

MARTIN
LUTHER
KING

DAY CELEBRATION



Princeton University's annual celebration
of Martin Luther King Jr.

January 21, 2008



José Huizar

Los Angeles City Council Member, Princeton University Trustee



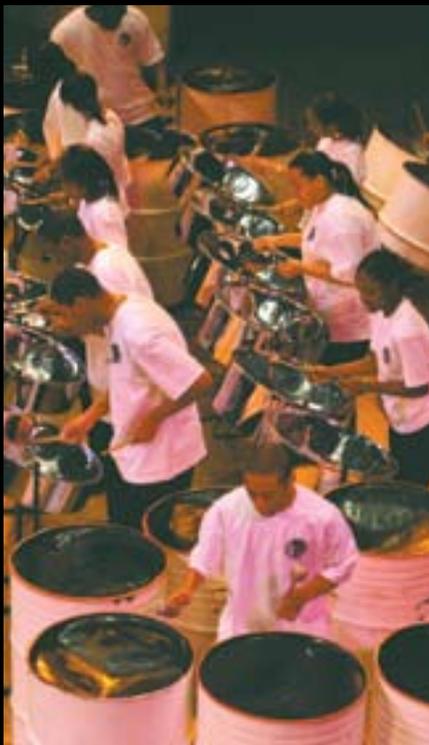
José Huizar is a Princeton trustee and graduate alumnus who is the first Latino immigrant to serve as a member of the Los Angeles City Council. Huizar earned his master's in public affairs and urban and regional planning from Princeton's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs in 1994. He was named to the University's Board of Trustees in 2005, the same year he was elected to the Los Angeles City Council. As a City Council member, Huizar's focus has included enhancing public safety, strengthening education and youth programs, and building more affordable housing and public transportation.

Previously, Huizar served two terms as president of the board of education for the Los Angeles Unified School District. During

his tenure, he oversaw plans to build more than 160 new schools within eight years, the largest school construction program in the nation's history. He also led a successful effort to reform the high school curriculum to ensure that all students, regardless of their backgrounds, will complete courses required for admission to one of California's public universities.

Huizar, who was born in Zacatecas, Mexico, and raised in Los Angeles, has received numerous awards and distinctions, including being named one of the 100 most influential Hispanics in America by *Hispanic Business* magazine. He previously served as a deputy city attorney in the Real Estate and Environmental Division of the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office and as an associate with several private law firms.

CASYM Steel Orchestra



CASYM is the acronym for the Caribbean American Sports and Cultural Youth Movement. Since its inception in 1983 as a nonprofit organization, CASYM has provided academic, recreational, social, and cultural activities for young people in the Crown Heights, Flatbush, and East Flatbush sections of Brooklyn.

Through mentoring, tutoring, homework assistance, college preparation, and other academic support services, CASYM strives to foster the quality of youth empowerment and development. Its motto "Education a Must" is evident by the provision of scholarships for every high school graduate in its program since 1990.

CASYM's mission is to provide an alternative to the "street life," and the organization works closely

with other civic, cultural, and education organizations like Crown Heights Youth Collective, Medgar Evers College, and the Caribbean American Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Inc. CASYM Steel Orchestra is made up of 90 members between the ages of 7 to 21, and it is the most visible and successful aspect of CASYM's program. The orchestra has performed throughout the United States, Canada, and the Caribbean and has performed with jazz legend Lionel Hampton, the Harlem Boys Choir, the Calypso King of the World, Mighty Sparrow, and Calypsonian David Rudder.

www.casym.com



**“Our loyalties must transcend our race,
our tribe, our class, and our nation;
and this means we must develop a world perspective.”**

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (December 24, 1967)

Martin Luther King Jr.
with Assistant Dean of
the Chapel Carl Reimers
and chapel deacons on the
steps of Chancellor Green
in 1960.

