

Poetry – Award of Excellence
Emily Pollok | Pine Crest School

As I sit here old and worn - an entire life's gone by
 And people speak of getting justice, but I have to wonder why?
 How can one even get justice for something nobody can justify?
 I am a Holocaust survivor, all the justice has run dry.
 Family members killed in the most horrific way.
 There is no justification to give, there are no "I'm sorry's" to say.
 Wrongdoers can be found guilty and punished for their crime.
 But that does not bring back my family- you can't go back in time.
 Some say that money should be given to those who suffered and lost.
 But what value can be put on human life- how can you calculate this cost?
 Don't get me wrong, I have lived a happy life with memories galore!
 I have kids and grandkids of my own whom I absolutely adore
 But when I think about the past and all it took from me
 There is no way of obtaining justice - at least not that I can see
 My hope is not to focus on the people who were full of so much hate
 They will get what is coming - they will face their own fate.
 I think the best chance of improving how things are and will be.
 Is to educate the kids today about what happened to me
 And teach them how to be kind and caring people who want to help not kill
 Because then future generations of mine have a chance at justice still.

Poetry – Honorable Mention
Cecelia Hansen | The Benjamin School

What is justice?
 Is it just that children in Africa are hungry?
 Is it fair that over 40% of our world's population doesn't have clean water to drink?
 Is it right that innocent animals are forced to leave their home because we want them more?
 No, it's not.
 It's not fair, not right, not...just.
 But, it's real...
 So it's time we make a real difference,
 It's time we get our hands dirty and stand up against injustice.
 So let's stop watching and saying, "someone should do something about this,"
 and do it ourselves.

Poetry – Honorable Mention
Braydon Weiner | Eagles Landing Middle School

Making a difference
 In the world today
 Helps the world in a better way
 Equality today should always be spread
 Since others back then
 Sometimes we're barely even fed
 Honor those who spread justice
 and do what is right
 These people show that they are very bright
 Spreading Justice is very important
 Which is something that is very significant
 Justice is important to the world
 Which is why it should be spoken about
 Every single day
 Justice



▲ Music Performance –
Special Judges Award
Kaley Byrne
Nataly Figueroa
Estefany Urbina
Camilla Reyes
 | St. Luke Catholic School



◀ Diorama – *Special Judges Award*
Jacqueline Lopez | St. Luke Catholic School
Lorie Rodriguez

▶ Diorama – *Honorable Mention*
Alexander Arroyo | St. Luke Catholic School



▲ Sculpture – *Special Judges Award*
Ethan Temu | BAK Middle School of the Arts



▲ Sculpture – *Honorable Mention*
Estrella Olivera | St. Luke Catholic School

▲ Drawing – *Award of Excellence*
Santiago Cisneros-Espitia | BAK Middle School of the Arts

Justice is the act of right behavior, treatment, and belief in equity. Justice is praised and recognized around the world. Martin Luther King Jr. says "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutiny, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly." I strongly believe in this quote and see it as a powerful statement. One can use their words to influence change in today's society. Mr. King Jr. pinpoints how injustice makes our world corrupt and unprincipled. In my lifetime, I was subject to rude comments, stares, and judgment. Being a black female in today's world, I cannot do anything without being pronounced lesser than. Luckily I go to an accepting school that strives to build community but, outside of the school's walls, I have to work even harder than a white female normally would just to prove that I belong.

Reflecting on justice is easier said than done. I still remember the first time I read about the people who made a difference in the black community. Major and more popular advocates like Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks, Harriet Tubman, Fredrick Douglass, and Oprah Winfrey are widely recognized in the black community. I believe that smaller advocates like Jane Bolin, Alice Allison Dunnigan, Claudette Colvin, and Daisy Bates are truly the ones doing the magic behind the scenes. They demonstrate and exemplify justice in strong and meaningful ways. I believe that this is a minor form of injustice. Although what people like Martin Luther King did is extremely heroic, we should still recognize and acknowledge the minor advocates. They should be celebrated just as much as Oprah Winfrey because they took steps toward creating justice for future generations, even if it meant risking their own lives. They influence daily lives in smaller communities while the others influenced future generations as well as the current generation. I became inspired to stand up against injustice, strive for excellence and live by Martin Luther King's quote. I can prove that I belong in a community that is predominantly white, or full of people who do not think I should be there.

I can specifically take action steps to create a just, humane, and compassionate world. When working toward this goal, it only has to start with one person, and that one person could be me. I could take tangible actions by stepping out of my comfort zone and walking in other people's shoes. In the case of racism or segregation, I could stand up for what I believe is right and push for equality in communities. I can also advocate for the smaller communities that are doing the right thing and are not seen in the larger world. I can engage in a more empathetic, encouraging, and understanding world by recognizing smaller advocates for the black community. Realizing how many advocates strived to create our world a better world, we could work toward understanding how important human equality is to some people. Justice only has to start with one person and one's actions can change the world.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., civil rights activist, spoke on the importance of justice and equality; King stated, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly." He stresses that if acts of injustice happen, all work to get rid of injustice is affected. Additionally, he explains that the world is connected, and if justice is disturbed, then achievements for equality change. Generally, having justice in the criminal system is important so that everyone feels safe, equal, and free.

Ideally, everyone is treated equally within the criminal system. This means no racial profiling throughout the system. Additionally, there is no bias toward a person because of skin color. Lastly, when a person deals with the justice system, his/her fate is not already decided due to race. In a dream world, everyone is treated with fairness.

Unfortunately, individuals all over the world are being treated unfairly in the criminal system because of race. A recent problem that garnered attention in the public eye is police officers jumping to suspicions based on race. On May 25, 2020, I remember coming home and yelling my parents' names to see if they were home. No response. I started looking for them; they were speechless watching the news. 46 year old, African American father, George Floyd was arrested for allegedly using a fake \$20 dollar bill. A white, male officer held Floyd to the ground with his knee on the victim's neck. After Floyd repeatedly said he could not breathe, he suffocated and died. I was stunned. My dad said to us, "We have to be careful out there, especially because of the color of our skin." That is when I realized that some people are unjust to those who are of different races, including those who are supposed to protect us. As a biracial person, this made me nervous for my family's safety. In the real world, there is injustice happening in the legal system.

To change injustice, I can treat others equally, not make assumptions based on skin color, and be more transparent. One way I can stop injustice in my life is to be kind and provide everyone the same opportunities. Another thing I could do is not make assumptions based on skin color. I can get to know someone before judging. Lastly, I could be more transparent to others. I would be honest with everybody. Overall, to create justice I would treat everybody fairly, not speculate, and be honest.

Lastly, individuals should be comfortable, safe, equal, and free without feeling a sense of fear; this is why the criminal system should be fair. To continue, people should care about justice because it encourages people to be fair and impartial. In sum, the King's opening quotation relates to the world as a whole because everyone is connected and should be treated equally, as we are all human.

Special thanks to the 2023 Essay & Creative Arts Competition judges Gail Coniglio, Marsha Gilbert, Sylvia James, Cynthia Kanai, Ann Metzger, Bill Metzger, Katherine Summers, and Debora Weinstein.

Poetry – Award of Excellence
Zoraida de Souza | Pine Crest School

Five Black boys walking home from school;
 Four White cops with their guns;
 Three boys die;
 Two paralyzed for life;
 One scarred in a way that can never be repaired.

You screamed “Black lives matter” for months;
 But what happens when your songs die down? What happens when you forget the anthems you said so proudly? What happens the day after?

You scream for justice, and then another boy dies.

What happens when that one Black child in your neighborhood looks just a little bit too much like that guy who's your suspect? What happens when he's just slightly too suspicious because he's wearing a hoodie? What happens when you scream for justice but, yet still, there is another lying dead body? What happens when that mother has to grieve?

