A major tenet of my life philosophy is that every person has an ethical responsibility to help others to the best of his ability. As an applicant for a 2013 scholarship, I discussed how sustainability, collaboration, dissemination of information, and creation of tools and experiences were all ways in which designers possess the potential to improve environments. Now I’d like to investigate the growth of these principles in my practice and how they affect my ability to help others as I move forward in my design career.

Sustainability is a cause that will continue to inform my projects. A novel experience that has augmented my understanding of urban sustainability was a course entitled “Walking Places” taught by LA artist and writer Ken Ehrlich. The course analyzed the act of walking in the context of an aesthetic practice that informs creative work by focusing on the planning and navigation of urban spaces. A work entitled “Crowds” arose from my walks, with the intent of promoting heightened social and sensory awareness of constructed environments. Learning from this experience and the insights into design methodology that have constituted the focus of my second year, I am working to broaden my process with strategies that draw attention to things that would normally go unnoticed in order to send impactful messages.
Regarding collaboration, I’m privileged to work with many people whose efforts benefit their environments. Getting involved with the creative community at CalArts has provided me with many growth opportunities. Assisting with design department fundraising events and speaking to and offering advice on issues that concern students has elicited nominations for me to replace our graduating representative on student council. As a senator, I would take pride in fulfilling my ethical responsibility to help others by improving the institute and securing resources for design education. For the duration of my career, I hope to not merely practice, but to be an active participant in thought, discussion, and advocacy with respect to design issues. Collaboration and community involvement at CalArts will go a long way in driving me towards that aspiration.

Becoming an active thinker in the design community adds skills such as writing, editing and teaching to the professional practice of design. An experience that exposed me to these skill sets in a design context was an assignment to develop an interactive didactic tool for the world of graphic design. Work on this publication has increased my already elevated interest in digital media as a mechanism for disseminating information through engaging experiences, and has encouraged me to declare the Digital Arts Minor in its first year at CalArts. Groundbreaking educational models and cross-disciplinary experiences offered in specialized courses are augmenting my technical skills (e.g. complex programming knowledge and heightened consideration of other media) and positively contributing to my education in ways I wouldn’t experience within the design program alone. Continuing down this path will reinforce my practice with processes that enable me to extend design beyond the ways in which it is conventionally encountered in order to teach, inform, persuade and help others.
My name is Sadie Red Wing, and I’m an enrolled member of the Spirit Lake Sioux Tribe in Fort Totten, North Dakota. I’m a Native American graphic designer of the Lakota and Dakota decent. Originally from the Cheyenne River Sioux reservation in South Dakota, I find myself very unique among the indigenous community. I recently graduated with my Bachelor’s of Fine Art: Graphic Design at the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) located in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

While studying at IAIA, I realized the importance of reciprocity to the Native American communities. Growing up, I witnessed the struggle and hardship among the Sioux reservations in South Dakota. I believe the lack of educators in the American Indian communities impacts the race dramatically which continues the reservations’ inferiority to historical trauma. It has come to my attention that many reservations struggle with a tremendous amount of health issues, the majority of which illnesses are present in the Native American youth. A future goal...
SADIE RED WING
Graphic Design

of mine is to start a project within an organization that will improve the health among students in American Indian boarding schools. As of 2013, I titled this project, "The Organic Tribal School Project." During my undergraduate studies, I have researched the assimilation processes used on Native Americans through boarding schools, some of which are still used in today's tribal schools. With the Organic Tribal School Project, I would like to conduct activities schools can use to teach the development of healthier living by switching to an organic lifestyle.

I have developed a great interest in the Master of Graphic Design program at North Carolina State University (NCSU). As a graphic designer, I cherish the art of communication through visual presentation. I believe an artist needs more understanding in diverse instruction rather than their media of choice. I acquired this belief from the work experience I accumulated from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) internship in the Center for Life Cycle Design (CfLCD) department. Aside from my graphic design work, I participated in the transdisciplinary team where I learned how important the role of being an artist is within any career field.

