SECOND ANNUAL

THE KAPPY FAMILY

Anne Frank
Art & Writing
COMPETITION

MAY 17, 2018 • AWARD CEREMONY

HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL CENTER • ZEKELMAN FAMILY CAMPUS
Where there’s hope, there’s life. It fills us with fresh courage and makes us strong again.

ANNE FRANK
With great pride, we congratulate all of this year’s Kappy Family Anne Frank Art & Writing Competition winners. We are overwhelmed by the creativity and power of this year’s 145 entries from more than 29 schools in Oakland and Macomb counties. We would like to acknowledge and thank every student, parent, guardian, and teacher that was involved for their hard work and support.

We live in an increasingly complex world – one in which it is far too easy to disengage from communal responsibility and one in which we need to remember *The Power of Hope*. In Anne Frank’s words, “Where there is hope, there is life. It fills us with fresh courage and makes us strong again.” As a young teenager – the same age as students that enter the competition – Anne’s wisdom and grit during unimaginably difficult times serves as the inspiration for this competition.

This competition provides a platform for students to reflect on Anne Frank’s life and her diary, to understand the dangers of prejudice and discrimination, and to build moral character. After taking the first steps of action by creating a piece of art or writing, we hope that students will internalize the lessons of the Holocaust and continue to apply them throughout their lives.

At the Holocaust Memorial Center, it is our mission to engage, to educate and to empower by remembering the Holocaust. As we continue to expand this authentic learning experience to more students throughout the state of Michigan, we truly believe that the knowledge gained by each student will make our world a better place.

Aliza Tick
*Education Associate*
Holocaust Memorial Center
Welcome to the second Annual Kappy Family Anne Frank Art & Writing Competition at the Holocaust Memorial Center. Our family is a proud sponsor of this contest that is designed to inspire and empower students to gain an understanding of The Power of Hope. Anne Frank serves as an important symbol of an individual who has illuminated the lessons of the Holocaust for Jews and non-Jews alike. A sapling of the actual chestnut tree that grew outside of her attic window stands at the Holocaust Memorial Center today, resolute in its determination to withstand the forces of prejudice and bigotry. Anne Frank was wise beyond her years, and her observation that “Where there’s hope, there’s life. It fills us with fresh courage and makes us strong again” has inspired today’s wonderful contest submissions that prove her reflections to be true.

Our father, Garry Kappy, is the last surviving member of his family and is very excited to have the opportunity to present today’s awards. Born in Opatow, Poland, he was imprisoned in different labor camps at the young age of 15, where he dug ditches and slaved in a steel ammunition factory. He survived the horrors of the Buchenwald and Auschwitz concentration camps, and managed to eventually make his way to Detroit where he had a family with his beloved wife, Viola, and a successful business career. Though it was important to him to memorialize all of the victims of the Holocaust, he felt it to be even more crucial to educate and help prevent future genocides. Out of this inspiration, the Kappy Family Anne Frank Art & Writing Competition was born and will hopefully flourish in the years to come.

Congratulations to all of this year’s winners, and thank you for sharing your inspiring entries with us all.

The Kappy Family
May 17, 2018
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My piece represents life and hope. I chose to draw a young girl, hopeful, yet alone and scared in the dark. The piece is meant to symbolize Anne's hopefulness during her time in hiding. The flame from the candle represents a light of hope in the darkness that she endured during the Holocaust. I imagine that many people during that time had similar emotions that helped keep them alive as they endured the atrocities of the Holocaust.
Hope is an empowering word that makes us feel as if we have a chance. My drawing shows the past, present, and future of the city of Detroit. Part of my picture shows Ford Motor Company, which represents Detroit in its prime. The city was viewed as having lots of hope back then. I drew people of different races working on a Model T to show how immigration impacted jobs within the city. There are abandoned houses above to show Detroit’s vacant house problem, and how many see that as representing poverty and a decline of hope. There is also a ripped newspaper that says “Bankrupt Detroit,” which represents the same thing. There is a classroom above that, containing a teacher spreading a common message to black youth, by telling them that they have to try three times harder, symbolizing a message to encourage kids to work harder to be more. The top of the picture shows businesses replacing the spot of abandoned homes. It symbolizes hope for the city and that with hope there is power. It shows how things can look bad in one moment but can turn around and change for the better.
Birds are free and can fly wherever they decide. They are a symbol of hope. Whenever I see even just a single bird in the sky, I get a little spark of hope. The quote by Anne Frank says, “Where there’s hope, there’s life,” but that can go the other way around. Where there is life, there is also hope. As long as we are alive, we can have hope. When I look at the beautiful nature around me – the birds, the trees, and the sky – I feel so at peace and filled with hope. Although Anne Frank was trapped in that little space and was eventually captured, she had so much hope. Her words inspire us all. If we have even a speck of hope, we can make it through the day and look forward to the great things we’ll do in the future.

Lydia Aguirre | Stoney Creek High School, 12th grade
People of all kinds were placed in concentration camps during the Holocaust. In one of the bleakest times in all of history, and even amidst all the suffering, people still found hope for the future. My painting shows boys who were forced into concentration camps, and depicts them using radiant color as recognition of the absolute power of spirit one must have to face such absolute darkness with positivity and hope.

Nick Daniel | Stoney Creek High School, 12th grade
“Where there’s hope, there’s life. It fills us with fresh courage and makes us strong again.” Anne Frank did this by displaying the strength and power that hope can grow. I chose to illustrate this message in order to demonstrate my skills as an artist. I painted two hands to symbolize two people. One hand is in the past, and one is in the present. The hand above illustrated how a person can rise above his or her past struggles and grow stronger through the hope that they hold. The barbed wire represents the barriers that enclosed the Jewish people and all oppressed people – both in concentration camps and in society – through prejudice. This is overshadowed by new life represented by plants. The flowers and vines draw attention to the ever growing hope and change that is possible if one is courageous enough to strive for it.

Annabel Philp | Stoney Creek High School, 12th grade
I know what it’s like firsthand to be so sad that I couldn’t move. I can still remember the suffocating, heavy pall of depression, squeezing out every drop of vitality until I moved through life like I was stuck in molasses. It’s been so long since I felt like that; the memories feel like distant nightmares.

In *The Way Out*, I show the progression of finding hope in a hopeless situation. The subject is trapped in a dark, endless hallway, curled up and blocking out the light from the outside world. Slowly, the subject stands and eventually reaches for that light; the subject finally reaches out. When you’re depressed, it’s easy to become bitter and convince yourself it will never get better. But you’re the only person who can help yourself; it’s not easy to recognize it and sometimes it feels impossible, but it is a battle you can ultimately win. It is a brave thing to find the glimmer of light in the darkness, and if you can grasp it and nurture it, it will lead the way to happiness once again.

