

**THE BLACK MAN**

*I am a black man.  
See me.  
Hear me.  
Hold me. Know me, please.  
I am alone in my life.  
A piece of dust in a dustless world.  
Don't change me,  
Accept me.  
Don't push me, Accept me.  
Don't push me, Pull me close.  
You make my life what it is.  
Make it a good thing.  
Beautiful  
Wanted  
When you are lonely, you cry.  
So let me cry, for I am no different from you.  
Let us be together.  
Let us be one.  
Let us be equal.  
Let it be right.*

**Teah H. Duke, Age 17  
Sam Barlow High School  
Gresham, Oregon**

**My dad hustles for money.**

*My dad has a job.  
My dad kills people.  
My dad saves people.  
My dad gives me money.  
My dad gives me love.  
My dad has lots of girls.  
My dad has a wife.  
My dad doesn't care about life.  
My dad has an important life.  
My dad thinks about killing himself.  
My dad thinks how to make himself better.  
I don't care about my dad.  
I love m dad.  
Everyone is not the same.*

**Kenny Wilson, Age 15  
Portland, Oregon**

**Untitled**

*Out of the darkness, into the light  
Fighting for justice, truth and right  
Struggling to be heard, struggling to be seen  
Struggling against prejudice obscene  
Wrestling for rights that should be yours  
Gaining ground despite slamming doors  
Trying to figure out what went wrong  
How bigots' ignorance became so strong  
No matter how cold and dark the night  
Continue to hope, continue to fight  
Following a legacy of hopes and dreams  
No matter how tough the battle seems  
One day we will win this fight  
And make mankind forget Black and white  
And judge people not by the Color of Skin  
But for what they stood for as women and men  
People who are judged and heard  
By the good of the action, or the truth of the word  
Then mankind will be the way it should  
Not just an elusive dream of brotherhood  
When a proud strong people walk out of the night  
Out of the darkness into the light.*

**Angelica I Schmitt  
Portland, Oregon**

**MARCH ON WASHINGTON**

*I stand with the wind at my back.  
Where he stood.  
I hear him over and over in my mind,  
The great words of Martin Luther King, Jr. echoing from the tall, white  
Washington Monument,  
"I have a dream..."  
I feel the power of a million followers.  
Pressed together, people formed rivers, their oneness mirrored  
in the Reflecting Pool.  
The trees, lush with green leaves,  
Hug in the magnificence of his speech;  
His words are here forever, tunneled down the passageway between two  
great monuments.  
At the end, the pillar stand piercing the afternoon sky,  
Standing tall against time,  
Like King;  
Like his words.*

**Laura Wittenberg, Sprague High School  
Salem, Oregon**

**TRIBUTE TO AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMAN**

*She of ebony skin  
She of high cheekbones  
She, whose fingers are long and elegant  
Her lips are full; her legs long; her body strong  
She is a survivor, a provider, an improviser  
She has had to do without, to do more with less  
She is a "Saturday's Child"  
She is exotic, an enigma to many  
She is a temptress, a feline in every sense  
She can embrace a heart and freeze a soul  
Her voice is like no other; so sweet, so strong, every word spoken, a lyrical verse  
She is full of understanding, yet few understand her  
She may be a candle in the wind, but can be the storm behind the clouds  
She is my woman, my friend; she is my fantasy  
She is a queen set adrift to grace her presence upon uncharted shores  
She inspires others, she is the model for the artist's brush  
She is sensuality, an adventure explained by mythology  
She is a bridge for the soul  
In every recipe, she likens to be the constant ingredient  
She can be the brass in the jazz; yet she can be the flute in the symphony  
She is scripture  
She is quiet  
she is rage  
She is fire and ice, in all the seasons  
She is, African-American woman*

**John Wolfe, Portland, Oregon**

# US Bank Announces 1994 Black History Month Poetry Contest Winners

In recognition of National Black History Month in February, US Bank of Oregon has announced 11 winners of its Black History Month Poetry Contest. The winning poems will be published in various Oregon newspapers in February. More than 300 youth and adult writers statewide submitted poems for the fifth-annual competition sponsored by the bank. A panel of three judges—Portland Police Chief Charles Moose, Michael Grice and Joe Franklin—selected the winning entries.

"Black History Month reminds us to reflect on the role African-Americans have played in the growth and cultural enrichment of our state and our country," said John Eskildsen, president of US Bank of Oregon. US Bank is proud to sponsor this annual recognition of outstanding new poetry that gives expression to the value of that heritage." Poems were judged on originality, form, theme and clarity in three age categories: children, young adults and adults.

US Bank of Oregon, Oregon's largest bank, is a subsidiary of US Bancorp, the largest bank holding company headquartered in ten Northwest. With assets of 421.4 billion as of December 31, 1993, US Bancorp is one of the nation's 35 largest bank holding companies, and has consistently ranked among the top tier of these companies in performance and capital strength. Other US Bancorp bank subsidiaries include US Bank of Washington; US Bank of California; US Bank of Nevada; US Bank of Idaho; and US Bank (Canada).

**1994 BLACK HISTORY MONTH  
POETRY CONTEST WINNERS**

**• Emily Beezhold-Corvallis, Oregon**

Emily began writing at age 10 after reading a poetry book. Music, art and history are her favorite subjects in school, and she enjoys basketball, reading and spending time with friends. After high school, she hopes to study music in college. She shares her writing with her parents, grandparents and friends.

