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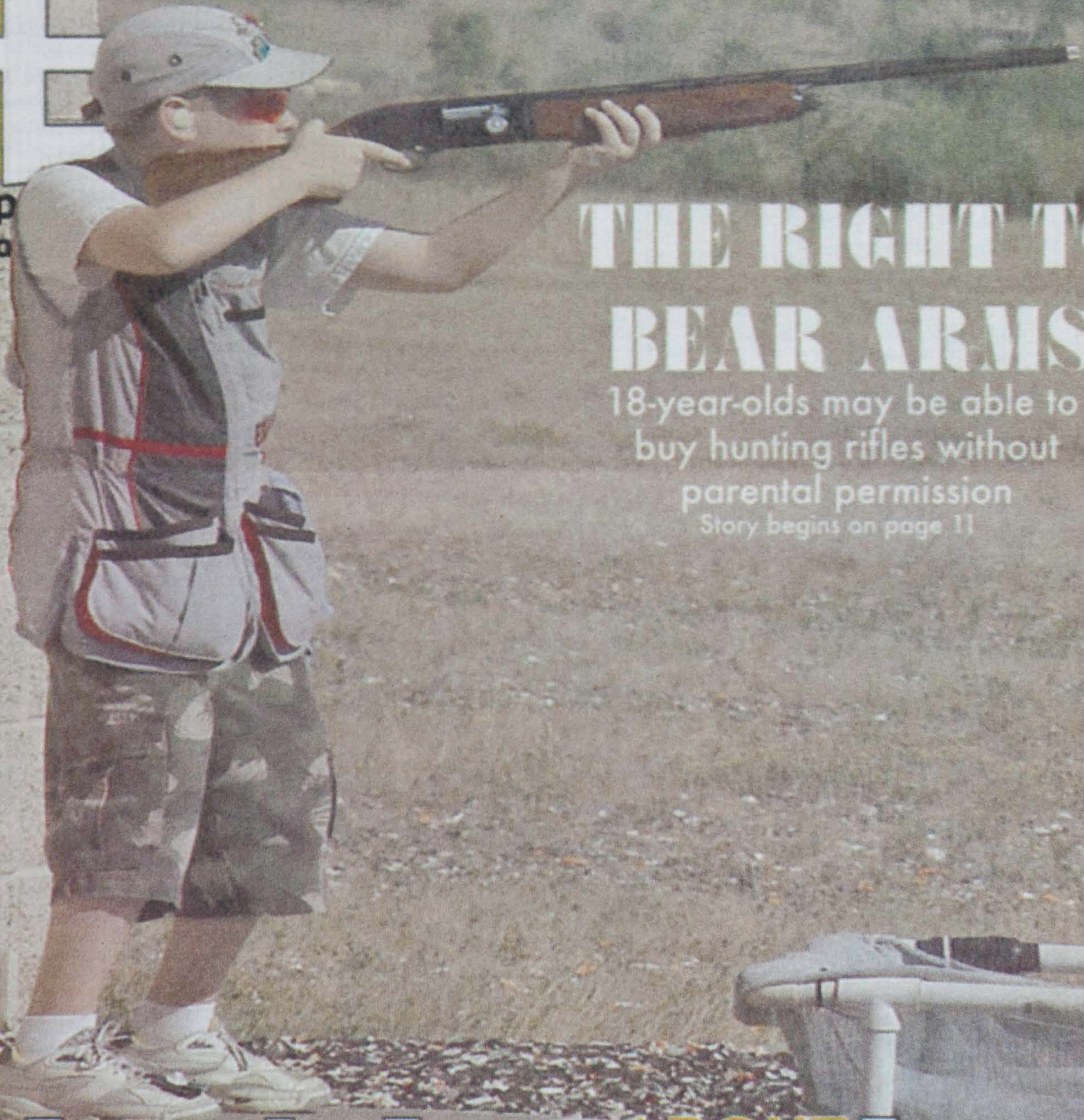
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Volume 27 Issue 1 May 2004



New Exp
NewsMo



THE RIGHT TO BEAR ARMS

18-year-olds may be able to
buy hunting rifles without
parental permission

Story begins on page 11

By Teens. For Teens. **ABOUT** Teens

This Month in New Expression

Summer Job Shortage

Many high school students spend their summer vacations working. However, jobs this summer will be harder to come by.

Page 4

Should Marijuana Be Legal?

Everyone has seen Cheech and Chong movies, "How High," and "Half Baked." You may even know people who like to smoke up. Unfortunately for them, having marijuana is illegal. Some people feel that marijuana laws are unjust. Writer Ernesto Palacios outlines why he thinks you should be able to find marijuana at your corner store. Legally.

Page 7

Poetry Slam

New Expression Metro Editor Brian Lewis and his poetry team won a citywide competition recently, and won the right to represent Chicago at the National Youth Poetry Slam in Los Angeles. In this story, Brian talks about his experiences in L.A.

Page 14

Urban Journalism Workshop

You've read New Expression for awhile and you want to get involved, but you don't know how. Go to page 17 and fill out an application for the Urban Journalism Workshop this summer, where you'll learn how to write from the pros.

Page 15

TV's Black Barrier

From "Amos n' Andy" to "That's My Mama," "A Different World," and "The Hughleys," the representation of blacks has been debated as long as television has existed. Have things improved or become worse?

Page 18

on the cover: Florida teen Sean Alexander competes in the 2002 USA Shooting Junior Olympic Shooting Championships. Photo courtesy USOC.

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From the Editor's Desk



Hey!

While you were on a relaxing and fun Spring Break, the New Expression staff stuck around Chicago to fish around the city streets. The city was jammed with exciting events, and we are not talking about the "Oceans Twelve" filming location.

Chicago is dealing with a proposed gun law that has sparked much debate because of the effects it may have on teenagers in Chicago. The NE staff is providing you with the latest developments, and a point/counterpoint between two of our most opinionated reporters. The proposed legislation carries a lot of weight, especially in the way that guns and other weapons are accepted and viewed in our society, making it important to understand what the new laws are and how they will affect us.

In national news, Los Angeles was host to Louder Than a Bomb, a competition for young poetry performers. The city took in hundreds of teenagers, and they were given the opportunity to showcase their skills to other poets from other states. Our own Brian Lewis, who is part of Kumba Lynx, placed fifth overall. Congratulations to all the Chicago teens who participated!

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www.newexpression.org



Coming to a commencement ceremony near you.

Big Bird Brouhaha

Villanova University seniors, who spent up to \$112,000 on tuition in their four years, are underwhelmed by news that the actor who plays Big Bird will be this year's commencement speaker.

Caroll Spinney, who has portrayed the tall, yellow-feathered bird for more than 30 years on "Sesame Street," will address the class on May 16.

"Everyone I've talked to says it's crazy," said senior Joe Mordini. (Associated Press)

"I also think there are other people who also embody truth and loyalty and love and other values of the university without also being iconic to the pre-school class," Mordini said.

Spinney, who published a book last year called "The Wisdom of Big Bird," has a positive message for students – and won't show up in costume – school officials say.

Spinney, who will receive an honorary degree, was chosen by a committee that includes the student government president, said spokeswoman Barbara Clement.

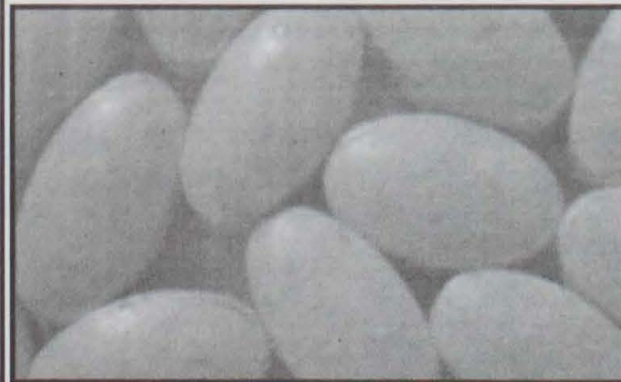
Villanova President Rev. Edmund Dobbin called Spinney a "world-class educator."

NE File Photo

NEWSBRIEFS

Teen's Choice: Marijuana

The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University found in a recent study that next to alcohol and tobacco, marijuana is the drug of choice for American teens, and it is by far the most widely used illicit drug. About six times as many teenagers have tried marijuana as have tried Ecstasy or cocaine. The study also found that for kids 12- to 17-years-old who have tried marijuana, the mean age of initiation is thirteen-and-a-half.



Morning-after Pill

The Food and Drug Administration delayed its decision to allow the distribution of the morning-after pill over the counter to gather more information on the use of the pill. Those who oppose making the pill available over the counter believe that it could lead to more cases of unprotected sex and sexually transmitted diseases. The University of Pittsburgh kept track of two groups of women ages 15 to 20. One group had access to the morning-after pill and the other group did not. Researchers found that women with the pill at home were not more likely to have unprotected sex.



Transgender Teen Tragedy

On April 28, Jaron Nabors, a witness in the court case dealing with the murder of a transgender teenager, said Eddie "Gwen" Araujo, 17, begged for mercy during a vicious 2002 attack by three men who had been her friends. The witness said the three men became enraged when they discovered the pretty girl was biologically male.

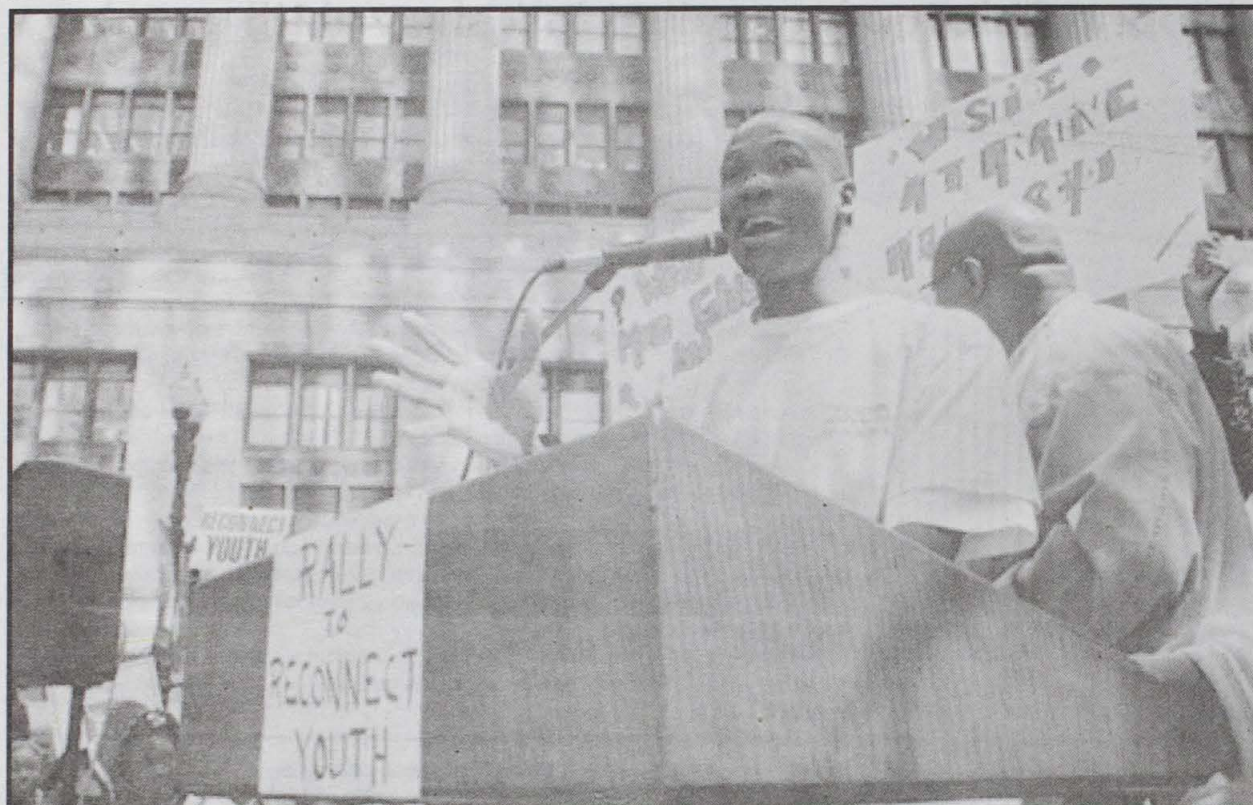
Prosecutors say Araujo was beaten, strangled and buried in a shallow grave after her biological identity was revealed to the three men. The murder took place in San Francisco, CA.

Michael Magidson, 23, and Jose Merel and Jason Cazares, both 24, are charged with killing Araujo. Nabors, 21, initially was charged with murder, but pleaded guilty to manslaughter and has been promised an 11-year sentence in exchange for testifying.

Prosecutors said that on the night that Araujo was murdered, the men tried to talk her into physically revealing she was a woman, but she resisted.

May 2004

News



NE File Photo

Teens rallied to find answers to the unemployment problem facing teens.

Summer job shortage hurts teens who need work

By Vincent Dixon
Gwendolyn Brooks

Chicago teenagers will soon be going on summer break, and that means another two-and-a-half months of parties, vacationing, volunteer work, traveling, or just relaxing. For many teens it also means finding a job. However, teen employment has dropped over the past few years, leaving hopeful teenage job seekers out of luck.

After the War on Iraq was declared, many companies and corporations began to suffer financially. As a result, people were laid off and employers began to cut back on hiring persistent job seekers, including teens.

However, teens everywhere are still looking for temporary jobs, and students are looking for solutions from the government.

A protest rally was held downtown on April 7, where teen participants and others hoped to find answers to the employment problem teens are now facing.

"I think it's horrible now, especially for African Americans," said Aumon Bankston, 20, a student who attended the rally.

Bankston and other job-seeking students have joined groups that try to help find employment for youth. Youth participants attend meetings on developing ideas for solving the unemployment issue.

Teens involved have come up with many explanations for the high youth unemployment rate. One major presumption, according to rally participants, is that the community is not involved and is overlooking youth development and growth.

The Losing Ground study, conducted by Northeastern University in Boston, found Illinois had the third largest U.S. decline in employment between 2000-2003. In 2000, 58 percent of Chicago's youth between the ages of 16 and 19 were employed compared to 22 percent in 2003. There has also been a high-school dropout rate increase over the past few years.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics,

www.newexpression.org

1,251,000 teenagers between the ages of 16 and 19 were unemployed in 2003.

