



THE PHOENIX FLAME

University High School- 55 Clinton Place, Newark, NJ 07108 -<http://www.nps.nj.us/> - Edwin Mendez , Principal

A Phoenix embodies: Responsibility Integrity Service & Excellence

Volume III, Issue 3 2017-2018

Class of 2018



Valedictorian
Prince Abimah 4.03
Rutgers University



Salutatorian
Inasia Belton 4.01
Denison University



3. Tamara Johnson
3.8
Rutgers University (Camden)



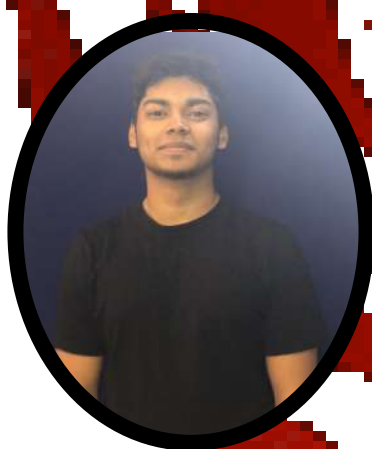
4. Blessing Braimah
3.825
Rutgers University (Newark)



5. Zeinab Ouedraogo
3.79
NJIT



6. Saheema Allen
3.77
North Carolina A&T



7. Ryan Hemnarine
3.73
Rutgers University (Newark)



8. Grace Blay
3.79
Rutgers University



9. Nefertiti Cooper
3.71
Howard University



10. Aaliyah Spencer
3.64
Rutgers University (Newark)



Valedictorian: Prince Abimah

University’s *Prince*

By, Nefertiti Cooper and Shamonique Attwater



With a name like ‘Prince’ University High School senior, Prince Abimah sure does have a reputation to uphold. There’s two months before graduation and Prince is in first place to be Valedictorian of Class of 2018. In the words of Drake: “I wanna prove that I’m number one over [everyone] Being number two is just being the first to lose.”

Prince is my very close friend, and a very hard man to get in contact with. The soon-to-be valedictorian is always busy leading the school, but I was able to sit down with him and get some answers on questions we’ve all been wondering. Although senior year is rapidly coming to an end, last minute slip-ups could’ve kept him from the Number One spot. I asked Prince to share with me how he felt about this academic competition and if he was worried about losing to Inasia. He confidently assured me that, “No, Inasia always triggers competition because we are .2 decimal places away, and she is someone I need to look out for, however everything is pretty much finalized. She was number one, and I was two but I took her spot because of my work ethic, and whatever I’ve done to make sure that I’m ahead. There’s no turning back, my grades keep getting better, my GPA keeps getting higher. I put in the work this year to keep my spot and go higher than I ever expected to be.”

With a very strong work ethic, and determination as great as Prince we should definitely be praising him for what he has done, and what he has accomplished. The statistics of males in high school let alone graduating is very low. I asked Prince how he feels being a young African American male from Newark graduating as Valedictorian of his high school? “It feels pretty good. You don’t really get a lot of male valedictorians, the last being Jordan... 3,4 years later it’s been girls ever since. And you know being African American weather it be male or female can do anything good for themselves but this just goes to show that, whatever you put your mind to you can accomplish it.” The African American males in our community need to be inspired and encouraged by this great example Prince.

As smart as Prince is, I expected him to love all his classes because learning must come with ease, but he says he doesn’t really have a favorite subject. Yet, if he had to choose, science... specifically physics or biology.. Math is also incorporated in science as well. I also expected Prince to be some sort of Einstein scientist or mathematician. I asked him about his future goals? And to my surprise he said, “I’m currently confused in life, so I really don’t know my future goals, but what I’m doing now is only going to progress as I move into college, there’s a lot of habits that I know I need to drop before going to college, but I know if I accomplished what I did even with these habits, there’s a lot more I know I can do. My future goal in a sense is to be a better version of myself as I step into college.”

In addition to academics Prince is a very talented African dancer. I asked Prince if he planned to continue dancing with the ALA dance “Yes I do, but we aren’t the same because everyone is busy but I do plan to continue dancing and branding myself and performing with African Artists. I performed at Apollo and Hammerstein Ballroom in New York. They’re all big theaters and the reputation that I have now mostly comes from dancing. I’m going to continue doing what I do because it’s also what I love to do.” We all know how challenging it can be juggling school with outside activities such as a job, a sport, or hobby.

Ironically, Prince will not be the only valedictorian graduate in his family. His sister Eunice graduated University High School Class of 2014 as valedictorian of her class as well. Did you feel as though you had a reputation to uphold considering your sister graduated as valedictorian years prior? “I did, I only did because of my mom. If she never said “Your sister graduated valedictorian, so you have to too”, I would have never been pressed. For the record, when I came in freshman year I never had the intentions on working to be valedictorian, I was just working to work for myself. Everything I do, I do for myself; I don’t do it to get an award letter from somebody or to please somebody else. But my mom is that little voice in the back of my head that I listen to.”

In addition to his mother’s expectations, Prince has high expectations to hold during school as well. With the title valedictorian, comes the role leader. Do you feel pressured to always be on your P’s and Q’s as “leader of the school”? “No, because one I’m not the leader of the school. But if other people see me as leader of the school I guess it’s my job to lead as example. Sometimes I walk the halls, I do everything like a regular student, you just have to know your boundaries, know when you can and when you can’t. I don’t feel pressured because I’m always going to be myself, I’m not going to act like the leader of the school because somebody’s calling me that. If I’m doing what I do and others view me as the leader of the school, that’s what it is.”

Do you get annoyed when people refer to you as “leader of the school”? “Yes I do, because I don’t know who appointed me leader of the school, it wasn’t Mr.Mendez but I mean I just get annoyed because people don’t realize I don’t do anything different from them, so I guess everyone is the leader of the school; expect opportunities when they come my way, if everyone took opportunities everyone could be leader but I guess people feel like I’m better than everyone, I’m just tired of school and ready to go.” Aren’t we all Prince? Prince has demonstrated hard work, dedication, and determination all four years of his high school career. As a result, he is placed on the high pedestal for others to admire and hopefully use as their inspiration to push toward their own version of greatness when the time comes.

Salutatorian: Inasia Belton

By: Deontee Matthew and Bianca Dodson

Inasia Belton has been a student at University High School for six years. Her achievements reflect in her grades, she is a hardworking young lady who has maintained a 4.02. She took time out of her schedule to answer a few questions for us.

So Inasia, how did you maintain your grades?

“I maintained them by always asking for help when I was confused by topics given.”

Your GPA is a 4.02. Wow it must have been difficult to handle stress. So how’d you do it?

“I handled my stress by talking to my friends who were in the same situations so I didn’t feel alone. Also, I would take breaks and watch YouTube or Netflix, then go back to the issue with a different outlook.”

How did you avoid distractions?

“I avoided them by surrounding myself with like minded people and remembering that I have goals are important to me.”

How did you stay organized?

“Planner. Planner. Planner. They help sooo much and it feels good checking off tasks. I didn’t not have much free time because I liked to keep busy with clubs and sports.”