MUSICAL SELECTIONS
CASYM Steel Orchestra

GREETING
Deborah K. Blanks
Associate Dean, Office of Religious Life

REMARKS
Shirley M. Tilghman
President

INTRODUCTION OF KEYNOTE
Paige G. Floyd
Class of 2010

ADDRESS
José L. Huizar
*Princeton University Trustee,
Los Angeles City Council Member*

JOURNEY AWARD PRESENTATION
Shirley M. Tilghman

STUDENT AWARDS PRESENTATION
Lauren D. Robinson-Brown
Director of Communications

CLOSING
Deborah K. Blanks

MUSICAL SELECTIONS
CASYM Steel Orchestra

The Journey Award

Martin Luther King Jr. was a powerful advocate for human rights who became one of the most noted African Americans in history. Yet even King acknowledged that his work represented the continuation of a journey started by others before him, including some of his personal mentors and heroes such as Dr. Benjamin E. Mays, Jesus Christ, A. Philip Randolph, and Mahatma Gandhi. King also predicted that the journey would not end with his own death. He often warned that this journey was not an easy path but a courageous one. In his 1967 address, "Where Do We Go From Here?" King said: "I must confess, my friends, the road ahead

will not always be smooth. There will be still rocky places of frustration and meandering points of bewilderment. There will be inevitable setbacks here and there. There will be those moments when the buoyancy of hope will be transformed into the fatigue of despair. Our dreams will sometimes be shattered and our ethereal hopes blasted. . . . Difficult and painful as it is, we must walk on in the days ahead with an audacious faith in the future." And so, the journey continues.

The MLK Day Journey Award has been created to recognize annually members of the Princeton University faculty, staff, or student body who

best represent the continued journey to achieve King's vision for America. Awardees have demonstrated that they support King's philosophy and teachings and that they have actively contributed to the improvement of civil rights and/or human rights, particularly in manners that have positively affected the Princeton University community.

President Shirley M. Tilghman and the MLK Day Celebration Committee are pleased to honor John Templeton and Anna Almore, this year's award recipients, and are grateful for their continued efforts.

Journey Award for Special Achievement

Anna Almore



From the start of her undergraduate career, Anna Almore quickly became involved in a variety of campus and community activities, with a particular emphasis on expanding access to higher education for students from under-resourced backgrounds. Almore was a freshman mentee in the Black Student Union's Leadership and Mentoring Program (LAMP) when she started hosting and tutoring high school students in Princeton's Witherspoon neighborhood. Now, she is the senior adviser of LAMP and has hosted almost 1,000 students from the tri-state area on Princeton's campus. In 2006

she received the Peter Goldsmith Award for her efforts on behalf of LAMP and other activities. Over the last three years, she founded the Ignite Student Outreach Program, served as co-chair of the Undergraduate Student Government's U-Council and as a board member of Princeton Admission Links, and worked as a teacher's assistant for the Princeton University Preparatory Program. Her nomination described one of her particular accomplishments as planning and hosting a campus visit for 75 multicultural high school students and school officials from New Rochelle, New York, which included a panel discussion by current Princeton students and a scavenger hunt at the art museum. In her free time, Almore dances with the Black Arts Company, plays the guitar, and frequents the theater.

As her nomination noted, "Anna has been actively engaged in campus and community activities since early in her freshman year, and her efforts to reveal the 'beloved community' within Princeton and the surrounding community have been exceptional."



The Journey Award includes a commemorative plaque (above) and, for the Lifetime Service award, an engraved wristwatch (opposite page) that features concepts including: love, truth, risk, vision, dedication, strength, dignity, hope, justice, faith, courage, and community.

Biography:

Almore, a member of the Class of 2008, is an English major pursuing certificates in African American studies and American studies. Originally from Denton, Texas, she attended Midlothian High School in Virginia, and aspires to work for Teach for America before attending graduate school in sociology.

*Journey Award for Lifetime Service***John Templeton**

John Templeton has served Princeton for more than 20 years, bringing to his responsibilities a commitment to increasing access to education for historically underrepresented groups. Currently assistant dean for graduate admissions in the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, his interest in race relations was formed by unforgettable experiences and individuals. From

watching *To Kill a Mockingbird* in a Virginia movie theater in 1963 in a segregated audience to learning about the vast differences between the communities of his grandmother and her African American caregiver, who lived just 10 miles apart in California, Templeton learned that separate was not equal.

As his nomination noted, Templeton has been a “tireless advocate for the increased admission of students of color to both Princeton University as a whole, and the Woodrow Wilson School’s graduate programs in particular.” Under Templeton’s purview, during the past decade the percentage of alumni of color of the Wilson School increased by 81 percent over the previous decade. Also for the past 10-plus years, Templeton has supported the school’s annual Students and Alumni of Color Symposia, which enables current students and graduates to develop a professional support network. While at the Undergraduate Admission Office, he expanded its minority recruitment

program, in particular increasing visits made by Princeton students to diverse high schools. Templeton also is lauded by students for his mentorship.

