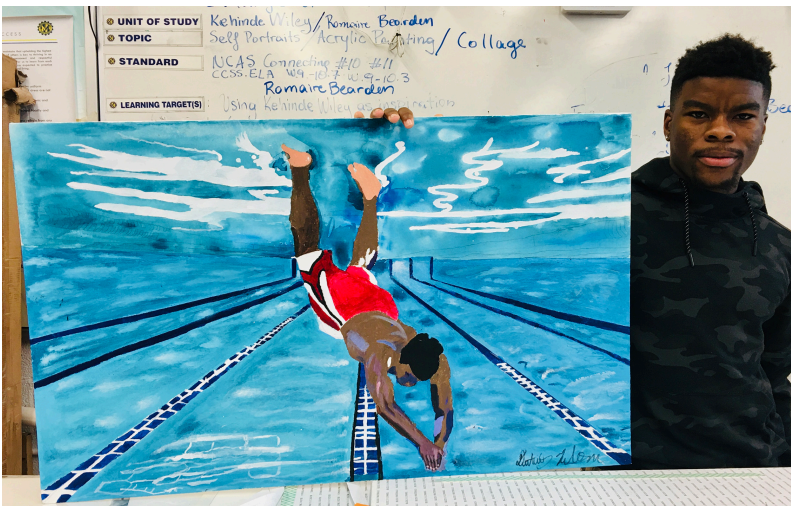


MARYLAND

By Demetrius Nelson

Demetrius Nelson, a high school senior in the City of Baltimore City, graduates this year 2020, from Mergenthaler Vocational-Technical High School (Mervo). His aspirational five-year plan is to attend college and become an architect. He and his brother grew up without a dad present in their lives, but his mother has always been an inspiration to him, along with all the hard-working people who have been role models in his life. He says he is a product of his environment and wants to continue his art by showing power and privilege through portraits of Black/African American people whom he knows and respects. He is an incredibly hardworking, intelligent, compassionate young man. The artwork entitled, "The Competition" is a self-portrait of Demetrius diving into an Olympic sized pool – a pool that doesn't exist in his neighborhood. Although Demetrius thrives with competition, this pool also symbolizes the hope and uncertainty of tomorrow and his own determination to succeed, empowered by integrity and hard work.



Demetrius produced this work, "The Competition", in Fundamentals of Art with Sia Kyriakakos, finalist for National Teacher of the Year in 2018 and Maryland Teacher of the Year in 2017. Ms Kyriakakos has been a Fulbright winner and received a Unesco award. She is currently a Baltimore city teacher at Mergenthaler Vo/Tech Highschool.