

WE ARE

TEEN VIBE

For Teens - By Teens

Bringing awareness to teen voices



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Full STEAM Ahead: Preparing the next generation

by Gianna Thomas

I am Gianna Thomas, a tenth grader at Middletown High School who loves STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, & Math). I like how these different fields connect with one another to move innovation forward. In today's society, it can often feel like youth/teens are overlooked as future leaders in these fields, so I'd like to reiterate my point – I love STEAM!

I joined TEEN VIBE to create materials for my fellow peers and local community about STEAM-related news and information from a teen's point of view. The content I will be creating is comparable to what a person might find on traditional media outlets, just with a bit of teen flair and perspective.

COVID-19 has impacted our community in unpredictable ways. It has taken normality and human lives away with such dramatic and devastating form, which seems almost unreal at times. These microscopic organisms resembling the sun's corona will continue to threaten our way of life if we don't take significant actions to negate its impacts. This new way of life is everything we've known for almost a year now and as a teen, I would like to be able to support other teens by stating, hope is not lost. There are bright sides to this situation - especially when considering advancements in STEAM to combat the virus and save more lives. Much more will need to be done as the years go by and things evolve. It will also be up to my generation and others to make sure humanity has a fighting change and STEAM will undoubtedly lead the way.

Teens are growing up in an astronomically different time. New and old methods for maintaining our health is something that all of us can try. According to Middlesex Health, **Lifestyle Medicine** is "something that can help people with prolonged chronic illness through diet, exercise, stress management and social connectivity." Even if not living with a chronic illness, taking a walk in your neighborhood during a break or after school and can be just the release we need. Remember to be physically-distant but not necessarily socially-distant with friends or family.

Remember that there is always sunshine after rain. COVID may not last forever and we are slowly but surely getting through this together. Always wear a proper mask and make sure to distance yourself when around people to curb the chances of infection.

A COLLECTION OF THOUGHTS

by Emma Tine of Mercy High School

Dear World

I know you think you may not be pretty, but you're pretty inside and out. I know it may be a bit cheesy or somewhat cliché, but you're uniquely you - and better in every way.



Poetic Words

Hi, I'm Emma, an active, compassionate, and unique soul who loves the outdoors while also knowing the value of a cozy couch. Normally, I would be swimming, playing golf, reading, or binge watching my favorite shows, but I wanted to take a little time to introduce myself as a writer for TEEN VIBE. Writing has always been a way for me to process everything around me, mostly because I love a good story, so why not create a few of my own to share with you.

Confused - Confusing

Confusion is your friend.
Confusion is your foe.
Confusion is a yes!
Confusion is a no -
Confusion is everywhere.
Confusion is nowhere.
Confusion is a bore.
Confusion is a chore.
Confusion is a light.
Confusion is bright.
Confusion is the substance.
Confusion is the superficial.
Confusion is a lot.
Confusion is a little.
I get confused saying
confused in a pickle.



Focus

Ah focus, focus. Ah focus, focus. Ah hocus pocus? Are you focused? Before you lose your mind and think of bogus?

Award Winning

Vote

Short Story

I crept into my father's room. A slow smile spread across my face like a dull knife scraping off the last of its kill. Blood - such an idea gave me a chilly feeling down-down-down my bony spine. He made me an outcast. He made me a slave. An ax in hand rusted to the very end with a silver handle that cried in the night, but then I stopped. Slowly turning around possessed by the spirit of freedom with a quick jolt resembling a lion attacking its prey, I slammed my ax. Freedom at last. The window now shattered, while my excuse of a father snored. I ditched the ax and ran. He had held me captive in this woodland for so long that civilization hadn't yet existed in my mind. Running at the speed of a cheetah, I reached his truck, broke the window, and hotwired it. But when I reached the town it was empty. Nothing but a thick paste white that choked your lungs. I looked over at a movie theater, which I hadn't seen in years. The posters were torn and the doors barricaded shut. I came across a coffee shop. The pasty windows covered in dirt made a shape. The shape got closer and closer. Then a man appeared covered in blood wearing a hazmat suit holding a case of syringes labelled "COVID-CURE". The man tilted his head and said, "What are you doing without protection, you could be..." BANG! A defining tone and another man emerged from the mist dressed the same but seemed slightly less worried. "Gotta do what you gotta do," he said, while picking up the case and limping away. I looked over to find a flashlight in the dead man's belt. Taking it out, it cleared the mist to reveal hundreds - hundreds of limbs and bodies, shot, bloody, ripped up and scattered - all in hazmat suits. Sadly, it seems the outside world had gone mad, like myself, for all the years I had been trapped alone with an abusive man. "They have it!" shouted a young boy dressed once again in a bloody hazmat suit. I blinked my eyes and had rifles all pointed in my direction. "Who have you voted for" asked one of the men in a stern voice. "I'm only 15 - I can't vote." "Then she doesn't matter, besides, I bet she'd vote the other way anyway," one of the men replied. BANG! White-hot light filled my eyes as I threw up blood and my heart raced until its end. My body slowly oozed like a bag of slime until I was nothing, nothing but a pile of white light. - The End

ASK SOFIA!



HEY TEENS

Have you ever had a problem that you just didn't quite know the answer to (not your homework)? Or have you ever felt like few to no options existed for you on a particular issue?

Perhaps there's a conflict with a friend/person that you just can't seem to sort out. Maybe you've been having trouble making an important decision like what would be the perfect gift to give someone you're dating. Teen life can be full of these messy uncertainties.

