

Youngsters Pen Essays About Books, Win Prizes From Library Friends



The 2019 winners of the Friends of the Long Beach Library contest: Front Row (L-R) Rocky Sandoval, Elijah Livingood, Eyan Lundahl, Zachary Escedy, Charlotte Navarrete, Sofia Perez. Back Row (L-R) Archie Byrom, Barbara Sosa, Glenda Williams, Darcy Fukuhaga, Greta Shinn, Payton Miller.

PHOTO BY SHARON ABAR, DIANE RISKA/FRIENDS OF THE LB PUBLIC LIBRARY

BY ASHLEIGH RUHL, CONTRIBUTOR
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One teenage girl wrote about being inspired by “Fish in a Tree” by Lynda Mullaly Hunt. Many young readers penned essays about the popular “Dog Man” by Dav Pilkey, and there was even an 8-year-old James Patterson fan in the mix.

More than 100 library patrons submitted essays this summer to the Friends of the Long Beach Public

Library’s third annual contest.

Volunteers had the difficult task of selecting the top three essays in five different age groups, and those results were announced Saturday at a celebration at the Michelle Obama Library in North Long Beach. Winners were presented with gift certificates valued between \$100 and \$50 to purchase books.

The Summer Reading Essay Contest was sponsored by the Friends of the Long Beach Public Library’s Helen Fuller Cultural Carrousel Committee, which is

celebrating more than 30 years of providing quality book-related programs for children.

It was part of the Long Beach Public Library system's summer reading program, with the theme this year of Showtime at the Library. This year's essay contest question was: "What book would you like to see turned into a show (movie or television), and why?"

The top five essays submitted this year were from: 7-year-old Eyan Lundahl, who wrote about "The Kissing Hand" by Audrey Penn; 8-year-old Rocky Sandoval, who enjoyed "Dog Man: Lord of the Fleas" by Dav Pikey; 11-year-old Archie Byrom, who read "Phineas Gage: A Gruesome But True Tale About Brain Science" by John Fleischman; 13-year-old Natalie Canalis, who wrote about "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn" by Betty Smith; and Christopher Chhim, who read the "I Survived" series by Lauren Tarshis.

Second place finishers included: Sofia Perez, 7; Elijah Livingood, 8; Darcy Fukuhaga, 11; Greta Shinn, 12; and Raquel Gass, 15. Third place honors went to: Zachary Ecsedy, 6; Charlotte Navarrete, 9; Sela Hacegaba, 10; Payton Miller, 12; and Ellie Kerns, 16.

The first four winning essays can be found in the electronic version of this story at TheGrunion.com.

Here is Christopher Chhim's essay.

The "I survived Series" would be great for a television show. In these series, the main character is either an eleven-year-old boy or girl. They are ordinary children until disasters, wars, natural catastrophes occurred. These circumstances transform them into extraordinary people who fought for their survival. They demonstrate a strong determination to fight against all odds.

Lauren Tarshis is a gifted author. She creates intelligently the plot with many twists and turns which keeps us hanging on to the last page of the book. She adds rich descriptive details making the reader dive into the story. She transports us to a different time and place. We ran in the battlefield in the American Revolution. The city of San Francisco under our eyes during the earthquake of 1906. We swam in the icy ocean during the sinking of the Titanic in 1912. The sound, picture, special effects play a key role in horror movies, catastrophe scenario and thriller movies.

The "I Survived" series are fascinating and thrilling stories. If we bring them to life and add sound, music, technology, we will have a television show of great quality. Thus we will create a masterpiece.