Did you have a lot of down time? If so what did you do?

“I didn’t not have much free time because I liked to keep myself busy with clubs and sports.”

Do you have any tips for the incoming freshmen or any of the other classes?

- “1. Get a planner and be consistent.
- 2. Find a good support system and surround yourself with people who have serious goals like you.
- 3. Make strong relationships with teachers/administrators/faculty because it helps you in the long run.
- 4. Try hard Freshman year. It pays off.”

Her hard work will pay off and help her with her college career! We wish Inasia good luck in her future!



The Phoenix Flame Academic Spotlight

Class of 2018 Top 25 Scholars



11. Jada Atkins
3.59
North Carolina A & T



12. Shahid Burwell
3.54
Combine Institute



13. Shamonique Atwater Speight
3.517
Kean University



14. Dajah Amaya Dixon
3.52
Monmouth University



15. Da-Quan Patterson
3.52
Hussan University



16. Emanni Jenkins
3.48
Clark Atlanta University



17. Charington Robinson
3.45
Rutgers University



18. Destanie Jefferson-Lee
3.41
Bloomfield College



19. Khaleya Kelly-Adams
3.41
Rutgers University (Newark)



20. Jefferson Avila
3.40
Kean University



21. Kelly E. McIntyre
3.38
Rutgers Newark



22. Dwight Ankle
3.36
NYIT



23. Enaysia Green
3.347
Rutgers University (Newark)



24. Ahzem Baldwin-Henry
3.346
Rutgers University (Newark)



25. Ike Harcourt
3.341
Rutgers University

Seniors Reflect on the School Year

Applying Pressure

By Sadeeya Bentham



As senior year comes to an end, the pressure of picking a school is getting more intense. I have narrowed my choices down to two schools which you'd think would make picking one easier. However, the decision seems to get harder and harder instead of becoming clearer. Knowing that I am not the only one struggling with picking a college puts me at ease just a tad bit.

When it's time for you to pick a school you have to make a list of the pros and cons for each school. You should consider location, tuition fees, the environment, academic status, credibility, and any other interest you may have and want a school to offer. Not to sound self-ish but I feel like you should go where you want to go and do what's best for you. I know around this age many of us may have relationships and friendships we want to hold on to and we are scared to really go far and follow our dreams because it could mess up our situations.

As far as friendships, your true friends should always encourage to go where your heart desires. Just because there is distance between you all, doesn't mean the friendship is over. Real friends do not have to speak everyday or see each other everyday for the friendship to continue or remain solid. Same for relationships. I'm sure no one wants to hear it but we are still young. You will meet tons of people in this lifetime. Don't turn down a life experience for one person. If it's meant to be, it'll be, and you all will work it out from a distance.

Overall, I think I know which school I will be attending in the fall. If I decide to go with this school I feel like I'll be very happy and enjoy my college experience. I wish all of my fellow 2018 classmates the best experience wherever they decide to go and nothing but success in life.

I've Decided on Kean University!

By Amber Moses



Let's just say high school has been a journey. But I'm glad I didn't give up. After taking the SAT test three times (and still not being satisfied with my scores), I'm so glad that colleges didn't overlook me. I applied to at least twelve schools and got accepted into the following: Caldwell University, Bloomfield College, New Jersey City University, Felician University, Fairleigh Dickinson University, William Paterson University as well as a couple others — not bragging, just facts.

Making my decision was difficult, I made my decision exactly one week before *National College Decision Day*. I know everyone says go to the school that offers the most money but I didn't decide to do that. I decided to go to the school I was most interested in. Kean University was one of the schools at the top of my list. Caldwell University offered me the most money. Still, I was torn between Fairleigh Dickinson and Kean University.

Both schools offered me a nice amount of money with their financial aide package. If I would've chosen Fairleigh Dickinson and Caldwell I would've ended up paying about \$10,000 back in loans. I want to avoid taking out too many loans. At Kean University, even without loans I'd actually be paying the less.



It has been an quite adventurous attending University High School and I'm a proud graduate soon to be alumna. Fall 2018 I will be a college freshman, conquering classes at Kean University. Future class of '22!

Senior Year: Is We Finished or is We Done?

By Malaysia Cotton



Senior year is the last year in our high school career. It has always been said, that it's supposed to be the best year. Senior year is one of the hardest years. College applications and essays plus basic future planning, this year is filled with obstacles. You are constantly hit with challenges and placed in some of the toughest situations. I cannot lie, there will be times where you feel like you'll want to give up. Knowing that it is your last year makes it worse. Why? Because, you are constantly reminding yourself that this is it and you can't wait for it be over.

Senior year is a real pain in the donkey! You don't have the drive to come to class, do the work, or better yet even want to attend school. It is tiring. You may find yourself slacking and sleeping in almost every class, no matter how good or bad you have done the previous years—you're not safe.

Keeping up with your grades and class assignments is definitely challenging. This right here my friend is called *Senioritis*. I am pretty sure almost every senior can relate to these feelings and symptoms. However, I think it is important to know what keeps seniors going: What gives them the drive to keep pushing through this last year. I decided to ask a couple of the seniors to share their thoughts. The first senior I interviewed was Dominique Joseph.

Would you do high school over again?

"I would do it over again. I'd go about some of the things I've done differently, such as schoolwork & friends."

Do you think school builds character?

"It does build character because you go through the experience. You get to know yourself more."

Would you say this year was your best or worse year?

"Well it wasn't my best, but it wasn't the worse because my grades were good but it just was stressful."

And emotionally?

"Yeah everything was good, really good."

I felt like we needed a male's perspective as well, so I interviewed Al-Quan Dwight.



What gave you the drive to finish the year?

"[I needed] to graduate to make my family happy to make myself happy."

Would you want to do high school over again?

"No, because I learned lessons that I will need for my future to become successful."

Do you think it builds character?

"Yes it does. It makes you mature as a man, and it helped me adapt to different situations."

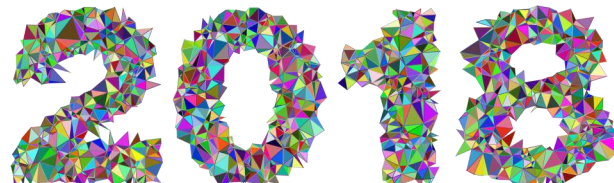
Would you say this was the best or worse year?

"It was both because it came with its ups and downs."

And emotionally?

"Very stressful year because you have to make a lot of big decisions that can change your life for the better or worse."

I think all seniors can agree that our senior year has revealed and built our characters. We've learned learn. We feel more. We notice more. It all wraps together. Coming to the end of the year makes me appreciate the experiences and people. Even though most of us will soon be drifting apart to further our lives and continue to figure ourselves out more. Each person whom I have encountered taught me a lot. I am thankful for the experience good and bad. All my mistakes were just lesson that I needed to learn. I hope everyone person in the class or 2018 is successful.



Final Thoughts About High School

Is PARCC Worth It?

