

# *Hills Review*

Journal of Student Poetry

*Spring 2017*



**INDIANHILLS**  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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*Joy Lyle, Editor*

# ***Table of Contents***

## ***Juan P. Aldaba***

Same Place..... 1

## ***D'Tresean Burge***

Strangled ..... 2

Abrupt Rhapsody ..... 3

## ***Natasha Clawson***

Own World..... 4

The Big Open Field..... 5

## ***Leah Dix***

Complete..... 6

## ***Gitali Piekarska Guanel***

Fire and Flames ..... 8

Thrive ..... 9

## ***Megan Hill***

All the Stars and Moon ..... 10

Crowphobia ..... 11

## ***Emilee McDonald***

Ode to the Cherry Blossom Tree..... 12

## ***Nyrobi McIntire***

Ours..... 13

Heart and Mind..... 14

## ***Shirley Morlan***

Amazing Love ..... 15

***Gabrielle Okones***

The Farmer ..... 16  
For Andrew Lee ..... 17

***Jonathan D. Rich***

A Life Not Soon Forgotten ..... 18  
The Illusion ..... 19

***Khloe Snakenberg***

Mamma Said ..... 21

***Sydney Striegel***

Food Analogies..... 22

***Barbara J. Tucker***

She Is Me ..... 23  
Fight On ..... 24

***Jaime Wright***

My Bed ..... 25  
Peaches and Cream ..... 27

***Autobiographies*** ..... 30

*Juan P. Aldaba*

## **Same Place**

This place  
It's like a home to me now  
I know way too well these routes  
The green fresh grass  
Lakes that reflect the sun like mirrors  
The mountain so well abstract  
And gentle sounding river  
Its tracks through the trees  
The secret places one may go  
For shelter  
Though these caves are full of webs  
And the carvings on the walls unread  
It is truly safe  
The trees  
So shallow and pure  
They speak to me  
But I do not understand a word  
I find all of this quite soothing  
But  
I am still ...

Alone

*D'TreSean Burge*

## **Strangled**

Forgotten passion got me feeling like a leaf in the wind  
Compared to volcanoes, oh how I burn within  
Mother Nature's maternal instinct kind of sucks,  
I feel as if she's stuck in revolving cycles that make her  
conscience erupt.

She claims we are the same, I say "shut up."

In return a blanket of white falls--  
jailed inside I breathe this cabin fever--

I am a prisoner in my own head; she knows this; she  
wants me to get lost.

She says "feel my wrath"

I say "This ain't you, it's Jack Frost."

A stale silence falls over us

Manic during this recession;

Her unpredictable preciseness aids in my depression.

Funny jokes get told to relive the tension

As we both bathe in this illuminated monotony.

*D'TreSean Burge*

## **Abrupt Rhapsody**

Bright eyes I tried to find mine; the only time I can  
remember is when my mom died.

A moment so dense with the musk of dead angels  
singing, I'm just screaming wake up, mom wake up,  
didn't want to budge.

This time show me love. Upset with the one, I won't hold  
a grudge.

The devil tried to get me, he almost made be budge. I  
realized I fell asleep, stuck in this mental sludge. Wait, he  
fell asleep, "Wake Up!" My eyes came wide open when I  
realized my teachers were people too.

All of that speeds by when you are young and assume  
that everything you could  
possibly think is the truth.

I got words for you.

It's not.

*Natasha Clawson*

## **Own World**

She was never herself.  
She was always faking who she was.  
This world was just a dream to her  
Because she was always in her own world.  
This world caused her so much depression and anxiety.  
She couldn't take it; she went into her own world.

*Natasha Clawson*

## **The Big Open Field**

It was a bright summer day,  
as I was standing out in the open field  
watching the clouds go by.

It was the perfect day in that big open field.  
I was dreaming about a perfect world and this was it.  
This big open field had all of my memories and dreams.

This place is what I called home.  
This big open field is where I grew up.

This was where I grew my roots.  
This big open field is where I love.

I can finally be free.

*Leah Dix*

## **Complete**

I was a child, unaware of society and all its cruelty.

I was happy and free, a living spirit.

One day I grew, suddenly, slowly becoming more and more aware.

I began to feel trapped, sad, and hateful.

I hated myself; I wasn't pretty enough or thin enough.

I hated my family; they didn't have enough money or nice things.

