UMN CROOKSTON ESSAY CONTEST 2020: WORDS AND IDENTITY

TELL US HOW WORDS ARE CONNECTED TO AN IDENTITY

We use words to describe who we are to others, and in doing so we choose what words we get to use. What happens when others are in charge of choosing words to describe us, or when individuals deliberately use negative labels to define who we are? Many people live this reality every day. This year UMN Crookston is asking you to reflect on this and to write your story.

What is a “words and identity story”? It is whatever you want it to be! We encourage creative and unique responses. You may approach the theme of “words and identity” in any way that you want. The following are some possible places to start:

- Reflect on the University of MN Pronoun Policy, why do pronouns matter, and why do they have power? [https://policy.umn.edu/operations/genderequity](https://policy.umn.edu/operations/genderequity)
- Spread the Word to End The Word
- Names of people and places—how do names reflect identities and histories? What are some connections between names and identities?
- The importance of listening to people tell us who they are, instead of imposing a label
- Stories about translations, interpretations, miscommunications, or mistaken identities

Essays should be no longer than 500 words. The writer of the winning essay will receive a $100 gift card to the UMC bookstore (second and third place winners will receive $50 and $25 gift cards, respectively).

All three winning essays will be published in the 2020 issue of Inspired.

Submissions will be judged on relevance, originality, and quality of writing.

The deadline for submissions is **Friday, March 13th.**

**RULES FOR SUBMISSIONS**
- Submissions may be NO MORE than 500 words.
- Submissions must be written in paragraph format (essay style) and clearly address the prompt.
- Submissions must include a title that reflects the content of the essay.
- Explorations of personal experiences, anecdotes, and beliefs are encouraged. If outside sources are used, they must be fully cited using APA or MLA format.

**TO SUBMIT AN ESSAY**
Send your submission as a Word document or pdf attachment (NOT a Google Doc) to umcwrite@umn.edu by Friday, March 13th. In the email, include your name, major, year at UMC, and the title of your essay.

*Sponsored by Multicultural Education, Student Success Center, and the Department of Liberal Arts and Education.*