

2003 International Essay Contest for Young People

List of Winners

No. of participating countries: 109

No. of entries: 5,254 (Children's category: 3,219 / Youth category: 2,035)

1st Prize

Children's category (1 entrant)

- *Regarding the soul - Love changes*
EPHEMERAL into ETERNAL
Teodora Mihoc (Age 15, Romania)

Youth category (1 entrant)

- *Serenity of Our Life*
Miranti Daniar (Age 19, Indonesia)

2nd Prize

Children's category (2 entrants)

- *My visions for the future*
Millicent Boa-Amponsem (Age 14, U.S.A.)
- *My Hope for the Future*
Aya Imai (Age 14, U.K.)

Youth category (2 entrants)

- *One Love*
Chanda Mutale (Age 17, Zambia)
- *Mantra of Hope*
Catherine Rose Torres
(Age 23, The Philippines)

3rd Prize

Children's category (5 entrants)

- Yasumasa Yamazaki (Age 13, Japan)
- Kaoru Kaganoi (Age 14, Japan)
- Feeras Zuhair Al-Nassar (Age 10, Kuwait)
- Dasha Nemchinova (Age 14, Ukraine)
- Gideon Amoako Sarpong (Age 15, Ghana)

Youth category (5 entrants)

- Gabriel Rodrigues de Campos
(Age 17, Portugal)
- Tinatin Tsereteli (Age 18, Georgia)
- Victoria Volkova (Age 20, Ukraine)
- Vesper Fe Marie Llanceza Ramos
(Age 20, The Philippines)
- Vanessa Ann C. Remoquillo
(Age 22, The Philippines)

Honorable Mentions

Children's category (26 entrants)

- Megumi Higashino (Age 8, Indonesia)
- Moe Hasegawa (Age 9, Japan)
- Gloria Estella Orrego Cifuentes
(Age 10, Colombia)

Youth category (25 entrants)

- Inna Omelyukh (Age 15, Ukraine)
- Marina Shinozaki (Age 15, Japan)
- Angela Elstob Stoler (Age 16, Australia)
- Shiori Oda (Age 16, Japan)

- Alisha Singh (Age 11, India)
- Gabrielle Rose Felio (Age 11, Canada)
- Samantha Karlin (Age 11, U.S.A.)
- Segev Rom (Age 11, Israel)
- Aika Ogura (Age 12, Japan)
- Marina Nancheva (Age 12, Bulgaria)
- Helen Dzuba (Age 13, Russia)
- Azusa Innami (Age 14, Japan)
- Chiaki Umezu (Age 14, Japan)
- Yosuke Kawanishi (Age 14, China)
- Wataru Sato (Age 14, Japan)
- Behjat Sahar (Age 14, Pakistan)
- Mutale Given (Age 14, Zambia)
- Mehernosh Minoo Bhadha (Age 14, Pakistan)
- Yara Al-Adib (Age 14, Kuwait)
- Tomoyuki Isa (Age 15, Japan)
- Manami Ogura (Age 15, Japan)
- Siddharth Malhotra (Age 15, India)
- Xu Haoning (Age 15, China)
- Jonathan Moylan (Age 15, Australia)
- Daniela Alejandra Soto Soto (Age 15, Chile)
- Harriet Riley (Age 15, Australia)
- Ben Luks (Age 15, Australia)
- Aiko Yabe (Age 16, U.K.)
- Nuhodzic Nermina (Age 17, Bosnia and Herzegovina)
- Hanin Ismaiel Abd-alrahman Ahmad Shuqair (Age 17, Jordan)
- Poornima Weerasekara (Age 17, Sri Lanka)
- Amaya Emparan Legaspi (Mexico, Age 18)
- Mitsuaki Nakatani (Age 18, Japan)
- Namyalo Caroline (Age 18, Uganda)
- Muteto Kandala Raymond (Age 18, Zambia)
- Mennat-Allah A. Gaafar (Age 18, Egypt)
- Wisdom Uwagwu (Age 19, Nigeria)
- Tania Raquel Corrales Samaniego (Age 20, Panama)
- Troitskaya Natalie (Age 20, Russia)
- Nadege Anen (Age 20, Luxembourg)
- V. V. Balaji Viswanathan (Age 20, India)
- Maarika Merirand (Age 20, Estonia)
- Valentina Kulichik (Age 21, Kyrgyzstan)
- Sydykov Aziz (Age 21, Kyrgyz Republic)
- Wang Xiang (Age 22, China)
- Anela Freeman (Age 23, U.S.A.)
- Titova Elena (Age 23, Russia)
- Silan Otlu (Age 24, Sweden)

Best School Award (2 schools)

- Musashino Higashi Junior High School (Japan)
- The American School of Kuwait (Kuwait)

Regarding the Soul – Love Changes 'EPHEMERAL' into 'ETERNAL'

(Original)

Teodora Mihoc

(Age 15, Romania)

Human society has always been in evolution. By saying this, I don't mean only physical and material evolution, but also the evolution of the soul. I want to draw attention to the difference between the first two kinds of evolution and the last one. Physical and material progress can be continued through the generations. It started several million years ago and it still goes on. However the evolution of the soul is a special progress that each person has to begin individually. In this case, one has to choose for oneself the best solution.



I have to express my hopes and dreams for myself and for the world, but I have the same message for both, because the whole world and I are all human beings.

The whole world is so large that I really have to analyze it step by step. I feel that something is missing and I want to find the piece that fills the empty space. Nowadays, society has lots of qualities: so much intelligence and so many scientific and technical achievements. It has reached an amazingly high level on the scale of progress. People live in a much more comfortable way now than in the past; they have increased in knowledge, and have such interesting and smart concepts about things in the world and about existence, that it is very hard indeed to comprehend them all in one's mind.

However there are also lots of defects: huge poverty, starvation, lots of wars and murders, and plenty of wrongdoing. The list can continue for hundreds of pages and still come to no end. But this is only one of the aspects of the world: the social state. This is based on material things. There are so many defects in the world because people don't care about each other, because so many of them look for perfect happiness on earth. Most of them don't have any idea about

what life means for them. Most of them have never tried to find a reason for this earthly life. They have their ephemeral things that create an ephemeral state of comfort for their ephemeral bodies. For them, love means a carnal and ephemeral desire of their bodies and minds, life is a space where they make a lot of fuss about almost nothing and, after all that, they have to die. Most of them have no God, no principles, and no values for good and evil. People do not see the need for true love and compassion. Human beings have come to think that selfishness and possessiveness are their natural rights. The world appears to be making incessant progress that proclaims the value of the human being. But, as it seems, it only proclaims the qualities of an animal that is able to think, an evolving animal with an amazingly developed mind. The soul can create space for the mind, but the mind cannot do the same for the soul. That is what the world shows us.