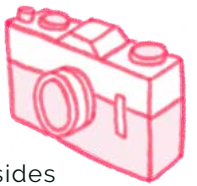
If you would like some free, supportive, and constructive advice, then this is the right column for you! Click [here](http://bit.ly/4AskSofia) or type the link into your browser (<http://bit.ly/4AskSofia>) to send in your queries. Your submissions remain anonymous and could appear in the next issue of TEEN VIBE!

WHO IS SOFIA?



I'm Sofia, the author of TEEN VIBE's advice and music columns! Besides writing, I love painting, photography, and poetry. When I'm not napping you can usually find me in the woods looking for mushrooms. I'm pretty new to Middletown, but I'm looking forward to getting involved with the community and helping a few people out along the way, whether it's through rad music recommendations or quality advice!

Things I've been listening to lately! I'm a huge fan of all kinds of music, from techno to country! But I do have my favorites. In the future, I'd love to share everything from album reviews to interviews with local artists- because y'all deserve the latest and greatest on your playlists! So far this year I've been listening to The Garden, Deftones, Gorillaz, and the Clone High soundtrack! Stay tuned for next month's issue featuring a surprise album review and an interview with a local artist!



WHAT'S COOKING

Foodie Reviews & Kitchen Tips with Tiara Allen

Hello everyone! My name is Tiara and I'm a big foodie. Food gives me life! During quarantine, many businesses and restaurants ended up closing their doors, some permanently. What's a teen to do...? Today, people and businesses are continuing to adapt. I will be reviewing restaurants I've visited to help support and promote these establishments.

I do also sometimes dabble with cooking and baking for me and my family, so I'll be sharing some of my kitchen tips and tricks with you as well. Now that we have schooling online, I find myself making lunches for me and my brother more often so I am happy to share my novice knowledge. I not only want to help small businesses. I also want to help high schoolers cook more wholesome lunches/meals while they're at home.

-Food review on page 4.



Tiara's

FOOD REVIEW

One of my favorite restaurants to eat from is Mr. Taco in Meriden, CT on 69 Miller St. They have great authentic style Mexican food at a reasonable price. I have been fortunate enough to visit the country of Mexico and try authentic Mexican cuisines. Truly a great experience for a foodie like myself.

By far, Mr. Taco is the closest I've experienced to my time in Mexico. I love getting their tacos and churros. The meat is the star of the show. It's nicely seasoned and super juicy. I highly recommend stopping by Mr. Taco to grab some great food. You can make it a family experience. They are currently open for dine-in and takeout.

I give them Tiara's 5 diamond rating for:
Service, Quality, Cleanliness, Taste & Satisfaction.



Photo from Mr. Taco's Instagram

Representation IN FILM, TV & STAGE

BY NETHRA
SUNDARAM



Over the years, the importance of representation on-screen and off has been more and more emphasized. We are starting to see more people of color in lead roles as well as behind the scenes. Although it is stated that representation is important, we never seem to talk about why it is important on a meaningful level. For young people like me, the shows we watch and people we see, or don't see in different roles matters a great deal. It allows us to imagine ourselves in entirely different ways, ways that shape our minds and give birth to new ideas for what is possible.

We are living in an age of technology, media, and entertainment. Particularly, film and T.V. are more popular than ever now and because nearly everyone consumes some form of media-based entertainment, people want to be seen and heard. People want their stories told and want everyone else to know that their stories aren't the only stories that exist.

LACK OF REPRESENTATION AND STEREOTYPES

Although people of color (POC) representation has improved over the decades, there is still a long way to go. Hollywood has an extensive track record of promoting very stereotypical or harmful images of people of color (the smart Asian, POC best friend, the angry black woman, and much more). Most of the time these characters are portrayed as one-dimensional people with no backstory. Eventually, we start to see stereotypes like these so much and begin to treat people in real life accordingly based on these one-dimensional characters that are shown.

BEHIND THE SCENES

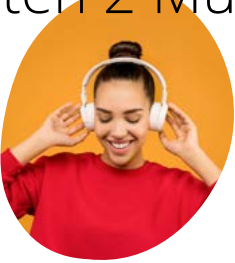
Not only is representation important on-screen and stage, but behind the scenes as well. It is usually due to the lack of representation behind the scenes as to why many people of color are often portrayed so stereotypically. There seems to be little to no thought or effort put into these stereotypical characters. Lacking diverse perspectives and stories is not only irresponsible, it is reckless, careless and crippling to future generations to imagine themselves as something more.

WAYS WE CAN IMPROVE THE ODDS

If you are considering a career in entertainment, think about the multitude of options that also exist behind the scenes. Writing, editing, photography, design, and so much more are just a sampling of options where voices and talents of color can help create a beautiful mosaic artistic expression. Breaking through barriers has never been an easy task to accomplish. Just know that when it's done and recognized, upcoming generations like mine will and do take notice. Thank you to those creating paths for others.

TAKE 4 CARE

Listen 2 Music



Learn Something New



Plan 4 Future



Connect



Create



Get Full Rest



Get Moving



Freshen Up

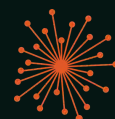
WHAT IS TEEN VIBE?

TEEN VIBE is media-based after school program that meets (virtually) once a week for 1 hour. Teens learn how to create and share news-style content and other materials that are informative for teens and the broader community.

The TEEN VIBE program is a partnership collaboration between the Middlesex YMCA and the Russell Library teen departments. We understand that teens have diverse voices and perspectives on a range of issues and topics. This is why TEEN VIBE was created, to amplify their voices and give them a unique platform.

TEEN VIBE is currently recruiting additional members to cover unique topics and stories that teens may find interesting. **Want to join?** Visit the link below to apply:
<https://bit.ly/teenVIBE>

To subscribe, e-mail the word "subscribe" to:
teenvibect@gmail.com



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