



Xavier Adekunle

11th Grade

Green High School

LeadDIVERSITY's Promote Change Competition

\$1,000 Cash Prize Winner

A Better Tomorrow Starts with Our Character Today

In a world full of hatred, tragedy, and sorrow

Where can one look for a better tomorrow?

Turn on the news and my eyes are dismayed,

Mosque bombing in Egypt 305 lives taken away.

Child sex-trafficking around the world is on the rise

10-year-old girls forced into the prostitution industry of lies.

Third-world countries don't have enough resources to survive

Everyday children wake up unable to eat, drink, and thrive.

All I do is sit and stare, for what else is a 15-year-old like me to do?

I have no car, no job, no money, nor power to contribute.

I have a family that loves me, three meals a day, a roof over my head;

I got a formal education, a good future ahead of me, a comfortable bed.

But something disturbs me as I go to sleep every night,

The fact that our society does very little to contribute to this fight.

We Americans give more attention to our own problems of distress

We're always looking for more because we can't settle for less.

We've done so little yet we expect everything to be given

I grow up in a generation where I don't have to work hard to be livin'.

I can cheat and lie to receive the good grade I need to succeed at school

I have to snap pictures of myself in order to be perceived as “cool”.

The approval of others determines my self-worth

If this is what our priorities are turning into what shall become of this Earth?

Whatever happened to having integrity for oneself?

Whatever happened to having dignity for oneself?

I continue to ask myself this as I continue to evolve

As the world continues to make mistakes that we continue not to solve.

We could rant all we want but nothing would change

Unless we put into action a solution within range.

In order to secure a better future for generations to come

We must take a glimpse inside ourselves to see what we’ve become.

It's human nature to deny our flaws and look the other way

Always looking for someone else to pass on the blame.

It all starts with our own humility and self-discipline to show compassion

Our willingness to be kind and loving to one another should be our one true passion.

It requires courage to speak up for those without a voice

It's up to us to take a stand and make that simple choice.

Those of us with privilege need to sacrifice for those without

Giving to benefit others is how justice will come about.

It only takes one person to bring about change

Having true character is the best human value one could ever obtain.

Keeping this in mind has changed the way I live my life

It's given me a new perspective on how I can solve the world's strife.

We have made this idea of leadership something beyond what we can achieve

But anyone can make a difference, for a solution is within reach.

By changing one person's character and thoughts you can start a chain reaction

By proving to others that you are the one who determines your own actions.

It only takes one small spark to ignite a wildfire

You could be that light to the world and spread it even wider.

With every small chance that each one of us makes

We'll eventually find the solutions to the problems our world creates.

In order to accomplish these goals, we wish to achieve

We must be willing to reach out and grab them in order to succeed.

Artist Statement: *"I've come to believe that the true measure of our commitment to justice, the character of our society, our commitment to the rule of law, fairness, and equality cannot be measured by how we treat the rich, the powerful, the privileged, and the respected among us. The true measure of our character is how we treat the poor, the disfavored, the accused, the incarcerated, and the condemned."~Bryan Stevenson. The first step to promoting change in our communities is by first promoting change in ourselves. Our character is what defines us as human beings and upholding ourselves to high ethical standards is how we can be upstanders and fight against the world's injustices. You are never too young to make a difference and start this domino effect by being an influence in at least one person's life. A solution to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion is within our own reach. We just have to carry out our passions in order to accomplish these goals.*