With the help of the Worldstudio AIGA, I hope to further my education at the NCSU and become a positive educator to improve the lives among the Sioux.
I am an ambitious creative thinker from Brooklyn, New York, currently attending the Kansas City Art Institute (KCAI). I enjoy graphic design because I truly believe it’s a catalyst for change in the world and the minds of the people that inhabit it. Growing up in New York City, I was surrounded by the colorful abundance of culture and entrepreneurship. Looking at the city today, I admire and take to heart the amount of people who move here to create something of themselves and ultimately give back to the community.

In 2005, I moved with my family to Arizona, where I developed a passion for skateboarding. Skateboarding became an artistic articulation of anything I could put my mind to. I created skate videos, took photographs, even painted old broken skateboards and sold them at events to express my curiosity in art through something I loved. Moreover, skateboarding intrigued me because it allowed me to push myself outside of my boundaries. It inspired me to never give up even when I felt defeated, and showed me that there are endless possibilities in anything that you strive for. These are all elements I integrate into my creative practices.
While attending the Arizona Conservatory for Arts and Academics (ACAA), I was invited to become a member of the National Honors Society. This was an enlightening experience for me, as it established a relationship and understanding of what giving back to the community truly meant. We started on our campus and gradually expanded to the surrounding communities. This involved becoming a mentor to the youth on the campus and adopting school roads, which we maintained throughout the years. As we expanded, we reached out to places like care homes and soup kitchens. Years after attending ACAA I had the opportunity to return and speak about attending a college that involved an arts-based curriculum. Currently at KCAI, I’m part of the Black Artist Culture and Community, where we strive to educate our campus about African American art and culture.

I’m most interested in leaving an impact on an individual or a community through my art. I do this because I feel I create the best work when its function is to impact someone directly. For example, two KCAI colleagues and I set out to raise awareness of the youth affected by the recent shutdowns of schools in the metropolitan area through environmental typography. We constructed the word “mend” out of foam core, moss and synthetic flowers to symbolize the growing minds of the youth and rejuvenation in the school system. Through social media, this project was recognized by the Kansas City Public School System.

I’m currently in the process of running a skateboarding clothing company with artistic ties called Metaphy Lifestyle Co. Metaphy is all about pushing boundaries, never giving up and finding life’s endless possibilities. Through my design work in Metaphy, I amplify the same ideologies I found within my skateboarding experiences.
“Mrs. Ragsdale, your biopsy results have come back positive with invasive ductal carcinoma.” On an ordinary Tuesday afternoon, while sitting alone in my 6x6 work cubicle, I got the extraordinary message that at 28, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. I sat there for a moment, holding back tears as I quietly packed up my things and left the office. I can still hear the sound of my sobs as I walked to my car. I was overcome with grief. The only coherent thought in my mind was, “I just want to live.”

Further testing confirmed multiple cancerous areas inside and outside of the breast, leaving me with one option. On January 24, 2012, I underwent a full mastectomy of the right breast and, over the next nine months, I endured six rounds of chemotherapy, followed by 33 sessions of radiation therapy. Now, I’m a cancer survivor!

During this time, I channeled my myriad of emotions into my art. I chronicled my journey to health and recovery in a six-part design series that delved into the psyche of a cancer patient, exposing my raw emotions of sorrow, heartache, inner-strength and survival. A complementary piece is my self portrait, which it dispels conventional notions of beauty by portraying my asymmetrical, post-mastectomy body and exposing the viewer to the source of my emotions. My art was instrumental to my recovery and self-acceptance, and I believe my art can be a source of empowerment.
for other minority women battling cancer, too. I want to inspire them to use their creativity to alleviate their mental anguish as they battle their demons, embrace diversity and reinforce their sense of self-esteem and self-worth.

After facing my own mortality, I feel an urgency to act on my desire to help others realize their full potential and use life’s challenges as a catalyst for art, healing and change. I no longer want to wait for tomorrow; I must act today. I draw on my experience as a mentor/tutor for the Early Identification Program (EIP) at George Mason University. EIP is a multiyear college preparatory program for minority, first generation, college bound students. As an EIP alumna, I found importance and meaning in heightening the academic aspirations of future generations. As I mentored future college students with EIP, I now seek to touch the lives of future designers through the pursuit of a master’s degree and by becoming a graphic design professor.

