

Empowering Teens
through Inspiration,
Empathy and Education

Minds★

MEET

Kellen
Drain

from DeSoto, Texas



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**Do not
shut up!**
See page 8

FEATURING



AGE

13

HOMETOWN

Desoto, Texas

SCHOOL

Desoto West Middle School

Kellen Drain

How do you balance school, extracurricular activities, and personal time?

My academics come before anything

I use my calendar on my phone to put down any activity I have.

My mom also taught me that once I start something I have to finish it.

Share a time when you demonstrated empathy to someone you did not know personally?

In December, me and my brother Kaiden went out in the community and passed out hygiene items and blankets to the homeless. They were asking me questions about school and my grades and they were strangers to me. I talk to them like any other person and they prayed for me and my brother before we left. I didn't treat them any different because of their situation.

What can teens do to eradicate violence at school and in the community?

I think that teens should not idealize rappers who rap about gun violence. I also think teens should report any weird things they see on social media like when kids are posting guns or say they are going to hurt someone.

Who has been a significant influence in your life, and why?

My Big brother Kaiden has had a significant influence on my life. He made good grades, he was in the band, and when he went to college he got a lot of scholarships and I want to do the same thing. He helped me a lot with my Dyslexia and he started an organization called Kaiden's Building Blocks to help kids like me.

What advice would you give to other teens who want to make a difference in their communities?

Do what Nike said...JUST DO IT!! I thought it was hard but there are so many people in the community who want to help teens work in the community. You also meet important people who will support what you want to do. You can't be scared to make a difference in the world.





