

BIRTH AND BEYOND

Sophomore juggles school and raising child

By Zoe Graves & Audrey Boles
PAGE EDITOR & INTERN

Although the Nickelodeon classic “Spongebob Squarepants” is not typically considered a memorable family bonding experience, it’s one of sophomore Andriana Williams’ favorite things to watch with her daughter.

In February of her freshman year, Andriana gave birth to Skylar Michelle Williams, who is now almost 11 months old. Andriana said finding a name was a struggle, but once she saw Skylar, it felt right.

“I went on the internet and looked up names, and I found that,” Williams said. “I got her middle name from my mom, and my little sister — (they’ve) got the same name. And then her last name is my last name, and that part was easy.”

Some of Williams’ favorite things to do with Skylar are the small things — singing to her, watching TV and trying to teach her to walk.

“I want her to be in a lot of activities and stuff — make sure she’s not lazy like I am,” Williams said. “And I want her to be interactive with a lot of stuff, be friendly.”

Andriana’s mother, Yolanda Williams, said that despite initially finding it hard to accept that Andriana had Skylar at such a young age, she thinks it’s important for her to completely support both her daughter and Skylar.

“She’s doing a really good job. She handles everything she can. I handle everything financially, but everything else she has under control,” Yolanda said. “I feel like it’s brought us closer because she needs (me) more than she ever needed me before.”

Since Andriana had Skylar, Yolanda has noticed many significant changes in her daughter. She said she’s seen her mature and become more responsible.

One of Andriana’s biggest supporters outside her family has been her closest friend, sophomore Taniya Jones. The two have known each other since fifth grade, but Jones said she realized they were best friends the summer before they started high school.

“She was comfortable enough to walk in my house without permission,” Jones said jokingly. “Who does that if we’re just associates? She basically was treating my house like it was her house.”

When Andriana’s family can’t babysit Skylar, Jones pitches in. Andriana said that normally either her mom or her grandmother will watch Skylar when she’s at school, but Jones will sometimes babysit after school.

Although being a mother at age 15 wasn’t necessarily what Andriana had in mind, she’s not letting it stop her from going after what she wants in terms of her future and her education.

Her mother hopes for her to complete her education so she can be successful and give Skylar the life she deserves, which is exactly what Andriana plans to do.

“As of now my purpose in this world is to provide a successful life for my daughter Skylar, and to graduate from high school and work my way up to college,” Andriana said. “I want to have a Spanish major and study to be a sign language interpreter.”

Languages and being able to travel and speak to new people have always interested Andriana, and seeing how fluently her own teachers speak Spanish inspired her to pursue a career in Spanish.

The motivation to learn sign language came from watching the Freeform show “Switched At Birth,” which centers around two girls, one of whom is deaf. Her interest was fueled further when she saw someone interpreting for her pastor at church.

“I feel bad for people that can’t hear,” she said. “It would make me feel good to know that my profession is helping people.”

Although taking on Spanish, sign language and motherhood is a lot, Andriana said this experience has made her stronger and helped her realize she can do anything she sets her mind to, whether that’s in school, professionally or as a mother. Jones has been supportive in this way since she found out Andriana was pregnant, encouraging her to keep the baby and stay in school.

“It was a struggle when it first happened ... then as (Skylar) got older, I kind of got used to it, and it became easier,” Andriana said. “It made me realize how much of a hardworking person I am, and I can actually get through tough times and stuff without breaking.”



COURTESY OF ANDRIANA WILLIAMS

A LIFE IN HER ARMS | Sophomore Andriana Williams’ mother, Yolanda Williams, holds Andriana’s daughter, Skylar, who is now 10 months old. In the future, Andriana wants to be more than just a mother. Andriana’s goal is to be a Spanish and sign language interpreter. “One of the main reasons I got inspired was at church when I saw a person translating for my pastor,” Andriana said.

Students partake in Bitcoin’s rise



By Michal Ruprecht & Savannah Burguron
EDITOR-AT-LARGE & INTERN

Instead of working at a restaurant or shop, sophomore Charlie Ramsdell goes to www.coinbase.com to make money. Since September, Ramsdell has invested in digital currencies like Bitcoins and doubled his money.

