

# Cost of Living: How is Poverty Becoming a Norm?



1 NO POVERTY




DO YOUR PART



Akina, Lynsay, Leya & Laila

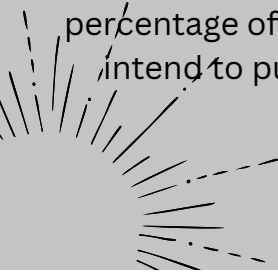


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## Our purpose

The purpose of this zine is to bring awareness to the high cost of living in the United states. Our hopes are that our zine highlights a specific cause as to why the cost of living here is so high. Therefore causing the percentage of our population in poverty to grow. What we really intend to put a spotlight on is how living in poverty is being normalized.



# Stuck

I am trapped in quicksand,  
The more I move, the more I struggle  
The tighter it has me, the more I sink,  
I'm stuck.

Why do you want what little I have?  
The need to make what's mine in your image?  
You can have the world  
But you want my humble abode.

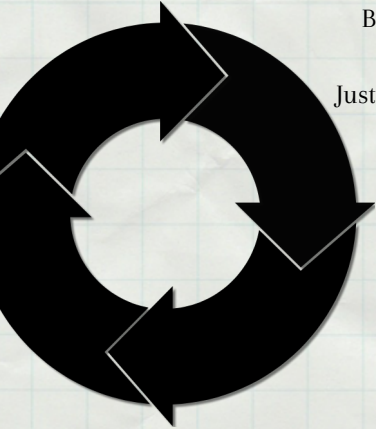
Just like a ring i'm trapped in a cycle  
With no beginning or end  
Without generation wealth  
I'm stuck

If education is like the key  
Then money is like a lock  
If I can't open the lock  
Then I'm stuck

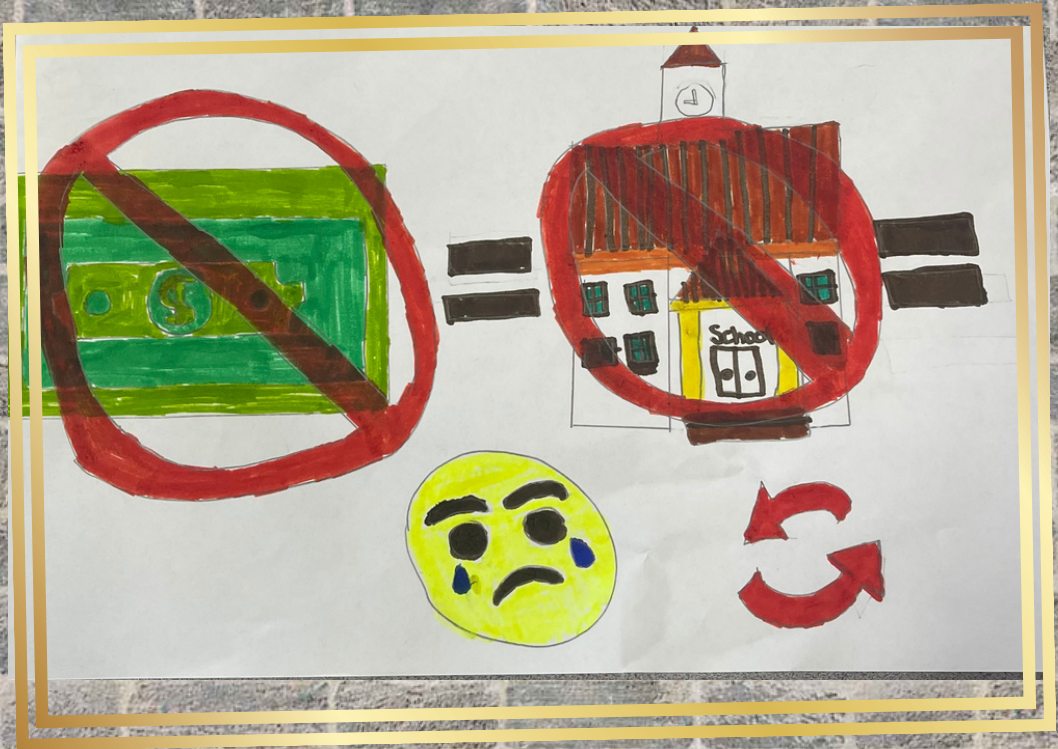
As the markets drop so does my spirit  
Jobs were already a rarity for me but now their scarce  
My money quickly drying up like a well  
Like I wasn't on my last drops

