Dreamers without Borders

EDUARDO LOPEZ
STAFF WRITER

Imagine moving to a new country with your spouse and 8 month old baby with a dream to have a better life for them. The emotions you endure because you to brave new territories, you learn to survive differently, and learn the languages and laws of the land in order to fulfill that dream.

For some like me, this wasn’t a dream. This was my reality. I was that baby. My parents made the biggest decision of their life and they moved to Chicago, IL. I applied during the summer to a program called “Dreamers without Borders.” This program was something that could help me in my journey to learn more about the land of my birth, my family, and could help my academic career.

The U.S.-Mexico Foundation’s “Dreamers without Borders” is an educational and service learning program that seeks to reconnect DACA Dreamers of Mexican origin that lives in the United States with their country of origin, for the purpose of contributing to their empowerment and professional development.

Well over 800 students applied from across the United States for this opportunity of a lifetime, as some people are not as fortunate to travel back to the country of their birth. Travel between the United States and Mexico is not only expensive, but also hard with travel restrictions and issues with immigration occurring frequently; which is a major concern as President Trump continues to threaten to build his wall, separating the U.S from Mexico.

Out of this pool of students, I was selected as one of the 100 recipients chosen that went to Mexico. I was so happy because so many have applied for this experience. Although I am a full-time student, working full-time and the President of the STEM Club on campus, I jumped at this opportunity. Not only because it was going to allow me to reconnect DACA Dreamers of Mexican origin that lives in the United States with their country of origin, but have a major impact on my education and professional journey. So during this past winter break, I got to fulfill my dream. I traveled back to Mexico; reunited with my family, and learned more about my Mexican heritage.

Contrary to popular belief, the program wasn’t just about seeing your family, but also about networking with other college students. The goal was to help each other in any shape or form, uniting us through education and our roots. The first couple days was bout the entire group visiting museums and learning about Mexico as a whole and in the following weeks, we broke into groups that originated from certain states.

The group I was assigned to visited Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México, where we were invited as guests to meet the Rector (what we consider the president of the university) Dr. Jorge Olvera Garcia of UAEM. The group had an amazing time getting to know about the university and for him to get to know them. The “Dreamers” also met with various politicians and talked about how the government works in the Estado de Mexico.

After the educational requirements were met with the groups, the students were allowed to separate and were given time to see their families. The feeling I got the moment I saw my family was indescribable. After 24 years of not seeing them or being in my homeland, it was a dream come true. Even to this day, it still feels surreal. The experience I gained while on my trip has given me more knowledge in the path to my career and future.

I am proud to not only have been able to have been chosen, but to represent my school as well. I am proud to be a Pioneer, and a Dreamer without a Border.

Photo Courtesy of Eduardo Lopez

Super Bowl Miracle: The Patriots and Patriotism

RAMON MORGAN
STAFF WRITER

2017 Super Bowl was one of the greatest, if not the greatest football game everplayed.

The NFL’s #1 offense, The Atlanta Falcons, went up against the NFL’s #1 defense, The New England Patriots. It was an amazing matchup. The Falcons leader, Matt Ryan, was named the Most Valuable Player by the National Football League. Ryan finished the 2016 NFL season throwing a league low 7 interceptions in 16 games earning the nickname Matty Ice. Patriots Quarterback Tom Brady, who many analysts see as the greatest player of this generation, had a lot to prove for the 2016 season. Brady was suspended by the NFL 4 games after gameballs were underinflated in the 2015 AFC Championship game.

The Patriots had a lot to prove this season. The team was stripped of its 2016 first round NFL draft pick. Tom Brady was in his 7th Super Bowl, and their initial possessions were very short. Offensive drives going 3 plays and out. Brady was named the MVP by LeGarrette Blount. The Falcons’ number one passing attack would take advantage of this. Matt Ryan threw 2 touchdowns against the Patriots; secondary, which struggled early on. The Falcons thus took an early 14-0 lead. The next possession on offense Tom Brady drove the Patriots all the way to the red zone. But then he threw an interception to Robert Alford. Alford ran all the way to the other end zone for 82 yards, the second longest interception return in Super Bowl history. New England was down 21-0. To some, the game looked over. Only three teams had overcome a 10-point deficit in the Super Bowl, including the Patriots in 2014. Now they were down 21-0. At halftime, the Falcons had a 21-3 lead. The Patriots needed a miracle. The next 28 minutes, Brady and the other 11 players on the Patriots would go on to score 24 straight points, including two 2-point conversions.

