

HERE THERE and EVERYWHERE

A FSYP Newsletter for Kids & Teens

Summer 2017



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A special thanks to McGrath Real Estate Services for their generous support of this newsletter



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YOUTH AWARDS 2017



Congratulations to the winners!

THE FSYP 2017 ACADEMIC MERIT AWARD WINNERS

Sponsored by STG



1ST PLACE

Isaac Burkhalter

Tokyo, Japan



Isaac Burkhalter graduated from Saint Maur International School in Tokyo, Japan. He will attend the University of Virginia in the fall where he plans to study Physics or Engineering. Isaac is a Washington Wizards fan, so he may have an opportunity to attend a game this season when he's not attending games at UVA. Isaac balances out his academics with sports and music.

2ND PLACE (TIE)

Marianna Karagiannis

Washington D.C.



Marianna Karagiannis graduated from Jeb Stuart High School in Falls Church, Virginia. She will attend the University of Chicago and likely pursue a degree in Physics with a concentration in Astrophysics or Geophysical sciences. This NASA hopeful enjoys ballet, volunteering with the Key Club, and participating in Science Olympiad and Quiz Bowl. Marianna's biggest challenge may be smuggling her pet guinea pig, Cocoa, into her dorm room this fall!

2ND PLACE (TIE)

Vidalia Freeman

Doha, Qatar



Vidalia Freeman graduated from the American School of Doha this year and will attend Utah State University this fall. She plans to study Economics and Actuarial Science. Vidalia grew up in England and Wyoming and has been posted to Brasilia and Doha. Vidalia enjoys reading, piano, and keeping her Portuguese sharp in her spare time.

THE 2016 COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS WINNERS

Sponsored by Clements International



Mackenzie Scheer PLUM (Please Learn and Understand Menstruation)

Kathmandu, Nepal



Mackenzie Scheer is 16 years old and a rising high school junior. While posted in Kathmandu, Nepal, Mackenzie founded PLUM (Please Learn and Understand Menstruation). Mackenzie's efforts have helped local Nepalese girls learn and take control of their reproductive health, and provided

a solution to increase school attendance rates for female Nepalese students. She will transfer to Bishkek International School where she hopes to continue a similar service project while posted there. Mackenzie has also been posted to Kigali, Rwanda; Muscat, Oman; Dublin, Ireland; San Salvador, El Salvador; and Warsaw, Poland. Mackenzie asserts: "Basketball is by far my favorite sport, but I also play volleyball, soccer, and swim."

Mackenzie also finds time to participate in the Spanish Club, play trombone in band, and perform in several theatrical performances.



Ryan Brown Community Service

The Hague, Netherlands



Ryan Brown is 13 years old, and just completed 7th grade at the American School of The Hague. Ryan is very active in his community. He serves as a Boy Scout, in various community service activities and Student Council. Ryan is quite the athlete, participating in swimming, break dancing, track and field, and cross country to name a few. Ryan is also fun-loving and facilitated a cross cultural break dancing event with refugees placed in Holland.



THE 2017 FSYP ART CONTEST WINNERS

Sponsored by the State Department Federal Credit Union



“There is More to Me Than What You See”

1ST PLACE, 5-8 YEARS OLD

Akeela Valdes

Yerevan, Armenia



Akeela Valdes is 9 years old, and is a rising 4th grader at QSI in Yerevan. Akeela has wanted to be an artist/painter since the age of 3. The FSYP art contest has given her an opportunity to explore her love of art, and she spends several weeks completing her work every year. This year she was inspired by the techniques that she learned from the art books of two famous painters. The leaves in the background come from Martiros Saryan, an Armenian painter. The bird in the background comes from Ito Jakuchu, a Japanese painter. Akeela asserts that when the treasure box opens, you can see more of who she is.



The Treasure in Me by Akeela Valdes





My Emotions by Noemi Valdes

2ND PLACE, 5-8 YEARS OLD

Noemi Valdes

Yerevan, Armenia



Noemi Valdes is 6 years old. This rising first grader attends QSI in Yerevan. Noemi has lived most of her life overseas. Her previous posts were Havana and Osaka. Noemi took several weeks to finish her piece. She put lots of effort on drawing a main "Me" at the center as well as all of her facial expressions.

She spent a lot of time thinking of the best way to color the background as well. Noemi is acquiring great qualities and skills through her art. Noemi states that she has many emotions that most people don't see. She does a great job depicting her emotions in this piece.

3RD PLACE (5-8 YEARS OLD)

Lydia Bitner

Athens, Greece



Lydia Bitner is 7 years old and has completed 1st grade at Campion School in Athens, Greece. She enjoys tennis, piano, jumping on the trampoline, rollerblading, and playing with family and friends. Her art shows the

first letter of her name, and it is illuminated to show the things that she likes a lot. Take a closer look...there is more to Lydia than what you see....



Luggage Labels by Lydia Bitner

1ST PLACE, 9-12 YEARS OLD

Solana Torreano

Bogota, Columbia



Solana Torreano is 9 years old, and a rising 4th grader at Renfort School in Bogota, Columbia. Solana is not only artistic, but also multilingual. She is fluent in Spanish, English, Russian, and Ukranian. She says of her art "This work is



Favorite Fun to Have Fun With by Solana Torreano

very important to me, because I love art. Moving helps you learn. Sometimes it is hard, but it is interesting. You have new experiences, you make new friends. It is amazing to be able to go to different places."

2ND PLACE, 9-12 YEARS OLD

Sophie Nave

Fairfax, VA



Sophie Nave is a rising 7th grader at Lanier Middle School in Virginia. When she's not creating art, she is creating music as a flutist in her school's band. Sophie has been posted to Brussels, Tokyo, and Naples. Sophie asserts that her artwork depicts where she has lived and the things that are close to her heart.



