

2020 FLM Creative Contest Winners

First Place Winner: Lillian Holt, from Episcopal Community Services (*her headshot will be attached to the email with this document*)

Entry/Poem: "The Dreams We Can Afford"

It's really not in the budget right now.
You'd have to get a second job.
If it's not on scholarship, I don't know what to tell you.
You know we can't afford that.

Well, what can we afford?
Food, clothing, shelter,
Paid for by labor
With no shortage of gratitude, of course

Some of the most basic needs for survival, we've got-
God's good!
Yes, you might not starve
The lights won't be shut off until next week
Still have hot water on the 16th? Miracle!

But until there's confidence
Not a threat, not a constant worry
Not a continuous flow of mental math
Not barely being able to make ends meet
We are just struggling to get by

And once we're finished striving,
We've made it!
Our investments will have been worth it
We see the benefit of sacrifice
Our time, our freedom, our strength

Then we inhale, exhale, inhale again
Head above water, clear blue sky
Endless fields ahead all the way until horizon

Then we can dream
When the bills aren't right in front of us
When we close our eyes and don't see debt
We can look past the end of the pay period

We can plan a trip
Take a break
Rent a movie!

Something extraneous
Something extravagant
Something expensive
Something extra

And look, Ma, no guilt!
Wouldn't that be divine?