By, Carlos Shamburger



As everyone knows, PARCC testing testing season starts in April. most schools are starting to prepare for them. PARCC is suppose to be a replacement for some standardized tests and used to test students skills and development throughout the school year. Many people have opposed to taking this test be-cause no one see the point of this test. They claim to make this test a graduation requirement but no colleges are asking for it and not that many schools list it as an actual graduation require-ment.

PARCC is something that should not happen because there isn’t a point to it. What really the main purpose of this test? Has any-one figured it out yet? This test started in 2014 and it has caused problems from the start. Many students opted out of testing but then teachers and guidance counselors told us,

“It’s a graduation requirement...you are not allowed to opt out.”

Students no longer have a choice. They have to take this weird, boring test for one week. This test never shows good results any-where. Why issue a test, who’s sole purpose is making a school system look good or bad? This test is making teachers change their lesson plans and teaching styles to fit a test. That’s not real learning.

PARCC has been a controversial hot button topic since its in-ception in 2014. Test creators claim it’s purpose is to start evalu-ating college and career readiness at a young age. But how can it do that when the elementary school students are completely dif-ferent than middle and high school? Newly elected NJ governor, says that New Jersey will soon end PARCC testing. There’s no word on how soon it will end but there is some sort of standard-ized testing change on the horizon.

In the meantime, New Jersey students will have to continue tak-ing this test, especially since its, *“a Graduation Require-ment.”* For those of use who have suffered through these long drawn out tests understand how stupid. We feel your pain. Just pass it so that you don’t have to suffer every year.

Even if PARCC is taken out of the schools it will just be re-placed with something else. I just hope that the next test will re-ally test our knowledge and not fish to see what we haven’t learned.

Senior Year Mood: I’m So Lazy

By: Dominique Joseph



Laziness is very common for students no matter what level of educa-tion you are at. The more work that is assigned, the lazier you become.

You would think that when you are a senior in high school you would get less work being as though you will be graduating, but that is not the case. The teachers pile more and more work on you. Most seniors look at school work as an option and not an obligation.

At times, I look at my work and say, “I’ll do it later” and never end up doing it. Picking up a pen to write even feels as such a difficult task.

The more I refuse to do work, the more it piles up. I always find my-self trying to hand in assignments last minute when the marking period is about to end. This is where all the frustration begins. When you look at your grades you start to get annoyed with your teachers because they don’t look how you want them to look, when in reality, it is your fault.

Being lazy will not cut it once you get to college, which is something I need to come to terms with. Professors will not give you extra time to hand in assignments as high school teachers would.

Usually, when a teacher gives out a do-now or an exit ticket, I say to myself “this won’t count as much of a grade,” but if a teachers gives one out everyday, they will add up. No matter what kind of work you are given, even if it is one question to answer, do it! You never know what will happen if you don’t. Every grade matters and counts toward your final grade.

Being lazy as a senior or in high school period is very common and there is nothing wrong with it, you just have to know when to.

Be mindful and know that you must stay on track so you won’t find yourself playing catch up at the end of every cycle. Being lazy is not the way to go especially as a senior, when you have these events oc-curring.

Is Prom Worth it?

By, Karin Adams

This is the time of year where every senior is struggling and stressing to make sure their prom night is perfect. As we all know, there is no such thing as per-fection. Yet, we all have been waiting for senior year so that we get to experience prom and just like that, the moment is here. When you start to experience something first hand, your perspective changes completely.

Typically, females are more interested in prom. I think prom day is harder on girls because females tend to stress more about these things. Boys don't. They just get to show up with a fly date on their arm. They only have to worry about a suit and a haircut but us females ? What, you already know how it goes down-- allow me to compare the two:

Girls - Dress , shoes , hair , hair installment , makeup, nails, feet, shoes, jewelry and car.

Boys - suit , shoes , hair cut , car , jewelry... that’s it.

You see where I’m going with this right? It’s too much. But, all of this is necessary if you want that perfect picture with or without a Snapchat filter. Remem-ber you and your friends will be posting photos all over social media. You know everybody in your family is going to share and post pictures of you. So, your look has to be on point. If not, you can end up on a social media page under the captain Prom 2018 Don’ts instead of Prom 2018 Slay. I am still twenty or so days away from the big night and just know, on the day of I will be coming correct. Only time will truly tell if it was all really worth it.

The Phoenix Flame May 1st, National Decision Day



Adams, Karin — *Fairleigh Dickinson University*
Adu-Agyei, Clinton — *Rutgers Newark*
Akagha, Chimazuru —*Rutgers University*
Allen, Saheemah -- *North Carolina A&T*
Ankle, Dwight —*NYIT*
Arenas, Martha—*NJCU*
Arizabal, Kevin —*NJIT*
Armstrong, Shardea —*Entering the Workforce*
Asante, Abena — *John Hopkins University*
Atwater, Shamonique —*Kean University*
Avila, Jefferson—*Kean University*
Baker, Sabir —*Entering the Workforce*
Baldwin-Henry, Ahzem —*Rutgers University (Newark)*
Bargaineer, Kailya—*College of St. Elizabeth*
Beckford, Aaliyah —*St. Peters University*
Belton, Inasia — *Denison University*
Bentham, Sadeeya — *Morgan University*
Blay, Grace — *Rutgers University*
Bowens, Cordell—*Kean University*
Braimah, Blessing — *Rutgers Newark*
Burrell-Anderson, Jordan
Burwell, Shahid — *Combine Institute*
Castillo, Arly —*Bloomfield College*
Cooper, Nefertiti — *Howard University*
Cotton, Malaysia—*William Patterson University*
Council, Niara — *Montclair State University*
Cuadrado, Fantaysha —*The College of NJ*
Desir, Byshir—*Undecided*
Dixon, Dajah — *Monmouth University*
Dixon-James, De'Jane S —*William Patterson University*
Dodson, Bianca — *Grambling State University*
Dwight, Al-Quan—*Undecided*
Ezeike, Janaya —*Rutgers University*
Fernandez, Eliezer—*Undecided*
Forbes, Naseem—*Saint Peters University*
Goines, Yusuf—*Vincent Robertson Prep*
Gordon, Alicia—*Delware State University*
Graham, Zakirah—*Felician College*
Green, Enaysia—*Rutgers University (Newark)*
Greene, Ikea—*The College of St. Elizabeth*
Harcourt, Ike—*Rutgers University*
Haywood, Najir —*NJIT*
Hemnarine, Ryan — *Rutgers Newark*
Hughey, Janae — *Berkeley University*
Jackson, Dy'Zhanæ — *Entering the Workforce*
Jackson, Me'Ajah —*Bloomfield College*
Jackson, Tatyana — *Kean University*
Jefferson-Lee, Destanie — *Bloomfield College*
Jenkins, Aaron — *Rutgers University*
Jenkins, Emanni — *Clark Atlanta University*
Johnson, Jada — *Lincoln University*
Johnson, Majid— Undecided
Johnson, Tamara — *Rutgers University (Camden)*

