

## **Summer Reading 2011**

### **ENTERING GRADE 11**

#### **Required Reading (all rising Juniors) – The American Dream, Jim Cullen**

You must read AT LEAST the Introduction of this book. The text will be used throughout the year in American History and referenced in American Literature, so the more familiar you are with it, the more prepared you will be for the year.

#### **Required for American Literature class:**

**The books on this list have been chosen to complement the novels, themes, and essential questions that you will cover in *American Literature*. The following questions will be discussed throughout the year. Consider them as you read this summer.**

- ❑ *How does literature teach us about rebellion and individual responsibility in a free society?*
- ❑ *How does a work of literature function as a social commentary?*
- ❑ *What does the literature studied in this course suggest about what it means to be American? What is the "American Dream?"*

**Please select one of the following:**

#### **Where Men Win Glory – Jon Krakauer**

In May 2002, Pat Tillman walked away from his \$3.6 million NFL contract to enlist in the United States Army. He was deeply troubled by 9/11, and he felt a strong moral obligation to join the fight against al-Qaeda and the Taliban. Two years later, he died on a desolate hillside in southeastern Afghanistan. The Army aggressively maneuvered to keep this information from Tillman's wife, other family members, and the American public for five weeks following his death. Jon Krakauer draws on Tillman's journals and letters, interviews with his wife and friends, conversations with the soldiers who served alongside him, and extensive research on the ground in Afghanistan to render an intricate mosaic of this driven, complex, and uncommonly compelling figure as well as the definitive account of the events and actions that led to his death. *Where Men Win Glory* exposes shattering truths about men and war.

#### **The Help – Kathryn Stockett**

Aibileen is a black maid in 1962 Jackson, Mississippi, who's always taken orders quietly, but lately she's unable to hold her bitterness back. Her friend Minny has never held her tongue but now must somehow keep secrets about her employer that leave her speechless. White socialite Skeeter just graduated college. She's full of ambition, but without a husband, she's considered a failure. Together, these seemingly different women join together to write a tell-all book about work as a black maid in the South,

that could forever alter their destinies and the life of a small town...In a page-turner that brings new resonance to the moral issues involved, she spins a story of social awakening as seen from both sides of the American racial divide.

**Our America: Life and Death on the South Side of Chicago -LeAlan Jones, Lloyd Newman**

These authors gained notoriety by telling personal stories of their life in the poor, violent, and desolate world of Chicago's Ida B. Wells Homes ghetto. This heartbreaking and inspiring book goes a long way toward fulfilling the wish one of its authors, LeAlan Jones, makes in his epigraph: "You must learn our America as we must learn your America, so that, maybe, someday, we can become one." Based on hours and hours of taped interviews that Jones and Lloyd Newman, these two high school students, conducted for two National Public Radio documentaries they prepared in 1993 and 1995, *Our America* is a no-holds-barred look at the devastatingly poor Chicago neighborhood in which they live. It's a world where elementary school students learn about drugs before they learn how to read, and where many boys do not expect to live to be 20.