Honorable Mention Senior Poetry

Alvin Nguyen

Oscar Smith High School, Marianne McMillin

***His Army and Her Heroes***

**Fear** commands an army

Hundreds, thousands, millions strong.

Fear tramples through cities,

And defeats armies before guns are even raised,

He runs in a deafening roar.

His smile is sinister, his smile petrifies the bravest soldier

He is conceived from the cry of a mere child,

Grows through the scream of a young school girl,

And rages on as the father bellows at his sons.

Fear is the ringleader and **Hate** his circus.

There is a bully whose morals are cemented in fear and hatred.

These bullies run around **tormenting the weak**.

They enforce fear into those around them

With strong rhetoric

And a grip of steel;

There was a time when he became so strong that he ran the world straight into the ground,

Turning entire fields into graveyards and cities of rubble.

**However,**

Fear has an enemy named **Love**

She is sometimes forgotten,

She is sometimes neglected,

But she never truly disappears or abandons.

Throughout time, humans have rivaled Fear with Love.

With **Compassion**, with **Patience**, and with **Persistence**.

It may take one man, such as Martin Luther King Jr. or Gandhi.

It may take entire armies,

But **she always prevails**.

In times when fear seems to have his grip on the weak,

It becomes our **responsibility** to find the strength to fight for love

And to **preserve that safety**,

To stand up,

And not fall into this same fear.

Whether it starts by telling the girl’s peers to stop joking her

Or by telling a friend to stop posting mean comments online,

Make the noise to **disrupt the silence**.

Spark the fire,

And **motivate those around you**.

For “Silence encourages the tormentor,

Never the tormented,” –Elie Wiesel

Negligence to the situation

Empowers those who hurt.

It starts with one, and Love can just as easily overcome Fear.