

...now I stand up for those
who are bullied, abused or
taken advantage of. I look at
these past experiences as a
lesson to be learned...I've learned
that everyone is created...
-Vanessa Guerrero-Cruz,
Christa McAuliffe Middle School

Violence is the cause
Of not only
Sleepless nights,
But emotional
Battles, raging
Inside my very be being,
Ripping at my heart,
Trying to unnerve me.
-Jessica Stone, Palm Springs Middle School

DO THE WRITE THING

...the number one source of youth violence is
human emotions. They can affect you more
than you know it. For instance, you get in a
fight with a friend. You feel like the
simplest actions could make you go crazy.
That, is where violence begins.
-Maxx Melanson, Boca Raton Middle School

**WORLDWIDE
NATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO STOP
VIOLENCE**

DO THE WRITETHING CHALLENGE

2010 PALM BEACH COUNTY DO THE WRITETHING CHALLENGE

The Do the Write Thing Challenge provides middle school students with an opportunity to examine the impact of violence on their lives and communicate in writing what they can personally do to stop violence.



The program involves a classroom discussion and a “Challenge” to answer three questions in written form:

- How has youth violence affected my life?**
- What are the causes of youth violence?**
- What can I do to reduce youth violence?**

The goal of the program is to reduce violence in homes, schools and neighborhoods by encouraging students to make a personal commitment to do something about this problem. Complete information about the program is available online at www.dtwt.org

There are 38,901 students enrolled in 35 Palm Beach County public middle schools. Of that number, approximately 13,772 students submitted writings. Many more participated in classroom discussions. Those schools with at least 1/3 of their students participating in the program were eligible to advance their “Top 10” best writings to the next level of judging. In addition, those “Top 10” students were published in this book. Since its inception, it is estimated that over a million students have participated in the Challenge. Over 300,000 of these students have accepted the “Challenge” by making a written personal commitment not to engage in violence and by preparing writings on the causes of and solutions for youth violence.

All of the entries in this book were read by multiple panels of volunteer judges who continued to narrow the field until the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place young men and young women finalists were chosen. The judges represent a cross section of Palm Beach County educators, parents, law enforcement and judicial leaders who are committed to solving the problem of violence in our community. We

are grateful to all of the judges who contributed their wisdom and a considerable amount of time to read and select the best entries.

The 1st place young man and young woman are invited as the guests of the local committee to serve as ambassadors from Palm Beach County in the national recognition ceremony along with other Do the Write Thing ambassadors from across the country.

The *Do the Write Thing Challenge* was established by the National Campaign to Stop Violence (NCSV) and is administered by the national office and by the local committee in each participating region. The NCSV seeks out individuals and businesses that want to make a difference in the lives of young people. If you would like to help the NCSV with your time or resources, please contact the National Campaign to Stop Violence at 910 17th Street, NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20006. Telephone: 202-2934483 or 800-256-0235. You can contact the local committee through its chairman, Bill Bone, Esquire, at 550 South Quadrille Boulevard, Suite 200, West Palm Beach, FL 33401. Telephone: 561-832-0623

Bill Bone, Esq.

The following localities are currently active in the *Do the Write Thing Challenge*: Atlanta, GA; Austin, TX; Beaumont, TX; Boston, MA; Brownsville, TX; Charlotte, NC; Chicago, IL; Corpus Christi, TX; Dallas, TX; Denver, CO; Detroit, MI; El Paso, TX; Harrisburg, PA; Houston/Harris County, TX; Las Vegas, NV; Los Angeles, CA; Memphis/Shelby County, TN; Miami, FL; Newark, NJ; New York, NY; Odessa, TX; Palm Beach County, FL; Philadelphia, PA; Pittsburgh, PA; San Antonio, TX; Victoria, TX; Washington, DC and the States of Mississippi and Utah.

DO THE WRITING CHALLENGE

2010 PALM BEACH COUNTY DO THE WRITING CHALLENGE

Cohen Pavilion, Kravis Center for the Performing Arts

May 10, 2010

PROGRAM

BILL BONE, ESQ.

