**Artist Statement - Brandon Alexander**

What inspired me to create my masterpiece was the idea of confinement. When I was asked to create an illustration for poverty, I wanted to brainstorm the perfect word to represent what poverty meant to me. After accumulating numerous words, I chose the right one. Now, I had to create a drawing that was full of emotion and that showcased the departure, agony, and restriction that I had intended. This is how the phase of my illustration began and finished. In my masterpiece, a chained down arm is supposed to be the aspect of confinement. While the hand is chained down, clouds with rain pouring are tears, lightening is the raging emotions from the individual facing poverty. It shows my true intentions. As for the other section, it's supposed to show the pursuit of happiness. People are shown having potent freedom, rages of lights portray the voluminous rays of happiness from the people, and the stars in the clouds show how they are allowed to dream big.

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**Illustrious Poverty**

Poverty is a lingering form of agony that only builds as its outcries are ignored. Agony is an implication of how much money has established its own independent loyalty throne with puppets to dispense the essentials.

Poverty is a result of the disjunctive people who were once conjoined but were oppressed by the ultimate greed king: Money. Poverty is a lingering uproar from a society that cries for change Poverty will be our epidemic downfall.
Artist Statement - Jamie Reggs
One of the things that inspire me is my Mom. She works so hard and goes to school trying to finish what she started. To me, she is a person who knows what she wants and doesn’t stop moving just because of little problems she encounters.

My first piece is a cup with change in it. This is based on a man I saw while taking the bus to school. He was homeless, and he was begging for money. All I saw was people walking past him like he wasn’t even there. That broke my heart, and that made me upset because these people don’t know if they’re going to be like this man. He could be five cents away from being able to put food on his table.

How Much One Woman Can Do
What I see is a woman.

A woman who knows what she wants for the Black community. She wants to make high expectations of the Black community.

She wants to make homes for people who don’t have one. She wants children to have an education that will help them in life.

“If we can’t care for ourselves, how can we expect others to?” She is right. How can we make a better community for us if we don’t better ourselves?

The race needs a leader and we have one. She’s a gem in a broken rock.

The Man
I walk down the street and I see a man, a man with a cup in his hand with very little change.

This man reminds me of a deer, one of the world’s most majestic animals, slowly fading away and I feel like crying.

I see this person begging for money to buy his next meal and I feel ungrateful that I have a house and a loving family and this man has nothing and I know this man feels as if no one loves him or there is no God, but I hope for this man.

I hope that one day he has a house, food, and shoes on his feet, but right now I give this man all my change and I hear a voice say, “Thank you.”

And a tear runs down my face as I think, “Are we going to be gasoline on an open flame?”
Artist Statement - Joshua Morgan

I’m trying to talk about poverty; how it can be worldwide and how “being broke is no joke.” Lots of people talk about being broke until they get broke. Then, it isn’t as funny. Some people experience that life.

The thing that I like about art is you can express how feel and express how you think. My work was once 5th place in an art show. I go to spoken word events, but I’ve never performed.

Poverty
If you look around the world right now, you will see the struggle and the money hungry people and the shelter needed and the food is scarce and to sum it all up, poverty is happening.

The homeless everyday begging aint got not even a dime. Living once a happy life, but now a life to survive without dying from a cold or any disease.

They are at risk with brash. They are too lazy to do something for themselves. They just are left there to die.
Artist Statement - Kayla Smith

The Legacy program has helped me open up my artistic mindset. I've created two prints one called, "Label" and the other, "Making a Difference". The first print symbolizes poverty and the other shows the characteristics of Jourdan H. Sorrell, the president of 100 Black Men. My inspiration came from positive criticism that I've received from my instructor during the printing process.

My print about poverty uses symbols to show change and poverty. The mask with no defined characteristics symbolizes how Americans see people in poverty. The unidentified person has the symbol of "times change" meaning change and life dynamics. The mask is stamped as poverty without any second thought because that's the label placed upon impoverished people by the wealthy.

My last print is about Jourdan H. Sorrell and his role as the president of 100 Black Men. I got inspiration from the 100 Black Men background story. Jourdan H. Sorrell is presented as a leader who has befriended a black man in my print. I'm trying to convey to people that Jourdan H. Sorrell was a man of great talents and continues to take care of our black male youth.

