



"I Hope" by Brynley McAndrews

*1st Place - *advanced to international competition*

SCOTTSDALE SISTER CITIES ASSOCIATION

2021 Youth Award Ceremony

May 8th, 2021, 1:00-2:00 pm

Honoring the accomplishments of SSCA Youth:

Youth Leadership Awards

Max E. Rumbaugh Outstanding Youth Ambassador Awards

Young Artists & Authors Showcase Awards

Young International Artists & Authors Awards

2021 SSCA Youth Award Ceremony

DONNA HARTZ, SSCA PRESIDENT: WELCOMING COMMENTS

ZOSHA DARNELL, SSCA TEACHER ADVISOR CHAIR, SUSL LIASON

YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARDS: \$100 each

Lindsey Jones

Ava Claire Lariago

Emma Podol

Jack Swenson

MAX E RUMBAUGH OUTSTANDING YOUTH AMBASSADOR: \$500 each

Alexander Nistor

Dash Pai

YOUNG ARTIST & AUTHOR SHOWCASE: "UNITED IN HOPE"

ART AWARDS - SANDRA ZALLY, SSCA VP, ART PROGRAMS CHAIR

1st Place: \$250: *I Hope* by Brynley McAndrews

*advanced to international competition

2nd Place: \$150: *One World United* by Iliana Mendez

*advanced to international competition

3rd Place: \$100: *Holding Us Together* by Sushmita Marella

4th Place: \$75: *See & Understand* by Brooklyn Fallon

5th Place: \$50: *Positivity Within* by Norielle Abts

SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER:

SAGUARO HIGH SCHOOL ART TEACHER – MICHELLE PEACOCK

2021 SSCA Youth Award Ceremony

YOUNG ARTIST & AUTHOR SHOWCASE: "UNITED IN HOPE"

AUTHOR AWARDS - SUZIE AUSTIN, KINGSTON & AUTHOR PROGRAMS

1st Place: \$250: *Connecting Isolated Pawns* by Jack Swenson

*advanced to international competition

2nd Place: \$150: *Rain Cleanse* by Ava Clair Lariago

*advanced to international competition

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH AWARDS: MAX E. RUMBAUGH

MARRAKECH YOUTH ESSAY AUTHORS

1st Place: \$150: *United Hope* by Hala Chaibi

2nd Place: \$100: *United in Hope* by Ahmed Elyassini

3rd Place: \$50: *Life in Pink* by Lakhdim Khaoula

Honorable Mention: \$25: *Voice* by Radia El Badouri

ALAMOS ARTISTS

1st Place: \$150: *Muy Bonitas Amistades (Very Good Friendships)*

by Sandra Vega Tamos

2nd Place: \$100: *Hemos Sido Iluminados (We Are Now Enlightened)*

by Nuvia Betzaly Reyes Antelo

3rd Place: \$50: *La Esperanza (Hope)*

by Rommel Yeoshua Martínez Murrieta

DONNA HARTZ, SSCA PRESIDENT: CLOSING COMMENTS

“United in Hope” Young Artists & Authors Showcase

Proudly presented by: Scottsdale Sister Cities Association

In partnership with:

Scottsdale Arts Learning & Innovation

Scottsdale Artists’ School



One World United by Iliana Mendez

*2nd Place - *advanced to international competition*

With this theme, students were asked to explore and share their insights for a more unified and peaceful world. Sister Cities aims to promote peace through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation – one individual, one community at a time. Selections from students in our sister cities of Kingston, Alamos, and Marrakech are included in this show, as our quest for international goodwill and connectivity continues.



Holding Us Together by Sushmita Marella
3rd Place



See & Understand by Brooklyn Fallon
4th Place



Positivity Within by Norielle Abts
5th Place

2021 SSCA Scottsdale Authors

Connecting Isolated Pawns by Jack Swenson - 1st Place

Chess is my favorite game, but since I am used to playing with opponents directly across the board from me, I felt completely alone on the chessboard during the pandemic. Quarantined at home, I found myself staring at a specific pawn in several chess games. As I focused on the pawn, the other pieces on the board started drifting further and further away, leaving the pawn unsupported and vulnerable in the center of the board. Like so many during this time, I went about my own activities like this isolated pawn.

According to chess.com, an isolated pawn is a pawn that cannot be supported or protected by another pawn. Isolated pawns are considered much weaker than connected pawns, which remain intact and support each other during many parts of a chess game. In the first few months of the pandemic, I missed being a connected pawn: having face-to-face interactions with others and creating new memories that strengthened me as an individual. Since connected pawns are always a superior force in a chess game, I began strategizing unique ways to not only become a connected pawn myself, but also to help transition others from isolated pawns to connected pawns.

