

Good evening everybody! My name is Adi! I came from Albania in February 2008. It was difficult for me because it was the first time I was away from my family.

I came here and I didn't know how to speak English. A friend of mine who attended NDEC told me about the program at this school.

I went there and started class. I was excited.

At September 2008 I started on the second level. My teacher in this school was Sister Peggy (Nawn). She taught me the alphabet. She taught me how to pronounce the letters.

I was going to learn a new language that was going to help me to live here and it was really helpful and it taught me a lot. Learning at this school allowed me to get a job and make a living in America.

This school taught me how to read and write as well as to listen and speak English. Now I'm on the fourth level (ESOL 4). Nora (Gerety) is my teacher.

We have a computer program at NDEC that allowed me to use, understand and improve my computer skills. And I'm happy to have a teacher like Gayle (Antoniou)!

I would like to thank all of you for letting me have the chance to thank this great program that taught me everything I know about America and the English language. If it weren't for NDEC I wouldn't be standing here in front of you today.

“We Are Here! How I Add Value To Society” by *Francisca Teixeira, GED*

I am a strong independent young woman. I've set standards for myself. I have a lot of skills I can put to use. I came back to school so that I can be known as a value to society. I want to achieve a goal in my life, move forward with as many accomplishments as possible. Coming back to school was the best decision I made for myself.

Before I came to school I was fighting the worst battle ever. Being a single mom with a child with cancer is a big responsibility. My world came to a complete abrupt end when I found out. That's a parent's worst nightmare. I was carrying a heavy burden on my shoulders, but you know what, I had to put my emotions and fear aside and be there for my baby. Going through that was a difficult time in my life. I was caged in myself. The more my daughter suffered, the more vulnerable I became.

I can see myself going far in life, and no one can stop me. My best quality is if I set myself to do something, I am very determined to do it. My schooling is very important to me. I want to show everyone

that, even if you've been through so much pain you can't bear, you just have to pick yourself up and move on. There are ways you can live and let live.

My good qualities are also with children. I worked at a childcare center before with infants and toddlers. It was a good experience for me. Children are harmless, loving, caring and funny. Working there made me realize that if I can deal with little kids, there is nothing in this world that I can't deal with. I've come a long way, and there's no turning back.

Before I was just a shy girl with no hopes and dreams, and now I can stand on my own two feet and be proud of myself. I'm raising a beautiful girl; she is the most important person in my life. I'm working on my goals that I plan to reach. I am happy and it's something I never dreamed of. I am here, and I will become known to society.

“Notre Dame Education Center, means many things to me. My week is good because of the Center. I learn many new vocabulary words. My learning process is getting better day by day. The staff here is very good, I just have to keep practicing.” - Larrieux Orisma, ESOL 3



“NDEC is part of our family history. My sister-in-law graduated High School when NDEC used to be Cardinal Cushing. Now, here I am studying for my GED, hoping to get my certificate, and increasing my knowledge for a better future.” - Cepriana S. Zandi, GED



“NDEC is helping me open the doors to college I never thought would open again.” - Mariah Ann Kenney, GED



Students Speak!

Volume VII • Fall 2011



“NDEC is a school that not only hopes for the best in you, but brings out the best in you. NDEC is a small community of students and teachers who welcome everybody.” - Malika Smith, Pre-GED

“NDEC is a wonderful place. Here I learn English well and so many other things that help me in my life. I like NDEC. It is more than a school -- it is my home. I really enjoy it here and want to congratulate all of the teachers.” - Innocent A. Pierre-Antoine, ESOL 3



“At Notre Dame Education Center we learn to listen, understand, read, write. NDEC empowers its students -- both teenagers and adults -- to keep working for their education. NDEC has given me the skills to apply for a job so that I can take care of my children.”