Thank You.
Jourdan, the road you chose to take and men you’re striving to make
Jourdan, oh you’re amazing
So fierce and bright the sun you could replace
Our young black boys are no longer ashamed to walk with their golden bronze grace
Your mission helped hundreds of black boys find their righteous place
Thank you ,Mr. Sorrell, for ending this everlasting race RACE!

No Way Out
Prying through the cold winter night
Rivals up and down the street
Suppressed by the powers that be
I'm picked, the black man dressed in black
Evidently my life is not as important as I thought
Running because I'm scared for my life, or guilty?
Trapped in this ghetto with no way out
**Artist Statement - Malik Rhys**

This art is about this lady named Fredericka Wilson. She was fighting for the right thing. She fought for the closing of the nuclear plant across the street from the school she was principle at.

This picture shows her followers behind her as she is demanding the people to close the power plant across the street. As you can see in the picture, she is slamming her hand on the desk yelling at the people she is debating with.

My second art work is of Ms. Wilson’s hats. She has over 100 hats. I think it’s cool that she has a lot of hats to collect.

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**Poverty**

Poverty. What an ugly word.
It makes me want to yell and scream
There should be no such thing as poverty.

Why have no hope or belief?
That's the only way you shall see.
There should be no homeless
With all the opportunities here

It’s a sad thing, but it is alive and well.
Only we can change poverty.

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**Fredericka Wilson**

Fredericka Wilson, the Lady with the cool hats.
She fights for what she wants

She doesn’t sit back
She fights for what’s right.
She will always be on top.

She has over a hundred hats.
Different hat every day.
Reminds me of my Grandmama’s closet
OMG hats don’t compare to inner thoughts of what she fights for.

She is a voice for the voiceless.
She talks for the people that can’t be heard
She stands up for the kids whose health was on the line
She grew like a lily and developed into a community activist.
Untitled
Can anyone please spare some change?
Please? I'll take anything
If you have a leftover sandwich, I'll take it.
Please! I haven't eaten for two days.
Please can anyone help me?

Poverty starts in the mind, but most feel it in their stomachs.
No food, no money, no clothing, not even 75 cents for today's only meal.
Bag of chips out of a local vending machine, and I'm gon' be alright
I get ignored every day, but from my own people
Whatever either way.
No matter the color of the person, I'm being rejected.
I just want to eat.
Just a meal and a warm place to sleep in this cold hearted city.
Don't matter where I go for the day, the least I'll get is small fry.
If I get lucky, I can get a happy meal.

Artist Statement - Mateo Payne
I'm not exactly sure of what I'm creating; I've just been drawing the art as it comes to my mind. My art expresses how I feel about the art or subject. My art is unique because it comes straight from my mind onto my paper.

My first art piece is me expressing myself about poverty. I drew a plant with the word “poverty” in the dirt. Then, I drew a leaf growing from it with the word “hope” on it.

My second art piece is on the C.E.O. of the National Urban League. Andrea L. Zopp. She's a brilliant speaker. She reminds me a lot of powerful women. So, I drew a face with the words “freedom” on her bottom and top lip.

When She Speaks
When she speaks, we get motivated.
When she speaks, we feel proud to be people of color.
When she speaks, she makes us want to help our communities.
When she speaks, she makes us want to come together as one.
When she speaks, she makes us think deeply into the spirit of ourselves and recover our identity.
When she speaks, I feel, You feel, We feel freedom.
When she speaks
Involved - by Maurice Gholson

If it wasn't for the dimes, there wouldn't be too many crimes. People like to use weapons like guns. When we need things, we use runs.

They pretend like jobs aren't at stake. In the meantime, they plot like a snake. Society makes it their goal to trap. The only way we escape, is through rap.

We live in the United States of America. We allow poverty, abuse, etcetera. Musicians even try to reach the money team. All I say, the current ways make us feen.

The process of separating poor and rich is wrong. Still, as a nation, we must be strong.

-Maurice Gholson
Donna Edwards of Maryland Congress
A bold woman, broad, and beyond
Outspoken as a wind in a December storm
She halts the violence
She educates and rewards our youth
The growth of her is beneficial to the growth of all jobs.
President Obama applauds her.
“Bring our noble men back”, she says.
“Fight domestic violence”, she says.
Educate our people youth and all
I educate you
I make you aware
I introduce to you
Democrat, Maryland 47th District
Donna Edwards.

