

Mockingbird Times



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

January 2007

Foster Care and Homeless Youth Speak Out Across the Nation

Volume VII, Issue 1

Visit us online at www.mockingbirdsociety.org or call 206-323-KIDS (5437)

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Mockingbird Family Model Replication Update

MISTY LOU COOK



The Mockingbird Society is very excited to announce that it will be replicating its Mockingbird Family Model (MFM) throughout this nation, expanding with Regions 2 and 3 in Washington State (North and Central Washington), while Washington D.C. is proudly replicating the MFM in two different regions as well. This means that there are six MFMs throughout this nation, each with up to ten families, with plans for 15-18 by the end of 2007. We are both excited and proud for Mockingbird Society and Jim Theofelis, Mockingbird's founder and the creative designer of this revolutionary foster care model. The Mockingbird Society has been receiving a lot of attention for this effective foster and kinship care model. Creative solutions, nurturing, extended family communities, reliable, fun respite care and a motto of "thriving, not just surviving" are some of the key features.

The true ingenuity of the MFM lies in the Hub Home. Influenced and inspired by the concept of "Grandma's House," and extended family, the Hub Home provides activities to **generate community and build strong relations between the youth and adults.** It is where the community gathers at least a couple times a month, where the positive community-building activities take place and where there is always at least a couple of beds open for **immediate or planned respite care. The best thing about the respite care is that it is available, immediate, and even fun.** Two young people in the same MFM could potentially plan to meet and hang out at "grandma's house," AKA the MFM Hub Home, where they could bake cookies, watch

movies or catch up on what's been going on. There are anywhere from five to ten families that are joined in the same Constellation, or general neighborhood, and all of the families know each other, like an extended family. So, even if you couldn't live with your sibling, due to whatever circumstances, you could live up the street or a couple blocks away from them. That's what the Mockingbird Family is all about -- increasing placement stability and keeping families together.

Washington, D.C. has had two MFMs since the end of October, with "15 families that Washington D.C.'s Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) has selected to participate in the model. CFSA will host two models, one in Northeast D.C. serving 7 families and the other in Southeast D.C. serving 8 families."⁽¹⁾ Seeing the MFM replicated throughout WA State gives me so much hope for the youth in Washington State's foster care system. The MFM really is an incredibly innovative and effective foster care model that was designed to keep siblings together, provide stability and increase the likelihood of a foster child's success. It has received outstanding positive outcomes from the University of Washington's NW Institute for Children and Families (NICF). The MFM can prevent a myriad of youth from ever feeling alone and in a place where they feel they have to escape. Reductions in feelings of isolation and multiple placements are just some of the results of this incredible foster care model.

According to the NICF's 2005 evaluation of the MFM, because of the Mockingbird Family Model and its innovative solutions, "siblings did remain together...parents reported feeling supported in their roles as foster parents and caregivers were very satisfied with the availability and quality of respite care... [and] parents of the children who received tutoring reported that the children showed improved attention in class and increased concentration that resulted in improved grades in the majority of classes"⁽²⁾.

Mockingbird Society was awarded a federal grant in 2003, with the help of Washington State Senator Patty Murray, to test-pilot this remarkably innovative new foster care model. The MFM is based on the concept that unconditional care, support, community-building, and planned respite care will lead to fewer placements, stability, and safety for all children. The MFM is based upon the philosophy of "taking good care of the people who take good care of the youth", which means that there are plenty of activities, community-building opportunities and of course, immediate respite care, just in case. The Mockingbird Family Model is a tangible, practical solution to many of the problems young people, foster parents and case managers experience everywhere. It is truly an amazing and effective new foster care model that is both nurturing and motivating for the young people and families who participate.