Olivia Barone | Stoney Creek High School, 12th Grade
To me, this quote represents that hope is brought upon by the creation of life and the will to live. Anne Frank, along with all the children affected by the Holocaust, possessed a special light that only children contain. This light allowed them to persevere throughout their struggles and allowed them to imagine and hope for a better world. Even through many lives were lost during the Holocaust, their stories of strength and hope have changed the course of history. My piece represents the hope that new life can bring. The pregnant mother symbolizes new life and its will to live. Additionally, the little girl symbolizes the happiness that the life of her unborn sibling has brought to her and her family. Together, the new life and the happiness of a larger family has brought a sense of hope for a better future which can be seen by the lighting focused on the people.
My mother, Smuruthi Kamepalli, grew up in a small village in rural India. Best in her class, she had hope for a better future for her and her family, so she packed up her things and came to the United States. With only $70 in her pocket, she was accepted to University of Texas in Austin and got her PhD in chemistry, her true passion in life, taking her hope for the future and making it a reality. My mother embodies hope, and this photo captures her hopeful spirit and perseverance in dark times. The glimmer of light in her eyes represents the hope that she held throughout her years of education and throughout her move in the United States. Surrounded by darkness, she chose to pay attention to the one small light of hope.
Throughout history, abuse has affected thousands of men, women, and children. My image portrays the harsh reality of human abuse whether it is sexual, verbal, or physical. This female can be seen with bruises around her face, resembling the many victims affected by abuse. In recent years, many people have effectively reported their abuse. Efforts have been made to combat abuse, causing victims to gain optimism. In this image, the victim of abuse opens her eyes due to the hopeful efforts towards ending her misery. The glitter on her cuts and bruises demonstrates the hope filling her spirits. Anne Frank mentions how hope “fills us with fresh courage and makes us strong again.” The victim’s strength comes from hoping for a better future. The girl in this image will overcome abuse by seeking help from present organizations who support victims of abuse. Her courage and hope allow her to persevere through the pain.
The sound of the bell hammers in my left ear as I sit down at my desk, ready for last hour. Another end to another boring Monday. The teacher, Mrs. Carp, hasn’t arrived yet, so I pull out my book and continue reading where I left off.

“Hey Pam, whatcha readin’?”

I look up from the pages to see Tina, my desk neighbor, smiling at me. She just moved here from Tennessee, and I’ve overheard her telling some interesting stories to the other kids in the class. I’m a shy person, so we haven’t spoken much, but I’m fascinated by her light Tennessee accent.

“The Outsiders,” I answer.

She smiles knowingly, “Oh I loved that book! ‘Nothing gold can stay,’” She laughs.

I nod. “It’s very good.”

“I loved Sodapop, he was so underrated. I wish he’d been a bigger part of the story.”

“Yeah, me too. He –”

“Okay class, sorry I’m late. Let’s begin.”

I look up to see Mrs. Carp had arrived, interrupting our blooming conversation, so I put my book down and face the front.

Class ends and I am walking down the hall when I see Jane, my old friend. Her short, athletic build is bent over as she reaches into her locker, long brown hair swinging with her movements.

“Jane!” I exclaim, jogging over. She turns around, and I smile warmly at her, “Hey, are you free this Friday? Want to go see a movie?”

“I can’t, I have volleyball practice. Sorry!” She apologizes before slamming her locker shut and walking away with a wave.

I feel my smile drop. It seems like she always has volleyball, never a moment off. I haven’t hung out with her in two months now, not since freshman year began.

The sad feeling that spreads across my chest reminds me of Carly. She’s my second oldest friend and probably the only other person besides Jane who would call me such. Last week she said she couldn’t hang out because she was going to her cousin’s volleyball game, but I think she was just making it up so she wouldn’t have to be around me.

As Jane walks away, I feel my chest tighten. I don’t know why the rejections hurt so much. I get them so often, I should be numb to the pain. And yet, every time it hurts more. Just one more knife shoved in there with all the others, stretching the wound a little bit wider.

Sometimes, when I’m really stuck in my head, I like to draw.

Every time I have this wonderful image in my head, like a picture formed by a real artist. The colors radiate
feeling and the lines accent emotion. It captures how I’m feeling in such a complex way that it only ever really exists in my head. Any little doodle or sketch I create is too simple and crude to possibly be the thing I drew in my mind. It’s frustrating, really, to see my basic drawing skills ruin the work of art in my head.

I am scratching one such imperfect picture on my paper when Mrs. Carp’s voice forces my attention to her at the front of the room, “Alright class, that’ll be due tomorrow. I’m sorry I couldn’t assign it sooner, but that does not mean you should not have it ready. Class is over, you may talk until the bell rings.”

She walks over to her desk, done with the class. Students around me stand up and begin to talk loudly to their friends. I pull out my book and am about to open it when someone next to me curses.

I look over to see Jane staring at the homework written on the board, her face distraught.

“What’s wrong?” I ask. She turns to me, stress written all over her face.

“I have volleyball practice tonight! I’ll never be able to finish this stupid paper.” She groans and her head lands on her desk in defeat.

“Maybe you could skip practice just this once?” I suggest, turning my book over and giving her my full attention.

“No, Pam, I can’t just skip practice, that’s a horrible idea!” She snaps, her exclamation laced with anger. Her words are so sharp I flinch.

“Sorry…” I mutter, turning away.

Suddenly, she sits up straight in her seat and turns her body completely around to face me, “Wait, Pam, could you do my paper?”

My eyes widen at her bold request. Cheating?

“Please?” She stares at me with big brown eyes, her hands in a praying position. I frown at her. The paper will probably take me an hour and a half for just my own.

As I stare into her eyes, I’m reminded of Monday’s events. It’s Wednesday now, but the memory still stings. Maybe if I do this favor for her, she’ll remember how much fun we have together and hang out with me again. Maybe we can go back to the way it was, before high school.

“Sure.” I say, and Jane lights up.

“Thank you Pam, thank you thank you thank you!” She grabs her bag and runs over to give me a big hug just as the bell rings. She pulls away too quick and runs to catch up with someone else, striking a lively conversation before they even exit the room.

As I watch her go, something stirs in my stomach.

I finish my homework that night at ten. The next day, Carly asks me to do her math homework because she has a family emergency. Then, Jane asks me to do her Spanish worksheet. I agree so they don’t get mad. They’ve begun to sit with me at lunch now.

That’s when things start to get bad.

Random people ask me to do their homework. It started with only Carly and Jane’s friends, but then expanded. I’ve begun to stay up past midnight and consider sleep at 1 AM a good night’s rest. At school I can hardly keep my eyes open, and instead of eating at lunch, I sleep. Every waking moment is spent either studying, doing homework, or listening to my teachers, and I can’t remember the last time I went outside. I eat less, sleep less, and move less.

