

9th Grade - Second Place Prize
Dominique – Morgan Park High School

Mandela: Man of the Movement

Non-conformist is one who does not conform to, refuse to be bound by, accepted beliefs, customs or practices. The dream of a safe and tolerable world is reliant upon those of us who are disciplined, devoted and unwilling to settle for anything less than brotherhood, peace and justice. Nelson Mandela exemplifies the individualist that our world needs to achieve the goals of unity and equality. Mandela has been a part of numerous attempts to secure the world from injustice. He has shown that in order to reach our desires, we must sometimes sacrifice ourselves for the sake of others. Dr. King had a vision of non-conformists who would stop at nothing to fulfill their duties of peace and justice. Nelson Mandela is a perfect example of the dedicated people we need to make our world and society a better place.

“For to be free is not to merely cast off ones chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others.” –Nelson Mandela

Mandela has been part of numerous attempts to secure the world from injustice. It was not until Nelson Mandela entered college did he begin his work as an activist. He developed a nationalist position and began to advocate from college, becoming involved in Black rights. Mandela felt as if his freedom was just an illusion and in his mind the only way to make it a reality was to take action. During that time some activist were using their social status to fight for justice. However, Mandela was taking a stand with the people. He participated in rallies, protests, and boycotts to show his devotion. Nelson Mandela was hands on, working with and interacting with the people. Leading many political protests, he did not let his connections with those of the wealthier communities separate him from his people. Everyone was equal to him. Mandela didn't care what his surroundings looked like because justice and peace comes in all different forms. To this day Mandela tours the world as a global statesman. He is very dedicated to spend his life fighting for justice. One day he will be able to sit back and instead of counting his attempts, he will be counting his successes of bringing peace to his people.

“There is no easy walk to freedom anywhere and many of us will have to pass through the valley of the shadows of death again and again before we reach the mountaintop of our desires.” –Nelson Mandela

Mandela has shown us that in order to reach our aspirations we must sometime sacrifice ourselves for the sake of others. There has been a few times when I gave up my tickets to a concert so my sister could go. I gave up something so my sister could reap the reward. Mandela was willing to give up his freedom for his people. He was asked to leave Fort Hare due to involvement in a boycott. He also was accused of trying to overthrow the government by violent means and other political actions, but was later acquitted. He was willing to serve jailtime just so his people could have equal rights. He would later be captured and sentenced to life in prison. Serving twenty-seven years of his life (1964-1990), Mandela was unable to contribute physically to the Civil Rights Movement. On the otherhand, working closely with the ANC (African National Congress), Mandela was able to continue his efforts for social justice. Even though he was sentenced to life, Mandela did not get discouraged. He was determined to achieve social equality.

“When the water starts boiling it is foolish to turn off the heat.” –N. Mandela

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. had a vision of non-conformists who would stop at nothing to fulfill their duties of peace and justice. Nelson Mandela went through many hardships in his lifetime. From being mistreated, to spending over 2 ½ decades imprisoned, he never stopped fighting. Being threatened with life in prison would have made some people give up. It takes devotion to keep going. After Mandela was released from prison he continued to fight and many of his dreams were coming true. Four years after being released he became the first Black President of South Africa. He never stopped his work after he became successful. Mandela even

formed a racially mixed government of National Unity with Mr. de Klerk. They also won the Nobel Peace Prize. Mandela shows dedication to his work. Also that sometimes you don't have to compromise for everyone to be satisfied, sometimes it is worth the fight.

Our longing for a safe and livable world relies on those of us who are disciplined and devoted to achieving justice, peace and brotherhood. Anything other than these goals were unacceptable. Mandela participated in numerous attempts to end injustice. He has sacrificed himself for other individuals. Mandela will stop at nothing to achieve his goals.