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# OPINION

## Reflecting on My Growth and the Future

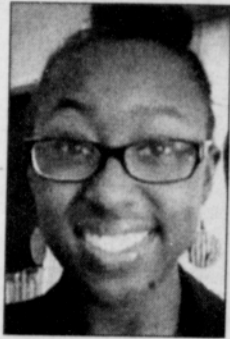
### High school graduate ready for next challenge

BY KENDALL JOSEY

Graduation is right around the corner and it seems surreal.

The excitement is building within me as I look toward new experiences. Although I'm excited to begin the next leg of my education marathon, I will miss and fondly reflect upon the experiences I was able to have in high school.

These past few years, community projects as well as school-related activities have kept me busy and have helped me continue to grow. When I graduate from Fort Vancouver High School, I plan on attending the Florida State University. I'm going to major in hospitality



management and minor in performance vocals.

Relocating for college will be another way for me to find myself, but there are things about high school and my environment that I will undoubtedly miss.

Throughout my high school career, I have solidified within me the characteristics of strong leadership, and have had the opportunity to demonstrate these qualities at local businesses, thanks to Deena Pierott, the founder of iUrban Teen Tech.

The program provides underserved youth in Oregon and Washington with the opportunity to learn about careers in technology. iUrban Teen Tech summits allow students ages 13-18 to experience an energetic business networking environment.

Kids who may have never had connections to people who help them cultivate their talents get the unique opportunity to meet professionals in different areas of technology. The technology

summits have been held at different college campuses in Oregon and Washington, and I have attended every one.

Ms. Pierott requested my assistance with the promotion and progression of these Tech Summits on different occasions, because she recognized in me the qualities of leadership and ingenuity. This program has opened doors for me in the areas of networking and personal development. I will definitely miss this creative outlet. Since I began volunteering at these events, I have been able to push my own boundaries and make an impact on my peers.

Another big part of high school that I will miss is just having the chance to showcase my talents for my classmates' entertainment without being too harshly judged.

From singing in the True Colors glee club to playing Dorothy in The Wizard of Oz, I have had the opportunity to show people what I love to do in a safe environment. In October of last year, I took

on yet another performance role by joining I.D.K. (Infinity Dance Krew), my high school dance team.

Our team, made up of dynamic black, white, Asian, Latina and Pacific Islander girls showed the beauty of diversity in motion! I believe that when young ladies of color saw me displaying my talents in different areas, it instilled in them that they really can do anything their hearts desire.

Besides my family and my church, both of which are huge parts of my life, I will miss my Vancouver community of supporters and friends.

I will cherish the connections I have made and the networks I have been a part of. It hasn't always been easy going, these past four years. There have been struggles, disappointments and losses. However, I have discovered that the challenges are what make each accomplishment worthwhile.

*Kendall Josey, 18, is a graduating senior at Fort Vancouver High School.*

## War Drumming Re-Run from the Right

### Haven't we seen this movie before?

BY DONALD KAUL

Can you hear it? Conservatives are beating their war drums and banging their tambourines, trying to gin up support for U.S. intervention in Syria.

Republican Senators John McCain of Arizona and Lindsey Graham of South Carolina have been particularly vocal about their desire to get us deeply embroiled in yet another Middle Eastern conflict.

They want us to arm the rebels and establish a no-fly zone to keep Syrian President Bashar al-Assad from bombing his own people, 70,000 of whom have

been killed in that miserable war. They don't want us to put "boots on the ground" — not yet — although they don't say how we're supposed to avoid that if things go south.

The surge in enthusiasm for intervention came after reports that Assad may have used poisonous sarin gas against rebel forces.

All of which presents a grave moral dilemma for President Barack Obama. He has said Syria's use of chemical weapons would constitute a "red line" that would require an American response. But he didn't say what the response would be.

Arming the rebels, however, would present its own set of problems. How do we know the people we arm wouldn't eventually turn those weapons against us? It's not a hypothetical question. Remem-

ber those "freedom-fighting" mujahideen who were supposedly our allies when they fought the Soviets in Afghanistan but then brutally oppressed Afghanistan's women and killed our troops?

If we don't do anything, will that be a signal to our enemies that we lack resolve and are weak? As the gentleman from South Carolina put it: "If we keep this hands-off approach to Syria...we're going to start a war with Iran because Iran's going to take our inaction in Syria as meaning we're not serious about their nuclear weapons program."

Graham exaggerated how "hands-off" our Syrian policy has been, but he applied typical Republican logic when he called for to waging one war to prevent another. Haven't we seen this movie before?

We went into Afghanistan to avenge ourselves against bin Laden for the 9/11 attacks and stayed to rid the Afghan people of the scourge of the Taliban, which we did...for a while.

We went into Iraq to rescue the country from Saddam Hussein's tyranny, which we did. The Iraqis have been killing each other ever since.

We pressured Hosni Mubarak to relinquish power in Egypt and the people elected a Muslim government that seems to be morphing into a repressive, authoritarian, Mubarak-style regime.

You can talk in high-minded terms about confronting evil where you find it because you are the high and mighty United States of America. But unless you have something better that can replace it, what have you accomplished?

Personally, I think that you never have to apologize for not wanting to get into a war. Even if a war is justified (which most aren't) it doesn't hurt to have a few dissenters arguing for a way to avoid it.

One my favorite politicians of all time is the pacifist Jeannette Rankin of Missouri. Almost immediately after becoming the first woman elected to the House of Representatives in 1916, she voted against our entry into World War I.

She was defeated in the following election but was elected again 24 years later — when she cast the only vote against our entry into World War II.

That's my idea of a Profile in Courage.

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