What happens?

When you scream for justice, when you scream it loud and proud, and, yet still, there are dead bodies everywhere? What about those boys who are dead now? What happens when those cops get suspended and get back to their jobs and do it again?

What happens?

You scream for justice. You always seem to pretend.

“Justice” you screamed. “Justice.”
 “Anthem,” you screamed, “Black lives matter! Black. Lives. Matter.”

Screaming these anthems with joy on your faces, you act as if it matters. “Justice,” you screamed for, but where is the justice?

You so proudly said, “where is the justice?”

Those who scream, their voices get drowned out;
 They promise justice, but they never deliver.

“Black lives matter” you say;
 “Justice for everyone,” you say
 but the next day...

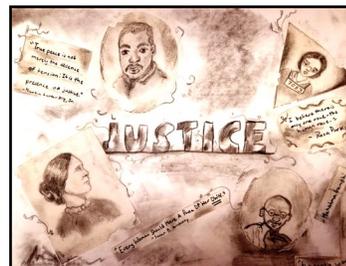
Five Black boys walking home from school
 Four White cops with their guns
 Three boys die
 Two paralyzed for life

One scarred in a way that can never be repaired. That one looks like me. That one is me.



▲ Poster – Honorable Mention
Charlotte Ryan | Rosarian Academy

▼ Poster – Honorable Mention
Valentina Monegro
 | St. Luke Catholic School



▲ Poster – Honorable Mention
Lola Grande | Rosarian Academy



▲ Painting – Honorable Mention
Satori Morales | Independence Middle School



Poetry – *Award of Excellence*
Luca Balzano | The Benjamin School

Look in the mirror, what do you see?
 A kaleidoscopic reflection of a being like you, or one just like me?
 Struggling with uncertainty while grasping glimpses of hope,
 optimistic thinking of an inexorable situational scope.

Stories of wearied souls like fettered aberrations trying to escape,
 while they spawned divisions and created new landscapes.
 A blend of ancestors now resting as silhouettes one and the same,
 linked by an unjust past with survival flowing deep in their veins.

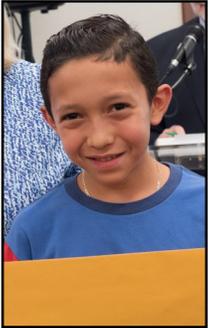
Greed and power – a man-made blindness,
 a conditioned intolerance, yet some resisted and pointed within.
 Exploitation! For those subjected to a world without kindness,
 forced into a captivity of darkness as they forged the "original sin."

Enduring the uncertainty while grasping glimpses of hope,
 using mercurial thinking and ambitious ways of how to cope.
 The Planters shaped foundations which they seeded and fortified,
 producing a hierarchy of hues that they thought were justified.

Desperation loomed, but hope was the harbinger many prayed to hear,
 like a twisted enigma inspired by chance as a promise so dear.
 The tall, honest, and bearded man, who made it so clear, most thought it a dream
 Like a tree hankering desperately to flourish across the Atlantic, so evergreen.

A complicated pattern of promises predetermined their destiny from the sea
 dreaming for justice and the proclamation for all to be free.
 While the healing Labor of justice comforts the hopeless and those feeling weak,
 uplifting the masses and extending a chorus of promises we should all seek.

Langston points us to the "blind goddess" holding the flame of truth to guide one's sight,
 Measuring souls and balancing scales – forging justice for each other's plight.
 A promoter of fairness, she ushers our communities to act with impartiality
 As our champion, Dr. King, professed, "whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."



Essay – *Award of Excellence*
Zurich Ronert | The Benjamin School

Justice is a representation of being able to find and take the path of good in any situation. As Theodore Roosevelt once said, "Justice consists not in being neutral between right and wrong, but in finding out the right and upholding it, wherever found, against the wrong." The definition of justice today is to be able to distinguish right and wrong. Roosevelt's definition adds something vital to the lacking definition of today. He adds the quality of being able to uphold justice once you define it. Roosevelt's interpretation is the meaning that needs to be thoroughly accepted in order to achieve justice globally.

In all forms of communities and groups, a sense of justice must be established to be able to work together and respect each other. If someone is getting bullied in one's school, one must be able to not only define the right path but also take it. The same goes for a business. If a boss or co-worker is being treated or treating someone unfairly, it is necessary to stand up for them and display one's sense of justice. "We are all implicated when we allow other people to be mistreated. An absence of compassion can corrupt the decency of a community, a state, a nation." (Bryan Stevenson, *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption*) Stevenson is saying that in order to prevent corruption justice is a necessary essence that must be spread around communities and nations alike.

Strives for justice are already being made. Around the world protests and organizations have banded together to fight for a future of equality. Justice does not always win, But the point is to fight even if you get down, as Elie Wiesel said, "There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest." So even if you do not succeed, stand your ground and triumph in the next one. Do not accept defeat and give up, for one victory for injustice does not set in stone a permanence of unfairness and corruption. As Angela Davis said, "I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change. I am changing the things I cannot accept." What she said is the basis of the fight for justice. Fighting the unacceptable injustice in the world and protecting what is right. That's what Davis is trying to explain. That's what the fight for justice is about.

Justice - The quality of being able to distinguish right from wrong, and then doing something about it. To stand up for it. To protect it. To be able to speak up for someone being treated unfairly and speak against injustice. To fight for it. To fight alongside T. Roosevelt, Stevenson, and Davis. To fight alone. To fight for justice for yourself, for someone else, and for the future.

Poetry – Award of Excellence

Dylan Donigan | Oxbridge Academy

JUSTICE

Written into the constitution
with meaningful intentions -
by white men, our Founding Fathers,
inspired and exhilarated-
with the dream of the birth of a new nation.

A transformative time,
with a shared sense of purpose -
a step forward for America.

STILL

Obstacles to overcome-
the chains of slavery finally ending.
With the 13th Amendment abolishing slavery,
we must remember...
American soldiers have fought and died for us - for our equality.

We live in a nation that strives for
"We the People" to mean "All the People"
and JUSTICE prevails for one and all.

FORGIVENESS

Evolving, Understanding, Moving morally forward-
So that our brothers and sisters
all hold the basic rights of mankind.
A voice that is ethical- a voice that is respectful- and above all...
A voice that is fair-

A voice that serves our human existence.
This powerful combination, when practiced,
is the very heart and universal truth of JUSTICE.

MOVING FORWARD

We must find a way to bear the burden of our past.
It's time to understand our moral compass -
and not compromise our core beliefs.
We must be brutal, yet sensitive -
in maintaining our integrity.
It's time to rise above prejudice:
where every gender, every race, every religion is fairly represented.
AMERICA: where JUSTICE is the ONLY CHOICE for ALL

Poetry – Award of Excellence

Bryce Smith | Independence Middle School

To solve social injustice, we need to unite,
And stand up for those who face discrimination and plight,
We must use our voices, we must use our might,
To fight for equality, with all our heart and might.

We must educate ourselves, and those around us too,
About the struggles of others, and the pain they go through,
We must open our eyes, and see things anew,
And work together, to create a world that's true.

We must break down the barriers that divide us all,
And embrace the differences that make us stand tall,
We must stand up for justice, and answer the call,
And create a society that values and cherishes all.

Let's join hands and work towards a better tomorrow,
Where everyone is treated with respect and not sorrow,
Let's build a world, where love and empathy can flow,
And put an end to social injustice, once and for all.



