

“It doesn’t matter if you have an accent. It doesn’t matter what people tell you. We need to be cherished and valued for the languages we speak.”
—Nabin Dhimal, Portland State University, IYLC Keynote

Join the IYLC Council
 We are looking for engaged ESL HS Students from all languages and cultures. Apply online at <https://goo.gl/gNC2z7>
Applications due May 12, 2017




"Immigrants make our country great. I am proud to see you as an immigrant and ESL student attending this conference."
—Ron Wyden, Oregon Senator



The News Team with IYLC Conference guest speaker, JaSiri X

Welcome to our first ESL student magazine, *POV/Change!*

In this first edition, we carefully selected events that happened in our ESL community. This issue covers the International Youth Leadership Conference, which took place at Portland State University on February 24th 2017. The conference brought together over 450 PPS ESL students this year; it was packed with various sessions, which provided the opportunity for students to learn, enjoy themselves, as well as socialize and interact with each other.

The News team of six students tirelessly covered the day’s events. Our work included conducting interviews and photographing a sampling of students and prominent people who were present.

We combined our efforts to create this for you. We hope you enjoy it!

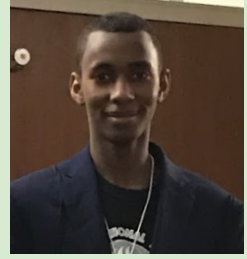
From your IYLC News Team,

Naa Amorkor Quaye, Abdul Ambon, Nhi Truong, Kyle Domingo, Janvier Gasabato, Wilondja Mashimango

WINNING ESSAY FROM THE IYLC WRITING CONTEST

“What does home mean to me?” by Saleh Abdoulaye, Benson

I started growing up in Chad, in a society where everyone is welcome and everyone in the neighborhood is a family. Because I was a young boy at that time, it feels like my home is there. Everyone in my community is a family, the whole neighborhood is a family. That made me love my neighborhood and my country. We all love each other in our community. Some in our neighborhood share their food with us and we share ours with them. Men have their own meals and women have their own meals. In our country men don't eat with women, only on special occasion or families meals. Most of my childhood memories were in Chad. I used to play soccer and go to school with my friends. When I was in Chad I used to enjoy walking with sheep and cows. When I was young, my father and I used to work together, taking care of our farm. On our farm we used to have cows, sheep and chickens. Most of the time we farmed for others, we got paid, we farmed with oxen. I use to hate farming because we farmed a lot. We can farm ten to fifteen different farms every year. Most of the time it was only my father and me. It takes us two days to five days to finish farming one farm. But the good thing is that we made a lot of money at the time. We could buy a few cows and some sheep a year. Most of that time when we were living in Chad we were refugees because of the war in the Central African Republic. We lived in Chad for seven years, and we had a little garden there. When we came to America I missed everything. Though I'm here, my memories are there so that is where my home is. What is a life without home?



The refugee camp in Chad made me unique. It gave my family the ability to have higher goals and dreams, it showed us the way to work hard and be successful, even though success is hard to reach. Success always seems like it is running away from us, because we are following it. Though life is always hard it is worth it; it comes with achievement. If life was easier in our home country, we wouldn't be here today. We are following the road to success, even though we left our people to be here today, we are still remembering them. We miss our grandparents, uncles and cousins. I miss my friends so much. With them, I use to enjoy life. Life is harder in America even though it seems like I have everything. Sometimes a man can have everything he needs but still he can be unhappy. It was really hard at first, because no one understood us. You want to speak, you want to communicate, but you can't find a way to. We were blessed with neighbors in New Columbia being good to us. Living away from our families was very hard, very difficult. My mother cried a lot at first. Sometimes she called home, but that's expensive. My parents didn't forget about their families. They always pray that God will forgive them and take them to paradise. My parents always pray for us too. They always want us to keep our traditions.

