

# Ultimate vision is peace in 10 years

**By Osauna Lafayette**

Kankakee High

My ultimate vision of Kankakee County in the next 10 years is peace; people helping each other, living harmoniously, and respecting each other's differences. If everyone helped in making the county a better place, they would experience success which would be measured differently for each. People need to realize that if they're not part of the solution, they're part of the problem.

In my ultimate vision, I see the murder rate shrinking greatly. I see illegal drugs losing their appeal and fading away because people will start to believe more in themselves and in each other; gaining self-respect which is the ultimate "high." I also want to see public aid recipients get jobs so they can also experience a sense of purpose of self-worth.

The problems in our community are related to these issues. The murder rate is high because of illegal drugs. Therefore, when the illegal drugs fade, the murder rate will drop. Public aid recipients need to try getting jobs and maybe further their education.

I would suggest stiffer penalties for those who continue to choose to

be part of the problem rather than the solution. For a first offense of selling drugs, I would sentence two years, no probation. Every offense after, two years would be added. I know that it is very hard to kick any drug habit, therefore, users would be put in drug rehabilitation programs funded by the state because most people don't have ways of paying for treatment. As for public aid, if children are in school, then there is no reason why their parents can't work. Those people would be targeted to have a specified number of days to find work. Nothing is gained by making a full-time career out of living off the government. People who live off the government suffer from low self-esteem. They have nothing to feel proud about and consequently rely on artificial means of self-gratification such as drugs to get the "high" they're looking for. If no job is found in those days, aid should be cut off in specified number of days or

months, although medical cards would be kept.

Though these suggestions may seem simple and idealistic, we have to start somewhere. It must begin with a vision of better lives for ourselves and our society. I see this clearly. We have to help people help themselves. We have to unite rather than divide. I strongly believe we can do this. Our resources on which to draw are vast but under-used. My vision for our community is people taking responsibility for their own actions and helping others to do the same. Only when we do this will our county become a better place.



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