▲
Spoken Word – Award of Excellence
Santino Merchan | Rosarian Academy
Nick Ferik
Andrew Sevald



▲
Spoken Word – Award of Excellence
Isla Brawn | Rosarian Academy
Caroline Mishke



▲
Spoken Word – Award of Excellence
Cecelia Hernandez Macias
| Rosarian Academy



▲
Spoken Word – Award of Excellence
Bea George | Rosarian Academy
Caroline Yohe

▼
Spoken Word – Honorable Mention
Sawyer Treadway | Rosarian Academy



Justice is of vital importance in most societies as it is the idea that all people are treated equally and fairly. As stated by Albert Einstein, "In matters of truth and justice... issues concerning the treatment of people are all the same." The laws of justice were put in place to protect people from harm. If harm is done to a person, that person can be compensated for their loss and the person who caused the harm can be punished. When most people think about justice they think about laws, however, the concept of justice goes way beyond this. It can also be thought of as people being moral and ethical and allowing everyone the same respect, opportunities, and happiness in life. There are many forms of justice and they affect the lives of every individual and society as a whole. Here we will discuss many types of justice including, social justice, economic justice, humane justice and mention some individuals that have fought for this justice.

Social justice is part of the perspective that everyone deserves equal treatment, rights, opportunities, and privileges no matter what social class they fall under or what race, gender, or religion that person might be. Social justice affects peoples' opportunities and careers. One example of this is when a person goes on a job interview and has the correct credentials for that position and the employer does not deny them the job because of the color of their skin, gender, or religion they practice. Social justice also allows people the same privileges. It permits people to live wherever they choose, attend the public school of their choice, ride on public transportation, visit parks, and attend events regardless of their race or religion. One historical example of improper social justice or social injustice was when Rosa Parks was told she could not sit in the same seat on the city bus as the white people. Another example would be the movement of Native American from their homes because some people didn't think they should be able to live in a particular area. Social justice is a huge part of running a democracy, where the people help to decide what they want to change or keep the same. Social justice allows everyone to vote and does not try to stop voters. The ACLU states that voters are kept from voting due to expired criminal records, destruction of voting boxes, and by changing boundaries. With ideal social justice in place, citizens that put the same amount of work into a society, should get the same amount of it.

Economic justice is another type of justice and one that is very difficult to achieve. This involves allowing everyone to become a productive member of society, so that they can earn a fair amount of money, feel dignified, and be able to provide for their families no matter what their background. Economic justice involves income equality in the workplace and would require that everyone with the same job skills and abilities make the same amount of money. The relatively recent "gender pay gap" has been one of the slowest-moving economic justice issues. The gender pay gap started in the 1950s with women earning around 60% of what men earned and only in the 1990s did the number go up to 70%. Now in 2023, women earn 82% of what men earn; that's only an increase of 22% since the 1950s. The gender pay gap has stayed in the same position for 20 years. Now the gender pay gap could be the result of sexism, lack of opportunities for women, or simply discrimination, but one thing that is for sure is the huge injustice it brings to women. Economic justice also includes the living wage or finding a way so that everyone is being paid a fair amount and that that amount is enough to survive on. The minimum wage in Florida today is \$11.00 an hour. Some believe this is not a wage that a family can survive on and therefore that it is socially unjust. In an economically just society, everyone who qualifies to borrow money from the bank should be able to. Borrowing money can help citizens make money by starting a business or buying real estate. This money should not only be loaned to the people the bank likes but to everyone. Our government has made the Fair Housing Act (FHA) to protect people from discrimination when it comes to borrowing money. Economic justice also includes the idea that the economy will be better if it is fairer, the goal is to help everyone make money, so that they can put this money back into the economy and the economy will grow. It is generally true that when people make more money, they spend more money. This makes the economy stronger and most gain from it.

A third type of justice which does not get enough attention these days, is humane justice. The present refugee crisis falls under the need for humane justice. The number of refugees entering our country has more than doubled in the past decade. In 2022 the UNHCR announced that we had surpassed 100 million refugees. This includes around 23 million refugees under the age of 18 now living in America alone. Refugees leave their homes because of violence, poverty, war, climate change, or food insecurity. It is important to work to make them legal citizens but while they are trying to get there we should treat them humanely. It is written into the U.S. constitution that the United States is a place of refuge for the weak and needy, however, it often fails in its human rights commitment in this area.

There's always been justice and injustices in the world, luckily there's always been people who stand up for what's right. For example, activists such as Malala Yousafzai, Dr Martin Luther King Jr, and Malcom X have fought to treat people with equal justice. Malala Yousafzai was only 11 years old when she started to fight for the rights of a safe education for girls. Malala bravely stood up against the Pakistani government, but sadly when Malala was 15 she was shot by a man that the Taliban had sent because of her protests against the government. Dr Martin Luther King Jr. might just be the most well-known activist of all time as the prominent leader of the civil rights movement. MLK stood up against racial injustice in the 1950s and 1960s. In his most famous speech -I Have a Dream- MLK Jr. states, Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children - meaning that right then and there was when justice was needed. Malcolm X was also a vocal advocate for black empowerment. Malcolm, a spokesman for the Nation of Islam, later became a part of the Sunni Islam civil rights movement. Malcolm started to get death threats from the Nation of Islam, On February 21, 1965, Malcolm was assassinated in New York by three members of the nation.

Unfortunately, there are so many examples of current injustice in the U.S. that it would be impossible to cover them all. One type of justice, poetic justice, seems to be a happy ending when discussing all the injustice in our world. Poetic justice entails the feeling of relief or justness when something that a person deserves or doesn't deserve happens or does not happen. One example of poetic justice is seen in the book Hamlet by William Shakespeare. When Hamlet goes out to seek the killer of his father his goal is to kill him and only after he kills Claudius can Hamlet rest; this was Hamlet's poetic justice. The fight for justice is a never ending one, all we can hope for is that more and more people do what is fair and vote for legislation that can make the world a more just place to live in.

Essay - *Award of Excellence*

Jack Freitas | Rosarian Academy

Is there justice in the world? This is a question countless people ask themselves every day, but is there a certain answer? Many human beings are not treated equally in comparison to others, and do not have certain rights that should be guaranteed. Without a doubt, citizens must take a strong stance on equality and help prevent injustice across the world, before the human race risks repeating history.

In today's world, countless individuals face inequality and prejudice. As a result, many citizens try to influence their communities by publicly protesting. For example, many young adults of the newer generation use social media as a tool, voicing their opinion and acquiring others to join their movement. A famous example of speaking out against injustice occurred on August 28, 1963, during the March on Washington when more than two hundred thousand people came, feeling that they deserved true justice in America. When Martin Luther King Jr. proudly delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech, the nation would significantly change, clearly exemplifying how a group of people can help make a difference in the world and for future generations to come. Eleanor Roosevelt once said: "Justice cannot be for one side alone, but must be for both." If government officials fail to recognize the precedents set by motivated activists and do not listen to their citizens, a community will indefinitely fail to function.

"There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest," said Elie Wiesel, a famous Holocaust survivor. Mr. Wiesel published the famous book *Night*, describing his experience in Auschwitz, an infamous concentration camp. This particular book was quite enlightening in how it encompassed the tragedy of the Holocaust: the smell of the burning bodies, the yelling of the German officers, the taste of what little rations were available, and the harsh beatings many prisoners endured. However, some citizens choose to believe it never happened. Furthermore, there have been recent discoveries involving antisemitic comments or actions. It's incredible to think that even after nearly eighty years, antisemitism is still prevalent in many communities, including the one in which I live, and citizens have failed to improve from the mistakes made before. I myself believe that I have a responsibility to attempt to make antisemitism subside across the world. I want to do my best to stand up for the Jewish people and their rights, and try to do my part in stopping any harmful or offensive comments others are making towards them.

