



UK Dow Jones Workshop 2009

**Profile of Ashley Scoby**  
**By: Drucilla Thompson**

Ashley Nicole Scoby, an ambitious 16-year-old from Glasgow, Ky., aspires to be a sports writer. “I used to run cross country in middle school and I’ve played tennis for fun, but I really didn’t like playing sports as much as I thought I would. I still really enjoyed watching and following them, so that made me want to become a sportswriter, where I could still follow sports, just not participate,” said Ashley.

Ashley enjoys several sports, primarily football, and she and her family have season tickets to UK football. Basketball is second, and baseball is her third most favorite sport.

Ashley lives with her mother, father, and her younger sister. Her parents are both graduates of UK.

In her spare time Ashley enjoys writing, watching sports, traveling and listening to music. She loves to listen to rock bands like Metallica, Nirvana, and Shinedown.

She has been to at least nine states. “I really like seeing new places, and I think it would be cool to go to all 50 states,” Ashley explained. With her past experience writing for her high school newspaper and also a member of her middle school yearbook staff, she is a skilled writer.

If Ashley’s dream of being a sports writer does not happen she wants to be either a clinical or sports psychologist. There, she would counsel people in a time of despair and can also motivate people into doing their best at whatever they pursue.

Her objective for coming to the Dow Jones Journalism workshop was to start her journey on becoming one of the world’s most eminent sports writers.

*Note: Ashley's essay received first place honors in the First Amendment essay competition.*

## **The Meaning of Liberty**

By Ashley Scoby

Americans have always been believed to be the type of people to take their rights and freedoms for granted. However, this is not fully obvious until you see just how important these rights are to the people who have grown up with less freedom. As I was interviewing Lexington Legends third baseman Ebert Rosario about baseball, the conversation suddenly took a turn towards something much more significant. When asked about what he liked most about living in America (as opposed to the Dominican Republic, where he grew up), Rosario gave a very simple answer that I would not have expected. I anticipated an answer such as more opportunities to play professional baseball, a better house to live in, maybe even the beautiful women. Yet Ebert Rosario answered with the one word that most Americans have forgotten the power of – liberty.

Rosario's answer got me thinking about just how lucky Americans are to have the rights that we have. The freedoms that the First Amendment guarantees all American citizens are probably the most important of all. The First Amendment gives Rosario the right to speak freely to the media. It gives the media the opportunity to write freely about Rosario. It gives us all the liberty to question and challenge our government, worship as we choose, and assemble peacefully in an effort to make our country an even better one.

Rosario recognized the “liberty” that all Americans possess; most of us, however, do not. We share our opinions, we criticize the government, and we go to the church of our choosing, yet, how many times do the First Amendment and the significance of it even cross our minds? Once a day? A few times a week? Not at all?

Time after time, we take advantage of the rights that we are given. But do we appreciate them? Do we even understand them? Studies done by the Knight Foundation have shown that much of our population (young and old) don't agree with some of the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment. Almost 30 per cent of teachers surveyed thought that the First Amendment went too far in the rights that it guarantees. This is a strong example of hypocrisy, in my opinion – every one of the people surveyed were exercising their constitutional rights to free speech, yet many were saying that some of those rights should not even exist. Where is the logic in that?

We as Americans exercise our rights every day, without even thinking about it. Yet the power behind the First Amendment, and even the ability to understand it, seem to be decreasing as the years go by. More people are admitting that they don't understand the First Amendment, while others simply argue that it is too much. They don't appreciate what a gift Americans were given when the founding fathers of the United States signed the Bill of Rights. People who have lived in different places, where the liberties that we possess are not so easily achieved, realize what a privilege it is to live in a place where you can speak, argue, and worship freely. Ebert Rosario appreciates what he has been given – without hesitation, he names “liberty” as what stands out to him about living in America.

The meaning and significance of liberty to any given person is different. But the main contrast is between the people who have been free all their lives, and the people who have seen the other side. The meaning of liberty is something that is important to us all in some way or another. However, the problem is the lack of appreciation for that freedom. Many Americans understand that they are free to speak and worship as they choose, yet are not thankful for that gift. Ebert Rosario, who is one of those people that have seen the other side of freedom, understands what is important about being an American. What's important is being able to understand and admire the meaning of American liberty.

### **Sources**

- <http://www.firstamendment.org/02-10-05.html>
- <http://www.thefirstamendmentfuture.org/>
- <http://www.nieman.harvard.edu/reportsitem.aspx?id=101116>