I hated the girls and boys; they were judgmental and stuck up.

I fell from the sweet, joyful, innocent girl I once was.

I became quiet, alone, depressed.

I couldn't find anything that truly made me happy,

I couldn't find anything to break me away from the world.

Three years later there I stood still unhappy and hating myself.

I found a place where I fit into society, friends who didn't care about money or looks.

I was getting better, but a piece was still missing.

A year later I found music.

Music filled the gap in my life.

It was inspirational.

It was soothing to the soul.

I was almost normal; I was happy; I had everything... almost.

I still had no love for myself.

I was never good enough or pretty enough.  
I sat in a classroom one day and heard a voice.  
She told me that it doesn't matter what my size is.  
She told me it didn't matter what society thought.  
She told me I was perfect in every way.  
She told me I was beautiful.  
She told me I was worth everything.  
She flipped the switch.  
Two years ago I was empty and hated myself.  
Today standing tall, grounded, and complete,  
I love my body.  
I love my family.  
I even love those who hurt me.  
I am me, and I am worth every penny.

*Gitali Piekarska Guanel*

## **Fire and Flames**

Fire and flames, water and ice  
Locked, in their grip, tight as a vice  
Rapids and falls, deserts and winds  
Cyclones and movement-- the Earth as it sings  
A song of destruction, a claim for rebirth  
A chance for renewal-- for life, on the Earth

*Gitali Piekarska Guanel*

## **Thrive**

The sun glares down on dusty sand  
Humanity dead-- a barren land--  
and yet, nature thrives--  
Waterfalls, rocks, grass and trees  
The light flies, the flowers breathe  
The sun sings whilst clouds dance  
The beauty of Earth, given a chance  
The leaves wave, the thunder rolls  
The snow comes and summer goes  
Nature sleeps to later rejoice  
When steps are taken, to make the right choice.

*Megan Hill*

## **All the Stars and Moon**

I sat outside on a June morning, waiting for the sun to rise. The sunrise is my favorite time of day. While waiting for sun and blue skies, I watched the moon and all the stars.

The moon was full with its old face that told wisdom and age. And the stars were the moon's audience, watching it shining through the dark.

I thought of how much the moon has seen on this Earth and through the Universe. Watching people grow, die, marry, laugh, and cry.

I wonder what kind of secrets the moon held and what kind of stories each star has seen? Before I could wonder long, the sun came up and started new secrets.

*Megan Hill*

## **Crowphobia**

No one knows the fear  
I have of the four claws  
at the end of their feet,  
the sharp mouths  
they use to eat and  
what people call beaks.  
I fear their dark feathers  
that somehow can survive  
the toughest of all weather.  
I get nightmares of being in  
the dark woods, running  
away from the awful birds.  
I fear their black, devilish eyes  
along with their high pitched,  
childish cries.  
They make me want to hide.  
I envy any of those who can easily go  
outside with all of those horrible  
crows.

*Emilee McDonald*

## **Ode to the Cherry Blossom Tree**

The cherry blossom tree gives off a fruity  
and musky fragrance  
That springs away in early May.  
The smell floods my nose as it brings back memories  
of breezy days of sitting on the porch  
as grandma braids my hair.  
Pink, red, green, and white, all of these colors,  
they swarm the sky as you look up.  
Soon the cherry blossoms will  
fall as the calm breeze comes through;  
the beautiful, breath-taking tree  
will soon be bare by June;  
the life the tree gave will be gone until  
next May when the tree blooms again.

*Nyrobi McIntire*

## **Ours**

Our passion is like the sun,  
hot and burning.

Our bickering is like a thunderstorm,  
loud and scary.

Our fights are like wars,  
bloody and disastrous.

Our makeups are like a coming home party,  
warm and inviting.

Our struggles are like a steep hill,  
make one wrong step and fall hard.

Too much stress and we break,  
like a twig on a tree.

*Nyrobi McIntire*

## **Heart and Mind**

coming together can make such beautiful things.  
The buildings we see, the technology we use, the books  
we read;  
they all started somewhere.  
Your heart and mind have to agree.  
You need both to make something truly beautiful.  
When I'm writing I need both or my stories will be boring.  
Even if for only a fleeting moment, sparks can fly; ideas  
can grow and flourish.  
The heart and mind are irrevocably twined together.  
One without the other is just incomplete thinking.  
If they do not agree, just take time to slow down and  
breathe.