Jones, Serenity —*Fairleigh Dickinson University*
Joseph, Dominique — *The College of New Jersey*
Kelleh, Mafatuma—*Rutgers University*
Kelly-Adams, Khaleya—*Rutgers University (Newark)*
Lassiter, Monica — *Montclair State University*
Leverett, Robert —*Shaw University*
Livingston, Brandon —*Undecided*
Lopez, Edgardo—*Undecided*
Manning-Cook, Shariff — *Essex County College*
Martinez, Dayanara — *William Patterson University*
Matthew, Decontee — *Cabrini University*
McClamb, Jaris —*Kean University*
McIntyre, Kelly — *Rutgers Newark*
Miranda, Jordan —*Rutgers University*
Moses, Amber — *Kean University*
Moss, Ty-Saiah — *Caldwell University*
Murphy, Khizeeq —*Caldwell University*
Nieto, Edwin—*Undecided*
Odom, Brandon—*College of St. Elizabeth*
Orta, Andrew—*Essex County College*
Ortiz, Teresa — *Monroe College*
Ouedraogo, Zeinab — *NJIT*
Owusu, Daniel—*Rutgers University (Newark)*
Padmore, Benjamin—*Montclair State University*
Patterson, Da-Quan — *Hussan University*
Patterson, Joshua—*College of St. Elizabeth*
Perez, Jeanmarcos—*United States Marines*
Pichardo, Meagan —*Baruch College*
Pierce, Rahquan —*Undecided*
Powell, Amayah— *Bloomfield College*
Powell-Bouie, Rahyanna —*Entering the Workforce*
Prindle-Higgs, Nakaya—*Morgan State University*
Ransdell, Larry— *Undecided*
Ridley, Ja'Myra — *Rowan University*
Robinson, Charington—*Rutgers University*
Robinson, Danielle — *Seton Hall University*
Rodriguez, Rosendy —*Rutgers University*
Rogers, China —*William Patterson University*
Saliva, Adrian — *Entering the Workforce*
Scott, Khadijah—*North Carolina A & T*
Scott-Holmes, Saleyah— *Bloomfield College*
Screven, Abbrielle—*William Patterson Univesity*
Sewell, Kaylah—*Saint Peters University*
Sexton, Shamik—
Shamburger, Carlos — *Dominican College*
Solomon, Travonte—*Bloomfield College*
Spencer, Aaliyah — *Rutgers Newark*
Stewart, Na'Dree —*Montclair State University*
Tawiah, Derika—*Bloomfield College*
Thomas, Darren—*Rutgers University (Newark)*
Vargas, Nyleen— *Essex County College*
Walker, Nadirah —*Entering the Workforce*

Wallace, Ayonna—*Montclair State University*
Ware, Caleb—*Rutgers University*
Watkins, Justin — *Bloomfield College*
Wertz, Tamar — *Centenary University*
Wiggins, Demani—*NJCU*
Wiggins, Kyle—*Fairleigh Dickinson University*
Womack, Kyleea —*Fairleigh Dickinson University*
Yarrell, Tyon—*Full Sail University*
Yarrell, Tyonnah — *Texas Southern University*
Zamora, Diana — *Fairleigh Dickinson University*



BEFORE WE GO... OUR FINAL SHOUT OUTS

“Shout out to Ms. Ruesta because she's only been my teacher for a year and I look at her as role model, she inspirational!”
— Amber Moses

“I want to shout out all of my friends. The funny ones, the dumb ones, the cool ones, the smart ones, the Halloweeners and et.c. YALL PUT UP WITH MY BULL FOR THIS WHOLE YEAR, AND I APPRECIATE YOU GUYSSSSSSS. Although I don't really speak to you guys on a deeper level, I still care about you guys. Especially my sister smh. I'm gonna shout out my mom for being her. And Ruesta, Defalco, and Mrs. Jones they were my favorite teachers and taught me a lot while having fun. (I apologize Mrs. Jonesssssssss for not doing work 3rd cycle *crying emoji*)” – Bianca Dodson

“I would like to shout out my friends and the people who affected my life good or bad. Also, certain teachers who helped me throughout this year. The main people I wanna shout out is my family. Even though they irked my nerves this whole time, they still helped me with whatever I needed.” – Carlos Shamburger

Shout out to my friends. The fat ones, the ugly ones, the ones whose breath stink, I don't like y'all like that but, ya'll stood by me for 4 years. and I appreciate it. enjoy college. – Decontee Matthew

Mrs. Coppola & Mr. Julien shout out to them for being a huge part of the little bit of happiness I found in high school. I very much appreciate & love them. – Shardea Armstrong

Shouts to my track coach Ms. Monroe for looking after me through injury I appreciate her. – Clinton Adu-Agyei

Shout out to Ms. Jones because she spent a lot of time getting these newspapers ready for us. This is probably one of the best things we have leaving this school. – Sadeeya Bentham

Shout out to all my teachers who didn't give me zeros when I was absent, thankful for you. – Shamonique Atwater

“I want to shout out Mr. Arroyo for making my senior year very easy. I didn’t take financial literacy in my junior year. He made it so I didn't’ have to be in class and be uncomfortable with the juniors as long as I made up my work which I did.” – Dwight Ankle

“Big shout out to Ms, Blake for being the best VP in Newark. She’s been a big help along the way. A mistake was made with my grades, and she took the time to make sure it was fixed.” – Karin Adams

Nefertiti Cooper
Devon Corry
Meagan Pichardo
Me-Ajah Jackson
Clinton Ade-Agyei
Destanie Lee-Jefferson
Ikea Greene
Enyasia Green
Carlos Shamburger

The Phoenix Fame
University History High School
55 Clinton Place
Newark, New Jersey 07108

The Phoenix Flame Staff
Advisor: Mrs. Stephanie Jones

Danielle Robinson
Tamar Wertz
Majid Johnson
Sadeeya Bentham
Malaysia Cotton
Emanni Jenkins
Amber Moss
Dwight Ankle
Raquan Pierce
Karin Adams
Dominique Joseph

All-Star Scholar Athlete

Tamara Johnson



By, Amber Moses & Clinton Adu-Agyei

As many may know, Tamara plays three sports at University: volleyball, basketball and track & field. When asked how she manages to keep up with her sports and still maintain a high grade point average, she responded, “I’ve been doing it all my life so it’s kind of like second nature.”

We asked Tamara if she had a favorite sport was and to share her most memorable moment at University, “Basketball, and my most memorable moment was winning my state championship.”

Inspiration is something that everyone uses to perform, and keep them motivated, so that prompted us to ask Tamara what keeps



Penn Relays: Xarrial Chandler, Sydney Williams, Tamara Johnson, Tara Johnson (sister)

her motivated. “As an athlete competition keeps me inspired because I want to win and as a student my mother keeps me motivated because she taught me to always work to the best of my ability.”

As Tamara is about to go off to Rutgers University (Camden), we asked her to share with us where she sees herself after college. Tamara said, “I’m not quite sure. That’s something that we just have to wait to find out.”

It is important to note that Tamara is graduating at number three with a GPA of 3.8.

Nobody Goes Hard Like Ike Harcourt

By Malaysia Cotton



Ike has played basketball for University High School all four years. So I’m sure that it’s going to be an adjustment for him now that it’s done.