Eyes on the World by Sophie Nave

3RD PLACE (TIE), 9–12 YEARS OLD

Francie Silva

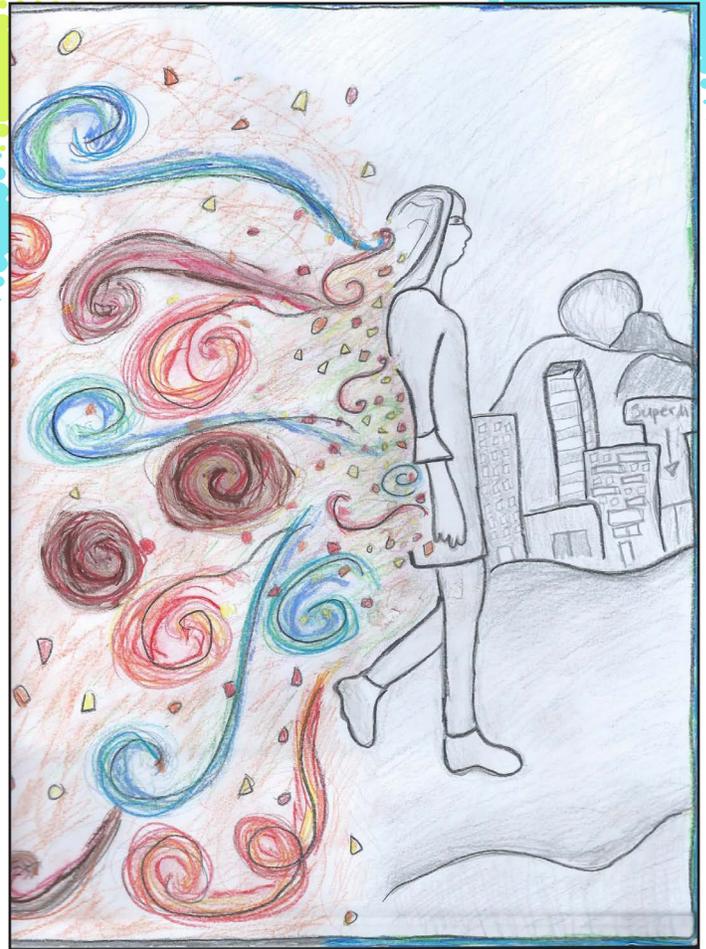
Montevideo, Uruguay



My name is Francie Silva, and I am 12 years old. I just finished my 6th grade at the Uruguayan American School (UAS) in Montevideo, Uruguay, where I reside with my family. I have twin brothers, David and Carlo who are 16, and my parents are Juan Carlos and Kathleen Silva. My father started

his Foreign Service career in Paris, France 13 years ago, hence my name Francie. They then moved to Washington, D.C., where I was born, and served together in Pretoria, South Africa; Caracas, Venezuela; Belgrade, Serbia; and now Montevideo. My hobbies are Ballet, Modern Dance, playing guitar and singing, and watching movies. I love drawing and also playing with our cat Mario. Lately, I am having a lot of fun making slime. I am also interested in anything to do with science and the environment.

In Francie’s art she is walking on a road, and everything visible is black, and white, and dull. Francie, however reveals the color and creativity that is inside her.



The Hidden Me by Francie Silva

3RD PLACE (TIE), 9–12 YEARS OLD

Nathaniel Babcock

Oslo, Norway



Nathaniel Babcock is 10 years old, and we assume with almost certainty that he has lived the majority of his life overseas. He’s been posted to Romania, Fiji, and Ghana. Nathaniel is a rising 5th grader at Oslo International School in Oslo, Norway. A guitarist and singer, Nathaniel is musical as well as artistic. He rounds out his hobbies with sports (swimming and skiing), and reading. Speaking of his art,

Nathaniel states, “When you first see me, you see a quiet boy, but there is much more. I have a lot of dreams and goals that I am working on to achieve some day.”



Me My Dreams and My Passions by Nathaniel Babcock

1ST PLACE , 13-18 YEARS OLD

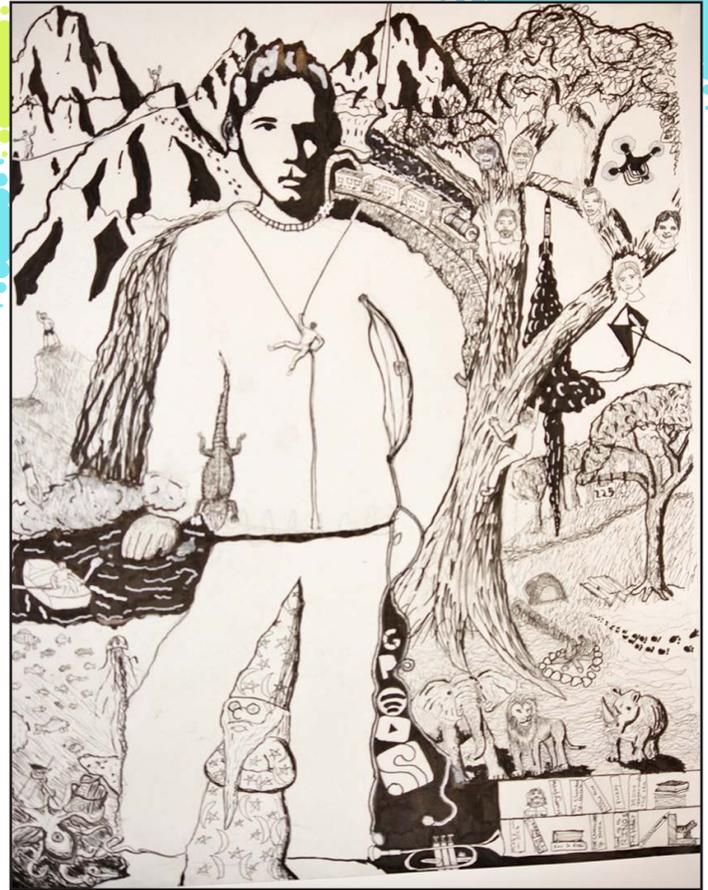
Jacob Newman

Washington D.C.