I'm Stuck  
Stuck in poverty  
Stuck in a world not willing to change  
Stuck in a runt  
Stuck

By: Leya Aleyu



# "Cycle"



## Art Statement:



You may think you have my drawing all figured out because it is "simple" or "goofy looking" but that's where I got you. You must first fully open your mind to all the possibilities before you even begin trying to depict the message behind my art work. My drawing is actually quite similar to Picasso's work in the way that it's quite literally but abstract. See my drawing is trying to tell the story of one of the biggest contributors to poverty, lack of education. My drawing is saying that no money equals no school in other words education, equaling a sad life, that's where the abstractness comes in. The emoji can be interpreted in a number of ways but to me it represents a sad life due to hardship and struggle stemming from the lack of education because they didn't luck out like the rest of us with money. Then the arrows represent that this will continue for generations to come. After looking at my art I want people to go outside and help make a change whether it be paying a students tuition or giving a homeless man a dollar. As for my poem I based it on Maya Angelou, "still I Rise" and used the ??? techniques of repetition, Hyperboles, smiles and metaphors, to get my point across.



By: Leya Aleyu

# Francis Duggan, and his work on poverty

## "The Children Of Poverty Street "

"At least spare a thought for the children the children of Poverty  
Street

They are homeless as young teenagers and against the odds they  
must compete

Their parents serving time for robbery and narcotic offences and  
most of their role models in jail

Their circumstance of birth is a huge mark against them the poor  
young people destined to fail.

They steal for to buy food, drugs and alcohol on Poverty Street life is  
tough

Too young much too young to be homeless without shelter and  
sleeping rough

They are pushed to the social fringes the young people society  
disown

Ignored by the Government Bureaucracies and to the Police only  
known.

Who could envy them their existence those born into cruel  
circumstance

The Gods are completely against them of success they do not stand  
a chance

For them life is such a great battle they must battle their ghosts of  
despair

They don't even dream of the good life to them life is very unfair.

You who waffle on of life's choices with you talk is always so cheap  
Bet you were not homeless at thirteen and on a park bench had to  
sleep

You would not talk of life's choices if you had to steal for to eat  
If you felt alone and abandoned like the children of Poverty Street."



# Francis Duggan, and his work on poverty

## "That Millions Do Live In Poverty"

"That millions do live in poverty should never be seen as okay  
The gap between the haves and the have nots keeps getting bigger  
by the day

Everyone should have the chance to live happy a home to live in  
and enough for to eat

There never should be slums and ghettos and never a poverty  
street,

That millions are born to live in poverty and to end their hard  
lives in despair

Only tells us if there's a god that god favours the wealthy and that  
god is not very fair

To leave millions homeless and dying of malnutrition the people  
condemned to die poor and young

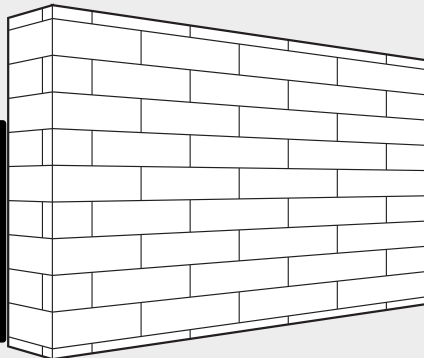
In the refugee camps of the World live the displaced, the poor and  
unsung,

In the age of celebrity worship the poor in millions multiply  
Why millions are destined to be poor don't ask me I wouldn't  
know why

Even in the World's wealthiest Countries poor people are no  
longer rare

And millions and millions of have nots in the bigger World out  
there

And millions are dying of hunger and millions are doing it tough  
And millions are displaced and homeless and as refugees living it  
rough."

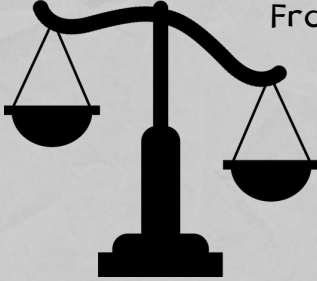


# Francis Duggan, and his work on poverty

## Quote:

"There is no such a thing as a 'fair go for all'."

From, "Racism Is Around Me Everywhere"



## Biography:

There isn't too much information about Francis Duggan out there for the public. What we do know about him is that he is originally from Ireland but then relocated to Australia which he came to know as home. Duggan has made thousands of poems since 1973, that are published online one of his best pieces being "Racism Is Around Me Everywhere". His muse for his poems are Humanity, nature, and the connections between them.