- Annie Telamir, ESOL 4

“NDEC means a lot to me because before I came here I couldn't understand when someone spoke to me. Now I have been at NDEC for five years. I understand, listen, ask questions, and answer questions, too. I did my ESOL classes here, but now I'm in Pre-GED classes. I am so proud of the NDEC staff. Because of them I can defend myself. They gave me a tutor to help me with everything I need. I feel comfortable with them and want to stay here until I achieve my goals.” - Armelie Pierre, Pre-GED



“I keep learning different skills I can definitely use to prepare for the GED test and move on with life. It gives me a lot of courage to leave the house to come to school everyday and learn something new with a big smile on my face.” - Megan Alves, Pre-GED

“I have met the people that treat me with dignity and politeness and gave me the courage that helps me to stay strong.” - Ali Abdalla, ABE 2



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Culture & Tradition...

“A Memoir...”

by *Siou Li, ESOL*

My name is Siou Li. I was born in 1930. My native city is Nanchang, the capital of the Jiangxi province of China. My childhood passed during the time when Japanese imperialism was launching an aggressive war on China. They wanted to destroy all of China, and invaded and occupied China's large territory. The war wrecked many towns and cities, killed countless Chinese people: men, women and children. Millions and millions of Chinese people left their hometowns and lost their homes to drift from place to place, here and there, homeless and miserable. They wandered about in a desperate plight and led a vagabond life...

...In China, I was a teacher. In 1993, after I had taught for almost thirty years, I retired. In 1998 my wife and I came to the United States to take care of our grandchildren. Since then our lives have changed. We began to live in a peaceful, democratic, and different new world.

American people enjoy the pleasures of life with gusto, advocating for democracy and freedom. They have many good qualities. They are sociable and take pleasure in helping people, to name only a few. Whenever they go for a walk or a drive in the car, they wave and say, “Hi, how are you?” when they pass somebody. They find it a pleasure to help others. For example, all of my ESL teachers who have taught me over these years all love their jobs and are conscientious and tireless in their teaching. They are not only good teachers, but also nice models for me. I want to learn from them and will remember them forever.

“New Year in My Country”

by *Nghia Phan, ESOL Student*

New Year is very important to everybody in my country, Vietnam. Everybody wears new clothes for three days during the “New Year.” Every member of the family has to say the best words to each other, such as: “Good luck in the new year,” “Get big money in the new year,” “I hope you live until one hundred years old (to old people),” and “Have good health.” Grandfathers, grandmothers or parents will give their son or daughter “Lucky Money.” They put the money in a red bag. We hope everyone is lucky during the whole New Year.

“Thanksgiving”

by *Leslie Gonzalez, GED*

A special tradition in my family is Thanksgiving. Even though it's a holiday, we also consider it as a special day tradition. It's when all the family comes together and celebrates. Everybody brings their own special platters. It's a very nice feeling when we come together and gather as a family because it has been so long since we have seen each other. I get to see my aunts, uncles, nieces, cousins and third cousins. I love my family.



“A memorable moment...”

by *Quasheeda Horton, GED*

Tuesday, November 7, 2006. Was the most tragic night of my life, a rainy evening I could never forget. On this very night around 9:30p.m. my brother, Hakeem Horton at the age of 17 was found in a parking lot with two gun shot wounds to the head and pronounced dead on the scene. This was traumatizing for me and my family because he was an admired older brother who inspired me and my siblings. I claimed a very special bond with him that I felt, and still feel unbreakable. I will always hold this bond forever like as if he were still alive today. It may have been even stronger over the past years if he hadn't been set up by his killers. This was a moment that was very intense, shocking and unforgettable. I will always remember this day like it was yesterday. I can remember every single thing that had happened in that very moment that pain was being felt and still feeling because no justice has been served. I love my brother with all my heart and I always will. I'm keeping a hold onto the good and bad memories I keep locked and pictures that will always be in my presence. He's gone but never ever will be forgotten forever and truly missed by his seven siblings and mother. Hakeem is always in my heart. November 7th is always on my mind.