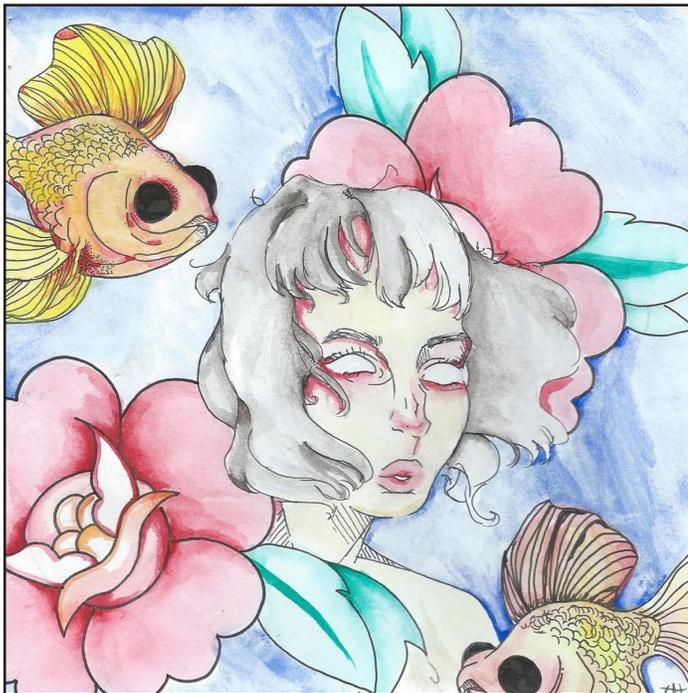


Jacob Newman is 13 years old and completed 7th grade at Parkville Middle School in Maryland. In addition to art, Jacob enjoys a wide range of activities like skateboarding, reading, rock climbing, and metal working. He has been posted to Swaziland, Sweden, and Dominican Republic. Jacob's artwork shows his goal to explore the

idea of negative space. Jacob states, "In this piece, things that inspire me and that I love quite literally form who I am."



Seeing the Positive in the Negative by Jacob Newman



Fish Among the Flowers by Celia Miranda

2ND PLACE (TIE), 13-18 YEARS OLD

Celia Kekai Miranda

Tegucigalpa, Honduras



Celia Miranda is 16 years old and completed the 10th grade at the American School of Tegucigalpa. Celia is artistic, expressing herself through guitar, singing, art, poems, and photography. Celia is proud of her multi-cultural heritage. She is Mexican-American as well as Hawaiian.

She enjoys time with her dog Kona that she adopted in Honduras. Celia's describes her art piece as seeming to be composed of random images, but if you look closer you can make connections.

2ND PLACE (TIE), 13-18 YEARS OLD

Emily Netherland

Bridgetown, Barbados



Emily Netherland is a rising 11th grader at The Codrington International School of Barbados. She has lived in Barbados since 2015, and enjoys a number of activities including the Interact Club and yearbook staff. She enjoys studying chemistry, biology, and art. Emily's favorite outdoor activity in Barbados is scuba diving, and she recently completed her Advanced Open Water Diver certification.

Emily was born in Schweinfurt, Germany, and has since lived in six U.S. cities as well as a posting in Quito, Ecuador. She is the daughter of Louis and Jamie Netherland, and a big sister to Jack Netherland, who is 11 years old and also attends The Codrington School. Her father is a Foreign Area Officer with the United States



Diving Deep by Emily Netherland

Army, and her mother serves as a background investigator in support of the Diplomatic Security Service.

Emily's art depicts her engaged in one of her favorite hobbies, scuba diving. This picture symbolizes how Emily feels that there is more beneath the surface than above.

3RD PLACE, 13-18 YEARS OLD

Delight Grimes

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



Delight Grimes is 15 years old and has just completed 10th grade. Delight is currently posted to Hermosillo and is homeschooled. Delight states, "Being in the Foreign Service grows many attributes in a person's life that you can't see but helps that person learn and mature... like a garden."



The Unseen Garden by Delight Grimes

FSYF ESSAY CONTEST 2017

Sponsored by McGrath Real Estate Services



Middle School Essay Contest Winners

1ST PLACE

Sophia Bitner Athens, Greece

Sophia Bitner, age 12, attends Champion School in Athens, Greece. She is in the 6th grade. She is the daughter of Steven and Katie Bitner and has 3 siblings: Braden, Annika, and Lydia. She has previously lived in Warsaw, San Jose, Washington DC and Jerusalem. Sophie's favorite thing to do in her free time is read. She also enjoys participating on the Debate team at school, and performing in theater productions, singing, and playing guitar and piano.



The Arch

by Sophia Bitner

My family takes a lot of road trips. Most of them take us somewhere exciting, even exotic. So, when my parents announced we were going to Jordan, I had mixed feelings. I had been there twice before, so alongside delightful memories of staying in a resort in Aqaba and snorkeling in the Red sea, I also recalled the terrifying donkey ride up the steep mountains of Petra; I have a total phobia of heights. Still, I pictured myself lounging by the pool with a freshly squeezed lemonade in hand, and a cute little umbrella stuck in a pineapple on the rim, ready for a new adventure.

However, this time we didn't pull into a nice hotel at the end of the long drive. This time we pulled into a dirt parking lot...surrounded by red sand... in the middle of the desert. The only other vehicles in sight were barely held together trucks with colorfully patterned tarps over each one...and snowboards attached to back. Snow Boards?! Didn't anyone realize it was over 100 degrees outside!

A turbaned man called out in Arabic and then he and my father exchanged some words. The man invited us into one of the jeeps. Maybe we couldn't drive our car through the sand? Hesitantly, I climbed into the back of the truck with my family. We drove deep into the desert, passing goats, sand, dirt, rocks, more goats, more sand, more dirt and more rocks. Our guide pointed out one particular arch, saying later on we'd climb up to the top of it. A sinking feeling filled the pit of my stomach as I craned my neck to look up at the top of the arch. I couldn't help thinking that I just wouldn't be able to scale it.

