



# 2018 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Art, Essay, & Multimedia Contest

I live in a small community. Many of my friends, neighbors, and peers don't understand just how lucky we are. We live in a bubble – a fact about which they proudly brag. We are only a mile away from poverty, but it seems like a universe. Nobody in my small community was willing to “break the bubble” – that is except for me.

Why was I able to see beyond the social confines of my community? What allowed me to do so? I don't know for sure what enabled me to see the world outside of my own, but I am so grateful that I did. Maybe, it was the fact that I wasn't born inside the bubble – I moved to Ohio when I was six. Or, maybe, it was because of my mom being a teacher in some of the worst neighborhoods in Columbus. Whatever the reason, I was able to see beyond myself and my privilege and that would greatly impact the way I viewed the world and the way I viewed my duty and place in it.

It was my ability to see the dark parts of the world that led to my creating something great. Its name is: Books for Bedtime. Books for Bedtime is my non profit 501(c)3 public charity. I founded it in August 2014 when I was 11 years old. My mission: to get books into the hands of children who need them. Books for Bedtime started off as a simple dream, an idea that probably would never happen, but with the assistance of my Grampie (a retired attorney) and the rest of my family, I was able to make my little dream a reality.

Now, just three years later, I have donated over 60,000 books to underprivileged youth. I have inspired and encouraged many youth all over the state of Ohio. Whenever I go to schools to donate books, I always speak to the students about who I am, what Books for Bedtime is, and how it came to be. I really try to encourage them to read and to make a difference in their own community, not just as the founder of a charity, but also as a fellow student. My favorite part of the whole experience is helping the students select their books. I love listening to and interacting with them.

I realize that one book, to one child isn't going to fix all the world's problems, but if I can help even one child realize the beauty of reading and their ability to make a difference, then I have done my job. I have no solution to the world's problems, but I have a start. I had a dream and I made that dream a reality. I managed to go against the “social norms” and escape the bubble. I am all the wiser because of that.

**Meagan Warren**  
**9th Grade Essay Winner**  
Bexley High School, Bexley  
Jamie Hayes, Teacher  
Harley Williams, Principal

## Be the Change