The rally participants consisted of students from various Chicago alternative schools. Teens voiced their opinions on the employment problem. "Those opinions are the ideas that the rally participants want the public to notice," Bankston said.

"The community is taking jobs and you can't get one without going to school," Bankston said about the community's lack of concern for jobless teens.

According to recent reports, employers have refrained from hiring younger employees because of the perception that younger employees will not be as committed to the job.

Most teenagers who apply for jobs usually only plan to hold them temporarily, or until they raise money for college, back-to-school shopping or just for filling their pockets until the summer is over.

Key organization leaders, school officials, and managers came out to support teens at the rally. Gordon Mayer, a spokesperson for the Alternative School Network, helped organize the rally.

Mayer explained that the purpose of the rally was to call attention to the fact that there are a lot of young people who are not in school and are jobless.

"(The job market) is a bleak picture overall, but it's the younger people who have been hit the hardest," Mayer said.

Mayer added the youth unemployment increase is affecting all student outlets for work. Programs such as Gallery 37 and Mayor Daley's Kid Start and Youth Net, which usually help teenagers find suitable jobs, are facing problems. These programs are advertising less due to their growing popularity and high enrollment. They cannot hire every teen interested in working for them.

Rally participants want state legislators and Gov. Rod Blagojevich to look into establishing programs to help conquer the teen dropout and unemployment crisis.

CPS pushes students to Just Go! to school

By Erna Dzafic
Amundsen High School

Each day a student misses school, that school loses approximately \$79 for that child, and Chicago Public School officials say that is money that could go toward books, computers and other helpful materials.

In order to combat attendance problems, schools like Amundsen, Foreman, Lane, Sullivan, and other Chicago schools initiated a program called Just Go!

"Our main goal is to increase the attendance rate of Chicago Public Schools, but it is also a way for students to come up with creative ways to help their peers," said Charles Campbell, a public school official.

Campbell heads the Just Go! Student Attendance Initiative, a grant program created by the Chicago Board of Education.

The main goal of the program is to help improve students' experiences at school. Campbell said the money distributed to the schools for attendance would definitely contribute to the improvement of city schools. Each school that participates in the program receives \$1,000.

On March 23, Amundsen High School became the first high school to officially host a Student Town Hall Meeting focusing on high school students and attendance. The town hall meeting was set up like a talk show.

Students were presented with informative literature regarding school attendance, but they also discussed real problems facing high school students that lead to poor attendance.

"At the town hall meeting, we had eight schools and we talked about why kids don't come to school," said Sheryl Rivers, the vice-principal at Amundsen High School.

The meeting was taped for the "Chicago Educator," a media publication distributed by the Chicago Public Schools.

According to statistics from Focus Adolescent Services, more than half the students who drop out of school leave by the tenth grade. Latinos and blacks are twice as likely to drop out, and whites and Asians are least likely to drop out. Chicago Public Schools also state that dropouts make up nearly half the heads of households on welfare.

The purpose of attendance clubs created by the initiative is to provide social support for those students who have 18 or more days of unexcused absences.

The club creates this support system by having "each member in the attendance club get the names of their friends or any student who needs help with attending class," Rivers said.

Crystal Herrera, a student at Amundsen High School and a member of the attendance club, said the club's priority is to build mentor and mentee relationships between peers.

"If a member does well that week they are rewarded. They will get awards like a \$5 gift certificate for Blockbuster, McDonalds, or American Movie Cienema Theater," Herrera said.

At Amundsen, mentors, who are members of the Attendance and Puerto Rican Club, escort their fellow peers to class, but other schools have structured their clubs to suit their situations.

Chicago Public School officials hope programs like Just Go! urge students to understand the importance of attending school every day in order to pursue and develop social, athletic and musical interests.

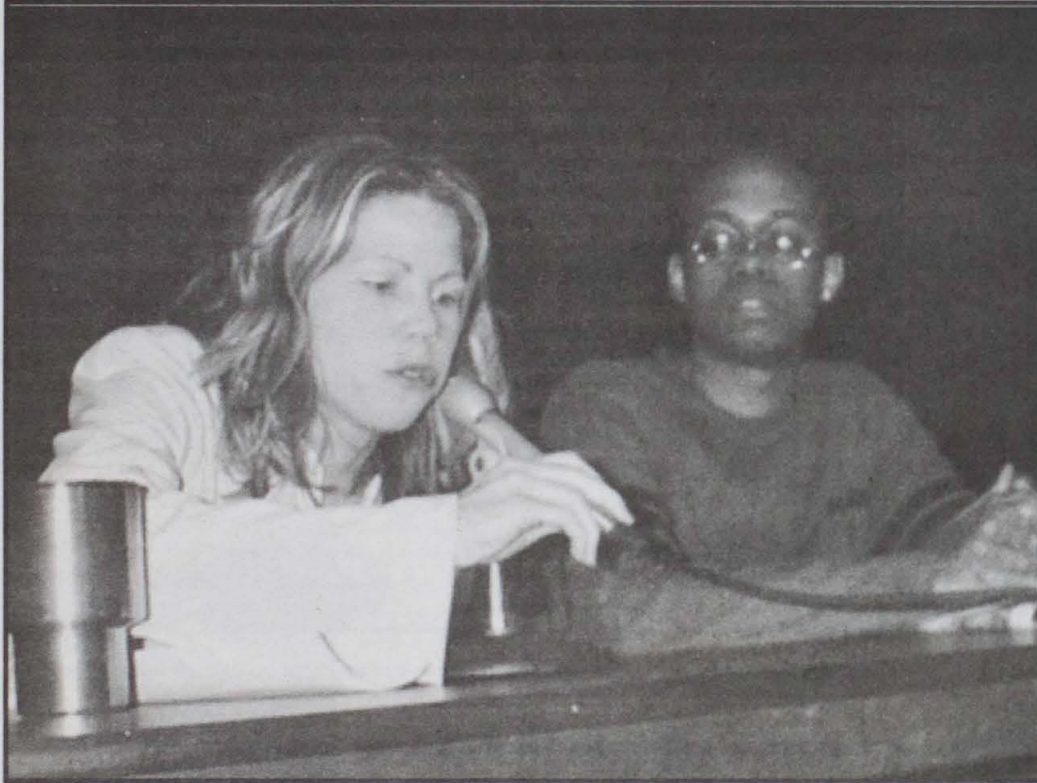
Want to learn what it takes to be a journalist and have fun at the same time?
Apply for NE's Urban Journalism Workshop.
See page 15 for information.

May 2004

News

Professional journalists and young Chicago journalists talk shop at NE event

By NE STAFF



NE File Photo

Reporters Kristen McQueary (left) and Will Lee discuss life as a journalist during New Expression's "Come Meet the Press" program.

Professional Chicago area journalists warned teenage journalists that they're entering the journalism field during one of its "lowest points" because of recent events involving reporters fabricating news stories and sources.

"If you have to make up the story you're writing, just get out of the business. Your readers depend on you for accurate information, and when you are caught, no one will ever trust you," said Carlos Sadovi, crime reporter for the Chicago Tribune.

Sadovi, Allan Johnson of the Chicago Tribune, Will Lee of City News, and Kristen McQueary of the Daily Southtown served as panelists for a "Come Meet the Press" high-school journalism program hosted by New Expression on April 24 at Columbia College.

Before the panel discussion began, the editorial team of Northside College Prep's HoofBeat was presented with a plaque for producing the best city high-school newspaper of the year by New Expression staff.

"We appreciate this award. We work hard, but we couldn't do this without good editors. They take the rap when things are bad, but they do take credit when things are good," said Aslam Rawoof, an editor for the HoofBeat.

After Northside received its award, Chicago-area journalists spent 80 minutes talking with the teens about their experiences as journalists.

"This is a great job. You meet lots of people and have some really unique experiences," Sadovi said.

"But we are the ones rushing to fires, murder scenes and into other dangerous situations while others are running away. As humans, we have a fight-or-flight reaction, and as a reporter, you have to fight that instinct. What helps us fight that instinct is that we are naturally curious people who need to know what's going on," Sadovi added.

A variety of topics were covered by the panel, but much emphasis was placed on high-profile reporters like former New York Times writer Jayson Blair and former *New Republic* writer Stephen Glass, who fabricated stories and damaged the credibility of all reporters and the industry as a whole. "People look to your stories for truth and factual information. They look to you to find out what the story is. There is no reason you should ever have to make up crap," Johnson said.



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News



What's Really Good?

By Patricia Easley
Whitney Young

Hey everybody! It's me, Patricia Rae, telling you what's really good in Chicago. I know you all missed me last issue but let's get started.

You all know adults always say that kids today are soooo horrible, but what happens when the kids are doing the right things and the adults won't cooperate? This is what's going on with the Austin Youth Mappers. They are a group of students mostly out of Austin High School that want to see a positive change in the community. They have youth speak-outs where they invite parents, politicians and community leaders to hear the problems facing the youth. Sounds like a good program, right? The problem is the adults never show up, yet they continue to complain about the children being so out of control.

Congratulations to the Westinghouse Warriors on their win over Farragut High School in the Boys Basketball City Championships. I want to also extend a personal congrats to our Whitney Young Freshmen Basketball team for winning the freshmen city title. Yeah Dolphins!

OK, let's talk about a serious matter. It was reported that there were over 900 reported cases of teachers being attacked in school last year. Why are we fighting teachers? Sure, sometimes teachers can get on our nerves, and sometimes they can push your temper buttons, but there is no need to get physical with them. Are we going to just go through life attacking people that we have a problem with? Why don't we focus all of the energy that is put into attacking teachers into doing the work and getting good grades? That way we don't end up back in that teacher's class again, and we might even move on to greater things, like being productive citizens and having careers.

If you were unable to transfer last year from your failing high school under the No Child Left Behind law, don't expect to transfer high schools this year.

About 190,000 students in the Chicago Public School system were notified that they are eligible to transfer out of their school due to poor test scores and into a better academically performing school. However, the school system only has about 500 open seats. **To make matters worse, school officials say that none of those seats are available in better performing high schools.** According to the Chicago Board of Education Website, the number of kids offered transfers continues to escalate while the number of available seats continues to dwindle. So who is not getting left behind?

Remember to get those service hours! Wouldn't it be really messed up if you got all of your credits but couldn't graduate because you didn't get enough service hours? So now you have to graduate out of summer school because you didn't go to the park and pick up paper or help at the soup kitchen? Be smart and get those hours.

Ever see the movie "Cheaters" on HBO? It's about the Academic Decathlon competition where Steinmetz tries to cheat to beat Whitney Young out of the title. Well, the Dolphins have done it again. They beat Northside Prep to advance to the national competition. If they win, this will be Whitney Young's 17th title in 18 years.

Anything else going on in Chicago Public High Schools that you want to tell me about? E-mail me at whatsreallygood@yahoo.com.

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Photo by Brent Watters
Sharon Kam (right) and Aldana Stanisci tour the Teen Chicago exhibit now on display at the Chicago Historical Society.

It's All About Teens at the Chicago Historical Society's Teen Chicago Exhibit

NE Staff

Sharon Kam and Aldana Stanisci, both giggled as they looked at the stickers and stacks of teen possessions piled into the locker on display.

"My locker has half my wardrobe and shoes in it," said Kam, 15, to Stanisci, 16, as they continued to joke with one another.

Kam and Stanisci were not invading anyone's privacy or nosing through someone's personal belongings. In fact, the locker is meant to be seen because it is part of the multimedia exhibit titled "Teen Chicago" on display at the Chicago Historical Society.

The exhibit is the product of the hard work of 15 Chicago-area teenagers who were hired and trained by the historical society. Through extensive interviews, video, music, research and collecting memorabilia and artifacts, the teens have done an exceptional job capturing the essence of teens in the 20th century.

The exhibit reflects on the teen experience beginning with the child labor reforms of the 1900s to the social guidance films of the 1950s, anti-war protests of the 1960s, and the angst of the Generation Xers of the 90s. The exhibit is broken down into four main themes: work, home, play and school.

Album covers ranging from Sinatra, Elvis, and The Beatles to Tupac and Michael Jackson cover various walls of the exhibit along with teen magazines, posters, sex education handouts, clothing, media devices, work uniforms, year-books and much more.

"It's really cool that people got together to do a project

like this. Though the styles of the teens were different throughout the years, the main thing that ties all this together is the dynamic ways teens have expressed themselves," said Johnathon St. Clair, 20, who is a graduate of Kenwood High School.

A special Website (teenchicago.org) has been launched in conjunction with the exhibit. The site explores the world of teens and allows teens to connect with other Chicago teens and teens from around the country. It also allows teens to be involved in moderated discussions on various issues conducted by members of the historical society's Teen Council. Teens can log on and take part in special polls about teen



Photo Courtesy Chicago Historical Society
A teen's first driver's license means you're no longer a kid. Your mom doesn't have to pick you up at school... in front of your friends. It was the truth for teens in the 1930s, and it was the same for these teens in 1987.

life and perceptions on social issues.

The Chicago Historical Society is open daily from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Sundays from noon to 5 p.m. Suggested admission is \$5 for adults and \$3 for seniors and students with valid school i.d.

May 2004

Opinion

Positive Pot: Pushing for the Legalization of Marijuana

By Ernesto Palacios
Dugan High School



Dave Chappelle



Cheech and Chong



Rob Van Dam



Redman

Sixteen-year-old Agustin Mosquita was recently placed on probation after being arrested for possession of a dime bag of marijuana.

"It was an embarrassing thing for me, being caught and arrested and having to admit to my parents that I smoke marijuana," said the Kelly High School student who, until his arrest, had a clean record with police.

"I think that marijuana should be legalized because people should not be thrown into jail for having small amounts of marijuana; getting thrown into jail for small amounts of marijuana is ridiculous. I think people with small amounts of marijuana who are caught with it should be given a break," he said.

While some would say that Mosquita might be calling for the legalization of marijuana because he got in trouble for possession, teens like Raul Gonzalez, who have not had any run-ins with the law over marijuana, also believe that pot should be legalized.

"Marijuana should be legalized because drug businesses on the streets would be cut down, and people would not be arrested and thrown into jail for small amounts of marijuana," Gonzalez said.

The legalization of marijuana has been a topic of debate for years and one that is difficult to tackle.

Some medical experts say that marijuana causes lung cancer, death, violent acts, and brain damage.

However, there are no records of anyone ever overdosing on marijuana or ever dying from marijuana. Studies have shown that marijuana does not cause lung cancer, but it does have effects on heavy smokers of pot, such as mild lung damage, chronic coughing, frequent colds and bronchitis. However, some researchers say that the effects of marijuana are not as dangerous or harmful as the way tobacco affects the body.

