

2021 African American History Month Arts and Writing Competition for Grades 8 to 12

Sponsored annually by the Connecticut People's World Committee to remember the lives and work of Dalzenia Henry and Virginia Henry who devoted themselves to the young people of New Haven and to making a better future.

Congratulations to All Participants

Participation Certificate

“Leading from the Outside” by Stacey Abrams

First Place \$100 gift card

Second Place \$50 gift card

Third Place \$25 gift card

First Place Art - Maya Akilotan

“End the Cycle”

Mauro-Sheridan Magnet School

Second Place Art - Karyme Beranda

“The Amazing Black Women That Helped Georgia Turn Blue”

Metropolitan Business Academy

Third Place Art - Ashley Portilla

“Equality”

Metropolitan Business Academy

First Place Writing Poetry - Bryan Lozano

“Vote!”

Metropolitan Business Academy

First Place Writing Essay - Demarques Stevens

“The Third Reconstruction”

Metropolitan Business Academy

Second Place Writing - Samuel Bampoe-Parry

“We are Here to Stay”

Metropolitan Business Academy

Third Place Writing - Bianca Osorio

“We the People”

Metropolitan Business Academy

Honorable Mentions

Rihansi Desai; Artwork “Kamala Harris”

High School in the Community

Nohemie Jeudy, Artwork “stargaze”

Naugatuck High School

Kalis Spell, Writing, “The Third Reconstruction”

Metropolitan Business Academy

Tajay Henlin Music “Bumblebee Blues”

Wilbur Cross High School

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Georgia On My Mind: The Third Reconstruction

PROMPT

Black women voters led the victory in Georgia that elected the first Black and Jewish U.S. Senators in the deep South since slavery. The historic organizing, which included Latinx, immigrant, Native American, Asian and union members, overcame every vicious white supremacist and corporate effort at voter suppression.

More than 100,000 voters who did not participate in November are voting in this election, have already cast their ballots, and they are disproportionately voters of color and disproportionately young voters," said Stacey Abrams who led the grass roots mobilization.

The election in Georgia represents a call for fundamental reconstruction to finally uproot the poisonous legacy of slavery. There is a new understanding of the horrors of systemic racism coming out of the pandemic and the police murders of Black people which gave rise to mass protests across the nation and world last summer.

"If the Reconstruction of the southern states, from slavery to free labor, and from aristocracy to industrial democracy, had been conceived as a major national program of America, whose accomplishment at any price was well worth the effort, we should be living in a different world." said the great W.E.B. DuBois in his book "Black Reconstruction in America 1860-1880" (1935).

The first Reconstruction briefly flourished after Emancipation, and the second Reconstruction ushered in meaningful progress in the civil rights era (1960's). But both were met by ferocious reactionary measures that severely curtailed, and in many cases rolled back, racial and economic progress. This Third Reconstruction is a profoundly moral awakening of justice-loving people united in a fusion coalition powerful enough to reclaim the possibility of democracy—even in the face of corporate-financed extremism says Rev. William Barber of the Poor People's Campaign author of "The Third Reconstruction."

"Our model of moral fusion comes out of Reconstruction, when black and white people after slavery got together to reconstruct the south and to rewrite constitutions and to implement policies that would address the post-effects of slavery...We also use Dr. King's model that racism, poverty, and militarism are the triple evils destroying the America society."

Express in artwork, essay, poetry, rap or song on the following questions

1. In this third period of Reconstruction what legislation should be enacted to uproot racism, given that Kamala Harris, the first African American female vice president, has the historic tie breaking vote in the Senate?
2. What organizing did it take to get people out to vote in Georgia in spite of the massive voter suppression and intimidation tactics used by the right-wing, targeting people of color?

JUDGING CRITERIA

Does the entry address the topic?

Does the entry address collective action for social change?

Does the entry reflect creative thought?

Does the entry have artistic merit?

Is the entry accurate in content and form?

Appreciation to Judge Clifton Graves, Vanessa Glenn, Elida Paiz for judging the submissions.