I kicked off the interview by asking him to share his experience as a four year basketball player. Ike’s response was, “Playing basketball all four years has been fun, it is something that I have always wanted to do since I was ten so there was passion in it. I feel my skills in basketball has definitely increased over time because each year gave me more time to practice.”

Everyone knows, in order to have a good team that plays well, everyone on the team must have good sportsmanship. This thought led me to ask which Ike to describe the type of relationship he has with his other team members. Ike says, “My relationship with my teammates is very good. It’s like a brotherhood. On and outside of the court.”

I then followed up with that question by asking Ike if he plans on playing basketball in college, “Yes, I plan on playing in college. Basketball has been something I have wanted to do since I was ten years old. Not only that, but basketball has been something that has been in my family for a long time. One of the reasons why I have passion for it. I guess it run is the genes.”

Lastly, since Ike will be graduating soon. I thought it was important to ask him what is some advice he would like to give to the underclassmen/rising basketball players some advice that they should know and take heed to.

Ike has this to say to them, “The rising basketball players should play as a team. That is one of the ways the team this year lacked in. Play as a team and remember to play as a team.”

Ike Harcourt, just as the other players worked hard and put his last blood, sweat and tears out on the court. It was a pleasure getting to know Ike’s personal feelings and view on his overall experience. I have faith that he will continue to keep up this hard-work and dedication as he is about to proceed to college.

The Heart of a Champion:

Teresa Ortiz

By Majid Johnson



Teresa Ortiz, plays basketball here at University. She’s one of the starting five for The Lady Phoenix Basketball team. She’s a shooting guard who has made 73 three-point shots this season. Teresa and her team are conference champions. With the help of her teammates, Danielle, Dom, Tamara & Miyah they knocked out the competition. They even made it to the first round of the Tournament of Champions.

How does it feel to be a sectional champ for the 3rd time in a row?

“I’m actually used to it now. We had a great team every year I played and we just ate.”

How many points did you score last game against arts?

“I had eighteen points.”

Was it hard putting up that much?

“I wouldn’t say it was hard or easy. I’ll just say that hard work pays off.”

How many 3 pointers have you made in your entire career?

“In the three years I played I made 195 3- pointers.”

Has your overall performance improved since your 1st year playing?

“Yes it has, I played a total of 82 games, Last year I made more 3s and had 43 more points then I had this year. Other then that my assists grew steadily every year.”

How did it feel to score 1000 points?

“It was a great achievement, that I am proud to say I accomplished, I did it for everyone who believed I could do it.”

Overall the University basketball team wouldn’t be the same without Teresa. She always pitches in for the win & is the main starting shooter University depends on for at least 6 points a game. Also is a good sport who knows how to take a loss and keep pushing.



Amayah Powell: The Big Man on the Floor

By, Emanni Jenkins

If you’ve ever attended a University High School Lady Phoenix, you have witnessed the “big man” Amayah Powell (senior) dominates any body put in front of her and/or pressed against her. As a result, her team won the sectional Championship.

Entering the state rounds, what were your first thoughts?

“It’s my last year playing basketball in high school I don’t want it to end, i need a ring. That’s my mindset.”

What type of basketball do you think you play?

“I play the type of basketball where as if my goal is to not let you score, I’m locking you down. I’m aggressive, you can’t get passed me and I use my weight and height to my advantage.

Will you continue in college?

“Yes.”

Not only does Amayah contribute rebounds, but she dishes out blocks, steals, and assists too. Not only is she big in the paint but she plays offense too. I’m sure her game will only improve next year Bloomfield College.



Ending With a Perfect Strike

By Carlos Shamburger



Recently, I was given the opportunity to interview one of University bowling team member, Bianca Dodson. Bianca has been bowling for a while but it was only for fun, she didn't start playing for University until her Junior year. Her dad helped her get started with bowling by taking her to different places whether it was for fun or not.

I was able to ask her a couple questions about her time bowling; Here is what she had to say:

Do you recommend anyone to join the bowling team?

"Uh duh! It's super fun and you meet a lot of people from different schools. And the team becomes sort of like a family. Plus if you're good you could be *scouted* by a coach to join a league and get money for college. Or an offer from a college but that only really happens for girls."

Any last words about the season?

"I'm going to miss it so freaking much, we had fun and made great memories. Also I would like to add that I had food poisoning at the Super Essex Tournament (one of the important ones) and I puked four times, once every game (we play three) I hope I receive a most dedicated award at the banquet."

Bianca has always been a good bowler and i really do hope she continues to bowl even if it is just for fun. This bowling team have achieved so much this year and we hope it continues years later. Congrats to Bianca and keep up up the good work.

Let's Hear it for Tyonnah Yarrell

By, Ikea Greene



What is your favorite memory while cheering?

"While it's not a favorite memory, the best thing about cheering is meeting new people and building a relationship. I love to meet new people."

Did you think about cheerleading for after you graduate?

"Yes I'm cheering in college and I also have a scholarship for cheering."

I want to say congratulations to Tyonnah for mastering cheerleading so much she got herself a scholarship. Keep the good work up and I'm proud of you for not giving up even when there were obstacles in your way.

The Incredible Caleb Ware

By Clinton Adu- Agyei

Caleb Ware, one of University High School's most versatile athletes. Caleb Ware is a track runner in the winter and a baseball player in the spring. Being able to balance two sports and school isn't always the easiest thing to do but that hasn't seemed to phase Caleb at all. In fact, Caleb has been recruited by Rutgers Newark's baseball team. I wouldn't be surprised if he's also asked to run track because his track times are incredible.



I was able to catch up with Caleb and ask him a few questions about his last season in track and the upcoming baseball season.

What was your brightest moment this track season?

"Running at eastern, it was so special because I was able to run with the best of the best"

What pushed you run this season being that it was your senior year and you'd never ran before?

"Well all of my friends were pushing me to run because they knew I was fast, they've been telling me to run since freshman year and i finally decided to give it try."

Congrats on your recruitment to Rutgers Newark, what are you most looking forward to?

"Thank you, and being able to play on the collegiate level and facing tougher competition."

The One & Only-Tamar Wertz

By, Kyle Wiggins



Tamar Wertz is probably the most competitive person in the school. His love and passion for the game of baseball is truly on a different level. He gives his all in every game he plays and is driven by his incentive to become even greater.

What are your confidence and expectations like in your last season?

"Well, my confidence was high because this is my last season as a UHS Phoenix baseball player and my expectations are to just have fun with the new guys and if it goes far then it goes far."

How do you feel about all of the new players that are coming out to play this season?

"I feel good, its something that'll help with the space we have on the team and I hope a lot of these players find a love for the game like I did...all in all I just want to make this season a season to remember for them."

What is your inspiration when you play baseball?

"I think about my grandfather, the one that's still alive, and he always believed in me, he still does. With that being said, I have to give it my all and become everything he believed I would—for him and myself."

Three Cheers for Shamonique

By, Amber Moses



As her season is coming to an end, we discussed what she will dearly miss as being a cheerleader:

"I'll really miss competing and seeing my mom chanting my name from the side of the mat and then seeing my coach shouting, 'Tightttt! Squeeeze! LET'S GO Y'ALL!' The encouragement

from the side of the mat gets me excited and influences me to give my all on the mat. I will miss it the most because I know my mom loves cheer just as much as I do. She told me once that sometimes she feel like hopping on the mat and dance with me at the end of the routine."