The Marble Begging Statues
Unable and unwillingly asking
The change in your pocket clinking like victory
They don’t choose to wash windows for change
To collect below what you have in between you couch cushions
To walk around with a sign on their chest
To be unmoving, eyes open, offering basket out
Their surface? Not marble, but surprisingly soft

Artist Statement- Naijeavah Jarrett
In my artwork, all picturing a woman, I see someone strong and embracing
what they are due to being able to change into another person. The art pieces
all show an African American woman that can either change how society sees
her or reflect on the terms that define her. My inspiration is those types of
woman: the changers and the reflectors.
I may not have many influences in my life, but I was able to take away lessons
that motivate me. Now that I am educated enough to know about poverty and
people who try and fight its primary causes, I am truly inspired by everyone’s
effort in helping to make decisions about the future of others. I now know that
the future of others impacts mine.
What I would like for someone to take away from my art is a clear message;
poverty is us! The changer I learned about, Donna Edwards, is just an
exceptional person. She changed me and made me a believer.
Artist Statement- Portia Ford
My Print on 100 Black Men’s president, Jourdan H. Sorrell, expresses the restriction and helplessness that impoverished people face. Those living in poverty are not helped by the poor because the poor are incapable of helping. They are not helped by the rich because they are greedy and don’t want to help. The poor can’t and the rich won’t. The poor are being pushed through life, but are also restricted and stuck. My print shows someone in poverty stuck but Sorrell is pushing them forward and actually helping them. My motivation for this print was the help I receive when I am hopeless, and feel there is no way out.

My print on poverty expresses society’s perspective on poverty and the people in it. It sees Blacks as being on welfare and uneducated. Society thinks, “Only whites can be rich, wealthy, and successful.” My motivation behind this was simply living life as a poor Black person, and noticing things on TV shows and movies.

In final analysis, the Legacy Program has taught me the origins of poverty, and what it actually means to be impoverished. Also, that poverty is a big issue that affects everyone. It’s an issue for “us” not “them” or “me.” I also want people to understand that we can be the answer and we can and help change society’s perspective. We must help each other get through life and leave poverty in the past.

Collecting More
Mr. Sorrell!
Rose up from
Underneath the ground
Turned Down
Not one brother
The engine in this company
100 Black Men is his anatomy
Works hard, Never stops
Trying to save the brothers on the block
Making sure you ain’t gonna end up with the cops

Get smart, Get a job, Never Stop!
He carries a company on his back
Never lacks
Never talks smack
Never turns his back
See, he
Trying to save the brothers on the block
Save em’ so they won’t get shot

100 Black Men march together
Mr. Sorrell leading
Collecting more

LOOK DOWN
WARNING: POVERTY HAS STRUCK THIS AREA.
PLEASE DO NOT TOUCH THE VICTIMS. THEY ARE CONTAMINATED PIECES OF DIRT.

Keep walking or you will join them.
Struggling, crying, screaming, reaching
For what they CANNOT have
Or
Blind, dumb, and bliss in their
Bank account abyss
But they wish…

FOR YOU!
For you to look down
They reach for you
They scream for you
Cry for you
But
You don’t hear them
In your bubble
Eating caviar, sitting on your Versace sofa
With your hand on your cold cola
You.
You hear about the poor and think
“It’s their fault” or “I’m just glad it’s not me.”

JUST: YOU. WATCH.
You’ll see
In that hole
it could be you or me
Unless
you keep walking
keep walking or join them
keep walking cause it’s easy
keep walking and join the weak
but don’t you DARE look down!!!
Read my frown
I’ll put you in the ground

KEEP WALKING
You gets to
Have your fun
Until it’s your turn
And remember
The games have begun…

WARNING: POVERTY HAS STRUCK THIS AREA.
PLEASE DO NOT TOUCH THE VICTIMS. THEY ARE CONTAMINATED PIECES OF DIRT.
Artist Statement- Qiama Williams
My first print expresses what you need to unlock wealth. The key represents education, support and willpower. The lock represents wealth which to unlock you need the keys. This shows even though these are the main tools needed to unlock wealth, many people don’t have access to these things. Many people in the world don’t have access to basic necessities food, water and shelter because of the advantages and disadvantages of certain people. With such mass amounts of millionaires and even billionaires no one should be in poverty and struggling the way many people are now.