Biography:

Templeton came to Princeton’s Undergraduate Admission Office in 1987 and directed its minority recruitment program from 1990 to 1994. He became director of graduate admissions at the Wilson School in 1994 and has led the admissions process for master’s and doctoral degree programs and played a prominent role in the school’s Junior Summer Institute from 1994 to 2003. Born in Wisconsin and raised in California, Templeton majored in history at Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington, and earned a master’s degree in education at Stanford University. He worked in secondary schools for 12 years before joining the Princeton community.

Journey Awards

2007

None Awarded

2006

Albert J. Raboteau, for Lifetime Service

2005

Robert K. Durkee, for Lifetime Service

Dylan H. Tatz, for Special Achievement



First Prize Winner



Sophia
Bernardi

grade 4, Princeton Day School, Princeton

Second Prize Winner



Charlotte
Zaininger

grade 6, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton

POSTER CONTEST

Grades 4–6

First Prize	Sophia Bernardi, grade 4, Princeton Day School, Princeton
Second Prize	Charlotte Zaininger, grade 6, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
Third Prize	Colin Frawley, grade 6, John Witherspoon Middle School, Princeton
	Spencer Reynolds III, grade 6, Princeton Academy of the Sacred Heart, Princeton
Honorable Mention	Kirstin Nicole Carter, grade 6, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
	Hilde de Regt, grade 6, John Witherspoon Middle School, Princeton
	Erik Ferenczy, grade 6, Readington Middle School, Whitehouse Station
	Lewis Gaskin, grade 6, Princeton Academy of the Sacred Heart, Princeton
	Kayla Jones, grade 6, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
	Sarina Kaplan, grade 5, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
	Christopher Rosemond, grade 5, Incarnation-St. James School, Trenton

ESSAY CONTEST

Grades 7–8

First Prize	Lyndon Lopera, grade 8, Princeton Academy of the Sacred Heart, Princeton
Second Prize	Taylor Filippini, grade 7, Readington Middle School, Whitehouse Station
Third Prize	Kathryn Karmazyn, grade 7, St. Paul School, Princeton
	Summer Ramsay-Burrough, grade 7, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
	Elisa Vera, grade 7, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
Honorable Mention	Brooke Ferenczy, grade 8, Readington Middle School, Whitehouse Station
	Justen Haynes, grade 8, Link Community School, Newark
	Cara Hume, grade 8, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
	Jack Orłowski-Scherer, grade 8, Princeton Academy of the Sacred Heart, Princeton
	Adithi Rajagopalan, grade 8, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
	Olivia Wiles, grade 8, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
	David Xue, grade 7, John Witherspoon Middle School, Princeton

Grades 9–10

First Prize	Bina Bansinath, grade 10, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
	Sophia Ginez, grade 10, South Brunswick High School, Monmouth Junction
Second Prize	Justin Miles Herron, grade 10, Montclair High School, Montclair
Third Prize	Meg Baker, grade 10, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
Honorable Mention	Caroline Collins, grade 10, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
	Sasank Isola, grade 10, Princeton High School, Princeton
	A. Brandon King, grade 9, Cherokee High School, Marlton
	Natalie Pontillo, grade 10, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
	Robyn Sellers, grade 9, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
	Prachy Shahi, grade 10, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
	Meredith Souto, grade 9, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton

Grades 11–12

First Prize	Kate Wiles, grade 11, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
Second Prize	Yassamine Ebadat, grade 12, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
Third Prize	Abigail Borah, grade 11, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
	Michael McCarthy, grade 11, Princeton High School, Princeton
Honorable Mention	Roxana Amirahmadi, grade 11, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
	Kate Baker, grade 12, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
	Nicole Blumenkehl, grade 11, Morristown-Beard School, Morristown
	Erin Byrne, grade 11, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
	Laura Engshuber, grade 12, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
	Andrea Kravitz, grade 11, Villa Victoria Academy, Trenton
	Clare Wiles, grade 12, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton

VIDEO CONTEST

Grades 7–12

First Prize	Alex and Izzy Kasdin, grade 10, Princeton High School, Princeton
Second Prize	Abigail Scott, grade 7, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
Third Prize	Sasha Chhabra, grade 8, John Witherspoon Middle School, Princeton
Honorable Mention	Ashley DelleFave, grade 8, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
	Claire Felten, grade 7, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
	Sarah Horton, grade 10, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
	Cara Souto, grade 7, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton
	Mackenzie Stricklin, grade 8, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton

Hundreds of New Jersey students helped commemorate the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. by submitting original essays, posters, slide presentations, songs, and videos. For 2008, we asked students to focus on immigration and human rights. More information is available at www.princeton.edu/mlk. A sampling of essay excerpts follows:

Grades 7–8

LYNDON LAPERA

grade 8, Princeton Academy of the Sacred Heart, Princeton

First Prize

The wind seemed to gust away from him with each word. The park seemed to echo back each sentence that escaped his lips. . . . “The Rio Grande is no Statue of Liberty, no, but a Berlin Wall. It is no beacon of hope, but another obstacle for those who seek liberty and prosperity. We are immigrants ourselves; on this majestic plain of Earth we call America. Yet, we refuse to share what we have ripped away from our Native American brothers. What have we become, if we cannot share the freedoms we say we would die to protect?”

TAYLOR FILIPPINI

grade 7, Readington Middle School, Whitehouse Station

Second Prize

As much as the heart needs passion and the lungs need air, as much as the mind craves enlightenment, so does the human soul yearn for freedom. . . . As Henry Wadsworth Longfellow so eloquently remarked, “One half of the world must sweat and groan that the other half may dream.” Well, I tell you today that we are all entitled to have a dream.

KATHRYN KARMAZYN

grade 7, St. Paul School, Princeton

Third Prize

Imagine, living in a place where being stoned to death for practicing your personal religious beliefs was all too common.

Imagine, living in a place where you were not able to feed yourself or your family, and had no way of starting a new career.

Imagine, that the only medical care your children received came from untrained doctors who had no vaccines or medical equipment.

Imagine, brothers and sisters, living the rest of your life like this and knowing that your precious children would face the same bleak future . . .

SUMMER RAMSAY-BURROUGH

grade 7, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton

Third Prize

Those who wait in silence for their freedom need a voice. . . . Brothers and sisters, I believe that this must be fixed. These people who have traveled thousands of miles for rights and hopes must be given a chance. Together we have conquered racism and sexism. Now we must help those immigrants who depend on Americans like us. . .

ELISA VERA

grade 7, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton

Third Prize

We will not have fixed the cruel injustice of racism until we fix the cruel injustices of excluding certain nationalities just because of poverty, war, and population. . . . Fear is one of our many steel walls that prevent rational and moral thought. Many in this country are truly afraid of letting others within our borders, for fear of terrorism and crime. This is a starting point on a path to reclusive minds and well-kept secrets that only cloud a country’s vision. Yet we cannot seem to look at the benefits of letting others within our borders. Like more original thoughts, and new dreams and ideas.

BROOKE FERENCZY

grade 8, Readington Middle School, Whitehouse Station

Honorable Mention

Make up your mind, America! Either accept those hard-working illegal immigrants by allowing them to become legal, productive citizens or round them up, tell them that the ideal of freedom is available only to a select few, and send them home.

JUSTEN HAYNES

grade 8, Link Community School, Newark

Honorable Mention

It was sad to see how strongly they opposed the settling of immigrants. These were innocent people looking to live in a better place. Dr. King made that very clear but they continued to yell out and chant, even before listening to him speak. . . . I witnessed a protester, who was against immigration, throw away his sign to join a group of immigrant participants. At that moment I knew that Dr. King’s voice was heard and strongly listened to. It just goes to show you that one man can change the minds of many people.

CARA HUME

grade 8, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton

Honorable Mention

We all search for freedom, the hidden treasure of our souls. Where do we come from? Do we, Americans, not come from different countries all around the globe, if we trace our roots? Let our brothers, with whom we share our very blood, unearth their freedom and come to the United States of America to discover their life happiness if they want to!

JACK ORLOWSKI-SCHERER

grade 8, Princeton Academy of the Sacred Heart, Princeton

Honorable Mention

Immigration is a wave. It is a giant wave that barrels people towards an alien and rocky shore. Some people choose to try to catch that wave. Most people, however, are caught in the wave and are swept away to sea to brave the storms and try to make a crossing to the other side. These people need our help more than anyone else does.