There are also studies showing that aggression caused by those under the influence is very rare. Opponents of marijuana say marijuana damages the short-term memory and causes lack of motivation. Marijuana is also said to be a gateway drug, which means if you try marijuana, you might want to experi-

ment with other drugs. Hard drug users say they have tried marijuana, but is that really why they chose to try other harder and more lethal drugs such as cocaine, heroin and ecstasy? If so, what is in marijuana that supposedly causes people to want to try these drugs? There is really no scientific proof that marijuana is a gateway drug and that it leads people to start shooting up heroin or start snorting cocaine. If that was the case, there would be millions of heroin addicts and cocaine addicts in this country alone.

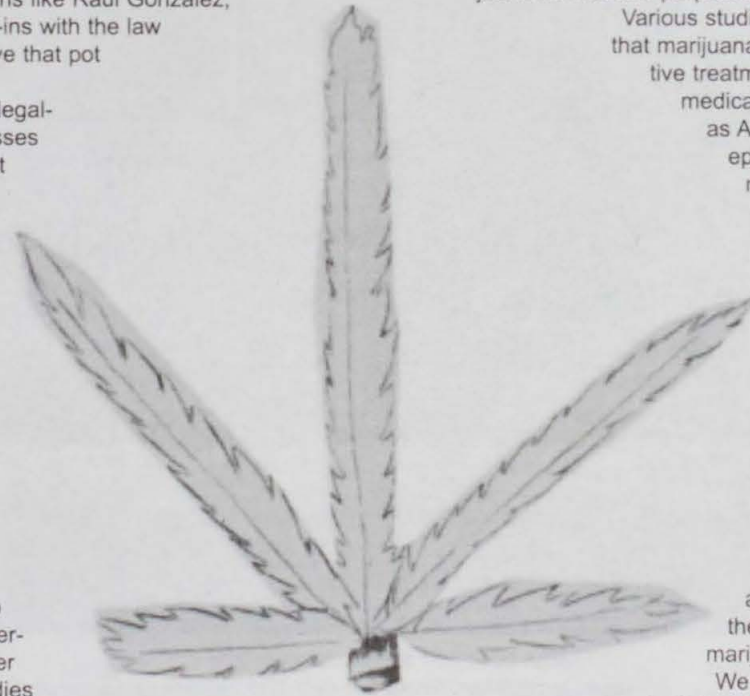
If the gateway argument holds any weigh, then it should be suggested that people who go to church to play bingo for money run the risk of becoming highly addicted gamblers who advance from the bingo halls to spending their money at the big casinos.

Without question, I also support the legalization of marijuana for medical purposes.

Various studies have shown that marijuana can be an effective treatment for various medical conditions, such as AIDS, cancer, epilepsy and glaucoma.

Here in Illinois, Cong. Jan Schakowsky is calling and fighting for the legalization of medical marijuana. She states in a press release that people who are sick, in pain, or cannot sleep should be allowed to have their pain treated with marijuana. I agree.

We also cannot overlook the fact that at different points in history, marijuana has helped spur our economy because it produces the natural strongest fiber. Former presidents George Washington and Thomas Jefferson grew hemp for fiber (and possibly more). During WW II, the government encouraged farmers to grow "Hemp for Victory." Think of how much in taxes the government could collect if it legalized marijuana for its medical, social, and industrial use. One day we will have a national leader who will put marijuana on the right side of the law. Until then, people will go to jail, have arrest records, live in discomfort because of illnesses, and struggle paying off the national debt.



Marijuana Possession Laws in Illinois

Possession	Type of Crime	Possible Jail Sentence	Fine
2.5 grams or less	misdemeanor	30 days*	\$1500
2.5 grams to 10 grams	misdemeanor	6 months*	\$1500
10 to 30 grams	misdemeanor	1 year*	\$2500
30 to 500 grams (first offense)	felony	1-3 years	\$25,000
30 to 500 grams (subsequent)	felony	2-5 years	\$25,000
500 to 2,000 grams	felony	2-5 years	\$25,000
2,000 to 5,000 grams	felony	3-7 years	\$25,000
more than 5,000 grams	felony	4-15 years	\$25,000

*Eligible for 24-month probation with first conviction; dismissal of charges upon completion of probation.

Information from the National Organization for the Reforming of Marijuana Laws



Method Man



Bill Clinton



Woody Harrelson



Your Grandma

Feature

LIFE IN THE MIDST OF TROUBLE

Rejection and rape leads a girl into a journey of darkness

By Linda Davis

Westinghouse High School

Candice Tiedmann, 17, was once a humble girl who wanted to fit in with the popular girls in her middle school and high school.

Instead, her peers teased her because of her pale complexion, large figure, and glasses. Candice said that not being accepted by her peers made her feel like an outcast. Already feeling like an outsider at school, Candice, who is white, said she even felt unusual or unaccepted walking in her own neighborhood, which is predominantly black.

Candice lives in a neighborhood commonly referred to as "L Town". Candice said that it was not her neighbors who made her feel like an outsider; it was the police.

her, but her ex-boyfriend continually taunted her.

"He threw bottles at me every time he saw me. He thought I was too good for him, which wasn't true," she said.

One day Candice decided to go out with some friends to woods on Chicago's North Side. Candice said she would often go to the woods to get away from the people who made her life depressing.

That day out in the woods with her friends Candice ran into her ex-boyfriend.

"I dropped my keys while heading out of the woods, so I had to go back to the location where we were and get them," Candice said as she began to fidget with her hands.

Candice said she continually struggles with bouts of depression and that she has tried to turn her life over to God. "If you get pregnant don't give up on God. That is what I would say to anyone in my position," Candice said.

"Love your baby because God gives it as a gift to the world and nothing is wrong if God meant it to happen," she said. Candice also said that teens who find themselves going through a dark place in their lives should try to find the light before they end up in an even darker space.



Photo by Linda Davis. Illustration by James Alsop

"I don't like walking the streets because the police always stop me and assume that I am out to buy drugs (because I am white)," Candice said.

About two years ago Candice began wearing all black clothing and hooded sweatshirts to hide her identity. Since then her wardrobe has mainly consisted of black clothing and she has dyed her hair numerous different colors. Currently her hair is a combination of green and black.

Based on her appearance some people associate Candice with being part of the Goth subculture, which is an offset of the punk scene.

But Candice said that, while she hangs out with people who are into the Goth scene, she does not consider herself to be a Goth. She does not listen to bands such as The Sisters of Mercy or Christian Death, which are commonly associated with Goths.

"I listen to alternative music like Korn and Linkin Park," she said.

Candice said that her appearance simply became a statement about how her life was going.

Around the time that Candice began wearing black, she also began dating a boy who lived on the North Side. "I thought having a boyfriend in my life would make the loneliness go away and I would have someone to love me for me," Candice said.

What Candice thought was love was not. Candice said she discovered that her new boyfriend only wanted her for sex. Being and wanting to remain a virgin, Candice said she would not give in to him, and she broke up with him.

A short time later, Candice found someone who loved

The ex-boyfriend approached her and began to beat her, hitting her over and over in the head with a glass bottle.

"(Then) he grabbed my hands and put them into the gate and started to perform sexual intercourse on me," Candice said.

After being raped, Candice cried, but soon straightened herself up before rejoining her friends. She did not want them to know what happened to her.

"I didn't tell them what happened to me because he said he would hurt me if I confessed a word to anyone," she said.

Shortly after the incident, Candice went to the hospital. She was afraid that she might have caught a disease. While Candice tested negative for diseases, she found out that she was pregnant.

"I was afraid. I was confused. I didn't know what to think," Candice said. Not believing in abortion, Candice gave birth to her daughter, Amber Tiedman.

After giving birth to Amber, Candice was sent to the Arts of Living School for pregnant teens. She now attends night school in hopes of graduating with a high school diploma.

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COLLEGE DAYS

Part Two: Top Ten List of Financial Aid Tips

By Rebecca Parsons
Columbia College

There are millions of dollars made available each year to prospective college students and it's up to you to get as much as you can.

I am a junior at Columbia College, with a tuition of about \$7,000 per semester. I have never spent a dime of my own money or my family's money on my education. I have received financial aid to cover the entire cost, including books and housing. So I do know a thing or two about getting financial aid and keeping it.

I have learned many lessons during my years of trudging through the financial aid process and I am happy to share them with you. The following is a list of my top ten financial aid tips, listed in order of importance.

10 - Increase your odds for getting financial aid by making yourself the best candidate possible. This means striving to get good grades and test scores (ACT & SAT) and getting involved in extracurricular, community, volunteer and business activities.

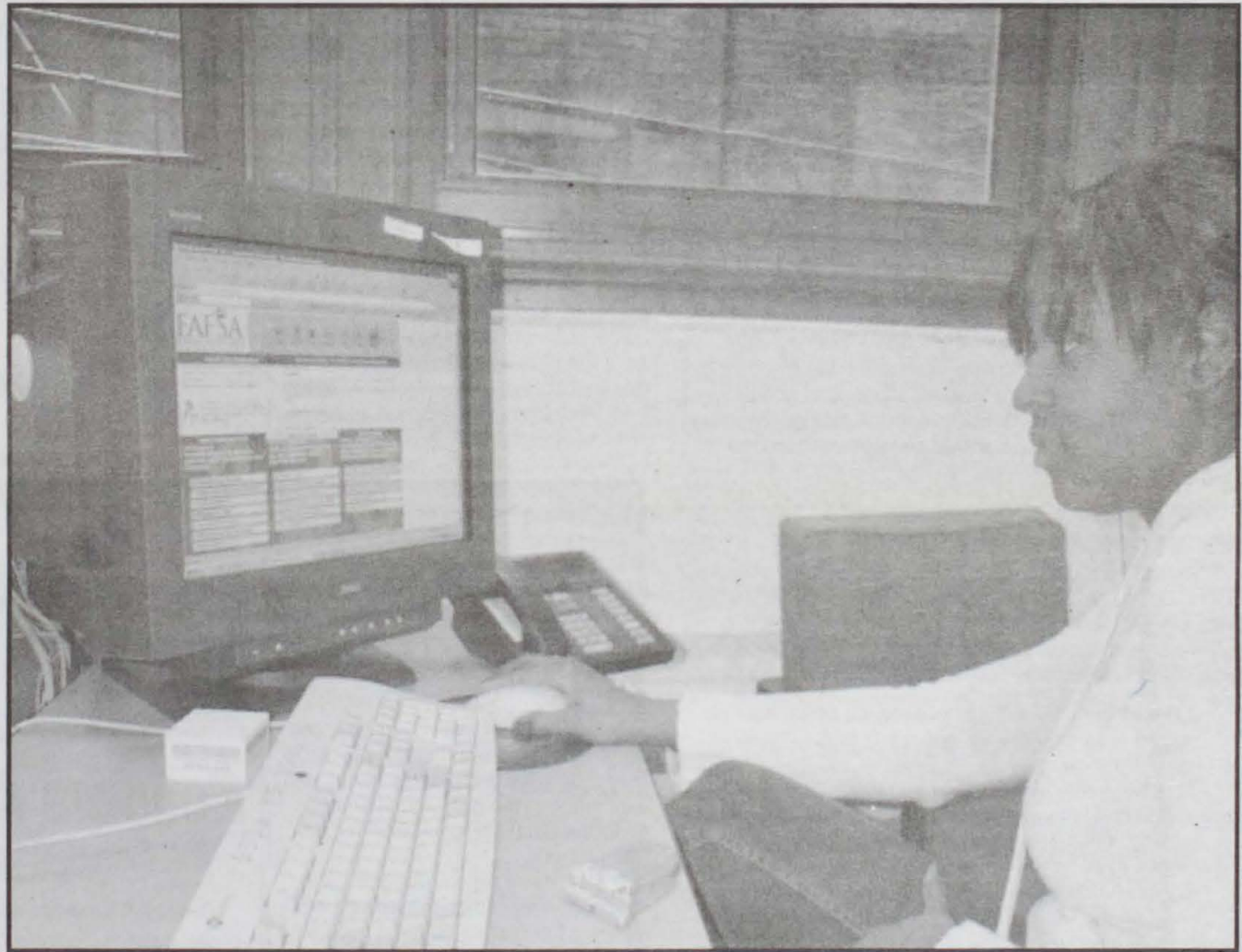
9 - Improve your writing skills. Many scholarships and grants require you to write an essay, so you can get a lot of college money if you can impress them with your words. And don't forget: Spell Check is your friend!

8 - Keep all of your financial aid paperwork and computer files organized. There is nothing worse than when you look at the calendar and realize that today is the postmark deadline for a scholarship and you cannot find your application and essay anywhere. Get a file cabinet for your paperwork and keep each application and response letter in a separate labeled folder. For computer forms, make sure you save all applications and responses to your hard drive and to a disk.

7 - Apply for anything and everything you can. There are so many different scholarships, grants, loans, tuition savings plans, and tuition assistance programs. Find out every scholarship, grant, loan, or program that you are eligible for and apply for every single one.

6 - Take your time and be careful when filling out financial aid applications, especially the FAFSA. It is so important that these forms are filled out properly and accurately the first time. A mistake on the FAFSA could cost you thousands of dollars. Follow the instructions exactly and ask a financial aid advisor to help you fill out the forms.

5 - Apply early. With financial aid, time is money. The FAFSA form is available online at www.fafsa.ed.gov every year after January 31. The earlier you apply, the more financial aid you will get. Every type of aid has a spending limit that runs out as time goes by; so there is more money available early on to each student.



NE File Photo

4 - Be your own teacher. Find out everything you can about every aspect of financial aid. The more you know, the more money you will be likely to get. Use all sources available to you: financial aid advisors, the Internet, books, pamphlets, and government programs. Talk to current college students who have received financial aid and ask for their advice.

3 - Be your own advocate. Financial aid is not easy to get and sometimes you have to fight for the money you need. If you ask a question and you do not get the answer or are not satisfied with the answer, then go to someone else in the office or go to the director. If your guidance counselor or financial aid advisor is not helping you enough, then go to the director and request a different one. Do not take one "no" for an answer. One person may tell you that you cannot get a certain award, but when you go to someone else, they will inform you that you can and show you how.