I went to the movies with Jane and Carly. I was so happy I couldn’t wait, but I fell asleep five minutes in. I don’t even remember what movie we were watching.

I sit at the desk in my bedroom. Tears sting the corners of my eyes. I’m so tired, I can hardly keep them open. I feel the hours spent awake sitting on my eyelids, weighing them down. I know that if I do them justice and sleep, they’ll leave, but I don’t have time. I squint to focus on the paper in front of me, but the words
swim and distort, blurring into an inky smudge. I feel my throat tighten and the urge to cry threatens me.
I still have two hours of work to do and it’s one in the morning, a godless hour that causes my brain to shut down.

One minute I’m forcing my pencil to move across the paper in illegible jabber, and the next I’m sobbing. My brain is running on sick fumes from lack of sleep and exercise, and all I can think about is hopeless, depressing things. Everything I’ve been holding in suddenly crashes out like a wave previously restrained by a tiny rubber band. My pencil falls to the ground.

I hear my door open and someone enters my room, but I don’t look up.

I feel a warm hand on my shoulder, but I still don’t turn. Mom heard me through the paper-thin walls of our cramped apartment.

I hear a soft sigh as my mother sees the work laid in front of me. She holds my shoulders and gently pulls me onto her lap, stroking my hair softly. She doesn’t speak, just hums quietly. Her warm touch is comforting.

It takes a long time, but eventually my sobs slow until I finally lay in silence. Mom never speaks. She only holds me and sings until I drift into sleep, but that means more to me than any words could.

I wake rested and comfortable, but with a pounding headache. I sit up, confused, and feel a rush of fear steal my breath as I see the sunlight pouring in from my window. Throwing off my blankets, I look at the clock.

2 PM. I missed school.

I squeeze my eyes shut and massage my temple, trying to fight back the throbbing in my head.

I climb out of bed and am delightfully surprised by a warm, sweet scent. I walk downstairs, utterly perplexed, the blanket hung around my shoulders trailing behind me.

I enter the dining room to see my mom standing above a fresh plate of waffles, syrup and forks placed around it. The bright afternoon sun pours through the window, revealing Mom’s outfit. She has her silly Minnie Mouse apron on, the one I got her six years ago for her birthday.

Mom smiles at me, “Hi, Pam.”

The homey scene is so warm and happy that I feel tears form in my eyes. I laugh, sniffle, wipe them away. I’m done crying. “Hi, Mom.”

I walk into school on Monday with a clear and resolved mind. Mom had taken the last two days off last week as “sick days” and we spent those days and the weekend together. We watched movies, went bowling, and visited the park to play tennis. She told the school about the cheating, and I got two weeks of detention.

As I enter first hour, I am excited. I can’t wait, because today is the day I start my freshman year of high school. Well, technically it’s my ninety-seventh day of freshman year, but I didn’t like those days, so I’m starting over.

I sit down at my desk and smile at Tina. I haven’t spoken to her in a long time.

She looks shocked at first, but then her surprise melts into concern, “Pam! Are you okay? What happened? Where’ve you been?”

I smile at the sound of her wonderful light accent, “I’m fine, thanks. I just had to deal with some stuff, but I’m okay now.”

She smiles slowly, “You look...good!”

“Thanks, I feel better. Hey, can you tell me a story about when you lived in Tennessee?”

She nods, her little brown ponytail bouncing behind her as she responds, “Yeah, sure! Lemme think...”

I smile and lean forward. I’m going to love freshman year.
Derek dragged his feet along. It wasn’t raining hard enough to obscure his vision, or even to make puddles to slosh through. It was just enough to make him feel even worse than he had already been feeling. His two best friends had gone home before him. After all, they had said, they hadn’t gotten detention, only he had. They were right, obviously. They hadn’t had anything to do with his latest bullying target, but it still made him feel down. They hadn’t picked up on his message, on his pleas for help. Both of them were in the honors program, and he needed tutoring just to scrape a passing grade. But they seemed dumb as dirt when it came to his feelings. Derek hated the tutors, hated the tutoring, and wished his friends would help him instead. But they didn’t notice, or did and specifically chose to ignore it. Derek wasn’t sure which was worse.

Despite being on the quieter side, Derek was so desperate for attention he had turned to bullying. He had thought at first that he would be bad at bullying, but he had surprised and even disappointed himself with how wrathful he was. The anger he was harboring enabled him to be far nastier and, frankly, more evil than he had thought he’d be capable of. What he had done today was particularly bad, especially because of his school’s no bullying policies. But it hadn’t helped. His friends hadn’t picked up on his cries for help. His parents seemed either clueless or powerless. He was sure his “bright” “friends” would’ve at least picked up on it today, after this drastic attempt. But no, they walked home without him, abandoning him.

Trudging into his house, Derek kicked off his wet shoes and headed toward the stairs. He heard his mother call out from the kitchen, “Hey, Derek, how was your day? Why are you home late? Were you hanging with your friends?” Derek heard her voice getting more desperate with every question, could hear the hope and worry mixed in her voice, but he ignored her and went down the stairs to his bedroom, not quite slamming the door, but kicking it closed with more force than necessary. He felt it was kind of like him – angry, but not too aggressive. Then he remembered the events of the day and realized with regret that he could no longer consider himself “not too aggressive.” Derek felt even more down than he had been over the past six months. Even being obnoxious hadn’t clued in his friends, and he felt himself slip further into a state of despair. He found himself thinking, “What’s the point?” over and over again as he lay down on his bed. With those three words beating in his ears, he fell into an uneasy sleep, fully clothed, at 7:30 in the evening.

His mother, worried before, was now almost frantic. Derek never napped. Ever. She knew he was sleeping and not on his phone because she listened outside his door and heard his snores, uneven and broken-sounding though they were.
She felt powerless. She knew her son was slipping, fading away before her, but she didn’t know how to react. She felt like she didn’t understand her own son. She tiptoed away, nervous for his future and the future of his soon-to-be sibling, wondering whether her two children would ever meet.

Derek awoke, disoriented. Groggily, he looked at his phone for the time. It said it was 9:40. At first Derek thought it was only 9:40 PM because he was beginning to remember falling asleep early in the evening. A closer look, however, showed that he was actually late for school. Jumping off his bed, Derek grabbed his bag and was about to leave the room when a wave of apathy washed over him. “What do I care if I’m late?” he thought to himself. He was about to change into new clothes when the same voice spoke up again, asking if he really minded being a little dirty. “Just the opposite,” he thought. “I’d rather have filth. I deserve it. It fits me better.”

Derek dropped his bag on the floor next to his bed, pulled out his phone, and plopped down. After using it for about twenty minutes he got up, stretched, and slowly started walking up the stairs. He kept up the sluggish pace all the way to school and arrived just as he would’ve ended his first tutor. In keeping with his mood, he didn’t inform her that he had arrived or why he had missed her. When he plunked into his seat for his next class, neither of his “friends” even acknowledged him, much less asked him where he had been during homeroom. He sat through the rest of his day in a mixture of anger and indifference.

