

## "WALK A MILE IN MY SHOES"

Darja'Nique  
Second Place winner age 11-12

Hello, my name is Darja'Nique White and I'm 11 years old. I am in the sixth grade at the Mildred Middle School here in Mattapan Massachusetts. I live with my mom, dad, and 3 brothers so I am the only girl. My hobbies are Dancing, Singing, and Acting.

To walk a mile in my shoes would mean to be in a Special Needs class for Reading Comprehension, and Math. I have been in Special Needs ever since I started school. I don't like it at all, I feel dumb and stupid when I have to leave my class and go to the resource room. I do this 5 days a week. I cry everyday because I am not like the rest of the kids in my school, there are mostly boys in my resource rooms. Why was I born with this disability? I know for a fact that I am going to overcome the disabilities that I have, I am too strong of a girl not to succeed in school. I love myself very much not to pass all of my grades in school.

My mom is also disabled, but she went back to school for law so she won't be disabled anymore, Last year she was suppose to graduate but she couldn't because she keeps failing math, so she cries a lot too. When my mom or any of us kids need help with math, we can't go to my dad because he can't do well in math too, it seems my whole family needs help in math. I still feel dumb. My mom tells me the whole family has a learning disability, and that we are so smart in other ways, she tries to make me feel better, sometimes it helps and makes me smile.

The things I enjoy doing is walking for Breast Cancer to help others in need, I was a miss pre-teen state pageant finalist in the National Miss Teen pageant, I didn't win but I got a trophy and some other things I bought. It was very expensive to do this and it was also a lot of hard work. The pageant was held at the Boston Marriott hotel in Burlington, Massachusetts and my whole family came to watch. I also like to dress up in my mom's clothes, she has always told me not to play in her shoes cause I wouldn't want to "walk a mile" in her shoes. This is an old saying that she picked up from her mom.

My home life is ok, it is pretty boring because my mom is disabled and my dad only works 15 hours a week so we have very little money, but my mom goes to the store and uses her card to buy penny candy and we play Bingo for prizes, or sometimes we play I Spy, I wish we had a car, then maybe we could do more things. My mom says this is why she is going to college, so she can have more money.

This past year, I started to become a young woman, I don't want to say how but, let's just say that me and my mom have a very special bond that we celebrate every month. My mom cried when this happened and she was sad all day, but my dad was ok with everything, he went to the store and bought me these women pampers called Always with wings, and after my mom showed me how to use the pampers I went to get on the computer, I wasn't scared because my mom has talked to me about this day since I was 7, she got her special day at 8 so she said she had to prepare me early, I think she should have prepared herself first. This experience has showed me how to use a calendar.

Well, I hope this has helped you see how it is to "walk a mile a mile in my shoes."

Thank you, Love

Darja'Nique