“Mexico”

by *Vera Hines, GED*

I went to Mexico for a wedding. My niece was getting married to a man called Uli. My niece, Sinead is from Ireland. She met Uli in Mexico on vacation in Talcum. Next, she is getting married, so I am going to the wedding. Sinead met me at the airport in Cancun. She drove me back to her house. She got dressed in a long white dress. We all went to church for her wedding ceremony with Uli. The best man and the maid of honor had all the same colors. The bridesmaids wore long blue dresses and the groomsmen wore their jackets which were also in blue. It was a good time to see all the people dressed up.

“My Family”

by *Sophie Xu*

I remember when I was fifteen years old. My father helped me and took me to start work to make money for my family to buy something. I had four sisters. We lived together without a mother, and our father loved us very much.

I remember when I went to another city for work because my city didn't have a factory. I took the bus for two days to find the job. I made the money for my sister to go to school to study anything she wanted and I worked very hard. I remember when I was fifteen years old and my family didn't have enough money.

Volunteer Appreciation

The key to our success at NDEC rests in people like you, who embody the spirit of generosity by saying, "Yes I can, and so can you!" Thanks for your inspiring dedication and tremendous example to the students at NDEC.

Now that your work is finished for this year, we say good bye with sad yet grateful hearts.

We want to thank you for your dedication, and being there from the very start. Words cannot convey our gratitude for your tremendous contribution.

Thank you so much for all of your hard work, kindness, patience and creativity.

We never could have asked for more dedicated volunteers.

It has been a pleasure and a privilege to work with you.

Thank you.



2010-2011 NDEC Volunteers

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| Lyz Alexandre | Dorothy MacDougall |
| Ann Berkeley | Clare McNeil |
| Diane Bernabei | Shakeema Mendez |
| Joel Blank | Elizabeth Michaels |
| Ann Brennan | Arthur Miller |
| Jose Briceno | James P. Miller |
| Marcia Campbell | Anne Mishkind |
| Jacera Carvalho | Laura Mora |
| Daniel Collins | Milton Morales |
| Peggy Cummins | Debra O'toole |
| Beverly Cunnio | Breanna Ockimey |
| Sy Danberg | Lasalette Ouellette |
| David Desjardins | Jin Min Park |
| Wesley Drew | Natasha Pena |
| Catherine Duran | Margarida Pina |
| Pauline Edmonds | Carol Pistorino |
| Katherine Fahey | Albana Qinami |
| Robert Ford | Carol Queeney |
| James E. Fowkes | Jaqueline Riso |
| Gregory Galizio | Grace Rooney |
| Lourdette Gangemi | Elena Rutledge |
| Joan Grant | Lauren Sanderson |
| David Horsfall | Jade Santos |
| Kathryn Impastato | Enrique Tensuan |
| Kristen Impastato | Jaqueline Tierce |
| Patricia Johnson | Alex Tringali |
| Ryan Jong | Dan Twomey |
| Anne Joyce | Louis Valenzo |
| Kathleen Lawlor | Nikolas Westfield |
| Mereille Leger | Leisolt Whitbeck |
| Natalie Lemard | Mary Whitney |
| Sandra Levine | Nia Wingard |
| Jonathan Lorie | Nicole Zanardi |