Derek followed this same routine for the next couple weeks. He got home from school, went straight to his room, and went to sleep in the same sweatshirt and jeans he had been wearing on that pivotal day. He usually woke up in the middle of the night, went to kitchen to eat something, went back to his room and used his phone for an hour or two. He went back to sleep, woke up late, grabbed a snack, and left the house to arrive late at school. He sat in his classrooms not doing anything, not going to tutoring lessons, ignoring everyone. People started avoiding him after a week without showering or changing.

While Derek projected indifference, he was conflicted. He was angry at the world, angry at his friends. He hated them, his tutors, his school,
himself. He felt he deserved the shouts of the teachers, the filth that was covering him, and the pangs of hunger that he sometimes felt. At the same time, he really kind of didn’t care about his body and was fine with his lack of nutrition and cleanliness. Throughout all of this, the refrain “What’s the point?” kept running through his head, although at some point it was joined by a more sinister idea. Derek began to find himself thinking, irregularly and then with startling frequency, “You should end this.” With these two thoughts cycling through his head, it was only natural for Derek to begin looking for ways to follow through on these vicious notions. However, despite being able to be hostile and bullying, it seemed simply too far out of his nature, even in his detached state, to really plot something of that kind. He also couldn’t sit and think about anything for more than a couple minutes without being bombarded with the two thoughts. Although they were in a similar vein to what he was planning, they still hit like a bomb, disrupting any scheming or other thoughts he may have had.

Derek walked up to his front door after another useless day at school. There was a note taped to it, and for some reason, Derek actually took the time to read the scrawled message. “Derek – gone to the hospital. Can’t wait for you to meet your sibling! Please call. – Mom”

Derek ripped it off the door and stared at it for a second. Then he crumpled it up, shoved it into his pocket, and let himself into the house. He plunked down onto the couch in his empty house and reached for his phone. His hand paused midair. He realized that if he was going to hurt himself, now was the time. He had the whole house and everything in it to himself. Suddenly his phone buzzed. He picked it up. There was a photo from Mom. He opened the message and saw his new little brother, blissfully sleeping in his mother’s arms. She looked tired but euphoric. There was a caption on the picture, just a single word. “Come.”

Derek gazed at his little brother’s face for a minute that seemed to last forever. And then, without warning, Derek suddenly burst into tears.

“How can I miss seeing this little guy grow up?!” he screamed to himself. “How can I let him live with the knowledge that he had an older brother who never bothered to stick around long enough to meet him? How can I let people say stupid things to him like ‘you must share a soul, because you were born the day he died? How can I mix my mother’s joy with pain every year on his birthday? How can I deny him the feelings of protection an older brother can provide?”

“Yeah, but what’s the point?” came his thought, right on cue. “Him!” Derek shouted back. “This infant is reason alone to stick around!”

Derek was about to order an Uber to the hospital when the voice spoke up again. “Shouldn’t you shower before you meet your brother?” it asked. Derek had gained too much clarity to know that he couldn’t wait alone in the house for another moment. He had to leave or he might never come out. He ordered the Uber and waited outside. When it pulled up, the driver saw him and didn’t want to let him in, but Derek jumped into the car, rolled down the window, and started begging. Reluctantly, the driver agreed, and they went to the hospital.

Derek ran inside and up to the Welcome Desk. He went through a similar routine with the receptionist that he had gone through with his Uber driver, but eventually she too relented and told him his mother’s room number. The elevator ride took far too long for him. As the doors opened, he squeezed out and ran down the hall. As he dashed in, his mother looked up in surprise. Seeing who it was as he skidded to a halt and held out his arms, she wordlessly placed the baby into his hands. As he clutched the newborn to his chest, they both burst into tears.
I was always told that medicine could “fix me.” That a couple pills every morning would automatically make me feel better. How can three big multi-colored pills make scars on wrists and a feeling of hopelessness vanish? Different doctors said different things: psychotherapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy, medicine, change of environment, different diet, nothing worked. I was hopeless. How do you cure the incurable?

All of these were the thoughts that ran through my mind as I sat on a gurney being loaded into an ambulance. I finally did it. As my eyes roll back and my mom shakes me in an attempt to keep me awake, my whole body just starts shaking. It’s like I’m in two places at once, the feeling is almost indescribable. I just keep hearing muffled screams and cries. My sister runs out of the house gasping for air, mortified by what she has seen. The neighbors are all out on their front lawns watching the basket case finally breaking down. I had managed to keep my depression private; no one besides my family knew. Now the whole state of Illinois will know.

The rest is a blur.

But, the one thing I vividly remember is this doctor. He’s talking to my mom, her head dropped down low, her mascara streaming down her face. And he just looked at her and said, “Stop searching for answers when your answer is in front of you. This isn’t some disease that can simply be treated with medicine. There is no cure for depression, there’s only treatment. She’s your living evidence.”

He then proceeds to walk over to me. He looks down, squinting his eyes. He knows I’m aware of my surroundings. He smiles, almost as if he knows what I’m thinking.

What am I thinking?

This can’t be glossed over. I got some drugs from a friend, enough to kill me. I had tried everything to rid myself of this dark shadow that I lived with. Death was my only way to be free. I had this intricate plan. I would do it on a Sunday. So I could see my friends Saturday and say a final goodbye. My mom and dad would be with my little sister at her soccer game, so I could go in peace; they wouldn’t suspect anything. It all went south when my best friend texted my mom, saying that she was worried. Then my sister’s soccer game got canceled. But I tried anyways. I had my drugs in hand, and I did it. There are parts missing from the rest. I can’t quite recall how my mom found me.

“Alexis, baby, it’s your mom. I know things are hard, but I promise you, you will get through this. We’re not mad at you baby, we’re mad at ourselves. We watched you become like this. You didn’t even talk to us, and that’s our fault. When you get better, which you will, please, talk to us.”

My mother caresses my face as tears stream down onto her lavender shirt. She puts her head on my chest and just cries. She sits there, gasping, and sobbing.

How did I do this?
Religious people call suicide selfish. I see why. I’m not religious, I can hardly even bring myself to go to Temple, but after having your own mother cry into your chest, for something that you did, you realize what being selfish is.

As time goes on and I physically get better, my mental state remains. Depression is more than just sadness, it’s a way of living. I’ve been under observation for about a week. The doctors say I can leave soon but I’m not mentally stable, therefore I can’t go home. They handed me a list of recommendations for “nice retreats” where I could go. They think I’ll be more willing to go if I choose where. As I scan the list with small, colorful photos next to each name, one catches my eye.

