

Second Place Poetry – High School

“We Matter”

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Grade: 10

School: Boyne City High School

The cries of the community echo across the nation.
As we unite to defend and support our brothers and sisters.
A community banded together and built on shared violence.
A community of the outcasts.
A community of every type of person.
We join together to fight and protest for justice.
For the belief that no one should be treated unfairly
Based on something so simple as skin color or sexual identity.
We have suffered long throughout the centuries to be ourselves.
Events like Stonewall, the Pulse Nightclub Shooting, and the too-many-to-count unrighteous
killings of Black American citizens by law enforcement.
We join together to fight.
We join in chants.
We join in song.
But too many times we join in sorrow for the lost members of our community.
After our tears are wiped from our eyes we continue to fight while the rubber bullets pierce
Our skin and tear gas inflames our faces.
We chant in unison while marching down the streets.
We are here.
We exist.
We love.
We feel.
We matter.
We are human beings.
Just like you.
And we will not stop until we finally get the justice we deserve.
To finally have every citizen respected.
For every citizen to feel safe in our own country.
For every citizen to not feel as if we aren't side characters in government policy.
For every citizen to matter to the nation.
In the face of adversity, we become stronger and louder.
We shout to the rooftops and sing to the sky.
We hold hands and cry,
“No justice;
No peace!”