2011 Student Easter Baskets!

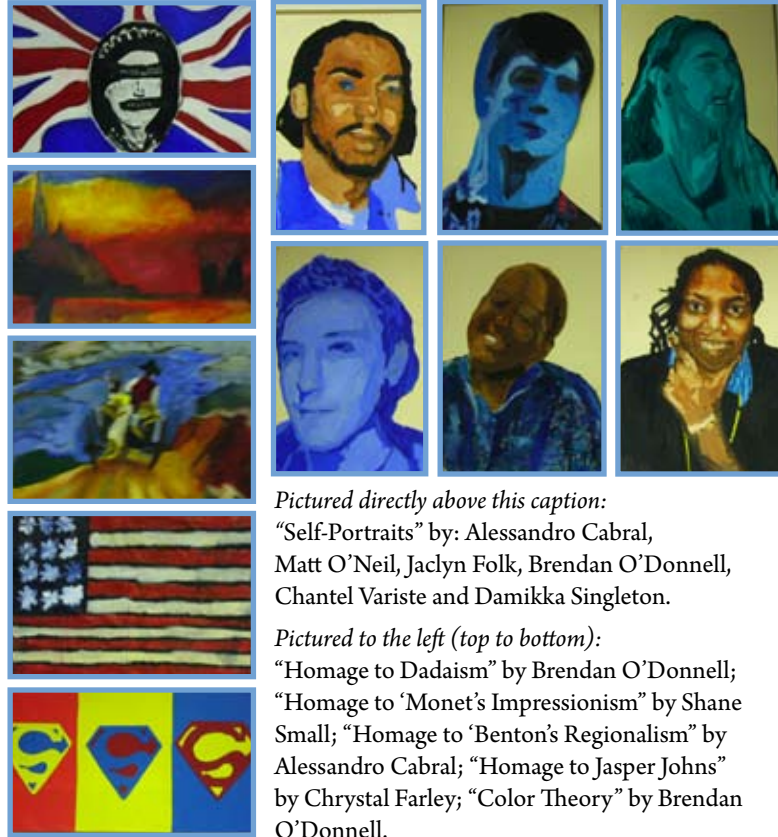


Each basket was generously donated by Notre Dame Academy, of Hingham, MA.

High School Diploma Program



Pictured above: Andele Jerome and Brian Joyce, students HSDP '11, modeled recently for the Neponset Health Center's Community Program & Youth Service AIDS / HIV awareness ad campaign.



Pictured directly above this caption: "Self-Portraits" by: Alessandro Cabral, Matt O'Neil, Jaclyn Folk, Brendan O'Donnell, Chantel Variste and Damikka Singleton.

Pictured to the left (top to bottom): "Homage to Dadaism" by Brendan O'Donnell; "Homage to 'Monet's Impressionism'" by Shane Small; "Homage to 'Benton's Regionalism'" by Alessandro Cabral; "Homage to Jasper Johns" by Chrystal Farley; "Color Theory" by Brendan O'Donnell.

Congrats January 2011 HSDP Graduates!

Vladimir Bellgarde	Reggie Gardner	Brendan O'Donnell
Alessandro Cabral	Ryan Gurley	Matthew O'Neil
Jacqueline Capuzzo	Amarilis Hernandez	George O'Reilly
Jaclyn Folk	Jennifer Joseph	Damikka Singleton
	Ariel Middleton	

List of "Awesomes"

by NDEC's High School Diploma Program Students

- 1.) "I love when my family comes together and has a great group discussion. It's not typical because we all have busy days, but when it happens it makes me feel good." - Terrance Hines
- 2.) "After walking the runway, I feel awesome." - Andele Jerome
- 3.) "When I go tanning, I feel awesome." - Marylin Joyce
- 4.) "When I'm with my son, I feel awesome." - Edilia Bernabe
- 5.) "When I'm really hungry and I eat my favorite foods, I feel awesome." - Lena Rojas
- 6.) "When I wake up on Tuesday and know I don't have to go to school until 3:30p.m. and can sleep late, I feel awesome." - David Dias
- 7.) "When I go to the barber shop for a line-up, I feel awesome." - Robert Bond
- 8.) "Miracles done with a deck of cards is more than awesome." - Amos Darbee
- 9.) "When Labron drops 30, I feel awesome." - Robert Bond
- 10.) "When I visit my nana in the nursing home/rehab center and we have a meaningful visit. Also, when the Bruins win!" - Shane Small
- 11.) "When I go shopping with my friends! To me, it compares to speaking a second language, which is awesome!" - Alea Clark-Thomas
- 12.) "The support my Grampie gives me is awesome." - Julia Clancy
- 13.) "Playing my guitar really loud is awesome." - Chris Lordan, teacher HSDP
- 14.) "When my daughter looks at me in that special way." - Crystal Farley
- 15.) "Making my mummy happy makes me feel awesome." - Brian Joyce
- 16.) "After I've been painting for three hours, and I finally reach the zone, my awesome is when I can continue painting for five more hours and really get my groove on." - Donna Pomponio, Program Coordinator
- 17.) "Meeting Mr. Lacoste and having him show me the ropes." - Shane O'Brien
- 18.) It is awesome when you come across a student and/or parent who you haven't seen in months or years and they say "Thank You" for the work you did in helping to raise or navigate the young person! - Mr. Lacoste, Case Manager
- 19.) "I am awesome." - BS