The Patriots shut out the Falcons high powered offense to force an overtime for the first time in the Super Bowl’s 51 year history after a 28-28 tie. The Patriots won the toss and selected to receive the ball. It was the beginning of the end. In just eight plays in under 4 minutes, Brady’s passing lead the Patriots to the game winning touchdown. On the 2 yard line James White ran it in for his third touchdown of the game. The greatest comeback in Super Bowl history. More than 30 Super Bowl records were tied or broken. Tom Brady surpassed Joe Montana and Terry Bradshaw for most wins by starting quarterback with five. He broke Kurt Warner’s passing record with 466 yards. This Super Bowl will never be forgotten. It was watched by 111.3 million people. Super Bowls are indeed another American Holiday.

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Black History Month, or National African American History Month, is a celebration of achievements by Black Americans that occurs during the month of February each year. This time is dedicated to those who have contributed to the advancement of Black people and for recognizing the central role of African Americans in U.S. history. Black people are responsible for some of the most groundbreaking inventions, technological, scientific, and medicinal breakthroughs. Without them, the world would not be how it is today. So we pay tribute with this celebration of achievement.

The event grew out of "Negro History Week," the idea of noted historian Carter G. Woodson and other prominent African Americans. Since 1979, every U.S. president has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month. Other countries around the world, including Canada and the United Kingdom, also devote a month to celebrating black history.

Everyone has a duty to recognize Black History Month as more than just another month in the year. This should be a time of celebration and remembrance of African-Americans and black people everywhere. However, we choose to live in the days of old, and fail to acknowledge the celebration of Black people due to their own personal prejudices. Contrary to those beliefs, Black History Month is very important to all, because the upcoming generations should be taught the significance and meaning behind the month and how far the black race has come despite all of the setbacks they (we) have encountered. The voices of our people continue to be heard and no amount of hatred or threat of punishment can take away the accomplishments of those that came before us and those that will come after us. "The African race is a rubber ball. The harder you dash it to the ground, the higher it will rise."

African Proverb**

Chicago Events: Black History Month Calendar

Feb 14 | American Masters—Maya Angelou
The legacy of renowned American poet and civil rights activist Maya Angelou will be featured during this free screening of American Masters—Maya Angelou: And Still I Rise. A short discussion will take place after the documentary. (Blue 16/47 Tech Innovation Center, 1647 S Blue Island Ave, 6:30-9:30pm, RSVP here)

Feb 15 | 5 African American Women Learn more about five black women (Phyllis Wheatley, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Gwendolyn Brooks and Harriet Tubman, Phyllis Wheatley, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman) who helped shaped American society. (DuSable Museum of African-American History, 740 E 56th Place, 11am-noon, $10)

Feb 16 | Lecture: Dr. Rick Kittles
Rick Kittles, co-founder and scientific director of African Ancestry Inc., will highlight the ways DNA can shed light on the past and reveal the hidden complexity of African American heritage. (DuSable Museum of African-American History, 740 E 56th Place, 6:30-8pm, $10)

Feb 16 | Rest in Power: The Enduring Life of Trayvon Martin
The parents of Trayvon Martin, Sybrina Fulton and Tracy Martin, discuss how they launched a national movement following the death of their son. (First United Methodist Church at the Chicago Temple, 77 W Washington St, 6-7:15pm, $10-$20)

Feb 17 | Culture Jam at Amundsen
Celebrate Black History Month with live entertainment, line dancing, an arts and crafts fair, music, poetry readings and youth performances. (Amundsen Park, 6200 W Balmoral Ave, 2-8pm)

