

2<sup>nd</sup> Place

9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> Grade

23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Student Essay Contest | Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum

### Shades of Darkness Give Way to Light

The Oklahoma City Bombing was something that I learned briefly about when I was in 6th grade. I think my class spent a total of ten minutes on the entire terrorist attack. As I watched the video for this essay, I wondered why it was so brief. Was it because I live in New York, where 9/11 is still prevalent every day? Or maybe because my teacher didn't want to scare her students anymore than they already are. School, church, concert and even parade shootings make the news daily. Being aware of my surroundings, the nearest exits and knowing to play dead if I am ever in a mass shooting is our new reality.

However, the quote in the video from Former First Lady Hillary Clinton touched my soul. On April 22, 1995, remarks by the President and Hillary Clinton about the Oklahoma City Bombing were made to the American children. Mrs. Clinton stated, "I also want you to know that there are many more good people in the world than bad and evil people."

I think it is important to take this quote to heart. Both my parents were alive for 9/11 and had family and friends that passed away that day. They still attend funerals for first responders who die from 9/11 illnesses. The community for 9/11 and Oklahoma City are similar. Both of those days were filled with darkness. The world will never forget what happened on either of those tragic days. Beautiful memorials were formed and instead of being filled with evil, people came together and were filled with hope and the enduring light of the human spirit.

In my opinion, the world today can be a scary place. Just last week a million people gathered to celebrate the Kansas City Chiefs Superbowl win in Missouri. Just as the parade was ending, gunfire erupted and one woman and 22 people were injured, half under the age of 16! However, as Hillary Clinton referenced, ""there are many more good people in the world than evil"". In the days since the shooting, the Chiefs worked with the United Way to create an emergency fund for not only the victims, but also the first responders (who ran towards the active shooters) and violence prevention organizations. In addition, a t-shirt and cookies are also being sold to raise money. It has been reported that Patrick Mahomes donated money and visited the children in the hospital and Taylor Swift also contributed to the Go Fund Me that was created for the victims.

In the same spirit of Oklahoma City, a quote from the Associated Press caught my eye. Michelle Hubbard, the superintendent of one of the largest Kansas school districts stated, "In the next few days, we will need to lean on our unity, and on each other." Once again, as Ms. Clinton stated, Kansas City will not let the bad and evil people win. This community will demonstrate their resiliency like Oklahoma City did, where hope and love will continue to triumph and bring people together in the face of tragedy.

### Citation

Hollingsworth, Heather. "Kansas City Was Basking in the Aftermath of a Thrilling Super Bowl Victory. Then Came the Gunshots." AP News, AP News, 17 Feb. 2024, [apnews.com/article/super-bowl-rally-shootings-kansas-city-6fe4ea935f546c7872d21ff56b124caf](https://apnews.com/article/super-bowl-rally-shootings-kansas-city-6fe4ea935f546c7872d21ff56b124caf)