

Student's words reveal stark reality of life's injustices

Tolerance is a subject Joemae Santos is teaching adults.

She is doing it with words – and showing how other people's words are ones of intolerance.



Joemae Santos

The incoming South Tahoe High School ninth-grader wowed the crowd at Tuesday night's Lake Tahoe Unified School District board of education meeting with two poems.

These are the same poems that led her to win Lake Tahoe Community College's poetry slam in April.

Santos was introduced June 14 by English teacher Jillian Raymond. Raymond is one of nine teachers (400-plus were nominated) in California to be named a Teacher for Social Justice.

Santos' subject matter is adult in nature. The poems sound like they are written by someone much older. But they show the struggles and insight of today's youth. Not only are the words powerful, but Santos' delivery makes one want to listen to what else she might have to say.

The first is titled "Queer 101" and the other is "Asia-America". She read both at the meeting.

– Kathryn Reed