I look forward to becoming an agent of positive change and motivation by influencing the lives of future designers. My unique life experiences and cultural background will enable me to encourage students to step outside of the known and develop designs that test boundaries and invoke change. I long to pull from my experiences as an EIP mentor, igniting my passion for instruction, touching the lives of future designers and helping them harness their creativity.
I was born in a small rural town in Michoacán, México. Both of my parents were raised in large families, which made it impossible for them to finish elementary school. Early on they acknowledged the importance of a proper education, and despite having scarce resources, managed to enroll my six siblings and me in a private elementary school. My early life in Mexico was very different from my life later on in the U.S, where my family relocated in 2003 with the hope of giving us a better education; it gave me the chance to experience my native culture and learn the history. Having lived in two different cultures has given me a unique outlook. I’ve learned to appreciate the opportunities of living in the U.S., but also to distinguish the necessary from the unessential commodities.

During high school, I was introduced to design through a multi-media class and became interested in making it into my career. While studying at the University of Houston (UH), I was exposed to works that communicated a message. In some of my work I’ve tried to explore the distinction of essential commodities and the unessential. The grand influence on my work has always been my family’s encouragement and desire to get an education. I know that I’ve been given an enormous opportunity to attend and graduate from a university, something my parents never got a chance to do. The work ethic they have instilled in me has
taught me not to waste opportunities, and to make a commitment to my personal and professional goals.

Currently, I’ve taken two jobs to help pay the expenses of school. I work part time for the student run newspaper at the University of Houston (*The Daily Cougar*) and as an editorial designer at the *Houston Business Journal*. At *The Daily Cougar* I’ve had the honor of receiving the award for Designer of the Year, Division 1 in 2013 from the Texas Intercollegiate Press Association, as well as two more awards for General Magazine Cover Design and an honorable mention in Ad Design. Over the past few years of working in newsprint media, I’ve become heavily interested in its mixture of traditional design and modern day process. Upon graduating with a BFA in Graphic Communications and a minor in Art History, I want to peruse a career in editorial design. With the preparation I’m receiving from the design program at UH and my work experience, I feel that I’ll be capable of finding opportunities where I can keep developing my skills in editorial design, whether in print or on the Web.

I’m an individual who doesn’t waste opportunities and knows the value of hard work. By being awarded this scholarship, it becomes a responsibility to give back and a commitment to accomplish all my goals in academics and in my career.
I’ve been interested in graphic design for quite some time, but it wasn’t until my sophomore year of high school that I began to take it seriously. My guidance counselor convinced me to apply for the graphic design program at the Warwick Area Career and Technical Center. What I hadn’t figured out at the time was how much that decision would change my life.

The program over the past three years, fits into my daily schedule by taking the places of three academic classes. The class has exposed me to an endless amount of experiences and opportunities. Sophomore year consisted of getting back to the basics of drawing, painting, pen and ink, etc. Junior and senior year have been mainly geared towards computer-generated work on Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop and InDesign. Throughout the years, my instructor has entered me in various competitions for poster, ad, billboard and sign designs, and I’ve won two awards that have truly revitalized my passion. Last year I was awarded second place for
CHRISTIAN ALEJANDRE
Graphic Design

the 2013 Safety Is NO Accident Video/Poster/Essay contest for a driving safety poster design. I was asked to attend an award ceremony at the Rhode Island State House and say a few words regarding my design. This experience as a whole was definitely a highlight in my life, and it will continue to remain that way. The best part is that I’ll have the chance to relive the experience next month, when I’ll accept first place for a design I entered about safety goggles. I think it’s safe to say that joining and applying for this program has shaped me as a designer and reinforced my own talent. I’ve proven that I’m able to push myself to my full potential as a result.

