

11th Grade – Second Place Prize
Whitney - Lincoln Park High School

There are many people throughout life that leave the world in complete amazement when it comes to their philosophies of what they want for our country or they leave us with an everlasting impression of the true, and honest person that they are and want to rub off on society. These strong leaders in life have gone through hell and back to fight for what they believe is right and equal for their people. These influential leaders have helped change the world in many different ways ever since they started their journey on reforming our country's social society in making the world a better place for people of different ethnicities and colors. When Dr. Martin Luther King said, "The hope of a secure and livable world lies with disciplined non-conformists who are dedicate to justice, peace, and brotherhood; it was only the beginning of a motto that would live on forever.

People how dedicate their lives to helping the world in every way they can, no matter what they have to do, are people that will lead the world to a better place for all and are dedicated to justice, peace, and brotherhood in every way possible. Many well-known activists have brought Dr. Martin Luther King's quote to light and influence many younger people today to follow in their footsteps. I now have a reason to fight for what I believe in and never give up and push for the best outcome I could achieve. Dr. Martin Luther King's quote means a lot to me in many different ways. A person that dedicates their life to justice, peace, and brotherhood is someone that wants unity in the world, for everyone in the world to work together as one, as a team, and that would help us achieve world peace. Brotherhood is a strong word to me because it's all about men that are united in a common purpose. They fight together as one and help each other in life's obstacles, and that's what brothers do.

A person that doesn't let anyone get in the way of what they believe in never gives up their fight or their journey. Perfect examples of these people are those who fought continuously in the Civil Rights Movements. They never gave up until they got what they wanted: which was equality for all. There are many influential leaders that have made the world a better place, but there is one in particular that might have changed the world more than anybody ever has and that is Nelson Mandela.

Nelson Mandela is one of the great moral and political leaders of our time: an international hero whose lifelong dedication to the fight against racial oppression in South Africa won him the Nobel Peace Prize and the presidency of his country. Since his triumphant release in 1990 from more than a quarter-century of imprisonment, Mandela has been at the center of the most compelling and inspiring political drama in the world. As president of the African National Congress and head of South Africa's antiapartheid movement, he was instrumental in moving the nation toward multiracial government and majority rule. He is revered everywhere as a vital force in the fight for human rights and racial equality.

Long Walk to Freedom is his moving and exhilarating autobiography, a book destined to take its place among the finest memoirs of history's greatest figures. Here for the first time, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela tells the extraordinary story of his life, an epic of struggle, setback, renewed hope, and ultimate triumph, which has, until now, been unknown to most of the world.

The foster son of a Thembu chief, Mandela was raised in the traditional, tribal culture of his ancestors, but at an early age learned the modern, inescapable reality of what came to be called apartheid, one of the most powerful and effective systems of oppression ever conceived. In classically elegant and engrossing prose, he tells of his early years as an impoverished student and law clerk in Johannesburg, of his slow political awakening, and of his pivotal role in the rebirth of a stagnant ANC and the formation of its Youth League in the 1950s. He describes the struggle to reconcile his political activity with his devotion to this family, the anguished breakup of his first marriage, and the painful separations from his children.

He brings vividly to life the escalating political warfare in the fifties between the ANC and the government, culminating in his dramatic escapades as an underground leader and the notorious Rivonia Trial of 1964, at

which he was sentenced to life imprisonment. He recounts the surprisingly eventful twenty-seven years in prison and the complex, delicate negotiations that led both to his freedom and the beginning of the end of apartheid. Finally he provides the ultimate inside account of the unforgettable events since his release that produced at last a free, multiracial democracy in South Africa.

To millions of people around the world, Nelson Mandela stands, as no other living figure does, for the triumph of dignity and hope over despair and hatred, of self-discipline and love over persecution and evil. *Long Walk to Freedom* embodies that spirit in a book for all time.