I wish that people would realize their need for God. I wish they would see how much love can bring them. In my opinion, every problem of the world can be solved by true love between people. I wish people would love each other in the noblest way. This is what I wish for them, this is what I wish for me. But as love needs no plans, I don't know how I will ever reach my aim. But if it ever happens, I will really be able to call myself and the whole world "happy".

2003 International Essay Contest for Young People
[Youth Category – 1st Prize]

Serenity of Our Life (Original)

Miranti Daniar
(Age 19, Indonesia)

What is my dream and hope for my future and the future of our world? When I read about this topic, only one thing came up in my mind: serenity of our life.

If you live where I live, there is nothing you want more than to see things to go back to normal, not to be afraid anymore to go outside or not to see more and more riots everywhere you go. The economic crisis in 1997 put my country in a very deep dark hole and caused nothing but suffering. And the effect of this economic crisis spread to all aspects of life just like a disease.

There are so many incidents that have happened in my country since the crisis. Everyday I heard about people getting murdered, demonstrations turning into riots, military crackdowns against communities, controversy between different religions or clans, politicians arguing about the best political movement, and recently I heard how the government is trying to subjugate the movement called Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (GAM) in Aceh which has already sacrificed many human lives. People get depressed because of the difficulties of life. To be honest I can say there are lots of people who have nothing to eat tomorrow and don't have a home. I guess because of that, people can now easily hurt each other and no longer pay attention to their faith. People get mad because of the situation and don't know whom to blame. Facing this situation is like a never ending story. Each human tends to be selfish and tries to fill up their needs no matter what, even if it means one has to steal from someone else or even worse, kill someone else. All they know is that they have to eat and feed their family, and this is a reality that happens where I live.



I'm sure what happened in my country also happens in other places. I'm sure no one wants to be in this kind of situation, no one wants to feel this suffering. But how can we heal these diseases if we still fight each other instead of helping each other? I think unity is the most important component to build serenity in our life. I'm here to encourage you to think about how we should be more appreciative of others and try not to be selfish. How can we not be selfish? I think by being grateful for what we have. When we feel grateful about ourselves and what we have, we'll never feel unsatisfied. We always have something to be grateful for; basically, I think we should be grateful because we are born and given a chance by God to live.

After we are able to be grateful for what we have, than we should start to look around us and realize that there are so many humans who are not as lucky as we are. Helping others is always such a beautiful thing to do. Have you ever felt that when you ease others pain, there's warmth in your heart, and you feel the happiness of seeing someone smile because of you... I think that is the most wonderful feeling in the world!!

I imagine all people appreciating and helping each other. I imagine people in this world becoming united and there will be no more wars between nations. I imagine the earth as a peaceful place to live, where every human can live with serenity and feel no fear to live day by day.

I hope my dream for the future of our world will soon become a reality, because I'm sure that deep inside our heart, no matter who we are, we all missed the peacefulness on earth. I'm sure we are compassionate human beings God created to love each other. I know we are and can make this earth a better place to live.

My Vision for the Future (Original)

Millicent Boa-Amponsem
(Age 14, U.S.A.)

If you don't have a dream, how are you going to make one come true? We need visions for larger things and to review worthwhile things in this world. We grow great by our dreams and all big men and women I have seen are dreamers. It's not always easy but we have to realize that the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. Since I was a kid, the only thing I have dreamt about is to become a famous journalist. I consider the fact that you cannot put all your eggs in one basket, but I also believe that if you know in your heart and dream of becoming a great person, no matter what obstacle you face, you can always succeed. The reason why I want to become a journalist is to get a chance to present news that will change the lives of the world. To me it is not about appearing on television for money or pleasure, but about being passionate and letting the world know that you care. The last reason why I want to be a journalist is to make my country proud. It's not easy to be from a minority group and be important to the majority, but I want to prove that they're wrong by making a difference. Another important reason for becoming a journalist is to enjoy life because life is not about looking up to people all the time but dreaming, visualizing, planning, believing, and acting on your dreams.

The competition is tough, so I cope by telling myself that there is only one person in this world who can make a difference and that's me. I also believe that everyone is born to accomplish a goal in life or to make a difference, so if it's not done by the person, no one can complete that job.

My personal dreams matter to me but the dreams of the world are also important. Right now it seems like we are living in a chaotic world. There is war, terrorism, violence, murder, rape, drug abuse, teen pregnancy, and the most destructive disease of all, AIDS. There is nothing such as a perfect world, but everything is getting out of control. I just wish I could make the world a better place and help people to make the world better. It's just so sad to watch people

in Africa who don't have food or clothing. I have seen some of these people with my own eyes. I wish these children would be loved no matter how they are or what they look like.

There is nothing to do than to dream about what the future holds for the world. I hope that one day, we will accept that all humans are created equal and even though some people are of higher rank, we will still respect and treat each other right. I also hope that teens will be taught how to act like teens and not in a violent way, and that the world can live in peace; I hope that one day, every individual can stand up and boldly tell the world that he is proud to be whatever he is without being scared.

It might take centuries but the best thing about the future is that it comes one day at a time. If we are going to make the world a better place, we have to start creating it now so that it will not be difficult to reach one day. We can create a future for the world by dreaming and working toward it.

2003 International Essay Contest for Young People

[Children's Category – 2nd Prize]

My Hope for the Future

(Original in Japanese)

Aya Imai

(Age 14, Japan <Living in U.K.>)

"I really want to help them!" a strong feeling crossed my mind.

Everything began with a TV program. There was a Gambian girl in such a tiny dress, faded into a brown color. She was saying clearly the following:

"I have a dream to be listening to a teacher with all my friends surrounding me, holding a huge piece of paper and a not too short a pencil."

She had lost both her parents during the war due to bombs and a landmine. Furthermore, she herself had lost her right eye. I remember she seemed annoyed by the bandage wound around her head, and she had to repeatedly rewind it behind her ears... Despite her physical disability, she must work and care for her little brothers and sisters from morning till night. I felt as if I could hear the sound of her creaking body on my side of the TV set. The girl who said "I want to go to school" had just turned eight years old.