Feb 17-18 | From Civil Rights to Black Power: Tracing the African American Freedom Struggle
Early civil rights advocates and young people who have taken up the struggle will come together for a two-day conference of discussion, film and music. (Roosevelt University, 430 S Michigan Ave, 8:30am-5pm both days)

Feb 18 | Black History Month
Feb 18 | Gentrified-Ethnic Cleansing: American Style
The creator of the documentary will present a screening of the new film Gentrified-Ethnic Cleansing: American Style. (Harold Washington Cultural Center, 4701 S King Drive, 6-8pm)

Feb 19-26 | 2017 Black Fashion Week USA
This lineup of caparison, trade and fashion shows and events are geared toward the economic end brand development of fashions designers of color. (Various locations. More info here.)

Feb 21 | Author Talk with Erin Mitchell
The author of From Colored to Black, Erin Mitchell, leads a discussion of her work. (Chicago Public Library’s Avalon branch, 8148 S Cottage Grove Ave, 7-8pm)

Feb 22 | Black History Program at Austin Town Hall
This annual black history program will feature dance performances, a children’s play, adult poetry, and a viewing and remembrance of famous black Americans. (Austin Town Hall, 5610 S Lake St, 6-8pm)

Feb 22-23 | Black History Month Concert Series
The Chicago Children’s Choir will be joined by Voice of Chicago for this Black History Month performance. (Symphony Center, 220 S Michigan Ave, 10:45am both days)

Feb 23 | Black History Month Calendar
Feb 23 | Black Words Matter
Chuck Smith will lead a lecture on black theatre in Chicago and the post-August Wilson generation of writers. (Harold Washington Library Center, 400 S State St, 6:30-8:30pm, Seating is first come, first served)

Feb 26 | 2017 Black History Celebration at Washington Park
The Ashaki Black History Month celebration will feature cultural exhibits, delicious food and live entertainment. (Washington Park, 5551 S Martin Luther King Drive, 10am-3pm)

Feb 26 | Black History Month Celebration at Loyola
Celebrate the rich history of African American, African and Caribbean ethnicities through music, poetry and historical remembrances. (Loyola Park, 1230 W Greenleaf Ave, noon-2pm)

Feb 27 | How Deep Are Your Roots? East, Think, Grow
You can grow who you are by what you eat—storytellers Dr. Yocha Brownlee and Bafia Tony will explore this African experience of staying healthy through stories, music, brand and conversation. (Chicago Public Library’s Richard M. Daley-W Humboldt branch, 733 N Kedzie Ave, 2-3pm)

Feb 27 | A Celebration of Cultural Heritage
Using stories, poems, drums and folk tales, storyteller Obo Williams King will explore the richness of African American culture. (Chicago Public Library’s McKinley Park branch, 1915 W 35th St, 6-8pm)
Gift ideas for the broke Lover

Lush has a great section of bath bombs and bubble bars to make her bath look, feel and smell amazing. They come in an array of colors, smells and prices, but range from 5 to 15 dollars each. Bath and body works also has amazing smells for amazing prices. Their bubble bath, body scrubs, and body wash are all around 15 dollars and they have an endless array of scents to choose from.

Even though women are usually doted on during Valentine’s Day, men also deserve some love. A great idea for men is a gift card to their favorite restaurant. Buffalo Wild Wings, Chipotle, Outback Steak House, Potbellies, and Texas Roadhouse all have cards for 25$, which is a good price for a date. Another good option is a gift card for iTunes. They come in various denominations from 5 to 25 dollars. For the man who is a tad fashion-challenged, a nice shirt is a good choice. Target has an endless array of shirts to make his wardrobe look amazing.

John Wick: Chapter 2: This is the sequel to the 2014 film John Wick. After returning to the criminal underworld to repay a debt, John Wick discovers that a large bounty has been put on his life and so he goes on the run. It stars Keanu Reeves, Common, Laurence Fishburne, Riccardo Scamarcio, Ruby Rose, John Leguizamo, and Ian McShane, and marks the first collaboration between Reeves and Fishburne since appearing together in the Matrix trilogy. This movie is one that may be worth checking out.