My largest dream in life is to have the ability to work as a designer for a record label. I’ve always taken an interest in the artwork and promotional material behind albums and the designs that bring them to life. According to some of my friends, I’m “one of the only people on Earth that still buys hard copies of albums,” and it’s just for that reason. I believe that artists convey the general feel of their album through the design of the packaging, and I’ve always dreamed of being able to become a part of that experience.
My name is Devon Rodriguez, a Latino teenager molded by my background and natural passion. I was raised in the South Bronx, and while it’s pretty tough out here, it inspires me and my work. Being born into poverty in the South Bronx has dramatically changed my attitude about life. For many years, the South Bronx has been plagued by high crime and drug use, but experiences and observations motivate me to lead a better life. Escaping this life of poverty is an extremely difficult task for anyone. Sometimes, I do feel very unfortunate. But ultimately, what I’ve come to realize is that the struggle to overcome brings me satisfaction. I’m inspired by just leaving my home to go out to the real world. I love to document what I see. With my works of art I want to express a deep love for the modern human and contemporary inner city life. I believe that there’s a story behind everything. For example, city scenes can express a lot about humanity. In a cityscape, everything is man made—cars, architecture, sidewalks and roads. Unlike a landscape, where the inspiration comes from the beauty of nature, a cityscape is less romantic; it’s a product of the people interacting, and that idea thrills me.
Happiness to me is living life doing what I most enjoy, and that’s illustration. That’s definitely my niche. I enjoy creating something beautiful and it also satisfies one of humankind’s basic instincts: to share stories. My upbringing has inspired my artwork and visual storytelling skills. My style is realism, which ties with my love of being able to tell my stories in a visually and conceptually realistic manner. I believe that truth is beauty, whether good or bad. Expressing the impoverished life of the people I see around my neighborhood really makes for an interesting narrative on humanity itself.

As an artist I want to create emotional work about the human condition. Like music, art can change people’s lives. Art inspires people, and it can also record history by telling the people of the future about life in the present. I think it also encourages people to be open-minded. Also, it shows us life in a different perspective. Shakespeare once said that the purpose of drama is to hold up a mirror to our nature so that we understand better what we “look like” – what we are. I want to bring to the community another artist who can provoke feelings, inspire others and be recognized by my future greatness.
As an artist I’m determined to become part of the art world. My past, present and future revolve around art. Better said, “I am art.” I’m an artist who digs deep into his emotions to depict a world of thought through the use of color. Everything I do leads to a creation. A huge contribution is my past, as it becomes a source of inspiration and symbolism.

In today’s world, everything that can possibly be made has already been done. That’s why it’s my job to create my own unique artistic style. I see my art as a mixture of both illustration and graphic design. Everything I make is bold, dark and captivating to the public eye. I incorporate elements that are beautiful, like animals, and components of life and death that can be seen symbolically within the creatures themselves. When it comes to portraying a subject, I become very picky as I try to find someone who depicts a unique sense of character. Typically, I draw portraits of people that have endured harsh moments in life. My art can be viewed as hard-edged, as I like everything clean and stylistic; patterns become evenly distributed and surreal, as well as zoomorphic because multiple animals are shown with different symbolic interpretations.
As an illustrator it’s my job to accurately convey a message through the means of art. I strive to give others in the art world a different perspective on what it may feel like to be different. I speak on behalf of others who have constantly been stared at for being different, whether it’s because of medical issues, genetic disorders or personal choices. Behind every person lies a story just waiting to be told; mine can be seen through my art. I paint and draw these worlds of humans or animals that appear as if they’ve been frozen in time. It’s as if they’re trying to speak, yet are too afraid of what society may say. My body has been scarred with disease yet I use this as a positive reinforcement to better myself both physically and emotionally.

Art, to me, is a scapegoat that allows me to go deep into my thoughts and perceive what I want. I create art because it’s a universal way of expressing how I feel. My life has been tormented by cancer and alopecia. I use this as a form of inspiration, because it helps me to create pieces of art that are meaningful, mysterious and beautiful to both the viewer and myself. The glory of it all is that I, myself, only truly know what the significance behind my art is. No one else will ever fully understand it but me. Like I said, it’s my own personal world.