The MFM was replicated in four different sites in 2006, with the help of an anonymous donor, and the results of the 2006 evaluation will be released in late January of 2007. I expect nothing but great and satisfactory results. The evaluation results will be posted on our website and reviewed in future issues of the Mockingbird Times. Jim Theofelis and the Mockingbird Society are currently working on creating what is being called "prevention models" in King County for families who are at-risk for entering foster care. We are also expanding the MFM to include non-licensed kinship care, such as grandparents or other secure and safe family members who wish to be included in the MFM. The MFM Prevention Models will support biological families while reducing the number of children and youth who enter foster care in the first place.

REPLICATION, CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

A New Year

another job so you can get the car or apartment. Doing extra homework, studying hard or getting a tutor to get through college. You might decide to join a narcotics anonymous (NA) meeting or go see a drug and alcohol counselor to get help with staying clean. If your goal is to lose weight you might make a plan to get to the gym to work out eat more and eat healthier.

To meet your goals for this New Year, you have to put your mind to it and stick with it. You have to remember that it is something that you really want and do whatever is reasonable to make it happen! All your resolutions might not be as easy as getting something small, but a huge life-changing goal that seems impossible to accomplish. Always know that by following your steps and a lot of determination and positive thoughts it will come with time and dedication.

I have a lot that I want to accomplish so ill go through the steps that I'm going to take to get them done. 1. I want to pass my GED, get through one year of college and complete Drivers Ed. without failure. What I'm going to do is work extra hard and when I need help with something then I'm going to ask

questions, get a tutor when I need one, be on time to school and call when need to miss, do great on my test, study extra hard and take notes, follow instructions. 2. I want to get my own car and apartment. So, what I need to do is get my GED, prepare my resume, get my records sealed and begin searching for a good job. See, that seems easy, but the hard part is following through with your goals. Remember, this comes with time and patience and I know for those of you who are impatient; it'll will come with time and hard work.

So try this out. Have clear goals and a good plan for your resolutions! I hope that it works for you and I'll let you know how it's going for me. Keep at it because I promise it will be all worth it in the end. Happy New Year to you all!!

Below are some sites that you can visit on the web to help you with your resolutions:

<http://frugalliving.about.com/cs/specialreading/a/123003.htm>

<http://www.lifehack.org/articles/uncategorized/new-year%E2%80%99s-resolutions-and-deficit-thinking.html>

JESSICA GARCIA



What are you planning for your New Year's resolution? What exactly is a New Year's resolution? Well, I'm going to explain. For a while now, people all over the world do take time to do this for the New Year. They figure out what their plan is going to be to accomplish new goals that they set for the up coming year.

The first thing that I do is sit down and grab some paper or not if you are good at doing this type of thing in your head. What you want to list is things that you want to change or do. Some examples are attending college, getting a place and/or car of your own, getting on track, staying clean, losing weight, etc.

Then what you want to do is to figure out steps that will help you reach your goal. It might be working extra hard to get to get

Letter from the Editor

JIM THEOFELIS



Happy New Year!

The Mockingbird Society is pleased to announce that Representative Mary Helen Roberts is sponsoring proposed legislation to Extend Medicaid to 21 for foster youth aging out of the foster care system. This will ensure that all youth who are legal dependents of the state of Washington on their 18th birthday will have health care coverage, including mental health, until their 21st birthday. Senator Rosa Franklin has agreed to sponsor the same bill in the Senate.

This is an exciting opportunity to continue all of our efforts to ensure that young people who leave foster care at age 18 do so with resources, opportunities, and hope. The research is very clear that young people aging out of foster care are at extremely high risk for homelessness, incarceration, unemployment and early parenting. We will need your help in

convincing legislators that this is a solid piece of public policy that is morally and fiscally sound.

Youth Advocacy Day is February 9th and we need a strong turnout at the Capitol. Youth Advocacy Day is always a day filled with inspiration, meaning and fun! Please do join us and bring young people from your school, organization, or make it a family day. We will be sure to let you know when the legislative hearings are scheduled and we will keep you informed of other critical dates when you could assist us in getting this legislation passed into law.

