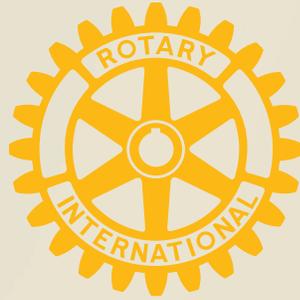


Laws of Life



THE GEORGIA
ROTARY CLUBS
LAWS OF LIFE
ESSAY CONTEST
2017

Courage

Grit

Compassion

Integrity

The Georgia Rotary Clubs Laws of Life Essay Contest

The Georgia Laws of Life Essay Contest asks students to select a "law of life" (such as "To give is better than to receive" or "Don't judge a book by its cover") and to use that saying to reflect upon and write about personal life lessons and character values. As a signature program of Rotary clubs in Georgia, the contest takes Rotary's emphasis on ethics, education, and advanced literacy into schools and classrooms across the state.

The contest is modeled on the original Laws of Life contest started by the late Sir John Templeton. Templeton—a pioneer in financial investments and a distinguished philanthropist—created the program to motivate young people to consider the things that are truly important in life and to follow their moral compass.

For the last 18 years, the Georgia contest has successfully been in the vanguard of character education and ethical literacy. By utilizing the power of the pen, the contest drives students to discover hope in situations that seem full of despair, discern triumph in the midst of tragedy, or find joy in simple acts of kindness. The contest encourages students to see themselves and others in a new perspective, and emboldens students to live their best, most compassionate, and most courageous lives.

Facts and Benefits

- The Georgia Rotary Clubs Laws of Life Essay Contest is the largest essay contest in North America. More than 580,000 Laws of Life essays have been written by Georgia students since the contest started.
- The contest fulfills the state of Georgia's mandated character education requirement for high schools.
- For the 2016-2017 contest, 48,836 students from 64 high schools wrote a Laws of Life essay. The contest named 179 school-level winners and seven state student winners this spring, and it presented \$22,000 in student cash awards and teacher honoraria.

The Georgia Laws of Life Essay Contest is an outreach of the Georgia Rotary Districts Character Education Program, Inc. (GRDCEP), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to transform lives by promoting positive values and by building ethical literacy in students.



THE GEORGIA
ROTARY CLUBS
LAWS OF LIFE
ESSAY CONTEST

"Calling to mind with gratitude those to whom we are indebted on our journey is...one of the few pleasures that endure without loss of luster to the end."

—William Alexander Percy,
Lanterns on the Levee

Those of us fortunate enough to be involved in the Laws of Life program are grateful to the individuals and organizations who make the Georgia Laws of Life Essay Contest a success. We thank the thousands of students who brave submission of their essays, the teachers who help their students "dig deep" in their essay writing, the Rotarians who selflessly volunteer to recognize deserving students, and the Rotary club, corporate, foundation, and individual sponsors who make the contest possible.

We especially thank and congratulate the seven student winners whose essays are showcased in this publication. We are inspired by their wisdom, their keen insights, and their willingness to share their values and life lessons.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan".

Susan G. Mason
Executive Director, Georgia Rotary Districts
Character Education Program, Inc. &
Georgia Rotary Clubs Laws of Life Essay
Contest

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Renee Welch".

Renee Welch
Board Chair, Georgia Rotary Districts
Character Education Program, Inc.

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State Winner

Taylor Reimann

South Forsyth High School – 11th Grade

Mind wanders. Worry swirls. Doubt grows. Her mind swims, flooded with unwanted reminders of internal unrest. Heart pounds. Eye waters. Hand trembles. Her body reacts, plagued with the physical reminders of internal unrest. She reaches for a pen to click, a hairband to snap, something, anything to distract, to cure, to occupy. Nothing satisfies the need for internal peace, emotional release, and a mind at ease.