After what seemed like hours of bumping around in the

back of his truck, we arrived at what looked sort of like a campsite. There were Bedouin tents, a small courtyard made of ...you guessed it... sand, dirt and rocks, and filled with ... goats. Our guide told everyone to get out of the truck and then he showed us to our tent.

The next morning the sand dunes were covered in a misty fog and a ferocious wind whipped my hair. The previous day had been scorching hot but today I longed for that heat. No matter how many layers I put on, I couldn't blot out the cold. We drove across the barren desert with sand and wind in our eyes. When we got back to camp for lunch I was ready to go home. I was covered in sand, bleary eyed from the wind, longing for real food, desperate for a shower, and dreading the climb up the arch. This was definitely outside my comfort zone.

Later that evening, our guide invited us up a cliff close to camp to watch the sunset. I hesitated due to the steepness of the cliff, but there were several stops on the way up, so I swallowed my fear and began the ascent. A familiar lightheadedness engulfed me and I doubted my decision to join the others on the cliff. And then I saw the stars. I had never seen so many stars in my life. I could actually see the Milky Way. In that moment, my angst subsided enough for me to realize that this was an amazing place, the opportunity of a lifetime.

The next morning, we set out for the arch. When I saw it, my stomach lurched. Could I really do this? With the wonder of the stars still burned into my mind, I grasped at a small shred of courage and set off up the arch. My throat was dry,

as much from fear as from the desert. Putting one trembling foot in front of the other, I climbed. Nearly at the top, I looked down and became paralyzed with fear. Our Bedouin guide called out, "You can do it, Habibi!" Taking the final steps, I reached the top and eased out onto the arch. In the middle of the bridge I stopped and looked out at Wadi Rum. In that instant I saw what I hadn't before. The sand was a deep red, formed into amazing dunes. The rocks were wind shaped into incredible sculptures and formations. Little patches of green popped up out of the dirt, revealing hidden springs, where adorable baby goats grazed. And I was filled with newfound confidence. Although I can't say that my fear of heights was extinguished, I found enough courage to master the arch and expose myself to something new and wonderful. On my descent, I was on fire; I could achieve anything.

The final day, we drove the truck up to one of the sand dunes. It was massive. I took off my shoes and felt the

sand between my toes. Slipping and sliding, I hiked up the dune, full of confidence. Curiously, our guide followed with the snowboard. The guide strapped me on and I got to experience one of the greatest thrills of my life- zipping down the red sand dunes on a snow board, in the middle of the desert of Wadi Rum.

Mastering my fear on that arch changed the way that I approach and deal with difficult situations. Whenever I face adversity or have to enter the unknown, I look up and master the arch again and again. Changing schools once more, dealing with a difficult friend, learning a new language, or moving to an unfamiliar place; all I have to do is remember the arch and how my own internal view had changed on top. With that feeling in mind, I can do anything. There is an entire world out there for me to explore, just beyond my comfort zone.

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|  | <h2 style="text-align: center;">High School Re-Entry Program: <i>For Youth and Parents</i></h2> |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Youth Program</u></p> <p>This program is for you if you are a Foreign Service youth who is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Rising 9th—12th grader • A recent arrival to the U.S. from abroad • Still having challenges adjusting to life in the U.S. after several months or a year | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Parent Program</u></p> <p>This program is for you if you are a Foreign Service parent that has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A rising 9th –12th grader • Recently arrived to the U.S. from abroad • A son/daughter still experiencing challenges adjusting to life in the U.S. after several months or a year |
| <p>Friday, August 11, 2017 6pm to 9pm Oakwood Falls Church 501 Roosevelt Blvd, Falls Church VA, 22044</p> | |
| <p>Fees: FSYF Members: \$10/person Non-Members: \$20/person</p> <p style="text-align: center;">To Register, go to: www.fsyf.org/event-2553826 or contact us at fsyf@fsyf.org</p> | <p>These Events Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Panel • Dinner • Interactive Activities • An opportunity to network with peers and educational professionals  |



2ND PLACE

Isobel Hamilton Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Isobel Hamilton is 12 years old and just completed the 7th grade at the International Community School of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Although she has many hobbies, reading and writing short stories are probably two of her favorite. Isobel is also a busy traveler and on this last tour she traveled all over Ethiopia as well as the Seychelles, Djibouti and Egypt. Although Isobel loves to learn about new cultures, she is thrilled to be back in the United States to catch up with her grandparents and eat lots of delicious ice cream.

Stuck on my way to Somaliland

by Isobel Hamilton

I remember in 2015, when we arrived in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, one of the first trips that we took was to the ancient city of Harar. My father could not leave work, as he was the most recent arrival, and all of the other Officers had requested leave way in advance. We had our first week off in a new place and my mother had already decided that we needed to see as much as we could of Ethiopia and make the most of every school break. So she booked tickets for herself and her three children to fly to Dire Dawa, only finding out later that it was not a top tourist destination.

Dire Dawa is the closet airport to the famous city of Harar, an incredibly old city to the far East of Ethiopia, which has five gates in its surrounding wall. It is also a UNESCO world heritage site, because it is an extremely historical city. I was okay sleeping inside the old city walls in a traditional home even though all we had to eat was fitera (a type of tamale made with flour and water) topped with local honey and tea flavored with nutmeg. I managed to keep calm when our guide my mom hired took us out into a pitch dark evening to see hyenas being hand fed from a seated man who appeared insane. (My brother also volunteered to feed the hyenas which we are still too scared to talk about.) And I kept calm (ish) when our guide made me feed kite birds raw camel meat to see them swoop in out of nowhere. My hand got scratched and she grabbed limes off of a nearby wheelbarrow and squeezed their juice on my cut. My hyena-feeding brother and I did manage to keep touring the next day even though we both spent time during the night throwing up (my mom said maybe because we had both handled raw camel meat).

And yet, the experience that took me out of my comfort zone was when we went touring with our guide in her friend's very old taxi. Our destination was the camel trading market in Babile, outside of Harar. It was full of animals being sold and traded and men in traditional skirts. That is what the men there wear. We toured a few Somaliland -huts" that are like upside down cups with almost nothing inside. A scowling little girl was left to guard her compound

and a bramble bush was being used as the gate.