ADITHI RAJAGOPALAN
grade 8, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton

Honorable Mention

Immigration is a complex issue and at its core it deals with the multitude of emotions linked with the human spirit. . . . In a world that is becoming increasingly smaller with free trade and greater access to knowledge, the time is not far off that boundaries will become meaningless and may only exist in our minds.

OLIVIA WILES
grade 8, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton

Honorable Mention

We must allow our rights and our ways of life to be the life for others. We must live in justice and live the goals that we tell others to heed. This is the way to triumph over the discrimination of our ancestors. I have a dream that all the people of the world will live together, as the one group of people that we truly are.

DAVID XUE
grade 7, John Witherspoon Middle School, Princeton

Honorable Mention

Immigration has always been important to the history of the United States, from the late 1600s to even now. Without it, the Americas would be very desolate and empty. . . . Immigration allows us to become more accepting of others' race and religion.

Grades 9–10

BINA BANSINATH
grade 10, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton

First Prize

Today, life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness are piggy backed upon compromises and thus are losing the succulence of their intent. Every American is hyphenated. The pioneers of this country immigrated to establish our nation. But now, we are unable to foster the same promises to potential immigrants and to those who are considered as undocumented aliens. If we wish to cement ourselves in the pillars of hypocrisy, then leave it be that we annul our acknowledgment of the ravenous lives of those who live in my land and your land. If we wish to do so by all means continue to barricade the acceptance of those Homers which long for asylum in this land. But I have faith in the people of America . . .

I have a dream that one day this nation will cease this furtive virtual colonization and dawn to the hope of extending its harbors out to those in need. We are a country which holds an appellation of truth, justice, and honor—we are a nation who also hides the bodies of greed, deceit, and facile instinct in our Fort Knox. Let not the flame on Lady Liberty's torch be diminished by the gusts of cold air from our flawed immigration policies. We are a strong nation, we shall overcome, through times of oppression and darkness we have held a tenacious grasp on brotherhood and the principles of a good heart. Let the mind and soul liberate us from these binding acts and let us embrace and provide for those who make us who we are today.

SOPHIA GINEZ
grade 10, South Brunswick High School, Monmouth Junction

First Prize

“So long as the United States of America seeks to enrich herself on the backs of developing countries, particularly those in Central and South America, our borders will continue to be breached by teeming masses yearning for economic freedom,” he warned yesterday . . . “it is incumbent upon me to speak for those who have no voice, regardless of citizenship or legal status, for my brotherhood with them does not proceed from any human document.”

JUSTIN MILES HERRON
grade 10, Montclair High School, Montclair

Second Prize

It is preposterous that a nation founded by immigrants is denying equal rights to other immigrants. It was the colonists' hope of freedom and prosperity, which propelled them, like mighty arrows flung from Orion's taunt (sic) bow, across the Atlantic Ocean. It is the same spirit for freedom and prosperity, which motivates our Latino brothers and sisters to cross the Rio Grande into America, like the Israelites crossing the River Jordan in search of the PROMISED LAND.

MEG BAKER
grade 10, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton

Third Prize

He stands erect with his eyes forward, a tranquil assurance etched across his weathered face; a face that has conquered adversity, and remains prepared to take on another battle. The people gathered to see Dr. King have many identities. They are dark, young, fair, scared, old, excited, grey, weary. But as all their eyes look towards King, standing above with his arms outstretched, they are expectant, hopeful. The microphone crackles and Dr. King begins. “Dear people, I come to you under this beautiful summer sky to ask you questions, to plead with you to look deep into your soul.” His first words are echoed by the translators alongside into Spanish, French, and Mandarin; they repeat the words hurriedly with great fervor.

CAROLINE COLLINS
grade 10, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton

Honorable Mention

I am a man fighting for peace and equality between the races of this nation. So what kind of man would I be if I decided I was against immigration? I would be a hypocrite. I stand before you now, my friends, to tell you that if we have a dream of America as a place where all are accepted and everyone is equal, we will never achieve it without immigration. Our country needs immigrants to come and show us what true acceptance is.