This is my friend Anxiety. She has stuck with me since my first cry and will remain until my final breath. She inhabits my mind, controlling my thoughts and my fears. When I was young, she reminded me to stay by Mommy's side. "What if someone wants to hurt you, or take you away?" she whispered in my ear. I quickly latched onto my mother's hand, now fearful of every strange passerby. In school, she taught me to avoid rejection. "What if they won't like you?" she taunted my young mind. I drifted to the swing set, entertaining myself alone on the playground. She taught me to only raise my hand if I was positive that I had the right answer. "If you're wrong, they'll laugh at you," she often reminded me. I kept to myself, only opening up when outwardly encouraged. Anxiety held onto every thought that passed through my mind, sometimes creating her own doubts and questions.

In high school, Anxiety began to mislead me. "Don't even try," she prodded, "You're only going to make a fool of yourself." So I stuck to what I knew, never emerging from the shade of my tree of life. "You'll never be perfect, and you'll never be happy," she foreshadowed as she grew larger. So I began to stop trying, giving up the things that I loved the most. "You'll never succeed. You're worthless," she tormented. Anxiety gave birth to Depression, and then I had two friends controlling my thoughts and

fears. Depression told me that life wasn't worth living anymore and the world would be better off without me in it. Anxiety told me that if I kept living, the world would destroy me.

Anxiety and Depression grew and began to spread to the rest of my body, revealing themselves through physicality. Sometimes Anxiety prevented my lungs from breathing normally. She made my heart beat quickly, my eyes water, and my hands tremble. Depression made my eyes glaze, my weight shrink, and my arms bleed. Anxiety and Depression began sucking the life out of me.

Somewhere deep down, beneath the worry, stress, fear, and doubt, Taylor hid. Taylor's love, smile, joy, and kindness were trapped beneath Anxiety and Depression, which had grown so large in order to block out Taylor. Eventually, she began to fight back. As Taylor focused on regaining strength, she grew. Whenever Anxiety told me to fear, Taylor taught me to be brave. When Depression told me I was worthless, Taylor taught me how to prove my worth. When Anxiety told me to doubt, Taylor taught me to hope. When Depression told me to give up, Taylor taught me to keep fighting.

I have a battle in my head. Anxiety, Depression, and Taylor argue every day. I have learned how to please all of them. Writing allows Anxiety to release, Depression to be heard, and Taylor to express. Painting gives Anxiety peace, gives Depression accomplishment, and gives Taylor joy. Performing gives Anxiety excitement, gives Depression distraction, and gives Taylor confidence. Each day, the three pieces get closer and closer to combining and completing me. Until that day, I will struggle. However, the struggle is worth becoming completely and entirely myself one day. One day. ♪

LAW OF LIFE:
"The struggle is
worth becoming
completely and
entirely myself
one day."



1st Runner-Up

Cordelia Phillips

Columbus High School – 9th Grade

You never realize the importance of a home until you don't know where exactly home is. It was never that we didn't have a place to land, it was simply a matter of those places not remaining ours. I've grown up in a military family; moving and never knowing how long you'll be in one place.

"Where are you from?" A simple question for most, but one filled with a million possibilities for me. "Where I was born? Where does most of my extended family live? Perhaps, where I lived last?"

I have had houses. That was never the problem; but a home? My parents always had a solid answer for "Where's home?" They grew up in one place. They had one environment filled with the same people consistently. I have always been at a loss of words at this question.

I envied those who could simply name a place. One where all of their family lives and where they've grown up in one house. A place that holds everything: their possessions, but also their memories. I felt as if my life was missing something. I felt that perhaps I didn't belong because I didn't have what everyone around me always seemed to.

That was until I realized that sometimes home isn't a place. Perhaps most people can name a city or a state, a neighborhood. However, I suppose I'm not most. When asked where home is, I picture my parents packing boxes over pizza and a board game with loud music playing in the background. I picture a house where my friends and I tried to hoist my brother twenty-feet in the air using fabric scraps. I see my grandparents' house in the summer, filled with family and love.