"When I came to the USA..."

by Hodan Gelle

When I came to the USA from my country, I was miserable, alone and I didn't feel like eating food or doing anything because I was missing my friends all the time. I was frustrated because I didn't know anyone at school or anyone who spoke my language or understood me. I couldn't even speak the language of this country, and it was very hard for me to understand what people were talking about. When I went to my new school, everything was complicated. It was difficult to make new friends because there were so many differences between my culture and the culture of the USA. I was afraid to be with my classmates. I had a horrible time and I felt alone, that there was nobody with me. I focused on trying to reach my goals and on taking advantage of opportunities to learn.

"My life in the U.S.A."

by Carolina Zabala

My life in the United States has totally changed, but it is a change for the better. When I came to this country in October 2011, I was so afraid because of 9/11. I wanted to come here no matter what. I knew this country was beautiful before I came because I was watching the TV. and I saw the snow on TV. and the way people live.

My life changed for the better because the opportunity this country has is for everyone. The law is for everyone. I feel so happy because my daughter was born here in MA and she was born early at 24 weeks. If she were born in my country probably she would not be alive because the care in the hospital is not as good. That was one of the ways this country started to get my heart. Also, the money I make from work allows me to buy clothes for me and my daughter.

I love this beautiful country. I brought my parents here one month ago and they're happy too. If I were born again, I would like to be born in the U.S.A. The beach in South Boston is here, the restaurants like Olive Garden and in the country there are very nice places. The opportunity in this country is always there, but I have to put in an effort and work for that dream.

Cultural Heritage day: Celebrating Diversity!

Many would say that Cultural Heritage day is the happiest day of the year at NDEC! This year's Heritage Day held November 23, 2010 was no exception. Heritage Day was a joyful this year. Through a colorful array of song, dance, artifacts, traditional costumes and many kinds of food we learned about and celebrated the diverse cultures among us! At the end of the day the staff at NDEC led all in the song, God Bless America. Thanks to all who made the day a wonderful success! We are already looking forward to Cultural Heritage Day, 2011!

"The War in Kurdistan"

by Zheyah Ahmed

The Kurdish people all over the world want a free Kurdistan. In the 1990s, Kurdish people from Iraq were told to be killed by Saddam Hussein's regime. We had to run to the mountains to hide and keep ourselves from the killings and the damage to our cities. The Iraqi government told us that they would be bombing and killing Kurdish people days and nights until there were no Kurds left. We lived in the mountains for a whole month with limited food, water and poor hygiene. We lived in tents and many people died of hunger, cold weather and diseases. Saddam did this because we Kurds wanted freedom. I lost my aunt and my cousin in his Gulf War and many people were killed for no reason.

"My Story"

by Elvira Leka

I grew up in a big city, Tirana. My city is the capital of Albania. It was a beautiful city. There I finished university in 1975. There I created a wonderful family: my husband, my son, my daughter and me. But my children had a new vision for their lives. My son has lived in the US for a long time. My daughter has lived in Belgium for three years. I'm a mother two times and a grandmother three times. I came to the U.S.A. in March 2008. Here everything has changed for me. I'm not young but I have more energy. I'm going to NDEC. for English classes. Here I am happy. I'm learning English. I know many friends from many countries. The staff at NDEC. is very friendly and there are good teachers. I feel very comfortable. My school finishes in June but I will continue to learn for more time. I am thinking about other schools, maybe for nursing, nursing assistant, phlebotomy or for banking. I hope and I'm sure my life is good and soon my life will be better.