**Light at the End:**
**Home for the Struggling**

As we pull into the parking lot, I look up and see a bright blue building. Although the gates behind us would make it seem like a prison, the building itself is bubbly and warm. We park the car and I pull my small duffel from the back seat. The warm sun hits my face and I cherish the moment, for this could be one of the last free ones I have. We walk slowly into the building where a group of teenagers greets me. They don’t seem sad or like they’re being forced to do so. They flash genuine smiles.

“Hi, I’m Erika, I’m 16, and I’ve been at L-A-T-E for three months. Let me explain how it works here.”

She grabs my hand and walks with me. The rest of the teens disperse, leaving me with the peppy 16-year-old.

“See, I’ve been here for three months. But, depending on how you’re doing, you could leave sooner. Every person is different, and mental illnesses are different based on every person. They get that here. They don’t seem sad or like they’re being forced to do so. They flash genuine smiles.

“This is a cult.

This sounds like some brainwashing crap. How can someone be this happy about being locked up? Look, I get it. Make the best of your situation. Hey, I’m all for getting better. I don’t want to just be the depressed girl. But this?

As a week passes, I meet with several doctors. They figure out that a mix of medication and psychotherapy is the best form of treatment for me. They say I should be out of here within a week, that is, as long as I keep continuing to take the medication and go to therapy outside of LATE.

*This is great. That girl wasn’t brainwashed. We get the freedom to choose if we want to get better. We push ourselves and the doctors, not the other way around. I’ve seen people here who don’t want to get better. So they aren’t. I’ve made friends, too. Good, nice, decent friends who understand what I’m going through. Ones who won’t give me enough drugs to commit suicide.*

**Finally, people see that I need treatment, not a cure.**

Good and bad days come and go, that’s normal. Depression never leaves. I’ve lived with this cloud over me for 17 years; it will never leave. But rainy days can turn into sunny ones, clouds can come and go. I’ve learned that I can control this. I can control this metaphorical storm that lives inside my mind. My friends from LATE and I still talk. I ditched my druggie people and moved on to ones that actually care.

*The fear that people would judge me still lives on. It will never leave. There is a stigma surrounding mental health that will never vanish. But I can’t be scared of other people’s views on my illness, for it is a part of me. Six months ago I was being loaded into an ambulance. I am proof that there is good in life. There is always a way out or a happier life you can lead. Never live in darkness.*

**Author’s Note:** The paragraphs that are italicized are Alexis’ thoughts. Despite the fact that the whole story is narrated by her, these small paragraphs are her true thoughts on each scenario, hence the title “What Am I Thinking?”
I woke up, tears streaming down my face, shaking. I sat up and looked at the clock, 2:30 AM. I stared at the dimly lit courtyard of the chalet I was staying in during my spring break vacation in Aspen and wished it was all a nightmare, “This can’t be real,” I whispered. Fourteen hours earlier, I was happily skiing through the Aspen mountains on my vacation in my favorite city on Earth. I had just received confirmation that I was able to start a school-wide community service project, I had just won the school election for class president, I was just offered a spot in the highest choir at my school, I felt as though I had the best friends in the world, and I was in my favorite city. It was April, summer was near and I was hopeful and excited about the future. As I was eating lunch in a mountaintop cafe, my dad received a call from an unknown number. He moved to the next table and picked up the phone. I practically fell out of my chair trying to hear what he was saying. “What benefits will be included?” I heard him say sternly.

My mom and brothers all stared at each other in disbelief. We knew he was job searching, but it never occurred to me that something could really happen. As my father hung up the phone, he looked at us and said, “Well, looks like I have a new job in Michigan,” he grinned, almost apologetically. From that moment on, my life was forever changed.

Fourteen hours later, after having nightmares of having to say goodbye to the ones I love, I sat in my bed still sobbing, “G-d please, please don’t make me,” over and over again, until I eventually cried myself to sleep. The crying lasted for what felt like forever, days of crying in the shower, in bed, on the ski slopes. Whenever I tried to speak, my voice became shaky as my body trembled until I eventually broke down and started to cry again. I had no one to talk to about this, as my parents swore me to secrecy until everything for the new job was “set in stone.” I tried everything to get the entire thought of moving off my mind, but nothing worked. I would try to laugh, but as soon as I started to smile I immediately remembered why I shouldn’t be smiling. I tried going walking in downtown Aspen, but it started to rain. I tried to listen to upbeat music, but I couldn’t bring my body to move to the beat. I tried and tried, but nothing worked. I was missing the hope that I needed. I had no idea where my life was going and the unknowingness was foreign to me. I was at an all-time low; all hope was lost. I needed to know that things were going to be okay. I started to picture all of my closest friends moving on, forgetting about me and living their lives without me. I realized I would become just another memory to the people I love, and that’s what hurt me most.

When I returned to my home in Wisconsin, my friends and I went to a coffee shop. Somehow, even though we were just sophomores, the conversation ended up being about senior year. They were
talking about graduation, our senior trip, our prom. I sat in silence, clenching my jaw, trying to prevent the tears from falling down my face. I no longer was able to picture myself, smiling as I walked across the stage, receiving my diploma. I couldn’t see myself with my arms wrapped around my friends, laughing and wearing tuxedos. In fact, the only thing I could picture was a “For Sale” sign in front of my house and my friends smiling and laughing without me.

Eventually, I was able to tell my friends I was leaving. I was able to mask my depression well enough that they thought I was okay. Oddly enough, I ended up having to be the one to comfort my friends, telling them that I would talk to them every day and letting them know that I was going to make the most of the time I had before I moved. In a time where I needed someone to assure me that things were going to be okay, it was me comforting others. As ironic as this is, it actually helped me crawl out of the depressing hole that I was stuck in.

It felt as if a small part of the weight resting on my shoulders was removed. Through reassuring others that things were going to be okay for me, I ended up reassuring myself, too. I started to believe that G-d had a real plan for me. I had found the small amount of hope that I needed to force myself to keep going and to not give up. I had a completely new outlook on life. I started to become a new person, one that makes the most of every moment and one that appreciates the little things. I started to make the most of every Friday night and every day of summer. I was doing things that I had never done before; I made some of the greatest memories during the summer before I left. I constantly kept myself busy, forcing myself to keep my mind off of moving. I did not leave myself time to be sad.

As my dad was working in Michigan, waiting for our house to sell before he moved the rest of us, my mom was forced into the role of being a single mother. I often forgot that moving was affecting more than just me; even my mother was scared for the future. Throughout the summer, I would not let her see me sad, I knew I had to be strong for everyone, yet inside I was still scared for the future. The depression that I was facing was no longer visible to the human eye; it was alive inside of me. The longer I kept things inside, the more that emotions stirred and brewed. As the summer progressed, I found myself having breakdowns every so often, in the strangest of times.