There is nothing more cruel than involving innocent people in wars. Besides, it is unforgivable for me to see wars destroy people's lives. Nobody has any rights. But, 'wars' cannot be solved with my voice alone so I would like to do my best in helping those who are in need.

What I want to do for those in need is to convey all my knowledge to those children. I want to pass on my knowledge and know-how to the future generations just as I have learned from my former generations. I, especially, want to be a teacher for the children who are not able to go to school just like the Gambian girl I saw on television.

I have learned a lot from so many people in the last 14 years and 3 months of my life. I have learned about people's lives. I have learned to be moved by their stories and I engraved the

significance of a life in my mind. And, I received love. No matter what poor or marginalized situation one is placed in, every child has the right to get an education just as I have had. Simply speaking, there needs someone to take an action.

I can do it. I can shed light on these children's lives again. I can give them a chance. I can persuade them that they can change their own destinies by themselves. I would like to help them so that they can stand on their own feet. Then, I believe there will be a society where people are not sacrificed even if they are involved in wars.

In the past, humanity has repeatedly caused wars. Therefore, it is true that there might only be a slight chance for wars to come to end forevermore. Even so, I dare to do my very best in creating such a future where the victims of war have another chance to be happy.

One Love (Original)

Chanda Mutale
(Age 17, Zambia)

My vision for the future is to go to University, study medicine and contribute to the development of my country. I also hope to join in the fight against AIDS and see my country awaken from the economic slumber it is in.

However, my vision for the future is blurred if the world remains a place of uncertainty, with no assurance of a better tomorrow. So my vision for the future of the world is not that it should have one currency, one language or one government, but one love. A love that can accommodate everyone, a love that is not discriminative. For with this we can achieve much more than just a global village. We can put away our barriers of language, forget our history of racial conflict and find a new sense of unity.

Today the world is filled with a lot of hungry children; children who have not known the joy of having at least three meals a day. My dream is to see these children partake in the goodness of the world. I wish to see them assured of a decent meal every day. Think of the children in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC): those who are orphaned at birth, some amputated even before they learn to walk. Who is going to feed these children? These children are part of the world, part of us. They are the future, without them, there is no tomorrow. The United Nations (UN) has worked hard to help people in various countries by giving them humanitarian aid. If individuals could also express such a kind of love to the underprivileged, then we could certainly have achieved the UN resolve to curb poverty.

The answer to a poverty-free world is not only massive food production, but also fair distribution of resources. This is only possible if done with love. Why should a child in Zurich or Frankfurt have enough food to spare for his pet and even some to throw away? While another one in Harare or Pyongyang is starving to death. I look forward to a future of equally distributed love to all parts of the world. From Cape Town to Cairo, Washington to Manila, just

one love, a love that considers the sorrow of all. Not only to a brother, but love towards mankind.

Imagine a world without wars? My vision of a war-free world is amazing. I see children all over the world smiling and singing joyous songs. They have no sad memories of a parent, brother or sister lost in war. A world with nations that have no hatred towards each other.

Governments that are concerned about the problems of their neighbours. I visualise people getting on planes with no worries of a hijack. People with minds free of the word 'terrorist' or 'suicide bomber.' I hear birds singing sweetly in fresh green trees. The wild animals running swiftly through the woods. Rivers flowing with clean sparkling water. These things I see in a future that will not know the frightening sound of a machine gun or suffer the consequences of a nuclear bomb. I look forward to a world where respectable men and women will sort out misunderstandings at a table. Not uniformed men carrying weapons of murder. Should we kill each other because of some oil well, which will soon dry out? Or because of fishing grounds which can be fairly shared? No, I don't think so. I hope the world realises that you can never win a war.

Crime is an off-shoot of many frustrations, especially during one's childhood. Most criminals have sad stories to tell about their childhood. Events like wars, abuse, poverty and bad parenting have robbed them of a lot of love. We can however, change this and reduce the number of crimes in the future by loving the children, providing them with an education, enough food and a family. My dream of a crimeless society only comes to life when I see all the children of the world loved. Only then will the children learn and grow to love one another. For a moment the world should turn its attention away from the fast cars, the busy computers, switch off their fancy phones and forget about their bank accounts. Then the world will hear the cries of the hopeless child. One who if left alone with no help, will be filled with hate and grow to be a criminal. The world will then realise that this child only asks for one thing, not a car, phone or bank account, but just one love. A love that is undivided and indiscriminating. A world with love is a world without violence and crime.

I long for a day when courts will be set up to deal with child abuses; a day when a UN General Conference for children will be established. I pray that the religions of the world will stop fighting and pray together for peace.

I believe my dreams of a peaceful world will come true because I dream not by night, but by day, so I will not wake up to find that my dreams are vanity. I will see this world live as one, divided only by mountains and oceans but bound together by one love. Look at the Crocodiles, unsightly as they may be, they still love and care for one another. Can't we human beings, so wonderfully made, do much better?

2003 International Essay Contest for Young People
[Youth Category – 2nd Prize]

Mantra of Hope

(Original)

Catherine Rose Torres
(Age 23, The Philippines)

Namaste is a beautiful word. It is an old Sanskrit blessing, a shorthand way of saying: "I honor the place within you where the entire universe resides. I honor the place within you of love and light, of truth and peace. When you are in that place in you, and I am in that place in me, there is only one of us."

The future I envision is that where each of us can summon this beautiful blessing and let it inspire our lives; where we can look at each other with compassion instead of condescension, and affection instead of indifference.

To envisage is one thing and to make real another. Taking stock of our world as it is, of its many discords and disasters, it is easy to grow disheartened. But we are not powerless! "The future of the world is my future, and what I make of my future will shape the future of the world" should be our mantra.

Tolerance is one of the seeds of this hoped for morrow. Humanity is bound together by a common thread-why do we look at the little islands of difference and ignore the vast ocean of our sameness?

Let us take religion which underpins much of the animosity in our world. Religion should not divide us if we look at the spirit beneath the form. Something or someone that claims to possess the ultimate truth need never take recourse to coercion, for such truth will be evident to all.

As Gandhi, the great soul, counseled us: "My effort should never be to undermine another's faith, but to make him a better follower of his own faith." Why do we seek to convert others to our way of thinking and our way of life? In religion and in other aspects of our existence, we assume the moral high ground and insist that others emulate us.