If you are not on the ASK-Y list serve contact Lauren at 206-323-5437 or lauren@mockingbirdsociety.org. She will add you to the list to ensure you receive all of the updates during the legislative session. Please do join us in this important effort as Mockingbird Society continues "... building a world class foster care system while serving our neighborhood youth."

Jim Theofelis

jim@mockingbirdsociety.org

REPLICATION, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

I hope that you all share in the excitement as Mockingbird Society prepares to replicate the MFM in 2007. The MFM could be compared to a guardian angel, invisible, helpful and full of magic. It could potentially help so many underpaid case managers, struggling foster care youth and families. In my personal opinion, it should be replicated all over this nation and world, wherever children need safe, happy and reliable families, which is everywhere.

"The Mockingbird Model should improve support for foster parents, who

do so much for our kids." ~ WA D.C. CFSA Interim Director Uma Ahluwalia

- (1) MFM Press Release ~ official script
- (2) <http://www.mockingbirdsociety.org/pdf/jul05.pdf>

Treehouse Referrals

Don't forget to ask your social worker to make a new treehouse referral for 2007. All youth must have current referrals on file to receive any treehouse services this year.

Extending Medicaid to Foster Care Youth Aging Out of Care

Advocates for System Kids and Youth (ASK-Y)

Proposal

Last year, 456 foster children "aged out" of Washington's foster care system by reaching their 18th birthday without being adopted or reunited with their birth family. The vast majority of these youth will lose critical health care coverage at age 19, despite the fact that federal law allows Washington State to offer coverage to these youth until age 21. This proposal would take advantage of this federal option.

Significant Health Problems

Children in foster care often suffer from health problems greater than those of homeless or very poor children who live at home; as they grow older they are often at serious risk of health problems due to early neglect, prenatal drug exposure, and the results of conditions left untreated in the first three years of life. Mental health issues among foster youth persist into adulthood and rates of mental health problems among foster care alumni are significantly higher than those in the general population.

Few Other Opportunities for Health Insurance

Insurance through employment is rarely available for this population, as less than half of former foster youth (ages 20-33) are employed, and half of those employed were still earning wages equal to or below the federal poverty level. Yet a third of foster care alumni had no health insurance - double the national uninsured rate for people of similar ages.

A Growing Trend

Since 1999, federal law has given states the option to extend Medicaid to former foster youth. Currently, 12 states have

adopted this expansion, including states as diverse as California, Mississippi, Indiana, Texas, and New Jersey.

A Small Cost with Future Savings

The lack of health care coverage for this population is not only unfair, given that many young adults with working parents are covered into their 20s, but it is costly. Without medical support, former foster youth, who often have significant health care needs, may end up using costly services for primary care, such as emergency rooms, may elect not to receive medical treatment necessitating more expensive care later, and may also, end up in jails, public assistance, or living on the streets. The cost of Medicaid expansion would be shared evenly between the federal government and Washington State, covering hundreds of youth with significant federal financial support.

Fiscal Note

'07-'09: \$1.6 million GF-S/ \$3.3 million total funds; '09-'11: \$4.6 million GF-S/ \$9.5 million total funds

Contact Information

Jim Theofelis (206) 323-5437

Update Your Subscription

If you have recently moved, need to change the number of issues you receive or the address we are mailing the Mockingbird Times to needs to be corrected, please complete and mail the subscription request form found on page 2 so we can update our records.