One night, as I was getting ready to leave to attend a small gathering with my close friends, things hit me, hard. The emotions that had been brewing inside of me found their way out. The bandage that I tried to cover my emotions with had broken, and I was exposed and vulnerable. Upon arriving at my friend’s house, I sat on the ground, silent. My lip quivered as I desperately tried to bottle up every emotion in my body.

“Josh, are you okay?” I immediately looked down. I refused to look my friend in the eye.

“Yeah, I’m fine,” I lied smoothly.

I forced myself to be strong when I didn’t have to be strong. In that situation, I should have let my friends in and told the truth, that I was not fine or okay, that I felt myself falling apart, just like I had after I initially found out I was moving. Although I never said I needed help or that I was not okay, my friends knew otherwise. The conversations we had started to make me feel better about my future. My friends, the people who know me better than anyone, finally told me that things were going to work out for me, that they were not going to forget about me. I was no longer the one reassuring others, I had the support system I needed. Whether it be at one o’clock in the morning, or right before a football game, I knew when I was feeling down my friends would have my back. They told me that I wasn’t expected to be strong all of the time. I needed that. I realized that the mini breakdowns that I was having weren’t going away,
but opening myself up and being able to talk about what I was feeling would help.

Once my aunt told me something that will live with me forever. She said, “Josh, if anyone can get through this, it's you.”

Ever since she said that, I have carried it with me. From that moment on my future started to seem a little brighter. I stopped worrying so much about what could happen to me, and I genuinely believed that I was a strong individual. Whether or not it was true, I believed that I was strong and I believed I would get through anything. My support system gave me the hope that I did not have, and without that hope I know I would not have been able to live the way I did. I lifted up my head and learned to smile through the pain, not because it was fake, but because I always found something to smile about amidst the pain.

Not to say that I still did not have rough days; regardless of what anyone said, my heart was still broken at the thought of having to say goodbye to my best friends. Throughout my entire depression, before I moved, the worst day happened two weeks before I left. My house was sold, and I was spending my free time packing boxes. During the school day, it hit me: I was leaving my home, my comfort zone, my happy place. I was talking to one of my teachers – she could sense my sadness and she told me that I was going to do great wherever I am. In that moment I finally broke, not a small moment of sadness, or a quick tear or two, but a complete emotional breakdown.

“It’s just so hard,” I muffled as I sobbed.

I went to the bathroom and locked myself in a stall. I let everything out, I cried like never before. I just did not want to let go of my life in Wisconsin. I let my back sink down against the cold wall of the stall. My head sank down and I placed my hands upon my face. All of the sudden someone knocked on the stall door. As I peered through the sliver between the door in the wall, I could see it was the school janitor. Maybe someone went and got him, or it was just coincidental timing – regardless, I am happy he found me that day. Eventually, I ended up in the school social worker’s office that afternoon where I was able to talk about all of the emotions inside of me. She told me that teachers were worried about me, that I am a great kid and that they care about me. She also told me that moving is a lot like grieving, it’s hard at first to let go of something, but eventually things get better. Minutes after stepping out of the social worker’s office (still shaken up) I was talking to my friend Lilli in the hallway – she grabbed my arm and noticed something was wrong.

“Are you okay?” she asked.

For the first time, I was able to reply honestly, “I will be.”

Although that was the worst day of my entire high school career, it was also the day I realized that hope is produced by other people. Personally, I was at the lowest low and I could not supply my own hope. I was able to get through that situation because of the people around me. Without the support system I had, I would have been a lost poster child for depression. For my last week in Wisconsin, I made sure that I finished at my school with a 4.0, I hosted a poverty simulation for students to go through, and I spoke at a gala about the issue of homelessness in my community. I was ready to give up many times throughout my final weeks in Wisconsin. I realized that without hope, life is going to be dark and full of misery, but life sometimes can knock us down to a point in which we no longer are able to produce our own hope. A point in which our only source of hope can come from other people. The power of hope, that things would work out in the end, pushed me to keep fighting at a time where I wanted to give up. For that, I will be forever grateful for my friends and teachers who gave me hope because I know I would not be where I am today without it.
“Where there’s hope, there’s life. It fills us with fresh courage and makes us strong again.” – Anne Frank

With an event as sorrowful and traumatic as the Holocaust, words cannot even begin to describe how it felt to struggle through such a hardship. At the age of 15, Anne was subjected to living life in constant fear, hiding for her survival. Her every waking moment was coated in uncertainty, never knowing what each day would bring. All Anne had inside her small living quarters were some basic necessities and an empowering imagination. Looking back on these horrific moments today, we see that words themselves can do no justice to the Holocaust. However, Anne always put her emotions into words, and today we study her thoughts for an insight at what life was like for a young girl growing up in Nazi Germany.

Hope. A mere ordinary word, with a meaning that is anything but simple. With death and persecution just outside their door, the Franks had little to hold on to, but through everything, hope prevailed. Described as being both the “grounds for believing that something good may happen” as well as “a person or thing that may help save someone”, hope is sometimes all that remains in the scene of tragedy. Although starvation and poverty were eminent in the Frank’s crowded annex, they never lost sight of light, dreaming that they would one day find sanctuary and protection. In today’s life, hope is often overlooked and cast aside. Despite many individuals having food on the table and a roof over their heads, life is considered to be cruel and unfair for everyone. In times of despair, we seek out hope in ourselves and others, as it seemingly remains always in our line of sight.
What does it truly mean for one to be considered “living”? To some this means to simply have air in our lungs and blood circling through our veins. Contrastingly in real world terms, it can merely be defined as “the period between the birth and death of a living thing, especially a human being”. For Holocaust survivors such as Otto Frank, life really might just consist of eating and breathing, while others may see it as something deeper, something that represents how we go about using our time on Earth. There is so much more between birth and death than just getting up and going about tasks that make up the typical day-to-day routine. Life is about making the most of what you have, whether it be time, or anything else. From the millions of lives lost during the Holocaust, we today can see that life is a precious gift, and it is not to be taken for granted.

Courage. When all else fails, courage is one of the most challenging things to hold on to. With life’s thousands of seemingly impossible requests, it is often a struggle to find the courage to take a moment and keep going. Anne had a true and prevalent knack for being courageous, given the fact that she knew she might not survive to see the resolve of the Holocaust. Yet, she never sacrificed her bravery. Courage is having “the ability to do something that frightens oneself” and allows them to overcome mass obstacles of dismay. To this day, the Holocaust is known for its strenuous pull on everyone’s minimal hope and has shown how the demands of one corrupt individual can forever scar an entire race. Courageous acts take many forms, from simply reassuring one another that hope never fades, to taking severe risks in attempting to save lives – both Anne and her family are widely known for their bravery.