2 - Stay on top of your financial aid advisor or guidance counselor. This is so critical. You must be proactive with your application process. Be continuously involved in every step. Talk to your advisor every day until the process is finished, either in person, by phone or email. Make sure that all forms are filled out and sent in on time. Don't ever leave this up to your advisor. Remember that you are in charge.

1 - Never give up on going to college. This is the absolute best advice I can give you. Anyone can attend college if they work hard enough for it. If you make every attempt possible to get financial aid and you still don't get the amount you need, look for alternatives. Look into fundraising, volunteer-tuition exchange programs, and tuition reimbursement from work. If you don't get enough money to attend your top choice school, then go to your second or third choice. You can always continue applying for more financial aid and transfer later.

Essay Contest

First Place

**Shaneka Monroe
Gwendolyn Brooks**

"Oh yes, I'm 18. I can finally go get me a drink. I've been waiting for this day. Who would have thought; two years ago I just got my license, now I can get me an alcoholic beverage. Yes, yes, I'm 'bout to drive myself to the liquor store and then get me that new drink out, what's it called, "Hurricane", and then me and my friends going to go driving around and "kicking it'." This would be the voice of an anxious 18 year-old on their birthday, now could you imagine if the drinking age was reduced to 18?

Imagine what the world would be like if the drinking age were reduced to 18. There would be chaos and heartache. Imagine the increased number of DUI's. Imagine how many people would die from the numerous amount of immature teens driving while under the influence. Imagine the problems that would occur.

Driving under the influence is one of the major crimes being committed today. People all over the world everyday commit this crime. This crime has created many deaths as well; so wouldn't giving an immature teen the right to drink really contribute to this problem? I would have to say it would enhance the number of accidents and death rates.

The right to drink is given to those mature enough to handle the privilege; therefore an 18 year-old is not quite that person. For instance they are fresh out of high school and have not yet gotten the experience of the real world. The drinking age is just fine because at 21 you are considered an adult and are more mature and able to handle more responsibilities, such as drinking alcoholic beverages; therefore I say the drinking age should be not be reduced to 18.

Second Place

**Robin Perry
Wells Community Academy**

Should the legal drinking age be reduced to 18 instead of 21? No, it shouldn't! Even though people under 21-years-old get alcohol illegally, we do not need more irresponsible people getting alcohol legally. There are many factors and reasons why people under 21 should not be able to drink. Think about it. Do you want your 18-year-old under the influence of alcohol?

When you're 18, as I am, you take being an adult for granted. I get over excited about being able to vote! I feel that if there are more kids who are able to get alcohol more easily, then there will be more violence. If adults 21 and over are intoxicated or under the influence, then why should we put more people at risk of hurting themselves or others? What if a teen is intoxicated and gets behind the wheel of a car? Disaster could strike without notice.

Our youth are too immature to be trusted with alcohol at a younger age. We're worried about looking cool in front of our peers instead of thinking rationally and responsibly. If it's harder to get alcohol, then we will be less likely to cause an accident whether in the car or on the streets. I think the drinking age should remain at 21. At least with this, most of us will have grown up and be either in college or in the work force. We will be comfortable with ourselves and will not read too much into peer pressure. We will be mature enough to know that we can make our own decisions in life.

Most people think that three years is not really a big deal. Just let teens drink now. They are wrong! Within those three years, my life will change dramatically, so will others. I'm going away to college, which I have to pay for myself, so I'm going to be more responsible, because I'm going to have to be an adult and take care of myself. Three years is a big difference, especially from 18 to 21. Most of us will be on our own so we will think more responsibly. We can wait three extra years. It will benefit us and every one around us.

This Month's Essay Question: "Should the drinking age be reduced to 18?"

Third Place

**TyNeisha H. Banks
Gwendolyn Brooks**

Illinois law states that the legal drinking age is 21. Many argue that it should be lowered to 18-years-of-age. Most feel that 18 is the age when you are legally grown and most individuals feel that at this age they should be able to do whatever they want. It seems that at 18 people would be mature enough to handle alcohol. In other countries like France children drink all the time. That may work in France, but reducing the drinking age in Illinois would have catastrophic results. Think about all of the driving accidents that Illinois has had in the recent year. Let's look at the statistics: 41% of the total highway deaths in the year 2002 were the result of driving under the influence. Also 17,419 people were killed in these accidents in 2002. Furthermore 86% of these individuals were said to be legally drunk. Most of these crashes occurred between the hours of midnight and three a.m. Illinois has some of the highest drunk driving fatalities in the United States. Since 1982 the percentage of alcohol related crashes have declined from 60% to 41%. Adding more individuals to the road who are eligible to drink alcohol definitely would not improve the situation.

Chances are if an individual is 18, he or she has only had a license for a mere two years, if that. The individual is either still in high school or just recently graduated. Also, 18 is still an awkward age where individuals tend to still be influenced by their peers. Statistics show that teens make up a large percent of automobile accidents, perhaps due to the lack of experience. Reducing the age of alcohol consumption will only add to this trend of drunk driving.

Perhaps 21 isn't such a bad age at all.

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Please make the subject line: "NE Essay"

Deadlines:
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New Expression reserves the right to cancel the essay contest

Cover Story

The Right To Bear Arms At Eighteen

By Joseph Struck
Providence

If eighteen-year-olds can vote, be criminally charged as an adult, and fight for their own life and the lives of their fellow Americans in war, should they be prohibited from buying a gun in the state?

Gov. Rod Blagojevich says no.

The governor is now trying to kill two birds with one stone by proposing that eighteen-year-old citizens be granted FOID (Firearm Owners Identification) cards if legislation is passed that will continue to put a complete ban on assault weapons. Currently the law states that anyone under 21 needs a parent's permission to get a FOID card. Under Blagojevich's proposal the age to get a handgun would remain 21.

The democratic governor's overture was met with great criticism, much of which came from his own side of the fence.

"You've got to be 21 to make a wager on a riverboat, but why would people support a bill that gambles on young people's lives?" said Atty. Gen. Lisa Madigan. "I'm concerned that there are 18-year-olds that are going to school and -- conceivably without their parents' knowledge--could get a FOID Card and purchase a gun and bring that to school."

Despite concerns about potential gun violence prompted by the governor's proposal, many teens said that in this era it would be very difficult for a student to bring a hunting rifle into a school without somebody noticing immediately.

"Rifles are for hunting. School safety throughout Chicago is reasonable enough to the point where a student won't be able to enter a school with a loaded rifle," said seventeen-year-old Peter Chang of south suburban New Lenox.

This proposed legislation has caused many to believe that the governor is simply fishing for votes in the next election, especially those coming from rural, downstate voters. When Blagojevich was in the Democratic primary for governor in 2002, he proudly advocated for stronger gun control measures, even one that not only kept the age minimum for purchase of a FOID card at 21, but also dramatically spiked the price for the cards. Blagojevich has now expand-



Photo Courtesy USOC

Haley Dunn, a 17 year-old from Eddysville, Iowa won a gold medal in the USOC Junior Women's Skeet Competition

ed the deer hunting season for handgun owners, and backed the development of the World Shooting Complex, a trap shooting facility and future host of national gun shows and competitions. There are even camouflage-colored bumper stickers that read "Hunters for Blagojevich."

Many gun shop owners say they have had enough of politicians consistently toying with gun laws while switching sides on the issue and would like to see more stability with the Second Amendment.

"Lawmakers keep messing with the Second Amendment. Politicians, many of who have no gun knowledge, are only using the issue to swing votes. It's really a disservice to the citizens," said a gun shop owner in south suburban Chicago Heights, who feels the current gun laws don't need to be changed.

"A parent should sign for a FOID card to make sure he's responsible. As for (banning assault weapons) a 22-rifle can kill another human being if that's what it comes to," said the gun shop owner, who asked not to be identified.

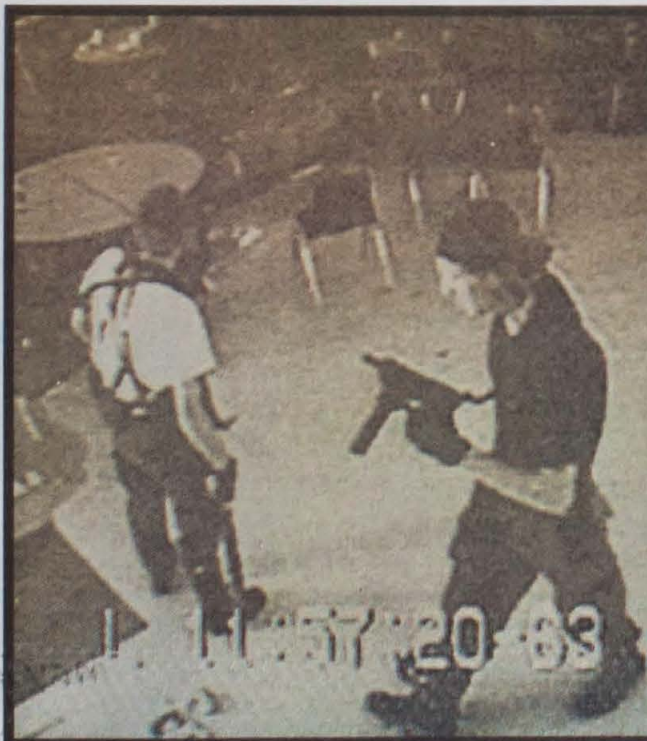
Although assault weapons are not even close to being the guns of choice in homicides, it has often been the greater, more impacted instances involving assault weapons that have triggered such animosity. It could, however, be argued that events such as the attempted assassination of Ronald Reagan and the vicious murders at Santana High School could have occurred with any gun.

"Assault weapons are only something like two percent of the nation's gun crime," said Timothy Skaggs, 18, of south suburban Frankfurt. Skaggs feels that banning assault weapons and changing the age for an FOID card is not attacking any specific problem.

"It's not a good idea. Gun education should begin at an early age, and if parents feel it hasn't been taught by age eighteen then there's no need for him or her to buy a gun," Skaggs said.

"High school teens buying guns (without their parents permission) is simply a dangerous thing. I think they should keep things the way they are," said Westin Spoon, 18, of Minooka. Spoon is a gun owner and avid hunter.

Though an assault weapons ban would definitely prevent crime, how much is questionable. It will be hard to prove to a public that is constantly fed images of handgun violence that the real violence is coming from "Rambo" like artillery.



Columbine Revisited

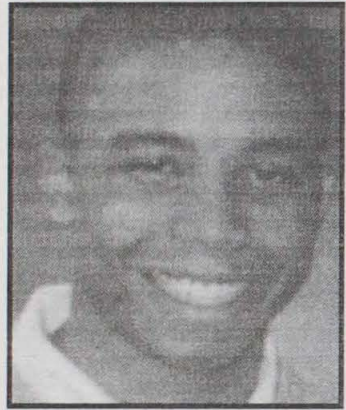
Five years ago, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold murdered 12 classmates and teachers at Columbine High School before turning the guns on themselves. Law enforcement professionals and psychiatrists are still asking why. The fatal killings that left America stunned launched massive debates on gun control and youth crime. The recent anniversary of the Columbine shootings along with talks about lowering the age from 21 to 18 for individuals to buy hunting rifles have rekindled those debates in Illinois.

POINT / COUNTERPOINT

POINT

Adult Enough To Own a Hunting Rifle!

By Haamid Xavier Johnson
Georgetown University



Illinois' legislative body is finally looking to pass a measure of substance as they move to lower the legal age to own a gun without parental consent in the Land of Lincoln from 21 to 18.

Originally, a Fire Arms Ownership Identification (FOID) card was and still is a license that can only be obtained by individuals over 21 or those 18 and

older with a parental notification for hunting purposes.

The governor's tenure in office thus far has been marred by immeasurable accounts of controversy surrounding our state's lawmakers deciding to borrow money to reduce our astronomical deficit spending – all while our chief executive flies from Chicago to Springfield and back and forth on the state's penny.

Additionally, the passage of such a bill and the signing of such a measure into law would modernize Illinois' records regarding the Second Amendment. Currently, we are out of touch with the mainstream of the country in that the two-thirds of the current 33 states that allow for Right-to-Carry laws does not include our home turf. The vast majority of the rest of the country's state legislators, in the early 1990s, were rightfully navigating in a starkly different direction than many of our liberal and closed-minded lawmakers.

Chicago's crime and violence rates should clearly be fodder for the argument that a reduction of an individual's civil liberties does not necessarily guarantee a safer or more secure city; it only intensifies the black market of gun smugglers and is proven not to be a deterrent in municipalities that have unabashedly prohibited gun possession.

Moreover, it is important to note that there are no pro-gun bills that moderates can advocate in our state chambers, especially as Mayor Daley seeks to propose a ban on semi-automatic firearms. Senate bill HB 3989 and House bill 2163 are centered around lowering the FOID age from 21 to

18, while the failure of these measures are likely to infringe upon our right to bear arms and invade our 'invasion of privacy' clause in the constitution.

For far too long our government has called on teens to drive emergency ambulance vans, sign up for police academy, and extinguish high-rise fires; they have told us that it is OK to smoke at 18 and enroll in military combat to serve our country. If all those aspects of society are permissible at the age of 18 without a parent's permission, then independently owning and a buying a legal hunting rifle should not be prohibited.



COUNTER POINT

Too Much, Too Young

BRIAN LEWIS
St. Ignatius

If there is a well armed police and military force, is there ever really any need for a large amount of guns in any nation?

Especially after September 11th, America has been a nation wrought with fear. America has the largest rate of death by guns in the world. Every year, more than 11,000 people die in America due to guns, as opposed to 68 yearly that die in England.

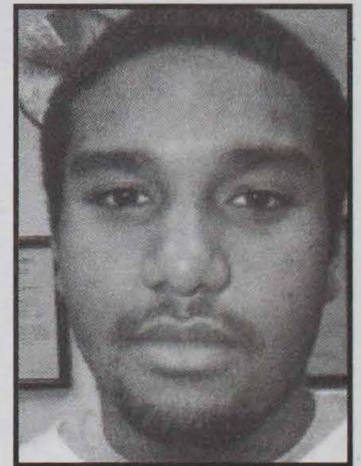
Every night, Americans turn on the news to view images of war, violence, death and murder. A country this overwhelmed by fear does not need to become more relaxed with its guns laws, if anything it should be tighter.

Hunting rifles are guns as well. They can be used to kill. Every year over 1,000 of the 11,000 deaths by guns in America result from hunting rifles.