*Shirley Morlan*

## **Amazing Love**

Day September 28, 1992,  
At the hospital at 5:20 a.m.  
Awaiting your arrival.  
The pains are closer and harder.  
Breathing is elevated.  
Excited, happy, and scared all at the same time.  
The final push, you are here.  
So small, so beautiful.  
Crying and kicking with so much life.  
First feeding and diaper change.  
Holding you and never wanting to put you down.  
Smells of a new baby.  
Smiling up at me with so much trust.  
The pain what pain, it was worth the gift and the miracle.  
Bundling you up and holding you in my arms.  
Love, amazing love.  
Eyes so small and bright.  
Ears tiny enough to hear my voice.  
Fingers and toes all there and so long.  
Leaving the hospital scared  
to always want to do the right things.  
Holding you, changing you, feeding you daily such a joy.  
Watching you change every day.  
Child birth what a life-changing experience.  
Love, amazing love!

*Gabrielle Okones*

## **The Farmer**

The work of a farmer,  
Is never done.  
The end of each task,  
Brings on a new season.

The work load is heavy,  
As well as the burden.  
Yet, every day, He carries on.  
His hands are rough and  
Heart full of love for the work he does.

Long autumn nights,  
Only company, combine and rows  
Upon rows of corn.

At the end of each day  
He is thankful and He is  
Proud, knowing he has done as  
His father had taught him, years back.

*Gabrielle Okones*

## **For Andrew Lee**

Two white birch entangled in themselves,  
Paying no attention to the other trees around.  
They were planted not so long ago,  
But have seen many days go by together.  
And hopefully see many more,  
Should the good Lord grant it.  
They like to whisper about the past,  
And giggle about what they did not know.  
No matter any arguments they have,  
They know they must move on from it  
For they are stuck there together 'til forever.  
Tomorrow is always a new day,  
With new opportunities and chances.  
They know the other will be right there beside them  
Through whatever.  
Any bout, trial, or triumph they will encounter together.  
They will watch their children and their children's  
    children  
Grow up around them.  
Who knew that they would land where they did?  
Right next to each other to live out their days.  
For God did. He planted them where they needed to be.

*Jonathan D. Rich*

## **A Life Not Soon Forgotten**

In a land of sorrow,  
A capital of misery,  
A palace of loneliness,  
The starless sky looks down on me and says  
“This was all your fault.”

My mind rewinds,  
And back I go as I recall the sight  
To that mournful day  
To that fateful hour  
To the minute you gave up.  
You left me here alone.

So now I sit in silent remorse asking the sky  
“Could I have changed it?  
If I had been there, would you still be with me?  
Could I have fixed the future?”

The more I think, the worse I feel  
And the more I want to join you.

*Jonathan D. Rich*

## **The Illusion**

Hope,  
I see it now  
My trek is at an end

I have made it through  
My mind intact  
Through the distress

Through the thick mud that lines the dark tunnel  
It seems that the mud is thinning  
It is there waiting for me

My legs, they can move faster now  
I can choose to live  
I can claim my prize  
The light intensifies as I approach  
The opening close at hand

Is this where I end my journey?  
Am I finally out of the pain,  
The sorrow  
The misery of my past?  
Did I make it to the end?

As I approach  
The image becomes clear.  
I reach out to touch it

But it's just an illusion.  
It fades back into nothingness  
The mud now thicker than before  
And still I trek onward hoping  
    One day,  
    I'll finally be free

*Khloe Snakenberg*

## **Mamma Said**

Mamma always said you were a pretty girl and you  
believed it.

When you are three pretty doesn't hurt,  
Being pretty enough isn't a worrisome thing at the young  
age of three.

Mamma said you're a beautiful girl,  
Your teenage years have begun.

Yet others want to tear you down.

Your thighs touch,

Your hair's too straight,

Your teeth aren't straight enough.

You shouldn't wear that shirt your stomach shows,

The stomach that's covered in stretchmarks.

Mamma said you're an astonishing woman,

Twenty and you've accomplished so much.

Pretty doesn't seem reachable anymore,

Beautiful is just a thing you see in dreams.

You lost the weight,

You cut your hair,

You dealt with all the braces.

Am I good enough now mamma?

Mamma said you're missed beautiful girl,

While she lays her baby in the ground.

