



**THE TOBY NUSSBAUM
JEWISH HERITAGE-NY2017 CONTEST**

***CULTURAL PLURALISM:
MAINTAINING CULTURES;
ENRICHING AMERICA***

**AWARD CEREMONY
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7, 2017
CITY HALL, NEW YORK CITY**

Jewish Heritage-NY2017 is a project of the
Jewish Community Relations Council of New York.





**THE TOBY NUSSBAUM
JEWISH HERITAGE-NY2017 CONTEST
AWARD CEREMONY PROGRAM**

Welcome..... Hon. Richard Buery
New York City Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives

Greetings..... Charles S. Temel
President, JCRC-NY

..... **Michael Nussbaum**
*Member of the Board of Directors, JCRC-NY, and
Co-Chairperson, Toby Nussbaum Jewish Heritage-NY2017 Contest*

Remarks Judith Shapiro
Chairperson, Jewish Heritage-NY2017

..... **Dale Nussbaum**
Co-Chairperson, Toby Nussbaum Jewish Heritage-NY2017 Contest

Tribute..... Bernard W. Nussbaum

Presentation of Awards Hon. Richard Buery

Closing Michael S. Miller
Executive Vice President and CEO, JCRC-NY

**Jewish Heritage-NY2017 is a project of
the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York.
The Toby Nussbaum JHNY2017 Contest is sponsored in cooperation
with the New York City Department of Education and
is supported by a generous grant from Bernard W. Nussbaum.**

**THE TOBY NUSSBAUM JEWISH HERITAGE-NY2017
CONTEST WINNERS**

**Intermediate School Level
(Grades 6-8)**

All Winners:

**Public School 232, Queens
Literacy Coach: Lori D'Andrea
Principal: Lisa Josephson**

First Place:

Moriah Ramcharran

Second Place:

Anisa Palevic

Third Place:

Faye Musarra

**High School Level
(Grades 9-12)**

First Place:

Jackie Dong

**Stuyvesant High School, Manhattan
Teacher: Michael Waxman
Principal: Eric Contreras**

Second Place:

Adam Wickham

**Stuyvesant High School, Manhattan
Teacher: Katherine Fletcher
Principal: Eric Contreras**

Third Place:

Bing Chen

**Brooklyn Technical High School
Teacher: Ashley Sapan
Principal: David Newman**

Baird Johnson

**Stuyvesant High School, Manhattan
Teacher: Michael Waxman
Principal: Eric Contreras**

INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL FIRST PLACE

Moriah Ramcharran
Public School 232, Queens

Cultural Pluralism

The tranquil fusion of all ethnicities and cultures,
Are what give America its title.
The land of the free and the home of the brave.
Seasoning the once bland country.
An orchestra that works in tandem
with each instrument playing its own unique tune.
Enriching America and influencing other countries to do the same.
Skipping down the path that once consisted of only one ethnicity
Is now a vast and beautiful mixture.
Each culture represents an iridescent color,
they come together in the dazzling rainbow and
shine euphoria amongst all living things.
Fighting past massacres and organized riots
the Jews persevered.
They slowly adapted in the Lower East side of Manhattan
In an "incubator" that supplied all their needs.
Other cultures shadowed.
As fierce as a lion but as calm as a lamb,
the Jews became a puzzle piece to America.
As years passed, the posterity acclimated to American life
They dispersed throughout New York city
They began to influence culture politics and business
They helped sustain New York City's legacy
as a thriving metropolis for centuries to come.
Welcomed by all,
"united we stand, divided we fall"

Every corner you turn,
There is a novel language to learn.
Around every curb,
is an exotic and cultural delicacy to try.
Philanthropy, benevolence and humanitarianism
Are traits we must show to make them feel as if they belong
America is their home away from home
America is the land of freedom
America is their comfort and protection
America is stirred with cultures and religions.
Don't be afraid, let your colors shine.
Home to over 100 different ethnicities, America,
the melting pot.

INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL SECOND PLACE

P.S 232, Queens

Anisa Palevic

701

Cultural Pluralism: The Cultural Enrichment of Society

America, the melting pot of all cultures and religions. The safe asylum for the masses. An accepting place where different people of different races, culture, and religion intermingle. Perhaps this being the reason why critics argue we are 'cultureless' but very much on the contrary. Cultural Pluralism has made us not a nation of a single definable culture, America is comprised of many, and we all know there is strength in numbers. We are a solid nation and we stand together united. We are a nation founded by many pilgrims. Pilgrims of course are those who were exiled from their country because of their religion. They came here with the goal for their own religion to be acknowledged and accepted, and is that not what we have done with every religion and culture since?

