit now,  
I will not slow down,  
I will just do me,  
And me is doing great...man,  
And no I'm not cocky,  
Because I had help back then,  
Because the Big Three is tough man.





# Poetry Contest

Honorable Mention

## Black, Woman and on Financial Aid

Gaelyn Smith  
Grade 12

This black girl  
On this white campus  
Is exhausted.  
Is club-head,  
Committee-head,  
Manager  
And your RA  
But is still treated as less than equal  
In the eyes of your rules and expectations.  
This black knows the rules.  
Knows second chances are for the pale skinned,  
Blond-haired.  
The pay full tuition  
And donate  
Types .  
While this black  
And this scholarship  
Are 2 reasons  
To throw me out  
As soon as I fall from grace.  
You do not care about me.  
I tell you that everyday  
My person is colonized  
By some classmate  
Or some teacher.  
You roll eyes  
And have conversation around me,  
About me  
But never with me.  
See



I am the diversity you fail to include and make equal.  
Call this school a safe place  
But your white silence  
Is your white consent  
And I will not hold back any longer.  
I am prepared to make you  
Just as uncomfortable as I feel.  
You did not make me.  
I would have been great without you.  
But I just chose  
To bless your campus  
With my presence  
And look how you disrespected it.  
All you have given me is  
This broken spirit.  
But,  
I got into my number one school  
And these internships look real nice on my resume.  
But I am more than  
A percentage in your diversity quota.  
More than student.  
And this black girl  
Been walking around exhausted for four years.  
And how light  
My shoulders will be  
When I leave!



# Poetry Contest

Honorable Mention

## Where will I end up?

Jahonna Scott  
Grade 9

That's the cup of my ambition.  
Everyone else wants to fill this cup.  
I know I'm smart.  
But sometimes, I can't spell.  
I feel I'm bound for greatness.  
But right now my cup is empty.

If I don't go to college where?  
I struggle all my life just to spell.  
In high school, I already feel like I'm falling.  
There is so much pressure.  
My brain won't listen.  
How do I take a goal from possibility to actuality?  
I'm bound for greatness BUT will I prevail?

When I grow up I want to be a model.  
I feel I am skinny enough.  
My confidence level is high.  
And I like being the center of attention.

Do I need to go to college?  
Will others think I'm pretty enough?  
I live with my dad.  
He struggles to make ends meet.  
I want to help.  
Do I go to college or do I try to model?

Where will I end up?  
There's so much pressure.  
Will others think I'm pretty enough?  
Do I go to college or do I model?