*Sydney Striegel*

## **Food Analogies**

As I stared out my window,  
I spotted kids eating watermelon  
While riding their bikes in the staggering heat.  
The dandelions mirrored fresh lemons,  
And the sun looked like a plump orange.  
I even found myself picturing a swimming pool  
    filled with gelatin.

As I left my state of daydreaming and returned to reality,  
I realized that I couldn't wait for winter.  
I stared out my window once more.  
This time, the snow appeared as mashed potatoes.  
The Christmas lights resembled cherry tomatoes,  
While the bare branches reminded me of pretzels;  
And I found myself wishing I were eating the cold,  
Obviously in the form of ice cream,  
Instead of having to bundle myself up from the biting  
    wind.

Barbara J. Tucker

***She Is Me***

Alone. She sits. She waits.  
Day has turned to night as  
Others have come. All have gone.  
The shadows blanket her in  
Peaceful serenity.  
Silence.

Then she hears her name, her  
Mother calling her for dinner. If only.  
The nurse walks her to a small room.  
The harsh, sterile, blinding light  
Bathes her like scalding water.  
She wants to run. Rather,  
She sits. She waits. Alone.  
Well past the time. Then  
He enters. He sits, on the  
Other side of the room. His eyes  
Cast down at the chart, as if looking at  
Her would turn him to stone.  
Finally, he speaks: "Are you—  
Alone?"  
A rush of blood races to her head,  
As if a dam has broken loose in her body.  
She is drowning. She can't breathe,  
Can't hear over the rushing water.  
One word breaks through like a lifesaver  
Weighed down with stones: "Cancer."  
Drowning in her tears, time is lost.  
She is me.

Barbara J. Tucker

## ***Fight On***

The apex of the mountain taunts me from afar.

You'll fail. You'll lose. You'll surrender.

The windy path to the top looms ahead.

I retreat in shame.

I failed. I lost. I surrendered.

NO! I return to the road and start running.

The mountain does not cower. She fights.

I dance around landmines of fallen rock.

Steep, plunging cliffs await a single misstep.

Higher, higher, and higher.

I'll succeed. I'll win. I'll conquer.

Oh, but the mountain gains strength as I grow weaker.

Dark clouds suffocate me like a murderous pillow,

And my lungs burn in excruciating pain.

A torrent of icy rain whips my face.

Plodding feet of cement quake the mighty mountain.

Higher, higher, and higher.

Wait! Is that—a light? A break in the deathly clouds?

The journey is not over.

My feet grow lighter as my body sheds its pain.

The air is bitter; it awakens my senses, and

My pace quickens, sprinting to the finish.

Finally, the skies open, and the horizon clears.

A sun of gold drapes me in heavenly victory.

I succeeded. I won. I conquered.

Jaime Wright

## *My Bed*

So many nights, I've awakened, with your stubble as a  
memory against my cheeks,  
So many dreams, you've haunted, in a warm, and kind  
echo, as I pressed against my sheets,  
So many nights, I lay, eyes open, irises on the dark  
ceiling, aching, lusting, wishing,  
So many dreams, you've whispered, held, and saved me  
from my pain and wandering,

I've gently put my head, on my pillow, grasping at  
chances to witness your thoughts,  
I've grasped my blankets, against me, looking for a  
foundation in you when I was lost,  
I've imagined what it would feel like, to have you curved  
up against my body in this bed,  
I've wished I could hold your arm, skim your skin,  
instead I think of all you've ever said,  
I wonder if I run across your mind, in an array of lively  
colors, and brightness,  
I quietly question what you think of me, if I'm seen in  
lust, or kindness,  
I don't know where your mind is, but I know the treasure  
your ribs hold,  
I know that my heart is stitched with wanting, to skim  
your heart of gold,  
But as I lay awake, or asleep, in my lonesome bed,  
You run in an array of lively colors, in my head

I don't know how you managed it, but my bed is a twist  
of blankets, and sheets,  
With missing and wishing of you, the wooden frame just  
cries, and creaks,  
You've never made your presence known, under my  
covers,  
Not as a romantic entanglement, or as a passionate lover,  
How is it that you've never known the warmth of the bed  
I own,  
But every corner is touched by you, every thread, ever  
sewn?