Now the government wants to put more guns in the hands of younger and younger people. There are those who argue that if 18-year-olds can carry guns in Iraq then they should be able to carry guns here. But, 18-year-olds can drive tanks in Iraq. Should they be able to drive tanks down the streets of Chicago and New York. And who says that 18-

year-olds should even be deployed in Iraq in the first place? Many of them do not actually want to fight in war and do not feel America was justified in attacking Iraq but are people who simply wanted to get some money for college, enlisted in the military, then found themselves half way around the world engaged in armed combat.

I do not have all the answers for how to make America a better place, but one thing is clear: while guns may not kill people, and while people surely do, a people so pumped up with fear and terror do not need more guns thrust in their hands at younger and younger ages. This will not make the world a better place.



Illinois legislature will take a step in the wrong direction if it passes legislation to lower the age for citizens to buy hunting rifles from 21 to 18. According to a proposal by Gov. Rod Blagojevich, 18 year olds will be able to go into gun shops and buy hunting rifles and ammunition without their parents' consent.

Conservatives have been waiting a long time to see this legislation, and others like it, passed. Many would like to see this legislation extended beyond being able to buy and carry firearms for hunting purposes and push legislation that would allow average citizens to stock up on guns and arm themselves in their homes and on the streets. I think that history has proven that this is the wrong way to go.

Conservatives argue that it is a constitutional right to buy and own guns. The Second Amendment secures the right to bear arms. They say this is the way the founders of America, namely Thomas Jefferson, George Washington etc...would have wanted it. While it's true America's founders had lots of guns, it's also true they had lots of slaves. Should peoples' rights to own guns be as tied into the social fabric of this nation as their rights to own slaves?

Fortunately, America's legislative system allows for change or amendments that allow the law to respond to the changing tide of the times. An amendment was made to the constitution to ban slavery. Maybe it's time to make a similar amendment to ban guns.

Cover Story (continued)



U.S. Teen Gun Statistics

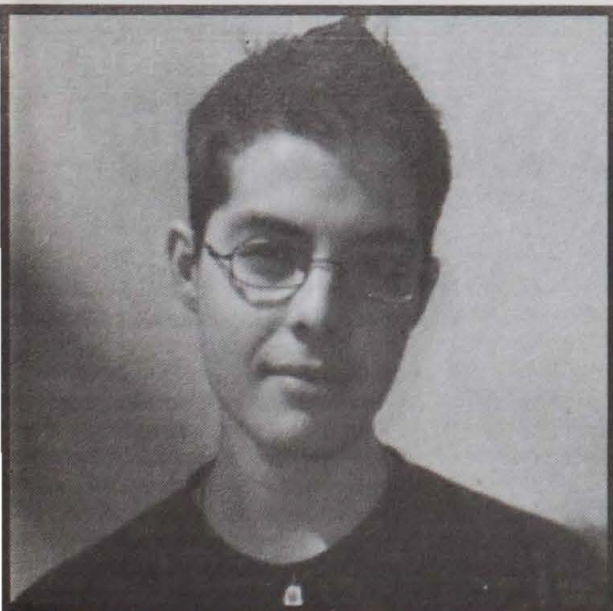
- Guns are the number one way that teens take their own lives. (National Center for Injury Prevention and Control)
- Between 1979 and 2001, gunfire killed 90,000 children and teens in America. (Children's Defense Fund, National Center for Health Statistics)
- There were over 37,000 teen gun arrests in 2000. (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention)
- 1,210 juveniles were arrested for killing a person with a gun in 1999. (Bureau of Justice Statistics)
- In the 1998-99 academic year, 3,523 students were expelled for bringing firearms to school. (U.S. Department of Education)
- American juveniles are 16 times more likely to be murdered with a gun, 11 times more likely to commit suicide with a gun, and nine times more likely to die from a gun accident than children in 25 other industrialized nations combined. (Centers for Disease Control)
- One in ten male high school students reported having carried a gun in the last 30 days. (1999, Center for Disease Control and Prevention)
- 43 percent of U.S. households with children and teens had at least one gun in the house. (Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, 2001)
- Parents owned the guns used in more than half of the teen suicides and suicide attempts. (Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, 1999)
- 60 percent of high school males and 31 percent of middle school males said they could get a gun if they wanted to. (Josephson Institute of Ethics 2000 Report Card: Report #1)
- In 2001, there were 57 fatal two-person hunting accidents; 23 with a shotgun and 34 with a rifle. (International Hunter Education Association)
- In 2001, there were 17 fatal self-inflicted hunting accidents; seven with a shotgun and ten with a rifle. (International Hunter Education Association)
- There were 352 juvenile murder victims, aged 13 to 16, killed by a firearm in 1997. (FBI Uniform Crime Reports, 1998)

Chicago Statistics

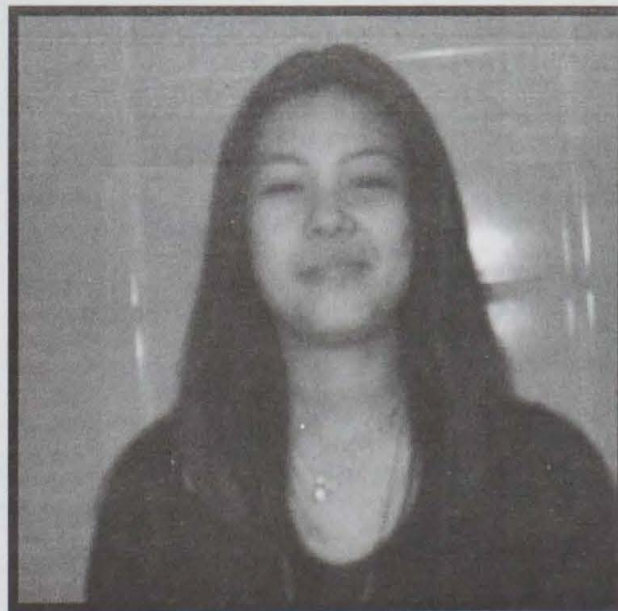
- In the first quarter of 2004, Chicago has had 103 murders - 77 percent involved a firearm. (Chicago Police Department Crime Summary 2004)
- Over 40 percent of Chicago 2004 first quarter murders were gang-related. (Chicago Police Department Crime Summary 2004)
- In 2003, more than 80 percent of Chicago murders involved a shooting. (Chicago Police Department Crime Summary 2003)



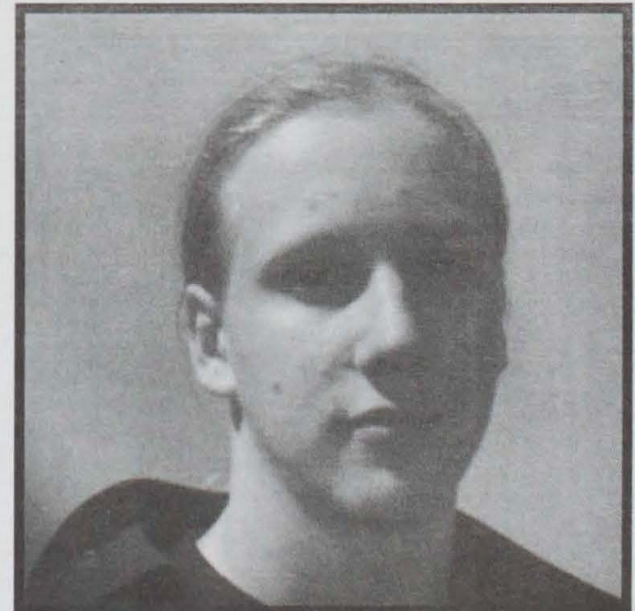
PhotOpinion: Should 18-year-olds be able to purchase rifles in Illinois?



Geoff Henao, junior, Jones Commercial
 "Yes, they should be able to buy guns because 18 is the age you can get in the army and go to war. If the government thinks 18-year-olds are mature enough to go to war, then they must be mature enough to have a gun."



Maricella Torres, senior, Jones Commercial
 "No, they should not be able to buy guns. Eighteen and 19-year-olds are the ones who commit the most crimes and if they could get guns easily, then it would be even worse. They would bring the guns to school, too, so kids wouldn't be safe at school."



Jonah Berquist, sophomore, Jones Commercial
 "Yes. Since 18-year-olds can be sent to war, they should be able to buy a gun. If an 18-year-old serves in the military and uses a gun there, but then they come home and cannot get a gun, then that's just hypocritical."

Poetry Slam

Flying on the Wings of Poetry

New Expression's Metro Editor Experiences a National Youth Poetry Slam in L.A.

By Brian Lewis
St. Ignatius

It was 8 a.m. The Chicago All Star poetry team stood in a dark hallway at Young Chicago Authors headquarters. We anxiously awaited our departure. We were sleep deprived, fatigued, and nauseous. Some of us were sick. Some of us were nervous about riding in an airplane for the first time. We were all eager and excited to find out what was in store for us when we got to Los Angeles.

The four-hour plane ride was smooth. Our team spent the time sleeping and writing poetry. We perfected the pieces we would perform by running them through our heads repeatedly. By the time we stepped off the plane and got our first view of the sunny, palm tree filled streets of L.A., we felt like we were ready for the competition.

We checked into our hotel and met the other poets. They hailed from as far away as Michigan, New Mexico, Texas, New York, Washington, California, Rhode Island, and even England. We decided to do away with the formal introductions and kick a beat box with poets from various cities. We spit rhymes about where we were from and what we came to do. Any local barriers that may have existed were demolished as we gained respect for each other's skills and talents.

The second day we congregated in a park not far from downtown L.A. Numerous specialists in Performance Poetry, Beat Boxing, and Djing facilitated workshops to teach the basic skills of these forms of expression.

That night was our first bout of competition. We met in a bright orange room with walls tagged by multi-colored graffiti and covered with posters of Che Guevara and Bob Marley. All the performances were beautiful and multitudes of experiences were expressed through the words of the



Poet/Spoken Word artist Saul Williams.

NE File Photo

poets. Our team performed pieces about the blues, religion and homosexuality. We finished in first place in the bout.

The second bout was just as amazing. Our team performed poems about puberty, rape, slavery, abortion and miscarriage. The performances left the majority of the audience in tears. Our team finished in a close second in this bout and crossed our fingers in hopes we'd make it to finals.

The next day we met the extraordinary poet, philosopher, and visionary Saul Williams. He ran a workshop on spiritual balance, meditation, self-actualization and writing. We listened intently as he told us about his creative processes, broke down his own pieces word for word and divulged meaning out of everyday words and sayings that previously seemed meaningless. That night they announced that our team was one of seven that had been selected to go to finals. Our team celebrated by going out to dinner and introducing the team from Leeds, England to authentic L.A. Mexican food.

The day of finals our team helped set up the stage. We spent most of the day relaxing and seeing the rest of L.A.

Spoken word artist Saul Williams hosted finals.

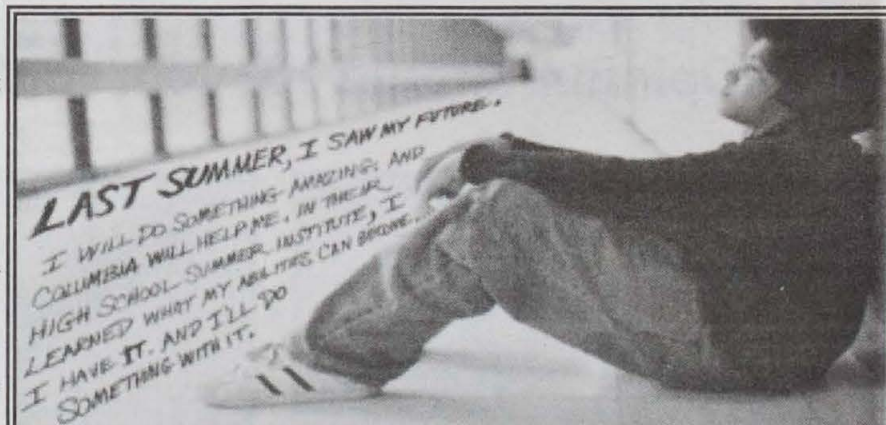
The night opened with a plethora of performances by teams who had done an excellent job of showcasing their talents and their stories but had not scored enough points to actually compete in the finals. By the time the actual rounds started, we had all tensed up. My team performed two group pieces and one individual piece. We gave our best effort and put all our energy into our performances on the stage. By the time the third round was over, our entire team was in the atrium, with TF North, the other team representing Chicago, holding hands and praying because we had all been overwhelmed with the spiritual power of the experience. Soon, we were interrupted from our prayer circle to run up on stage because the team from Ypsilanti, Michigan decided to forfeit the finals in order to allow everyone from their team to get up on stage. Every teen in attendance joined Ypsilanti on stage and freestyled together to close our ceremony.

Saul Williams capped the night off by performing two of his own poems. The "winners" were announced soon after, but it was clear as we stood on that stage our last night in L.A. that each and every person who had attended the four day slam walked away with something that made them a better person.



NE File Photo

A young poet performs at the National Youth Poetry Slam in Los Angeles



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Learn the power (and the future careers) that journalism offers in Youth Communication's 2004 Summer Urban Journalism Workshop. For more than 25 years, New Expression has been hosting the Urban Journalism Workshop. From 10 a.m.- 2 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays, beginning June 28 and ending Aug. 20, you will take field trips, meet journalism professionals, learn the needed skills it takes to be a journalist and have a chance to interview all kinds of people. Stories from the workshop will be published in New Expression NewsMagazine, the citywide teen-produced publication of Youth Communication. As a participant in the program you will automatically become eligible to be staff for the 2004-05 year. So what are you waiting for?