By: Leya Aleyu





# Inescapable living

By: Akina Parker

Unfiltered sun  
Destroys our crops  
A walk to a grocery store,  
tags convert to the price of gold  
Winter turning into summer

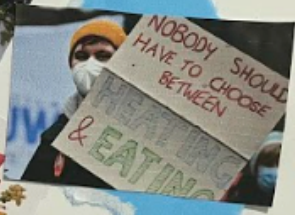
Unbearable heat  
but one flip of the switch  
will cause our pockets to drought  
It's hard to live this way  
Destruction floods our land  
The little light we have left  
Slips out of our hands

Poof.

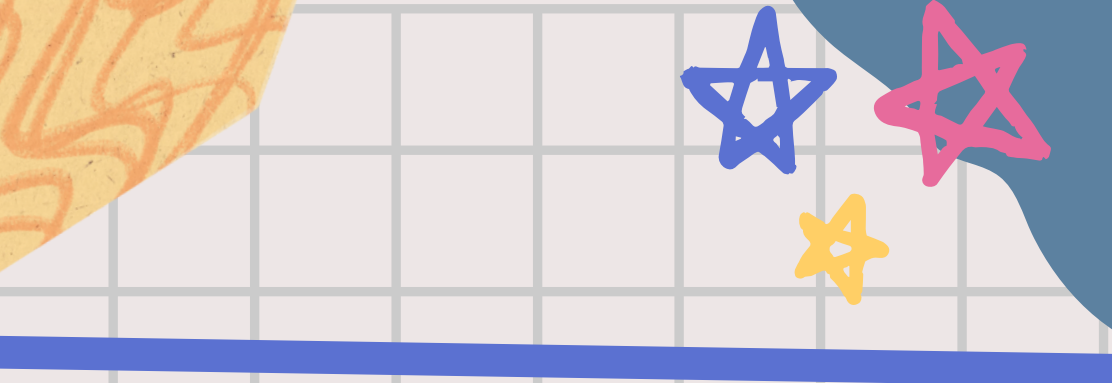
There should be a way,  
A way to reverse this pain  
We're stuck to our consequences like glue  
Forever broken.



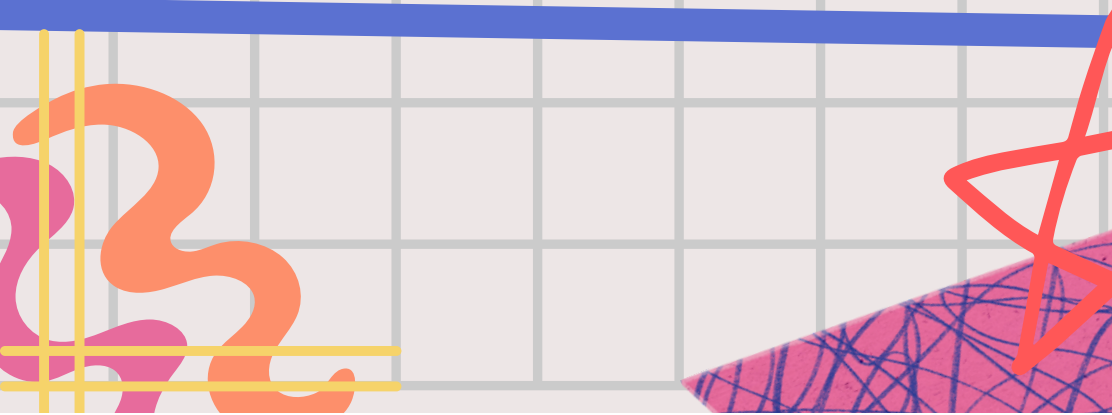
"High Cost for Low Living"



There IS A high COST for Low Living" - EDWIN LOUIS COLE



My collage is a representation of what climate change is doing to our society. It shows how we are struggling day by day to get by due to the effects of climate change. I wanted to put the dangers of our actions into perspective for the audience's eyes. It's something many of us tend to overlook, and we doesn't connect the high cost of living to climate change. This collage was to bring awareness to the cause so we can make a change.



# How Climate Change is Affecting the Cost of Living

Akina Parker

Our necessities are becoming harder to access as years go by. Climate change has/will continue to raise the cost of living for everyone, making each day harder than the last.