Jaime Wright

## ***Peaches and Cream***

Well come now darling it cannot all be peaches and  
cream,  
You cannot drink, inhale and live a wondrous child's  
dream,  
Can no longer clutch a pillow you've known since your  
youth,  
The one that you tucked a long lost precious tooth,  
With the chance of a nickel or a dollar to your name,  
But as years go by the money is bloody and far from the  
same,  
It doesn't hold that magic, that delight, any longer,  
It leaves a cavity in my chest, a headache, an insatiable  
somber,  
The fantastic fantasies that danced in my mind as I once  
would mend,  
Are dying off like wilted roses, curling up and brown, the  
garden I couldn't tend,  
Reality soiled those roots with a poisonous bite,  
I wish to rewind, to water myself, make it right,  
Breathe a life into me, to fight against reality,  
To chase those dreams and to blindly smile at the world  
and shout my name like they would all know it one day,  
With a golden heart, a bright mind and wide eyes, I  
would run to adventure with color that held no gray,  
But now I fear that naive youth is to blame,  
And age to call forth for how I'm not the same,  
I no longer have a place to call mine,

I hop from place to place on a dotted line,  
Pictures, memories and wishes all compacted into  
cardboard,  
All those dreams and hopes barred into walls with no  
goal to go toward,  
The idea of me is twisted and crushed to be thrown in the  
bin,  
So now I find it hard to find a sense of worth, within,  
She's lost the light in her soul, that burned so bright it  
drew moths, to turn to light bugs,  
She would be the first to hand out a letter of care, a  
bright and shining cheer, a shoulder, a hug,  
She would tell everyone to love themselves, because you  
will always have you to lean on,  
To love that body because it's the only one you have until  
the day you are gone,  
To hand out smiles like they are candy, and kindness  
because it is priceless and costs nothing,  
But inside this new reflection is a girl who is wilting and  
stained,  
She knows the price of what she lost, and knows the  
worthless cost of what she gained,  
I touched my hand today and it felt like someone else,  
Is life always going to be a constant obstacle to find  
myself?  
The girl in that reflection isn't who I am supposed to be,  
I am not me.  
She wishes for ribs that trap her body like fingers and are  
visible to touch,  
She aches for the way that patience and kindness traveled  
together with no rush,

The way her body burned when she would pay its price  
for being fit,  
The way she would appreciate her life and self with a  
book and a candle she lit,  
The way her idle time with nature became her prayer and  
sanctuary,  
Has age become my own personal adversary?  
Am I racing against the impossible, reality?  
What happened to those creative bursts and midnight  
cups of tea,  
That girl, that wild tame paradox with faith, hope and  
kindness to lift her like helium,  
Was it right, was it magic that carried her, or just wacked  
out delirium?  
Why can't I keep my sense of wonder at the world and  
gain wisdom as well as my dreams?  
I'm devastated to announce, my darling, it may not all be  
peaches and cream.

## ***Autobiographies***

**Juan P. Aldaba** graduated from Ottumwa High School in 2016, and in the future plans to major in theatre.

**D'Tresean Burge** was born and raised around the Quad Cities, Davenport, IA. He has two brothers and is currently going to school for Phlebotomy. D'Tresean has been writing on and off for several years and takes pride in his confidence to tell the truth and get personal. His work is very reflective and often causes readers to go into deep thoughts themselves. His favorite way of describing his work is walking into a room where a movie is playing and it's at a really suspenseful or meaningful part in the story line, that makes a person want to sit and watch the rest. This is what he craves: attention from storytelling.

**Natasha Clawson** writes poems and song lyrics to help herself and others get through their struggles. She plans to enroll in the Occupational Therapy program for animal therapy. She is from Bloomfield, IA.

**Leah Dix** is a seventeen-year-old junior at Pekin Community High School in Packwood, IA. She resides in Ollie, IA with her mother, Janice; father, Glen; and Brother, Alex Dix. She loves playing and listening to music. She plays the flute, trumpet, and piano, and participates in a number of activities including volleyball and softball, Spanish Club, FCCLA, FCA, band, and choir. Leah plans to graduate college in 2021 with a degree in Mathematics and Education, along with a middle school endorsement.

**Gitali Piekarska Guanel** was born in Kansas City, Kansas, and grew up in Iowa. Throughout her life she has seen many calamities and hence has become very passionate about helping others. She is currently sixteen and studies medicine to manifest her ambition of becoming a medical doctor. She began writing poetry at the age of about eight, using it as a way to communicate her feelings and perspectives. Gitali believes that her creative writing is an effective method of conveying perspectives and moral messages to her readers. She hopes her poetry will help others to see different perspectives and inspire them to embrace humanity's better side.

