

# The **AFRO** American



The AFRO Celebrates 128th Year

AUGUST 8, 2020 - AUGUST 14, 2020

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**Michelle Tillery** is a 15-year-old rising Junior at Banneker Academic High School. She is an outstanding participant in a Marion Barry Summer Youth Employment Program (MBSYEP) that is being offered via Zoom by Do The Write Thing of DC. She wrote poems about what it's like to be her (she describes herself as a white girl without the privileges), what she finds to celebrate in her life, and what it's like to live in America during the COVID-19 pandemic. She shared her poems in a Virtual Open Mic that was attended by DOES officials who are providing her with a special incentive. Her poems, along with those of the other SYEP participants, are published in a book titled *Dear Black People and Other Poems* which is available at [amazon.com](https://amazon.com).

Michelle was also one of the youth moderators for DTWT's Virtual Town Hall: 2020/DC Youth Speak on COVID-19, George Floyd and Change. A local children's book author, was so impressed with Michelle's rich, melodious voice that she hired her to record the text of seven books. Michelle has completed five recordings. Listen to her by clicking on the MP3 files are at: <https://bit.ly/3f54Zuz>