



Official Entry Form

U.S. Embassy Nassau

2016 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Essay Contest

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ESSAY TITLE: Achieving Peace and Harmony in the Bahamas

Over the years our country has been terrorized by an onslaught of violent crimes committed by merciless individuals. Our society, which once stood firm on the foundations of love, unity, and tranquility, has fallen prey to this seemingly ceaseless savagery. Despite this, I still believe that the Bahamas can achieve a state of perfect harmony. We can end the brutality by restricting access to weaponry, training our youth in conflict resolution, and showing mutual respect should be our first steps.

Whenever I hear the heartbreaking news of another senseless shooting or armed robbery, I cannot help but wonder why guns seem so accessible. This constant supply of dangerous weaponry stands obstinately in the way of our achievement of a peaceful Bahamas. The simple pull of a trigger takes an innocent life. The government can reduce guns in the Bahamas through the implementation of laws restricting entry of guns into the country. The formation of a police task force dedicated to the removal of illegal weaponry and the termination of black market weapons trade is essential. This will put a significant dent in the number of murders in our country, bringing us closer to our dream of a serene Bahamaland.

Over the course of my life I have heard of and occasionally witnessed many ferocious fights. I can barely contain my feelings of disgust and disappointment when I hear the nonsensical motives for such altercations, which include accidental bumps and parking spaces. These are just a few of the conflicts that can be easily resolved by simple discussion, but too often end in violence. The importance of proper conflict resolution should be taught in schools, starting at the early grade levels. This will provide a solid foundation for an individual when he or she is exposed to media and peer pressure, which often condone violence. Citizens who are less susceptible to violent emotions and willing to talk things through are vital to a more tranquil, united Bahamas.

Ever since the recent murder of beloved teacher, Joyelle McIntosh, a grim and terrifying question has haunted me. How can one be so barbaric as to snuff out the life of an innocent teacher and mother? This cruel act brings to light the complete disregard for human life in our country. The feeling of mutual compassion for our own people that should be instinct to us has been eliminated from our conscience by a morally warped society infatuated with selfish pleasures. I believe that if we fully understood the value of a human being, the word violence

would not exist in our vocabulary. School and community programs which encourage us be sensitized to the needs and importance of others will help us to be a stronger more unified Bahamas.

In order to create a peaceful society, we must make the choice individually to live selflessly, letting love and understanding unite us. Only then can we move forward as a nation. Only then can we achieve peace and harmony in the Bahamas.