



## 2017 HOLOCAUST SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM RECIPIENT MELANIE PHILIP

Melanie Philip is a teacher at Mackay Centre School in Montreal, Quebec. As an educator, Melanie considers it her mission to equip her students to recognize prejudice and discrimination in society, empowering them to take action when necessary. Throughout her career, Melanie has taught her students that their opinions matter, encouraging confidence, leadership skills and engaged discussions.

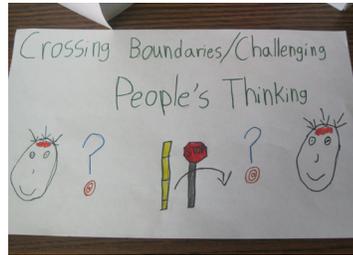
### YEAR OF IMPLEMENTATION IN REVIEW

Participation in the CSYV Holocaust Scholarship Program allowed Melanie to deepen her knowledge of the Holocaust and to refine her pedagogical skills, particularly in regard to how she communicates the lessons of the Shoah to her students who have special needs. Aiming to increase her students' capacity for relating to the material, Melanie's course on the Holocaust includes a weekly Literature Circle, during which she reads to her grades 5-6 students Holocaust-related fiction for children, introducing them to such works as "Hana's Suitcase" by the Canadian writer Karen Levine.

While listening to Hana's story, Melanie shared how her students demonstrate compassion for the immense suffering of fellow human beings. They feel they can connect and relate with Hana. She could have easily been their peer, studying alongside them in their class. The pre-war component allowed children to appreciate how much they had in common with her, even after so many decades. They were extremely upset about Hana's tragic end.



MELANIE'S STUDENTS AT THE MONTREAL HOLOCAUST MUSEUM



EXAMPLES OF THE WORKS CREATED BY MELANIE'S STUDENT AS PART OF "COURAGEOUS VOICES FROM AROUND THE WORLD" PROJECT

Melanie's students were also deeply moved by the story "The Heart of Auschwitz". It tells the story of a greeting card, made in the shape of a heart, by Auschwitz prisoners for Fania's (also interned at Auschwitz) 20th birthday. Inspired by this story, pupils created their own hearts and messages of hope for the holiday season, which was shared with the entire school. In the story, the creation of the heart was an act of spiritual resistance and kindness. Melanie's students were motivated to perform their own collective act of kindness, collecting brand new toys for children in shelters, which they donated to a local non-profit organization.

To give her students an opportunity to supplement their knowledge of the Holocaust and what they have learned in the Literature Circle, Melanie took her students to the Montreal Holocaust Museum, on January 27, 2018, to mark International Holocaust Remembrance Day. The presentation on the "Righteous among Nations" was particularly fascinating and inspiring for students.

Students' reactions to the stories of "Righteous among Nations" encouraged Melanie to create the unit of study: "Courageous Voices from Around the World". During this unit, Melanie presented inspiring stories, memoirs, biographies and autobiographies of Righteous among the Nations, as well as other historical characters who demonstrated exceptional courage and resilience in the face of hostility. Students were instructed to choose a research project on an individual, which they would then present to their peers. For their research, students used a variety of digital tools available at the school's Virtual Library. They were eager to discuss their research project in class.

To further her own Holocaust education, Melanie plans to travel to Europe to visit the main sites connected with the Holocaust. Melanie aims to gain a better understanding of Jewish culture, how it once thrived before the Holocaust and how it continues to thrive after the devastation and destruction of the Holocaust.