SASANK ISOLA
grade 10, Princeton High School, Princeton

Honorable Mention

The importation of Eastern ways of thinking into this country could make life much less hectic, and much more relaxing. Eastern concepts of meditation and yoga have been proven to reduce stress, hypertension, and increase life expectancy. . . . America itself was built by immigrants, run by the children of immigrants, and its future is in the hands of immigrants. Allowing them and their ideology to come to this country is the best thing that can be done to make America, as well as the world, a better place to live in.

A. BRANDON KING

grade 9, Cherokee High School, Marlton

Honorable Mention

Dr. King’s own words summed up in his “Beyond Vietnam” speech tell us his stance on humanity and fair treatment for all: “. . . Beyond the calling of race or nation or creed is the vocation of sonship and brotherhood. . . . We are called to speak for the weak, for the voiceless, for the victims of our nation, for those it calls ‘enemy,’ for no document from human words can make these humans less our brothers.”

NATALIE PONTILLO

grade 10, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton

Honorable Mention

Our institutions and our nation that we live in happily today were built on the backs of immigrants. So why now do we turn our backs on the modern day immigrants when we ourselves are the children of those who had nowhere to go, and needed a place to call their home? How can we feel so dispassionately towards our fellow man, when the memories of our own struggle and desperation to find a place to call home are so fresh in our history?

ROBYN SELLERS

grade 9, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton

Honorable Mention

I put my notes in front of me and started to write my speech. The hours raced by, tears of sweat ran down my head. I often felt like giving up, but I kept reminding myself that great change couldn’t be reached without great endeavor. I am a slave to my pen; it forces me to write words that will change lives. With a conclusion I broke free. My work was not yet done. I soon would become a soldier of war. It would not be people I would kill but instead injustice. I shall use my greatest weapon, my voice.

PRACHY SHAHI

grade 10, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton

Honorable Mention

He raised his hands and spoke. He spoke of injustice and discrimination. He spoke of what he saw from day to day. He told us what he had to live through and endure. And then he did something no one had before. He spoke of unity. Telling us what he wanted to see, change. He wanted to see people of different ethnicities collaborating, seeing their children playing with each other and learning.

MEREDITH SOUTO

grade 9, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton

Honorable Mention

I stood among a mosaic of hearts; a thousand different stories unified under a mutual vision. . . . So what is the American heart? It’s not a fearful heart, or a hateful heart. It’s not a closed heart or a racist heart. It’s not a brutal heart or a rejecting heart. It’s not a citizen’s heart or an immigrant’s heart. Standing in the rally I realized, that the American heart is the one that is broken from realization, and broken open wide enough to let everyone in.

Grades 11–12

KATE WILES

grade 11, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton

First Prize

People who enter our country with a sincere desire to better themselves are labeled “aliens,” “illegal immigrants,” and “usurpers.” They are accused of stealing American jobs and subjected to raids and forced expulsion. These people, humans, are entitled to seek their own betterment and the betterment of their children through the American system. America is a beacon, an icon of hope, and yet our laws are still xenophobic and unjust. I appeal, therefore, not to our laws, but to a higher authority.

I am not an illegal immigrant myself, having been born and raised in Atlanta, Georgia, amidst a loving family. Nevertheless, I still know some of the harsh reality of being denied equal wages, disregarded for my beliefs, and disenfranchised because of my appearance.

YASSAMINE EBADAT

grade 12, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton

Second Prize

The culture change was a slap in the face. I could no longer walk into our corner bakery and ask for a dozen noon gerdoo or attend Friday prayer in our local mosque. I was no longer able to communicate as the strong woman I once was in Iran. The language barrier brought confusion and isolation. I had lost my voice. It is now 30 years after I fled from my culture to start a new life, that I understand what my mission is, and has always been. “Freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed.”

ABIGAIL BORAH

grade 11, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton

Third Prize

Citizenship is recognition beyond political and economic privileges; it is an incalculable sense of belonging. But to achieve citizenship, one must bear the burden of responsibility: paying taxes, military service, and obedience of laws. Should people who fail to accept the responsibilities of being a citizen reap the benefits granted to those who do? All people are entitled to certain inalienable rights, including the consideration of each individual’s dignity. Regardless of a person’s citizenship, he or she deserves the same “life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness” as all legal Americans, even if that means that paying citizens bear the financial burden of illegal aliens.

