November 1, 2019

Lifting Up Westchester Announces Student Essay Contest Exploring the Role Hope Plays in Helping to Transform Lives

WHITE PLAINS – Lifting Up Westchester, a non-profit agency committed to helping individuals achieve self-sufficiency, announces their third annual high school student essay contest. This year the contest will explore the role hope plays in helping to transform lives. Open to all Westchester students in the 7th to 12th grades, students are invited to reflect on the meaning of hope and the impact it can have in times of adversity.

The essay contest was established in 2017 in memory of Beth Massey Rubens, a lifelong teacher, tutor and mentor who had a love for language arts.

This year’s essay invites students to reflect on the complex subject of hope. Beyond fundamental, everyday necessities, such as food and shelter, do we need hope to thrive? Why? How can we regain hope when it has been lost? How do we know when hope has been restored?

Students are asked to provide a real-life example of how hope has made a difference between hanging on and just giving up. And finally, essays must relate back to the core mission and work of Lifting Up Westchester.

“The topic of hope is a powerful one,” noted Anahaita Kotval, CEO of Lifting Up Westchester. “We know firsthand how important hope is for those who are experiencing homelessness, substance abuse, incarceration or struggling to change their lives. We want this contest to encourage students to think about what the Westchester community can do to help men, women and children who are feeling hopeless.”
First, second and third place cash prizes will be awarded in three grade groups; 7th and 8th graders, 9th and 10th graders and 11th and 12th graders. First prize in each category is $500, second prize $250 and third prize $100. An Awards Brunch will be held in late April to celebrate the winners.

Students can enter the contest from November 1, 2019 through January 31st, 2020. Essays must be submitted in PDF format via e-mail to: luwessaycontest@gmail.com. Students, teachers and parents can learn more about how the contest works and the judging criteria by visiting www.liftingupwestchester.org.

# # #

About Lifting Up Westchester

Lifting Up Westchester (www.liftingupwestchester.org) is a 501 (c )(3) organization whose mission is to restore hope to Westchester County’s men, women and children in need by providing them with food, shelter and support - lifting them to greater self-sufficiency with dignity and respect. It is one of the largest social services agencies in Westchester County and has been fulfilling its mission since 1979 through the operation of eight community-based programs. The agency serves 3,500 men, women and children each year providing almost 100,000 meals to the hungry and 20,000 nights of shelter to the homeless.

For more information about Lifting Up Westchester, visit www.liftingupwestchester.org or contact Chris Schwartz at cschwartz@liftingupwestchester.org or (914) 949-3098.