Many times in history, one people imposed on another its course of development in an attempt to make the latter "more civilized." The result was often displacement and confusion, suffering and dissension.

People are guided by an inner wisdom endowed by their peculiar circumstances. As long as they do not go against the grain of human dignity, is it not more sublime to let them live and preserve their way of life according to their judgment?

The world I envision is united in diversity. Diversity is the key to the survival of humanity, not just in evolutionary terms. It is the source of the richness of human experience, which nourishes the spirit. Monotony and homogeneity shackle the soul and silence the voice of inspiration.

Imagine a world where we all think and live in the exact same way; where each of us is but a mirror of the other. Lonely and colorless, lacking novelty and freshness, such a world cannot stir or higher impulse to create. A people's culture is not a mere ornament but its lifeblood.

Biodiversity is nature's equivalent of the diversity of humanity's cultures. Our planet did not evolve one, two or a handful of species but a full array of them. She adorned herself with millions of different organisms not only because it would be beautiful, but likewise because it was essential.

The future I envision is where we can live amid nature and let nature live-where the first voices our children will hear will be those of clouds and trees, of birds and seas, and the first language they will learn to speak is the language of love and harmony with all forms of life.

We always ask: "What kind of world are we letting our children inherit?" But isn't it time that we ask as well: "What kind of children are we letting inherit the world?"

I am no longer a child; At 23, I am at an age where I am prepared to bring life into this world. I have immense hopes for my future and the future of the world, and as I strive to make them real, part of what inspires me is knowing that it is no longer just for me.

One beautiful heritage we can leave our world and humanity are younger generations who feel

empowered and eager to make a difference, children who can dream and who will act on their dreams for a better world and future.

It is an imposing vision and a tall order for humanity. But we are not powerless and we shall make it-if only we let the change emanate from within us; from that place within us where there is only one of us and where the universe resides.

2003 International Essay Contest for Young People

[Children's Category – 3rd Prize]

The Power of Belief

(Original in Japanese)

Yasumasa Yamazaki

(Age 13, Japan)

A group of children in post-war Iraq were pictured on television recently. They had serious burns down their backs and all over the rest of their bodies. These wounds were not the result of attacks during the war, but they were caused by left-over unexploded bombs that went off for some unexplained reason while these children were out drawing water from a well or doing other such chores.

What is more, despite being hospitalized, medical shortages meant that there were no painkillers or burn medication and they had to go without proper treatment.

One of the children, a young boy much younger than myself was sobbing in the treatment room and crying out in anguish, asking whether he had done something wrong. A large tear fell from the corner of his mother's eye.

I cannot get the image of that tragic scene out of my head.

Above all, medicine and chemistry are supposed to be sciences that you learn in order to "save" lives, but the fact that they are used to "kill" people shows just how stupid human beings can be.

It reminds me of a book called *Le Petit Prince* that I read in the past. If anyone in the distant reaches of outer space was to look down on Earth, where things such as this are happening, they would probably wonder at a race that does such strange things.

I have no wish to become one of those critics who just quibble over who is to blame and why something happened. I want to become one of those people who does everything within their power to help other people without making a big fuss about it, like doctors, nurses, and those

people who risk their lives to go to places where no one would ever go in order to perform tasks such as digging wells or treating the sick and wounded.

At the moment, I really look up to the famous mountaineer Ken Noguchi. He has just returned from his fourth expedition to scale Mt. Everest. There was a time when his actions were criticized as being publicity-seeking, but he stuck firmly to his beliefs and now there are other people who support him and contribute to his work.

At the moment, I am searching for something that I can do in the future and I still don't even know what sort of work I will end up being involved in, but no matter what it is, I want to work alongside people who are always working to protect the environment and praying for peace. Acting with these beliefs can't fail but help to persuade people and enable the world to become a place where there are no wars, no divisions between religions or countries, and where everyone, not just myself, can live together in peace.

Image of Peace
(Original in Japanese)

Kaoru Kaganoi
(Age 14, Japan)

I can't recall who first said the words "if you kill one person you are a murderer, if you kill a hundred people you are a hero," but they left me with a strong impression of the irony of war, which has lingered to this day. War is irrational. Those responsible for initiating wars hypocritically proclaim that wars are just and righteous battles fought in the name of peace. In reality however, can war bring peace?

Take, for instance, the recent war in Iraq. Despite the fact that America's justification for that war was to topple Saddam Hussein's regime and reconstruct a peaceful country, now the war is over, could it really be said that Iraq is a country at peace? Just by turning on the television you can see round-the-clock reports of rioting, lynching and death. It is inevitable that all this will have a devastating emotional effect on those involved. Is this really the vision of peace we dreamt of? Are the people who boasted of being able to put Iraq to rights really fulfilling their role? We should think back to the situation in Afghanistan, which once caused such a stir in the media. Somewhere along the way, the troubles in Afghanistan were put aside as the world's gaze switched to Iraq. By now, you would think it would be obvious to anyone in a supposedly peaceful, democratic country that there are less-fortunate countries that are in a similar position to Iraq and Afghanistan. If not handled properly, the situation in these countries could well become even worse than they were before.

We are only junior high school students at the moment and as such we are not old enough to go out into the world and do something to help. Nevertheless, there must surely be something that we can do. Even if we cannot do anything immediately, at the very least I feel it is important that we each think deeply about issues such as what we consider good and evil to be and how we can go about achieving peace. The first step should be to rediscover ourselves. If we continue along such a course, then when we become adults, we might be able to gather together people with the same hopes and desires and, in some small way at least, build the

peaceful world that we all want.

Surely, if we can solve all of our problems with words rather than military force and try to understand one another, then the vision of peace that we have all dreamt about for so long will become a reality. Whether or not I will be able to witness such a vision with my own eyes depends on our efforts.

My Vision for the Future (Original)

Feeras Zuhair Al-Nassar
(Age 10, Kuwait)

If I was a leader of country I would make peace between my people. I would provide free schools, and hospitals for the poor. I would make rules which are fair for all. My last decision would be war because war is a very sad time. I would share my money with the poor. I would provide shops, and entertainment for every one. I would let people make some decisions for the country. I would have enough food if I did not I would get more. I would get people to make sure no one pollutes the country. I would have enough airports for the country so people can travel. I would make the streets as good as I can. I would make sure the whole country is safe. I wouldn't make enemies with other countries. I think these are the things are leader of the future would do.