If you want me to tell you about my home, I can tell you the names of the neighbors I had in Hawaii, or the people we went to church with in California. I will list the cast of best friends I had through elementary

school, or the people who we call an uncle or aunt, and not because they were blood. Sometimes "Mr." just wasn't enough anymore. If you asked me about my home, I'd tell you of hide-and-seek in the dark at my best friend's house with a scary movie playing in the background. I could paint a picture of two girls scream-singing in the back seat of an older sister's car on the way to breakfast. Home became the feeling that these memories were created within, the one I feel when reminiscing.

The most important thing we can develop in our lives are relationships. The friendships we build with others are the only thing we can rely on throughout the tough times. Those who were once simply strangers becoming our family is one of the most extraordinary events in our life. It's the people in our lives who take home from being the thought of a physical place, to a feeling. Friends are the thing that transforms home into a connection deeper than what could be developed in a place.

Home, for some, is a place. For others, however, home is the memories we've made with the people who love us. Family, and the friends that became family. Every goodbye is home becoming bigger, broader—spanning over continents.

So while I may not have a simple answer, I do have an answer. I'm incredibly lucky; my home isn't tied to a place—it's tied to people. And do you want to know what makes people so special? They can love you back. Friendship is the bond that holds us together. When we're together, we feel a sense of kinship, of belonging. Human nature drives us to find a home; somewhere we belong. So while I may have never had a physical 'home,' I have a home—I have a way in which I belong. My home is just a little different from how anyone would imagine it—and I wouldn't have it any other way. ∞

LAW OF LIFE:
"Home is not
a place,
it's a feeling."
—Anonymous



2nd Runner-Up

Claudia Marquez

Forsyth Central High School – 11th Grade

Thinking about a life without my mom is like thinking about a life without water. Impossible to imagine, but even more impossible to bear. I am not blind to the fact that we all face trials that really test who we are. But this, this was different. Everyone says that it is the difficult times that make us stronger, but throughout this period of my life, I felt helplessly weak. The silver lining was nowhere to be found.

I remember it being a Sunday morning, quite a beautiful one actually. The sun peeked through the opening of the blinds, the smell of coffee and my vanilla scented candle traveling through the air around me. As early as it was, my morning routine remained the same. Looking up to heaven but only seeing the ceiling of my room, I thanked God for another day of life. Not praying or hoping it would be a good one, just simply being grateful for another one. As my cheekbones began to rise and my eyes began to glisten, the smile on my face resembled stone, remaining entirely intact for almost a minute. That is, until I heard my mom, the most beautiful and gentle woman in the world, cry out with so much hurt in her voice that I began to hurt. The smile on my face faded away.

What happened after that I didn't understand, nor did I want to. The sound of the ambulance siren seemed to be getting closer, and before I knew it, there was a line of paramedics rushing up the stairs to the bed she was lying in. My brother and I attempted to speak to my mom before they took her away, but the pain in her chest did not allow her to say anything. As soon as she left the house, I felt the atmosphere change. It grew dark and barren. All three of us stood looking at each other for a minute with nothing but pain to define us. Although we could not think straight, we pulled it together and

followed the ambulance to the hospital.

Upon arrival, my dad went to the front desk, and we were directed to her room. As yellow as she was, and without even the slightest drop of makeup on her face, she still remained beautiful. Though she still could not speak, the expression on her face gave me enough reason to believe that something was very wrong. One of the nurses took my

father to the other room to tell him what was going on, and I heard him sob painfully loud. Once the first tear broke off, the rest followed in an unbroken stream as he explained to my brother and me that her aorta was in the process of tearing, and she would need an immediate open heart surgery that had a 95% death rate.

In this very moment, I remember driving myself nearly insane. Nobody taught me how to cope with this. How can you hold yourself together when your own father can't seem to? With the only ounce of sanity I had left, I did conceivably the smartest thing anyone could do in my position. With both knees to the floor and my hands wiping the tears from my eyes, I let it all out in my most vulnerable state. My deepest, most powerless cry resulted in my most sincere prayer.