**Megan Hill** is a sophomore at Indian Hills. After graduation, she hopes to further her education at The University of Iowa in the fall of 2018. She was raised in Keota, Iowa, and has one brother. Megan likes to write about funny or happy moments in her life. Poetry is a great way for her to express her feelings. Her first poem, "All the Stars and Moon", describes a peaceful and happy moment in her life. She waited for the sunrise on a summer morning. "Crowphobia" isn't really peaceful but it is a funny poem.

**Emilee Ann McDonald** was born in Iowa City, Iowa, on November 17, 1996, to Kim Latcham and Heath McDonald. She grew up in Washington, Iowa, with two siblings: Tyler, 25; and Kylee, 15. At the age of eight, she was diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes and it changed her life forever. She graduated in 2015 from Washington High School with her CNA license through the Kirkwood academy program. She plans to finish the nursing program at Indian Hills and transfer to a University to get her BSN and CDE license.

**Nyrobi McIntire** is twenty years old and in her second year of college. She will be transferring to UNI next fall to major in English. She plans to take that into publishing and editing so will most likely minor in writing. She has loved reading and writing for as long as she can remember and hopes to work in publishing and editing someday because she thinks it would be great to have a job where she could read books all day.

**Shirley Morlan** is age fifty-five and live in Centerville, Iowa, with her husband Rick. They have two grown boys: Kyle is twenty-four, and Coty is twenty-two. Kyle is married and has a little girl named Olivea who is loved dearly, and Shirley has a grandson on the way. She has a dog named Coco, age sixteen, and a cat Sassy, age eight. Shirley loves to sew and make quilts. She loves spending time with her family and cooking, especially for the holidays! This poem is about her oldest son when Shirley was pregnant and then gave birth. Her poetry comes from her heart. Since taking a poetry writing class, poetry has become a part of her life.

**Gabrielle Okones** attended Keota High School and is now working towards an education degree at Indian Hills Community College. She lives in Sigourney, Iowa, along with her husband and two sons. She intends on finishing her degree at Buena Vista and teaching locally.

**Jonathan D. Rich** is a dual major at Indian Hills Community College, studying Laser Technology and Psychology. He graduated from Rock Bridge High School in Columbia, Missouri, in May of 2016 and achieved the Rank of Eagle Scout in December of 2015 from troop 706. He has a vast love of literature and poetry, writing being his main hobby.

**Khloe Snakenberg** is seventeen years old and attends Sigourney High School. Her parents are Pat and Cindy Snakenberg, and they live on a farm outside of Sigourney and raise crops and livestock. When Khloe was one year old, she was adopted by Pat and Cindy who did foster care before she was adopted, and they had her biological mom in their home. Khloe has four siblings: Amber who is 35, Brys 29, and Sommer 22. She is very active in music, in and out of school. She started taking piano lessons in second grade, violin in third, trumpet in fourth, guitar in seventh, then she picked up mandolin and tuba her sophomore year. She participates in band, choir, FFA, 4H, County Council, youth group, speech, and drama. She wanted to take poetry writing to help her with song writing.

**Sydney Striegel** is seventeen years old and attends Sigourney High School. She lives with her parents (Dean and Shellie), two brothers (Brett and Evan), and lhasa-poo (Rosie). When Sydney was in 3rd grade, her best friend moved to a completely different state, so she learned how to maintain friendships and communicate well on her own. From freshman to sophomore year of high school, she was in a relationship that changed her in that she became more self-conscious about her body image. When the relationship ended, she learned how she wanted to be treated in the future. Through her experiences with life so far, she has developed her personality and become the person she is today.

**Barbara J. Tucker** has twenty years of experience in the publishing industry as an editor and a writer and is currently a part-time associate editor for Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. She is excited to start her second career in the health information field after she graduates with her associate of applied science degree in May 2017. Barb cherishes the time she spends with her family, especially the time spent traveling with them. She lives in Dubuque, Iowa, with her three cats: Junie B., Mitzi, and Sadie.

**Jaime Wright** is a freshman in college from small, cow town Illinois. She is biracial, a middle child, peace loving dark hippy who hopes everyone learns to love themselves and find peace within themselves.