Larmoyeux & Bone, PL

Palm Beach County Chairman, National Campaign to Stop Violence

DR. ARTHUR C. JOHNSON

Superintendent, Palm Beach County Schools

CAPTAIN JEFF LINDSKOOG

Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office

HONORABLE RONALD ALVAREZ

Judge of the Palm Beach County Circuit Court, Juvenile Division

PEPE FANJUL, JR.

Senior Vice President, Florida Crystals Corporation

Palm Beach County Sponsor

CONGRESSMAN TED DEUTCH

19th Congressional District of Florida

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT SPEAKERS:

Garret Williams, *Bak*

Lillian Rozsa, *Bak*

Maxx Melanson, *Boca Raton*

Taylor Hupp, *Boca Raton*

Ty'trell Dixon, *Carver*

Gia Simmons, *Carver*

Neil Oberholzer, *Christa McAuliffe*

Vanessa Cruz, *Christa McAuliffe*

Trevor Durham, *Congress*

Tenaj Alexander, *Congress*

Agostino Scanu, *Conniston*

Karina Zambrano, *Conniston*

Wouvel Chevelon, *H.L. Watkins*

Mae Ghannouma, *H.L. Watkins*

Jordan Young, *Jupiter*

Revathi Ravella, *Jupiter*

Gamaliel Otero, *Lake Worth*

Fednike Nozistene, *Lake Worth*

Melvin O'Neal, *Lantana*

Jean Strait, *Lantana*

Zachary Pekale, *Omni*

Elyssa Eckhart, *Omni*

Kenneth Lutz IV, *Osceola Creek*

Joelishia Banfield, *Osceola Creek*

Jessica Stone, *Palm Springs*

Samantha Alexander, *Palm Springs*

Shekh Arefen, *Roosevelt*

Alicia Trice, *Roosevelt*

Michael Tatto, *Tradewinds*

Jessica Sarro, *Tradewinds*

Christian Cury, *Watson B. Duncan*

Elizabeth Bradford, *Watson B. Duncan*

Chad Bonincontri, *Western Pines*

Jaqueline Campos, *Western Pines*

Tyler McMahan, *Woodlands*

Alon Lewis, *Woodlands*

The entire ceremony will be filmed for broadcast on The Education Network (T.E.N.) on Comcast Channel 97 at the end of the month. T.E.N. is the television station for the School District of Palm Beach County. For broadcast times, contact the station at (561) 738-2926.

DO THE WRITE THING CHALLENGE

Participating Middle Schools and Top 10 Students

Bak Middle School of the Arts **Elizabeth Kennedy, Principal**

Claudia Canamas-Donnelly
Maria Gomez
Jessica Hamorsky
Jordan Lane-Palmer
Tristen Perez
Iliana Robles
Lillian Rozsa
Drew Shannon
Charles Suarez
Garrett Williams

Boca Raton Middle School **Jack Thompson, Principal**

Hayley Adams
Nicholas DaCosta
Gabriel Figueredo
Spencer Foster
Taylor Hupp
Alec Jaquez
Moriah McGowan
Maxx Melanson
Sam Tucker
Jake Woods

Carver Community **Middle School** **Lena Roundtree, Principal**

D'Antony Achille
Jaynell Atmosfera
Brianna Dillard
Ty'trell Dixon
Savannah Heffernan
Madeline Olesky
Amura Powell
Gia Simmons
Maryann Wong
Kentiana Wright

Christa McAuliffe **Middle School** **Faith Ann Cheek, Principal**

Katie Clarfield
Holly Draper
Julia Fullone
Vanessa Guerrero-Cruz
Danielle Krumholz
Jennica Lebrun
Neil Oberholzer
Morgan Patipa
Marcella Simioni
Matthew Yoss

Congress Middle School **Kathy Harris, Principal**

Tenaj Alexander
Alexis Anderson
Justin Cohen
Isaac Cruz
Trevor Durham
Alejandra Gutierrez
Natasha Leonard
Sarah Pomponio
Franchesca Uy
Keith Yarnell

Conniston Middle School **Mary Stratos, Principal**

Morgan Egan
Andrea Bounds
Elizabeth Lipscomb
Gabriela Murphy
Savannah Padgett
Tiffany Royle
Agostino Scanu
Brandon Terrazas
Adam Wojcik
Karina Zambrano

