

For the past twenty-six years the Community Presbyterian Church of Merrick has sponsored a Peacemaking essay contest for students in the Merrick and Bellmore middle and high schools. One winner is chosen from the two middle schools and one winner from the three high schools. Each winner receives a certificate and a cash award.

This year there were over 200 entries. The committee was impressed with the quality of the thought and scholarship shown in the submissions. Our community can be proud that there is a lot of good teaching, learning, and thinking going on in our schools.

The middle school winner is Sidney Wang, an eighth grade student taking all honors classes at Grand Avenue Middle School. Sidney, with the support of her mother, Mei ya, her father, Xun, and her sister, Sophia, is involved in many extra curricular activities including SADD (Students Against Drunk Driving), and the Art, Math, and Communication clubs at Grand Avenue. She plans to continue to do well in her school studies, and to attend Harvard or Yale to prepare for a career in medicine.

The high school winner is Jonathan Lloyd, an eleventh grader at Sanford H. Calhoun High School. Jonathan won the Peace Essay contest two years ago! He is the Director of Social Media for the Distributive Education Club (DECA) at Calhoun and after winning local and regional DECA competitions, he travelled to Nashville to compete in the Nationals! He is one of only two students who sit on the Calhoun Curriculum Committee and takes all Honors and Advanced Placement classes. He will soon compete in the Counties for Badminton. In the summer, he works at Birch Elementary School Summer Recreation Program. Jonathan plans on a career in engineering and is being recruited by a number of schools, including New York Institute of Technology and the Stevens Institute of Technology. His mother, Monica Lloyd is proud of her son, and appreciates the educational opportunities available to him in our schools.

Jonathan is also popular with his classmates because when his English teacher, Ms. Arresto heard that about Jonathan's win, she baked cookies for the whole class to celebrate!

The two winners read their essays at Sunday worship on October 23,2016 and each received a certificate of recognition and a \$100 prize.