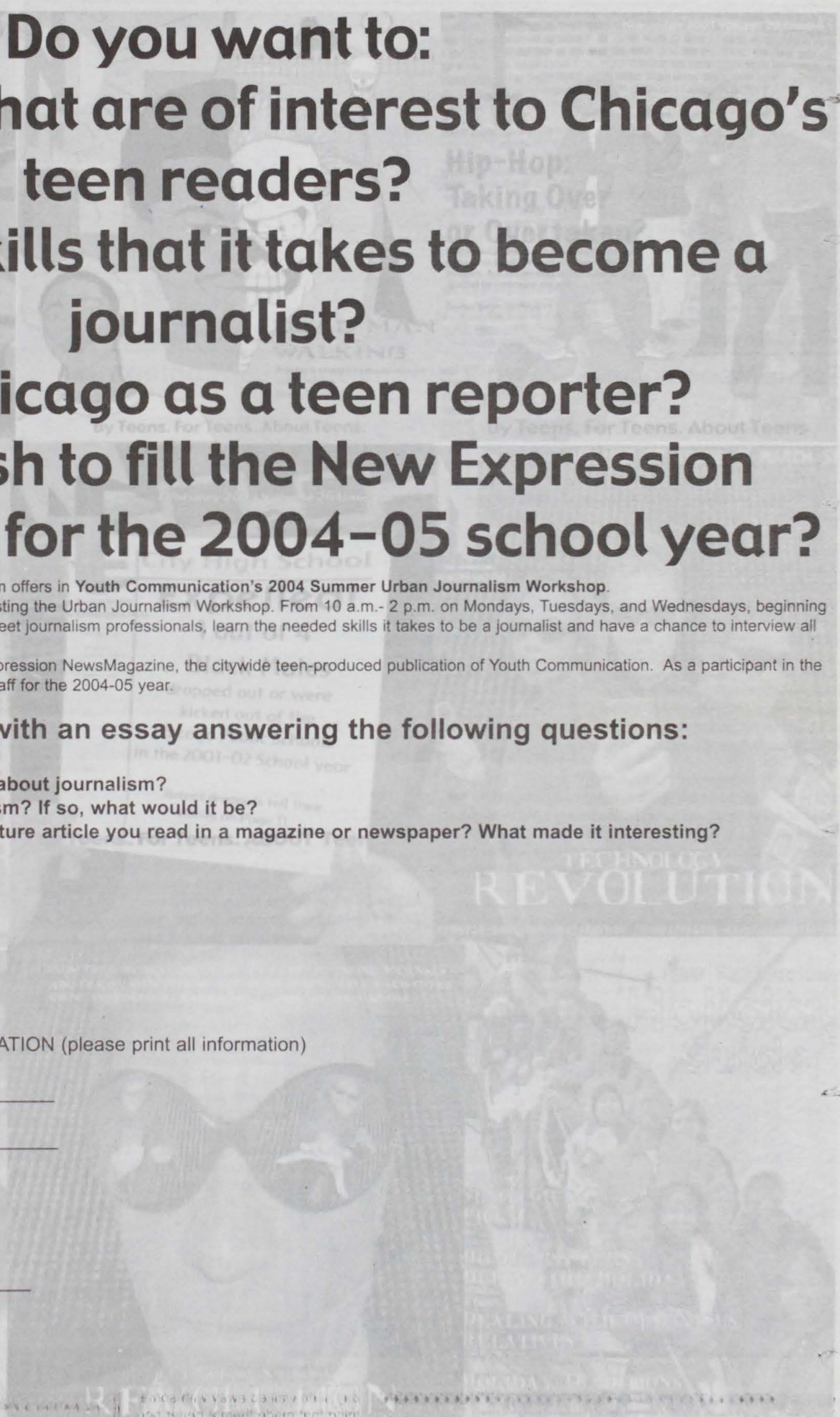
Send the application below with an essay answering the following questions:

- Why do you want to be in the workshop?
- What do you find particularly interesting about journalism?
- Have you considered a career in journalism? If so, what would it be?
- What was the last interesting news or feature article you read in a magazine or newspaper? What made it interesting?

Send the application to:
URBAN JOURNALISM WORKSHOP
c/o Youth Communication
600 S. Michigan Ave.
Chicago, IL 60605
Deadline: May 20

URBAN JOURNALISM WORKSHOP APPLICATION (please print all information)

1. NAME _____
2. HOME ADDRESS _____
3. HOME PHONE _____
4. AGE _____
5. SCHOOL GRADE IN FALL 2003 _____
6. SCHOOL _____





Teens Mean Business At National Entrepreneur Conference

By NE Staff

Several like-minded teens from around the country who look to manage successful businesses recently attended the seventh annual Young Entrepreneur Conference and Business Competition in Milwaukee, WI.

More than 450 youth between the ages of eight and eighteen had a chance to showcase their businesses at the three-day event and compete for cash prizes, laptops and office equipment. The event was held from March 24 to March 26.

Participants were provided with a variety of information on how to start, manage and maintain their own businesses. Tons of literature was made available to the participants at various workshops that were conducted as part of the conference.

Several professional businessmen and women spoke to the teens and provided insight into the world of entrepreneurship. Keynote speakers at the event included John Liautaud, owner of Jimmy John's Gourmet Sandwich Shop, and syndicated talk show host Troy Dunn. Both spoke about the hardships and rewards of owning and operating your own business.

"The conference is important because it shows people they need to do in order to have a successful business," said Ashley West of Holy Trinity High School in Chicago.

The conference also allows them to express their ideas to people who will in turn offer their advice and help," West said.



NE File Photo

Lakreash Dixon, who operates a t-shirt business in Chicago, said she enjoyed this year's event. Dixon has been attending the conference for the last three years.

"I think this was the best one so far. There were a lot of businesses to see and I met a lot of new people," she said.

Dixon was one of many teens who took advantage of setting up a table in the young Entrepreneur Flea Market, which allowed teens to advertise their business, display their products, and improve customer service skills.

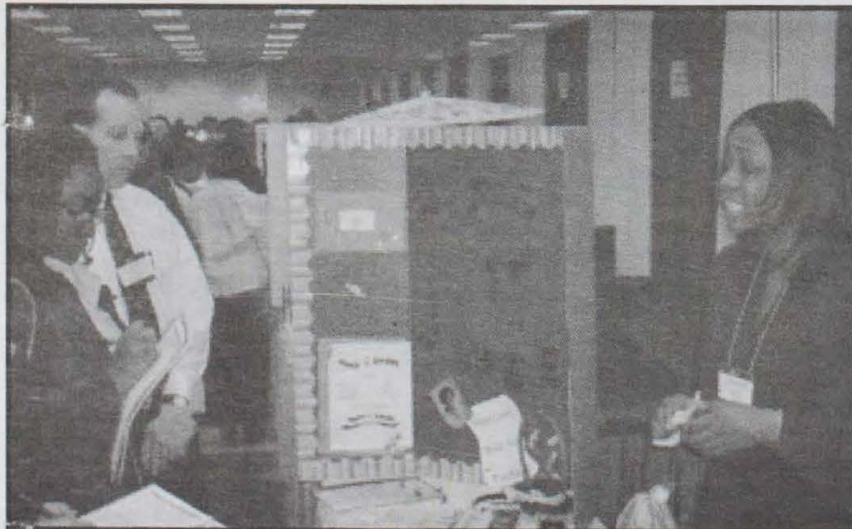
"I am a more confident person. Attending the conference has given me a chance improve my communication and presentation skills," said Ebele Mara of Columbus Ohio.

Young participants were not the only ones to learn something at the conference. Teachers were provided guidance and support to help better train young entrepreneurs by business professionals and other educators from across the county.

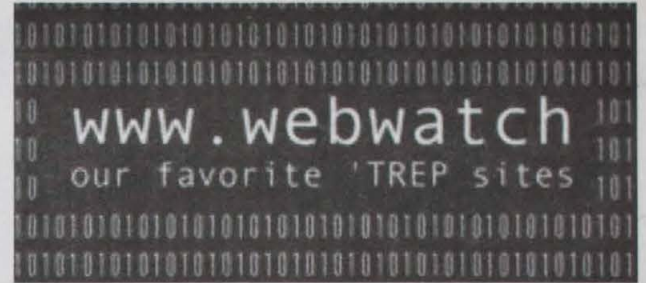
As with any big conference, participants got a chance to come together and rub elbows and cut loose at the Young Entrepreneur Dance Party.

"The dance was fun and the music was good," said Lovia Harris, a hairstylist from Chicago.

The event was hosted by the non-profit, Milwaukee-based Institute for Entrepreneurship and sponsored by several foundations including the Kauffman, and Coleman foundations.



NE File Photo



Web camps putting teens on the road to success

By Phylecia Thompson
Lakeview High School

Four million teenagers use the Internet and many of them have created their own websites. There are plenty of chances for teenagers to create websites with the right tools and training in website development.

Web camps and technology programs are essential tools to help learn how to create web pages. In many cases, creating websites does not always involve countless hours of sitting in front of a computer.

The other way to learn how to develop websites is learning on your own and using programs such as Dreamweaver, which allows users to create websites on their own.

Yet, web camps and technology programs give participants more insight and hands-on experience with guidance from an instructor.

Students (campers) in these programs are trained by professionals or persons with extensive knowledge in web design.

These programs teach teens that the technology field is not difficult as long as there is a sense of patience. For instance, the Girls Web Camp at Loyola not only teaches web development, but also how businesses benefit from the Internet.

The Girls Web Camp at Loyola University is a web camp dedicated to high school girls who are interested in web developing, learning about the future of electronics and how to compete in the business world. The girls create web-based business sites, and sometimes sell their own products.

"I feel that this camp is important. Not many women are interested in technology. The tech field shouldn't be a guy thing. Girls can do it too," said Bobby Chanthavong, assistant director of Center for Information Management (CIMT), which is a center for research and education in business administration.

The web camp was founded by Dr. Linda Salchenberger. You can check out the web sites created by the campers at www.girlswebcamp.com.

There's also the University of Chicago's High School Computer Club. This year round program is held two Saturdays a month.

The university program encourages students to compete for scholarships in the Annual High School Computer Competition Training Classes at the BDPA (Black Data Processing Associates) National Conference. The conference begins in the third week of February and ends in the first week of August.

Professionals in the field will train the students in computer technology. High school juniors will compete in various group projects and learn about MS Access Web Site Development.

"I think there should be more programs to teach youth about the Internet and positive ways to use it," said Tristesse Jones, a student at Lakeview High School.

To learn more about the BDPA conference, visit www.bdpa.net/hsccl/index.php

Opinion



Photo Illustration by James Alsop

Television's Black Barrier TV Sitcoms' typecasting of black characters

By Monsura Brimah
Hyde Park

American teenagers spend an average of 13.6 hours per week watching television, according to a study by the U.S. Center for Media Research (July 2003). With that amount of time spent in front of the tube, there is no doubt that the images we see on it have a profound affect on us. In today's racially conscious climate, I think it's about time we start taking a closer look at how black people are portrayed on television and how this effects our self-perception and how others perceive us.

Historically, blacks have been grouped in stereotypical roles that show them as criminals or uneducated people who are only there for entertainment. Most people believe that these stereotypes originated during slavery and have lived on since.

"On today's television, black sitcoms are broad and too loud. The story format seems too obvious and the characters make smart comments as a means of being comical," said Tim Reid, a veteran actor who starred as the father on the popular sitcom "Sister Sister."

Laura Washington is the Ida B. Wells-Barnett University Professor at DePaul University and a columnist for the Chicago Sun-Times. She said that today's black television shows are no different than the original black television shows of yesteryear.

"Today's television shows can be compared to past sitcoms like "Amos and Andy" because they show a similar buffoonery of black people."

Shows like "The Parkers," "The Hughleys," and "Martin" show blacks as comedic figures, but never as serious intellectuals.

"There are not enough programs targeted towards

blacks, and the ones we do have show blacks in a negative light," Washington said.

Not everyone agrees. Clarence Waldron, features editor at *Jet Magazine*, said; "Right now in television we are at a pretty good place. Blacks have come a long way since 'Sanford and Son' and 'Good Times' in the 70's"

"Today's sitcoms, for the most part, are more well rounded and the portrayals have good values that are more realistic. I'm talking about shows like "Bernie Mac Show," "Girlfriends," "All of Us," "Half and Half," and "One on One," Waldron said.

Tim Reid also said, "I don't think that there is a difference between how blacks and whites are treated in the entertainment industry because they both have to work just as hard."

Black characters are not only limited to roles in select comedies, but are frequently based on disparaging stereotypes that are often misleading about the reality of black lives. The overall image of black people on TV is deceiving because it presents only a portion of the picture instead of the whole thing.

So why is television programming so segregated? Most of today's sitcoms are on the major networks like NBC, CBS, and ABC. These networks present mostly white sitcoms with occasional appearances by minorities instead of presenting black sitcoms that show real black lives.

"There were only a handful of black people when I was getting started in the business and it was very competitive," Reid said.

Some experts feel that television network shows are becoming more segregated than ever. In the 1970s and

80s there were programs like "The Cosby Show," "A Different World," and "The Flip Wilson Show" that attracted racially diverse audiences. In the 1990s, shows like "The Cosby Show" and "A Different World" ended, leaving a void for positive black sitcoms that has never been filled since.

Today's sitcoms are lacking integration, leaving black audiences watching black shows and white audiences watching white shows.

Even today's multi-cultural dramas, with the exception of "ER," have failed to attract a substantial black following.

"We still don't have many black TV dramas; that's where we're coming up short. "Soul Food" is the only black drama, but it is on cable, not a network station. This drama is honest, uplifting and tells a real story. Blacks want to see themselves portrayed positively and realistically," Waldron said.

Theresa Perry, a social studies teacher at Hyde Park Academy, believes there are too many negative portrayals of blacks on television sitcoms.

"There are some teenagers who see these black characters on TV who do not study, who make snotty comments and worry about material things...and then they imitate them. Black television characters are not thoughtful; they're superficial," Perry said.

All of us watch television, and whether we realize it or not, we are definitely influenced by it. Television has an important role in our culture. The network executives, program creators, and producers are not using this medium to accurately reflect the various lives of black people. That is why I feel television's negative portrayals and stereotyping of black characters is hurtful to us all.

Entertainment

May Movie/DVD Releases

May 7 Movies

Van Helsing

May 11 DVDs

Scary Movie 3

Shrek & Shrek 3-D

May 14 Movies

Breakin' All the Rules

Troy

May 18 DVDs

Paycheck

Torque

You Got Served

May 21 Movies

Shrek 2

May 25 DVDs

Bubba Ho-Tep

The Lord of the Rings - The Return of the King

Underworld

Welcome to Mooseport

May 28 Movies

The Day After Tomorrow

Soul Plane

June 1 DVDs

Eurotrip

Monster

My Baby's Daddy

June 4 Movies

Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban

Zatoichi



You've seen Takeshi Kitano as Vic Romano on MXC. Now, see him as the blind samurai Zatoichi. This movie will only be in select theaters, so check showtimes.