H.L. Watkins Middle School **Gerald Riopelle, Principal**

Zara Bell
Wouvel Chevelon
Benjamma Claude
Jailene de la Cruz
Waly Elifrance
Mae Ghannouma
Emmanuel Korley
Moses Louis-Charles
Ashley Romero
Shatavia Smith

Jupiter Middle School **David Culp, Principal**

Meredith Bock
Koren Cole
Sean Fallon
Tiffani Friedman
Royal Hayes
Tia Nardi
Katie Pease
Revathi Ravella
Rebecca Weiner
Jordan Young

Lake Worth Middle School **Jesus Armas, Principal**

Meddjina Dorsainvil
Nalaine Fils-Aime
Claire Joseph
Fednike Nozistene
Gamaliel Otero
Jonathan Rampersad
Daniella Rodriguez
Edver Rony
Juan Salvador
Dannon Stanley

Lantana Community **Middle School** **Edward Burke, Principal**

Eden Ash
Alanna Genovese
Maria Gironza
Katie Harrison
Gina Keleman
Kayla O'Neal
Melvin O'Neal
Luis Rosales
Jean Strait
Ellie Vigurie

Omni Middle School **Pierre D'Aoust, Principal**

Alyssa Antman
Ceiran Crichfield
Amanda Diamond
Benjamin Diaz
Elyssa Eckhart
Victor Eduardo
Tiffany Eisner
Sophia Gedrock
Chehak Gogia
Katelynn Jones
Le-Ceisa Kerr
Jonathan Klumpp
Jacob Kosowsky
Carli Levy
Zachary Moody-Tackley
Angelina Odoms
Zachary Pekale
Savannah Shepard
Olivia Solomon
Rachel Tolces

Osceola Creek Middle School **David Alfonso, Principal**

Anthony Adorno
Joelishia Banfield
Jamario Cantrell
Aaliyah Carn
Gentreal Harrison
Laura Louberti
Kenneth Lutz IV
Mairead O'Rourke
Donnell Perry Jr.
Myles Wilkerson

Palm Springs Community **Middle School** **Sandra Jinks, Principal**

Samantha Alexander
Kasandra Betancourt
Damien Burgos
Cassidy Kerr
Brittany Miller
Jesse Peters
Angelica Prado-Diaz
Jessica Stone
Shirley Volmar
Samantha Watson

Roosevelt Community **Middle School** **George Lockhart, Principal**

Maiah Andrews
Shekh Arefen
Kayla Brown
Meagan Carter
Joshua James
Arleta Mitrovic
Victoria Murphy
Evenson Romulus
Ratesha Smith
Alicia Trice

Tradewinds Middle School **Dr. Kirk Howell, Principal**

Sanique Balan
Michelle Duong
Sureiny Gonzalez
Alexia Lakeman
Alyona Palhof
Matthew Sanders
Jessica Sarro
Ashish Shrestha
Michael Tatto
Alexis Villanueva

Watson B. Duncan **Middle School** **Jose Garcia, Principal**

Austin Blakeney
Elizabeth Bradford
Christian Coury
Connor Decker
Katerina Dominguez
Jennifer McCrate
Sara Peterseil
Jonathan Sacht
Lucien Sylvain
Quinn Watson

Western Pines **Middle School** **Robert Hatcher, Principal**

Chad Bonincontri
Alanna Brescia
Jazmyn Brown
Jacqueline Campos
Nalina Chawdhry
Zachary Hansen
Sabrina Kurtishi
Blake Moser
Briana Posner
Angela Wilber

Woodlands Middle School **Tanya Daniel, Principal**

Sean Barran
Brian Bipram
Leeah Heiferman
Julie Lampert
Alon Lewis
Cristina Matias
Tyler McMahon
Karly Rutherford
Taylor Smith
Daren Wyche

2010 DO THE WRITE THING CHALLENGE WINNERS

Selected from Participating Middle Schools in Palm Beach County

YOUNG MEN

1st Place Ambassador

Maxx Melanson
Boca Raton Middle School

2nd Place

Christian Coury
Watson B. Duncan Middle School

3rd Place

Chad Bonincontri
Western Pines Middle School



YOUNG WOMEN

1st Place Ambassador

Jessica Stone
Palm Springs Middle School

2nd Place

Joelishia Banfield
Osceola Creek Middle School

3rd Place

Vanessa Guerrero-Cruz
Christa McAuliffe Middle School

The Ambassadors from Palm Beach County

The first place young man and young woman are given the opportunity to travel to Washington, DC as Ambassadors representing Palm Beach County in the national recognition week ceremonies held July 10th through the 14th this summer. Students are accompanied by a parent and a teacher from their school. The local committee pays all the major expenses of the Palm Beach County delegation such as air travel and hotel accommodations.