Fifty Shades Darker: This film is a sequel to the controversial film 50 Shades of Grey. In this film, Christian Grey will be battling his own inner demons while his love interest Anastasia must confront the anger and envy of the women who came before her in his life. Just like the film before it, it will feature some steamy scenes and if that’s your thing, you may be interested in seeing it this Valentine’s Day.

The Batman Lego Movie: This is the second installment in the Lego movie franchise. The first was critically acclaimed for its wit and satirical look at various characters in pop culture, including Batman. Lego Batman now has his own movie and it will feature other characters such as The Joker, Batgirl and Robin. This movie is guaranteed to make you at least crack a smile, and is great for group dates!

La La Land: This is a modern day musical that stars Emma Stone and Ryan Gosling. Mia, an aspiring actress, serves lattes to movie stars in between auditions and Sebastian, a jazz musician, scrapes by playing cocktail party gigs in dingy bars, but as success mounts they are faced with decisions that begin to fray the fragile fabric of their love affair, and the dreams they worked so hard to maintain in each other threaten to rip them apart. It’s a throwback to film classics such as Singing in The Rain. It is just the right touch for that classic V-day love.

Hidden Figures: It tells the untold story of three brilliant black women who worked for NASA in the 1960s helped launched the spaceships that sent the first men to the moon. This gripping historical drama will really make you think. When society holds back a marginalized group, it is holding back achievement and progress for everyone. It is perfect for a date AND Black History Month.

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The Pioneer 2014 film John Wick: Chapter 2: Based on the best-selling novel of the same name, a dog looks to discover his purpose in life over the course of several lifetimes and owners. Guaranteed to be a tear-jerker, we recommend this movie if you are feeling sentimental.

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Images courtesy of amctheaters.com
Ebony Hampton is what most people would describe as a generally outstanding person. Whether we are discussing her as Editor in Chief of The Pioneer, her mentoring in various women’s empowerment groups, her activist work, and her dream to one day start her own foundation for empowering women, it is hard to contest that she is truly an accomplished humanitarian. However, you may be wondering how she got to this point in her life, surely a list of such accolades must come from someone with a supportive family, a happy childhood, the perfect friend, she had a great life! Well, I am sorry to admit that this is not the case.

From even early on in her life Ebony has been facing struggles, adversity, and oppression. When I sat down to talk with Ebony about her beginnings it was not a happy conversation. From an early age she did not possess a great set of social skills and found it very difficult to make friends. Most of her grade school years were spent in the school library where she befriended the school librarian. Ebony already had a love of books and the creative arts, she shared with The Pioneer that books had taken her to a place of her own; a world where she didn’t have to face the troubles of her day to day life. She was abused, bullied, and torn down. Her pain was not change the things around her, however, she is still facing struggles and challenges as a child was more than the average person experiences even into adulthood. Times were always dark, that is until she decided they were not going to be. Knowing she could not change the things around her she changed herself, by persuing her passion of reading and writing by channeling her outlets, and by sheer force of will Ebony has, is, and will continue to fight no matter how hard or how desperate it becomes. She is an everyday hero, standing up for what she believes in, and what she believes is right.

No matter what life throws at you keep going, dear reader. Never give up on your goals. You have more than any other time in her life she was still having trouble fitting in with everyone else. Home life had not gotten any better at this point, but she did find some outlets to help cope with the troubles. She turned to sports for her aggression and reading and writing for her expression. Now more so than any other time in her life she was starting to feel some control, but like all good things it did not last too long.

Now at this time we want you to consider the person we have just laid out for you, this poor girl has been abused and neglected from before she can even remember. From the very moment of conception, she was doomed to a life of pain and torment. Every corner she turned life was following her, nearly everything she was abused, bullied, nearly everything in her life was painful. That is, except for the kind heart of a school Librarian who helped to foster what would become Ebony’s saving grace, her love of literature and the creative arts.