May CD/Video Game Releases

CD Releases

May 11

Soundtrack - Shrek 2

Eric Burdon - My Secret Life

May 18

Alanis Morissette - So-Called Chaos

Lenny Kravitz - Baptism

Method Man - Tical O: The Prequel

May 25

Avril Lavigne - Under My Skin

Soundtrack - Harry Potter & The Prisoner Of Azkaban

Slipknot - Vol. 3 (The Subliminal Verses)

Wilson Phillips - California

The Cardigans - Long Gone Before Daylight

Lisa Loeb & Elizabeth Mitchell - Catch The Moon

Video Game Releases

May 4, Shrek 2 XBOX/PS2/GC

May 10 Custom Robo Battle Revolution - GC

May 4, 2004 Metal Slug 3 XBOX

May 4, 2004 Rallisport Challenge 2 XBOX

May 4, 2004 Syphon Filter: The Omega Strain PS2

May 6, 2004 Van Helsing Xbox/PS2

May 11, 2004 Mega Man Anniversary Collection PS2

May 11, 2004 Transformers PS2

May 25 Carmen Sandiego: Secret of the Stolen Drums - XBOX/PS2/GC



Alanis Morissette has always made her life an open book with her honest and revealing lyrics. She will introduce us to a new chapter on May 18 with her new CD, "So-Called Chaos."

Dear Audriena...

By Audriena Comeaux
Mother McAuley



*Dear Audriena,
My sister and I are really close; we are only a year apart. I really had a crush on this guy, and though she knew I really liked him she began dating him anyway.*

The other day he came by the house and she was not there yet. We were watch-

ing TV and talking. Well one thing led to another and we started kissing. I have not told my sister. I feel terrible, and now I really like the guy. I am so confused, please help.

-Shelly

Dear Shelly,

Family is your blood and friends come and go. You shouldn't let a guy come between you and family or you and your friends. If you and the guy hadn't talked about what happened already, I think you should do so. Then if you and the guy come to an

agreement to be friends or if it is too difficult to be around this guy without being flirtatious, then it is best you stay away from him for a while. After everything is settled between you and the guy, you and your sister should have a serious private discussion. If you and your sister are really close, then she should understand and maybe EVENTUALLY she will forgive you.

Dear Audriena,

I am 18 years old and getting ready to go to college. I have been accepted to all of my top choices in Atlanta, Washington and New York. The only thing holding me back is my parents. They want me to stay in Chicago because I am the youngest sibling. How can I convince them that I am old enough and responsible enough to go away for school?

-Ready To Go

Dear Ready to Go,

I completely understand where you are coming from. At times I wish I could go away for college, but my parents prefer me to stay in the state. In order to show them that you are responsible, remind them respectfully that you are older now

aren't a little kid anymore. List all the adult things you do and let them know you thought of home arrangements, job opportunities, and that you can keep up with your schoolwork. I can't guarantee they will definitely let you go away but they will have more reason to consider it.

Dear Audriena,

I just turned 17-years-old and I met a guy. He is very smart and nice and funny. The only problem is that he is six years older than me. He knows my age and he is okay with it. I am very mature, but some of my friends think he is too old. I am also afraid to bring him around my family. What should I do?

-Not Sure

Dear Not Sure,

Well, if you think he is good enough to go out with you, then he should be good enough to share with your family and friends. The age issue may be a big problem with your family at first, but if he is as great as you say he is, in time your family and friends should warm up to him. But if he doesn't appeal to them, maybe you should re-think the relationship and decide that maybe they do know best.

Entertainment

"Us or Them" Brings Understanding Between Police and Teens

By Phylecia Thompson
Lakeview High School

Does the phrase "Us or Them" tell how teens feel about police, or how police feel about teens?

The Police Teen Link program at Live Bait Theatre showed both points of view in a dramatic play that ran in April called "Us or Them".

The play was based on 40 hours of interviews by police officers and teenagers. Those interviews were turned into a script for "Us or Them" which reflected the relationship between police and teens. Sharon Evans, artistic director of Live Bait Theatre, wrote the script. "Us or Them" was the first scripted piece by Live Bait Theatre.

"When they (teens and cops) see the play they're struck by how complex they are, and how smart they are," Evans said.

The purpose of the play was to show the complexities of being a teen and a police officer, and how both are misunderstood. The 90-minute play consisted of dramatic stories such as Sgt. Stacy Kraft's experience of having her partner killed in gunfire, and other hardships faced by teens and police officers on a daily basis.

"It's an outlet for the police," said Michael Rivera, a teen ensemble member, and a junior at Lane Tech High School. The Police-Teen Link program is a five-year-old program that provides a unique mentoring service with teens and police officers.

Over the years the Police Teen Link group has done many improv performances, such as "Out of the Blue" and "Live on Stage." The ensemble has evolved into a tougher level by performing a scripted performance.

Cast members said it was a huge difference for the group having to handle serious rehearsal time, lines to memorize, and rewrites. Yet with the history of improv shows they've done, it helped the group be prepared for a scripted performance.

"It's improv with script," said Terrance Richardson, a teen ensemble member, and freshman at Chicago International Charter School.

The group is proud of what they are doing, and have learned many things about each other. By presenting "Us or Them," the group feels that they were giving a message to the audience of how different and similar the two groups are.

"The cops are very great guys," said Clairellyn Smith, a teen ensemble member, and a freshman at Chicago Waldorf School.

The group knows that "Us or Them" has helped evolve the program to greater heights.

"Compared with previous shows, this was a lot of work. Improv is fun and easy, but script is harder," said John Regir, executive director of the theatre.



The Cast of "Us vs. Them"

NE File Photo

-Because of the success of the performance the theatre group is considering bringing the play to a variety of schools in Chicago. If "Us or Them" comes your way be sure to catch it.

The Wonders of Hats

by Jocelyn Grove, Fashion Correspondent
Columbia College Chicago



NE File Photo

According to our fashion correspondant Jocelyn Grove, hats can make a good outfit a great outfit.

How can one spice up an outfit in just a few seconds? Some may believe hats are just a cover up to a bad hair day, but actually a cap or a hat could be just what is needed to make an ordinary outfit extraordinary.

One day, I was pressed for time and grabbed a white bucket hat as I walked out the door. It was amazing the difference it made to my outfit. I was wearing cuffed jeans, brown boots and white knitted sweater, but this little hat added balance and style to what would be an ordinary outfit.

Wanting to learn more about the wonder of hats, I decided to stop by a little boutique called Presence located on North Clark Street. I had the opportunity to speak with the owner Betsy Betsyonore.

Betsyonore, who has been in the hat business for about 35 years, explained to me the difference between hats and caps. The difference between a hat and a cap is a hat goes over the head, and a cap sits on the head. Most of the time, caps have bills.

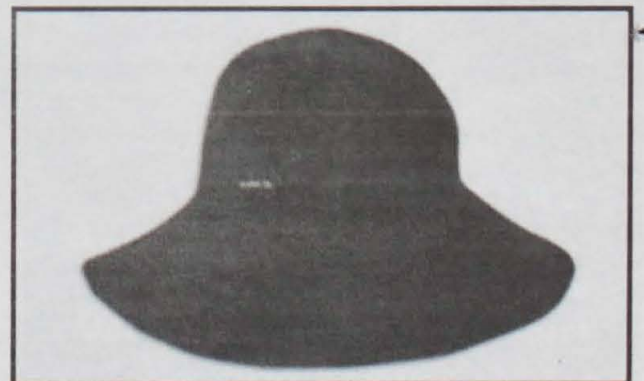
According to Betsyonore, trends for hats and caps come and go, but now the hat and cap trend is very popular, and some of the new trendy styles will be arriving at Presence and other stores for the spring.

The ivy caps and the newsboy caps with the long bills are very popular this season. These are the caps that are seen in magazines and in the movies. They can come in different colors and fabrics like leather.

Betsyonore also said that bright colors are in this season, so one can find a hat to match the brightly color dresses that will be fashionable for the coming warm weather.

When asked what hat style should be worn for particular face shapes, Betsyonore suggested to try on each style of hat to see what looks best.

Hats are easy to wear and with the wide range of styles and colors, there is definitely a hat made for everyone. Having a bad hair day, or just want to add a finishing touch to that special outfit? Just remedy the problem with a hat or a cap. With so styles to choose from, you can marvel at the wonder of hats.



NE File Photo

Feature

The Zone: The Teen Hangout Making a Difference

By Christina Watters
Sullivan High School

Have you ever wondered if there was a place where you can hang out, be yourself, get help on your homework, learn leadership skills, eat and think healthy, and explore your interests? Well, you're in luck!

The Zone, Howard Area Community Center's Youth Program building located at 1527 W. Morse Ave., is a place that offers various services to teens in the Rogers Park area.

"It's a home away from home, a safe place for youth to come and be themselves, and be supervised," says Bill Swain, Teen REACH Activities Specialist. "Our goal is to develop and help direct youth into becoming responsible young adults."

Bill, who is also an educator, always serves nutritious snacks such as tuna salad, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, and different kinds of fruit to the teens at the center. The Chicago Anti-Hunger Federation provides the snacks. Sometimes the teens plan and cook their own dinners, such as fried rice, spaghetti, and tacos.

Aside from eating healthy, teens can hang out with volunteers who tutor them in various academic subjects.

University and Truman College regularly come to The Zone to help teens do their homework. In February, about ten Northwestern University students volunteered to help students in the college application process.

The center also hosts the Teen REACH program, which offers free ACT prep classes for those who want to get ready for the test. Teens who aren't sure if they want to go to college or which college they might attend can have one-on-one conferences with program coordinators to get direction.

"I like coming here because I get inspired to do better in school," said Aaron, a freshman at Sullivan High School who goes to The Zone.

Bea Rodriguez, program coordinator of Teen REACH, says the program was developed to empower youth so that they can reach their full potential.

"We offer five core services: academic assistance, life skills, recreational/cultural activities, mentoring, and parental involvement," Rodriguez said. This school year, Teen REACH formed three new groups: SisterNet, Gay-Straight Alliance, and Computer and Communication Literacy Apprenticeship.

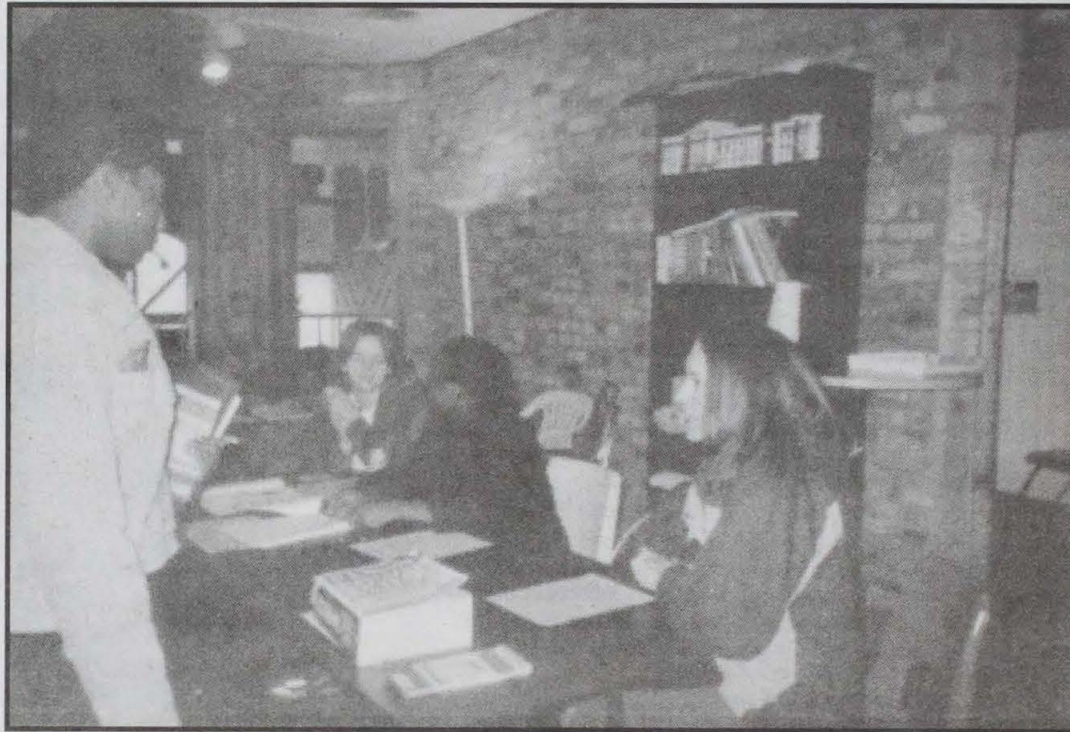
Another component of The Zone is the ICVP (Illinois Center for Violence Prevention) SisterNet Chapter, which is composed of young women who are committed to doing something positive about women's issues and different levels of violence in the Rogers Park and Chicago area.

"They earn service learning hours and learn how to systematically pursue issues of social justice," Rodriguez said. Ramissa, a junior at Sullivan High School, said she is excited about being part of ICVP.

"We're going to research issues of teen dating violence, domestic abuse, and sex education. After that, we'll write our own skits based on the research, run auditions, perform and direct the skits, then produce a video library that we'll present and donate to Chicago Public High Schools," Ramissa said.

Howard Area Community Center Teen REACH formed another new group, the Gay-Straight Alliance Club based in Sullivan High School and at The Zone.

Funded by After School Matters, the Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) is a safe place for LGBTQ youth (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning) and their heterosexual/straight friends to learn about positive identities, as well as the true meaning of diversity, social justice, and violence prevention. They regularly do homework, and participate in



Teens gather at The Zone, a teen center located in Rogers Park

NE File Photo

various workshops and recreational activities. They also get free bus cards and field trips.

"Based on needs assessments and direct service with various youth in the Rogers Park area, we believe that this program is important because it addresses a need that has long been overlooked," says Ginger Spitzer, youth programs director of Howard Area.

The Computer and Communication Literacy Apprenticeship, another program funded by After School Matters, teaches students various computer and writing skills. Their main project is the creation of a website and newsletter for Howard Area Community Center Youth Programs. They get free bus cards and field trips, earn service learning hours for creating the website, and have the opportunity to become published in newspapers such as New Expression and Rogers Park 2000. The website project will be continued and maintained at the Zone, where there is a newly-established computer lab. The computers have internet service, open to you for use whether you're working on an assignment or just surfing the net.

"It feels safe here. I like the atmosphere," says Eddie, a sophomore at Sullivan High School. Eddie regularly participates in theater workshops led by Michael Eisenstein, a senior at Evanston Township High School.

Teen REACH offers many different life skills workshops, such as HIV/AIDS/STD awareness, stress management, drug and alcohol prevention, and nutrition workshops at The Zone. They also have free field trips and activities, ranging from bowling to movies to Six Flags Great America. The Zone also houses another program called MOWD, or Mayor's Office of Workforce Development. MOWD offers workshops on how to write a resume, and how to act and dress during an interview.