"But I know, somehow, that only when it is dark enough can you see the stars." Looking back at this point in my life is still incredibly hard. It was the first time I felt completely and utterly broken. But it was also the first time I was able to string myself back together. I am so glad I didn't lose my mom that day. My best friend. But had I not been placed in this situation, perhaps I would not show the deepest level of love and appreciation for people that I do now. God broke me down and built me back up stronger than ever before. I didn't understand it then, but I do now. ☺

LAW OF LIFE:
"But I know,
somehow, that only
when it is dark
enough can you
see the stars."

– Anonymous



3rd Runner-Up

Christina Sun

Lambert High School – 12th Grade

Standing on the side of a busy street in downtown Chengdu, I held an unassuming plastic cup of glass pudding. The jello-like dessert, bathed in a caramelized sugar-syrup with red goji berries and crushed haw flakes, snatched up the waning rays of light and scattered them like a stained-glass window. Near the vendor's cart, I take my first bite—the soft, bittersweet taste runs slippery and cool down my throat. In that instant, I must have tasted life. It was inviting, biting, and impossible to fully grasp.

I've never been a picky eater. Growing up, the family dinner motto, "Eat it. It's good for you!" taught me to appreciate different tastes and textures. No food, whether it be broccoli, brownies, or duck with the head still attached, could ever escape my plate. I even began dreaming of creating a show, traveling the world to explore how different foods and cultures worked hand in hand. But seven-year-old me had neither the funds nor the time to do such a thing. Instead, I found my outlet for exploration in cooking.

Around the same time that I discovered my interest in culinary endeavors, the stork sent me a little sister, along with a few additional responsibilities and worries. As a first generation Asian-American daughter to high-achieving parents, the pressure to lead an "acceptable" life couldn't be ignored. My parents were by no means controlling tiger parents, but they did expect me to already know my life's path, which hopefully matched up with a dream career, which hopefully included becoming a doctor or lawyer. The pressure, though well-intentioned, morphed life into a sudden-death game show. I was petrified with the fear of failing, and my life took a halt, trapped in the notion that, if I pursued something risky and later discovered it wasn't the perfect fit for me, there would be no more hope. The pressure started seeping into other parts of my life. Missed opportunities, lost

friendships. All from the irrational fear of an intangible beast.

Cooking stayed my constant through the pandemonium of trying to piece together what life meant to me. I discovered new foods, created new dishes. Granted, my grub wasn't always delicious nor aesthetically pleasing. But when my stir fry turned out to be too bland or too spicy, it was okay. I just added soy sauce or served it with more rice.

When my new brownie recipe never rose, I didn't reject it as a failure. I simply dubbed it

brownie brittle. As I noted that the fear of making an imperfect dessert never prevented me from experimenting, I realized the trepidation of leading an imperfect life shouldn't prevent me from pursuing my own version of it. As I began to discover that imperfection didn't necessarily constitute inadequacy, I could abandon my fear, take risks, and create something more than a simple dish

from a recipe. When I failed, I'd simply fix any errors to the best of my abilities, or wash my hands and try again another day. The concepts I'd long applied to cooking encouraged me to release myself from the paralyzing shackles of unattainable perfection.

Cooking is a harmony of personal passion, aesthetics, quality ingredients, and most importantly, freedom. I've remembered that I don't have to be confined to one page, cautiously cooking one recipe for the rest of my existence. The quote, "the only real stumbling block is fear of failure," could not be more true. No matter what else stands in the way, the freedom to pursue variety and a greater possibility is what makes life delicious. As we cook, we taste, we tweak. I have learned to love the uncertain, messy process that goes into every one of my creations. While I could spend eternity trying to perfect a recipe, tastes will change. I will change. The world will change. But we can always adapt, and add salt and pepper when needed. ∞

LAW OF LIFE:

"The only real stumbling block is fear of failure.