Our guide insisted on showing us "just one more thing" - to see a famous site, the Dakata Rock, just outside of Babile. It seemed interesting, so we got in a very rickety old car, eight of us crowding into a car that was obviously made for only five people. It was a tight squeeze, and I looked down to tie my shoelace and saw that there was a large hole in the bottom of the car! My mother asked how old the Peugeot was, and the driver responded proudly, "Fifty-seven years." I looked around worriedly that the rusty contraption would not last long enough to get us out to this famous rock and back. We continued driving long enough to get impatient, seeing desert, the occasional shrub, and a few people riding their donkeys, when we stopped. We piled out of the car, stretched, took some pictures and puzzled at how strange a sight it was. Then the driver started up the car, and kept driving on. I sank back into my seat, wanting to go back and have some lunch. I heard my mother's voice ask the driver and the tour guide "Aren't we supposed to go the other way?" and the guide's curt response "We are going to see sites a few miles from here." The guide's response which was not a question on what we wanted to do but rather a comment on what we are going to do, struck me as rather odd. I sat up and looked around, realizing that we were still going in the same direction as before, instead of going back to Harar, driving straight into Somaliland! This scared me a little bit because I realized that we were not supposed to enter Somalia. and I started to panic. My mother was talking quietly with the driver and tour guide, asking about getting back. Then I heard somebody say that we were crossing into Somaliland. I was beginning to freak out, and I looked out the window anxiously.

Then the car's engine stopped. My heart almost stopped with it. No, no, no, this cannot be happening, I was thinking to myself. We are stuck in Somaliland? This was the absolute WORST case scenario. The driver looked out the window and swore in Amharic. The tour guide looked very relaxed, like this happened every day to her. My brothers were looking around, smiles fading as they realized that this was not a joke, we were truly stuck by the side of the road...

in Somaliland? We got out of the car, my brothers and I looking around at the barren, desolate landscape, while the driver, guide, and my mother put their bodies up against the car and began pushing it down the road back towards Babile. The car started up again, and the driver hopped in to drive, so we followed his lead and jumped in as it was rolling down the road. We started back to the city, and each mile got me more calmed down.

This experience brought me farther out of my comfort zone than I had ever been, and I learned that no matter the situation, I always have to remain calm. If I am calm, I will be able to think more clearly and maybe fix the problem. I am uncomfortable if we are not in control of our trip, if we are in a dangerous area, and if our car is so old that it breaks down. In retrospect, I was probably the most frightened person in that car.



3RD PLACE

Eva Etcheverry Tbilisi, Georgia

Eva Etcheverry is 13 years, and completed 7th grade at QSI in Tbilisi. She is a member of a family of 5 and enjoys singing, poetry, and reading.

Outside the Zone

by Eva Etcheverry

My comfort zone was small when I started with the Foreign Service. Microscopic. It was tiny and I only left it when someone forced me out. I was in a bad place before adopting the Foreign Service life. I was in a mental health hospital, actually. Prescription drugs and thoughts of suicide were problems I dealt with in those days, and though it seems strange, feeling useless and ugly was my comfort zone because I was the kid who couldn't do anything right.

I said goodbye to that past and joined my new family for the long flight to Tbilisi, Georgia. The first thing my new Mom did was toss the pills in the garbage, which was frightening until my head cleared and I started feeling peaceful and content. When I walked out of the airport I felt like I was entering a parallel world that was crazy and kind of familiar, but not really. Within a few days, everything around me seemed bright and colorful and I was full of energy, which was good because the Foreign Service life never rests and we went to work right away. At school in the U.S. I was a "Special Needs" kid, and everyone in my old life seemed okay with that. They didn't make me work hard or try to discover myself, but that changed in Tbilisi. I couldn't just quit when things got difficult or boring, and all of the new people in my life told me that I am capable of much more. They expected me to do my best and even to succeed. After a while, I started to believe it was possible.

I am now in mainstream classes without any tutors or shadows, I scored at the top of my class on a MAP test, and I jumped ahead a grade in Writing and Literature. I even stood up in front of a group of classmates and parents and recited a poem that I had written myself. I was frozen with fear at first, but then I saw that people were listening and enjoying what I was saying, I discovered that I love to perform.

The Special Needs label was a big fence around my comfort zone that locked me in and kept others out. I could hide behind it when classes were difficult or when I didn't want to work or deal with people. I even used it to get out of uncomfortable social situations, which really doesn't work in the Foreign Service! Sometimes I think the people here look for difficult experiences.

I always feared these new experiences because I thought change would only make my life worse, but that attitude didn't work in the Foreign Service. It used to be that when I worried about falling behind in school or about being unable to do things that were simple for other kids, and I would escape by watching Scooby Doo cartoons for hours at a time. When I wasn't in the mood to do schoolwork, I could pretend not to understand something until the adults gave up and let me play with my cat. I wasn't being sneaky or lazy, but that was the only way I knew how to deal with the embarrassment and shame I used to feel.

I've grown a lot in two years and I have been out of my comfort zone every minute of that time. It was 24/7 because I started this journey with a brand new family. I love them and can never thank them enough for what they have done for me, but they were basically strangers at the time.

The Foreign Service lifestyle is all about trying new things, and I've done a lot of that since coming to Georgia. I have visited seven countries, learned a little Georgian, Russian, and Ukrainian, and earned a green belt in Taekwondo. I even started singing. This was a big surprise because I never talked much in the past, but the words just came out of me one day and I have learned that singing is a great way to express my thoughts and emotions all at once.

I also beat some old problems here. For example, I learned to tie my shoes, I made my first true friend, and I am now good at dressing myself and doing my own hair. I know I'm years late in these accomplishments, but I wouldn't have dreamed before coming here that I could handle even one of them. I've checked them

off my To Do list and made room for bigger successes, and this year I will learn to ride a bike, ski Gudauri, and bake khachapuri.

