



**Baiyina Richardson, 2018 winner of the
Rod Serling Memorial Foundation scholarship**

“People are ashamed of who they are, and try to hide it,” Baiyina writes.

“Rod Serling sought to teach people that being yourself is spectacular. My art piece is a drawing of myself, and all the things that make up me. To start, the flowers over the eyes represent the innocence that I see in the world. Each flower representing, optimism, innocence, and leadership. I wear a shirt of different flags to represent the uniqueness in one's own culture.

“Black power, feminism, and the American Flag are all symbols of my life. With the scarf on my head it shows that I’m a Muslim and an American too, I fight for women's rights and African American rights. The value of individualism has been thrown to the side in the era of social media and internet connectivity.

“To overcome this, we must show our future generations that it’s okay to be different. We should celebrate the differences amongst people, not bury them. We could overtake social media platforms and show how different everyone is, and teach our children what makes them each unique ...help them celebrate the valuable stuff inside them.”