Thank You's

Anne McBride; Brooke Stout; Donald Jones; Silvana Bruxel; Clearwire; Karen Cowgill; Erin & Mike Pugh; Nancy Spaeth and Shannon Reagan; Katherine Cooper; Lynnea Manahan; Kaye Mathews; Beverly Cuevas & Tom Gill; Ron & Lauren Maier; Barry Eben; Florence Manos; Martin & Alex Tobias Foundation; Felicia Cross; George & Bev Theofelis; Betty Jean Williams; Patricia McDonald; Shirley & David Allen Foundation; Jennifer & Jeffery Redinger; Harvey & Hisako Nakaya; Elizabeth; Lucinda Richmond; Andrew & Jeanne Morse Stephens; Byron & Alice Lockwood Foundation; Gail Winberg; John & Shelly Hersman; Valerie Ramisch; Kathy Elias; Diane Coyne; Donna Mathus; The Black Family; Rhonda Berry; Wendy Marlowe; Keith Gormezano; Virginia Blayney; Kathryn Brooks; Susan Weiss; Chuck and Tracy Nordhoff; Ruth Williams; Joyce Schowalter; Joan Stewart; Chrissie Jackson; Stocker Foundation; Bruce Cross & Perkins Coie; Chris Marsh, Attorney; Fremont Rotary; University Sunrise Rotary; University Village Rotary; Seattle University; Alicia Claiborne & Seattle University; YMCA Young Adult Services.

ABOUT US: The Mockingbird Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation developing innovative models for improving the outcomes of foster care, while advocating with decision makers for system reform. All contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Please consult your tax advisor regarding your specific tax situation. The **Mockingbird Times** is a monthly newspaper written and produced by youth who have experience in foster care and/or homelessness. All youth employees of The Mockingbird Society are paid between \$7.63 and \$8.50 an hour. Additionally, youth from across the country submit articles, art work, poetry and are compensated up to \$25 per published piece. The **Mockingbird Times** has a monthly circulation of 50,000 copies being distributed across Washington State and the U.S.A, through a private distribution list and as an insert in **Real Change**, a Seattle-based community newspaper. Youth involvement is the key to the philosophy, values, and success of The Mockingbird Society and, as such, youth are involved in all aspects of organizational development and decision-making. Donations to The Mockingbird Society may be tax-deductible and are greatly appreciated. No part of the Mockingbird Times may be reproduced without the written permission of The Mockingbird Society. All contents copyright 2006 The Mockingbird Society.

Become a Member of The Mockingbird Society

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

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
 PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

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

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

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

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

MEET OUR STAFF

Executive Director
Jim Theofelis

Youth LEAD Coordinator
Najja Morris

Operations Manager
Ros Ghan

Administrative Assistant
Juan Ramirez

**Public Relations/
Fund Development**
Darcie Gray

Executive Assistant
Lauren Frederick

Senior Youth Representatives
Misty Lou Cook, Jamica Henderson

Youth Representatives
Larisa Asher, Terasa Asher, Surri Evans, Jessica Garcia, Raquel Granath, Renita Baskin, Samuel Martin, Jonelle Abd-Rahmaan, Andrea Roldan, Melissa Stringer

Contributing Writers
Amelia Lee Logen, Tasha Quirrels, Alexis Bednarski

Volunteers
Chrissie Jackson

Layout
Kelly Hawkins

Queer Youth in Foster Care

**RAQUEL
GRANATH**



Recently I was fortunate enough to watch a documentary of stories produced by LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning) Youth who were formerly in foster care. It was entitled "Breaking the Silence" and was a glimpse of what life is like for so many youth who find themselves outcasts based on their sexual orientation and/or gender preference. I really enjoyed it because it was so original. Each clip was made by the youth themselves and so each story was very personal and unique. All of the youth presented themselves as extremely talented. Their stories touched my heart, although their message was universal: something must be done about persecution in the foster care system.

One individual, who identified as a male, recalled how his aunt would beat him with no mercy because she thought he was "possessed by demons." Another female who identified as a lesbian reminisced on how her grandmother wouldn't allow her to sleep next to her sisters growing up because she feared her homosexual tendencies would rub off on them.

George's entry into foster care begins at age five when his biological father abandons him, and he moves in with his aunt. The time that he spends there is filled with maltreatment, both physically and mentally, based on his sexual preference and gender identity. When he begins his school career, a teacher forces him to perform oral sex and then gives him \$50 not to tell anyone. After this incident, he begins selling his body for over two years until he is arrested. Following his incarceration, he finds school as a sanctuary and confides in his school Administrator.