MICHAEL McCARTHY

grade 11, Princeton High School, Princeton

Third Prize

We were blessed with a bountiful nation, filled with nature’s wonders. Who are we to keep such a natural wonder to ourselves? Who are we to say to newcomers to our country that the message on the Statute of Liberty does not apply to them? . . . If we do not allow all Americans, immigrant or otherwise, the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, then we have reneged on the pact we made when we put our Constitution into effect. We will have defamed our image in the world’s eye, and we will have scorned the ideals of our founding fathers.

ROXANA AMIRAHMADI

grade 11, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton

Honorable Mention

Today I will begin by deeply appreciating the different faces I see before me, the faces of the new America. In each face, I see not just the story of a faithful taxpayer, a Republican or a Democrat, but also the story of a dazzling civilization, an ancient tradition of thought, a proud culture, and a hard decision to leave a beloved birth-country. Whether we are conscious of this or not, we are the descendents of brave, ambitious immigrants.

As Americans, we are as diverse as the grand world beyond our borders.

KATE BAKER

grade 12, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton

Honorable Mention

We've developed a fear of non-conformity; the idea that that which is different is dangerous has permeated our culture. This growing unwelcome and exclusion is being cultivated within American borders, making the nation and its people un-American in principle.

NICOLE BLUMENKEHL

grade 11, Morristown-Beard School, Morristown

Honorable Mention

Our nation was built on immigrants seeking opportunity and freedom. By acting as if these rights are simply our prerogative and cannot be offered to others, our nation has failed in its original purpose. . . . As a nation founded to escape persecution, political turmoil, and an infringement on rights, it is our duty to provide a safe-haven for the oppressed. Just as many of our ancestors, such as my own, traveled here to start a new life under better conditions, a higher standard of living, and endless opportunities, others should be allowed to test their success in the melting pot of America.

ERIN BYRNE

grade 11, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton

Honorable Mention

Let the justice promised by our forefathers be permanently instituted. Let liberty bring inspiration to all present and future immigrants to the United States of America. And let equality—equality more than all—let equality ring from the highest mountains and flow through the lowest valleys. Let it blow through the winds and roll through the oceans.

Let it percolate into every crevice of this nation, and bring peace and hope to the future of our nation and its people.

LAURA ENGSUBER

grade 12, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton

Honorable Mention

“We must be kind to those without a country.” Well, that certainly didn't happen in my case. “We must carry out the American dream—liberty and equality for all.” Oh, definitely. Being teased for one's inability to pronounce English words was a crushing experience for an eight-year old who hadn't been in the country for more than a month. Worse yet, being told I was not only not an American, but I was no longer a German either, in fact I was nothing, has haunted me since.

ANDREA KRAVITZ

grade 11, Villa Victoria Academy, Trenton

Honorable Mention

Intolerance and deluded biases directed towards immigrants, concluded Dr. King, are unnecessary evils that prevent the true goodness of the human race from shining through. As I walked out of the arena that afternoon, I realized that while it was ultimately everyone's responsibility to exude the sunlight of Dr. King's message in their lives, it was also the presence of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., as the ever present wind continuing to blow away the clouds of doubt and discrimination, that had made way for that true goodness that he spoke of to shine through us all.

CLARE WILES

grade 12, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton

Honorable Mention

“The United States has a moral duty,” he said, “to aid those who are suffering, to facilitate pathways for those who wish to rise from the depths of poverty to the great American dream.”

This year, a website created by John Moore, a teacher in Texas, was used as a reference to help students think about how Dr. King would have discussed immigration issues. Several of Mr. Moore's students, from Besteiro Middle and Simon Rivera High School in Brownsville, have firsthand experience about immigration and shared their stories of compassion, triumph, and sorrow with the MLK Committee. We thank them all for their contributions.

Abigail Cabrera, grade 8

Mayra Flores, grade 9

Blanca Gonzalez, grade 8

Melissa Guerra, grade 8

Yesenia Martinez, grade 8

Alexa Karina Mireles, grade 9

Vanessa Trevino, grade 8

The MLK Day student contests are open to all 4th to 12th graders in New Jersey. Students may submit entries as individuals or through their schools or community organizations. Information on next year's contests will be posted at www.princeton.edu/mlk, so please check the site periodically for updates. Generally, contest submissions are due in November, before Thanksgiving.

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