In the land where I was born, we had the power to do as we pleased, a place where a man without money has the ability to own a property. It is a land where people have never seen snow, if they would to see snow they would say that the sky is raining sugar. If they tasted it, they would say that it is not sugar, it is a white sand that is falling from the sky.

In the United States we have four seasons. In my home country we also have four seasons. In Chad most of the year we have summer, and winter.

I'm trying to make Portland my new home. I want New Columbia to be similar to my neighborhood in Chad, so that in a couple of years Portland too will be my great home. I want New Columbia to be more united. In our neighborhood in New Columbia we have Saturday classes for younger children, so that more children can be united, and we want more diversity in our neighborhood. We don't want racism in our community, but love for each other.

For me as an ESL student who has only been here for five years, things are still hard. For most ESL students who are like me, who came as teenagers to America, things are difficult. We do not speak English fluently; also the culture is hard to master. Five years ago I did not speak any English, nor did anyone in my family speak English. No matter where I am, it feels like Chad is my home. In Chad most of the people speak my language, but here few people speak my language. My grandparents, uncles and cousins are still in Chad and some are in Cameroon. Me as a young boy who started growing up in a great country, and had great friends, and moved out from that country--it is hard to adjust to a new culture.

The most important thing in life to me is my family and my friends. And my great memories that I don't wish to forget. Those things I consider home. Because no matter how hard I try to adjust to a new culture or try other things, without these things I will never be happy enough. So let us respect our families, and friends because they are our happiness, they are our home.

And I hope whoever reads this will benefit.

"We need to value our language. It doesn't matter if you don't speak English well, because you are one step ahead of those who speak just English."

—Ruben Estrada-Herrera, Warner Pacific College, IYLC Keynote

News from Cleveland!

Current ELL student Ana Paula Alabata placed as the district champion (for ELL's) in Speech & Debate, and will be competing at the state conference.

While not currently in the ELL program, Biftu Amin (who is from Ethiopia) won the title of Rose Festival Princess at Cleveland.

ELL students Terry Nguyen, Naw Yua Mu and Ana Paula Alabata started a **Volleyball Club which meets on Thursdays at Lunch**. They wanted to offer those not on a team a chance to play.



Students enjoying the 2017 IYLC Conference. Photos: Nhi Truong, Kyle Domingo

News from Grant!

Grant High School has an Immigrants & Refugees Club.

We are actively engaged in a fundraiser to support immigrants and refugees. We are also planning a video project. Join us!

The club meets **every other Thursday in Room #237**.



News from Jefferson!

Jefferson High School won the men's basketball State Championship!

Jefferson has many different clubs, including a Polynesian student club, a Latino/a/x student club called Unidos, and a Native American student club.

Contact Ms Bovee: Room D-15 jbovee@pps.net

A number of ELD students got jobs working in restaurants.

Jefferson's prom is on May 6th and the spring dance is June 1.

Jefferson students want readers to know that Jefferson keeps getting better and better; the school has improved over the last few years.

FEATURED KEYNOTE SPEECH AT THE INTERNATIONAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

by IYLC Council member Sara Mohamed (Benson)

مرحبا انا سارة محمد من الصومال بس ولدت وتربيت بسوريا . بدرس بمدرسة بنسون. متخصصه بفرع الهندسه المعماريه. اجيت على أمريكا من 3 سنين ل هيك بحكي عربي, انكليزي وبفهم شوي صومالي وشوي تركي. مثل ما بتعرفوا سوريا بلد مسلم, وتقريبا كل البلاد المسلمة فيها مدارس للبنات لحال والشباب لـ حال. انا بمدرستي يلي كانت كلها بنات, كنت البنات يلي قاعده ع جنب, كتير خجوله ونادرا ما احكي. بس لما اجيت لهون كان لازم غير كتير شغلات فيني مثل اني احكي مع شباب علما انو انا كنت كتير اخجل. الحكي مع الشباب كان مثل الكابوس بالنسبه الي. بس بعدين انضميت ل ال IYLC وهنيك عرفت انو انا صوتي مهم وانو لازم وقف مشاني مشان صوتي ينسمع ويكون الي رايب الخاص. مو بس اتبع حكي العالم عرفت اني انا وحده مهمة متلي مثل اي حدا بهالدنيا, عرفت وفهمت انو انا حتى لو بنت بقدر اني اسس حالي من دون ما كون ضعيفه واني كون قويه وواجهه كل حدا بيحكي عكس هيك, لاني مهمه. ومثل ما انا مهمه, كل حدا بهالغرفه مهم ولاننا مهمين لازم نعلي صوتنا ونكون قوايا تيوصل صوتنا لكل.



