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Dear District Director/Guidance Counselor/Teacher,

Our association is hosting an essay contest and would like to invite students in your county to participate. The contest is open to High School Seniors ages 16-18 in the 2017/2018 school year. Enclosed is a letter for guidance counselors, along with a poster and documents students need in order to participate. Please share with anyone you feel would like to participate and with students who meet the criteria.

We love concrete and hope to inspire Florida residents to feel the same way! Possible idea starters: Concrete's positive effects on the environment, the job market, etc.; Concrete's benefits to society; Concrete is green; Concrete and technology; Concrete...local resource...local jobs.

If you should need additional information, please do not hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,

Michele White
Executive Director
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Daily trips to school had become routine for Adam, what was unexpected was a new assignment in his English class. All students were to draw one word from a hat and proceed to write a creative piece on that one word. Frightening to say the least, this double weighted assignment depended on one word. His turn finally came, without looking he could feel all the possibilities slipping between his fingertips hoping for a fun word such as “sports”, or “science.”

His word “concrete.”

Everyone laughed under their breath, thankful they didn’t pick a word as boring as “concrete.” Adam played it off; he could still ace the assignment. As the cold sweat approached, so did the bell and he vacated the school. He was nervous and had lots of research to do. Concrete would not bury him. He would conquer concrete.

There was no time to waste, he had to know all there was to know to pull off an A. The basics of concrete of it being a solid and made of 3 aspects: aggregate, water and cement was too boring to cement a solid score. He dug deeper into the history and to his surprise concrete had been around longer than the enlightenment where great thinking took off. In fact, it had been occurring naturally on earth for millions of years. Curious minds began mixing the elements of earth and trial and error turned into one of the most powerful organic mixtures capable of withstanding the forces, and supporting and protecting those that created it. Adam, began to see the significance behind concrete as he learned more about it and felt bold enough to write a poem for his assignment.

Concrete

Chances are it’s been poured all around you.
Discovering its strength was a major breakthrough
Arm’s length away it’s made to stay
Despite its popularity, it has no holiday.
The Romans paved the way,
Their ancient structures of concrete can be seen today.
Columns became arches, pillars and domes,
Rome became the greatest place to roam.
Nothing lasts forever and down went Rome.
Concrete was buried,
800 years alone.
The Industrial Revolution revived concrete,
Brought it to life, poured under every man’s feet.
Water, rocks, cement, aggregate
Natural materials, for that I’m an advocate
It can stand alone and withstand the weather,
Made of earth and water it can resist a fire.
Millions of people concrete has hired.
Sadly its social significance is overlooked,
Something not taught in history textbooks.
Its perfection has protected and connected society,
Providing peace and privacy for the public.
Roads carry truckloads resulting in new area codes.
Where humans travel, concrete will too
Concrete needs humans and humans need it too,
Without each other its presence might not ensue.

Adam was more than excited to turn in his creative piece and sure enough the assignment was a success! Far more important than the grade received, Adam had a new respect for concrete and his peers did too. Something so simple and prevalent had been forgotten and unappreciated. Adam thought about how amazing it is that one word could not only help him become a better creative writer, but teach him about something beyond the classroom. He felt empowered writing about it because he truly believed without concrete, humans are just another vulnerable animal. Concrete has put human’s one step higher on the social ladder and humans have put concrete on the map. This strong bond has come to stay for the present and future.