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Law School News: Meet The RBG Essay Contest Winners!

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March 22, 2022

Law School News

Meet the RBG Essay Contest Winners!

With drawings and essays, young Rhode Islanders answer the question, “How has Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg inspired me?”

March 22, 2022

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Michael M. Bowden



Roger Williams University School of Law is proud to announce the winning entries in its Second Annual Ruth Bader Ginsburg Essay Contest.

In December, RWU Law invited Ocean State students from grades K through 12 to submit essays and artworks on how they have been inspired by the legacy of late Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, who passed away on September 18, 2020.

As part of the prize, *Rhode Island Lawyers Weekly* generously agreed to publish the winning entries. The winning students also received cash prizes and books.

“Justice Ginsburg cared about equality for all people,” said RWU Law Professor Emily Sack, who advises the Women’s Law Society, which co-sponsored the contest with its members serving as judges. “When she started her fight for women’s equality under the law, it seemed like an impossible task, but she worked hard and persisted, and made great strides for the things she believed in.

“She also knew that this is not something she could accomplish alone, and that we all have a part to play in making a better world,” Sack added. “She famously said, ‘Fight for things you care about, but do it in a way that will lead others to join you.’” This essay contest is a wonderful way for all of us, and especially our state’s students, to be inspired by Justice Ginsburg’s life and her call to action.”

This year’s response was once again gratifyingly large and enthusiastic, and the judges found themselves making some very hard choices. But the winners have been selected and (drum roll) they are:

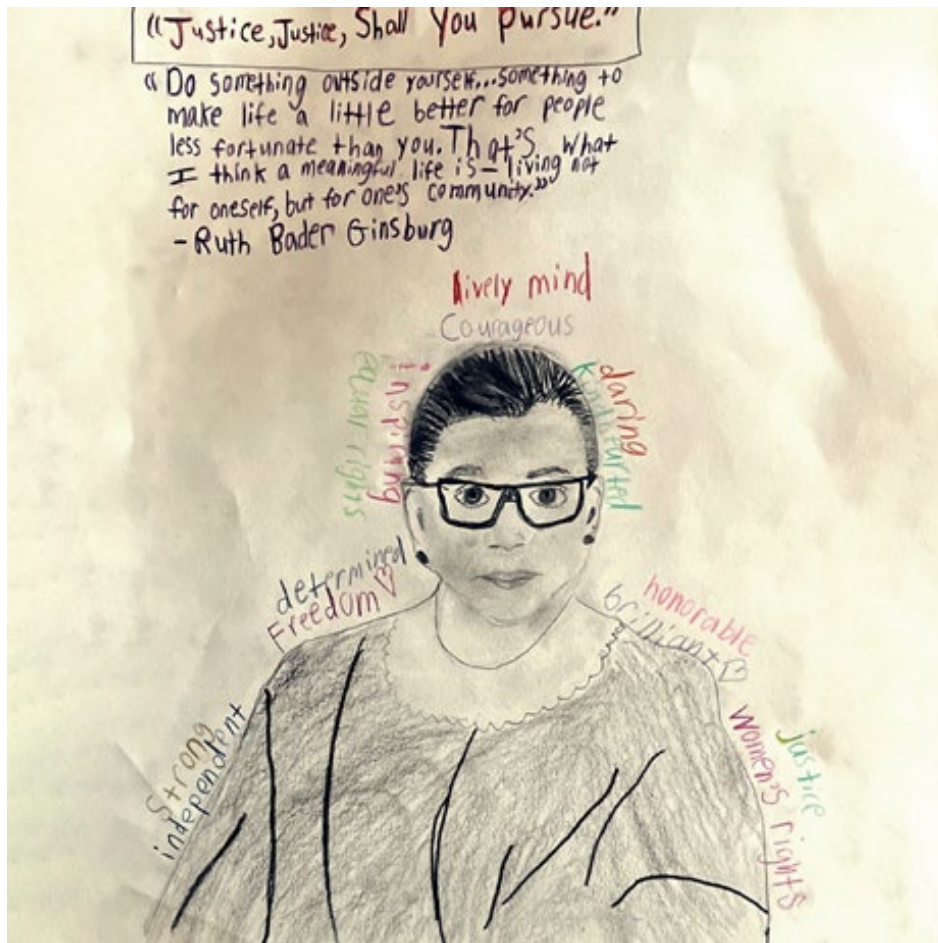


Elementary School Winner

“Justice, Justice, Shall You Pursue”

By Aviva Nierman

North Smithfield Elementary School (Grade 3)



"Justice, Justice, Shall You Pursue"



Middle School Winner

“How Has Ruth Bader Ginsburg Inspired Me?”

