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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?