

# VOYAGER

North Star\* Liberal Arts / Creative Writing & Literature

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\* Jinny Beyer Quilt Pattern

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## SKALD '17 ACHIEVES NEAR PERFECT SCORES

The Columbia Scholastic Press Association has essentially three rounds of judging and over the Break we received our critique from an individual judge in their annual magazine critique. Each magazine is judged on its own merits without regard to previous standing.

ESSENTIALS:	196 out of 200	All-Columbian Honors
VERBAL:	398 out of 400	All-Columbian Honors
VISUAL:	400 out of 400	All-Columbian Honors
Total Score:	994	

Rating: GOLD MEDALIST

The All-Columbian Honors are awarded to those publications that receive very high point totals and the minimum point totals are determined annually by the CSPA. In recent years, All-Columbian Honors have been given only when the publication has achieved 95<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher in each of the three categories.

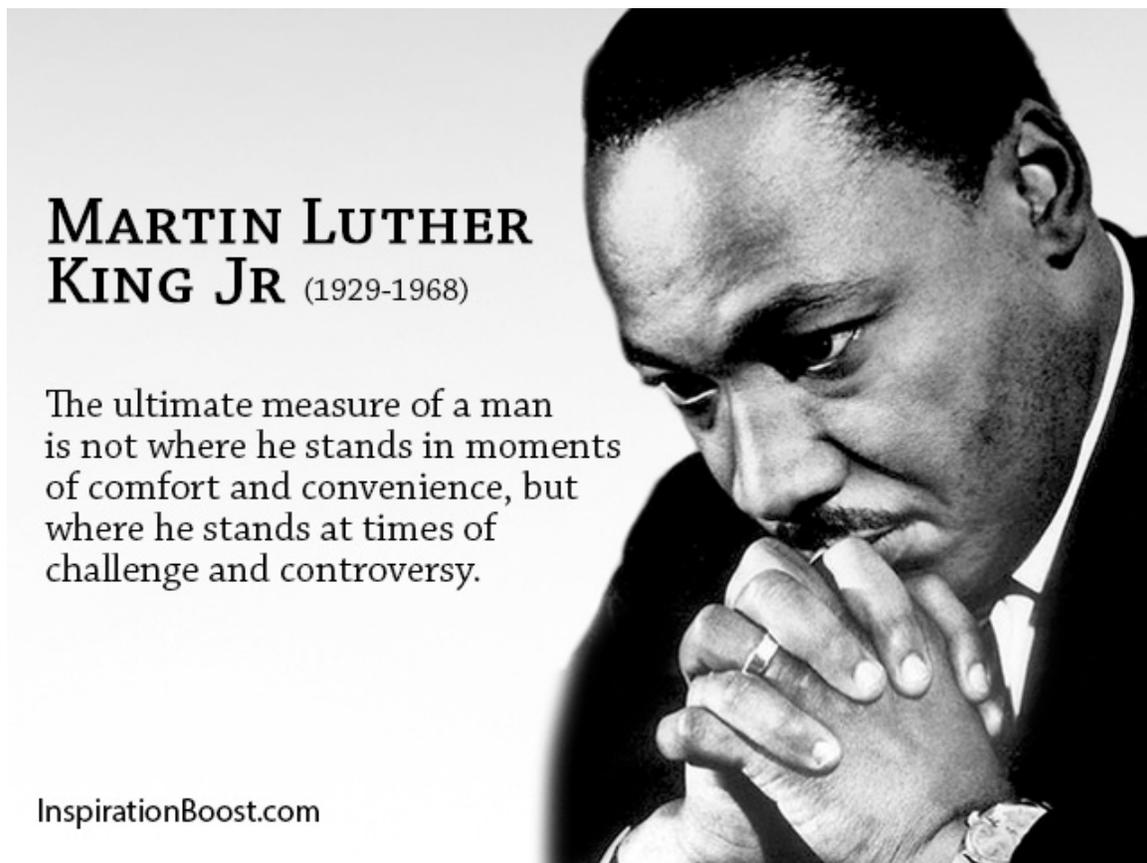
Our judge noted "top-notch aspects of your magazine included layout design writing skills and selection of verbal and visual works" and termed SKALD "an engaging literary-art magazine."

Congratulations to our student staff –Francesca Bubb, Travis Springer, Gina Griffo and Alexander Mayers! Special thanks to Professors Julie Zack and Bob Grizanti.

## **2017 -18 CORE VALUE: COMPASSION**

“Here is the true meaning and value of compassion and nonviolence, when it helps us to see the enemy's point of view, to hear his questions, to know his assessment of ourselves. For from his view we may indeed see the basic weaknesses of our own condition, and if we are mature, we may learn and grow and profit from the wisdom of the brothers who are called the opposition.”

