

The Michael C. Rothberg September 11th Memorial Scholarship
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Essay A: Describe your personal goals, challenges or commitments and how you can draw on what you've learned about Michael Rothberg's legacy to inspire your own.

Ultimately, I hope that any personal success I may find in my career will not drive me to sacrifice concern for my local and global communities; better yet, that success would stem from helping them. I imagine a well-rounded life in which I am constantly seeking self-improvement and guided by empathy. To integrate chemistry, psychology, and Spanish into a life of inquiry, collaboration, and service would be ideal. For me, the goal is not affluence. I'm shooting for happiness by way of intellectual epiphanies and affected lives. Of course, I plan to focus on making sure that my family and I can live as comfortably as necessary, but the end is less important than the means. I hope to make a living in a satisfying way that engages and elevates those around me. In service, I will not assume the perspective of a savior or hero; rather, my community members and I will be equal partners. I'm so impressed that Mr. Rothberg could remain grounded, continuing to value philanthropy after becoming as accomplished as he was in his professional life. It seems that Wall Street never overshadowed Dana Farber or the MS Foundation, and that's encouraging. I expect that as I enter the adult world, I will find it increasingly challenging to be competitive but not cutthroat and self-aware but not self-centered. Cultural pressure can be hard to avoid, but I am committed to my values, and if Mr. Rothberg did it, then I believe that I can, too.

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Essay B: What would you recommend to our government to prevent terrorism in our country or anywhere in the world?

To prevent terrorism, governments should invest less in warfare and more in the spread of accurate information. So much propaganda tends to pollute the cultures of the terrorists and the victims. Knowledge of the truth limits the misunderstandings, ignorance, and fear on both sides that lead to terrorism. The more people believe gross generalizations, the more negative messages are relayed from one nation to the other, and the more people think that innocent foreign civilians hate them. People must recognize the majority of peaceful, rational citizens within antagonistic nations. Though this responsibility may lie more with the mass media than the government, such a campaign would aid in breaking the cycle of violence. Furthermore, youth living in the countries from which terrorists arise often grow up exposed to hardships caused by a harmful foreign presence in their homelands, military or otherwise. We want to minimize the grounds that those children have for blaming their troubles on a foreign power. It would also help to support developing nations as they implement political and economic plans beneficial to them. Regardless of whether or not those plans match America's ideal, it is crucial to support the nations and try to understand their values as opposed to interfere and cause chaos. Well-educated, intelligent, marginalized people unable to find work in their own countries often turn frustrated and bitter. They look to blame America and may fall to terrorism. More content people and a safer world spring from healthy, prosperous nations.