Mahatma Gandhi, a famous Indian lawyer and civil rights leader, once said: “The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.” Reflecting on this quote, I realized that I could discover purpose during this time by helping others who are struggling. By June 2020, the COVID-19 crisis hit Arizona hard and many families struggled with food insecurity. I wanted to use chess as a tool to help raise funds for those in need. So, I brought together the chess community to play in my online charity “Chess Peace Tournament” to support the United Food Bank. We raised enough money to serve 9567 meals to Arizona families. This tournament allowed me to connect with friends again while leading everyone towards a common goal: helping our community.

I also began teaching chess for free online by connecting with students through Skype. I organized mini chess tournaments online and reached out to friends individually to connect with them. Many of my classmates told me how happy they were that I brought chess into their lives during this difficult time.

I believe that my passion for chess and ability to unify people around a common purpose is a combination that has helped me to have a positive impact on both the local and international communities through my non-profit organization, Chess Peace. The pandemic has taught me to pursue life with the intent of continuing to bond with others. My hope for the future is that people all over the world will strive to become connected pawns, rather than to divide like isolated pawns. As connected pawns, everyone is capable of bringing out the best in each other.

2021 SSCA Scottsdale Authors

Rain Cleanse

2nd Place by Ava Claire Lariago

Newspapers lie forgotten in the gutter.
Rain soaks headlines, dates, history,
Reduced to an inky mess,
Swirling in a hazy pool of grey.

Dark skies and misty fog
Monday is Wednesday and Wednesday is Friday.
What day is it? Has it been this long?
The downpour outside is all I recognize.

Redundancy has left me numb.
When can I feel again? When can I see again?
I don't know for sure, but I hope
Tomorrow will be better.

I believe this storm will pass soon
Because Hope tells me the sun returns afterwards.
Hope kisses the grass with dew
And encourages the flowers to bloom.

Hope makes the children smile
And reminds the birds to sing again.
Hand in hand with comfort,
Comes the bright light of possibility.

Drip, drop, drip
I focus on the skies in higher definition.
Knowing spring has heard my hopes,
I welcome this rain cleanse.

2021 Marrakech, Morocco Authors

UNITED HOPE

1st Place by Hala Chraibi

Corona Virus is our common enemy that appeared last year and pushed the world to be united to confront it. United in what? United in Hope.

This period, when the whole world is suffering from the same problem, is the perfect opportunity to engage new tactics, and lift up the next generation of youth ambassadors to reflect their power in changing the world to a better place, and make a positive social transformation, by implementing projects, analyze and select the appropriate methods and resources to meet the needs of their community during this time. We can see this through their civic participation in the community, youths have a strong sense of civic responsibility, they have also contributed to spreading information and awareness about Covid-19 to follow health protocols, without forgetting how they showed resilience and leadership on voluntary work by packing food and take care of the most vulnerable. In their own way, they can encourage people to stay hopeful and that Covid-19 transcends beyond color, race, or socioeconomic status, showing that we are all in this together and it's all about hope.

One of the things that help to stay hopeful and positive is to live life fully, participating in international experiences, and stepping out of your comfort zone to learn, grow, and boost your self-confidence. Your international experience could be more positive by allowing you the opportunity to get to know yourself, and your strengths and weaknesses, while making a positive impact on the world. There is a lot to gain from your time in a new country, every day is different and exciting, just stepping out of your routine, getting to know new people and new culture, or engaging in voluntary work, this, in itself helps you to be positive and hopeful the most of time. An international experience makes you believe that unity can open tons of doors when you can't find any door open when you are on your own because one hand can't clap. If we succeed in achieving our goal of staying united and adding a little more hope to humanity, we deserve to celebrate this together in different ways.

We can create a center of humanity's future embodying hope and optimism, a center of explorations and encouragement for people to become even greater than they are now, and spreading good ideas from everywhere, it would allow us to celebrate life in its positive sides together. Indeed, history is full of actions that embody what we have said such as, the National Day of Racial Healing, which is an annual day that gathers people together in their common humanity; civic leaders, artists, musicians, teachers, and students of all ages, and inspires action in every community to bridge racial divides and begin to heal.

2021 Marrakech, Morocco Authors

UNITED HOPE by HalaChraibi (continued)

We cannot talk about ways of coming together to celebrate our common humanity without mentioning the power of the Olympic games as the greatest sporting and cultural festival in the world that reflects the human spirit and inspires hope for a world that has come together to share in this singular experience, with its universal ideals such as friendship, fair play, dreams, inspiration, joy, and effort.