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.  
April 4, 1967



[Editor's Note: Due to a delay in publishing, this response to Toni Morrison's talk at Babel was held over until this issue]

## **BABEL: After hearing Novelist Toni Morrison**

By Romona Harkness

When I arrived at Kleinhans Music Hall, I decided to have a glass of wine. I needed something to relax me, after walking what felt like twenty blocks (but was only five) back to the music hall. There was no parking around Kleinhans, all the spots were filled. As I looked around the theatre and chatted with a few colleagues including professors from Villa, I spotted a few flyers of Toni Morrison, with a red stamp across it that read sold out. I knew I was in for a treat.

Before Toni Morrison came out we were blessed with a solo from the Afro-centric songstress Drea D'Nur. She sang, Sam Cooke's *A Change Is Gonna Come*. As Toni approached the stage to a standing ovation, I became overwhelmed with emotion. It felt surreal to be standing in the same music hall exactly fifty -years to the date, that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gave his speech on the "The Future of Integration".

Morrison, who is now eighty- six years old, gave me hope when she stated she didn't write her first book (*The Blue Side*) until she was thirty-nine years old. That's so inspiring to me. To hear someone express that they didn't officially write their first novel until middle age makes me feel that I don't have to rush to write a novel so quickly and that it will come with time.

Toni has written eleven novels, thus far. She shared with us the motivation behind each novel. She went into great detail about her novel *Beloved*. Her motivation behind *Beloved* was derived from an article published during slavery times in the South. The article was about a young black woman who killed her daughter. The state had to decide if they should charge her and kill her because she murdered her child or return her to her owner with no penalty because technically she was "property". They killed her. Toni's novel was based on the ghost of the woman. She gave a rendition of what that woman's side of the story would have been. Toni stated that she wasn't thrilled about the movie that was derived from her novel. She expressed disdain for the location, the casting and the unnecessary growing of a whole field of corn.

It was truly a pleasure, an honor and a once in a lifetime experience to spend an evening with the phenomenal Ms. Toni Morrison. I'm forever

thankful to the BABEL organization and Villa Maria College for this incredible experience.

## **FROM THE BOSTON PILOT**

BRAINTREE -- In a statement released Jan. 12 on his weekly blog, Cardinal Seán P. O'Malley relayed his hope that the New Year will bring a change in the language surrounding immigration reform, one that steps away from "epithets" and instead gravitates towards love.

The statement came amid outrage sparked by media reports that President Donald Trump made vulgar remarks about Haitians and African nations during a private meeting with lawmakers. That incident is not specifically mentioned in the statement, but Cardinal O'Malley, who has a long history of ministering to ethnic communities, seemingly condemned language surrounding immigration that is, at times, "harsh, not welcoming, and deeply suspicious."

"I believe the vast majority of Americans recognize the contributions immigrants have made to our country and our Church. We are a nation of immigrants, and historically an immigrant Church, and both have benefitted greatly from those welcomed here," he wrote.

"But, while I am optimistic about our country, there are institutions and individual voices with the capacity to distort the reputation of this country in the eyes of the world," the cardinal continued.

The cardinal notes that as a powerful nation, "we expect to be respected by others." Yet, he continues, "respect has a quality of mutuality," and power alone "does not guarantee respect from others."

Instead, he wrote, the United States must earn its respect by offering it to other nations.

The cardinal's statement also comes days after the Trump Administration announced it would end Temporary Protected Status for Salvadorans in the country, making immigrants from El Salvador the latest group to lose the status under the current administration.

Closing the statement with a message of hope, Cardinal O'Malley wrote that it is "my hope and prayer" that "we can change the tenor of

the debate about immigration: that we provide protection for DACA Dreamers; that we come to recognize that Temporary Protective Status is really needed for Haitians, Salvadorans, Nicaraguans and Hondurans; that we will move from epithets when we speak of immigration reform and speak rather the language of compassion, justice and love."

## **BABEL, PRESENTED BY JUST BUFFALO**

In the spring, we will continue to think about how Buffalo is the city of good neighbors when we welcome Pulitzer Prize winner Viet Thanh Nguyen.

Born in Viet Nam, Nguyen came to the United States as a refugee at the age of four. The feeling of being an outsider or "other" defines Nguyen's writing. Last year, his novel *The Sympathizer* topped more than 30 book-of-the-year lists.

In honor of Buffalo's proud record of welcoming more than 2,000 refugees this year alone from around the globe and ranking 8th in the country for the number of Syrian families who have resettled here in our community, we will read Nguyen's latest book, *The Refugees*. This beautiful collection of short stories explores universal and urgent themes of love and family, the histories we hold within us and the people "we can't afford to forget."

**(Photograph of Viet Thanh Nguyen courtesy of The Tuesday Agency)**

***Students can attend free, contact Joyce Kessel for tickets.***



**Friday, March 23, 2018**