How did that feel for you? Who understood what I just said? It was incredible speaking my language in front of you all! I can see most of you saying, “What the heck is she talking about?” I can imagine you’ll be looking for a subtitle down somewhere. But don’t worry, I have some things to say in English.

First, good morning everyone. My name is Sara Mohamed. I’m Somali but I was born and raised in Syria. I go to Benson H.S, majoring in Architecture. I speak Arabic, English, and I understand Somali. I came to the US 3 years ago, and when I came I had to make a lot of adjustments in my life. Many things changed in a very short amount of time. In Syria, I was shy and always thought that I’m not important. I didn’t have the power to say anything against what people say. I didn’t even think that I’m valued or that my ideas and my perspective is important. I’ve always felt scared of being not heard or ignored. When I came to the US, I had to talk to people. Even interacting with males, which was the biggest change in my life, knowing that I never talked to a man in Syria because schools were separated for males and females. Wooh, a guy?! It was a nightmare for me. I was afraid of telling my teacher, “How can I talk to a guy?”

Then, I went to the IYLC Conference. It was the time when a radical change occurred in my life. I heard the IYLC team saying that I’m important, and they need my voice. And I thought to myself, am I really important? Do they really need my voice? After that I decided to join the Council. I decided to get out off my shell. I joined the IYLC, met new people, shared my ideas, my feelings, and my perspective, and I gained confidence and I gained knowledge. I feel more powerful! Now I know that I’m important and my voice needs to be heard. I started being active in school. I never thought that my mom would depend on me on me but now she does. I advocate for her when she needs that.

Now I comprehend that our voices should be heard because we are all important.

Aduunyo waa hoos ka labadiiyasa gelin

The world is like a shadow

In the morning it is turned towards one direction

In the evening towards the opposite one

--Somali proverb, shared and translated by **Noor Hussein (Madison)**

JaSiri X: Rapper, Activist, IYLC Conference Guest Speaker by Naa Amorkor Quaye (Grant), News Team Chief

Considering the recent target on immigrants in the U.S, the IYLC News team spoke to JaSiri X about his views on policies targeting Muslims and immigrants.



JaSiri X is a Pittsburgh-based rapper and activist. He is also the founder of an anti-violence group called 1Hood and a recipient of the Rauschenberg Artist as Activist award.



JaSiri X explained how political activism affects his career. His first experience in hip-hop was when his "Free the Jena 6" song went viral in 2007. From there, he has continued to include activism in his career. "It is my responsibility to talk about real issues," he says. He stated that real issues are controversial like the Black Lives Matter movement and the harassing of undocumented immigrants, as he affirmed his passion for activism with young people of color.

We asked JaSiri X also about his song and video "[Who's Illegal](#)". This video was made in 2012 but is very much relevant today. JaSiri X spoke of his original motivation for the song and video: to show black American solidarity with immigrants. He mentioned how immigrant and undocumented students feel targeted, when in fact white Americans were not "legal" when they arrived here. His video points out this hypocrisy.



JaSiri encourages immigrant students in the U.S. to **speak about their experiences and advocate for their communities**, as well as showing solidarity with one another, regardless of differences between immigrant cultures and racial groups. As he says: "Do your thing, but get involved in a way you're comfortable with."



For more on JaSiri X, visit his website at www.jasirix.com

News from PISA!