## **What's happening?**

In 2017, along with the health issues burning fossil fuels has caused, the average the U.S economy spent on climate change is \$240 billion a year. It's predicted that extreme weather events induced by climate change will happen more frequently as the years progress. This means this average will only increase from here. In the year 2020, coastline and flood-prone areas alone have accumulated \$1 billion in damages due to extreme weather events.

## **What will this affect?**

### **Energy Cost**

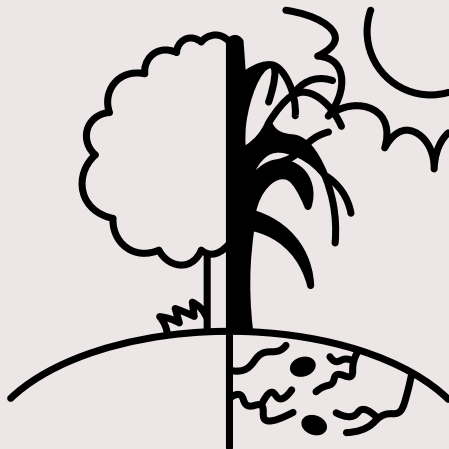
The cost of energy has increased, and this will cause our electric bills to rise. As the earth gets warmer, the need for cooling agents (such as air conditioners and fans) has been in higher demand. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, the average monthly electric bill rose from \$104.52 in 2009 to \$122.00 in 2022, and it's only going to get more expensive. The more our earth heats up, the more our wallets will suffer.

## **Food**

Our groceries are getting more expensive. Climate change has affected the productivity of food producers and as production gets harder/ more expensive, the price of our groceries will increase, Brandon R. McFadden, associate professor at the University of Delaware states. Extreme weather has also affected the availability of food which can cause food shortages. The more our land is destroyed by these extreme weather events, the harder it will be to produce food. Globally, climate change has inflated food prices.

## **Effects of Extreme Weather Events**

Extreme weather events caused 39% of home insurance claims to be made, this is the highest it's been in 6 years, according to the 2021 LexisNexis Home Trends Report. Some insurance companies have been raising rates by 10%-20%. Depending on the income of a household, flood insurance can be between \$10-\$1,000 per month.



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Voice Of My Poverty  
by Lynsay Bennett

Cracking. and  
barely any food in the house or  
what house should i say,  
no roof over my head on the street i have to stay  
getting jobs but no raise in pay,  
prices going up how must i find a place to lay,  
every night i pray,

i ask God why,  
waking up with no tears left to cry,  
oh how i try,  
looking up at the sky,  
hoping for a miracle is my joy

strangers walking by,  
money or food they sometimes supply,  
“thank you,” i always reply,  
going a day with nothing to cease my struggle.  
oh when can i have a wealthy lifestyle,  
thoughts in my head becoming a pile,  
not only would i love to have a beautiful child,  
but a beautiful family to protect under my shield.

# How is Gentrification Helping Poverty Become a Norm?

Science Leadership Academy At Beeber  
Lynsay Bennett  
Oct 13 2022

## What is it?

Gentrification occurs when more well off and privileged individuals move into neighborhoods that are the opposite in hopes of “bringing resources and refining these communities”. Gentrification has been promoted as a good thing from people in power or those that it benefits. However, an article by Emily Chong states that, *“the gentrification process becomes detrimental when it forces original residents to leave the neighborhood through exponentially increasing property prices, coercion or buyouts.”* If this doesn’t occur and the neighborhoods are planned with inclusion and increases socioeconomic, racial and ethnic integration, gentrification can be possible but this is rarely the case.

## What’s Happening?

“ Many people are rapidly forced out of their neighborhoods, leading to less community networks and more reasons for elderly low-income individuals..Gentrification usually leads to negative impacts such as forced displacement, a fostering of discriminatory behavior by people in power, and a focus on spaces that exclude low-income individuals and people of color.” This reinforces the idea of how cost of living and poverty is not only becoming a norm but is heavily increasing for minority groups over the years due to what little resources they have are being taken away by people in power. In recent time a study done by NCRC.org that stated, *“Often, the people who lived there, overwhelming people of color, were not benefiting from the investment that flowed there. As the Philadelphia Federal Reserve found, renters are more vulnerable to displacement as their communities gentrify, and unlike owners, they reap none of the rewards from rising home prices and rents can bestow.”* This is making poverty not only a norm but a lifestyle for many people in today’s world.