Without a doubt, justice can be a difficult topic to understand. Many people are not treated as equals; thus, citizens of the world must make an effort to voice their opinions and help prevent history repeating itself. It's hard to believe that the human race will one day achieve absolute peace. However, that should never stop us, as human beings, from assisting others, and helping to make the world a better place.



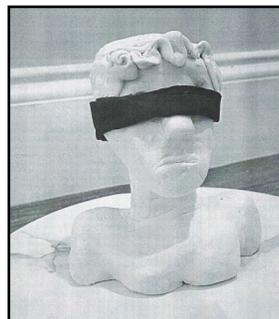
▲ Painting – *Honorable Mention*
Rayjan Alvarez | BAK Middle School of the Arts



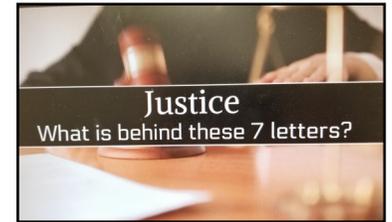
▲ Drawing – *Honorable Mention*
Addison Wilkes | BAK Middle School of the Arts



▲ Painting – *Special Judges Award*
Adia Agarwal | BAK Middle School of the Arts



▲ Sculpture – *Award of Excellence*
Alexandra Hlewicki | Western Pines Middle School



▲ Video – *Award of Excellence*
Likhitha Narava | Independence Middle School



▲ Video – *Award of Excellence*
Siena Davis | St. Mark's Episcopal School

▼ Drawing – *Honorable Mention*
Victoria Cardas | BAK MSOA



▲ Sculpture – *Honorable Mention*
Chryssa Rezvanian
| Rosarian Academy

Essay – Award of Excellence

Gabriella Ferry | Western Pines Middle School

To me, justice is the equal and fair treatment of people wherever they are, regardless of their race, ethnicity, or other differences. Justice includes the laws and legal systems set in place to ensure that equality and fairness exist. Those laws also allow action to be taken against those who treat others unequally or unfairly. Justice looks different in other parts of the world, though.

To begin with, I recently began a research project on Malala Yousafzai, who became famous for fighting for women's educational rights in Pakistan and the Middle East. In my research, I learned that girls living in countries on the other side of the world have to fight for their right to be educated. I have learned that girls around the world are not treated equally and are oftentimes held to different standards than the men in those societies. For example, up until 2018, women in Saudi Arabia were not allowed to drive. Some Islamic countries require women to cover their entire bodies and hair, only exposing their eyes, while men do not have to follow these same rules. Is it just for women in these countries to be treated differently than their male counterparts?

Although many countries have made strides to improve conditions for women, there are still many places in the world where women see justice differently than men. In South Sudan, women are still not allowed to take part in the decision-making process in their homes and are banned from being a part of the political process. Not having the right to vote due to their gender is not just.

However, injustice isn't something that is only experienced outside of our country. There are places everywhere, even in our country, where you can find examples of people being treated unfairly and unequally. For instance, my school soccer team recently played a game at a middle school in Belle Glade. The conditions of the school and the soccer field were very different from mine. The field was overgrown and covered in fire ant hills. I kept wondering how two schools in the same district could be so different. Although they have the opportunity to play soccer for their school like me, I could tell that the soccer players from that team do not have the same opportunity for success as my team.

All of these examples of injustice got me thinking about how I can make a difference. I can take advantage of my right to vote and take part in political discussions; in my country, I have the right and responsibility to make my voice heard when I see injustice. I can also use tools like social media to support those that are facing injustice throughout the world. In addition, I can support Malala and others by donating money, time, and other forms of support to help make their voices heard. Social media has made it easier for us to reach a larger audience which can help inspire others to fight for justice.

Essay – Award of Excellence

Lia Interlandi – The Benjamin School

"True peace is not merely the absence of war, it is the presence of justice," said Jane Addams, the second woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize and an American activist. Addams believed that justice is what makes peace arrive. Peace disappears in society, given enough time, which is why justice is so important. Justice is important to a society, for without it, many voices are drowned. Without justice, America is not a democracy. Justice is the quality of being unbiased and fair.

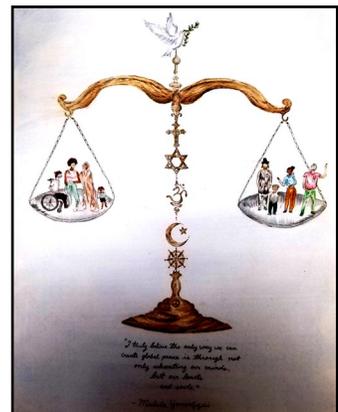
Being fair is a key quality of being just. Fairness must be shown in professional environments such as court rooms. To be part of a jury in America, one must prove to be unbiased. Fairness is not mandatory in personal life, and the effects start to show through in society. Many people don't treat others fairly. In day-to-day life, one often sees favoritism in many ways, such as parents' favoritism in kids, teachers' favoritism in smarter students, adults treating kids less because of their age, and even many younger kids treating people their own age differently because of their gender, race, and ethnicity. Although fairness may be written in the Constitution, it is not common to see someone without personal biases and stereotypes.

Justice derives from compassion. Humans have a natural instinct to help others around them, but humans also have the instinct to only help themselves. The question is, though, which one comes out on top? Most kids learn from a young age to stand up for themselves, and do what is best for them, but sometimes, it is better to help everyone than to just help yourself. Simply an act of kindness, like sharing some lunch with someone who doesn't have any, can start a chain reaction. Though the kid might be losing food, they are helping the other have something to eat, which could, in turn, help many others. If we have compassion for everyone, then everyone will, in turn, treat others equally and fairly.

Fairness is a key quality that defines the term justice. Without these qualities, justice would not truly be just for everyone. Society without justice would be inhumane and intolerable. For reasons like these, everyone needs to work to create a better world, a more just one. There are many ways to create a better world, but the most simple, and important, is kindness. It spreads, and small acts of kindness can make someone happier, more positive, and treat others around them better.



▲ Mixed Media – Award of Excellence
Stephanie Ni | BAK MSOA



▲ Mixed Media – Award of Excellence
Karishma Koodie | BAK MSOA

Essay – Award of Excellence
Bridget McDermott | The Benjamin School

Justice is a concept of moral rightness based on ethics, rationality, law, natural law, religion, or equity. Injustices can be shown in many different settings. The concept of unfair healthcare acknowledges the stark differences between populations in terms of healthcare outcomes and access across different communities. America needs to try and tackle this systematic problem by making healthcare free and just. Our country wants to pride itself on being a leader in medical technology and such, but in reality, our system is greatly flawed and unjust. Medical anthropologist and physician, Paul Farmer, said, "the idea that some lives matter less is the root of all that is wrong with the world." This means that healthcare is not a privilege because it should be available to everyone. Recognizing that access to cheap, high-quality healthcare is a basic human right is another aspect of the pursuit of an equitable system that America can be proud of.

The fundamental human right of healthcare is just not available to everyone as it should be. A hospital bill in America is enough to bankrupt a large percentage of our population. People are too scared to enter a hospital because of their substantial worry about their ability to pay for it. Twenty-seven million Americans still lack health insurance. Even when being insured all medical treatments run a substantial charge that can lead people into debt or to declare bankruptcy. Imagine having to choose between your health and your family's well-being. A simple hospital bill can easily take away home and food from families. Healthcare is not the only injustice in our system, forty percent of Americans struggle to pay their household expenses. This can be because of income inequality, inflation, unemployment, debt traps, and poor education. The majority of people living in poverty do not have access to healthcare and an adequate education. How are they meant to get a job and provide for themselves and their families with a reduced education?