Strength. Often coupled with courage and perseverance, strength is yet another word whose meaning holds true to emphasizing the internal strains of those who dealt with the persecution and genocide of the Holocaust. Strength, in a relation to hope, shows that by continuing to push through during times of turmoil, an amazing amount of light can be brought forth to the world. Being considered as “the emotional quality necessary in dealing with events that are distressing or difficult,” strength is the key way in which individuals are able to overcome mental defeat. Having the ability to get up every day and push down the daily troubles and worries that life was throwing at her, Anne continues to model a renowned picture of strength.

From hope there stems motivation to persevere when life is confronted with defeat, the need for courage, and the push for strength. Who would have thought a word as small as hope would have such a monumental impact on one young girl, who then effortlessly spread her bravery across the world for all to see. Having a so-called “face of hope” in the eyes of the world has perhaps given Anne a place to always be remembered as an icon of courage and strength, through times of immense desperation.
The Power of Hope Essay

A small lifeboat floats within view of a tumultuous shore where waves glide over large boulders. A few moments before, the passengers on the lifeboat had abandoned their ship, which has no chance of harboring in the rocky shallows. After such a laborious journey across the ocean, the sailors face two options for the conclusion of their voyage: a successful trip to the shore, or a painful death at the hands of the waters. The sailors may be exhausted, but if they succumb to the fear of this journey and accept impending death, that is what they will achieve. If they look at the shore and realize how close they are and what they have endured to get there, then they will have hope. Hope will give them the courage to complete their journey, and I like to believe that this is the outcome that Thomas Birch had in mind for the sailors in his painting *Ships Off a Rocky Coast*. Hope gives people the power to achieve what may seem impossible. Hope inspires action, and in times of trouble, hope will enable the individual to power through the obstacles they face.

Birch’s painting reminds me of the story that my mother told me in the car a few days ago. She told me about an eleven-year-old girl who went on a vacation with her family in the 1900s. The family was on a luxurious yacht trip, but they entrusted the wrong captain to take them on the trip. The captain killed the girl’s entire family and sunk the yacht. The girl was left to traverse the ocean alone on only a lifesaver. She spent four days in the ocean with no food or fresh water, and she faced harsh conditions. During the day she would burn under the hot sun, and at night she would freeze, wearing only the nightgown she wore the night the yacht sank. After four days like this, a cargo ship came near, and the sailors spotted her surrounded by sharks. They retrieved her from the ocean, sunburnt, dehydrated, and exhausted, and they were shocked by her survival. When they asked the girl how she did it, she told them that she never lost hope in her return to land. Her hope gave her courage and life. She could have succumbed to the deadly conditions that she faced. She could have drowned or died of thirst, but instead she had faith that she would be rescued, allowing her to achieve her goal.

A family friend of ours was diagnosed with brain cancer a few years ago. She had surgery for it, but the doctors told her that it will return in about two years in a more aggressive form, which would likely be deadly. Our friend prayed and hoped that the doctors were wrong. She hoped to beat the statistics and be an exception to the doctor’s prediction. It has been four years since the day that the doctor told her this, and she remains cancer-free. As Anne Frank said, “Where there is hope, there’s life,” and hope gave life to our friend.

Hope is willpower; hope gives us strength. Like sailors on a lifeboat, we too need to have faith to achieve our goals. Whether it is a matter of life or death, or simply the ability to complete an arduous task, people need to have hope in order to complete it. It is easy to stay home each day and to hear about problems in the world on the news. However, the only way to solve these problems is to take action, and action comes from the belief that something can be done. This belief, of course, is hope.
She has only ever known 
the back of the bookshelf: 
tucked into the 
muted corner 
of the attic

The same bookshelf 
read her bedtime stories 
about a place where bravery 
was not killing 
and courage 
was not killed

Welcome to the City of Bones 
Population: Over 6,000,000

Red, black, white: 
the only colors 
she’s ever drawn with 
yet she managed to create 
a rainbow
Tell me how such a story ends

Her cheekbones were so sharp 
she carved a story into 
what was once 
considered 
her life

“Don’t worry, 
you’re safe” 
is the euphemism for 
“Don’t worry; 
you’ll die quickly” 
I don’t think they anticipated 
how long it would take 
to take her (life)(courage)(hope)

After all, how do you 
kill a girl 
whose (life)(courage)(hope) 
is in her writing

She had more stars in her eyes 
than stars in the skies

Welcome to the City of Wishes 
Population: 7 Billion
The Little Butterfly Who Did

58-26-43-82 That is my name and that is my identity.
When I first entered this camp, Auschwitz-Birkenau,
I noticed the sign in front that said:
“Arbeit Macht Frei”, or “Work Makes You Free”.

From that day, I have clung onto this sign of false hope, believing in all my heart
that if I worked hard enough and played by the rules, then I would be free.
I held my head up high that day,
not shedding a single tear when the Nazis chopped off my braid
and shaved the rest off.
I didn’t even flinch when the Nazi took a foot long needle and punctured my delicate skin,
forever marking me with this blue-inked number
that would pulse through my bloodstream
and write my death sentence.

For so long, I have lifted my colorful butterfly wings
to shield me from the horrors of the world surrounding me.
Slowly but surely, my wings took the blows
and with every earth-rattling blow,
the Nazis would drain my peacock colored wings of its hue,
until I was left with these transparent, paper-thin wings that made it impossible for my eyes
to avoid the cruelty of the world around me.

Why do the children have to go to sleep wondering
whether or not they will awake the next morning?
Or worse, why are the children here allowed to wonder
whether not waking up tomorrow is better
than reliving the horrors they experienced today?
How come that woman’s son was stoned to death the other day just because he stole an extra piece of burnt bread to nourish his ulcer-stricken stomach? Or how come that same child’s mother was told, with a gun barrel pointed at her head, to throw the stones at her son that would forever end his life, or else the Nazi would shoot, killing both her and the unborn child that was stirring in her stomach?

I don’t want to inhale the acerbic smell of dead children’s ashes that emanates from the gas chambers anymore. I don’t want to see the hollow, lifeless stares of children as they run up to me and ask “Oh Rivka, oh sister, do you have anything I can eat?”, when I myself have nothing to give. I just want to see them hold their healthy stomachs, and laugh at how full they are.

I heard a rumor the other day that in Norway, the Norwegians were wearing paper clips as a silent resistance against the Nazis. Nothing seems true nowadays, but I am clinging to this sliver rope of hope because I am afraid of forever losing my grasp on the world. I want the world to rain paper clips, and encase me in a circle of paper clips that will protect me from the hate and negligence that I have become so accustomed to.

I don’t wish this number, this sign of the devil’s arithmetic to be the only sign of my existence. I want to be remembered as the butterfly who dived into the mouth of a rainbow and flew out the other end with her translucent wings bursting radiant with colors. All I want is to be remembered as the butterfly who soared her way to freedom, with her wings made of paper clips outstretched towards the sky. And those wings will not bear this number with them, but instead with the words “Do Not Forget” written across them; “Do Not Forget Us”.