There is indeed a language barrier, everybody speaks in different languages and sometimes it's difficult, but we have another universal way of speaking, which is music and dance, and here I would like to mention a creative project that inspired me a lot, which is the creation of a global group called "Now United" made up of 17 members from 17 different countries spreading love, hope, happiness, and combat all forms of racism between nations through music and dance. Going back to the situation we lived and are still living in, we cannot forget how the world came together in a way that we have not seen before when towns and cities around the globe where citizens are painting hearts on windows and cheering for health care workers, and where everyday people perform songs on social media to help lift spirits.

In Morocco, adhering to social distancing was most difficult especially in Ramadan where we pray together, fast together, and break the fast together, but there is a positive side as it has been confirmed that fasting has a role in boosting the immune system which is the most important thing during this time of the pandemic, we weren't able to attend the mosque to pray as it was closed, but we performed the prayer at home in isolation for the first time, trying to inculcate that spirit of coming together and praying even if it's only with the family. Another positive side was giving charity and zakat, which is one of the five pillars of Islam, it has been greatly encouraged during the past year, we have seen charities delivering food to the poor and needy to plant hope in their hearts during the crises, we were all believing that God never shuts one door without opening another. Despite all the negative things that we have faced because of this virus, we must have learned that we all share the same sky, we need to be together to shine, we need to show people that we are always united in hope.

2021 Marrakech, Morocco Authors

UNITED IN HOPE by Ahmed Elyassini - 2nd Place

Dec 31, 2019... An unforgettable date for millions of people around the world... Our lives are almost divided into what came before this date, which is often referred to as a happy period, and what comes after it, which is a series of calamities. It is the date of the very first corona virus infection!

Jan 30, 2020... The World Health Organization declared a public health emergency. This led to a wave of panic among the inhabitants of the world. And I don't think that I need to describe the state of despair that affected humanity... I would rather leave it to your imagination.

March 10, 2020... The virus reached my city! Before this, all the events sweeping the world were foggy to me, I thought that the bad things we see on the television and we read on the newspaper only happens to others... Just to be surprised with the pandemic turning my world upside down and throwing me in the heart of events... Everyone you know... Everyone you love is threatened with disappearing in the blink of an eye. How can someone stay hopeful in such circumstances?

April 24, 2020... The holy month of Ramadan has come, in which we (Moroccans) fast and show solidarity with the poor, those were in dire need of help after this pandemic caused many families to lose their sources of income... A lot of grocery stores put up signs saying that if you can't afford to pay, just take what you need. This helped people to stay hopeful...

Jan 20, 2021... More than 1.7 million new cases were recorded in one day! Yet, people seemed more hopeful than before. Why? Well, it's hard to tell, but we cannot skip an essential factor: The youth movements... Young people have done a great deal to stand up to the pandemic, for they have made good use of social media, in order to spread accurate information and positivity as an attempt to alleviate the pain the pandemic has left in the hearts of many.

March 8, 2021... They say that the darkest times of the night are the ones just before dawn... Well, I guess they were right after all... After the cases were more than a million in a single day, they became nearly 300,000, and with the arrival of the vaccine to several countries, this number is decreasing. And even before the vaccine, a wave of hope and positivity spread in various places of the world: In England, children have been putting up pictures of rainbows to spread joy, in Pakistan, some young people decided to distribute free meals to poor families, in Poland, physicians organized social media groups for those in crisis under the slogan "Only united we can beat this pandemic".

May 23, 2021... Finally! We did it! After more than a year of struggle, of suffering, of pain, we defeated the virus... We stood up for this... As one community... One body... One threatened being... And we won!

2021 Marrakech, Morocco Authors

LIFE IN PINK by Khaoula Lakhdim - 3rd Place

Covid-19 is a virus that hit our world for more than a year from now. It had various impacts on both our physical and mental health. It has been a source of fear for months and transformed everyone's life. Many are those who struggled to stay hopeful in this challenge that humanity is having. Others have found it a source of inspiration and growth. They got out of the curfew being a better version of themselves and did their best to transfer this positive energy to their surroundings. This may lead us to question: How can Youth Ambassadors help the world after the pandemic?