It is fair to say that Sham is nearly devastated that she may no longer be cheering anymore. Hopefully she makes her mind up soon. It was exciting watching her transition from team to team with the same enthusiastic energy for each team she participated on. Advice from Sham to student athletes:

"Learn to manage your time between school and your athletic activity. You're a student athlete, a student before you're an athlete, so be sure to maintain outstanding academic records before trying to perform with your team anywhere."

Thank you Sham for your patience, time, and honesty. Best wishes to you in college!

The Phoenix Flame Senior Sports Edition Cont. ...



Ty-saiah Moss
By, Nefertiti Cooper

We all may know Ty-saiah Moss as one of the tallest and goofiest seniors. Outside of his hysterical reputation, Ty-saiah has another reputation to uphold: his sports career.

I’ve known Ty-saiah Moss since 5th grade, although I did not start attending University until 9th. He has always been a silly kid with a passion for basketball. I had the pleasure of interviewing the soon-to-be D2 player. I asked him what sparked your interest in basketball? Ty-saiah wanted to play basketball since he was a little kid, although he was short back then. Once gaining his height, he was intrigued by basketball. Ty-saiah has been playing basketball since 8th grade, and just recently began a new passion for football.

Interested in what goes through his mind during a game, I asked, what is your fondest memory about playing basketball? Ty-saiah said he enjoys the adrenaline rush of making the crowd go crazy. The satisfaction and the support from the crowd keeps him going. Even though Ty-saiah initially signed with Clark Atlanta University, he will be attending Caldwell University in the fall where he will continue his football career



Enaysia Green
By, Phoenix Flame Staff

Some think that cheerleading is not a sport but if you ask Enaysia she'll most defiantly argue you down. Over the years people have argued down that cheerleading isn't a sport. "As you can see cheerleading meets ALL of the athletic specifications. But, because cheerleading's primary purpose is to support high school and college athletic teams. Competition comes second! In other words, cheerleading is more than a sport."

I asked Enaysia a couple of questions and these were her responses.

What motivates you to cheer?
"What motivates me to cheer is really my cheer sisters. They make me want to keep going, the bond we share and memories we make. I love them!"

What qualities make a good cheerleader?
"Good sportsmanship, leadership, drive and commitment."

Do you think you'll continue to cheer after high school?
"No. cheering in high school just helped me shape myself but i won't join varsity in college maybe just a club."

Have you ever felt the need to give cheerleading up?
"Yes, so many times, its hard and stressful. Really just competition season that stresses me out. It also takes up a lot of time and in the process you get hurt and it can get very discouraging."

Has cheerleading shape you in anyway?
"Yes, it has it shaped me into a leader being captain. It taught me responsibility and teamwork."

University has some of the best cheerleaders hands down, these ladies have came along way and they deserve all the credits. Together as a team they can get anywhere. Last year during their competitions they lost by .1 to Central high school, but this L didn't push them back, it only made them stronger and now they're back better than ever.



Clinton Adu-Agyei
By: Dwight Ankle

University High School is home to some of the best student athletes in Newark. Clinton Adu-Agyei is one of those outstanding athletes. He is a great student academically and even a greater athlete on the track. Clinton is even in the lead for "Best Athlete" in the senior yearbook. Clinton was asked questions in an interview regarding what his future plans are, what influences he had, his goals as an athlete, and tells us more about him as one of University's "Best Athlete".

Clinton decided to run track because his best friend Prince Abimah convinced him to join to the team, and since then he's been running for 3 years. Clinton is a captain of the track team, a 100m, 200, and 400m runner, And sectional champion.

Clinton tells me about his interest in track " I like the 100m because I have a lot of success in it, i think my fondest memory was when i won sectionals, a personal goal of mine is to run under 11 sec in 100m this season and win sectionals for a second time"

I asked clinton if he plans to run in college or in the future. "Yea I wanna play both sports(soccer and track) but if I cant im gonna stick with whatever offers me the most money, To be honest when I first started track it was fun but then I realized I could actually go to college for this, then I got serious and stop messing around"

Clinton Adu-agyei has a promising future ahead of him. He is a great track runner and determined athlete that laughs at and enjoy challenges that comes his way.



Class of 2018
Senior Athletes

- Abmiah, Prince—Track & Soccer
- Adu-Agyei, Clinton — Track & Soccer
- Allen, Saheemah -- Cheer
- Ankle, Dwight —Track
- Arenas, Martha—Softball
- Atwater, Shamonique —Cheer
- Baldwin-Henry, Ahzem —Track/Football
- Beckford, Aaliyah —Cheer
- Belton, Inasia — Tennis
- Blay, Grace — Cheer
- Braimah, Blessing — Tennis
- Burwell, Shahid — Baskerball
- Council, Niara — Track
- Cuadrado, Fantaysha —Softball
- Desir, Byshir—Football
- Dixon, Dajah — Bowling
- Dixon-James, De'Jane S —Cheer
- Dodson, Bianca — Bowling/Softball
- Dwight, Al-Quan—Basketball
- Goines, Yusuf—Basketball
- Graham, Zakirah—Basketbal/Softball



- Green, Enaysia—Cheer/Track
- Harcourt, Ike—Basketball
- Jackson, Me'Ajah —Softball, Tennis & Bowling
- Jefferson-Lee, Destanie — Volleyball, Cheer,
- Jenkins, Aaron — Baseball
- Jenkins, Emanni — Track, Volleyball, Cheer
- Johnson, Tamara — Volleyball, Track & Basketball
- Joseph, Dominique — Basketball
- Kelly-Adams, Khaleya—Tennis
- Lassiter, Monica — Cheer, Track
- Leverett, Robert —Football,Track
- Matthew, Decontee — Softball
- McClamb, Jaris —Track
- Leverett, Robert —Football/Track
- Livingston, Brandon —Squash
- McClamb, Jaris —Track
- Moss, Ty-Saiah — Basketball/Football
- Nieto, Edwin—Men’s Volleyball/Squash
- Odom, Brandon—Track,Football
- Ortiz, Teresa — Basketball
- Owusu, Daniel—Track
- Padmore, Benjamin—Bowling, Track
- Patterson, Da-Quan — Track, Football

- Robinson, Charington—Track
- Robinson, Danielle — Basketball
- Scott, Khadijah—Track, Squash
- Scott-Holmes, Saleyah— Track
- Screven, Abbielle—Cheer, Volleyball
- Sewell, Kaylah—Squash, Tennis
- Sexton, Shamik—Basketball
- Shamburger, Carlos — Cheer
- Spencer, Aaliyah — Tennis
- Stewart, Na'Dree —Squash, Track
- Vargas, Nyleen— Tennis, Softball, Bowling
- Ware, Caleb— Basketball, Track
- Wertz, Tamar — Baseball
- Wiggins, Kyle—
- Baseball, Basketball
- Yarrell, Tyonnah — Cheer



Inspiring University Students Ms. Eltawil



By: Ikea Greene, Shardea Armstrong

This year we finally had the opportunity to have an awesome math teacher whose name is Ms. A. Eltawil. When the administrators first announced that we were having a “real” math teacher,” I was excited and just wanted to see and meet her. When Ms. Eltawil first started teaching here her very first day I saw how she wanted everyone to learn and understand her assignments. She is the type of teacher who wants everyone to succeed whether or not she gets along with you. Ms. E has her moments sometimes just like everyone does. However, she still finds her way to help each and every last one of her students with no attitude. I look up to Ms. E as a hard working determined teacher who really cares and try to help students the best as she could. We need more teachers like her. Even though many students may say Ms. E is “aggravating” she only want her students to succeed.