The challenge at school will continue to get harder and I understand that I need to put more and more effort into my work to get me through middle school and move on to high school. I'm planning to go to college now, too.

I finally feel good about myself, which is something I won't change. The most important lesson I learned in the Foreign Service life is that I should define myself by what I can do, and not by what I cannot do, and the only way to grow is to step outside the zone and try more things.

Without my new family and this bizarre lifestyle, I never would have discovered who I really am. That old comfort zone seems so small and uninteresting now, and when I saw that I had outgrown it, I began to see hope for my future and even picked out a new name for my new self—Eva. The name means new life and I think it fits perfectly.



Middle School Re-Entry Program: *For Youth and Parents*

FS youth (rising 6th—8th grade):

Are you new to American middle school or struggling to adjust after several months? Join FSYP for a fun and interactive workshop designed to help students develop strategies for adjusting to middle school life while connecting with other local FS kids.

Parents of FS youth who are rising 6th—8th graders:

When you register your middle school child for Middle School Re-entry you are eligible to join FSYP for a free parent re-entry program that will provide parents with helpful resources and advice.

Sunday August 13, 2017
1pm to 3pm

Fees: FSYP Members: \$10/person
Non-Members: \$20/person

To Register, go to:
<http://www.fsyf.org/event-2555338>

Oakwood
Falls Church
501 Roosevelt Blvd,
Falls Church VA,
22044



FSYF High School Essay Contest Winners



1ST PLACE

Harry Andrew Kamian Washington D.C.

Washington-Lee High School in Arlington, Virginia and will attend Williams College in the fall where he plans to major in Economics and Political Science. Harry is quite active in soccer and helped his team win a championship in 2016. He is also a co-founder of Bill Biewener Project, an organization that raises money and awareness for autism.

A Meandering Moped

by Harry Kamian

I turned my head and watched the moped meander precariously down the alley. In Vietnam, this is no extraordinary occurrence; the entire population navigates the labyrinth of Hanoi perched on motorized scooters. On the back of this particular moped, however, there were 10 mattresses, stacked on top of one another, the entire structure held down by a single bungee cord. And yet somehow the moped remained upright. Stunned by the man who had successfully contradicted every principle of nature, I slowly began to realize I had won the game.

From the ages of 10-13, I lived in Hanoi, Vietnam. When my family and I first arrived, I thought I would be able to adjust quickly to life in Vietnam as I had in other countries where we had lived, such as Turkey and Chile. It turns out I was wrong. I was utterly terrified of the chaotic traffic, bizarre smells, and the prospect of living in a house sandwiched between two neighborhood brothels. In part to divert our attention from certain less appealing details of our new home, my parents created a game that we would play for the next three years: "Who could spot the weirdest thing on the back of a moped?"

A moped is not like the Harley-Davidson we generally picture when someone says "motorcycle." A moped can comfortably hold one person, two at the most. Yet while playing our game of "spot the oddest object" we saw mopeds piled with hundreds of goldfish in plastic bags, a dead water buffalo, and even six children (the youngest was on the shoulders of her brother).

Even after seeing all of these seemingly impossible feats, watching a man drive a moped with 10 mattresses stacked on the back made my head turn. After the shock wore off, I announced – with the supreme confidence of a 10-year old –

that I was the winner of the game my parents had created.

I loved that game, and by the time I spotted my winning moped, I realized I had come to love Vietnam as well. I loved living in a place where everyone was different from me, where everything I saw surprised me, where I could step outside and instantly be exposed to the unexpected. I loved waking up to hundreds of honking horns, the sight of cattle walking up our alley, and the taste of my favorite breakfast of sticky rice and peanuts. But most importantly, I loved that I had come to feel at home living in a place where nothing was just like me.

After three years in Vietnam, we moved to Arlington, Virginia, and within a week I attended a youth group session at the invitation of a new friend. I was stunned when the pastor running the session pulled out a ham, and used it to tell the group why we should only be around people who are just like us. "The pure flesh represents Christians like you, and the fat around it is all the Muslims, Jews, and atheists. When you eat ham, you want to pick the meat, not the fat. And when you choose your friends, you want to pick the Christians, the people like you."

Never once since I left Vietnam have I seen a hundred goldfish, a dead water buffalo, or six children on the back of a moped. But that experience still affects me every day. I now know that I am happy when surrounded by new smells, unique sights, and diverse people who sometimes are not at all like me. Arlington is an amazing city, but whenever I can, I take the time to look for the extraordinary. I don't know where I'll end up, and I can't say at this moment if I'll be happy there, but if I see a moped with 10 mattresses drive by, I'll know I am in the right place.

*5K Fun Run &
Welcome Back Picnic*

FOREIGN SERVICE
YOUTH
FOUNDATION

Sunday, September 17, 2017
5K Fun Run from 3:00 pm—4:00 pm
Picnic from 4:00 pm—6:00 pm

Nottoway Park
9610 Courthouse Rd
Vienna, VA 22181

RSVP

Register at FSYP's website

www.fsyf.org/picnic

by Sept 16

All are Invited! Gather your FS friends for food and fun, and a family friendly 5K run at the park. Join FSYP as we welcome home FS families returning from overseas.

Please bring a side dish or dessert to share.

For more information contact FSYP:

703-731-2960 fsyf@fsyf.org



2ND PLACE

Thomas Odlum Washington D.C.

Thomas Odlum is 18 years and a recent graduate of Washington Lee High School in Arlington, Virginia. Thomas is a published writer as well as an accomplished soccer player. While in high school, he was active in the Philanthropy Club and Investing Club. Thomas will attend Emory University in the fall where he plans to study Business. Although Thomas has a rigorous schedule, he does manage to carve out time to binge-watch shows on Netflix.