I get most of my inspiration from poetry and motivational speeches. These things give me a deeper understanding by the way they are delivered. They use imagery, reality, and irony to say deliver their meanings. I feel like it’s a greater connection than just general lectures and information. It educates people on a more personal and realistic level.

Untitled
Poverty is a reality for millions of people around the world.
It is a barrier for success and a reason for people to look the other way.
Poverty is a mindset that takes way more than a couple of dollars and a donation box to break.
Poverty is more than a reason for you to brag and look good because you donated $100
Your money won’t help if they don’t know how to use it.
Your 20% charity offering won’t make a change if I have no access to education, a home, a family, or a place to lay my head.
Educate, motivate and strive to make a change.
State Yourself - by Raven McDonald
Who are you?
What is your reason for being here?
I am an African American leader.
I am one of six brothers.
My mother was a teacher
And my father was a doctor
My ears are like Dog horns.
They hear the ones who cry.
I served in the US Army to protect my fellow man, to fight the challenge of racism
I remained a leader in History
My name lives on through the National Urban League which teaches my African American males to become better.
I may be dead but my name lives on.
Who are you?
I am Lester Granger.
**Artist Statement - Trey Raines**

My first work of art states that words are powerful when put into rhythm. I wrote this saying and included art with the intent of pointing out the fact that words often stick to people's heads when there is a constant beat and/or rhythm. People hear words all around them, but they don’t always understand what is being said.

My second work of art is about determined people who are fixed on goals and unfaithful people who aren’t fixed on the goal and are stuck. The words are, “The determined look toward goals, and the unfaithful look down on themselves.” I wrote this because it tells people that no matter what situation you’re in, your mind tells you where you’re going in the future.

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**Wealthy Mind**

I'm about to tell a story metaphorically
Openin' doors, you see. I'm morally
Soarin' gee, but this is about more than me.
So Jessica's ballin' gee
She's fallin' in dollars
And can't nothing stop her
From buying dresses with gold collars
With no apologies
So I can understand she's rich
And the feds can't stop her
And the fans/ paparazzi too proper
She's a balloon so high, and they can't pop her.
A showstopper she is.
I can't even imagine that much in my tiny mind
That this girl owns the hotel on I-95
And as she goes in, I'm followin'
Different types of wealthiness
Like, she wears the green clothes
The shirt that's green glows
The fight she's never had is comin'
And she knows as time goes she -
She gets old, and she prunes up like raisins. She sleeps
Like little Bo Peep, like a Days Inn.
And then she wakes up and she prays to her
Franklins
That she's not dead
But she's still broke, 14, female, homeless
The wealth was in her head.

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**The Woman of our Time Andrea L. Zopp**

Understand here, that right now, young man
Representing the CUU, cuz you can tell she
Binds them together, our brothers and sisters
And a different view she has of what people are called to be
Never gives up on those who were left behind but that's not all, you see.
Linguistically assembling words of nurturing and care
Carefully and comfortably caring slowly but surely bringing
Immunity to our community.
Everlastingly able to relate,
Motivates our "now" people.
All of it started with,
"Those people are our people."
Getting together, they are.
Like black on charcoal
Understand, the goal is to be greater.
Not famous, the aim is not be famous.
The greatest can't make us
Don't let the money change us.
Entertainment is just so heinous.
We're together to be amazing.
I guess it helps to be honest.
It helps me like antihistamine.
But the friend of me, of my history
Isn't in the means of my enemy, is it?
The Victim
Poverty is being hungry and homeless
Unable to get what you need
The essentials
All because of little or no money
Really?
He’s out on the street
Because of green paper he can’t even eat?
That’s the reason they walked past him.
Judged him
Criticized every detail
From his cold head to no shoes on his feet
Never caring or wondering how he felt or failed
Never realizing that they could be victimized like him

Two years later, they’re right where he is
Sitting just a half block away
On the ground
Homeless and Hungry and Scared
Never knowing what will happen next
“What happened in my life?
I was rich, fun
Everyone loved me
Now, I’m next to a bum in an alley
That I walked past two years ago.”

“Bum?
Have you looked at yourself, Brother?
You don’t have anything to eat
Nowhere to live and you gonna call him the bum?
Drowning in tears every night before you sleep
On that hard concrete
And when you wake,
Don’t expect help
Now you will know how he’s been feeling for years
Look at those eyes up there
Those cold, dark, criticizing eyes
You’re torn apart and victimized.”