We talked to Ms. E for a while and she talked about her students and her love of teaching a lot. The one thing that stood out most to us was when we asked her the following:

What will you miss/remember most about the class of 2018?

“Despite the ups and downs throughout the year, I am going to miss everyone. I hope that I have helped all of you to understand my lessons fully and for you all to be able to utilize these strengths in college and your future careers.”

You have and we thank you for all of your hard work.

Dr. Rahimi Schools us on the Environment



By Dwight Ankle

I got the chance to interview University’s Environmental Science teacher Dr. Rahimi. Many people probably don't know, but Dr. Rahimi is a teacher whose had a long history with University High School. He’s has had a pretty interesting and inspiring story to tell, I think a lot of students would like to hear but don't take it from me, continue reading!

Is it hard dealing with seniors?

“I don't think so, do you know why? There is a good side and a bad side, the good side is they are mature adults but the bad thing about the senior is school is over and I'm senior don't bother me, a little bit arrogance or they think you know it's whatever. I like seniors I've been teaching them for the last 15 years and everybody is ok with me and I'm ok with them i don't have a big problem.”

What advice would you give to the class of 2018?

They have to be aware that college is not the same as high school and they will not call your parents, you have to be responsible, you have to be polite and respectful to other people, other culture, people who look different than you, be humble and ask questions. If you don't know anything there are people, there is guidance counselor, there are tutors available, professors have office hours. The more you go to the professor the more connections you make. Also you can enjoy your life after your done with college. But if you enjoy your too much in college you might suffer, you might be making minimum wage flipping ham-burgers.”

I honestly didn't know that Rahimi was kind of cool. While interviewing him I learned that

A Big Thank You



By Destanie Jefferson-Lee

There are multiple people who helped me out throughout my six years attending university. But I want to give this spotlight to my guidance counselor, Monic Lockett. Ms Lockett has a great effect on all the kids she has as her mentees. Ms Lockett treats everyone like her own. She makes People think about their decisions and make sure they are being realistic with their thoughts. Her doors are always opened. She nurtures her students to prepare them for the real world. She always tell us that one, this is our last year of free school, free anything of that case and two, we’re now in competition with not just our city or state but worldwide hoping to get us an understanding that, this

is serious.

I asked ms. Lockett that is working with seniors any harder than working with any grade, she replies by saying seniors are “exciting” preparing them for their next step. She adds on to say all grades are hard. They are all different pockets, having their difficult times. You have the popular ones, the athletic ones, ones that are just focused on their grades, but with each grade, you have a little bump in the road. She mention the gifted and talent group. She says during those years, they have their ups and downs, but once they hit ninth grade they start to settle because they been in this high school setting and already know what to expect.

Ms Lockett raised majority of the seniors. When new guidance counselors came, and they were assigned to them, she never closed her doors to offer us more information or more help if needed. She says she enjoys being a counselor. Helping where she could benefits not the students but herself aslo. Always keeping them motivated, helping them grow. Ms Lockett says she pushes her students to understand that what they do in high school, they can’t get away with in college. Making up working, coming late to class. She motivate them to get out of bad habits.

Ms. Lockett is more than our counselor. She’s our go to for any problems. With open arms, she is there to fix all our problems if she can. Making sure there is no doubts in our hearts.

Ms Lockett has something to say to the senior class. “Stay focused and live your best life, don’t let anyone tell you, you can’t do anything. If you put your mind to it, you can accomplish endless things.” A big thank you to ms lockett for all the love, and hard work she put in for us. Never allowing us to feel like we couldn’t do something or we were defeated. I speak for my class, We appreciate you and all you’ve done for us.



Senior Class Advisor: Mrs. Dunker-Ware



By, Shariff Manning-Cook

What will you miss/remember most about the class of 2018?

“I will miss the humor and genuine good nature of the class as a whole. The class is very eclectic with characters ranging from the very shy, quiet, and studious to the very boisterous, demanding, uncompromising, and challenging. Nevertheless, I can truly say that the Class of 2018 reminded me that no matter how old we are there is still is room for personal growth! I am grateful to the class for giving this old teacher a much needed tune up!”

How is this class different than any other classes you’ve taught?

“This class is unique because my son joined the class as a sophomore which added a new layer that I never dealt with before in my career. Secondly, I taught the class of 2018 as juniors with a few exceptions and it was only my second year teaching juniors throughout my career. So, I had to concentrate more on building relationships than the curriculum, if I wanted to be successful as the class advisor during senior year. It was sometimes a challenge because I have always been about the work first. Lastly, I was blessed to experience the NICEST group of kids that have come through UHS in a longtime! This class is just AWESOME and it was clear to me freshman year which is why I accepted the challenge of becoming the class advisor and when Caleb needed a new school, it was EASY to choose UHS because of the character of the class he would join.”

Do you enjoy teaching seniors? Why or why not?

“I have taught seniors in the past and gave it up very quickly because seniors walk into school in September ready to leave and are on average not very interested in doing more school work. However, I absolutely enjoy planning senior activities BUT I wish fundraising and dues collection were not part of the job of the class advisor. It demises the pleasure. “

What last piece of advice would you like to impact on the class of 2018?

“With 50 years of life behind me, I advise the class of 2018 to chase a passion not MONEY even though it’s tempting. Create as many deep relationships as possible and treasure them because there won’t be as many as you might think. Then, LOVE YOURSELF! When you hit a bump on the road toward adulthood, just get up! Apologize to those you have hurt and do better. Finally, if you remember me fondly, I achieved my purpose in taking on the challenge of becoming your class advisor; but, if you don’t , remember that in life even those who have challenged us have taught us something.”



Here’s Why You Don’t Want Leave Home Without Your Kindle This Summer

By, The Phoenix Flame Staff

Having a kindle has made it so much easier to read books. We don’t know about you, but us Phoenix Flame staff members have been reading so many books on our Kindle and with the *Project Lit Book Club*. Lead by Mrs. Jones. So since we don’t want the reading momentum to stop, we compiled a list of summer must reads. If you can, read all of them. If that’s too much at the very least, pick up one of the titles on the list. Trust me, you won’t be sorry.

Newark Public Schools has made it easy for you. The first book on your list is **FREE**. Yup, you read that right. It is already downloaded on your Kindle if you use your NPS account. But that is only the Trevor Noah book, sorry. However, the other six books on our list are worth spending your money on. Trust us, you’ll want to talk, Snap & Tweet about these titles. And guess what, some of the authors will tweet you back!

