

Jaylin Duchesne is a student whom I could not recommend highly enough. Last year we were fortunate enough to receive a gracious and unprecedented amount of attention for our *Alien* play and that show would never have been possible without Jaylin's help. She handled the construction of all of the astronaut costumes even when that included two last minute additional suits. She met every challenge presented to her even when she did not think she was capable of it. She was fortunate enough to be a part of a video where she explained her process to Discovery Channels Adam Savage and she explained why her creativity and culture is vital to her process. This year we decided to follow up that success by trying to create a short fantasy-based film. At every turn, from our 20ft tall tree of life to our lead costumes, Jaylin was there to help construct everything. Where Jaylin shines more than anything is in her empathy and joyfulness. She greets everyday with an unwavering surge of optimism that I have never seen in another student. She makes sure to take care of every one of her peers before she takes care of herself. In an age where it is difficult to pry students from their phones, she is rarely seen without a book fresh from the library. She has become a resident of not only the art department, but the Music and Home Ec. Dept as well. We are used to seeing students come and go every four years. We always have stellar students, but it is the rarest of situations to have one student who will leave a sizable crater across the span of so many teachers. Across the global community, we are all living in uncertain times. It is our academic duty to acknowledge and foster great minds when we see them and I could not be prouder that we, as a department, were allowed to be a part of Jaylin's journey. I am not sure where Jaylin will land in the future, but I know like Kathleen Kennedy or Sigourney Weaver, she has the potential to become one of the most influential voices of her time. Thank you for your generous donation and consideration to the academic future of one of the brightest minds I have ever met.

Steven Defendini
Art Director/ Teacher North Bergen High School