They Kept Singing

Out on the streets, while others were sleeping,
Soldiers broke into the homes they would pass;
The only sound was the victims’ weeping,
And the soldiers’ orders and broken glass.

They marched the arrested far from their homes,
From where they had been dragged a night before,
And packed into trains which shook on their bones,
But under the train's rattling and roar,
There was a murmur.

Into the camps they were led by their chains,
To shovel dirt, dig trenches, and haul stone,
Although their work was covered in bloodstains,
And faces were slowly replaced by headstones.

They were forced to march within the prison walls,
As their captors forced them to sing,
The songs of the new regime, in their calls,
But hidden within their marching,
There was a tremor.

The singing was for humiliation,
To destroy the thought of revolution,
Or hope for a form of liberation,
Or any wishes for retribution.

Silence followed, their captors thought they won,
The prison was quiet as a graveyard;
The sound of orders was the only one,
Noise which escaped past the gates,
which were barred.

Monotonous marches and punishment,
Became the only real daily routine;
Prisoners’ gradual diminishment,
Of hope and joy dominated the scene.

But in the concrete walls of the prison,
Hidden by the sound of footsteps drumming,
In the clamor, a new sound had arisen;
There was the faint, broken sound of humming.

The humming grew and echoed off concrete,
And met all the other prisoners’ ears,
And somehow they knew this was not defeat,
And encouraged them to wipe away tears.

But the humming soon had reached the soldiers,
And the wardens came with their chains and guns;
They would snarl and their eyes would smolder
Dared anyone to speak a word, just one.

“Who started the humming?” They roared in rage,
“Who dared to make sound, let alone hum?”
A shadow stepped forward onto the stage
Instantly, pressed to her head was a gun.

It was a girl, no more than age thirteen;
She gritted her teeth and shockingly, she,
Had the fiercest eyes they had ever seen,
And before her captors, she did decree,

“I will never stop humming and singing,
As long as I am stuck here, in this cage,
I will sing until your ears are ringing,
Or I die of sickness or of old age.”

The soldiers laughed. “You will die by this gun, 
And your comrades will be unaffected; 
As for resisting, you are the last one.” 
But what happened next was not expected.

A voice arose from where their heads would hang, 
It started with one voice, it became three, 
Then more joined in, and every voice sang, 
Of the hope and wonder of being free.

The soldiers screamed for them to be silent, 
Deafeningly, their voices kept ringing, 
Shots rang, but the prisoners were unbent; 
Unwaveringly, they just kept singing.

No one knows how the prisoners survived, 
Not knowing what the next day was bringing, 
Hoping for escape or help to arrive, 
But through the pitch black night, they kept singing.

How did the captives win the waiting game? 
How did they survive the cruel soldiers' guns? 
As dawn broke, on the horizon, planes came; 
They were freed, and they weren’t the only ones.

The walls were broken, their chains were undone 
They all raised their voices to the sky, 
Their rescuers said the war had been won, 
And the whole world had heard their outcry.

Others who were held in captivity, 
Were freed from their wardens and joined the throng, 
Of those who took back their own liberty, 
And chorused the prisoners fighting song.

What happened to those who are still alive? 
Maybe they started a new beginning, 
And maybe they still continue to thrive, 
But I assure you, they are still singing.
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<td>Daniel Forta</td>
<td>Mesivta of West Bloomfield, 12th grade</td>
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<td>Juliette Quenioux</td>
<td>North Farmington High School, 9th grade</td>
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<td>Nudar Shabil</td>
<td>International Academy East, 9th grade</td>
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Now in our 34th year, the Holocaust Memorial Center remains an important nexus for education, research, conferences, programs, speakers, and community engagement. Founded in 1984 by the late Rabbi Charles Rosenzveig and members of Shaarit Haplaytah, the Center opened its doors on the campus of the Jewish Community Center in West Bloomfield. The award-winning new building opened to the public in 2004. Designed by Neumann Smith & Associates, symbolic architectural elements of the building evoke memorials of the horror of the Holocaust.

The Holocaust Memorial Center Zekelman Family Campus houses not only museum exhibits, but also a research library, archives, and a gallery for temporary art and history exhibits. Each year, more than 65,000 people visit the museum; docent-led tours are offered daily, often with the opportunity to meet with a Holocaust survivor who shares his or her story and answers visitors’ questions.

Upon entering the museum, visitors are surrounded by a synopsis of Jewish history and an exploration of European Jewish heritage, including social, economic, educational, and communal aspects of Jewish life in Europe prior to the rise of Nazism. The core of the museum experience addresses the period between 1933 and 1945, when the Holocaust nearly succeeded in wiping out all of European Jewry. It is followed by a chronicle of the post-Holocaust period, including Holocaust survivors who remade their lives in Metro Detroit and greatly contributed to the local community.

The museum culminates in the Harry and Wanda Zekelman International Institute of the Righteous, honoring the righteous individuals who saved, or tried to save, a Jewish child, adult, family, or even an entire community, at great personal peril. Such heroes are, and always will be, honored in every Holocaust center worldwide. As it says in the Jerusalem Talmud, “When someone saves a single life, it is as if that person saved the entire world.”

Throughout the museum, visitors encounter timeless ethical themes and examples of altruism. Visitors are challenged to confront the dangers of unbridled hatred to a free and open society. It is our hope that each visitor leaves with a sense of urgency to stand up to discrimination and persecution, in big or small ways, taking to heart Anne Frank’s words, “Where there’s hope, there’s life. It fills us with fresh courage and makes us strong again.”
We would like to express our deep appreciation and gratitude to...

**Art Judges:**
Lynne Avadenka, Artist and Director of Signal-Return Detroit
Jo Strausz Rosen, Local Artist

**Writing Judges:**
Laura Berman, *The Detroit News*
Brian Dickerson, *Detroit Free Press*
Nolan Finley, *The Detroit News*

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**Art Photographer:**
Robert Hensleigh

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**Caterer:**
Quality Kosher Catering

**Photographer:**
Jerry Zolynsky

**Videographer:**
Blue Racer Productions

...and to the Kappy family and our dedicated staff

**Participating Schools in Oakland and Macomb Counties:**
Academy of the Sacred Heart
Adlai E. Stevenson High School
Berkley High School
Bloomfield Hills High School
Brandon High School
Detroit Country Day School
Eisenhower High School
Farber Hebrew Day School
Farmington High School
Frankel Jewish Academy
Fraser High School
Harrison High School
International Academy East
International Academy West
Marian High School
Mercy High School
Mesivta of West Bloomfield
North Farmington High School
Rochester High School
Roeper School
Southfield High School for the Arts and Technology
Stoney Creek High School
Walled Lake Central High School
Walled Lake Northern High School
West Bloomfield High School
Wylie E. Groves High School