The National Campaign to Stop Violence is especially grateful to Florida Crystals Corporation, the William H. Pitt Foundation, Southwest Airlines, and the Kuwait America Foundation for helping to underwrite these expenses.

The Published Writings of the “Top 10” Best Submissions

The 1st, 2nd and 3rd place young men and young women appear at the front of this book. Thereafter, all student writings are listed in alphabetical order by school.

In an effort to honor stylistic decisions and in recognition of the fact that this challenge is more about finding solutions for the problem of youth violence, then it is about the “skill” of writing, the 190 “Top 10” submissions published in this book have not been edited for grammar, spelling and structure. Students were judged on the content of their work and their response to these three questions:

- How has violence affected my life?
- What are the causes of youth violence?
- What can I do about youth violence?

VIOLENCE
NATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO STOP

Congratulations to Every Student who Participated in this Program!

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO STOP VIOLENCE

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Larmoyeux & Bone, PL

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Judge, Juvenile Court
Palm Beach County
Circuit Court

Sheriff Ric Bradshaw

Palm Beach County

Honorable Ted Deutch

Member of Congress
19th District of Florida

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Senior Vice President
Florida Crystals Corporation

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City of West Palm Beach

Honorable Carey Haughwout

Public Defender
15th Judicial Circuit

Sandra Jinks

Principal
Palm Springs Community
Middle School

Dr. Arthur C. Johnson

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School District

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Prevention Center
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Director of Program Expansion
National Campaign to Stop Violence

VOLUNTEERS AND CONTRIBUTORS

Nothing makes a more lasting impression on young people than acknowledging and rewarding their efforts. Through the generosity of **Florida Crystals Corporation** we are hosting the “Top 10” students, their parents and teachers from each of the participating middle schools at the recognition luncheon on May 10th, 2010. Florida Crystals underwrote the costs of the luncheon and of sending the Palm Beach County ambassadors to Washington, D.C. this summer. We are grateful for Florida Crystals’ financial support and for the active participation of **Mr. & Mrs. J. Pepe Fanjul, Jr.** in organizing the Palm Beach County effort. Florida Crystals, headquartered in Palm Beach County is North America’s largest sugar producer.

Each middle school Principal who took the effort to make sure that a significant number of students from his or her school participated in the challenge has received a \$500 gift from the **William H. Pitt Foundation**. We thank the foundation for underwriting the cost of these “no strings attached” grants. The William H. Pitt Foundation is headquartered in Stamford, Connecticut and Palm Beach, Florida. **Robert G. Simses, Esq.**, the Foundation’s President and COO and its local Directors, **Lesly Smith**, former Mayor of Palm Beach and **Mrs. Pauline Pitt**, are strongly committed to reducing violence in Florida’s public school system.

The thoughts and ideas of the “Top 10” best students who participated in the challenge have been published in this book for the benefit of all who care about the problem of youth violence and struggle to do something about it.

The entire cost of this publication was underwritten by a grant from the **William H. Pitt Foundation**. This book is dedicated to the Foundation with grateful appreciation for all they do to help young people across America. We also thank our typesetter, Doreen Flynn and Bill and Patti Vitale, Vital Printing Corp. for their contributions to this publication.

The law firm of **Larmoyeux & Bone, PL**, underwrote most of the administrative costs for organizing and directing the efforts of the Palm Beach County Steering Committee. Volunteers from the firm include: Bill Bone Esq., Aimee Kelley, Elsa Martinez, Liz Townsend, Jeff Chapin and Eric Westman, a graduate of Palm Beach Atlantic University employed by the law firm.