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# "Fix The Displacement"

# DISPLACEMENT

starts with a home.

RIGHT  
GENTRIFICATION  
WITH THE  
REVOLUTION

gentrification can be a plague, as it eats up neighborhoods.

GENTRIFICATION IS  
CLASS WAR!  
FIGHT BACK

Economy

Collaboration and Change

# SOLVE FOR YOUR TOMORROW.

WHOS  
OURC

You know, I remember when you start gentrification happens long before you start seeing white people in formerly people-of-color neighborhoods. It starts happening when we start telling the young hard-working, quote-unquote "smart" kids that they need to measure success by how far they get away from our communities.


— Majora Carter

The pandemic may have had a lethal effect on American manners. Lawyers are re clients. Post

## My Artist Statement

“When creating this collage , I wanted to highlight a feeling of activism against the negative effects of gentrification and how it's increase poverty. In this piece , the viewer should notice how the collage doesn't necessarily uses a lot of pictures but key phrases, quotes and terms that aid in bringing the idea of what gentrification is doing to the world. I primarily wanted to focus on giving and showcasing that we should use our voice to help other and bring awareness to issues like this. The inclusivity of the pictures were partic as they were moment from protests and people self advocating. In conclusion , I hope this art work of mine brought the viewer a sense of awareness of the topic as well as a urge to speak up.

-Lynsay Bennett



the good ole days.

I miss the good ole days  
Do you?

The days when the warmth of the sun shined bright through my windows  
and the smell of delicious pancakes snuck into my nose while I lie on my pillows.

The days when we could skip to the corner stores with a dollar in hand,  
to come back out smiling from ear to ear eating ice cream and playing candy  
land.



I miss going out to dinner most  
it was the best when we vacationed on the west coast.

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This pandemic hit hard  
It caught the whole world off guard.

Mornings now are as cold as ice,  
my feet hit the floors and all I hear is mice

I awaken to sounds of disgruntled neighbors  
While my home smells of nothing I favor.

With the cost steady climbing  
My family struggles because jobs aren't coming at the right timing.

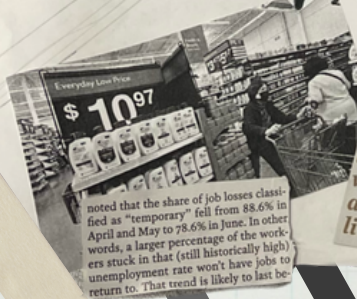
Meals get lighter like car rides get shorter  
As the gas prices hit another high quarter.

It's the check to check life  
We wake up and do our best to thrive.

I miss the good ole days  
Do you?



# "Changes"



The economic impact of COVID-19 will cut deeper than any recession in living memory

↑ BUSINESS CLOSING

MORE CLOSING

GOING OF BUS

HOMELESS HUNGRY

'Bad Pricing kills good planning.'  
—MASHI HERRERA, SAN DIEGO ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

NO JOB NO RENT



2

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2



## Artist Statement.

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As an artist, in my collage I was trying to illustrate how within recent years for most of us, our world has gone from living normal to living with misfortunes. On one side it displays life around 2019, being a time in which life was a lot different and much easier to live in for the majority of people. On the other hand, the other side displays life currently, which would be a life with the cost of living going higher than ever before causing people to not be able to provide themselves with the basic necessities of living leaving them in poverty. As well as that, I wanted to highlight a recent core cause to poverty which was Inflation, being the reason why people are now not able to have enough money to afford basic items. . Lastly, I want this collage to speak to myself and others, and give them a voice like mine, to speak up on these silenced issues and fight against them.

My poem "the good ole days," was based off of Ada Limons poem "Lover." In that poem it has a structure of only having two lines per stanza and that in fact is something I incorporated into my poem. I also incorporated some of the similar poetic techniques that were used in Ada Limon's poem, such as, Metaphors and lots of imagery.

