

Letter from the Editor

Edmicelly Xavier, 2016-2018 Graduate Assistant



Greetings Readers,

Serving as the Graduate Assistant for the Black Studies Program this year in particular has been my haven for healing. As you will discover through reading the writings that follow, our theme for this year was *Dearly Beloved*. As such, portraits of victims to police brutality were hung in my office throughout the year. These victims resemble the students that I teach on the south-side of Providence every day. *Dearly Beloved* became my haven for healing because even after a long day of work as a Providence High School teacher, by being a part of this work that Dr. Julia Jordan-Zachery is so passionate about and by looking into the eyes and faces of the victims that surround my office, I became strengthened and motivated to not only defeat the odds that are before me as an urban school teacher and as a woman of color, but also to inspire my students to beat the odds that are before them.

There are several people who I would like to thank. First, I would like to thank you, the reader, for supporting the Black Studies Program and for taking the time to read the *Heritage Journal*. Second, I would like to thank the authors and artists for their poignant pieces. Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Jordan-Zachery for the sweat and tears that she has poured into the Black Studies Program; for her unwavering support and dedication to her students, colleagues, and to me; for always asking me “how are you doing?” and truly meaning it; and for steadfastly embodying a beacon of hope and justice throughout the Providence College campus.

Sincerely,

Edmicelly S. Xavier