



UK Dow Jones Workshop 2009

### **Profile of Kalandra Waynika Gray**

**By: Anntonia Jackson**

Kalandra Waynika Gray is a writer. She is a journalist. She is a student.

She has only been on this Earth for 17 years but has already achieved a high level of awesome. Her stomping ground is in Memphis, Tenn., specifically Wooddale High School. She will be a senior there this fall.

Kalandra shares her secret sanctum (home) with her mom, Delondria Walton, and her dad, Kevin Walton. Mrs. Walton makes her living as a real estate agent. Mr. Walton owns his own home improvement business.

Before astounding us with her writing skills, Kalandra was a writer for her middle school newspaper.

A substitute teacher told her of the Dow Jones journalism camp. Because of him, she has graced us with her presence for these past ten days.

Kalandra doesn't plan on stopping after high school. She plans on going to Spelman College in Atlanta to major in journalism.

"I believe that once you find something you really enjoy doing, you should work at it until your dreams come true," she said. This statement shows Kalandra isn't the type to roll over and give up.

Her writing interest does not stop at journalism. Poetry and writing stories are other types of writing she enjoys. She is a fan of fiction and fantasy, which she also enjoys writing. She attended the Dow Jones journalism camp to expand the types of writing that she can do. She doesn't want to be limited to just poetry and story writing, no matter how much she enjoys them

Kalandra is not afraid to step outside of the box and venture into new territories. "I seem to find a new hobby or passion just by trying something different each day."

While shy at first glance, Kalandra is full of creativity and awesome.

## The First Amendment

By: Kalandra Gray

Imagine growing up being told by your government what religion you must believe, what you can and can't say, that you don't have the freedom to express yourself in any way you want. Now ask yourself, would you still be the person you are right now? What about your morals, your values, would you still have the expressive personality that makes you "you," or could these things simply be decided for you unwillingly? Without any question this would be exactly how it would be without the First Amendment. You would be told to believe certain things, told not to say exactly how you feel, and despite how wrong this would be you wouldn't even have the right to speak up against your government.

Think of everything going on in the world right now at this very moment. Now think of how you were informed of what you know. Without this amendment every source we rely on for information wouldn't be available. In that case we would only know what our government wants us to know and tells us. The government will be the only control over our country, an act as a dictatorship. We will no longer be considered a free country. Even some of the everyday things that we do we wouldn't be able to. Simple things such as worship our religion or publically express how we feel. Without this amendment that was adopted over 217 years ago, America as a whole country would change dramatically. A lot of sources and even jobs wouldn't exist, such as news reporters, journalists, preachers, motivational or peace speakers, etc. With dreams of one day wanting to fulfill an occupation as a journalist, I have come to recognize just how important the First Amendment really is.

I believe if we all actually gave the First Amendment some thought, and imagined our lives without it we would come to see just how meaningful it actually is. It is hard to imagine how our country, "Home of the Free," would run without the First Amendment. But all people everywhere don't believe nor have the right to the First Amendment. Some people from other countries even risk their lives every day to come to America just to have the rights we don't even take heed of. If more Americans could recognize the importance of the First Amendment, I deem it wouldn't be violated as much as it is.

The First Amendment guarantees us five rights: freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of the people to peaceably assemble, and freedom of the people to petition the government of redress of grievances. Even though we as Americans are guaranteed these five rights, there have been millions of violations to this amendment in America. Some people are robbed each day of the right to the First Amendment but don't speak up because they don't even acknowledge just how important it is to America. It is never okay to be told you can't have your right to the First Amendment as an American. I believe as Americans we should take pride and stand up for this particular amendment and all our rights as Americans because without them we wouldn't be nearly as unrestrained and free as we are today.