It is my job to have a unique artistic style that will make me stand out in today’s world. I make art because the process itself becomes an art form, it is my own personal journal, and it will help me strive for the career I want as an Illustrator. I am a young adult with a voice that will one day be heard worldwide to further inspire others whom have been physically or emotionally tormented like I have.
My name is Wereme Sebastian Guerra-Martinez. I was born in Colotlan, Mexico, and moved permanently to California in 1999. My parents traveled a lot and I experienced living in diverse parts of Mexico, including deserts, jungles, mountains, lakes and coasts. As such, arriving in the suburbs of the Napa valley was a great culture shock. Having had such a beautiful impression of Mexico from my childhood, I was horrified to see it devalued as a third-rate culture in California. I retained my love for Mexican culture and sought to promote its values. After high school, I returned to Mexico for three years to travel, work and study on my own while rediscovering my roots.

My commitment to serving my community begun as a freshman in high school, when I taught art classes at children’s summer art camp and a high school in California. I’ve also taught at a middle school and a culture center in Mexico. I love painting murals and have done murals for a public high school’s Latino clubs and another for a public middle school where I led Latino leadership class on the mural. I have also painted murals for Mental Health Services in my town and a non-
profit environmental group in Mexico. I have volunteered as an English teacher for Native Spanish speakers in Napa and St. Helena, California as well as private classes in Mexico.

In addition to my Mexican roots, my father was adopted into the Cheyenne Native American culture soon after I was born, and Cheyenne art has had a very strong influence in my illustration work. The Cheyenne philosophy of love of life, appreciation, friendship, service, faith, forgiveness and joy have been instrumental in my evolution as an individual, but also as an artist.

While in Mexico, I traveled and worked on a graphic novel, a large commission from the U.S. and a clothing line with silk-screened images that I illustrated. I’m very goal-oriented and driven in my work teaching children, my graphic novel and other side projects. My mission in life is to promote faith in the good of humanity regardless of your culture or creed. Because I believe it is a worthy goal, it keeps me focused and inspired to get up in the morning to create uplifting images that speak of the world’s hidden magic and beauty, and the goodness of individuals. However, it has become clear to me that in order to express what’s in my head and in my heart with my art, I still need a lot more training, so I have decided to return to school so that I can make the difference I want to make in this world.
I’m an artist who’s influenced by the good and the bad in this world. I have a passion for creating anything out of nothing, a passion for trying to change the way people think, act and live.

I grew up in a small town in Colorado thinking that the world was a beautiful, perfect place. When I was seven, I moved to Mexico where, slowly but surely, the definition of perfect started to shift right before my eyes. I started to learn about poachers, diseases and man-made disasters, and suddenly I couldn’t go a day without wondering how there can be thousands of people and animals in desperate need of help and how so many people can just sit back and watch. I knew then that I needed to try and change the world.

Winning this scholarship will have a great impact on my future. It will get me one step closer to learning different artistic mediums and be able to use anything in front of me as a canvas for my imagination. Inspiration and ideas come to me from all around the world, and for years I have made those ideas my life. I think of them, dream of them; I live on my ideas. My brain, muscles, nerves and every part of my body are full of my ideas, and I know that one day my ideas will not only change my life, but the lives of thousands.
It wasn’t until a few years ago that I came up with the idea of changing the world with art. With the help of artists from all around the globe we can make a positive impact on our world and communities.

One way we can have a positive impact is by having charitable art shows with a specific theme, like clean water, poachers, slash and burn, poverty, etc. Each art show can showcase either one specific artist or a collaboration of many different artists to raise awareness and money for charities around the world.

Another great way to have an impact is simply by spreading a message. I plan to work with artists from around the world who have a passion for change just as much as I do. Every few months we’ll host a competition where anybody from around the world can submit a simple, passionate message. We will then choose the best message and find new and creative ways to share it all over the world. The goal here is to get people thinking and hopefully start a global change.

I strongly believe that all it takes to change the world is a few people who are willing to take risks. If we’re not prepared to be wrong, how can we ever come up with anything original?
One of the things I’ll always remember about my father is that he stressed the importance of giving back to the community. It’s a principle that I really took to heart, so when he passed away I decided to donate $35/month to sponsor a child in his honor, a little boy who shared the same birthday as my dad. Unfortunately, I was quickly disillusioned when I discovered that the child was only receiving a fraction of my funds (most of it actually went towards administrative costs). I realized that if I truly wanted to make a difference, simply donating money wasn’t going to cut it—I was going to have to become personally invested.