Artist Statement - Yo’Quan Williams
My inspiration comes from going downtown with my grandma. When we walked down a street, we saw people who are impoverished with signs saying how they need food, a place to sleep, and saying how they still have hope. However, most are losing hope. To me, that’s just sad. Then, I see how people who are wearing washed clothes and have briefcases look down and just keep walking like they don’t care about the lives of the homeless and the struggles they go through each day. The wealthy don’t even bother to read the signs begging for help.

My artwork will, hopefully, make an impact on poverty. It gives people just an idea of what goes on in lives of the poor; what goes through their heads, their worries, and their fears. They’re human too. They’re just unable to get what they need. They need help getting it. ‘A picture is worth a thousand words’, so conveying this story through art might have a better impact than just words.

My other artwork expresses how One Hundred Black Men of Chicago helps increase the number of impoverished people who succeed in life; not by the hundreds but slowly and steadily.

At The End of the Tunnel
How many people would help you see the light in that cold dark tunnel of life?
Able to help you solve problems when you think you might go insane from the problems faced.
Thinking you’ve raced at the fastest pace that you could.
That you did everything that you should
Losing hope
But there he is in that tunnel of darkness,
Jordan Sorrel and his One Hundred Black of Chicago leading the way.
He’ll take you to that light with jobs and education
And now that you’ve reached that light, you no longer worry about having a better life.
My Brother's Keeper
The stench, the filth, the lack
Wiggled black words across dilapidated cardboard.
People shaking cups, begging for change
Not quarters, nickels, dimes, real change.
Change from our politicians and world leaders
Change from this systematic design, red lines
Separation, heartbreaks
Crash like broken glass
The poorest always coming in last
It's not about race but class,
not even that,
the war is spiritual.
They keep us hypnotized with their lies,
the materials of this physical,
it's critical.
Wealth is not tangible
It's in your mind.
The freedom of vision,
it's sublime.
Forcing black brothas into committing crimes
Our they can't get a nine to five
I'm telling you this system was designed for us to fail.
Yet we have deliverance!
A man, one man faces all of his fears,
faces all the prospects of failure,
faces the jeers of his peers.
Taking our young men, our brothers, our sons,
our uncles, our cousins, our fathers, our leaders
off the streets and out the jails.
Protecting them from a world where their faces are
Staring down gun barrels
Protecting them from the powers that be
Who don't wanna see them succeed.
Who with a foot on their backs push them to their knees.
A world that don't want them to be free
But bondage is in your mind
He's pushing our brothers to realize a world full of equality
Gratitude to Jourdan for delivering
My people to Jordan and keeping us in mental liberty.

Artist Statement - Zaria Evans
I am inspired mostly by music. The artists I listen to write about self empowerment and having pride in African American Heritage. I'm also inspired by my parents. They give me an amazing example of what NOT to do. My father is hard, aggressive, and mean. My mother is the polar opposite. She's quiet and timid, but she leans toward apathy. I know it's because she's tired. She's tired of dealing with people and their idiocy. My poetry and my paintings are a direct reflection on how to have pride in myself and others because others are an extension of myself.

The first painting with the quote from Nelson Mandela is my definition of poverty. Poverty is a man made socio-economic affliction that transcends boundaries and affects people as a whole. If humans as a collective would hold themselves and each other accountable, this societal disease would diminish on its own.
The heart means patience and tolerance. The diamonds mean slavery and injustice.
The second print was about what I have learned during my time at Legacy. I knew what poverty was, and I knew it was done by design to specific demographics. However, the whole of humanity can be likened to a hand and each human, a separate finger. We are all human beings sharing one planet and going for the same resources. It would be more conducive to our survival as a species if we upheld the ideals of life, loyalty, pride, courage, peace, and love.

Outcast Alien
I'm in the place where the eye does not see
I'm in the place from which God does not deliver
I'm stuck, fresh out of luck
When people see me, they walk past turning their nose up…
This could be you
This could be me
We all have a job to change the injustices in our society.
Think of those you call "dirty" for wearing the same shirt twice in one week.
Or those hovering over your tray at lunch because they have no food to eat.
Are we better than them?
Are we above them?
Are we more superior?
NO!
We. Are. Not.
No matter who we are
Physically
Racially
Socially
Economically
Our souls inside are all LIGHT.