Our broken system is in need of change, first, we must understand that healthcare is a basic need and not a luxury. Other parts of the world like Canada and Europe have made healthcare free for their citizens. The people of the United States are very vulnerable when it comes to healthcare. Our system is not one of equity but one of partiality. Based on location, healthcare can have heightened prices. There are also systematic biases in the healthcare industry. These biases can lead to the unfair and unjust treatment of certain groups of people. We should not have to compare or argue prices when someone is unwell or in a health crisis. Only about eighty-two percent of American citizens do not have medical debts on their credit. The number one reason for bankruptcy remains to be healthcare costs.

We have to recognize that access to free healthcare is essential for our nation. This is an important goal that can help to improve health outcomes and reduce disparities in healthcare.



Poetry – Honorable Mention
Rebecca Westfort | Woodlands Middle School

Some people might say
"Justice is just a word"
But it is so much more than a word.
It's the freedom and loyalty,
Of this word.
It is the act of trying,
Of this word.
It is the act of all these thoughts, expressions, words;
It's the act of loving too.
Injustice is a threat anywhere and everywhere in the world.
If there was justice, the world could be at peace.
The people of this world deserve justice.
No matter if you're poor, rich, strong, weak, ugly, or beautiful.
It doesn't matter your gender or race.
The justice should be there,
It should be anywhere and everywhere.
It should not be overlooked;
It should not be "reserved" for one "kind."
Justice is freedom and tranquility.
It's meant for everyone.
The act of conducting this peace, like an orchestra, all together in harmony;
But our world is not like this.
It is better than it used to be but, people are still being judged, being treated differently.
But why?
Why would someone need to be treated differently?
What cost are we giving up?
We are giving away justice.
The one property - and fundamental of this world.
The strength this world could have if we came together and had peace.
If we had truth to ourselves and others.
If we had a destiny or job.
A destiny to have justice in this world.



Essay – Award of Excellence
Gianna Dileo | The Benjamin School

Even though justice is the quality of being righteous, equitable, or morally right and is seen as a standard for the United States government, it is so often disregarded in its practices. As Benjamin Franklin once said, "Justice will not be served until those who are unaffected are as outraged as those who are." Benjamin Franklin's words correlate perfectly with the injustices today in the U.S. bail system and how it is exploited by the privileged.

The legal system in the United States consists of two justice systems: one aimed at the wealthy and a second for everyone else. Every year, the difference between liberty and prison for hundreds of thousands of incarcerations is determined entirely by their socioeconomic status. Wealthy individuals can purchase pre-trial autonomy, keep their job, as well as remain in their residences whilst also planning their defenses. On the other hand, an arrestee who lacks funds must stay in jail for days, weeks, months, or years until their case is settled. Those who are imprisoned before they are tried are more inclined to lose their jobs, be removed from their residences, and have no way of providing care for their families. Since the money bail system does not favor the poor and incapable people in jail, they accomplish nothing to encourage freedom, general security, or court appearance rates. These are all goals that can be reasonably accomplished through alternative ideas instead of creating unnecessary pretrial confinement which increases crime rates. As Equal Justice Under Law states, "Money bail is a price tag on freedom that only serves as wealth-based discrimination."

In line with Benjamin Franklin's wise words, I am a member of a small community that is unaffected by the inequitable bail system. Nevertheless, I have noticed this discrimination and am just as outraged as the nation's underprivileged citizens. I and many others like me can create a more just, humane, and compassionate country by merely empathizing and defending the less favored. Instead of manipulating the system, my small community can take action and create the America all citizens were promised.

The wise quote by Benjamin Franklin, "Justice will not be served until those who are unaffected are as outraged as those who are" connects perfectly with the unfairness today in the U.S. bail system and is abused by the privileged. Using the instance of the Holocaust, some non-Jew people in Europe overlooked the injustice the Jews suffered because they believed it was "out of their hands." However, people like Miep Gies utilized their privilege as non-Jews to aid families in need. Risking her life to help the Frank family was not out of Miep Gies' hands. As Kurt Messerschmidt explains, "Some of the people disapproved. But it was only silence, and silence is what did the harm." I intend to be like Miep Gies and bring attention to the alarming injustices of the U.S. bail system.

Essay - Award of Excellence
Zane Robertson | Western Pines Middle School

Justice has different meanings for everyone worldwide, but what does it look like and how has it changed over time? Years ago what people thought was just turned out to be unjust, and we will continue to realize our mistakes as time goes on. In this life, full justice may never be accomplished but if we don't push for it as our predecessors did we will never reach that point.

"There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest." from Elie Wiesel, a Holocaust survivor. This is a quote I will stand by forever. Not only was this something people needed to do during World War II, but continue to do forever. The Holocaust is a perfect example to show what can happen when we don't protest injustice. Most of the world acted as a bystander while Jewish people were being eradicated, it wasn't just Germans and people nearby, but countries everywhere did nothing to stop it because it wasn't something affecting them. Another instance in history that I believe aligns with this quote is the Rosa Park bus boycott, what would have happened if no one protested? Chances are, segregation could have lasted much longer, meaning all those who boycotted the buses played a big part in ending segregation. In Birmingham Alabama, there were protests by hundreds of people, even kids, who filled the streets fighting for the justice they deserved. Injustice isn't something that one person can stop, it's something that everyone needs to help stop otherwise those facing injustice will face it forever.

In summary, fighting against injustice is important for everyone. It's important to stand for what is right and work together as a group because we cannot fight alone.



Essay – Award of Excellence

Jayne Hutson | Western Pines Middle School

Each person has their own interpretation of justice. To me, justice is the correction of injustices. Today, technology is an integral part of everyday life. Injustices in the technological world are especially important to me as I am passionate about this field and wish to pursue it in my future career. I believe technology has improved justice by allowing people to communicate injustices that have happened to them and by creating a more connected, compassionate society.

To begin with, technology helps support and raise awareness for victims of injustice. For example, the "Black Lives Matter" or BLM movement had a huge surge during the pandemic when contact with the outside world was dependent on online sources. The black community and many allies banded together online to demand justice for those black individuals who experienced discrimination. Without technology, this movement would never have been able to reach so many people, especially while the whole world was in lockdown. Tim Berners-Lee, the inventor of the World Wide Web and the first version of Html, a programming language, shared his thoughts by saying "The web is not the universe, but the web is an important lens on the universe... We have a duty to use the web to make the world a better place, to help those who are oppressed, and to promote greater justice and equality". Tim Berners-Lee hoped his creation would be used to create a better sense of justice and equality. The "Black Lives Matter" movement is a perfect instance of this where people got together and helped demand justice for those who were oppressed. They did this by creating an online community supporting individuals and connecting people.

Next, let's look at the "Me Too" movement. The "Me Too" movement was started online and focused on sharing sexual assault victims' stories by tagging posts with #MeToo. It gave support to a lot of women that otherwise would have most likely never shared their unfortunate experiences. The movement started on Myspace in 2006 and blew up in 2017 after actor Alyssa Milano tweeted her experience and encouraged others to share as well. This created a safe haven online where sexual assault victims could share their experiences and get support. This online community fights for victims and provides justice for them if possible.

Ultimately, communities like the "Me Too" and "Black Lives Matter" movements are significantly supported by technology. Technology helps support victims, connect individuals, and promote justice and equality. When in-person communication is difficult or even impossible, having an online community amplifies the diversity of experiences. By having more diversity, it creates a place where more people can relate to and support each other.

Essay – Honorable Mention

Emma Derby Boren | Rosarian Academy

When I think of justice, I think of key leaders and role models. They are the people who stand up to injustice and for what they believe in. They risk their lives and safety to ensure change for society. They make the world a better place by their actions. Three people who have gone above and beyond to change the world for others are Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King Jr, and Malala Yousafzai. Rosa Parks once stated, "You must never be fearful about what you are doing when it is right."