In the future I think things will be better. I think there will be no war ever. If there is a disagreement the leaders will just find a way to fix it other than war. There wouldn't be as much criminals because every poor person I can help I would help. I wouldn't want to say bad words, and do bad things because there so much murder I think someone will stop it at least I would try to stop it. I think people will start to understand other people... I think every citizen of different countries will be treated alike. I even think the poor will be able to get some free things, and no one will be killed by human whether in war, or by murder.

One day we will be able to go to all the planets, and discover new planets, and even discover a planet other than earth that we can live on. I think people will even settle there, and see other living things. Life will become better. We will probably discover a cure to viruses, and bacteria that can not be cured now. I think there will be skilled workers. People will start inventing new things, but no matter what we do there will be evil, but we try to make less evil. The last thing we want is Hitler, or Saddam 2.

I wish my vision of the future will become true. If my vision for the future becomes true the

world will become a much better place. That is why I want peace between the world.

My Vision for the Future

(Original)

Dasha Nemchinova
(Age 14, Ukraine)

It is so good to be a child. Our carefree childhood doesn't make us think about problems, when everything is in bright colours, when our idols are cartoon characters. But the time comes, when we must not only think about our future, but also take care of it. My future is only my dreams, of course, but I'll do everything I can to realise them.

Now I studiously learn foreign languages, because I think my future will be directly connected with them. Of course the profession of translator, moreover very literate translator-is not the only dream I have. I hope that my future will be connected with acting. I always imagine myself on the stage of a great theatre or on a movie set, easily communicating with the world's great stars using a foreign language. My longing to follow this way stops me from dreaming about an easier job. Even some time ago I didn't think about my future. I liked everything what was happening around me. But when I became a little bit more adult, I began to understand, that everything is not so easy. There were a lot of fairy-tales in my childhood, but now everything is real. I know a lot about modern day problems. To my mind, the pollution of our planet-is the biggest and the most vital problem. I always think about it and I'm scared for myself and my planet. The gift of life is so wonderful, we live only once. Why won't we use this prodigy, given to us from God, in a good way, without causing illnesses, wars, terror and destruction? Of course, my future profession isn't connected with restoring clean air, but I'll try to help in solving this problem. I know, that I must protect nature, so I don't throw papers from sweets or similar things on the street. I understand , it's a little drop in the ocean in comparison with the worlds pollution, but it means something! I'm sure, it's not only me thinking about the ecological situation of our planet. The world organisation Greenpeace often annoys governments, companies, and people who don't care about the future of the world.

Unfortunately I don't have the chance to say: "People! Please stop! Think, what you are doing with us, with your generation!" But if I have such a chance, I won't reject it and I'll use it in a

good way. It's my Earth, my future and the future of my children. Our ancestors made a lot of mistakes and worsened the ecology so we should help to correct all their mistakes. My acting abilities made me think about the role I need to play in this world. It will be a Soul of the Planet, frank and unprotected. The Soul, which will show mankind, how unfairly it uses the earth's resources. The Soul, which can protect herself, by unleashing volcanic eruptions, waterspouts or tornadoes, yet which loves its children, endures all suffering and forgives everything, to make us remember our Earth. I want to act out my role in such a way, that I would make everybody believe and feel pleasant moments of love and also responsibility for their indifferences to their general mother Earth.

English-is an international language, so I want to act my role only in English. I want people to see my film and to think not only about themselves, and about their descendants. So if the ecological disaster doesn't threaten our planet, my future and also the future of the world is not so bad.

I think every new generation is born cleverer than its predecessors. I can judge about it by the development of science and technology. With such knowledge mankind can't stay in only one place. Perhaps mankind will find a way to stop the ozone holes, earthquakes and acid rain. Science, going ahead, must not only take care of the present, but it must also count every step forward.

We need everything natural, not artificial. After all, a natural sea is more beautiful than an artificial bay. Trees are more wonderful in forest, than in floral pots. In my dreams I see everything alive and beautiful, when every season is accompanied by corresponding climatic changes, when birds sing on flowering green branches, not in cages, when we don't have to include animals in a "Red Book" of disappearing species and not just admire them in museums because they are now extinct animals. In every generation there will be somebody, who will studiously take care of the surrounding world. My generation feels this need to care for the environment and strives to justify it. So, if my friends and I don't make mistakes, we won't let our planet die. I'm sure, it will be only this way.

My Vision for the Future (Original)

Gideon Amoako Sarpong
(Age 15, Ghana)

A newborn's cry filled the air, drawing my attention to the newborn father's words, "May God bless this child in order that it can become a great person in the future, so that its work will influence the world". His words reminded me of my own dreams to become a great person, whose work influences the world, making it a better place for all. They reminded me of the world's future, with peace and harmony as its greatest peak.

My desire to become a Pastor/Medical Doctor is the heart of that dream; helping sick, poor, and needy people all over the world, who due to no fault of their own, live in poverty and die from curable diseases. Lacking access to health services, and education, even their survival becomes threatened. As a pastor/doctor, I'll be able to give physical and spiritual help, enabling such people to improve their situation. These acts alone will make great strides toward a peaceful world by eliminating the need to cheat, steal or fight in order to survive."

More concerted efforts are needed to achieve my aim. I, therefore, strive to make the most of every opportunity I have. It is said, "Failure cannot dismantle the flag of success at a place where determination is present." So, I'm studying diligently and seeking advise from people who have achieved what I want to achieve. With hard work, determination and a deep faith in God, I will succeed.

My vision for the future is not complete without attaining a world of peace and harmony. War hinders peace, causing insecurity, lost lives, property loss, and crushed dreams. Many would say that tolerance to the extreme is to prevent war, enhancing the development of peace and harmony. However, this is not totally true, since true lasting peace begins within.

The 1989 Nobel Peace Prize Winner, the Dalai Lama, stressed the need for inner peace when he said, "When we have inner peace, we can be at peace with those around us, when our

community is in a state of peace, it can share that peace with neighboring communities." Developing inner peace goes a long way in helping me lead the fight for peace. As a student, my fighting role for peace starts by fighting a lack of discipline among my peers, since this lack of discipline leads to lawlessness, disturbing the peace in a particular country and ultimately the world.