Another example of the persecution of queer youth in the foster care system is Danielle, who realized at 11 years old she was attracted to the same gender. While in a foster home, she was forcibly sexually abused by her foster mother and misunderstood the way lesbians have sex and love each other. At first she only "came out" (as gay) all the way to her social worker, and identified as bisexual with her peers. Her social worker told her to keep her orientation a secret, which she did, until she was 18 years old. When her older brother found out, he kicked her out of his home so she didn't tell anyone else in their family. Through the program

California Youth Connection (CYC), the same one that funded this documentary, she was able to overcome her doubts and come all the way out as a person who identifies as LGBTQ.

Nicky is a queer woman of Asian ethnicity/ancestry. When she was in primary school she received a slap across the face for scoring only 99% on a math quiz, so naturally her parents opposed her liking the same gender. She came out at the age of thirteen and was viciously beaten as a ritual because she was told that homosexuality "is an abomination" in the Buddhist religion. Subsequent to her entry into foster care, the physical abuse stopped, whereas the emotional and verbal abuse doubled. She was tormented at school and in her group home, and it constantly gnawed at her self-worth. She was finally able to find affirmation in her fiancé and now finds joy advocating for youth in schools.

Last but not least is Kevin who was biologically (or "originally") born as a female, but identifies as a man in his everyday life. Kevin says that he had a positive experience and is not bitter for the challenges he faced. He was always a tomboy growing up, and was rewarded by his counselors when he "acted his gender." When his social worker called him lesbian he didn't understand, and when he was ridiculed in class, he lashed out and ended up in Juvenile hall. As a result, Kevin received a new social worker who he thanks for the progress he later made campaigning all the way to congress for Gay Rights.

I recommend this video to all people who want a glimpse into the reality of life for teens with different gender, identities and sexual preferences. We need to take these stories as lessons and apply the message to the system and improve it. Wendy, a queer youth from Hawaii, said that "the greatest thing you can do for a child who is questioning themselves, is to reach out a helping hand and ask, 'is everything okay?'" If we take the steps to educating people, then we won't be an ignorant society. We need to promote acceptance and understanding so that all people can feel that they belong.

To request a free copy of this DVD, please contact:

National Center for Lesbian Rights
870 Market Street, Suite 370
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 392-6257 | info@nclrights.org
nclrights.org

I Found My Love: Photography

**MELISSA
STRINGER**



When I first started to take photo's I thought it was just a hobby but then it started to become more to me. When I first started to like photography it was when I was on the ferry to go to Kingston in Edmonds. I had a 35mm throw away camera with me. There was a beautiful sunset out and I just picked up the camera and started to shoot the pictures. When I got the pictures back that is when I knew I had a gift.

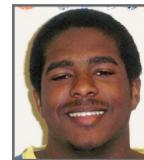
Whenever I am upset about something I just pick up a camera and start shooting the camera and that's when I feel most at peace with myself. I remember when I first went into the dark room. It felt as though all my problems just lifted off my shoulders and nothing mattered to me

anymore. I know that this doesn't make much sense to you but you have to feel it. The feeling of a camera in my hands is like holding my heart. When I take a picture I am putting everything that I have into it. Personally I think without photography in my life I wouldn't be much at all. When I graduated from high school, my photography teacher came up to me and told me to never give up hope and to keep on believing because I have talent.

I didn't believe him because for the longest time I told myself I was a failure. But when I took Youth in Focus that all changed. For once people got to see the work that I was capable of, which meant a lot. So all I ever feel and think about photography is that this is what I want to do as a living not just a hobby. I just wanted to thank every single person that has ever had faith in me with my art work. If it wasn't for you guys putting up with me, I wouldn't have gotten this far.

