

Renal Support Network Announces The Winners Of Its 11th Annual Essay Contest!

Written by Australian Business

GLENDALE, Calif., Sept. 17, 2013 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Now in its 11th year of providing a voice for people who have kidney disease and are passionate about writing, Renal Support Network (RSN) announces the winners of its Annual Essay Contest

This year's theme was

"Provide an example of how you became an active participant in your care."

Entrants needed to meet only one qualification— to have been diagnosed with chronic kidney disease. Essays were submitted from patients all across the United States

"Each year we receive many wonderful and inspiring essays," said Lori Hartwell, RSN's founder and president. "The contest gives people with kidney disease the opportunity to share their innermost thoughts and feelings, and we are proud to create an outlet where that can happen."

1st Place – "The Desperate Truth-Seeker" by Risa Simon of Scottsdale, Arizona. Risa's first-place essay describes her journey from learning that she had inherited the same illness that claimed the lives of her father and grandmother to making the decision to learn as much as she could about kidney disease, choosing not to wait until she became "sick enough" for treatment. Risa shares the routes she took to learn, what she learned and how this truth-seeking eventually led to finding Melissa, her living kidney donor. "I love how RSN's essay contest stretches our minds and spirits in a special way to tell our story" says Risa.

2nd Place – "The Black Binder" by Mary Wu of Ossining, New York. The transition from being a child-patient to becoming an adult, fully responsible for her own care, is the subject of Mary Wu's second-place essay. The tool she used to finally get organized and show the medical professionals that she was now in charge of her own healthcare and not her father, was a black binder, complete with tabs and dividers. When asked about the essay contest, Mary said, "I enjoy sharing my story of why it is important to be a proactive patient in order to help encourage others to do the same."

3rd Place (Tie) – "Old-Fashioned Self-Discipline" by Susan Decuir of Carrollton, Texas. Fi

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ending herself with new dietary restrictions due to a decrease in kidney function, this strong-willed grandmother stayed strong. Susan's essay describes how she talked herself into sticking with the challenging exercise routine and restrictive diet her doctor recommended so that she would be ready for the future kidney transplant and enjoy her grandchildren for years to come.

3rd Place (Tie) – "A Trip to the Castle" by Elizabeth Usher of Barboursville, West Virginia

Elizabeth's essay, in the form of a fairy tale, tells the story of a maiden who learns that she must be the heroine of her own story by taking charge and making the right decisions to stay as healthy as possible.

Cash awards were given to the first-, second-, and (2) third-place winners (\$500, \$300, and \$100, respectively).

High blood pressure and diabetes are the two leading causes of kidney failure. People who have kidney failure need dialysis or a kidney transplant to live. RSN provides educational materials and peer support.

Winning essays and more information about kidney disease are available at www.RSNhope.org

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