Rosa Parks was an African American woman who was born February 4, 1913, and died October 24, 2005. Ms. Parks believed everyone should be treated equally, regardless of their race. On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat to a white man on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama. After this courageous event, a boycott started. The Montgomery Bus Boycott was a civil rights protest for African Americans. She was put in jail and lost her job for participating in the boycott. The Montgomery boycott, started by Martin Luther King Jr, was to help Rosa Parks and all African Americans earn their rights as citizens. Many people boycotted the bus system for about a year. Finally, after blood, sweat, and tears; they earned justice with the 14th amendment. This made segregation by race illegal and provided equal rights for all.

Martin Luther King Jr. was an African American activist for justice, as well. King was arrested 29 times for protesting for African American rights. He led many boycotts, including the Montgomery bus boycott. He advocated for peaceful addresses to some of society's biggest problems. King Jr. understood the importance of solidarity and nonviolent protest. He was a man of many talents, especially his ability to speak publicly and garner attention. With his leadership, important legislation was passed including the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Act. Martin Luther King Jr. was met with such adversity that he was assassinated for his desire to be treated equally. The civil rights community lost an important leader that day, but his legacy, words, and actions still live on today.

Malala Yousafzai is a young Pakistani woman who has fought for justice most of her life. Malala, since the age of 11, has been fighting for the educational rights of all women. During her youth, the Taliban attempted to take away the ability for girls to go to school and receive an education. Malala took to the local airways to take a stand against the Taliban, even though she knew doing so would be putting her life in danger. Yousafzai strongly believed that a life without learning is not a life worth living. This passion and courage led to her being shot in the face at only fifteen years of age. Not even a bullet could stop Malala. She continued to speak out against the Taliban and won a Nobel Peace Prize for her efforts regarding the rights of children. Ms. Yousafzai is an inspiration to young people everywhere. She believes that everyone is capable of making a difference. She stated, "One child, one teacher, one pen, and one book can change the world."

These three extraordinary leaders proved justice is possible through their words and actions. Parks, King Jr., and Yousafzai raised the bar regarding standing up for human rights. The world is a more equitable place because of their belief that all people should be treated the same regardless of their differences. Martin Luther King Jr. once brilliantly wrote, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."

Essay – Award of Excellence
Flavio Matta | Independence Middle School

"Justice is indiscriminately due to all, without regard to numbers, wealth, or rank," stated First Chief Justice John Jay in *Georgia v. Brailsford*, in 1794. The Founding Fathers also wanted "Justice for all and equal treatment under law." But this most important moral value of our society is not respected. Just turn your television on, and you will see that our daily life is full of injustice. We all are the witnesses of unacceptable injustice like the Ukraine War; how can this war be just when we see all these victims? Not living in justice is very dangerous because without it, freedom and truth can't exist. They are like the ingredients of the recipe to make us live in a beautiful world. They are the roots of human happiness. We need to realize that we are capable of changing our world, and we have to react now because "the future starts today, not tomorrow," as Pope John II said.

I want to stand up because I can't stay blind or deaf about what is going on around me. I want to follow Jackie Robinson's example to achieve my goal because like he said, "A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives." He broke the color barriers on and off the baseball fields. He fought for justice. Martin Luther King said this about him. "He is a legend in his own time who challenged the dark skies of tolerance and frustration." What will be justice without tolerance? I know it will just be a baby step, but why not? I don't have to go very far away to act for justice because social justice begins at home. My school is like my second home. I can use my voice when I see one of the students being bullied because it is not the right treatment to someone who is different from us. We have to understand and accept the differences. I can also defend justice when I play soccer with my team; as a captain, I have to lead my team to play fairly and to respect the other teams.

"No one can win the war individually, it takes the wisdom of the elders and young people's energy like wrote Common and John Legend in their song "Glory," to "heal the world and make it a better place for you and for me and the entire human race," as sung by Michael Jackson. Let's work all together to win the war against injustice to reach justice.



Essay – Award of Excellence
Georgia Cash | St. Mark's Episcopal School

Alexander Hamilton, a founding father of the United States, discusses the importance of fairness in the following quotation: Hamilton stated, "I think the first duty of society is justice." Hamilton emphasizes that it is crucial to prioritize equity. For example, being just is doing what is morally right and acting with integrity. Also, he shows that being honorable is an invaluable responsibility. Overall, a cohesive and fair community is one where equal opportunity exists for everyone in all spaces, even in the male dominated world of athletics.

In an ideal world, justice would equate to men and women having similar experiences as athletes at all levels. Men's and women's sports programs should be given the same attention and money, from high school to the professional level, because gender has no connection to hard work, ability, and success. Justice in action within both gender's sports would include the following: equal salary, attendance, sponsorships, TV time, and facilities. This is necessary because, in reality, equality does not exist, and women face inferior conditions across many sports. Ideally, men and women should be equals in athletics.

In reality, men are treated with more respect, and therefore receive many advantages. In 2021, I watched a TikTok video about the differences faced by women's and men's NCAA basketball teams. I was shocked at the size of the men's weight room in comparison to the women's facility. There was no satisfactory explanation for the difference. Unfortunately, it is typical in athletics for women's amenities to be inferior to men's. The United States Olympic Women's Soccer Team fought for equal pay for many years. Finally, after filing a lawsuit, the court awarded the women with equal pay because they recognized the injustice. This is only one example of many unsolved unjust situations. Overall, due to men being regarded higher than women, they secure primacy.

As a female athlete, I can be an instrument of change by vocalizing the injustices in athletics. First of all, I plan to work on my school newspaper in high school. That will give me opportunities to speak up in writing on injustices I see in my community. As a female, when I experience injustice, I can elaborate on that as a writer on the paper. Also, another avenue for drawing attention to injustice would be as a member of the debate team. To summarize, women are powerful, and I intend to speak out and draw attention to this unfair situation.

All in all, the world of athletics must be as fair as all parts of life, and women should promote justice in sports. The world will be a more moral place when justice exists in all aspects of life, including athletics. Only when people truly care about justice will equality be accomplished. In the late 1700s, Alexander Hamilton set very high standards for society when he spoke the previously mentioned quotation. There is no reason humanity cannot aspire to this goal of fairness. If equality is achieved, society will flourish.

Essay – Award of Excellence

Dominick Mazzeo | Western Pines Middle School

"Justice cannot be for one side alone, but must be for both." - Eleanor Roosevelt

In my favorite movie it started with tons of people protesting outside of a school. Half were protesting that the school should stay segregated, and the other half didn't want that. I thought about how justice still applies in today's time, and what we can do to make sure everyone feels equal.

Can you imagine not being able to go to the same school as some of your friends because they are a different race or different religion? It would be really bad if I and my friends had to go to different schools. Back in the day people with a different race or different religion could not go to the same school, drink from the same water fountains, ride the same bus, or play on the same sports team as your friend. I feel like justice in this world today is a lot better than it was back then but there are still some issues today. During school I hear people use slang words to my friends every single day. I also know that people will still talk about stereotypes. How could we stop this?

Would you want someone to stand up for you if you were a different race or different religion? Well, if we want justice we have to stand up for people no matter their race or religion. Every single day in school we recite the pledge of allegiance in the morning and it says, "liberty and justice for all." Only if everyone showed what they said then justice for all would happen. If everyone starts doing what they say in the morning, then everyone would have justice and equality. Everyone has to, not just some.