My First College Experience

**SAMUEL
MARTIN**



Anything worth doing is not supposed to be easy, and I recently made one of the hardest decisions of my life. My choice was to cut my high-school career short and move to college as a part of the Running Start program. This would make a dent in my social life, and move me into an environment that is a complete mystery. After contemplating the decision for about five months, I finally decided that my high-school experience wasn't working out for me and I signed up for the program. On September 2006 I stepped into Seattle Central Community College for the first time. This proved to be a whole new adventure and I was ready to explore.

The reason I felt that it was time for me to move into the Running Start program was because I felt that I needed to move on with my life outside high-school. The "student life" was constantly frustrating. It's not that I had a problem with anybody, but I felt that my maturity level was higher than most. I don't want to hold myself on a pedestal, but I just felt like I had grown up a lot sooner than most people. Students were constantly disrupting the class and messing with substitute teachers. I felt like it's something I could not handle and was wasting my time. My personal beliefs are that every student (especially African Americans) need to take advantage of K-12 education only because there is too high a dropout rate in the African-American community. If everyone graduated from high-school, we would have a much greater chance of getting into colleges and universities and being more successful in life. At my school, I feel like people sometimes take for granted the opportunity that is given. At the same time, I did not want to leave because social life was getting more and more appealing as the days went on. However, I still knew I needed a different environment to learn in.

At the beginning of the quarter I was

completely intimidated by the whole environment. I was afraid to raise my hand and literally thought I was not good enough to attend college. I felt I should not have been there. I was also having a hard time adjusting, so I continued to go to my high school after class, because I did not want to leave, nor did I want to stay. After the first few weeks I started to get a little more comfortable. I continued to flinch when I raised my hand even when I knew the answer. But an old friend told me that "By perseverance the snail reached the ark" - Charles Haddon Spurgeon. I sat back and I realized that if I did not have what it takes to be here, I would not have gotten the opportunity. I was doing fine in my classes and I needed to stop doubting myself. I continued to work hard and strive for success.

Another thing that was difficult for me to handle was the fact that I had a ridiculous amount of freedom. In high school they called your house when you skipped, they sent home report cards, and they also sent home mid term progress reports if you were failing (don't worry I was never failing). I will admit that I had a problem assuming the responsibility of going to class; it didn't become a huge problem. It made me feel like I could just do whatever I wanted to do in the world. I had class from 8-11 and after that I was free until 3 which is when I had football practice until November. I began to see the pattern for self-destruction and I was in danger. So, instead of straying off the track, I buckled down and put myself to the test.

All in all I think that it was a great experience and a good start of my college career. I bet you are dying to know what my GPA was for the first quarter. I ended up getting 3.1 GPA. I was proud of my work. I learned a lot about myself, my education, and how things work at the college level. I honestly believe the first quarter is the hardest one, but then again I have only been through one. Well, I just started my second and it looks challenging, but I have developed some study habits and I now know what I need to do to continue with my success.

Mockingbird Celebrates the Season



Senior Representative Janica sharing ingredients for the perfect gingerbread house.



Youth Representatives Jessica and Raquel (from L to R) show off their holiday gifts.

GET EDUCATED!

Dynamic workshops for caregivers, middle school youth and high school students! Help with: WASL prep, study skills, college applications, post-graduation planning, tutoring and more.

Saturday, January 20, 10 AM - 2 PM
Technology Access Center
801 23rd Ave S, Seattle

Free lunch. Free childcare with reservation: Call Joan at (206) 691-2334.

For more information, please contact **The Mockingbird Society** at (206) 323-5437 or info@mockingbirdsociety.org.

