

Tyray Hunt, "Who Am I" (essay), and "Evergreen" (poem) Grade 12 (Joel E. Ferris High School – Spokane)

### Who Am I

Who am I? That's a question you get to ask yourself a lot through these high school years. But finding the answer to that question is a lot harder than asking it. It's a lot harder than they tell you when you're growing up. Through my life I have been through things just like everyone else. To some people it may seem like a lot and to others it may seem like a little. Everyone has their own battles to fight but we are all people and everyone has infinite worth. But back to the original question, who am I? That I still don't know how to really answer. Let's see, I was born here with a sacred heart in Washington's second biggest city Spokane. Yes my parents were married but I have no memory of seeing my parents together. My parents split when I was around four. For my first two years of school I was a husky from the south hill. But for third grade that all changed to Dubuque, Iowa. Here is where I would have to witness my mother getting beat for the first time. To see all of that at around seven with your little siblings and have no idea what to do. To hear your mom screaming in her room for you to go to the neighbors. All this in third grade. Fourth grade was all brand new again. New state new school. This time we are in Lancaster, California, or southern California. This time my mom had found someone else, and I was at a new school. At this school these boys tried to fight me most of the year. I remember one time they were all in the bathroom I went in and as you can imagine what did happen. But that was just at school, at home we had a total of nine people living in our three bedroom house, and my mom's someone else seemed to have the same problem as the first. More awful memories of things hard to see your mom go through and trying to fight but not get anywhere. How could I help my siblings from this? They don't deserve these things at this young of an age. Fifth and sixth grade back in Spokane, WA. Now I'm at a school called Franklin. This time I don't have my siblings to watch anymore they're back with my mom still, and now I'm with my dad. But I'm not really with my dad. Shortly after my school year had started my grandma told me that my dad went out of town for a new construction job, just to later find out he will be gone for three years and labeled as a felon. At my age I didn't know all of the specifics but what I know now is my dad went away for three years for attempted murder. This wasn't the dad that I knew and grew up with. What was happening? Now with my dad gone all I had to focus on was school and friends. Seventh grade. Elementary schools are

over now. But now I'm back in a new state new school. Now this time I'm in Atlanta, GA at a middle school named McNair. Back with my siblings and mom but there is something new about my mom. She still smokes as she always has since I can remember, but now she drinks and she has found someone new again. This time at school I'm introduced into a new society, a new culture. I'm introduced into things like gangs, drugs, hustling, and more and more. This time I'm the outcast, I'm the one who stands out with the skin color. By this time I have gone to school at different places with different people so I knew how to fit in. But it's hard to fit in when you're the "white boy." This is the first time being mixed really affected me. In places like Washington or California I was the mixed kid or whatever they said. But not down south, it's a whole new world. Now I'm the "white boy." I'm the one who doesn't belong. Eighth grade. Spokane, WA again as a charger. I find all of my old friends and there is something. Something about WA, something about Spokane that makes me want to call it home. Yes I have been through things in life. To some people it may seem like a lot and to others it may seem like a little. But through these things, through being the "white boy," through being from the west coast to the east coast and even between, through the bad memories of other places. Through finding infinite worth in myself. I have found what I have been looking for. The answer to the original question. Who am I? I am not the "white boy." I am not the outcast. My name is Tyray and I'm a Washingtonian, and that is who I am.

## Evergreen

I am from the cool breeze that pushes up against you while the rays of the sun comfort you within.

I am from the blue that you see in the sky and the green on the ground with the trees in the wind making their evergreen sound.

I am from the calmness you smell of the breeze and the green of the leaves.

I am from the taste of the warm sun and the cool feeling after it rains.

I am from the sound that you hear from the calls of all the living things from the deer jumping by to the birds flapping their wings.

We are the evergreen state and the evergreen state is us.