Bitcoin is the first decentralized digital cryptocurrency, meaning it’s not controlled by a government. It is a digital cryptocurrency that allows users to transfer money via the internet without any middlemen.

Since its creation in early 2009, one Bitcoin has grown in worth from less than \$1 to over \$20,000 on Dec. 7, 2017, according to the New York Times. The exponential growth started in 2017, with Bitcoin processing \$2 billion worth of transactions every day, a 10-fold increase in 2017, Forbes Magazine reported.

Since the supply of Bitcoins has remained the same, business teacher Dennis Koch said their value is increasing because of the increase in demand.

“Bitcoin is, in a sense, the new phenomenon,” Koch said. “(It) involves really a lot of speculation on behalf of American people and the world to invest in a new currency.”

According to www.coincentral.com, the Coinbase app and website is one of the most popular exchanges that sells Bitcoins because the interface is beginner friendly. However, trading fees on Coinbase are higher than on other exchanges that Ramsdell uses like Poloniex.

Because Bitcoin isn’t backed by any government, it technically has no value.

Koch said people accept Bitcoins because others accept and trade it. He added that the cryptocurrency is reconfiguring the investing world because more students like Ramsdell are getting interested in Bitcoin and investment.

“I think it’s great for students because it has aroused interest in investing for them, albeit it’s a little bit risky, but at least students are talking about investing,” Koch said. “It’s giving students some exposure to the world of investing and has them interested in learning more about business and learning more about stocks and their futures, which in a sense to me are all good things.”

Although Bitcoin has dramatically increased in value, senior Daruk Garlapati said Bitcoin is too volatile. He did a project on the currency for AP Macroeconomics and is interested in investing, but said he wouldn’t invest in Bitcoin because of its fluctuating price. He added that if students are properly experienced and know how to invest in stocks, they should invest in the currency.

“Investing in it can be very risky. It could either go very high in a day, or it could crash, or the price could go very low, and that could be very harmful to interact with,” Garlapati said. “It’s very risky, and it could possibly make students lose a lot of money.”

Koch hasn’t invested in Bitcoin either. He agrees with Garlapati and said student and intermediate investors usually cannot establish enough research about an investment like Bitcoin, so they should avoid buying it.

Koch said he teaches his business classes about Bitcoin and added that in class, students compete in an online stock market game called MarketWatch where the goal is to invest \$100,000 in any stock. He said this experience allows them to have exposure to Bitcoin and other stocks.

Even though Ramsdell said he won’t buy more Bitcoins, he plans on continuing to invest in lesser-known currencies like Nav Coin. He added that though it’s a currency, he only uses Bitcoin as an investment and enjoys the volatility of it.

“I think students are some of the best people to invest in Bitcoin because they don’t really have any financial risk at the moment,” Ramsdell said. “They would probably be the most practical people to invest.”

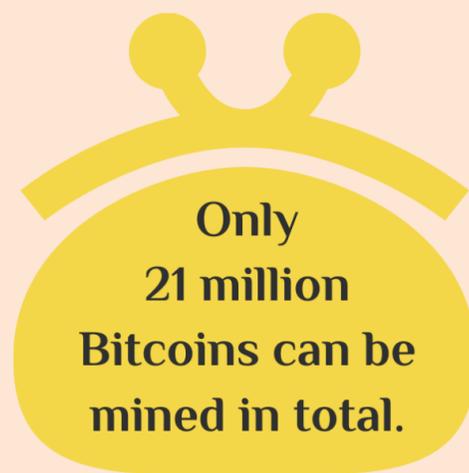
Even if students don’t invest in Bitcoin, Koch said investing is important early on. He added that he’s interested in the outcome of Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies.

“It’s going to be an interesting ride. It’s so new and so different,” he said. “The world’s greatest economists and investors still don’t have 100 percent of their finger on top of it, so stay tuned month-by-month to see what’s going to happen. I’m curious. I’m excited about it.”

The man without a face:

Satoshi Nakamoto

Since he mined the first 50 bitcoins in 2009, creator Nakamoto has preserved his anonymity.



1 Bitcoin is equal to...



14,607.70



12,107.60