Creative Corner

Rain

MADEL ROGULI

I love the rain, the sound it makes...
 When I hear it my breath it takes
 To be under it feeling the raindrops touch my skin,
 To enjoy this lovely trance I'm in
 The way the raindrops run down my window slowly...
 Looking and watching the rain is so peaceful and holy,
 A kiss in the rain, so full of romance and purity,
 The hold and lock of the lips, a form of security...
 Just standing alone in the rain puts me in the mood of content,
 To just stand there for the utmost extent
 Not afraid to get sick,
 Not there to leave quick...
 I stand there for a reason,
 No matter the season
 I love the rain
 The way it washes away pain
 It is better to cry under the rain because no one can tell
 For u cannot see the tear drop that fell
 Away from ur cheek
 Down onto the street
 Drifting away down the drain to the sewer
 Only one tear less and fewer
 I love the raindrops in my hair
 I just stand alone right there
 The rain is warm and welcoming, yes it's true
 It helps me think things through
 Being in the rain or just admiring it from afar
 Learning that the rain is seeping into my invisible scar
 I love the rain
 For it does not let u be vain
 Just let it rain, rain on me
 As long as I am here longing and free...

Inside

ALEXA HAWKINS

Bottled up inside
 Are the words I never said,
 The feelings that I hide,
 The lines you never read,
 You can see it in my eyes,
 Read it on my face:
 Trapped inside are lies
 Of the past I can't replace.
 With memories that linger
 Won't seem to go away.
 Why can't I be happier?
 Today's a brand new day.
 Yesterdays are over,
 Even though the hurting is not.
 Nothing lasts forever,
 I must cherish what I've got.
 Don't take my love for granted,
 For soon it will be gone.
 All you ever wanted
 Of the love you thought you won
 The hurt I am feeling now
 Won't disappear overnight,
 But somehow, somehow,
 Everything will turn out all right,
 No more wishing for the past
 It wasn't meant to be.
 It didn't seem to last,
 So I have to set him free.



Untitled

EMMA CUMMINGS

Searching for a place deep inside,
 Somewhere;anywhere,
 For me to hide
 I've seen so much,
 For one so young
 Already this songs been sung
 I've witnessed a lot
 For one my age
 What happens when I turn the
 page?
 I wanted only what one can see
 Just to learn
 And be me.

2007 ADVOCACY DAY CALENDAR

**Advocates for System Kids
and Youth (ASK-Y) Meeting**
 January 22nd, 3:30PM - 5PM
 2100 Building (Treehouse)

Advocacy Day Training
 February 6th, 1PM - 4:30 PM
 2100 Building (Treehouse)

Advocacy Day
 February 9th, 9:30AM-2PM
 Olympia, Wa (State Capitol)

Food will be provided at both
 Advocacy Day events. Trans-
 portation to/from Olympia
 can be coordinated with notice.
 Please contact Lauren @ 323-
 5437 or Lauren@mockingbird-
 society.org for more informa-
 tion and assistance.

Courage is of no value unless accompanied by justice; yet if all men became just, there would be no need for courage.

~ Agesilaus the Second

Celebrating the Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

RAQUEL
GRANATH



Martin Luther King was a prominent pioneer in the black community. He stood up for what he believed in, and helped abolish segregation in our country. January 15th is not only his birthday, but a day in which we commemorate the lasting impacts he has made on our nation.

He was born in 1929 to Alberta and Martin Luther King Sr. in the very racist city of Atlanta. By 1948 he had a Bachelor in sociology from Morehouse College after skipping the 9th and 12th grades. Merely five years after that, he became a pastor in Montgomery Alabama and began the bus boycotts following the persecution of Rosa

Parks. The boycott lasted 381 days and subsequently racial separation on buses was outlawed.

King correctly deduced that nonviolent protests would lead to media attention resulting in more followers to bring down injustice. He fought hard using organized methods that assisted in the struggle for blacks to attain equality. Indeed, his technique brought forth the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and eventually brought an end to the oppressive Jim Crow Laws.

