

Judge: Jessica Scott Kerrin

Winner:

Damsi Novenya Chandrasekara

Many competent and well researched essays were submitted about remarkable young role models who have made an enormous impact: Terry Fox, Ann Frank, Hayley Wickenheiser, Iqbal Masih, Louis Braille and Hannah Taylor to name a few. That made selection difficult. However, what separated Damsi's essay from the rest was the inclusion of how Craig Kielburger, an international child's rights advocate, inspired Damsi to join other like-minded classmates and raise funds to help educate children overseas. It is one thing to write about someone who has made a difference; it is quite another write, "I may not be able to do a lot of big things but I hope the small things I do can make big changes." Indeed, after attending one of Kielburger's inspiring speeches, Damsi reports raising more than two thousand dollars for this cause. Actions speak louder than words. Now *that's* changing the world!

Honourable Mentions:

Eve O'Keefe-Daw

Eve's fictional narrative is a chilling account of child abuse, highlighting the critical role that volunteers play in organizations such as the Kids Help Line. Her powerful opening paragraph immediately draws the reader's attention. Appalling details are told in a matter-of-fact manner that showcases poor parenting skills and dreadful living conditions. The juxtaposition between dialogue and exposition is very accomplished. The work is upsetting. As a reader, it makes me think. It makes me want to volunteer. This is powerful writing!

Russell Denney

I love Russell's simple pared-down poem about his sister, Madeline. He includes just enough detail to give the reader a strong vision of her: her good qualities, liked helping out at an animal shelter; her flaws, like bossing Russell around; as well as the qualities that make her fascinating and unique. Russell offers the reader a fully developed person in all her complexities. And still, he obviously loves his sister as evidenced by his careful selection of descriptive phrases and the poem's charming last line. We should all be so lucky to have a sister who is making the world a better place. I know I am!