At least 16 PISA students will be moving on to comprehensive high schools next year!

Students have chosen to attend the following schools: Benson, Jefferson, Franklin, Wilson, Madison

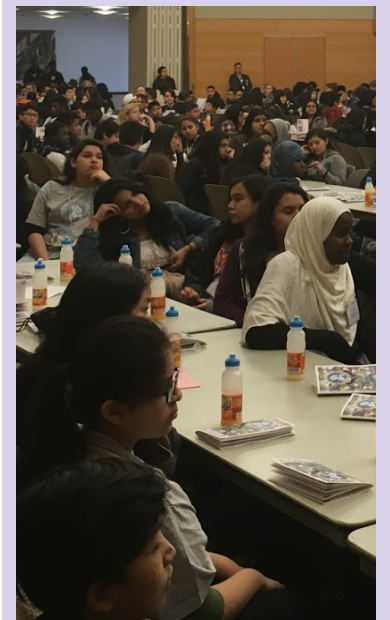
Please be sure to welcome them into your communities.



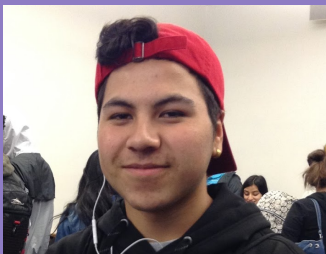
News from Wilson!

Wilson has a Muslim Student Association that meets every Wednesday at lunch in **Mr. Pier's classroom, Room #136**.

Rand Ibraheem was recently interviewed for The Immigrant Story website. Read her story [here](#).



Faces at the IYLC



My Point of View

by Wilondja Mashimango (Madison), News Team reporter

Hi, I am Wilondja Mashimango, a junior at Madison High School. I have been in the IYLC since 10th grade. While attending a couple of meetings, I was picked to be one of the IYLC News Team members. My job was to interview the special guests and students; so, a reporter.

I liked my job. I liked the way the News team worked. I would like to thank all the students that I had a chance to interview for taking their time and answering questions so nicely--better than I expected! They were amicable; that made me feel confident. Their feedback was phenomenal, and also for those that I did not get a chance to interview, just their presence was important, valued, and respected.

The conference was a huge and interesting event, and the parts that were executed by the council members ran very smoothly. The various teams running Operations and Safety executed their jobs perfectly. The presentations gave notions that were understandable to everyone. In particular, my IYLC colleagues showed wisely how to solve any kind of problem using a **“problem-solution tree”**; they were articulate presenters, which made me proud. As long as we have hundreds of languages spoken by English as a Second Language students (ESL), we want a chance to show others that we can also do better in English. As a matter of fact, all students attending the event worked harmoniously; that told the IYLC that you guys are doing great stuff at your schools and representing our community very well.

“Graduating from high school is a way to achieve success.” I was fully touched by this saying from PSU President Mr. Wim Wiewel, himself a second language speaker of English. **It is a long walk that we are walking, and the way that we are walking gives us hope that we will reach the top.** It seems that we are strong enough and full of hope that we will reach our goals.

Additionally, I would like to encourage other students to integrate the IYLC into their lives, because it is a great opportunity for ESL students. It strongly supports ESL students and makes sure that you feel like you are improving your English, and you are on track for college and in other areas of your life. By joining the IYLC, you will make us upbeat that we are doing a great job, and we will know you are eager to support us. IYLC allows you to interact with other council members, share your own experiences and ideas, and even build friendships, because you will be working toward a common goal: to make the conference event look great, and be helpful, interesting, and fun.



WINNING ESSAY FROM THE IYLC WRITING CONTEST

“Home” by Noor Hussein, Madison

I am from Somalia, a long narrow country that wraps around the horn of Africa. It has the longest coast of the any African nation bordering the Indian Ocean.

I am from many beaches, the beaches Liido and Berbera.