Zabi and Me

by Thomas Odlum

I could not have asked for a better childhood, but my childhood probably could have asked for a better me. Being a Foreign Service child had many perks. I grew up traveling the world, seeing beauty everywhere: the entrancing vastness of the Jordanian deserts, the tranquility of Turkish olive fields, the sheer magnitude of the Pyramids of Giza. Yet even with the abundance of once on a lifetime experiences overseas, I was so preoccupied with these visual experiences that I neglected to pay attention to the blemishes of the world. I only saw the outer beauty, the snapshot, but not the people behind it. I failed to recognize the imperfections and inequalities that burden so many people all around the world. It was apparent that I needed to change. Ironically, this life altering change that challenged the boundaries of my comfort zone took place in the most comforting place I knew: my house in Arlington, Virginia. All it took was one brave man and some open-mindedness to diminish my naïveté and lack of appreciation for the opportunities in my life.

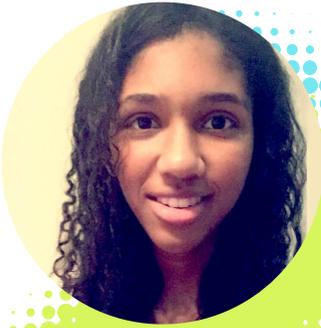
The man who helped open my eyes to this reality was Zabi Nasiri, an Afghan citizen who worked for the United States Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan, alongside my diplomat father. Because Zabi helped the U.S. government, he received many death threats from the Taliban and survived a roadside bomb that spared him but no one else in his Humvee. He moved to America in 2013, in search of a better life, full of opportunity. My parents offered him our home until he could support himself. I wondered what adjustments I would need to make in sharing my space. I felt a mixture of curiosity and trepidation.

But then I actually met Zabi. In his early twenties, he was clean-shaven and well dressed, with a chestnut complexion, short, dark hair and a soft smile that radiated kindness. I tried hard to be welcoming yet even with

my hospitality he must have felt out of place in this new country. Soon enough, I found out that he was very intelligent; he spoke surprisingly good English, and had big plans for himself. He demonstrated a strong work ethic and remarkable determination every day, from quitting smoking, to working out, to seeking a job; his resilience deeply impressed me. He cautioned me not to take my life for granted - a novel proposition to me - but rather to appreciate everything in my life that had always been supplied: food, safety, education. By contrast, he had never lived in a time of peace, yet somehow, his life's experiences, full of tragedy, were a source of motivation.

Zabi taught me to expect more of myself. Following his example, I began to take my studies and athletics more seriously, taking to heart his love of education and determination to succeed. We would sit facing each other at the dinner table, he searching for apartments online while I interviewed him for a journalism assignment. We learned from each other. I taught him how to use our modern appliances, while he taught me how to cook the traditional Afghan lamb and rice dish of qabuli palau. Four months went by so fast that by the time Zabi moved to his own apartment, he had become family.

When we meet up with Zabi these days for a traditional Afghan dinner, he always surprises us with a new achievement. He is now working a full time office job, attending night classes, and inviting other Afghans refugees to stay with him in his one bedroom apartment until they get settled. Both he and I are planning to enroll in college this year. I look forward to the journey ahead, and I hope that I can emulate the strength, resilience, and work ethic that Zabi embodied, to make the most of my college career, and live by the examples he taught me.



3RD PLACE

Sophie Kane Brasilia, Brazil

Sophie Kane is 16 years old and is currently posted in Brasilia, Brazil. She finished grade 10 at the American School of Brasilia. Sophie has been posted to Lagos, Lisbon, Maputo, Washington DC, and Dakar.

A Gift From Fouta Toro

by Sophie Kane

I seemed to be the only one shocked to see the puddle of blood sinking into cracks in the hot cement...well, me and my sister - at whom I didn't have to look back to know her face exhibited a similar expression of abhorrence as mine. I was guided away from the horror film-worthy spectacle around to the back of the house before any of my relatives could read the sentiment blatantly displayed on my 12-year-old face. By the time I had arrived at the back of the house I had rid myself of emotion, but I had not gotten over what I couldn't, for the life of me, unsee. The worst part was I knew the corpse that this blood belonged to, and I knew all this was done in my name.

This was the Fouta Toro, or simply "the Fouta" - the mystical place that had all too suddenly become a reality. It was the place "bad American children" were sent in northern Senegal, to in order to become "industrious and polite African children." Threats of long summers in the Fouta in which we would "shape up" were common in our household - and the customary response to this threat was an eye roll or perhaps a shaking of the head by the youth of the household. But now, through no fault of our own, a summer in the Fouta had become a reality.

The local s had promised me un cadeau when we had first arrived. I had smiled, deeming this the appropriate response. It was then explained to me in English what a gift really meant here. It was a honor to have a sheep sacrificed outside of an Islamic holiday. I was not honored. I tried to convince them that they really didn't have to kill a sheep for us - ce n'est pas necessaire I repeated - but they just laughed. I didn't laugh. The conversation quickly switched to Pulaar, the unapologetically loud language of the Fouta, shutting me out of the discussion.

Despite the unpleasant experience of meeting our dinner, my stomach rumbled with hunger as we sat upon woven

mats trying to press ourselves into the shadow of building in order to escape the late afternoon Sahel sun. The red in my cheeks, which had nothing to do with the heat, began to lessen as I grew accustomed to the eyesore of a sight of our Costco-sized tent in the back courtyard of this little home. Yes, this is where we would spent the night, in a tent that almost surpassed the size of the humble home of our hosts. And if that wasn't enough to make me want to bury my head between my knees, our monster-sized Acura SUV was parked parallel to the tent that fueled my embarrassment. Instead of burying my head in between my knees, I buried it in between the pages of my book, so no one would be able to decipher my expression.

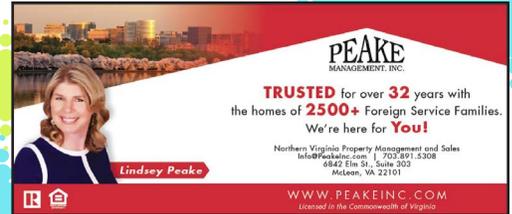
After trying to milk the cow, failing, trying again and failing I was beginning to grow tired of our little family vacation. Meanwhile my family yelled all sorts of advice such as "Bend your knees!", "Adjust your grip", and "Pull harder!" I grimaced, arching my back so that I kept my face far away from the pinkish underbelly of the animal. The Senegalese just laughed at my futile attempts. Once I dared to venture to the outhouse made infamous by my sister as "the cockroach bathroom", but I didn't plan on returning there anytime soon.