Enter now her college years: She joined the school newspaper when she re-enrolled in Prairie State College and unbeknownst to her, was being groomed early on for the position of Editor in Chief. Within no time she was chosen as Editor in Chief had stepped down and almost unannouncedly her peers on the paper agreed with her appointment to the vacant position. To Ebony, leadership and the responsibility that came with it, was an escape from the problems of her day to day life. The weight of the position was enough to offset the weight of her pain. Now that she loved her position, life had gotten better for her, however, she is still facing struggles and challenges that would make the normal person have quit long ago. In fact she has just recently overcome being homeless for almost a year, living in a car while still making it to school, where she maintained her A’s and B’s, despite her situation. Now with a roof over her head and her loving boyfriend, Tyler, she feels as powerful as ever, ready to take on the world that keeps trying to hold her down.

Her story is one of many others here at PSC. We all appear to be regular students, but sometimes our lives are anything but normal. Ebony is a testament to how far a person can fall and still climb back up. From the very moment of her birth Ebony had a deck stacked against her. She was abused, bullied, beat up, and torn down. Her pain as a child was more than the average person experiences even into adulthood. Times were always dark, that is until she decided they were not going to be. Knowing she could not change the things around her she changed herself, by persuing her passion of reading and writing by channeling her outlets, and by sheer force of will Ebony has, is, and will continue to fight no matter how hard or how desperate it becomes. She is an everyday hero, standing up for what she believes in, and what she believes is right.

Without every edition of The Pioneer, we want to bring you the everyday heroes that walk our halls and those that share our community. Every person goes through their struggles; every single person alive has their pain. We never talk about it, we never open up to who we really are. We want to show you all that we you not alone, your pain is not your own, your struggles are not to be shouldered by just you. We can relate to pain and hardships, even if we have never gone through what you have, we can still be there for you because we know how it feels to be hurt, betrayed, lost, or worse.
“Valentine”

Shelly Asas
Staff Writer

Attention PSC: Hear me out! It’s time to tell you what this is all about! It’s Valentine’s Day today! So let’s talk about what usually takes place in this special day.

Love, romance, smiles, laughter. Where couples, friends, families, and new lovers take the time to spend time with each other. To appreciate one another, to get closer than ever either emotionally, physically, mentally, spiritually. Being with each other is where they want to be.

Hearts can either be a symbol or a reminder. A symbol of love, or a reminder of another. Another moment where you wanted to forget but also a reminder that it’s not time to give up yet.

Everyone deserves to be happy. However, we have to wait patiently. As life continues, to teach us throughout life. It’s more beneficial and exciting to walk through the journey, than rush to get a husband, boyfriend, girlfriend, or wife.

But hold up a minute. I’m not trying to be sad now, not even a little bit! So it’s important to keep your head up. For some people, they’re so down, they want their life to stop.

If anything, at the very least just know deep down, the idea of having someone love you hasn’t ceased. It’s still very true that someone does love you. Almighty God above, remember his love.

For more poetry by Shelly “Shawtie Shizzell” Asas, visit https://www.facebook.com/shawtiepoetblogspot and look out for her in later issues of The Pioneer!

*The Pioneer and Prairie State College are not responsible for the views of the writers. This is a personal statement.

*Images appearing on page 2 courtesy of Pinterest.

Vision Statement

To be recognized as Prairie State College’s leading and most trusted media network, reaching not only our home campus, but through our neighboring communities as well.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Prairie State College Pioneer is to be the most precise, most wide-ranging and most thought-provoking source of news, sports, and entertainment for the PSC campus community. The core values that the Editorial Staff and the Reporters of the Pioneer should operate on are:

- To react quickly to any newsworthy events, whether on campus, around the community, in the state, or in another part of the world if we believe that the news would impact our readers.
- To actively seek content that will interest and inspire readers, provide quality entertainment, provoke thoughtful discussion, and advance the reader’s knowledge.
- To create a platform that is a direct reflection of the diversity and uniqueness of the backgrounds, goals, needs, and interests of the readers.
- To consistently hold the ethical guidelines of The Pioneer and Prairie State College in high regard and to cultivate the most professional atmosphere at times, whether in office or on location.
- To develop professional and successful student journalists that will be able to use the skills gained working on The Pioneer and studying at Prairie State College in every aspect of life.