

Third Place - \$500 Scholarship

**Christina Roach
James Bowie High School
Senior**

On the day of August 28, 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. had a dream, a dream that he spoke of on the memorial built for the very man that signed the Emancipation Proclamation – a document that freed African Americans as a people from bondage. The 20th century was a time for freedom and civil rights, and thanks to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., people that look just like me can have a dream too. We can learn in integrated schools and get an equal education and I am proud.

Dr. King said “let us no wallow in the valley of despair.” His message to us was to move on, for we are not defeated, but empowered as a people to do anything we aspire to do. Dr. King has made an indelible impression in the minds of the American people. His existence and accomplishments opened doors for us as a people today and mad possible things that people of his day never thought possible.

One thing confuses me, though. Dr. King worked so hard for the rightful Civil liberties of his people. He was criticized, jailed, abused, and eventually assassinated for fighting for the very privileges we have today. Dr. King spent his life fighting for the very privileges we have today. Dr. King spent his life fighting so that people of color would be treated equally. So why is it that we do not take advantage of this? How dare we sit at home and not go to college simply because we don't want to? How dare we drop out, skip school? How dare we sit up in jail cells for trying to be thugs on the streets rather than trying to better ourselves and learning in the classroom? How dare we spit on the very footprints King made in the cement on the march toward freedom. We are a privileged generation and if we aren't taking advantage, then what are we doing?

I am proud to be an African American female in today's society and I am proud to say that I am educated. It is sad that, I, as well as kids like me are looked down on by our own African American classmates for making good grade and going to class, and made fun of the we talk, but I am not ashamed. “We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal” is what this land is built on. I have an equal opportunity to get an equal education and a decent job and I dare not overlook such a pleasure.

Be you Black, White, Hispanic, Asian or any color, we are all sisters and brothers and we should all love one another and lift each other up, this is what King preached. We will all share the dream with our families, children, brothers and sisters together. We will live our dreams because we are free to and we can do anything we put our minds to. We will soar because we are eagles and fly above adversity. We are one.