We thank other organizations and volunteers: **The School District of Palm Beach County** for putting this program into the middle schools and especially **Dr. Arthur C. Johnson**, Superintendent, for his personal commitment to this event, **Dr. Ann Killets**, Chief of Staff, and **Liz Perlman**, Director of Curriculum for Palm Beach County Schools; **The Prevention Center** in the Department of Safe Schools for their experience working with the issues of youth violence, especially **Kim Williams**, Assistant Director, Prevention Center, and **Dr. Alison Adler**, Chief of Safety and Learning Division; **The Palm Beach County Sheriff’s Office** for their efforts to prevent youth violence and combat the problem before it starts, especially **Ric Bradshaw**, Palm Beach County Sheriff, **Captain Jeffrey Lindskoog**, Community Services Division, and **Cpl. Rafael Duran**, Training Officer. **Elaine Weber** and Elaine Weber Designs, Inc. for creating the original cover and **Elaine Meier** for her help in promoting this year’s “Do The Write Thing” Challenge.

JUDGING COMMITTEE

Reading and judging all the writings submitted by the 13,772 Palm Beach County students who participated in the 2010 Challenge was an enormous undertaking that would not be possible without the assistance of the teachers, administrators and staff of the participating middle schools together with the members of the Local Steering Committee who made certain that every student who submitted a writing was considered.

We are grateful to **Lourdes Fanjul** for Chairing the Young Women's committee and **Circuit Court Judge Ronald Alvarez** for chairing the Young Men's committee. Two other independent judges were instrumental in organizing the process and selecting the finalists and they are **Mary Simses, Esq.** a philanthropist and community volunteer and **Arthur Bullard**, executive assistant to the Mayor of City of West Palm Beach.

Additional people involved in the judging process are:

Congressman Ted Deutch, 19th Congressional District lead by **Darcy Farnan**, District Representative, and their support team: Courtney Bafer, District Representative, Jill Benson, District Representative, and Lauren Berger, District Representative.

Dr. Arthur C. Johnson, Superintendent, The School District of Palm Beach County and **Liz Perlman**, Director of Curriculum for Palm Beach County Schools and their team, Dr. Ann Killets, Chief of Staff, Tara Smith, Jennifer Zumpano, and Angela Fitch, K-12 Curriculum.

Kim Williams, Assistant Director of the Prevention Center, Department of Safe Schools and **Margaret Kallman**, Specialist, and the Prevention Center team.

Sheriff Ric Bradshaw, The Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office and his team of volunteers led by **Captain Jeff Lindskoog** and **Cpl. Rafael Duran**.

Honorable Carey Haughwout, Palm Beach County Public Defender and **Jennifer Loyless** and numerous hard working Assistant Public Defenders from the Juvenile Division.

Honorable Michael McAuliffe, Palm Beach County State Attorney and **Sarah Alsofrom** and their support team: Debra Coltun, Linda Crawford, Alice Grant, Kimone Hall, Adam Hecht, Kristin Jalm, Kathryn Lewis, Angela Miller, Linda Moberg and Cheo Reid.

Pepe Fanjul Jr., Florida Crystals and their support team at the Corporate headquarters, especially Marianne Martinez, Angela Blumberg, Janet Lewis, and Angela Pasquarelli.



SPECIAL THANKS

We would like to thank the **Miami Dolphins** organization and **Davone Bess** for their participation in the "Do the Write Thing Challenge."

Work hard. Get better every day. Stay humble. Be patient. Be thankful.

Those words hang in Davone's locker, guiding him through the good times and bad. We appreciate his words, actions and inspiration to all our young people.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



Headquartered in Palm Beach County, Florida Crystals is the largest sugar producer in North America. Thank you for underwriting all the costs of the Recognition Luncheon and for sending the Palm Beach County ambassadors to Washington, D.C. this summer.



The William H. Pitt Foundation was established in 1985 to benefit deserving youth primarily through education. Thank you for underwriting all the costs associated with publishing this book and for giving every middle school principal a “no strings attached” grant.



The law firm of Larmoyeux & Bone helps injured people get their lives back together. Thank you for underwriting the administrative costs of the “Do The Write Thing” program in Palm Beach County.