The Zone is definitely an exciting place. All the opportunities are there for teens to make life better for themselves. For more information on The Zone, call (773) 381-3652.

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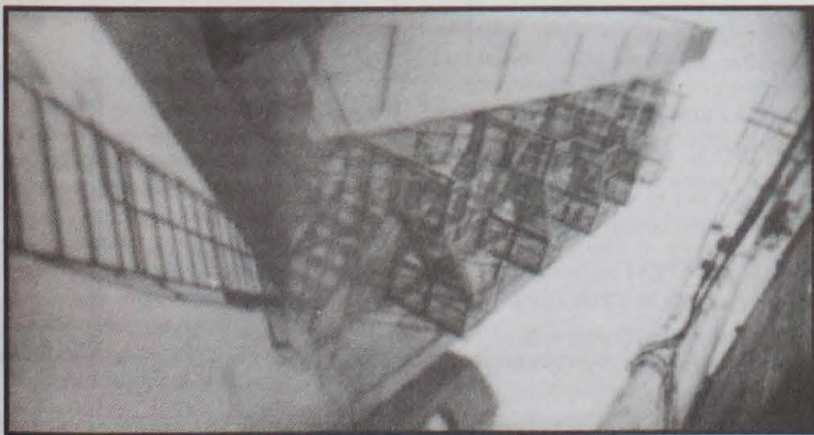
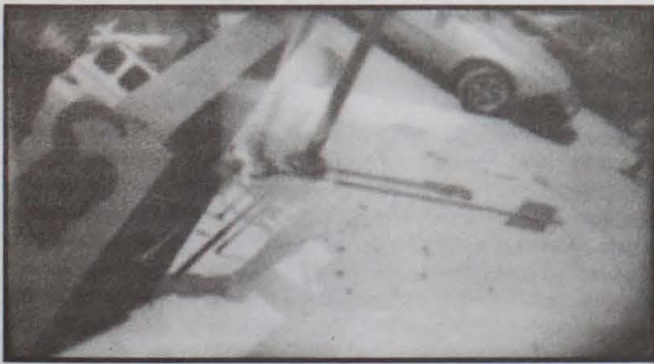
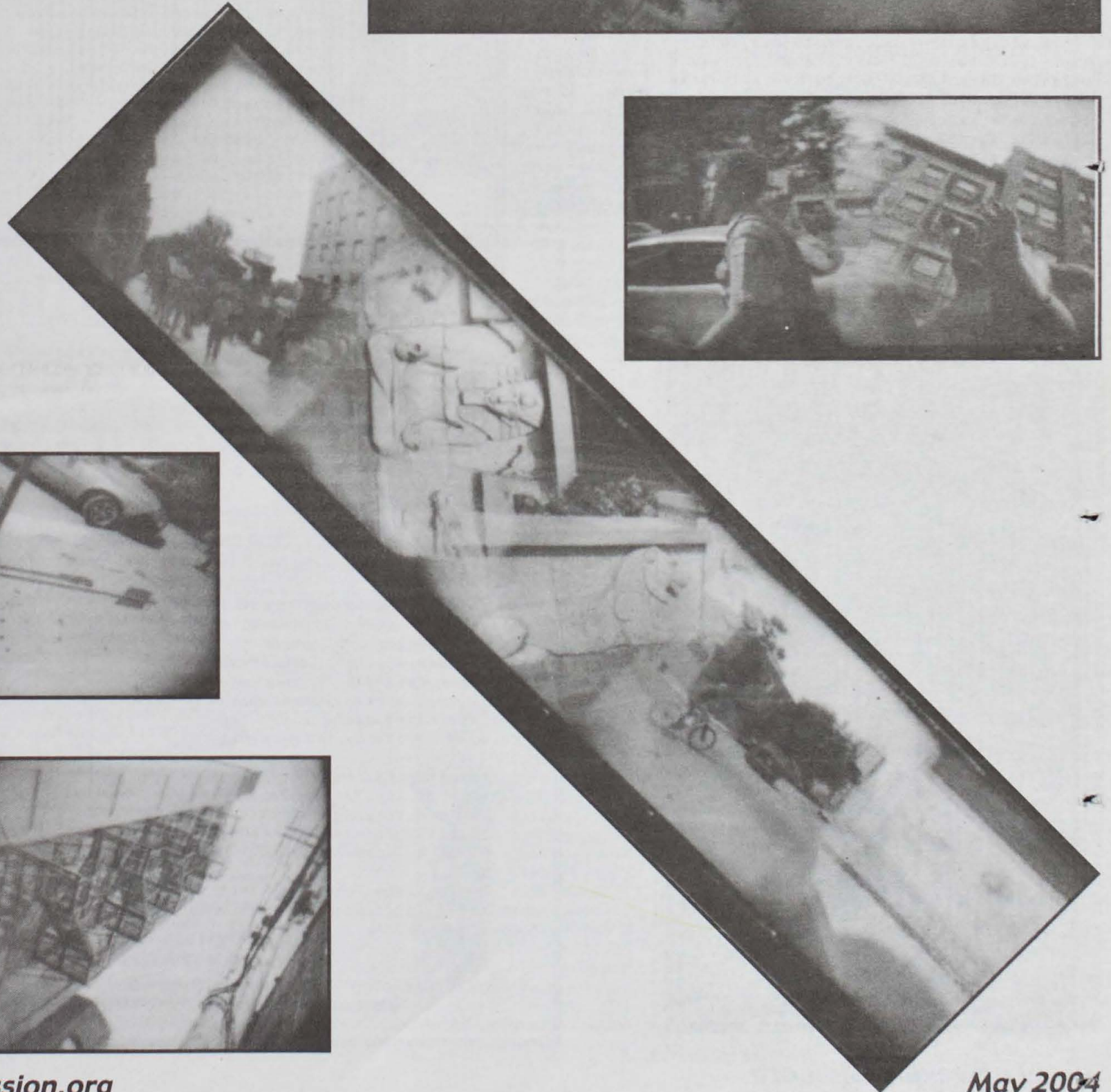
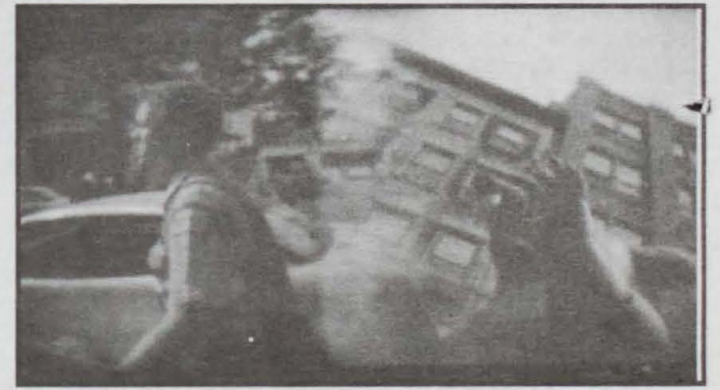


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Photo Essay

As the Day Goes By

a Photo Essay by
Carmen Ordonez
Lakeview High School





Young Chicago Authors

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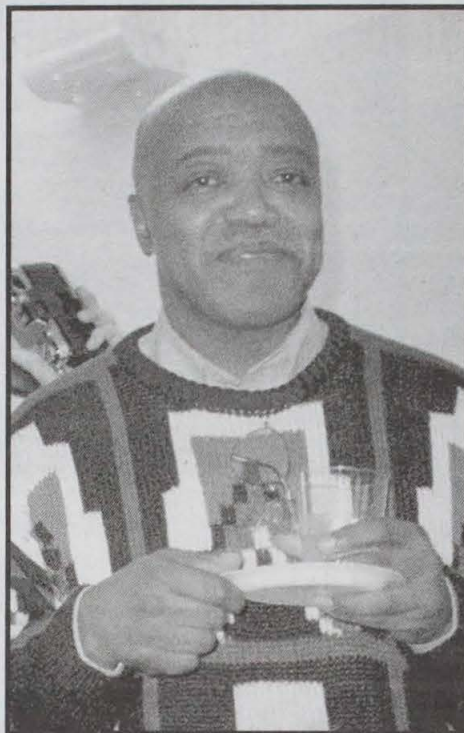
If you answered yes to all these questions, call

Young Chicago Authors
1-847-835-5430

or visit us at

www.youngchicagoauthors.org

Berton Thomas "B.T." Bryght 1944-2004



Mr. Berton Thomas Bryght, known by New Expression and Roosevelt University staff members as B.T., dedicated most of his life to helping other people, especially young people.

"He really cared about the kids. He was awesome in his glory. The school was his home away from home," said Verona Bryght of her brother.

Mr. Bryght, 59, died April 7, after battling a serious illness.

A funeral service was held on April 16 at Wallace Funeral Home in Chicago.

Internment took place at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elmwood Park.

Mr. Bryght was born Aug. 28, 1944 in Chicago. Mr. Bryght managed the computer lab at Roosevelt University's School of Communication, 18 S. Michigan Ave.

Mr. Bryght also dedicated time to working with high school journalists who were part of New Expression's Summer Urban Journalism Workshop.

"He really enjoyed working with the high school kids. I know it meant a lot to him," Verona Bryght said.

Mr. Bryght began working at Roosevelt University eight years ago upon completion of his master's degree in journalism from Roosevelt.

In 2002 Mr. Bryght received Roosevelt University's outstanding staff award and was honored by the students there that year.

In his free time, Mr. Bryght collected old and broken computers and restored them and gave them to the underprivileged.

Mr. Bryght was a decorated marine veteran, having served in the Vietnam War from August 1961 through August 1967. He was honorably discharged.

Mr. Bryght is survived by three sons, Berton T. Bryght Jr., Kevin Cooper Bryght and Rennick Thompson; a sister, Verona Bryght-Pendelton; a brother, Louis M. Bryght; two nieces, Davetta and Lauryn; four nephews, Duane, Darryl, Troy and Tracey; extended family, Elizabeth Thompson and Wendy Thompson, mother and grandmother of Rennick Thomson; and a host of other relatives and friends.

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Book Review

"College in a Can" Captures College Experience

By NE Staff

"College In a Can" offers everything a college student needs to know about life on campus and information is presented in an appealing and easily digestible format.

The 318 page book provides more than 250 lists on topics that matter most to college students - from the colleges with the best radio stations, the most luxurious dorms, and the most famous fraternities and sororities to how to pick a major, deal with difficult professors, and get the best internships.

Other topics covered include:

- The most common mistakes students make in choosing a college
- What to bring and what definitely not to bring
- How to coexist peacefully with your roommate
- Full-course meals you can make in your toaster oven
- Space-saving tips for even the smallest dorm room
- Professor profiles
- Symbols to use when taking notes
- The best college movies
- Things you can do with your diploma

With a team of college-age consultants, Sandra and Harry Choron have compiled loads of information from books, websites, newspapers, magazines, and real-life

tales of just what college life is all about. "College in a Can" is published by the Houghton Mifflin Co. and sells for \$12.

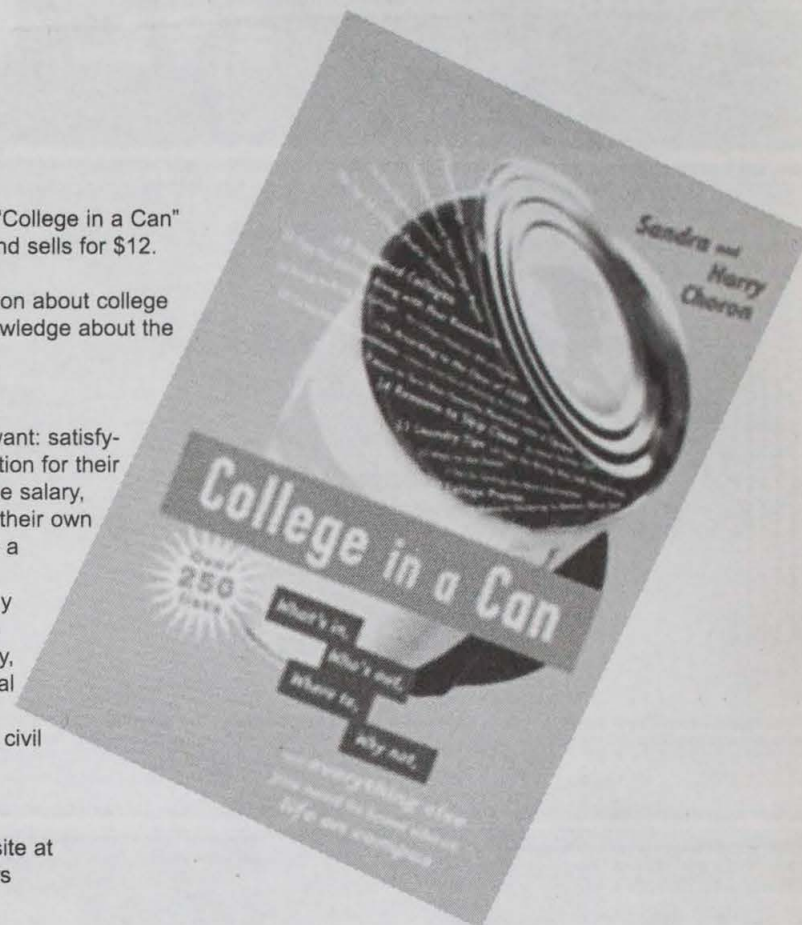
Besides good, need-to-know information about college life, College in a Can also offers trivial knowledge about the college experience.

For instance:

A list of what college students really want: satisfying career, happy marriage, college education for their kids, a job that pays more than the average salary, good friends, an interesting job, control of their own schedules, lots of money a job that makes a

The 13 most important issues currently facing the nation according to college students: war, terrorism, the national economy, AIDS, crime, moral values, drugs, biological and chemical attacks, the world economy, abortion, health care, quality of education, civil liberties.

For more information please visit the website at www.houghtonmifflinbooks.com/booksellers



For more information about the Chicagoland Regional College Program, visit our Web site at www.crcprogram.com or call us toll-free at 1-866-501-2727.

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Open House Schedule:

April 14	Wednesday	7:00 pm
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May 1	Saturday	9:00 am
May 11	Tuesday	7:00 pm
May 27	Thursday	7:00 pm
June 2	Wednesday	7:00 pm
June 15	Tuesday	7:00 pm

Open House Location:

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