1. *Born A Crime by Trevor Noah

“Trevor Noah’s unlikely path from apartheid South Africa to the desk of The Daily Show began with a criminal act: his birth. Trevor was born to a white Swiss father and a black Xhosa mother at a time when such a union was punishable by five years in prison. Living proof of his parents’ indiscretion, Trevor was kept mostly indoors for the earliest years of his life, bound by the extreme and often absurd measures his mother took to hide him from a government that could, at any moment, steal him away. Finally liberated by the end of South Africa’s tyrannical white rule, Trevor and his mother set forth on a grand adventure, living openly and freely and embracing the opportunities won by a centuries-long struggle.

Born a Crime is the story of a mischievous young boy who grows into a restless young man as he struggles to find himself in a world where he was never supposed to exist. It is also the story of that young man’s relationship with his fearless, rebellious, and fervently religious mother—his teammate, a woman determined to save her son from the cycle of poverty, violence, and abuse that would ultimately threaten her own life.” (Good Reads)

2. Love Hate & Other Filters by Samira Ahmed

“American-born seventeen-year-old Maya Aziz is torn between worlds. There’s the proper one her parents expect for their good Indian daughter: attending a college close to their suburban Chicago home, and being paired off with an older Muslim boy her mom deems “suitable.” And then there is the world of her dreams: going to film school and living in New York City—and maybe (just maybe) pursuing a boy she’s known from afar since grade school, a boy who’s finally falling into her orbit at school.

There’s also the real world, beyond Maya’s control. In the aftermath of a horrific crime perpetrated hundreds of miles away, her life is turned upside down. The community she’s known since birth becomes unrecognizable; neighbors and classmates alike are consumed with fear, bigotry, and hatred. Ultimately, Maya must find the strength within to determine where she truly belongs.” (Amazon)

3. The Belles by Dhonielle Clayton

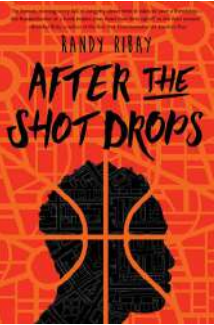
“Camellia Beauregard is a Belle. In the opulent world of Orleans, Belles are revered, for they control Beauty, and Beauty is a commodity coveted above all else. In Orleans, the people are born gray, they are born damned, and only with the help of a Belle and her talents can they transform and be made beautiful.

But it’s not enough for Camellia to be just a Belle. She wants to be the favorite, the Belle chosen by the Queen of Orleans to live in the royal palace, to tend to

the royal family and their court, to be recognized as the most talented Belle in the land.

But once Camellia and her Belle sisters arrive at court, it becomes clear that being the favorite is not everything she always dreamed it would be. Behind the gilded palace walls live dark secrets, and Camellia soon learns that the very essence of her existence is a lie, that her powers are far greater, and could be more dangerous, than she ever imagined. And when the queen asks Camellia to risk her own life and help the ailing princess by using Belle powers in unintended ways, Camellia now faces an impossible decision.

With the future of Orleans and its people at stake, Camellia must decide: save herself and her sisters and the way of the Belles, or resuscitate the princess, risk her own life, and change the ways of her world forever.” (Amazon)



3. After The Shot Drops by Randy Ribay

“Bunny and Nasir have been best friends forever, but when Bunny accepts an athletic scholarship across town, Nasir feels betrayed. While Bunny tries to fit in with his new, privileged peers, Nasir spends more time with his cousin, Wallace, who is being evicted. Nasir can't help but wonder why the neighborhood is falling over itself to help Bunny when *Wallace is in trouble*.

When Wallace makes a bet against Bunny, Nasir is faced with an impossible decision—maybe a dangerous one.” (Amazon)

4. Children of The Bone by Tomi Adeyemi

“Zélie Adebola remembers when the soil of Orisha hummed with magic. Burners ignited flames, Tiders beckoned waves, and Zélie’s Reaper mother summoned forth souls.

But everything changed the night magic disappeared. Under the orders of a ruthless king, maji were targeted and killed, leaving Zélie without a mother and her people without hope.

Now, Zélie has one chance to bring back magic and strike against the monarchy. With the help of a rogue princess, Zélie must outwit and outrun the crown prince, who is hell-bent on eradicating magic for good.

Danger lurks in Orisha, where snow leoponaires prowl and vengeful spirits wait in the waters. Yet the greatest danger may be Zélie herself as she struggles to control her powers—and her growing feelings for the enemy.” (Amazon)



5. *The Poet X by Elizabeth Acevedo

“Xiomara Batista feels unheard and unable to hide in her Harlem neighborhood. Ever since her body grew into curves, she has learned to let her fists and her fierceness do the talking. But Xiomara has plenty she wants to say, and she pours all her frustration and passion onto the pages of a leather notebook, reciting the words to herself like prayers—especially after she catches feelings for a boy in her bio class named Aman,

who her family can never know about.

With Mami’s determination to force her daughter to obey the laws of the church, Xiomara understands that her thoughts are best kept to herself. So when she is invited to join her school’s slam poetry club, she doesn’t know how she could ever attend without her mami finding out. But she still can’t stop thinking about performing her poems. Because in the face of a world that may not want to hear her, Xiomara refuses to be silent.” (Amazon)

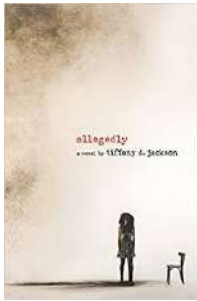
6.The Astonishing Color of After by Emily XR Pan



Leigh Chen Sanders is absolutely certain about one thing: When her mother died by suicide, she turned into a bird.

Leigh, who is half Asian and half white, travels to Taiwan to meet her maternal grandparents for the first time. There, she is determined to find her mother, the bird. In her search, she winds up chasing after ghosts, uncovering family secrets, and forging a new relationship with her grandparents. And as she grieves, she must try to reconcile the fact that on the same day she kissed her best friend and longtime secret crush, Axel, her mother was taking her own life.

Alternating between real and magic, past and present, friendship and romance, hope and despair, *The Astonishing Color of After* is a novel about finding oneself through family history, art, grief, and love.



7.*Allegedly by Tiffany D. Jackson

“Mary B. Addison killed a baby. Allegedly.

She didn’t say much in that first interview with detectives, and the media

filled in the only blanks that mattered: A white baby had died while under the care of a churchgoing black woman and her nine-year-old daughter. The public convicted Mary and the jury made it official. But did she do it? She wouldn’t say.

Mary survived six years in baby jail before being dumped in a group home. The house isn’t really “home”—no place where you fear for your life can be considered a home. Home is Ted, who she meets on assignment at a nursing home.

There wasn’t a point to setting the record straight before, but now she’s got Ted—and their unborn child—to think about. When the state threatens to take her baby, Mary must find the voice to fight her past. And her fate lies in the hands of the one person she distrusts the most: her Momma. No one knows the real Momma. But who really knows the real Mary? ***ProjectLit BookClub Selection**