

Carlie Lee
Missouri School for the Blind
(314) 633-1562
Carlie.Lee@msb.dese.mo.gov

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Missouri School for the Blind Student Takes Prize Wolfner Library Teen Poetry Contest

St. Louis: Three (3) students from Missouri School for the Blind (MSB) took awards for their original poetry submissions to Wolfner Library's first-ever Teen Poetry Contest. Jessica Johnson, 12th grader and daughter of Mark and Anita Johnson of Warrenton, Missouri, won Best Overall for her poem "The Things I think." Nicole Motley, 8th grader and daughter of Richard and Rebekah Motley of Dover, Missouri, took Most Original for her poem "Poem Just for You." Desiree Lasky, Jan. 2017 graduate from St. Louis, Missouri, took Honorable Mention for her poem "Ride of Die." Their poems are all published below.

Walter Barga, Missouri's first Poet Laureate, served as guest judge and selected three winners: Best Overall, Most Original, and an Honorable Mention. Along with their poems published in the Wolfner Library newsletter, winners received a plushie of Wolfie, the Wolfner Library mascot, and their work was recorded and transcribed into braille.

About Wolfner Library: Wolfner Library is a free library service for Missourians who are unable to use standard print materials due to a visual or physical disability. Materials are mailed to and from library patrons at their homes, postage paid. There is no charge, whatsoever, to the patron. Currently, over 11,000 Missourians actively use Wolfner Library. The library's collection includes fiction and nonfiction audio and braille books for all ages. Over seventy (70) magazine subscriptions are available, and the library loans playback machines to those using audio books.

About MSB: Missouri School for the Blind offers educational and outreach services for legally blind Missouri children from birth through age 21 and their families. MSB is operated by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education of the State of Missouri and its services are free of charge. MSB's services are concentrated in two areas – its centerbase kindergarten-grade 12 school in St. Louis, Missouri, and its Outreach services offered throughout the state.

Best Overall

"The Things I Think," by Jessica Johnson

The things I think,
The things I worry about,
The things they say are crazy
They are all reality.

I think of Open Fields,
I think about the animals hurt every day,
I think about the house up on the hill,
I think about the weather and hope it won't be stale.

I worry about my Sisterhood and my brothers,
I worry about the plants and animals that cry and say goodbye,
I worry about the ones that are lost and need to be found
I think about what the world could be for the rest of Eternity.

People say you should not believe in this or that,
People say do this or do that,
They try to take away the free will we have,
Saying I know what is best if only you would try this.

People don't realize the real in reality,
Daydream of things that could be but never will be,
Joining people together as one is the key
But thus Unity is harder than reality.

Most Original

"Poem Just For You," by Nicole Motley

I have secrets, hopes, and dreams
things that will never happen so it seems
I'm stuck in chains, not of the devil, not of pain
but something that's driving me insane

I would tell you but why waste my time
I would be destroyed like a melted dime.

I could say and it would be the happiest day
But what if it isn't

I'm full of fear
That's not my fault

I'd rather stay awake than go to sleep
Talk to you rather than weep

Yes I'm weak I know it's true
I wish I could just tell you!!

Honorable Mention

"Ride or Die," by Desirée Lasky

Ride or die with me baby?
Just a caution I'm crazy
The pain made me this way
So what do you say?
Will you stay?
Do with me what you may
Cuz trust me I've felt worse pain
Just don't think this is a game
I want you but I don't just wanna for a minute
Don't just hold me for a bit
Baby and let me go
Cuz I promise I'll be the best you ever had
Cuz I give everything I have
When I give you my all
Just please don't let me fall
Love me like you say you do
Keep me and don't leave me
Imma ride or die for you
It'll be easy baby
Just not all the time
I'll be yours and you'll be mine
Do what you do that's fine
Just don't leave me forever
And hurt me like all the others do
Don't tell me this isn't what you consented to
Ride or die with me?