



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: November 22, 2023
To: Local Educational Agency Leads, Administrators of Approved Private Schools for Students with Disabilities
Route To: Principals, Teachers, Guidance Councilors
From: The New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education
Apply by: February 2, 2024

Sister Rose Thering Fund 14th Annual Essay Competition

Founded in 1993, the Sister Rose Thering Fund for Education in Jewish-Christian Studies (SRTF) provides scholarship aid to public, private and religious school teachers and administrators who enroll in Seton Hall University's graduate program in Jewish-Christian Studies. The Fund's mission is to advance the legacy of Sister Rose Thering by fostering understanding and cooperation among Jews, Christians, and people of other religious traditions through advocacy and education. For nearly 30 years, hundreds of teachers throughout New Jersey have benefited from Fund scholarships, making it possible for them to share their own coursework with hundreds of thousands of elementary, middle, and high school students in the state. The commitment of these educators has encouraged a generation of young people to understand and embrace the importance of personal and societal appreciation of our diverse culture.

For 13 years, the Sister Rose Thering Fund has offered a statewide writing competition for high school students in New Jersey who have viewed and discussed the award-winning documentary *Sister Rose's Passion*. Information about, and copies of the film, are distributed to public, private, and religious schools in cooperation with the New Jersey Commission for Holocaust Education. For 2024, the SRTF is pleased to enhance the competition by broadening its submission categories. In addition to essays, poetry and video submissions will now be accepted.

The theme for this year's essay contest is ***Exhibiting Moral Courage & Standing Up to Injustice Can Change the World.***

Through words and actions, Sister Rose Thering demonstrated great moral courage. This year's competition provides an opportunity to show how, by exhibiting moral courage and standing up against injustice, one person can positively affect the world.

Students should think about a relative or friend, a past or present public figure, or a character in a literary work who demonstrated great moral courage, stood up to injustice, and changed the world in which they live or have lived.

Who should apply: Open to all New Jersey students in grades 7-12.

Key steps/actions

Those interested in participating in the essay contest should watch the Academy Award-nominated documentary, *Sister Rose's Passion* and conduct research on the chosen character. Participants should share the research and analysis in an essay, poem or video demonstrating how the character's behavior would be considered morally courageous.

There will be first-place and honorable mention winners for each grade level across all entries. Please submit up to 10 essays and poems or 5 videos per grade level per school. The Celebration of Education Award Ceremony will be held at Seton Hall University on April 14, 2024

Application and guidelines can be found [here](#).

Contact Information

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c: Members, State Board of Education
NJDOE Staff
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Garden State Coalition of Schools
NJ LEE Group