**• Melinda Brown-Portland, Oregon**

This writer uses poetry to express her feelings and wrote her first poem at age 13. Although Melinda usually writes about love, concern about vio-

lence on the streets inspired this entry. Math is the favorite subject of this Jefferson High School sophomore, who was encouraged to enter the contest by her teacher.

**• Ocelene Renae Cain-Portland, Oregon**

Ocelene has been writing poetry for ten years and is inspired by women poets such as Maya Angelou. Her family and school counselor at Benson High School encourage her writing, and her work has been published in "Voices of Kuumba." She currently is an intern at the port of Portland, and hopes to study civil engineering in college.

**• Teah Duke-Gresham, Oregon**

This Sam Barlow High School senior has been writing short stories and poems for five years and is encouraged mainly by her mother. She wrote her winning poem for an assignment about African-American reflection in her creative writing class. Teah enjoys singing in her church ensemble and would like to become a surgical nurse.

**• Janet Kuenzi-Silverton, Oregon**

Janet wrote this winning entry about discrimination in response to an assignment in her English class. This Silverton Union High School sophomore is a member of Future Business Leaders of America and enjoys basketball, volleyball and swimming. She hopes to enter the medical field after college.

**• Curley Massey-Portland, Oregon**

Admiration for Thurgood Marshall inspired this writer's winning poem. This sixth-grade humanities teacher at George Middle School starts class each day with a positive message and uses writing to instill pride and self-esteem in his students. He is a member of the Northwest African-American Writers Workshop.

**• Jillian Murphy-Portland, Oregon**

This 13-year old, Ockley Green Middle School student was encouraged to enter the contest by her teacher and mother. Beside poetry, she writes letters to friends and family. In her free time, she enjoys basketball, football and dancing, including jazz, ballet and African. Jillian plans to go to college and become a lawyer.

**WORDS OF WISDOM**

*Not a day passes by without me looking  
at the sky and thinking, why did Dr. Martin  
Luther King have to die?*

*Some people wonder why  
people had to sit back and sigh,  
but for me, I will always know why.*

*Then they cried as the night went by  
and the Black people wondered if they  
were going to die.*

*At their surprise, Dr. King came  
and said, "Our race will never die."*

*But all who think Dr. Martin Luther King  
was the first one to speak...well, you're  
wrong. He was just the first one to be  
heard.*

**Jillian Murphy, Age 13, Portland, Oregon**

**Do you understand why**

*I don't understand?  
I love fiercely  
I hate Fiercely  
I become angry  
I am not understanding  
I become excited  
I get depressed  
I have confidence  
I am not understanding  
I enjoy life  
I enjoy people  
I want friends of all races  
I am not understanding  
I am a human  
You are a human  
We are all alike, aren't we?  
I am not understanding  
We both have emotions  
Inside we are both alike  
So why am I being discriminated against?  
Do you understand why I don't understand?*

**Janet Kuenzi, Age 15,  
Silverton Union High School, Silverton, Oregon**

**Untitled**

*My grandma sits on the porch and rocks  
and she say to me  
Girl you know there aint' no  
such thing as a free lunch  
even being dead ain't free  
and you gotta pay a price for living  
but even if you poor you can love  
much as you want, won't hurt none  
and  
she  
rocks  
and say to me  
Girl now hate cost a lot It cost people their spirit  
and sometimes their lives and if you  
go 'round people who hate  
close your eyes 'cause you'll catch it  
and  
she  
rocks.*

**Emily Beezhold, Age 12, Corvallis, Oregon**

**A TRIBUTE TO THURGOOD MARSHALL**

*So long Thurgood Marshall you really left your mark.  
To America and the world you are a man of conscience,  
You are an integrating spark.*

*You are a man of good will who fought injustice with a fervor.  
You overcame incredible odds and obstacles.  
Your accomplishments will live forever.*

*We the people are going to miss you, with your style, charm,  
and grace, you tried to bring us all together.  
As brothers and sisters of the human race.*

*You never allowed your color to hamper you, or prejudice  
to stop your quest.  
You proved with your character and your sills,  
you were head and shoulders above all the rest.*

*You were a driving force in your fight for justice and  
equality, and your record stands tall. It speaks for  
itself, for the whole world to see you made better  
people of us all.*

*You stood up for righteousness; you set an unchallenged pace.  
You weren't just fighting for the rights of Black people,  
but for the dignity of all mankind and justice's  
proper place.*

*We need to reflect upon you integrity, and from your  
wisdom we must borrow. You left the world a  
better place than you found it, you left hope  
for a brighter tomorrow.*

**Curley Massey, Portland, Oregon**

**A WORLD WITHOUT EYES**

*Imagine if you can if all were blind.  
Would we see color, or would see what's behind?  
Like characters, minds, souls, and hearts.  
Would we learn to judge others by their innermost parts?  
Would we learn to see qualities and not a face?  
Would we acknowledge all as the human race?  
Would the holocaust, racism, or slavery ever exist?  
Would a world of harmony be a reality and not a wish?  
The end of prejudice we need not delay.  
For all prejudice in some type of way.  
So imagine if you can from the beginning of lives,  
A world unaware. A world with out eyes.*

**Ocelene Renae Cain, Age 17, Portland, Oregon**

*People  
rushing  
running  
walking.  
P  
People  
stopping  
laughing  
talking.  
E  
People  
loving  
caring  
giving.  
O  
People  
taking  
stealing  
fibbing.  
P  
People  
shooting  
slanging  
banging  
dying.  
L  
Children  
Mothers  
Fathers  
Crying.  
E*

**Melinda Brown  
Age 15  
Jefferson High School  
Portland, Oregon**