Around three in the afternoon the conversation was limited to a chorus of questions from my sister and me with a similar theme: "Where is the food?", "Is the food coming?", and "Are we ever going to eat lunch?" followed by the same vexatious response of "Soon" delivered by my parents. Finally the meal arrived, served on a large communal platter as is the Senegalese custom. I scrambled into the circle forming around the plate and took a spoon from the pile being

KID VID WINNERS

Sponsored by Peake Management Inc

Recognizing U.S. Foreign Service youth who create original videos depicting life at an overseas post from a youth's perspective.



1ST PLACE (TIE)

Emily Netherland

Bridgetown, Barbados



Emily Netherland is a rising 11th grader at The Codrington International School of Barbados. She has lived in Barbados since 2015, and enjoys a number of activities including the Interact Club and yearbook staff. She enjoys studying chemistry, biology, and art. Emily's favorite outdoor activity in Barbados is scuba

diving, and she recently completed her Advanced Open Water Diver certification. Emily was born in Schweinfurt, Germany, and has since lived in six U.S. cities as well as a posting in Quito, Ecuador. She is the daughter of Louis and Jamie Netherland, and a big sister to Jack Netherland, who is 11 years old and also attends The Codrington School. Her father is a Foreign Area Officer with the United States Army, and her mother serves as a background investigator in support of the Diplomatic Security Service.

1ST PLACE (TIE)

Patrick Hamilton

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



Patrick Hamilton is 15 years old and just completed 10th grade at the International Community School, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Patrick's favorite hobbies include taking photographs, making short films, skateboarding, playing basketball and playing golf. He is his school's golf team captain and was just voted their most

valuable player. Patrick is thrilled to be returning to the USA as he has spent only 2 years of his life here. Patrick closely follows national news and politics and is pleased to be back in Washington, D.C.



3RD PLACE

Thomas Karnell

Matamoros, Mexico



Thomas Karnell always adapts well to the different environments he finds himself in, whether it's Tanzania, Botswana, Mexico, or the Oakwood Apartments! From the earliest age, math and technology sparked Thomas' interest. When he was only 4 years old, he created stop motion videos with legos and

an SLR camera and flew remote control helicopters. More recently, he effortlessly hopped on his Airwheel to get around the neighborhood, and now his attention is directed toward mastering racing drones. His next move lands him in Belfast, Northern Ireland where he looks forward to exploring all that is on offer, including parkour and drone racing clubs. Not unlike



many teens, he's not looking forward to the school uniform but is looking forward to living in a place where he will be able to go outside and meet up with new friends. Thomas loves his dog, Sugar, a constant throughout his moves.

FSYF WELCOME HOME VIDEO CHALLENGE

Supported by Una Chapman Cox Foundation

Recognizing U.S. Foreign Service youth who create original videos depicting life in their D.C. metropolitan area city from a youth perspective

Victoria Stoner and Jackson Stoner

Prague, Czech Republic



Victoria ("Tori") Stoner completed grade 8 at the International School Prague (ISP). When living in Herndon during the 2015-16 school year, she attended Rachel Carson Middle School and played soccer and basketball with the Chantilly Youth Association. In Prague she plays soccer with a Czech team (Dukla) and soccer, basketball and softball at ISP.

Jackson Stoner completed grade 10 at the International School Prague. He attended Westfield high school for 9th grade and played on the basketball team. He continues to play basketball at ISP and participates in Robotics and MUN.



This newsletter is made possible by the generous support of McGrath Real Estate Services.



2017 Welcome Home Video Challenge

If you currently live in Montgomery County, Washington, D.C., Alexandria, or Prince William County, FSYP wants you to submit a video of life in your community.

Two videos will be awarded a cash prize of \$400 each!

Whoever submits their entry form first in their region will automatically be selected to produce the video and earn \$400. We will be accepting entry forms until August 1, 2017, but don't wait!

Visit fsyf.org/page-1710932 for more details and to enter

Submit your entry form before August 1, 2017

Submit your video before September 8, 2017

Those who start early have the best chance of winning!

This program is supported by the Una Chapman Cox Foundation

About the Foreign Service Youth Foundation Since 1989, FSYP has helped Foreign Service youth embrace the adventure of an internationally-mobile childhood by encouraging resilience and fostering camaraderie. Global programs include: a Foreign Service youth-written newsletter, an adult newsletter, five annual contests, and two scholarships for college-bound seniors. D.C.-area events include: re-entry seminars for high school and middle school students, a college admissions workshop, teen/tween game nights at Oakwood Apartments, and a Fall welcome back picnic. FSYP also assists FLO and AAFSW in providing emergency support to families evacuated from overseas. For more information, visit www.fsyf.org. CFC code 39436.

Contributors Wanted

for the spring issue of FSYP Youth newsletter *Here, There and Everywhere*.

We want submissions from **YOU**,
your life as an FS Youth, your Post, your thoughts...



What can you send in?

We accept contributions of all genres including, but not limited to:

- Reports
- Art work
- Interviews and profiles
- Comic strips
- Riddles
- Word puzzles
- Poetry
- Recipes from Post
- Tips about moving to your post, or starting a new school
- Advice columns
- Etc., etc., etc.

Who can contribute?

American Foreign Service kids of all ages and in all locations are welcome to contribute. However, we would particularly love to see teens participate more.

Please include:

If you submit, please include:

- Your name
- Your age and grade
- Your post and school
- Photos to accompany your submission (optional but appreciated)
- Photo of yourself (optional but appreciated)

Topic of Next Issue:
The topic will be announced in September.

Look for it via email, or check our Facebook page or website (www.fsyf.org) for more information.

FSYF gratefully acknowledges our newsletter sponsor:



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