*Magazine
Submission*



***How has your participation in
sports attributed to your
resilience?***

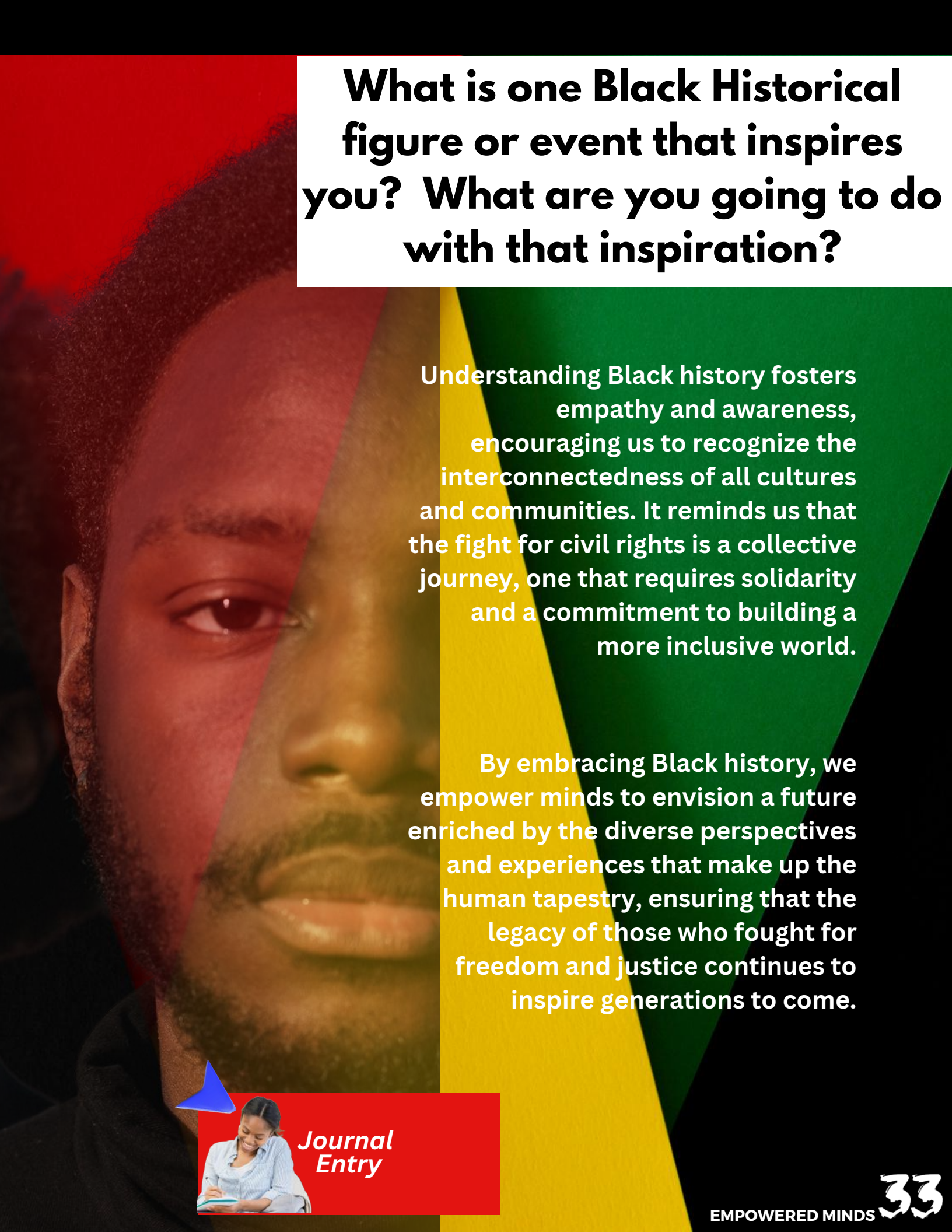


Inclusive Connected Compassion

Embracing diversity and community helps you to develop a broader perspective of the world and foster inclusivity. Be encouraged to actively and authentically explore different cultures, traditions, and viewpoints. It will enrich your understanding and empathy towards others. You will begin to appreciate and celebrate differences rather than fear them, promoting a more harmonious society.

Being a part of a diverse community will allow you to engage in conversations that challenge your own beliefs, assumptions and the negative influences that may be portrayed among various groups. This will make room for collaboration and innovation, inspiring unique classroom projects and community service ideas.

Be encouraged to build a strong support network that offers guidance and acceptance of others. This sense of belonging is vital for everyone's mental and emotional well-being because if you feel connected and valued. In essence, embracing diversity and community equips you with the mindset necessary to thrive in an interconnected world, preparing you to be compassionate and open-minded global citizens.



What is one Black Historical figure or event that inspires you? What are you going to do with that inspiration?

Understanding Black history fosters empathy and awareness, encouraging us to recognize the interconnectedness of all cultures and communities. It reminds us that the fight for civil rights is a collective journey, one that requires solidarity and a commitment to building a more inclusive world.

By embracing Black history, we empower minds to envision a future enriched by the diverse perspectives and experiences that make up the human tapestry, ensuring that the legacy of those who fought for freedom and justice continues to inspire generations to come.



*Journal
Entry*

Coach Gardner

Shannon Farrell



EPCHS WINTER SPORTS 2024

Evergreen Park High School Assistant Coach, Kacey Gardner notes:

I always make sure every player feels comfortable giving their opinion in any discussion. I encourage my girls to play off of each other's strengths & embrace their weaknesses as areas to grow. This can be applied on and off the court.

There would be times in practice where one or two players weren't playing as well as others and it showed on everyone's body language. I emphasized the importance of always picking your teammates up. If they missed a lay up, made a bad pass, or missed a free, it doesn't matter. Over the season this improved their dynamic as a team, and encouraged players to get better individually and as a team.

Shannon Farrell, 15

Evergreen Park, Illinois



**Magazine
Submission**



What do you think are the benefits of maintaining inclusivity among a team? How does inclusion impact communities around the world?

How does spiritual wellness impact your success?

This is an intriguing connection that often goes unnoticed.

Teen spiritual wellness involves developing a strong sense of self, understanding one's values, and fostering a connection to something greater than oneself—be it nature, community, or a higher power.

This inner grounding provides teens with resilience, clarity, and purpose, which are crucial elements for achieving success.

When you engage in practices that nurture your spiritual wellness, such as meditation, journaling, or spending time in nature, you will cultivate mindfulness and emotional intelligence. These skills help you manage stress, maintain focus, and develop empathy, all of which contribute to your overall well-being and academic or personal success.

A spiritually-grounded teen is often more adaptable and open-minded, able to navigate challenges with a balanced perspective. This adaptability not only aids in overcoming obstacles but also inspires creative problem-solving and innovation, key components of success in today's ever-changing and complex world.

Ultimately, teen spiritual wellness is about nurturing the whole person, fostering a sense of balance and harmony that empowers them to thrive in all areas of life.



What does spiritual wellness mean to you?



Cultural Literacy

Through music, dance, theater, visual arts, and literature, you can communicate your thoughts and emotions in creative ways.

Arts and culture serve as powerful tools for bringing people together and builds a sense of community and shared experiences. When you participate in cultural events or collaborate on artistic projects, you are building relationships and understanding with others from diverse backgrounds.

