

TINA DANG, PHOTOGRAPHER

My name is Tina Dang, Editor-in-Chief of Cleveland Publications (CPub) at Cleveland STEM High School in Seattle.

I like to say I've been on my publications team since my freshman year, but I've only officially been on the team since I was a sophomore. (Freshmen are not allowed on the journalism staff). I still was there to help. I joined CPub because of my strong desire to pursue and learn more about photojournalism, and I fell in love.

Following my sophomore year, I pushed myself to take on a bigger role in CPub. I became serious about my role as a visual journalist, and spent all my time and efforts improving myself. Although I was assigned the role of photographer, I voluntarily stayed after school and found a new interest in design. I spent all of my free time improving my photo and design skills. After becoming the lead photojournalist, I moved up the ranks to Design Director, news anchor for our TV broadcast and finally, Editor-In-Chief. I've won five national journalism awards for photo and design, but that's not what I'm most proud of. I'm proud that I create impactful images and bring awareness to my community with the work that I do; that I have passion and I'm pursuing it.

Ultimately, through CPub I learned my passion was photography. I realized through journalism there is more to photojournalism than pressing the button on the camera. Photojournalism is a way to tell a story, a way to show emotion, and a way to express yourself and the community through imagery, and I love it. None of my leadership roles in CPub ever involved photography, which I think is ironic because I believe photography is my strongest point. This year, I focused on taking more action-filled photos because I always struggled with fast-paced shots. I spent a lot of time learning different techniques in editing and taking photos and that resulted in a fast improvement in my skills.

I was always scared of entering photo contests because they are always competitive, and I did not want to be disappointed in myself. However, the biggest thing I learned was to value and take worth in my discipline which is photojournalism. I learned to be proud of my work, and to not downplay my talent. I learned how to take pride in my work and be self-confident, so I decided to enter more contests without being afraid of the outcome. As a result, I won my first national photojournalism award at the San Francisco convention.

Although I do not plan to become a journalist as a career, I plan to continue my visual journalism passion through my photo and design business, MXT Visuals. I am thankful for CPub for introducing me to photography and design, and for giving me confidence in myself. I want to serve the community in which I live and bring awareness to the stories to keep them in the spotlight. I will continue to work to create impact within my community through visual journalism.



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THIS NIGHTMARE MUST END

Students and adults march from Seattle Central College to City Hall on Sept. 28, 2017, to show their solidarity with students who are undocumented immigrants. When President Donald Trump announced he was dismantling the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) act, it sent waves of panic through the undocumented immigrant community. The program, which was instituted by former President Barack Obama, is scheduled to end. In preparation, agencies that support undocumented immigrants held events around the area to teach educators how they can help.

I had not planned to cover this event since not many Cleveland students were going to participate, but I went anyway and ended up capturing some really powerful moments in the crowd.



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DUNK ON 'EM

With all eyes on him, Charles "C.J." Elleby, Cleveland's star varsity basketball player, goes up for a dunk during the first half of a tight basketball game against south end rival Franklin High School on Feb. 1. The senior is a fan favorite on the court who wows fans with his dunks and defense. The 6-foot-7 Washington State commit is ranked third in the state, behind four-star athletes Kevin Porter Jr. and J'Raan Brooks.

The gym was packed for this game, so I knew C.J. would want to put on a show. He had already dunked the ball twice in the first half, so I positioned myself under the goal. I adjusted the settings on my Sony A7rii, which works great for taking pictures during fast-moving games like this one.



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BRING IT ON!

While Cleveland's basketball team was battling rival Franklin, an equally intense battle was happening on the sidelines and eventually on the court. Cheerleader Ernesto Tugade, center, along with the rest of the cheer team stomps onto the basketball court in an effort to out-cheer the Quakers on Feb. 1. Administrators quickly shut both teams down, but later, both squads performed a "unity cheer" to show that just like in basketball, the competition is only part of the sport.

Ernesto is easily the most animated and most fierce cheerleader on the squad. When the teams started moving closer to one another, I ran from the sidelines to capture the shot. Image taken with my Sony A7rii.



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SOUFEND'S FINEST

Senior Dante Lopez-Escarez yells in excitement after he catches the game-winning throw against Franklin, one of the team's fiercest rivals on Sept. 25. After a nine-year losing streak, this was the second year in a row that Cleveland defeated Franklin. Ultimate Frisbee is beginning to gain popularity across the country, with South Seattle being one of the epicenters of its growth. But as much as our students love the game, Ultimate Frisbee is not recognized as a sport by Seattle Public Schools. "It definitely sucks not being recognized as a sport because we don't get the same resources as a sports team or recognition for our athletic abilities as athletes," said Lopez-Escarez.

I had just purchased this new camera, a Sony A7rii, and was super excited to use it. I wasn't scheduled to cover the game and went as a spectator, but I ended up getting some great shots, and we used this one in the yearbook.



HOW'S IT HANGIN'

Senior forward Mubarak Michael-Makelfa tries to avoid Charles "C.J." Elleby as he swings from the rim after an insane dunk against Chief Sealth on Dec. 8. Elleby, a senior, managed to throw down several dunks this season. He committed to play basketball at Washington State University in the fall.

This photo is just as much about Mubarak as it is about C.J. I love that I was able to capture the expression on his face. This was shot with 1/320 sec exposure; f/2.8 with 2500 ISO with a 85mm lens.

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