“I am leaving this legacy to all of you...to bring peace, justice, equality, love and a fulfillment of what our lives should be. Without vision, the people will perish, and without courage and inspiration, dreams will die...”
– Rosa Parks

Rosa Parks was an ordinary Black woman who lived in the segregated South of the fifties and stood for justice and equality for her people. One day, when she could not stand the insults of racism for one more moment, she challenged the injustice of having to give up her seat on a public bus to a white man, as declared by law. Facing humiliation, arrest, and perhaps worse, she refused to bow to power and claimed her human right to the bus seat for which she had purchased a ticket.

In Grand Rapids, we have dedicated a sculpture to honor the life of this brave woman who changed American society in a monumental way, but a sculpture alone is not enough. This bronze monument is a message to those who would continue her work, uphold her philosophy, and “demonstrate dignity with pride and courage with perseverance.”

The Rosa Parks Sculpture Committee encourages students in grades 6 - 12 to write an essay about how to live out Mrs. Parks' legacy by stepping outside the bounds of their reality, taking risks, and shaping lives to make a difference.

The Prompt: There will never be a time in American history where the heroism of Rosa Parks will be forgotten. Although she did not plan to become a hero, her heroic actions helped this nation fight racism and hate while creating pathways to healing.

How will you practice acts of healing to combat injustices and inequities to keep the legacy of Rosa Parks alive?

#HealingWithoutHate

Criteria

Theme – Healing Without Hate

Appearance – Essay must be double-spaced, size 12 Times New Roman or similar font (no italics or other fancy fonts), white paper only and stapled. Cover Sheet must include:

- Title of Essay
- Date
- Your Name
- Grade Level
- School
- Home Address
- Phone Number

Please do not put your name or school on any of the other pages of the essay.

Mechanics – Students should pay attention to:

- Grammar
- Capitalization
- Paragraphing
- Spelling
- Punctuation
- Sentence structure

Composition Structure – Essay shall

- Be 1 to 1½ pages long
- Be your own idea
- Have a title that is not a restatement of the theme
- Have an introductory paragraph
- Have main points with supporting ideas
- Have a conclusion

Number of copies – 1

Submission Date and Place – All entries must either be postmarked or emailed by October 21, 2021. Mail to Office of Equity and Engagement, City of Grand Rapids, 300 Monroe Ave NW, Suite 840, Grand Rapids, MI 49503 or Email to crc@grcity.us

Recognition – The winning essays will be announced on December 2, 2021. The decision of the judges will be final, and first place winners may be featured in publications and required to sign a photo release waiver.

Awards –

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<th>Grade Range</th>
<th>6-8</th>
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For further information: Please email crc@grcity.us or phone (616) 456-3027