The Jewish people have faced such exiling for years and America was there with open arms. With the acceptance of those people has led to so many great things for our country. For example, and perhaps the most famous example: Albert Einstein. He was a refugee, and had come to America in 1933 after he was forced to give up his position, his findings were targeted and burned and at one point a German magazine had him as enemy of the German regimen and but a \$5,000 bounty on his head. When he came to America he helped the fields of math and science flourish and bloom. Even the Jewish people who didn't make such an impressive mark on history has a huge role in America, especially right here in New York. With new arrivals from former Soviet Union countries, and the middle east will "help sustain New York City's legacy as a thriving metropolis for centuries to come."

I am a first generation American, both of my parent's immigrants one a refugee, and another had been undocumented upon arrival. My father was to be drafted for the Bosnian War. The Bosnian War of course was a part of the Yugoslav Wars, and the Bosnian war on its own claimed upwards of 100,000 people's lives. Had my father been drafted he would've been fighting for the Serbians. For the people that attempted to put an end to Cultural Pluralism in that area, because the main reasons war was engaged was because of religion and the intolerance of religion. Its near unfathomable to think how dreadful it would be to think of having fight against those that you share thoughts with, brothers in knowledge. Having to fight for the sign that was cruel to the Bosnians. The horror stories of what Serbian soldiers did to Bosnian civilians was heinous. I can scarcely think of these instances without wanting to cry. So, he fled, and at a time he was quite literally running from the military police attempting to recruit him, and having to venture into the high mountains to lose the men attempting to recruit him. As a resort, he left for America.

He made a great sacrifice, leaving his brothers to be drafted for the war, but it was not in vain. The job he has currently is largely involved with one of his greatest talents; instructing those on their job and speaking to clients. He explains to his co-workers what exactly they are to do, and deals with the issues of the clientele. The work is hard, but he rarely complains even with the onslaught of calls and emails leaving barely any room to breathe. He helped his company

and has taught others outside of his job. He has told even grown adults about the events that have occurred during the Yugoslav Wars. He has recruited many people for jobs, giving so many opportunities and ways to support their family. He is always the voice of reason, and he has contributed so much to New York with his knowledge of his culture and his inherent determination to succeed. Recently, I am proud to say that America earned a new citizen, because my father after applying finally gained his citizenship. My father had told me about all the different people that have aided him and he has aided. Had America not been a country that wasn't so diverse and such a huge melting pot of people, these people would never have been helped, and I would not be here today. Making me forever grateful for the idea of 'cultural pluralism.'

My mother was raised a very devout Muslim. She went to mosque, prayed regularly, and practiced Ramadan. Being raised in a widely old-fashioned country her marriage to my father was arranged. At that time, he was already in America. But with that special determination shared by all immigrants she persevered to come to America. She came here undocumented but swiftly got her papers on arrival. She told me stories of hiding in trucks quietly with two other girls in a cramped space just praying to not be discovered. She left her whole family for this fruitful land. At the time, she was only a young girl at the age of 16, when she reached Aruba she was found and sent back to her country. But once again with great determination she could make it to America and gain her green card at age 17. Imagine you being a mere teenager and making that journey to America with only knowing few words of English. But she persevered and came here. Adapting slowly but surely to the English language, and speaking about the little-known history of Albania, and Montenegro.

At first the cultural differences may have seemed like a dividing difference for immigrants, for Jewish immigrants, and for my parents. But the cultural barriers were knocked down without haste. The language barrier decimated with help from people all around. This happened repeatedly to many people in America so much so that no longer see people of different races and religions that we should be distanced from. They now see people. People that can enrich the land if they so please. People that while where they are from may be different from us, we can learn their traditions and they can learn ours giving us knowledge we otherwise wouldn't have had otherwise. Much like the quote from the Theory of Jewish American scholar, Horace Kallen he had stated. 'American history is like a symphony orchestra, each instrument playing its own tune to create a richer overall sound.'

No two people are the same in truth. We are all different, but that doesn't matter. What matters truly is what we do with that difference and most people use it to better everyone, we create that melting pot. We do this all under one flag, one nation, and one dream. Much how like Adrian Cronauer had said, "The American flag represents all of us, and the values we hold sacred." We are represented by our nation and our nation represents us as people from different places that all hold the same basic ideals.

INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL THIRD PLACE

P.S. 232Q

Faye Musarra

Class 601

4/24/2017

Cultural Pluralism

We are all humans. We were all born on earth, here *together* and that's for a reason. The truth is that we need each other, no matter our race, gender, or beliefs. So why are so many of our minds soaked with prejudice in believing that those who have different cultures, beliefs, and backgrounds should be treated differently? Because in reality, we are all different, and that gives us uniqueness and individuality that we should be proud of. That is the balance of nature and it always should be. And yet, so many countries are still filled with a lack of diversity. Many countries fail to see the balance of nature that holds us all together and makes us who we are. And that is why America, especially New York, is so special. Because in a world filled with racism and discrimination, we have a diverse society, accepting an array of different cultures and ethnicities. I love my country, and there are no other words I can think of to express that.

Being a New Yorker I see all kinds of diversity, whether it be in my family, my friends, my classmates, or even just strangers on the street. My family, for example, has many different cultures, the three main ones being Irish, Italian, and Cuban, a mix rarely seen. While some of my family immigrated from different countries, others were simply born and raised here in New York. Either way, we are a large mix of cultures and traditions along the line, and that is one thing I love most about my family.

Jewish people have been coming to New York since 1654, starting with just 23 of them, and then about 400 years later, increasing to 1.54 *million*. Jews weren't the only ones coming to the USA. Roughly 63,864,817 immigrants came between 1821 and 1940. Thirty-six percent of New York's population was foreign-born, each and every one of them having a difficult struggle and journey to come here to our land of opportunity. That shows how drawn to our free country outsiders are and explains why we have the word cultural pluralism. Because just like the Jews, many people of other cultures and religions have been coming here for a centuries and *still* to this day continue to come. New York even has Indian, Russian, Irish, Italian, Asian, and Latin-American districts. New York City has long been our country's immigration hub and is known as the cultural capital of the world.

I am proud. Proud of my country. Proud of my state. Proud of my borough. Proud of my city. Proud of my neighborhood. And proud of my household. I am proud that we hold the definition of cultural pluralism within the borders of our free country.

HIGH SCHOOL FIRST PLACE

Jackie Dong

March 10th 2017

Essay Contest

Mr. Waxman Global
Stuyvesant High School
Manhattan

Cultural Pluralism

Today, America is looked at worldwide as one of the most diverse countries. Cultural pluralism is the idea that Jewish and other religious and ethnic groups could both maintain their culture and maintain society. Immigrants and people all around the world move to America in hope for a better life and more opportunities. And so, the joining of cultures from all over the world shapes American society and enriches it. This is shown through food, language, as well as the relationships of people from different cultures.

“American society is like a symphony orchestra, each instrument playing its own tune in order to create a richer overall sound.”- Theory of Jewish American Scholar Horace Kallen(1882-1974). This quote is a simile comparing the individual unique cultures of American society to the wide range of instruments in an orchestra and the richer overall sound to the enrichment the different cultures. Each individual culture provides its own significant effect on American society. I can relate to this quote because throughout the fourteen years of my life, I have been able to blend in with American society being born in a family with Chinese origin. Me blending in with American society is an example of cultural pluralism because I maintained many aspects of my Chinese backgrounds but also adapted to many customs of America. In addition, I was able to provide the people around me a different view of society because of my Chinese background.

“American culture is like a stew. It is composed of many different ingredients, spices, beliefs, and often a secret ingredient to give it the unique flavor that people crave. It is the land of opportunity, and it tastes good.” -Author Unknown, 2011. Just like the other quote, this quote compares America to a stew. It compares certain aspects of America to a stew’s components. For example, it compares the ingredients in a stew to the cultures of America, the spices of the stew to beliefs in America, and the stew’s secret ingredient to pride and freedom in America. Jewish people are a big part of America's society today and they have lived up to the concept of cultural pluralism. They have both maintained their culture and also enriched today’s society. For instance, the Jewish culture has been widely accepted in America, and their culture has provided many of its aspects on American society, such as religion and jobs. In the case of religion, synagogues have been built around the nation in order for Jewish worship. Additionally, Jewish people have been able to create their own businesses, enroll in government jobs, and take part of the education system.

All in all, the concept of cultural pluralism is lived up to by the different cultures in American society. Each culture remains its cultural identity while also adding to American society. As stated by the Jewish American scholar Horace Kallen, America is like an orchestra, and the individual cultures are like instruments in the orchestra. And with the instruments the orchestra produces a better overall sound.

HIGH SCHOOL SECOND PLACE

ADAM WICKHAM
STUYVESANT HIGH SCHOOL
MANHATTAN

Pluralism: It's Challenging

Living in New York City, pluralism is the status quo that we live with, yet we live in a world where we are afraid to honestly face our differences. For example, in my neighborhood, there are multimillion dollar brownstones next door to Housing Authority projects. Residents of these vastly different buildings virtually never interact. Though we preach diversity, we are extremely segregated, and there is great inequality.