We have to take what we have learned in the past and make sure that it does not happen again. As Sheryl Yost says in my favorite movie, Remember the Titans, "people say that it can't work, black and white; well, here we make it work, every day." We as people today need to make it work even better.

Essay – Honorable Mention

Reed Jackson | St. Mark's Episcopal School

Albert Einstein, a Nobel Peace Prize winner, states, "In matters of truth and justice, there is no difference between large and small problems, for issues concerning the treatment of people are all the same." Albert mentions that people should be treated well no matter who they are, and everyone should be treated equally. He divulges that no one being is more important than another and "... issues concerning the treatment of people are all the same." Justice is fairness, everybody getting the same, and righting a wrong.

In an ideal world justice looks like all human beings are treated the same no matter who or what they are. Justice should look like people being treated well and helping one another. Treating your neighbors with kindness and respect is necessary because the world would revolve much better with much less conflict. Less conflict would lead to people genuinely being more patient and kind; in fact, a little kindness can go a long way. Justice is also everyone being acknowledged and no one being ignored because nobody is less than someone else. Above all, it is important to treat others the same no matter who they are.

In the world today people are sometimes mistreated and experience unfairness. I experienced injustice in second grade when this kid would treat me poorly and treat his friends with kindness and respect. This left me sad and uncomfortable with who I was. Also, I felt less confident about myself in school and at play. When people are looked down on and ignored they feel bad, and that is injustice and it needs to be corrected. The world is not so perfect, and many face rudeness and disrespect every day.

When people are mistreated or if someone sees injustice, we should stand up against it and help a friend or stranger. I personally can stand up for myself and others by telling the wrongdoers to be start treating people respectfully, and reminding them that they are not superior to somebody else. People should stand up for others because it will not only help people to see what's wrong but make the wrongdoers acknowledge that they need to change. People shouldn't only stand up for others, but themselves as well. A person can stand up his or herself, by just ignoring the hateful comments and knowing that that person is just jealous. People need to learn to treat everyone the way they want to be treated. To sum up, we are all children of God and no one is better than somebody else.

Every human being should be treated in a good respectful way. We should care about justice because just being kind to one another would make the world a good joyful place. Einstein declares, "In matters of truth and justice, there is no difference between large and small problems, for issues concerning the treatment of people are all the same." In other words, every one is the same; so, treat everyone nicely.



Essay – Honorable Mention

Natalie Vidal | The Benjamin School

Albert Einstein once said, "in matters of truth and justice, there is no difference between large and small problems, for issues concerning the treatment of people are all the same." Justice is defined as, "the maintenance or administration of what is just, especially by the impartial adjustment of conflicting claims or the assignment of merited rewards or punishments." Justice is done when different people are treated equally if their differences are irrelevant. Separate but equal is unjust.

The Brown vs Board of Education court case was a landmark decision by the Supreme Court in 1954. Racial segregated public facilities for black people and whites are unfair and a discrimination against others. Although the schools have equal supplies, it is unconstitutional. The "Jim Crow Laws" established the "separate but equal" doctrine for the next six decades. A plaintiff named Oliver Brown filed a class-action lawsuit against the Topeka Board of Education in 1951. The Supreme Court decided that segregated schools are unequal under all circumstances. In today's society, justice is used in everyday life. For instance, employers are not allowed to discriminate among candidates for a job, based on race, gender, religion, age, or other personal factors.

Allowing citizens to vote in elections, without putting undue burden and obstacles, is a vehicle for justice. People merit the right to be accepted and feel safe in an amiable and welcoming society where everyone has justice and rights. To me, justice is the way individuals are treated in everyday life. If somebody bullies me at school, they will get disciplined. One must respect others and follow institutional rules, or one shall be prepared for consequences. It is unquestionable that in my life, people make fun of others, whereas righteousness is the act of justice toward others. Justice is a motivational path to respect others in life.

In my local community, I want a change. I want a more compassionate world where I can be free and have my rights respected. Together, we can all work to form a humane society where everyone benefits from consideration and respect. I value the act of kindness because it shows how together we can create a better world together. As human beings, we deserve the rights our ancestors fought for. Justice is ideal while being perceived in various ways. People are exposed to inhumane acts of injustice and unfairness. Justice used in our world today is to be considered powerful for every person.

Overall, justice is used for many purposes. The system of justice explains the fairness of every individual. Around the world, justice is cherished to save lives and go against prejudice. Every person deserves justice to keep all the rights of people safe. The Brown vs Board of Education is a broad way of saying separate but equal is unjust. While being blunt, our rights are respected to keep everyone safe. Justice is a vehicle for all people's rights to keep everyone safe-guarded.

Essay – Honorable Mention

Bryan Schofield | Western Pines Middle School

Justice, injustice, social justice... These terms are often tossed around haphazardly in our world today. The natural world seems to have an instinctive understanding of the concept of justice - a sense in which things must be made right, or fair to all. Eleanor Roosevelt carried this idea in her statement "Justice cannot be for one side alone, but must be for both." Justice is an active word that can make our world a more compassionate place to live.

In its purest form, justice must be impartial; not based on one's skin color, ethnicity, or any other outside thing. Langston Hughes, a famous American poet penned these powerful words in his poem titled Justice:

*That Justice is a blind goddess
Is a thing to which we black are wise:
Her bandage hides two festering sores
That once perhaps were eyes.*

If justice shows partiality it is in fact by definition not justice. Our Nation uses the symbol of Lady Justice to depict Hughes' very words; a blindfold to show that external influences do not determine justice, a balanced scale representing impartiality, and a sword for the power justice brings. It is clear to many that this idea of justice has not always been carried out correctly. Periods of time that put one race, gender, or ethnicity above another were not just times. Thankfully, we live in a world that recognizes when an injustice occurs, the other side as Mrs. Roosevelt pointed out, and there are systems in place by which corrections can be made to bring the scales back to balance.

Justice also carries with it an idea of compassion. In the book of Isaiah the prophet writes "seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause." Here we see that the concept of justice is deeper than right or wrong, but carries with it action to help those who are in a place of need. A fatherless child is seen as innocent and defenseless, therefore we are called to have compassion for them and actively seek to protect them using justice as our motivation. A compassionate world will seek out to correct all oppression and lift up its most vulnerable citizens.

It may seem at times like the idea of justice is lost in our world. As oppression continues, opportunities to show justice will arise. We, as citizens in our communities, must take an active role through compassion to ensure justice prevails. The scales must start out balanced for all who seek justice without regard to their outward appearance or station of life.

Thanks to all the 2023 Essay & Creative Arts Competition participants!

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Justice is a fundamental principle that governs the interactions between individuals in society. At its core, justice is the concept of treating people fairly and equitably, regardless of their race, gender, social class, or other factors. This principle is essential in maintaining order in society and ensuring that every individual has access to basic rights and freedoms. The quote, "In truth and justice, there is no difference between large and small problems, for issues concerning the treatment of people are all the same," underscores the importance of justice as an equalizer that protects the rights of individuals.

The quote suggests that justice is not relative to the magnitude of the problem. Whether an issue affects one person or an entire community, justice demands that individuals be treated with fairness and respect. This principle is especially important when dealing with marginalized communities that often face discrimination and mistreatment due to their socioeconomic status or identity. Justice requires that individuals who perpetrate harm against others be held accountable, regardless of their status or influence.

