**Notre Dame: A Humbling Experience**

By Yahterie-Anne Sykes Ortiz

During my first year at Notre Dame, I noticed a few things. Most students at Notre Dame are Caucasian and come from middle class families. They had access to more financial and educational resources. Many have attended private catholic high schools. I have spoken to people whose parents and grandparents attended Notre Dame. They were conditioned from a young age to see attending Notre Dame as their educational destination. To them, it was just another expectation they had to meet.

I have lived a different experience from the majority of Notre Dame students. I am the first one in my family to attend Notre Dame. My family is not affluent, but we had enough to be happy and healthy. I had to rise above family circumstances and conditions in the Eastside to get to where I am today. My past experiences have made me realize that attending Notre Dame is a very big deal. I am very appreciative that I have a spot among some of the brightest minds, even though I did not have access to the same resources as everyone else. It is very humbling to think about how hard I worked to get to this point. I am proud to be a Notre Dame student and realize that I deserve to be where I am today.