Constructive discipline, on the other hand, provides much needed infrastructure, training people for proper conduct and actions in all situations, bringing about order and maintaining peace and harmony, both locally and worldwide. I, personally, have cultivated the art of positive peer pressure, bringing about positive results in my own society and my field of influence. With or without reward, honour, or notoriety, I aim to improve the situation in which I and others live by showing a greater concern for those around me.

Together, we must end the conflicts of the world, bringing world peace. We must seek an end to wars for land and superior resources. Every nation must respect the charter of the UN, the world's peace controlling body. The God-given rights of every individual must be respected. Differences between nations and individuals must be settled, with nations fully cooperating to achieve a peaceful life for all nationalities on earth.

It is my hope, and that of every peace-loving citizen of every country in this world, that the world will be peaceful in times to come. This peace will bring increased productivity and greater harmony, enabling people to make use of all opportunities that come their way, and to strengthen the relationship of man with his fellow man. May Peace prevail on earth and let it begin with me!

The Future is Now (Original in French)

Gabriel Rodrigues de Campos
(Age 17, Portugal)

I am making my studies in a scientific field. I do not have the intention to introduce you here to a creative or literary essay; I could not do it. My thoughts are based on pragmatic aspects and deal with the individual responsibility of all people who have a personal project to offer. At school I have led a study about our behaviors in relation to the respect for human rights on a daily basis. We have discussed the results, and sometimes there have been very different views in theory and practice.

Roger Garaudy stated once: "The future is not to be discovered, just as Christopher Columbus discovered America. We do not have to discover, we have to invent." This said, what Garaudy teaches us is not a definition of his future. The history of mankind is neither the simple realization of a fixed divine plan, nor the result of a certain number of accumulated facts. If the history of mankind is the result of an experience which is in relation to the past and the present, it also depends on hope. Hope is the main factor to the creation of the future. A human being is born when a project emerges. It is at that moment when a human being feels alive.

If we reach truth through error, let us use the past, but let us also create the future. The world will become what people love and are working for, because it is human beings who are creating the future. According to a Portuguese poet, "We have to inform everybody that, for every flower we crush, there are millions of other flowers which are blooming." The hope of the world will always be stronger than of those who declare the end of the world. We have to transform the obstacles into forces of hope which will emit energy waves leading to the building flourish of this future, where feelings, remembering and virtue will cooperate and will flourish.

A recent European social Forum gathered thousands of young people who discussed the future of the world: peace, social rights, participation of institutions, globalization, social integration and ecology... While calling for a new order, the young people answered: "The Present!"

And what about me? Me too, I have a dream, like Martin Luther King had. If I dream about the future, it is not a mystical or science fictional scenario in which each human being would be an angel on earth or in which a system of a police control would prevent an evolutionary crime. Me, I dream of a world in which each individual takes his part or responsibility towards the planet, its citizens and himself. Universal order is an unavoidable result of the individual order established through ones respect for his whole existence, of his environment-physical, psychological and spiritual- and of all humanity.

Education is not a business matter; we also need to teach to young people what has no financial value: the principles of democracy, of solidarity and social justice. But do not worry: youth does know the true price of these goods. It is said that the future belongs to youth. A further good reason for young people to take it in their hands. It is not up to parents, teachers and governments alone to take care about MY future. It is up to me to do so. If in the future I want to protect myself from attacks on my fundamental rights, like my dignity, and my self realization, then I have the moral obligation to do everything so that all those who are on the same path as me, have the same rights, Asians or Europeans, Buddhists or Christians.

I have had a great opportunity to participate in youth gatherings debating the future. To listen to and to accept ideas which are not really mine, is already saying no to violence and to discrimination; and being together with young people who are preparing the future, means already living this future. Each time I am doing this, I become really strongly aware that the narrow world of my country Portugal, becomes larger and more open towards welcoming other people with whom we can enlarge our thoughts and experiences. And to enlarge our thoughts is to build a world of respect and acceptance for others; and to enlarge our experiences is building the future.

My very young mother often told me a story, an anthem to an anonymous and simple worker who lives in the heart of each human being who is following an ideal:

“Once upon a time, there was a world traveler. One day, he came into a town and entered a place where a magnificent construction was being built. Everybody did his job. Questioned by this traveler about what was being built there, the architect told him that he was in charge of this project; the carpenter said that he was taking care of the wood;

the sculptor of the statues... and so on. Only a humble old man who was cleaning the place informed him: I am building a cathedral."

We Will Say – What a Wonderful Life is!

(Original)

Tinatin Tsereteli
(Age 18, Georgia)

We entered into the 21st century with new achievements, with old and new problems and unfortunately with new wars, and terrorism. Looking at the 20th century's history, we can evaluate the past and it will be clear, what we can do and what we mustn't do to avoid past mistakes.

War provokes new wars, terrorism provokes vengeance. These are the results of wrong decisions made by adults. I cannot believe that it is impossible to act in another way. I think that the right method of resolution of conflicts doesn't exist yet. More work on these methods would make easy the resolution of problems by peaceful ways.

I would like it if a "World Leader's Council" and "Association of Resolution of Conflicts" exactly be created in Hiroshima (near the world memorial museum of Hiroshima). All important world decisions might be made there, as world leaders would have the possibility to watch once more the tragedy of war and they would make the right decisions and say no to every kind of violence.

We mustn't turn our earth into desert, we mustn't poison its air, or animals, we mustn't destroy all that nature gave us. We must love the earth as a mother who gives us life. We have to take care of it like a little child without whom we have no future.

As we know from looking at the cosmos, the earth looks like a ball- a "World Ball"-round as a sun, it is very beautiful. But it isn't a real ball for play, and there is only one for everyone. Don't we all live together on it? Don't we breathe its air? Can we play with this "World Ball"? – No. We mustn't cut the branch on which we are sitting on! I hope that my envisaged "World Leader's Council" will make decisions to destroy all kinds of weapons of massive destruction. We all have to take an active part in making this decision.

I dream about a world in which everyone would say, – “How wonderful life is” – it means that everyone would be happy. It is true that happiness, for different people means different things. For example, it can mean having a car, having a child, being rich, having a good job, being a star, just having pets, doing something good for others and so on...But today, when somewhere is the war, how we can be happy? Yes, unfortunately whilst war exists and there is no peace in the world, we cannot be happy. I think so.