The principle of justice is evident in various areas of society, including the legal system. The legal system is designed to ensure that justice is served by providing a fair trial for individuals who are being accused of committing crimes. This principle is critical in ensuring that individuals are not wrongfully convicted, and justice is served in a manner that's equitable and transparent. The quote highlights the fact that justice must be impartial, and every individual has the right to a fair trial, regardless of the nature of the crime they are accused of committing. Justice also plays a crucial role in ensuring that individuals have access to basic rights and freedoms. The principle of justice demands that everyone has access to basic needs, such as healthcare, education, and housing, and that these needs are met regardless of their background or socio-economic status. Justice requires that individuals be treated with dignity and respect, regardless of differences, and that their rights are protected. The quote also highlights the fact that issues concerning the treatment of people are the same. Everybody deserves the same equality and treatment, regardless of background or identity. Justice demands individuals be treated with respect, and that their human rights are protected, regardless of status, race, gender, or any other factors.

In conclusion, the quote, "In truth and justice, there is no difference between large and small problems, for issues concerning the treatment of people are all the same," highlights the importance of justice as a fundamental principle that governs the interactions between individuals in society. Justice requires that every individual be treated with fairness and respect and that their human rights are protected. It is essential justice is served equitably and impartially, regardless of the magnitude of the problem. Justice plays a crucial role in ensuring that every individual has access to basic needs and freedoms, and their dignity is respected. Ultimately, justice is essential in maintaining equality ensuring everybody a fair opportunity in life.

Albert Einstein, a theoretical physicist, states, "In matters of truth and justice, there is no small difference between large and small problems, for issues concerning the treatment of people are all the same". Einstein highlights that justness should not be given to those who have what society deems "a bigger problem," since rightfulness should be fairly distributed. Justice is vital to society, as it provides safety and is a crucial element in having an ethical, flourishing, community.

In a perfect world, if someone was forced out of his/her country, he or she should receive immediate protection. Many asylum seekers flee due to reasons beyond their control. No one deserves to leave their home, so the least the United States could do is provide refugees with a safe place. This is necessary; if the roles were reversed, and a US citizen was forced to leave everything and ask for safety, he/she would want another country to help. When an individual is granted asylum in the US, he/she is living legally with an "asylee" status. The asylee can apply for Social Security and work legally. Overall, in order for justice to be served in the US, sanctuary for those who have to escape their country must be given.

In reality, millions of asylum seekers wait years to receive a decision on their claim. With thousands of people fleeing Ukraine due to the ongoing war, hundreds of refugees are asking the US for asylum. Unfortunately, while many people are accepted, hundreds are not. Others will be forced to wait for years for the news of their asylum. Refugees who are lucky enough to be accepted are only provided basic necessities, such as government issued shelter and food. Clothes and money must be sought elsewhere. As a daughter of someone who was given asylum, I can understand the significance asylum holds. Asylum can save someone and give them many new opportunities. To conclude, while immediate security for all asylum seekers is ideal, in the real world, many are rejected or forced to wait a long time.

I can make a difference in my community by raising awareness about injustice toward asylum seekers. One way I can do this is by participating in peaceful protests and signing petitions that influence the government to have looser asylum laws. Also, I can donate to charities that supply asylees with necessities. Clearly, there are ways I can make a positive impact in the lives of thousands of asylum seekers across the U.S.

In a civilization, justice is crucial in order to have a thriving, moral public. Society should care about justice because the presence of justice gives hope in a world that can be dark. Justice also provides comfort; it gives the idea that everyone will get what they deserve. Einstein's quotation shows that problems are overlooked, but this should not be the case; all problems should be treated with the same amount of care and concern.

Essay - Honorable Mention

Ruth Busse | St. Mark's Episcopal School

Bryan Stevenson, the founder and Executive Director of the Equal Justice Initiative, talks about helping the needy. Stevenson says, "My work with the poor and the incarcerated has persuaded me that the opposite of poverty is not wealth; the opposite of poverty is justice." Bryan states that, even though some may think that the opposite of being poor is being wealthy but instead it's actually being treated the same and having justice. He shows that if you dig deeper in what the poor really want or need is fairness not wealth. Stevenson shows the importance of fairness in his quotation.

To begin, justice is an important topic, in an ideal world it allows for fairness to be restored. This term is perceived differently by different citizens. For example, in some individual's eyes justice is the act of fairness that allows the perpetrator who committed a crime or did something wrong to get a punishment so that it's restored. I believe it is for people who have experienced something unjust so they can have a fair, honest society or situation. Overall, being just is a very important factor in being a good person or society.

Unfortunately, in our real world many humans overlook the poor. I've personally experienced injustice driving through poverty-struck communities or even neighborhoods. Especially in Florida, it's common to see extreme poverty in half of the cities and the other half is extremely wealthy like Riviera Beach. The ones who have a lot sometimes don't even know the struggles people in their community face. These richer individuals are so wrapped up in themselves being jealous of ones like them. Others who have less are just grateful they have an education and a roof over their heads. In short, many people don't realize what really happens all around them.

Finally, there are many small ways we can help our area. One of the most obvious methods is community service. This can be by donating your ability or just with your time. Donating to ones who have less means a lot to them. When you're in a bad situation it helps to know that someone is thinking or praying for you and sacrificing their time for you. Some methods that I have done to help those less fortunate are "Food Packing for Haiti" or going to the "Quantum House" through our school's programs. In brief, sacrificing just a little time for someone in need can mean a lot.

All in all, justice allows for us to come together and help our society. Having a strong sense of justice makes us fight for what's honorable and just. It makes everyone want to really help people and help the community or even the world. Also, it helps the ones who are forgotten so they can have a chance. In fact, the small things can impact more than what we think. The next step in helping our world is fighting for what is right and good. We need to come together and help our society and the millions of people in impoverished situations. I believe step by step we all can rebuild our world for justice.

Essay - Honorable Mention

Camilla Torres | Western Pines Middle School

Without justice, there may be fewer contrasts like cultural diversity. Justice means liberty, inclusion, fairness, and equality. When I think of justice, I think of the U.S. Supreme Court and how they rule against injustices. Although the world shows more justice now, what did it look like in the past and how might it still be unjust now? How can society help to create more justice?

Supreme Court Justices ensure that bills and laws passed are constitutional. They show justice by guaranteeing anything ratified shows equality for all. Some wise words from William O. Douglas are, "The liberties of none are safe unless the liberties of all are protected." Douglas was a Supreme Court justice from 1939-1975. In this quote, he means that no one can live free or equally unless their rights to protect them are preserved. The job of the Supreme Court Justices relates to justice in the world because, for example, they regulated the laws that segregated the United States since they did not show justice to all. For many years the U.S. was segregated by mostly the Jim Crow laws. These laws showed injustice to colored people. The Supreme Court exhibited justice by ruling the landmark U.S. Supreme Court case, *Brown v. The Board of Education of Topeka*, unconstitutional. The case ruled that racial segregation in schools was an injustice act. By recognizing that and trying to put an end to it, The Supreme Court was promoting justice in the U.S.

In segregated schools, students could have included one another to try and discourage racism in the classroom. One thing people can do to create justice in society is to include each other. Not only should the students have tried to include each other during the segregation, but we should also include others now. According to the website *IndependentSector.org*, "Inclusion is the act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate." This quote demonstrates how including people can create justice and equality since everyone can build off each other and feel appreciated. It is also an important part of creating justice because there is none if society can't work together. This issue refers back to the quote by William O. Douglas because if you do not include others and stand up for them there will be no justice or liberty.

In conclusion, justice in the world today takes the form of liberty, equality, and inclusion. First, the Supreme Court Justices are a big part of justice in the U.S. since they decide if a bill or law is constitutional. This would mean it shows justice to all. Finally, we can all create justice in society by including others. As Douglas proposed, there is no real justice unless we all have justice.

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Facing History and Ourselves **Holocaust Education**

See article on page 10.

▼ *Facing History and Ourselves* July 2023 seminar participants represented more than 20 schools.



▼ Holocaust survivor Sam Ron shared his story with the teachers.

