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2023 High School Scholarship Essay Contest
\$1,000 Scholarship Winner

Untitled Essay

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attending Oakmont High School in Roseville

Truthfully, I can't decide if I'm as insignificant as a single star amongst billions or if every step I take sends some sort of galactic ripple through time. I'm in a constant state of believing one over the other. Whichever makes it easiest to cope with my current situation. I suppose the most accurate way to make a decision is to look at the evidence.

Did one angry conversation alter an entire relationship, or when I passed by a homeless man on the street did my lack of empathy ruin his day? If I volunteer for a girl scout troop of 7 year-olds, will they remember me in ten years time? Will they remember planting trees and gluing popsicle sticks? I think they will, and I think it all matters.

It's a heavy burden to carry and the statistics disagree. But while I might be one of 8 billion, I'd rather spend my days making a difference than sit by idly and let life carry on without me. Life is a series of decisions. From the moment I wake up until the moment my head hits my pillow, I am making microscopic changes that in classic snowball fashion, accumulate to impact the world around me. But worse than a bad decision is no decision at all.

Indifference and ignorance have become the most sickening plague; everyone has a voice, and anyone can speak out. Not all of us will go unharmed, but it is those risky choices that make the difference. And it's the

people who are willing to carry those choices on their backs that write themselves onto the pages of our history books.

To ignore the simple truth that our actions do matter is to live in a constant state of ignorance, pretending that shutting our eyes will make a bad dream go away. Sometimes bad dreams are the reality, and we have to wake up and face them. And in those moments, we must decide how much we're willing to give up, how much of ourselves we're willing to turn in.

We all make the decision, conscious or not; we all decide how much of our lives we'll offer to the causes we believe in, to the people we love, and to the sicknesses that plague our mind. It's no easy decision, and sometimes we don't know we're making it, but nonetheless, it makes all the difference. Our life is what we make of it, and the legacy that we leave behind lies not in the titles we hold or the wealth we've accumulated, but in the state that we've left the world.