I am from good soil, smell of fresh rain and fresh food and fresh milk and fresh meat like goats and camels, milk gross at first but then good.

I am from milking camels and goats and cows, and talking and joking, watching news and fashion shows.

And shopping for my family at Winco and Fred Meyer with my sister and my cousin and baby nephew and my grandmother.

I am from Muslim pray salah and eating with my friends, meeting the community and helping the poor people. After we finish helping, we go to the mall, for shopping and video games, then playing soccer and going to the beach, having fun and going back our house.

I’m from Somali culture, clothes and traditional dance, dhaanto, shopkeepers, and farmers. I’m from the rose flower, scent of my house.

I’m from Eid, a holy day which all Muslims celebrate.

I’m from my family, especially my parents. And my grandmother, sisters, brothers and nephew.

I’m from Canjeero traditional pancakes. And Odkah traditional meat.

I’m from the potted flower houseplants, banana, lemon, papaya and pineapple.

I’m from farmers, camels, cows, chickens and sheep.

I’m from my Somali traditional song Magool Afrikaay Hurudooy and Somali proverb, Aduunyo waa hoos ka labadiiyasa gelin:

The world is like a shadow in the morning it is turned towards one direction, in the evening towards the opposite one.

I’m from a big family tree that starts with my ancestors and ends with my baby nephew.

News from Madison!

Join the Pan-African Club! EVERYONE is welcome. We meet **Mondays and Wednesdays in Room # B15.** We help students with homework and provide food every Wednesday in the Sun program. Any clothes, shoes, or food donations will be gratefully received. We also need help with fundraising for club t-shirts.

Contact Wilondja Mashimango (MHS junior) or Mrs Edelson:
jedelson@pps.net

News from Benson!

Sara Mohamed and her Benson colleagues have started a new club: the **Benson Islamic Association.**

Our biggest project is to donate food for homeless people. We need volunteers to help facilitate a food drive and fundraiser. You don't have to be Muslim to join the club!



My Impressions of The Conference

by Janvier Gasabato (Madison), News Team reporter

Hi. My name is Janvier Gasabato, I go to Madison High School, and I'm in 11th grade. My role at IYLC was interviewing guest speakers and students at the conference.

Something I loved about my job was how we used the experiences that IYLC staff members taught us in the real world. All the things my classmates and I were teaching other students from different schools were from IYLC members. They also taught me how to overcome shyness because that is my weakness. Before I joined IYLC I was too afraid to talk or give speeches in public. But during IYLC meetings I started to get used to it. Now I also feel comfortable in public. Another event from the day that really connected with me was when kids from the PPS Vietnamese Immersion program were dancing to music from Vietnamese culture. That reminded me of when I was in the kindergarten: we used to sing and parade every morning before we started the class.



Janvier Gasabato, staff reporter, interviews a student at the IYLC.



Students from the Vietnamese Immersion Program treat us to their dancing and singing. Photos by Nhi Truong

Like I mentioned, this program made me want to encourage students to join it. **It's a great opportunity to learn leadership skills, and you get use to them in real life.**

HONOR ROLL

We are proud to announce the High School graduation of our IYLC Council seniors...

Tarefa Gedi, Paw Klu Htoo, Mohamed Matan, Eh Munar Htoo, Mor Bu, Sagen Maharjan, Naa Amorkor Quaye, Yanet Asghedom, Rand Ibraheem, Habibo Jama, Saleh Abdoulaye

The following colleges have accepted our members: Portland Community College, Warner Pacific College, Portland State University, Rutgers University, Columbia University

CONGRATULATIONS, seniors!

We will miss you!

Good luck!



And congratulations to our council members who have been selected by Portland Public Schools as finalists for the annual **Young, Gifted and Black** award: **Wilondja Mashimango** and **Mariamou Abdoulaye**

Have any ideas for POV/Change Magazine?

We need writers, editors, artists, and photographers!

Visit our web form <https://goo.gl/3KaeQ7> (*log in to apps4pps.net required)