Being part of communities that are different from my own is the norm in my life. Despite living in the most multicultural city in the world, I've often been one of few Black or Jewish students at all my schools and activities. Fostering inclusion is difficult, but I have seen its rewards and importance.

This summer, I learned about the difficulties of fostering cultural pluralism, as a Bronfman Fellow. The Bronfman Youth Fellowship in Israel is a pluralistic Jewish leadership program. Though we all shared the same religion, we had different practices and cultural beliefs. During the third week of the program, we even stayed with Israeli teens on homestays, as part of a weeklong seminar, where even more differences were revealed. Over the summer, I had many fascinating conversations about the ideas of gender equality, politics, privilege, and the dichotomy between past and present. Different perspectives and disagreements were evoked, but I was able to learn from and gain a greater respect for my peers.

Being open to questions is central to embracing diversity. I know that I don't know everything, and that it's important to ask and answer questions. With diversity through pluralism, there will be disagreement, but our conflicts can be used constructively to allow ourselves to open up to learning, embracing and even celebrating a different way of life.

HIGH SCHOOL THIRD PLACE (TIE)

Bing Chen
The Toby Nussbaum Jewish Heritage-NY2017 Writing Contest
Cultural Pluralism: Maintaining Cultures; Enriching America

**BROOKLYN TECHNICAL
HIGH SCHOOL**

The Melting Pot Connected by The Subway

New York City is the center of the American melting pot. The subway embodies the city and brings it together. I spend a lot of time on the subway. It has given me the freedom and independence to travel around the city. It has also allowed me to feel connected with the other 8 million New Yorkers.

Everyone from different parts of the city uses the MTA. As I walk into a station or train car, it's nice to see the diversity amongst the passengers. The subway is a place where I hear languages like Yiddish, Mandarin, and Russian. I get to see multicultural friendships and appreciate the harmony of the melting pot.

In the city, people can and are encouraged to hold on to their cultures. The subway opens the doors to ethnic enclaves around the city. I can hop on the train and stop by Chinatown, Corona, Borough Park, and Washington Heights. These cultural hubs allow immigrants to stay connected with their culture. Chinatown has allowed me to connect with my Chinese heritage. In my neighborhood, Sunset Park, I get to practice my Spanish and enjoy authentic Mexican food. I live a few train stops from Borough Park, the largest Orthodox and Hasidic Jewish community in the United States. It's eye-opening to see the change in demographics within two or three train stops. The community is steeped in tradition and is a safe-haven for the Jewish culture. The residents enjoy a sense of community with many independent religious-themed businesses and community organizations. The subway allows me to see the diverse neighborhoods that feel like a different world.

The ethnic enclaves are also home to many different groups. It's proof that multiculturalism can live in harmony. The different religious and ethnic groups that maintain their culture make New York a utopia.

HIGH SCHOOL THIRD PLACE (TIE)

BAIRD JOHNSON
STUYVESANT HIGH SCHOOL
MANHATTAN

DREAM

Dreams have no race
No color
No gender
No prejudice
A dream is a yearning, a hope to be free
Free of persecution
Free of oppression
Free to pursue any culture
Free to practice any religion
Free to be Jewish
Christian
Muslim
Hindu
Buddhist
Free to believe anything or nothing at all
A culture built on respect
A society based on friendship
Respect for the beliefs of others
Friendship for those different than oneself
When they come for one of us
They come for all of us
We do not descend into
The Hell spoken by Niemöller
We stand alongside those weakened
We leave no man behind
When one of us is pushed down
Together we rise

We rise as an unbreakable quilt
A quilt of infinite thread
A wall against intolerance
Yet a blanket for the cold
A protection from evil
A beautiful work of art
Each of over eight million people make up the fabric
Woven together with love, tolerance, respect
Yes,
We are a quilt
The Great American Melting Pot
What a sight to behold
To be greeted by the Mother of Exiles
To be embraced by the City of Dreams
We are the city of New York
We are strong
We ARE TOGETHER
Dream

JEWISH HERITAGE-NY2017

**A project of the Jewish Communal Affairs Department of
The Jewish Community Relations Council of NY**

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JCRC-NY Executive Vice President and CEO: Michael S. Miller

JHNY2017 Chairperson: Judith Shapiro

**The Toby Nussbaum JHNY2017 Contest Co-Chairpersons:
Dale Nussbaum and Michael Nussbaum**

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