I was a little girl of 4-5 years with curly hair when war begun in our region of Abkhazia (in The Republic of Georgia). I remember how bombs were falling down and many houses were burning...we became IDPs. It is now already 10 years since I have had my own home and I live in a little room of a school with my family. Because of fear, my hair fell out, as I looked many times in the eyes of death. I don't want to remember it! It is enough! I want to be healthy, study languages of various nations, as knowing languages gives us the possibility to understand the way of thinking of various nations. (I can speak some different languages and now I am studying Japanese). I want to turn the world around as I am studying international relations at Tbilisi State University and I will become an expert in international relations of oriental studies specializing in Japan. I'll study hard because I want to create my peaceful future. I want to tell to everyone about my own experience, that there is no winner in war. I prefer reconciliation. I know that it is difficult, but not impossible. Let me give an example. After ending the course on Conflict Transformation and Conflict Resolution by Peaceful Ways, at the program of AED (Academy of Educational Development) called “Young Leaders for Peace and Development”, the youth from both conflict sides, met with each other at the “Georgian-Abkhazian Youth Forum”. We played together; found many things in common and organized common cultural events. I dressed girls from both conflict sides in dresses made with my designs (dresses made by cellophane). The beauty warmed their hearts. We danced together and created our lovely world, a peaceful world. We declared that vengeance is destructive for both sides...I wish that all those in conflict in the world would act in the way we did, to show each other that we are good.

In my dream about the “World Ball” I imagined the world, as a happy roundabout on which everyone there would be sitting in spite of their age, color, nationality, religion, languages, and titles. We would sing the “World's anthem” about peace, happiness, and we would say – “How wonderful life is”... “What a wonderful world”... Yes, I believe we will say these things.

I dream about a world like this and I want you to wonder about this my dear friends.

Let's Choose Right (Original)

Victoria Volkova
(Age 20, Ukraine)

I open the map of the world, my eyes start looking for the small country of Ukraine... I see this country, I find the capital. This is where I live, this is where I go about my day with my hopes, dreams and plans for the FUTURE. My heart starts beating faster as I think that the capital of my country holds three million people, each one of them with their own dreams and hopes. Then I realize that everyone in the world, all of the 6 billion people in the world, have their own visions of the future. How do we combine these visions? Can we combine them at all? On the one hand, the world is a combination of all the futures of these 6 billion people, but on the other hand, it has only one future, the future that we build with our own ones.

I believe that people can CHOOSE their future, and I have chosen mine. I have a very simple, and at the same time a most important dream for my future. I want to Live - I am afraid to miss my life. "How can you miss your life?" you will ask me. Very simply. I can miss my life while figuring out the ways to live it. What makes it dangerous for me to miss living my life? For me it is the way people have made the modern world work. I said "people have made the world work" because this is the way it feels to me. The world nowadays is what we make it to be. It is not simply the way things are. NO. This is the mistake we all make, our mistake is in the statement: "this is the way things are, this is the way our world is". No. It is about choice. We choose it to be this way and not the other.

If we think that multinational corporations must rule, then they will rule, if we think that there should be limits to a nation-state sovereignty then there are ones, if we believe that the Mass Media tells us whether we are pretty or ugly, too skinny or too fat-then it is not because we live in a world like this, but because we ourselves created or let a world like this be created.

To my mind it is important to understand that not only people who are in positions of power, who set up a "top-down" processes, - people who distribute money through the World Bank or

IMF, who send troops through NATO, or who stabilize markets through ASEAN, - choose the future of the world. It is US. You and me, Ukrainians and Russians, Chinese and Japanese, Vietnamese and Irish... We just mould the future in different ways. People from above set up the rules, and people from below follow these rules.

I switch between TV channels and stop for a couple of minutes to watch a movie containing blood, guns and rape. Even though it's just couple of minutes I still participate in this, I participate in the "violent culture of the world", in something that is popular not because it is good, but because it is cool, and these two things are not necessarily equal. Your daughter takes you shopping and points to the jeans that barely stay on her hips. She participates in it too, as well as yourself, if you buy these jeans. You participate in MTV "modern culture of beauty and attractiveness". However, you may not see it as a bad thing...and this is the point. We are all different, thus our "futures" are numerous and different.

I want to live in the world, but not above the world. Human being have a tendency to establish control over things, over their lives. Because they feel a lack of security. This lack of security drives us crazy sometimes, and we feel unsafe in our own life. However the dilemma of the absence of security is important to remember. I don't want to control the world, I just want to enjoy it.

Can we all, being so different create the FUTURE for OUR world? I believe that all of us-all of the 6 billion people on earth can CHOOSE the needed future for the world. Let's choose right. I think it is essential to let the world go, to let our lives go. By this I don't mean not to manage our lives, not to strive to change anything or achieve anything, but try to loosen up our control over things. The world will take care of itself if we are sensitive enough with it, if we respect it, if we seek to achieve balance. Look at the lives of indigenous peoples; look at the harmony in which they live, harmony with the world and harmony with themselves. It is something worth learning.

My hope for the future of the world is rather simple as well. I would like the world to be REAL, just to be itself. To be beautiful, rich in color, smell and taste, the world as it is known in the winter and spring, but not during the financial crisis experienced by some countries; the world as it looks during sunrise, but not during the flames of war...The world where someone finally says "enough" to the fighting for more and more land, resources and power; where someone else will agree with this "enough"; where someone will choose love in poverty instead of a fake

life in wealth. A world where children don't compete for toys and computer games any more, don't starve and shake in fear because they hear bombs and explosions in their neighborhoods, but where children smile and learn lessons from the REAL world. I hope that people in the future will see the world like IT IS, will see it as it was meant to be seen initially. My dream is that people will not forget how the wind feels, and how the rain sounds; and will not stop noticing the REALITY of the world. The beauty of this is that by choosing such a future for our world, each one of us automatically chooses a certain future for themselves. It also has to deal with being REAL...

"To laugh often and much, to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children, to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends, to appreciate beauty, to find the best in others, to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch ...to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded!" said Emerson. This is to have lived-I will add. If at least one life has breathed easier because you have lived you have worked for a GOOD FUTURE. This is what it means to be a good Leader, to be a good President, to be a good King, to be a good Government...to be a good person. Let's choose right.

2003 International Essay Contest for Young People
[Youth Category – 3rd Prize]

Vespers For Tomorrow (Original)

Vesper Fe Marie Llanaza Ramos
(Age 20, The Philippines)

My name is Vesper, from the word meaning evening prayer. As long as I can remember, I have been praying for the future that keeps hope alive in the present.