Youth Ambassadors are mainly young teenagers that see life in pink. They always focus on the bright side rather than pointing out the dark one. So certainly, after this pandemic, they will have a big role in the recovery of the world, and it is going forward after its injury. By communicating with people from around the globe, they let them know that everyone is in the same situation and that no one is left behind. They also give the mental support that everyone needs nowadays but lack due to social distancing. And the ambassadors living in countries that suffered from a rise of covid cases but that are now back to their normal lives, will always be a proof for others that everything will go well, and the world will be back to its normal state. The youth Ambassadors will have a hand in raising awareness.

While Covid does not hit close to home for some, it takes other's loved ones every day. So, by exposing and sharing stories, youngsters will be more aware of the bad situation and take more precautions. Staying hopeful was hard for some, but for others it became a practice. In Morocco, we have noticed many signs of citizens fighting together against the virus. They've shown an unbelievable level of solidarity that impressed people around the world. They offered help to those who are in need and made sure all those who lost their jobs have a shelter and food to fill their stomach. They also used to sing the national anthem out loud every day, to show their support and their respect to all those who sacrifice their lives and get up every day to fight the virus, while we are staying warm in our bed. Every single Moroccan citizen has contributed to keep his brothers and sisters safe during this hard time.

We can't deny the impact of the lockdown on Moroccans, yet it was an important phase of their growth. It showed them how precious our country is for keeping us safe and healthy compared to others. It showed them that they can rely on their brothers and sisters, and that everyone is ready to give all what he owns for the sake of his people. It tightened relationships between Moroccans and made them appreciate the goods they have. Covid was not the first virus that threatened humanity. Previous generations have faced worse pandemics, and they definitely survived. We are the result of their survival. All what humanity have reached now is thanks to their efforts. That's why we should have high hopes and never give up, all for the future generations. This period of our lives is going to be their bed stories in. They will enjoy hearing how humans proved to be the strongest and the bravest creatures in the world. And we will be so proud of being part of this adventure. That's why we need to survive and be positive, and life is going-to go back to normal soon.

2021 Marrakech, Morocco Authors

VOICE by Radia El Badouri - Honorable Mention

2020 was a year that kept us literally voiceless. Half and a year ago, no one of us could have thought that a virus would spread around the world, lock everyone in their houses, and terrify a great number of scientists. Consequently, what could the youngest people do to survive the pandemic? And how did they stay hopeful?

First of all, it has always been our responsibility as youth ambassadors to help the communities respond during and even after the pandemic by being creative, aware and supportive. When we are young we have so much creativity, energy and most of the time we see the world fresh and new with a lot of hope, which made us always come up with a solution to our hardest problems. Accordingly, we used this advantage to create as much as we could, things that could be helpful during the pandemic. Besides, we had been fully aware of the danger and the consequences of COVID 19 and tried to be careless, thus, we can protect our country and our community's health. Moreover, we supported our family and friends and let them know, that we would always be there for them in these hard times.

Another thing that we should mention is that it is difficult for an individual or community to stay hopeful when a virus spread around the world. I still remember how much we were terrified on March 2020, also a lot of people thought that Covid 19 would end our existence in the earth. But few months later, we got used to the situation as everybody else here. Therefore, despite the fact that we were worried in the beginning as a person or a community, we stayed hopeful and helped each other months later.

Furthermore, If I am asked what are some aspects of celebrating our hope in humanity and its future, I will definitely say our behavior in the first months of the pandemic. We respected the barrier gestures, we encouraged scientists to find a vaccine, and we were charitable by donating and sharing with the people who lost their jobs. I think all these actions proved how much hopeful we were, and we still are as hopeful believers hope that COVID 19 will soon disappear, and we would live in a world better than it used to be.

Moreover, Morocco has proven by some unique ways the importance of staying hopeful during the pandemic. For example, using religion to explain that after every difficulty there is an ease, and this is why hope should be always present in our hearts. Also, Morocco supported his people during the lockdown by giving a sum of money to each person who lost their job. By so doing, they showed that the country has fulfilled its duty supporting and helping the people in need despite the difficulty.

As a conclusion, we can say that hope is what united communities and made them stronger during the last year.



*"Muy Bonitas Amistades" (Very Good Friendships) by Sandra Vega Tamos
1st Place – Alamos Young Artist*



*"Hemos Sido Iluminados"
(We have been Enlightened)
By Nuvia Betzaly Reyes Antelo
2nd Place – Alamos Young Artist*



"La Esperanza " (Hope) by Rommel Yeoshua Martínez Murrieta
3rd Place – Alamos Young Artist



"Two in Winter"
By Keaton Taylor
Kingston, Ontario - Young Artist



"Fluidity"
By Sophia S. Bos
Kingston, Ontario - Young Artist