His most profound and remarkable accomplishment was the March on Washington. In June of 1963 two bills, (The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the 1965 Voting Rights Act) were up for a vote in congress; it was up to them to decide the verdict. The march took place on August 28, 1963 in order to put pressure on the Senate to ratify the laws. Many other advocates for equali-

ty were in support and the turnout was approximately 300,000 people strong. In the duration of this event, Martin Luther King gave his famous "I Have A Dream" speech, which reverberated across the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, and into the hearts of millions of people.

In conclusion, I feel that it's vital to take some time out of our day to honor a man who assisted in founding some of the most important laws our nation is based on. We should revere his memory and take inspiration from his story of success .

Seattle Area Celebrations

Friday, January 12, at Mount Zion Baptist Church from noon - 1:30 PM, there will be a MLK Celebration with a musical tribute and speech in memory of Dr. King. Everyone is more than welcome to attend. http://www.seattlecolleges.edu/mlk_main.aspx

Monday, January 15, at Franklin High School (3013 South Mt. Baker Blvd), the **24th Annual Martin Luther King Rally** will be held beginning at 9:30 AM and ending at Noon. There will be educational workshops and a march followed by a second rally. Seattle is renowned for having one of the largest celebrations in the nation. Hope to see you there!

<http://www.mlkseattle.org/>

Monday, January 15 the **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Parade** will begin at Westlake Center promptly at 10 AM. The Dream Celebration will follow at Seattle Center. **MLK Youth Awards** will be presented by Mayor Greg Nickels, along with many other concerts and speeches. For more information please call 253-719-8496. http://seattlepi.nwsource.com/local/255403_mlkbox12.html

Please check your local listings for MLK celebrations in your community.

Dear Granny

JAMICA
HENDERSON



Dear Granny,

I have some things on my mind that I wanted to tell you. As you know, I now have custody of Dennis and Leon. My wishes came true for the year of 2006: My family being together on Christmas and New Years is the best wish I could have. It's weird to see Dennis and Leon in their teenage years. Remember when they were babies? Now, they know how to do a little cooking, cleaning, and work. It's crazy how they grew up so fast, but they are very respectful, loving and good kids.

Thanks Grandma for encouraging me with getting custody of the boys. I remember when you were trying to get

custody of us all, but you got sick and it took you longer than we expected to recover. When you took more time to recover, I knew that we would not be able to come and live with you. That's when I knew it was left up to me to get the family back together. I knew you were sick and you did not want to tell me because you did not want me to worry. I told you I wouldn't. "I hope you get better so we can come visit you" were my last words.

I was so shocked and hurt on December 22, 2006, when you passed away. You were my best friend, I loved you so much. The last time I saw you was the year I graduated from the 5th grade in Gary Indiana before we moved here to Seattle Washington. I was your oldest granddaughter and I really had a close bond with you. You spoiled me rotten. We have had lots of good moments together. Remember all the things we did? We went on road trips, you would always take me

to get ice cream, to movies and so much more that I can't name them all but the memories will always be in my heart..

It hurts me that you did not get to see me in my teenage or adult years. I did get to send you pictures of me throughout my high school years, but it's nothing like going see you. It makes me glad that you passed away knowing that your grandkids were happy. You know that two out of five of you're grandkids graduated from high school, one attended college, one is about to graduate this year and two are still in school. Let's not forget that you're grandkids are back together as a family which was goal that you wanted to complete yourself, but your oldest granddaughter did it for you. As I say my last goodbye, I want to thank you for teaching me that family is important no matter if they're rich, poor, homeless or taken away from the family. I'm glad that you left with a happy heart knowing that

your grandkids will make it with the love of our family and memories of you.

Thanks Grandma.
 Love, Jamica (BO)

Foster Youth Need You

Hundreds of children in our communities are in desperate need of a safe home.

Will you give them a safe home?

Have you considered foster parenting?

Please call Foster Our Future at
 1-866-958-KIDS

Foster Our Future is a contractor with Washington State Children's Administration.

An experienced foster parent will answer your questions and mentor you through the foster licensing process.

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