Culture is language...food...how one lives....beliefs, traditions and values. Be encouraged to immerse yourself in different cultural expressions. It will offer you a deeper appreciation and respect for diversity. This cultural literacy will empower you to become well-rounded, creative and understand the importance of cultural heritage and expression in shaping a collective future.

Lift every voice and sing,
'Til earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise
High as the list'ning skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on 'til victory is won.
Stony the road we trod,
Bitter the chastening rod,
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat,
Have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the
slaughtered,
Out from the gloomy past,
'Til now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.
God of our weary years,
God of our silent tears,
Thou who has brought us thus far on the way;
Thou who has by Thy might
Led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,
our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee;
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,
May we forever stand,
True to our God,
True to our native land.

Lift Every Voice and Sing

James Weldon Johnson



As part of a celebration of Abraham Lincoln's birthday on February 12, 1900, "Lift Every Voice and Sing" was first publicly performed by 500 school children at the Stanton School in Jacksonville, Florida. The school principal, James Weldon Johnson, wrote the words and Johnson's brother Rosamond set them to music.



***Journal
Entry***

***How do these lyrics
resonate with you?***

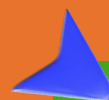
I AM GRATEFUL.

I am grateful for...

**How do you think U.S. President
Trump's executive orders impact:**



**Your Family
Your Community
The United States
The World**



**Social
Media
Post**

#iThrive2025



The Public Policy & Regulation team of Holland & Knight, a law firm, provides brief overviews of the numerous orders published by the Trump Administration.



LEARN MORE



Tanya's

Truths

Don't Take It Personally

What people say or do is about them, not you. Don't let someone else's drama mess with your vibe.

Scripture: "Fearing people is a dangerous trap,
but trusting the Lord means safety."

Proverbs 29:25 NLT

*Adapted from The Four Agreements by Don Miguel Ruiz



Tanya Darnell-Davis
Houston, Texas

MANI ADAMS, JR.

Legacy Scholarship

IN LOVING MEMORY OF MANI ADAMS, JR.

APPLY



CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
School of Business Administration



Mani Adams Jr. Mani was a business student attending CAU and described as a charismatic, vibrant, and athletic young man with aspirations of becoming an entrepreneur. Mani completed his studies in December 2020 with the hopes of pursuing his MBA. Unfortunately, before his commencement, Mani was tragically killed as a result of senseless gun violence. His family accepted his degree at CAU's Spring Commencement in 2021. In honor of his memory, his family created the Mani Adams Jr. Legacy Foundation. The scholarship supports male CAU business majors, sophomores or above, with a 2.5 higher GPA. May his legacy live on and his family and loved ones be richly blessed.



A Holistic Therapy Group LLC

We are strengths-based solution-focused therapists. This simply means that we will help you re-discover the strengths you already possess to resolve issues or improve areas of your life. We like to take a holistic approach to your care. Holistic health means we will explore your mental health, spiritual health, and physical health. When all these areas are well, it gives you the best opportunity for success in all areas of your life. We will strive for the small victories and work our ways to the big ones. Always remember that achieving small goals are not insignificant, but useful to show you that you can do more.

- **Anxiety**
- **Relationship Difficulties**
- **Amicable Divorce Counseling**
- **Life Transitions**
- **Difficulties with Self-Esteem**
- **Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)**
- **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder**
- **Professional/Career Issues**
- **College/Graduate School Issues**
- **Pain Management (I do not prescribe medication)**
- **Stress Management**
- **Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)**
- **Spirituality**
- **LGBTQ+ Counseling**
- **Grief, Loss, or Bereavement**
- **Other Issues**



Dr. Ashley A. Nazon, DSW, LCSW, QS



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TEEN SESSION



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Community Outreach Asst. Coach

University of Illinois-Chicago

Teacher Resident

Academy for Urban School Leadership

Chicago, Illinois

Amanda Mullenax,

Director Sales

Flight Safety International

Dallas, Texas

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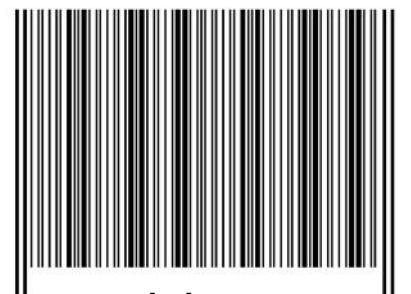


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