

BHS students honored for personal growth, activism

The Brookline High School 21st Century Fund, a nonprofit organization that creates and funds innovative programs at Brookline High, presented awards to BHS senior **Ivory White** and junior **Sarah Plovnick** on Wednesday, April 27.

White was given an Award for Outstanding Participation. The award is presented to one student whose participation in a 21st Century Fund program has resulted in profound academic and personal growth, and comes with a \$1,000 scholarship.

Through her participation in the fund's Family Partnership Program, White has taken part in the Athena Conference, an annual leadership event planned and led by Harvard undergraduate students around the theme of female empowerment. She participates in, and has emceed, the annual Poetry Festival held at Brookline Booksmith. Last summer, White attended the selective Juniper Young Writers Institute at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, for a week of rigorous work with published poets and writers. In January, she performed her poem, "Strive," at a school assembly to honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Following graduation, White plans to attend Lesley University in Cambridge.

Plovnick was presented with an Award for Citizenship, given to a student in a fund program whose civic involvement has helped to create a better community. A \$100 cash award was presented to Plovnick in recognition of her efforts to become a global citizen. Plovnick participated in the Social Justice Leadership Program.

Plovnick led a collaborative effort to create an organization that addresses the inequity in education and literacy. She set up a relationship with the Ralph Waldo Emerson School in Roxbury. The school has no library, and roughly half the students are recent immigrants who struggle to pass the MCAS. Plovnick's passion attracted other students, and by the end of last school year, Plovnick and her colleagues had built a team of activists who began

doing book drives and school visits. The group planned IntelliJam!, a benefit concert to seed money for a library at Emerson.

The awards were presented by Brookline High English teacher Gaelen Harrington.