I pray that I can one day look at a child eye to eye, without envy for a childhood that was not mine, realizing that every childhood is unique to grow that one special individual. I wish to look at that child with trust and joy knowing that he has every opportunity to claim his chosen destiny, as I have done mine. This is peace with myself, harmony with the wisdom of the years and the child who will always be within. My vision of the future is me, still dreaming of the future, with love of life's dynamism, without any bitterness for an unsatisfactory present or any regrets for the past--at peace with time because at peace with myself. Yes. My vision for the future is peace, that sense of home and love and happiness that need not be chased. I pray that if I can hold peace, I can also pass it on (the only way to really have peace) in a form that is the receiver's own. There is peace in the skyscrapers of the city, and peace in the nighttime countryside sky. Peace with friends, animals, or within that hermit on top of his mountain. I wish for peace, as dynamic as life itself, but with the same element as binding as the remarkable gift shared by all living beings.

I pray to become a doctor, as a healed person, sharing the blessing of being at home with my humanity. I wish to heal so as to help people live, and live so as not to be afraid of death because it can't take away what has been. I wish, one day, I will welcome death as a celebration of life, but not before helping the dying and those we leave behind to do the same. Writing my own eulogy for a writing exercise, I remember a special sense of peace when I wrote, "I have loved myself so much, I am now happy to let go. In loving more and more, the embrace just gets bigger and bigger that I cannot contain it anymore...And that love belongs now to the Universe."

I used to be afraid of myself for I was only too aware of the selfishness inside me. I thought how horrible it was to want everything for myself. I was afraid to forget others because deep inside I knew I could not be happy with being alone, separated. But look at that, I was afraid to be selfish because it would make ME unfulfilled! I was terrified to be told, "You are NOT the center of the Universe!" But then I realized that I AM the center of MY Universe. Everything I perceive, think, or do revolves around ME. I AM ME. Selfishness is not the enemy that it has long been painted to be. In wanting for myself a good home, I am wanting that for my family, my neighbors, my fellow inhabitants of this world...for a good home cannot stand in a bad neighborhood just as a healthy country cannot remain as such in a diseased world. Also, how can I make others happy, when I do not hold happiness myself? Or in the other way that I like better to put it, "I love making people happy, because that means I've been happy myself." It is the same with peace and love. If one were at peace with the self, why wish to go to war? War necessitates two entities. For every peaceful man, there is a tremendous loss of artillery for war. If one truly loves himself, he would have no wish to hate, for hate would hurt him more than the object of his hate.

So I pray for loving self-centeredness for everyone. I believe that it is only when we are really centered in ourselves (our greatest ally) that we see where we are in the picture that is bigger than ourselves. Only then can we truly care and share, for ourselves, for all.

This is my prayer. But I will not be surprised if it seems familiar. Maybe you remember Saint Francis of Assisi, "Lord, make me an instrument of Thy Peace..." or Nelson Mandela wishing for us "To manifest the glory of God that is within..." or perhaps William Blake best put into words my prayer,

"To see a world in a grain of sand and a Heaven in a wild flower,
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand
And eternity in an hour"

The future is all ours after all.

2003 International Essay Contest for Young People
[Youth Category – 3rd Prize]

The Future I Own (Original)

Vanessa Ann C. Remoquillo
(Age 22, The Philippines)

I, as a young person, have been told that I own the future. Once day I shall possess the world, with all its shambles, its poverty, its denuded forests and polluted oceans, its callousness, its strife, its wars. But one day I too shall lay claim to its wonders, its miracles, its dolphins and pandas, its children, its goodness, its peace. I shall soon inherit all these.

I am not a head of state, a monarch, or a world leader. I am neither a president of any republic nor a senator in any government. But I hold a vision that is as powerful as any of theirs. That is because I am a member of the youth of today, and the future belongs to those like me. It is a challenge to be responsible for the world – whether it is to be responsible to your family or your nation. But with a vision to guide and inspire me into action, I can begin working for this future today.

A field of dreams, a veritable wish list, there are too many good things I wish for the world and its people. Less pollution, beautiful sunsets, equal opportunities for all, a solution to global hunger, an elephant population boom, a cure to AIDS – the list can only grow longer. At the end of the day, however, the best that I can envision for the future is peace for the world and its children. In the tomorrow I aspire for, nations will seek to never wage war, and to never distort the truth in order to justify one. Governments will realize that in any armed conflict, the casualties are someone's father, mother, or child – never just incidentals or collateral damage.

In the future I own, the world's peoples will see there are no victors in wars, only victims. In my future, nations will put an end to the manufacture of land mines and weapons that shatter not only limbs but also hopes and dreams. I envision all countries coming together to address threats to the environment. In the future I own, we will accept that, rich or poor, industrialized county of not, we all share the same planet. Tomorrow, I wish for people to seek to understand other cultures, beliefs, and religions, and not fear them because they are different or

unfamiliar.

I desire for children to learn to value and respect diversity, and carry this important lesson throughout their lifetimes. In the future I own, I pray that all children will know prayer and make it their anchor in the turbulent sea of life. I dream of a time when children can dream, without worrying about how many soccer balls they need to sew or flower leis they need to peddle. In my future, I want to find them smiling because they can read a word, write a line, sing a song, or play a game. In the future I own, children are free to be just children.

I hope for the day where peace will be a subject taught in schools, alongside algebra and chemistry, because the long, arduous journey to lasting peace is itself a science – one which sometimes even the world's best thinkers and great leaders have failed to comprehend. As a young person, I have all these dreams and more. Many of them are still beyond my reach today. For these I must possess patience and an open mind for the years of learning that lie ahead. Of what use is my youth, if not to spend it trying to turn small hopes into big realities? I am only one speck of humanity, but with strong will, fierce determination, and much prayer, I might just succeed in making a difference.

Today I work with fellow young people in my country. Together we encourage young people not only to dream for themselves but also to dream for their communities. Each day is a discovery of the fascinating ways the youth are making the world a place worthy of our best dreams. For example, they could be young physical therapists giving free treatments to the poor. Or teen counselors training children on the streets about the dangers of AIDS. Or a group of nature lovers devoting their summers to cleaning up coastlines and planting mangroves. By taking responsibility and striving to serve their communities, these young people are co-creating the future.

I, as a young person, have been told that I own the future. I can only wholeheartedly agree, because tomorrow is all about how, and not about when. The future is not a matter of time. It is a matter of vision.