My Journey to the USA...

“It wasn’t true...”

by Maryan Wayreh

I came to the U.S.A. in 2005. The reason was that my husband was in the U.S.A. I thought everything was cheap, beautiful and easy but it wasn't true. When I was in Africa, my favorite thing was American movies and I thought they were true but they weren't.

After that, when I came to the U.S.A., the first week I said to my husband, “Please, I want to go back to the place I came from,” because my husband was a student and he couldn't rent a good house or apartment. He lived in a one bedroom only and he shared with other people one bathroom, one kitchen, one sitting room and I never had seen that life. I never had seen cold weather.

This country and my country are different. That difference is when I was in my country our neighbors were your uncle or aunty but in this country neighbors are afraid of each other because they have different languages, cultures, traditions and different religions.



Citizenship students pictured above: Leydi Mercedes, Michelle Baez, Aminata Diallo, Marie Borgard, and Luz Miranda Perez

The NDEC Citizenship Program

by Nora Gerety, AmeriCorps Volunteer

The citizenship program at Notre Dame Education Center, run by Sr. Gerry Stanton, seeks to help students to obtain citizenship. Sr. Gerry teaches a Citizenship course that runs 10 weeks and prepares students for the written and oral parts of the test. Sr. Gerry also meets with students one on one to help them through the application process and finally to practice interview questions from the application.

Sr. Gerry also relies on dedicated tutors that help students from her Citizenship Class who will take the test soon to practice interview questions. Sr. Dorothy MacDougall SCN and Sr. Clare McNeil SCN are two tutors who have been volunteering at NDEC for the past three years.

The Sisters identified the need for more aid for women seeking citizenship during their volunteer work at NDEC and decided to write a grant that would provide funding to help women pay the cost of the citizenship application. Sr. Clare writes, “We wished to focus on women seeking citizenship because we believe that women often are raising a family while struggling to enrich their own lives. Educating themselves and attaining citizenship enables women to be role models for their children, especially their girls.”

Working with Sr. Gerry and staff members at Notre Dame Education Center, Srs. Dorothy and Clare are helping to begin a program using the grant funding that will supplement the cost of submitting the citizenship application. This grant has sparked new ideas, practices and conversations that will allow the program to grow and accommodate as many women as possible in future years.

“...trying to accomplish my dream.”

by Yanick Valles

The way I came to the USA is by my godmother. When I was in Haiti, my godmother usually paid for my school every month. After she had been in the U.S.A. for 20 years, she went back to Haiti. She paid somebody \$3000 US dollars to buy a visa for me in 1987. That was when I entered in New York City. I spent 6 months in my godmother's house. She put me in night school to learn English, which was very helpful for learning English. Then, I had a babysitting job to take care of a 6 year old girl. I worked for them for a good year. From there, I went to work for an agency as a home health aid and took care of elderly people. My goal was to go to school to become a nurse but in 1991 I had my first son. I didn't have any help then and I was unable to pursue my dream to become a nurse but I still wanted to become a nurse. That's the reason I came to NDEC. I know it's never too late to have your dream come true. In order for me to have my dream come true all I need to do is to learn how to write English. That's the reason I am here at NDEC trying to accomplish my dream.



Congratulations, New USA Citizens!

List of new citizens for the school year of 2010-2011:

Safiya Aden
Gladys Guevara
Jenneh Sherriff
Elonora Laka
Postal Laka
Nikollaq Llupa
Leni Llupa
Francesca Garcia
Rahel Denke
Arlette Perez
Maryan Wayrah
Martine Dor
Huseyin Cerkez
Innocent A. Pierre Antoine
Shoa Le
Ayan Nuh
Feng Ming Du
Marleny Villar
Sosi Laci
Vindia D'Leon
Marleda Polanco
Gail Durant

This years students to be sworn in as citizens in May and June:

Hodan Gelle
Howa Mohamed
Cai Dinh
Juana Santana
Hiadatu Diallo

This year's students waiting for their interview in May or June:

Oscar Flores
Maryan Mohammed
Jackie Charlot
Onelite Latus
Patricia Bogard
Amininata Diallo
Avril Atherton
Marie Borgard

Student Poetry...