- Laila Abdul-Haqq

**Kim Merryman:  
"Reflections and New Beginnings"**

**"Out with the old year, in with the new,  
Welcome to year twenty twenty-two.  
Hoping this will be a much better year,  
Filled with more peace and not so much fear.**

**Twenty-twenty was the year it all began,  
Covid appeared and we didn't have a plan.  
Hand sanitizer, wearing face masks the new norm,  
Keep your distance, no parties - all must conform.**

**Twenty twenty-one was supposed to be better.  
The whole world obeyed precautions to the letter.  
But Covid kept coming - nothing seemed to work,  
Then came the vaccines and the world went berzerk!**

**The world was divided on what they should do,  
Because the vaccines had been quickly pushed through.  
Some trusted the safety of the newly made shots.  
Others questioned their safety- get the jab they would  
not!**



**Add to this mess rising prices and crime,  
And criminals released before it's their time,  
Weather patterns are freaky all over the place,  
And all the government wants is to talk about race.**

**But now here we have a new year to embrace,  
Blank pages to fill with purpose and grace.  
And though last year wasn't the best of times,  
It gave me the inspiration to write these rhymes."**

# Kim Merryman

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## Quote

“Demands exceed supply, - no plan!”

From, "Pandemic"

## Biography

Kim Merryman was born on April 27th, 1959. She was born in Louisville, KY, but grew up in Rancho Cordova, CA. She's married to a man named Rob, and they've been married for over 30 years, and they have two sons. Although there is not much about her past, currently she is living in Florida continuing to write her poetry. Most of her poems are reflected on things that happen in the world and off the bible due to her being a Christian believer. She's been doing poetry for 7 years and is continuing do do it to this day. Besides that, there isn't much else to tell about the poet Kim Merryman.





# Contributor's Page

## Leya Aleyu

Hi, my name is Leya and as a teen who lives in the state of Pennsylvania, specifically the city of Philadelphia, the cost of living in the U.S. and the question of if poverty is or isn't becoming normalized is very important to me. This topic saddens me deeply because Poverty runs rampant in my city. Although I myself am not in poverty, it hurts to watch others around me struggle to get the bare necessities of life, knowing I alone can't solve this issue. The cost of living in the U.S. for as long as I've been alive has always been very demanding but after all these pandemics the cost of living demands the price of an arm and a leg. People around me can barely afford to buy their next meal let alone a house and clothing. As a student who catches Septa around the city of Philadelphia, I can guarantee to find a homeless person at each bench, and bus station. What really boggles my mind is how nobody bats an eye, a homeless person could be right in front of them shaking a cup filled with pennies, holding a sign saying he needs money not feed him but his children, in clearly beaten up worn down close, in the most inhabitable weather and they would walk past them like no one was even there. I truly feel bad because poverty is a cycle and once you have begun it, it is almost impossible to fight your way out. I believe if things keep going the way they are in a couple decades we will be no better than cavemen and women, uneducated, and prehistoric.

## Akina Parker

Born and raised in Philadelphia, I, Akina, a 16-year-old student at SLA @ Beeber has seen the effects of the rise of living cost first hand. Walking into the grocery store, I see prices I've never seen before. It's harder to enjoy my hobbies because I try to be more conservative while spending money, especially because it's not mine. For example, paying for sport essentials has been a top priority. This means, I try to spend less on other things I enjoy, like books and skincare. Although I have to worry more about how I spend money, I'm very fortunate to be in this position. My situation is a walk compared to others who have to run.

# Contributor's Page

## Lynsay Bennett

Hey Hey ! My name is Lynsay Bennett and I'm one of the creators behind this zine that speaks on how poverty is becoming a norm in today's world. As a sixteen year old who has witnessed poverty first hand from living in a third world country to seeing how it affects specific groups during my time in the US, I wanted to this zine to mirror the issue of Poverty in the world. I have become very concerned with how poverty is now a lifestyle for many people in our society. It is almost bewildering on how rich successfully people can have these huge sum of money while there are families suffering and lacking basic resources. My mom has always said, "the rich will get richer and the poor will become poorer", and while that it has been the reality now, I strongly believe something must be done to rectify this growing problem

## Laila Abdul-Haqq

Allow me to introduce, my name is Laila Abdul-Haqq, a 16 year-old student who lives in the "City of love", Philadelphia. Up to this day, I have been privileged with being able to have a roof over my head, food to eat, and clothes to wear without having many struggles. Unfortunately also during my time on Earth, I've seen family members struggle to buy themselves a nice sandwich let alone afford a whole house. Not only my family, but living in Philadelphia I see, first hand, how many people struggle to provide themselves with the basic necessities of living. As time goes on, and the cost of living continues to rise up I continue to see how many people are falling into a state of poverty, and how they resort to different coping mechanisms to deal with it. Sad to say there are many people who acknowledge that this is an rising issue in our community but won't fight to have it fixed, but I believe with our voices one day we can rise above this issues.

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