



## Beloved Community 3rd Annual Essay Contest

### **Mission Statement**

Through community and coalition building, organizing, advocacy, and education, the Beloved Community will lead in creating sustainable change where we live, work, and are educated by confronting systemic and institutional racism. We will work to engage our community members on topics critical to racial justice by facilitating local opportunities for education, deep reflection and reconciliation. Using these tools, we will challenge inequity affecting historically marginalized and underserved groups, with the objective of affirming the equality, dignity and worth of every person in our communities.

### **Background**

In partnership with the Michigan Roundtable for Diversity and Inclusion, the Beloved Community is implementing its second annual Dr. Martin Luther King Essay Contest. The Essay Contest is open to all Canton and Plymouth students in grades six through twelve. Our hope is that the essay contest will foster a deeper understanding of the importance of diversity and inclusion.

## Essay Question

A community is a group of people who are responsible to each other and support one another through activities that build on common interests while maintaining respect for community members' unique differences.

Think about the Plymouth-Canton communities and your school community and please answer each part of the question below:

Have you seen people or groups of people excluded or not included in your communities?

- Please give example(s) of how people are excluded from your communities.
- How did it make you feel?
- How do you think it made them feel?

What could your communities do to be more welcoming and inclusive of all people?

- What would you change to make your communities more welcoming and inclusive?
- What would you be willing to give up or sacrifice to have your communities be more welcoming and include everyone?

## Awards

First, Second, and Third place winners in Middle School and High School will be awarded a financial scholarship.

Winners in each category will receive:

### Middle School

**1st Place \$300**  
**2nd Place \$200**  
**3rd Place \$100**

### High School

**1st place \$600**  
**2nd Place \$300**  
**3rd Place \$200**

## Eligibility

To be eligible to participate in the Beloved Community Dr. Martin Luther King Essay Contest, you must: (i) live or reside in Plymouth, Canton, and surrounding areas; (ii) be eligible to attend Plymouth-Canton Community Schools; and (iii) be a current Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh, or Twelfth grade student. Students who attend charter schools, but would otherwise meet all criteria are eligible to participate, as well as students who are home schooled, but would otherwise meet all criteria.

## Selection Process

The Committee will complete an initial evaluation of each participant's essay based upon the application package and the criteria listed below. Winners will be notified by e-mail no later than **May 1, 2017**. Contest winners will be honored during a special ceremony on May 19, 2017.

The Committee will judge all entries with an emphasis placed on the clear expression of ideas. We will also weigh originality, clarity, creativity, originality, basic grammar, spelling and writing skills.

Inquiries about the application process for Beloved Community Dr. Martin Luther King Essay Contest may be directed to **Loren Khogali** [lorenkhogali@gmail.com](mailto:lorenkhogali@gmail.com).

## Essay Requirements

All essays must be attached to an application entry form listing the student's name, grade, school, home address and telephone number (this information should not appear in the essay).

All essays must: (i) must address each part of the essay question, (ii) relate the student's own personal ideas or experiences relative to the topic; (iii) be your own words.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in automatic disqualification. When quoting from sources, use quotation marks, but you are not required to cite to those sources.

You are required to use 12 point font, double-spaced paragraphs, and 1 inch margins (top, bottom, left, and right).

If you are in middle school, your essay must be 700 - 900 words. If you are a high school student, your essay must be 1000 - 1200 words.

If you wish to be considered for the Beloved Community Dr. Martin Luther King Essay Contest, you must submit the following materials by electronic mail **no later than 5pm, April 3, 2016:**

- Completed application entry form attached to this application packet.
- Your essay.
- Must meet all of the essay requirements, no exceptions.

Applicants are required to submit all application materials to [TheBelovedCommunityCanton@gmail.com](mailto:TheBelovedCommunityCanton@gmail.com).