By Carter Mi

TIMES² Academy, Providence (Grade 6)

Ruth Bader Ginsburg has inspired the world in many different ways, especially for women. But here is how she has personally inspired me. The first way is that she was one of only nine women in her class of 500 hundred at Harvard Law School. She even graduated at the top of her class! How this inspires me is that when I grow older I want to become a lawyer. At the time being a lawyer was a rare job for women since they were thought to be less intelligent or less capable than men. This fact makes it more inspiring because she defied the expectations of society at that time.

In addition to that statement, another way she has inspired me is that she did many things for women’s rights. How this inspires me is that women at the time were oppressed. Even though I am not a woman, I feel inspired by this because I am an Asian-American and quite a few Asian hate crimes occur throughout America due to the spread of COVID-19. People of my culture are currently being oppressed, kind of like how women were at the time, so seeing someone stand up for their people in order to prove what they think is right truly inspires me.

Lastly, the final way she has inspired me is that she kept working at the Supreme Court even though she was sick with colon cancer. How this inspires me is that throughout my life I’ve experienced a few deaths and have seen loved ones struggle to stay alive while they were sick. Now, to see someone who has the strength and willpower to work even though they’re sick with a disease like cancer is truly inspirational.

In conclusion, Ruth Bader Ginsburg is an inspirational figure, not just for women, but the entire world as a whole. Even though she’s gone now, she will not be forgotten for the ways she has inspired the world.



High School Winner

“Cultivating Change”

By Isabella Montini

North Kingstown High School (Grade 12)

Ruth Bader Ginsburg not only paved the way for feminists, but she demonstrated what true leadership looks like. Throughout her career she worked with others and led a nation to fight for what they believed in and to encourage others to join them, no matter their beliefs.

She practiced what she preached through the friendship she found with Justice Scalia. Although the two Justices had differing ideologies, they battled in good faith and had a lasting friendship. Her actions and words have inspired me because not only did she fight for justice, but she fought for civility among differing opinions.

This is a key value that I impose as I lead a non-partisan political action committee called Students4Change. Giving students and young members of society a voice in local democracy is a powerful skill to cultivate meaningful change. Ruth Bader Ginsburg inspired me to lead this platform to give everyone a collective voice, no matter their viewpoint.

Our country is lacking good-faith actors on the local, state, and national level. Citizens can become cruel and vile when fighting for what they stand for, as demonstrated during the insurrection. RBG never gave in to foul play or bad actors. She chose to lead in a way in which others will follow. Her passion and leadership inspired me to fight for what I believe in during local municipal meetings, as well as encouraging others to do so despite controversy in opinions.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg was also an avid fighter for voting rights and wanted to grant equitable access for Americans to exercise this right. In the case of *Shelby County v. Holder*, RBG specified that she believed any states with a history of racial discrimination in voting under The Voting Rights Act of 1965 should be required to get federal approval before changing their voting laws.

Because of the history across the country of gerrymandering, limiting ballot drop boxes, and stigmas around mail-in ballots, RBG’s fight for equitable voting rights inspired me to join the

Let Rhode Island Vote campaign and work with elected officials to ensure voting rights in Rhode Island. These provisions include no excuse mail voting, a permanent absentee list, rigorous voter registration list maintenance, early voting, enhanced signature verification, online mail ballot request, ballot drop boxes, no witness requirement, and new primary dates.

I door-knocked in Providence to inform citizens on this new act, and encourage them to send Let Rhode Island Vote postcards to their state senators and representatives. My political action committee also met with Alana DiMario, one of the lead state senators sponsoring the legislation, to discuss how efforts can be increased to ensure its passing. As RBG put it, “throwing out preclearance, when it has worked and is continuing to work to stop discriminatory changes, is like throwing away your umbrella in a rainstorm because you are not getting wet.”

As a feminist, Ruth Bader Ginsburg continuously stood up for women’s rights and equal representation. She gave us a seat at the table and showed so many that the voices of women need to be heard and respected. Her perseverance has inspired me to fight for equitable access to abortion in Rhode Island. Under the current system, not all healthcare covers this cost. This disproportionately affects women of color and women with lower incomes. We all deserve equitable access to these programs.

Throughout her career, Ruth Bader Ginsburg has worked to protect the rights of so many Americans. Her actions and words of wisdom inspired me to fight for what I believe in in my own town and state. She leaves behind a great legacy of leading in a way where others will follow, and she proved that what makes a great leader is inspiring others to also fight for change as she laid the groundwork for so many after her.