In 2012, I created a meetup group called VolunteerNYC to bring people together who share a common goal of giving back to the community. Soon after, I was approached by the Rosa Vera Fund (RVF), a medical, social and educational NPO that provides aid to children. They wanted me to help increase their exposure through social media. I helped create and launch their very first newsletter campaign to raise money. My experience with my meetup group and RVF has been invaluable and tremendously fulfilling, and the direct impact I have made has inspired me to continue giving back to those in need.
My father’s passing also inspired me to go back to my roots. Although I spoke Chinese at home, I never felt a strong connection to the Chinese community growing up. My family immigrated to the U.S. when I was just three, and I was encouraged to assimilate into American culture. By including East Asian Studies as part of my college curriculum, I was able to enrich my understanding of the Chinese language and culture and to learn about my heritage. For the first time in my life, I felt close to my community.

I fell in love with technology and design unexpectedly. Two years ago, I enrolled in a continuing education class in design just for fun, and I haven’t looked back since. While the learning curve has been steep, it has been a transformational period. I went from being afraid to even sketch, to diving into D3/Javascript/CSS/HTML. I almost can’t believe how far I’ve come. I have developed a real passion for technology and design, and I will dedicate my time becoming the best and most well-rounded designer possible.

I truly believe that technology and design have widespread applications, and we’ve only just begun to scratch the surface. While there are countless examples of the influence in the entertainment industry, not nearly enough is being done to help solve the various social, humanitarian and environmental challenges that we face. I plan to utilize the skills that I develop to apply them towards the non-profit sector, an area that can really benefit from some fresh inspiration. My goal upon graduation is to be someone who builds things in order to solve real-world problems, and this scholarship will help me achieve that goal.
From an early age, my brother and I were exposed to many art forms. We attended local ballet, theatrical and musical productions as well as art openings and lectures. Piano, violin, theatre and dance lessons were integral parts of our homeschool curriculum. This exposure to the arts initiated my love to tell stories through photography. After graduating high school, I took a gap year to study photography and build my portfolio at the Glassell School of Art in Houston. My teachers pushed me to experiment with different processes and explore alternative methods of expression. Working full time at a restaurant, I practiced photography in my free time. Cinema and fashion have inspired many of my images and I use styling, setting, wardrobe and theatrics to tell stories in the pictures I made at Glassell. I became part of a nurturing photographic community in Houston that encouraged me to devote all my time to my true passion to have the career I wanted and pushed me to apply for a BFA. I researched my options and decided Parsons New School of Design was my best option due to the school’s renown fashion programs and location in New York.
My love of cinema, theatre and costumes piqued my interest in fashion photography, but not necessarily the entire industry. Fashion photography is typically portrayed as being commercial and seems to promote a somewhat wasteful and vain consumer lifestyle—not an aspect of the industry I admire. Raised as a vegetarian in an environmentally and socially conscious family, it would feel wrong to violate my values and perpetuate those wasteful lifestyles. Instead, I want to use fashion as a tool in my artwork (rather than create photographs explicitly to sell clothes), by blending the fine art and fashion genres. There’s a way to positively influence society through art without being overly didactic, something I feel driven to achieve at Parsons. By using healthy models in recycled, inventive wardrobes, I’ll use my photography to promote values of environmental consciousness, sustainability and resourcefulness while promoting a realistic and healthy body image.

Having an accessible arts community is something I strongly care about because I was influenced so much by art events I attended in my adolescence. In high school, I enjoyed doing charitable community service and used my photography to publicize a local ballet company. I currently work with the Houston Ballet’s community outreach department and with a new art gallery that fosters the type of art community that influenced me. At Parsons, I will seek out opportunities that promote these communities in my internships and volunteer work. Doing pro bono work in the past has helped me gain invaluable experience, so I plan to continue this work to help charitable causes and help the public experience art. This is type of community involvement I feel is necessary to be a good contributor and citizen of the world.
Art has always been an active presence in my life. At home the walls are covered in artwork, both that of professional artists and our own. My parents value art and consider it to be essential to an inspirational life. As a result, I have cultivated both an appreciation for art and an eye that allows me to either detect objects of aesthetic quality or select the strongest piece in a gallery show.