“Memories That Will Never Fade...”

by Matthew Watts, GED

The way that the wind blew through our hair, made us think about the last time we approached it. The water ran stream fully over the beginning of the sand. Then the water finally touched our toes that had been roughly edging in the sand for more than seven hours.

“The ocean is a peaceful place to be,” she said to me.

Later on in the day, we walked across the boardwalk, looking at all the nice stores like the Love Shack, Patty's Palace, and, of course, Sunny Days. It was the most beautiful, peaceful, and stress free day that we had together in a long time. All thanks to my best friend, my mother.

“Beach House”

by Patrick McDonough, GED

Never shall I forget how nice the location of our house is in South Dennis.

Never shall I forget how the summer breeze hits my face.

Never shall I forget how peaceful the summer nights are.

Never shall I forget how beautiful the water looks as the moon shines down on it.

Never shall I forget all of the fun I had growing up with all the games we played.

“Never Shall I Forget”

by Edison Reyes, Literacy Student

Never shall I forget the day my son Andre was born.

Never shall I forget the day I stared into his big black soulful eyes.

Never Shall I forget the first time he said,

“No daddy, I can do it myself.”

Never shall I forget his “why” stage.

Why daddy? Why daddy? Why daddy?

Never shall I forget the day I realized that my baby boy was growing up.

“My memory for my aunt”

by Bayard Bien-Aime, GED

I still remember my aunt the way she was before she died.

Never shall I forget her ways of doing things.

Never shall I forget how she used to walk.

Never shall I forget how she used to talk.

Never shall I forget how she used to laugh.

Never shall I forget how she used to treat others.

Never shall I forget all of the good things she had done for me when she was alive.

Never shall I forget the day that I said good bye to her at the funeral home,

For all the good things she had done for me before she left.

“Never Shall I forget my Birthplace”

by Cepriana S. Zandi, GED

I shall never forget the place where I grew up. I can still hear the chickens at 3 o'clock in the morning, reminding us that it is time to get up. Then the cows start mooing telling us that it is time to feed them. Oh! What a nice feeling it was to know that even the animals need you.

I shall never forget my mother's home cooking that she prepared for us everyday. I can still smell the freshness of the vegetables, the sweetness of the fresh fish caught from the fisherman next door. Oh Mama! I long for it.

“Never shall I forget Max”

by Angela Dapkas, GED

Never shall I forget his long legs, the way he kicks when he is playing. Never shall I forget how loving he is, always wanting to cuddle and sit next to me.

Never shall I forget how hyper he is, jumping around everywhere and running really fast.

Never shall I forget how cute he is, not too big, brown with big spots.

Never shall I forget walking with him.

“My beautiful island”

by Carlo Picanco, GED

Never shall I forget the island where I was born and raised. The beach where the water is warm and the waves are great.

Never shall I forget the friendly people that walk around on a summer night.

Never shall I forget the beautiful, long, warm, sunny days.

Never shall I forget the spicy food tingling my tongue.

Never shall I forget this beautiful tropical island where I was born and raised.

“My Mother”

by Annette Lucas, GED

Never shall I forget my mother.

Never shall I forget her long, curly hair, black as midnight.

Never shall I forget her charming wit and funny personality.

Never shall I forget her tiny little feet, stepping as a small child.

Never shall I forget her cry, as she sobbed and wept like a little child.

Never shall I forget as I hug her, she was short like a little child.

Never shall I forget she is the strongest, most influential person in my life.

“I am who I am”

by Anderson Laurent, GED

I am who I am because of the way I was raised by family and friends. They have shown me how to be myself and how to live my life. I am also who I am by making the right moves to better my self and learning from my mistakes. And always love life, regardless of what happens.