

SACRAMENTO WRITERS

Send us your
Fiction & Poetry

THE RULES:

Entries must be original and previously unpublished. They must be about Sacramento, or set in Sacramento. There will be four categories:

- 1) The first part of a story of 500 words or less
- 2) Flash fiction of 100 words or less
- 3) Best opening line.
- 4) Poems of as many as 250 words.



THE DETAILS:

Send your entry as a Word document or a PDF, or place it in the body of your email to: fictioncontest@newsreview.com, with the category in the subject line. Deadline is noon, Friday, June 28. Be sure to include your name and a daytime phone number.



Fiction & Poetry Contest

DEADLINE TO ENTER JUNE 28 // ISSUE ON STANDS JULY 18

SN&R

SACRAMENTO GAY MEN'S CHORUS PRESENTS

OUT & ABOUT

A Coming Out Journey

JUNE 14TH & 15TH • 2019

C.K. McCLATCHY HIGH SCHOOL • 3066 FREEPORT BLVD • SACRAMENTO CA

SACGAYMENSCHORUS.ORG



15 MINUTES

BY MAXFIELD MORRIS

maxfieldm@newsreview.com



Michelle Chen, winner of SN&R's 2010 College Essay Contest, graduated medical school very recently.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MICHELLE CHEN

Doctor checkup

In 2010, SN&R rolled out its annual College Essay contest. Since then, it has given local high school students the opportunity to share the personal essays required for many college applications. They have shared powerful stories about their struggles and triumphs, about the paths that led them to where they are. That inaugural year, Mira Loma High School senior **Michelle Chen** won first place with an essay about her grandfather's passing when she was 8 years old and how her interactions with him led her to **pursue a career in medicine**. She received her undergraduate degree from UC Berkeley and just graduated from Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York City. We checked back in with Chen to see how that journey was working out.

How's things?

Things are good. I'm just still in New York. I just graduated a couple days ago. Yeah. I mean, things are OK, things have finally calmed down, just kind of getting things settled in my new apartment.

What are you up to these days?

So I just graduated this past Thursday from medical school, and this July 1 I'm starting residency over at Montefiore, which is a hospital in the Bronx. So I'll be there for internal medicine residency for the next three years. So that's what I'll be doing in New York, and for now I'm just sort of trying to relax and enjoy the time off I have before I start my new job and everything.

How is that? Being committed so many years into doing this?

Yeah. Well, I think, for me, that it wasn't so bad because I knew for a really long time that I wanted to do this—and it's basically the main topic of the college essay that I wrote to get into, like, the personal statement I wrote to get into colleges. So, I've known for a long time that I wanted to do this, so for me it wasn't so difficult ... because this just kind of felt right. ... I know for a lot of people this is something they decide a lot later on, like they decide to have a career change after working in something completely different for a few years. But for me, I never really went there, I just sort of straight shot it from high school and yeah. Now I'm here.

Did you have any doubts along the way?

Yeah! One thousand percent, all the time. I think that with each step you kind of worry that you're not going to make it to the next one, so in high school I was like, what if I don't get into a good college that sets me up for med school? And like, in college, you worry like, "OK, what if I don't have good enough grades or good enough test scores to get into med school in the first place?" And when you get into med school, you're like, OK, now I need to score well on even more exams, and now I'm in a classroom full of people who are basically some of the best students in the country. It's really easy to feel like you're very average or below average when you're around them. And you kind of lose sight of the fact that you're just around a lot of really smart people who are just as accomplished and just as intelligent and hard-working as you are.

Has any of that gotten easier over time?

I don't think it gets any easier. I think it's still the same problem, it just kind of manifests itself differently with each stage of life that you go through. ... Each time you run into a hurdle like that, you learn a little bit more about yourself and what you can do to overcome that sort of challenge. □