Much of my love for art has also come from nature. I grew up surrounded by woods, fields and wildlife. We have had a wide variety of domestic animals at home, such as chickens, cats, dogs, and my brother’s tortoises, tarantulas and lizards. Having spent so much time outdoors has given me an understanding and respect for the beauty of nature, which I want to preserve.

I remember looking through a *National Geographic* magazine as a child and being shocked by pictures of rhinos that had been slaughtered for their horns. I was saddened that people could have such little regard for life. Moreover, I wanted
to stop this senseless cruelty. From that moment, I decided to make my mark by promoting respect and appreciation for animals. I started volunteering at a wildlife rehabilitation center. Something powerful occurs when an animal begins to trust you. A sense of responsibility develops, which, in turn, creates a deeper bond.

Over the years I’ve dabbled in many art forms like still-life drawing, painting, printmaking, pottery, calligraphy, sculpture and photography. Photography is how I best express myself, particularly through portraiture. There is something personal, even uncomfortable, about taking a portrait. I enjoy capturing someone or something at their best or worst, or showing a previously unseen aspect of my subject. When getting up close, I’m intent on catching a piece of character that will make the photograph strong. Recently, I’ve been photographing rescued horses and mules at Equine Advocates in Chatham, NY. They’ve used some of my images in their promotional materials and display them in their educational center.

I plan to intern in the photography department at a magazine to gain more insight and experience in the working world. I will continue to photograph wildlife. We take nature for granted every day, oblivious that we may be negatively impacting life around us. I want to promote a positive change for our planet, which may require taking shocking photographs, much like those of the rhinos with their horns cut off. But that’s what makes an impact. I want to evoke the same reaction I had when I first saw the images of slaughtered rhinos, because, ideally, people will be motivated to take their own unique actions to preserve the diverse beauty in our world.
What pushes a photojournalist to tell a story with photographs, to take the pulse of the people without having to think about it first? To show their lives as they live them through pictures? To repeatedly bring passion and quality to work that is obviously a labor of love? To capture the eloquence of community and a sense of solidarity from the perspective of a sensitive Black female photojournalist, and to become an independent photojournalist-sportswriter-athlete in a field where there are not many African women at all?

In 2002, I couldn’t speak above a soft whisper. My first foray into the corporate working world left me with severe vocal chord dysfunction as a direct result of a potentially lethal on-the-job chemical exposure. This condition persisted until 2009. But in 2003, after struggling to become well enough, I was assisted by the African-American Scholastic Program at City College of San Francisco to enter New College of California, where I graduated at the top of my class and completed my BA in Humanities in 2006. However, I couldn’t return to radio news casting. I couldn’t talk audibly.
MALAIKA KAMBON
Photography

The extreme Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) I have is permanent and disabling. But I’d fallen in love with photojournalism. By the end of 2008, I began submitting articles to the San Francisco Bay View newspaper, focusing specifically on African people in the Diaspora.

Today, despite the hardships of a disability budget, I use photojournalism to combat the extreme prejudice against people whose disabilities are virtually invisible. I’ve photographed and written about numerous martial arts events, while simultaneously becoming an AAU national champion in Tae Kwon Do. I’m now a special correspondent and photographer for the International Tae Kwon Do Times Magazine.

Documenting community events in the Northern California Bay Area and globally for the San Francisco Bay View is one of the highest of honors. Examples of my work can be found in print and online covering a wide range of topics, from professional athletic events to politics. In the finest traditions of African women photojournalists, being awarded the Luci S. Williams Houston Scholarship in Photojournalism by the Bay Area Black Journalists Association, in 2011, heightened my commitment to excellence. Why do I want this scholarship? Simply, and with depth of feeling, I want to become a master of my craft and to continue to serve my community. If I’m selected as an AIGA Scholarship recipient, this will help me achieve this goal.