For cooking, you've got to have a what-the-hell attitude."

—Julia Child



4th Runner-Up

Catherine Quarles

McIntosh High School – 10th Grade

In Memoriam

When I was eleven, I thought that strength was standing up to bullies and winning fights. I read about strength in characters with sharp swords and sharper words. I wanted to be like them, wanted to be unstoppable, loud and witty and powerful. I wasn't wrong. But when I was twelve, a little boy died. When I was twelve, I learned about a different kind of strong.

He was in second grade when the cancer took him. His mom was the third-grade teacher, and when she came back to teach, it was kindergarten. Everyone understood. They whispered in hallways, in classrooms. In a school with a hundred kids total, pre-k through eighth, everybody knew. Everybody grieved.

We missed math class that morning. I remember that. The pastor was there, trying to explain how this could happen to a room full of children with *they-were-white-when-I-bought-them* shoes and too-wide eyes. "He's in heaven now," he said. "Everyone has a home in heaven, a big beautiful mansion. His mansion got finished early, so Jesus took him to it. He's happier there." We didn't understand. One girl raised her hand, concern on her face. "How can he be happy if he's not with his family? Isn't he lonely?" "Of course he's not lonely," came the reply, "He is with God. He is in paradise." I didn't know about that. It seemed to me like I would be lonely if I went anywhere without my family, even to heaven. Then I thought about the family that got left behind, the mom and the dad, the baby brother and the older sister. I could not imagine how lonely they were. Lonely like strange places in

the dark. Lonely like a hole in your chest.

The funeral was held in the school gymnasium. We didn't have a church building, but the gym functioned as a basketball court, stage for plays, and place of worship. Orange was everywhere. Orange in the drawings from his classmates and orange in the flowers on the casket. It was his favorite color. Everyone sat stiff and somber, perched on their chairs like crows, like if there had been a very loud noise the whole crowd would have up and disappeared. All of the students in attendance had to go up to the front and sing *Jesus Loves Me*. We sang soft and clear, and did all the hand motions. We sang for him, for the life he had lived and all the life he didn't. We sang for his family, for the child who would never get to know his older brother, for the girl who had lost her friend. We sang for the father who lost a son and the mother who never got to be his teacher. We sang, and the silence that came after was louder than anything I had ever heard.

When I was twelve, a little boy died. When I was twelve, a mother lost her son. Ernest Hemingway once wrote, "The world breaks every one and afterward many are strong at the broken places," and when I looked at her—shoulders straight and chin held high—I knew it was true. I realized that there is a quieter kind of strength than winning fights and slaying dragons. I learned that there is something to be said for facing the day, that there is a special kind of courage in surviving, in facing loss, and then getting out of bed and going to work and drinking coffee. ∞

LAW OF LIFE:
"The world breaks
every one and
afterward many are
strong at the
broken places."
—Ernest Hemingway



5th Runner-Up

Brandi Joanne Hafermalz

Dawson County High School – 12th Grade

At the Top of the Stairs

It's midnight. I should be in bed, but I'm not. I never am now. Thoughts are always consuming my mind during the night. No one is home. I sit at the top of the stairs surrounded by empty bedrooms, five to be exact. One of them is mine, although I don't spend much time in it. Darkness is all that is present. No lights are on. No one is laughing or arguing. Everything is silent. A house that once held seven people now only holds me for the night. My dad is out of town and no one else lives here. I sit at the top of the stairs. Memories flood my mind: my older sister moving out and going all the way to Athens, my oldest brother moving to Roswell, my little sister living with my mom in a different house, my other brother becoming a freshman in college and now leaving me just like the rest, my parents divorcing, my empty house, my bad grades, my poor decisions, my failures. I cry. I miss my family. I don't like being alone. I hate failing.

I do this same routine every night, but one night it's different. I sit at the top of the stairs. Darkness fills the house except for the light on in my room. I forgot to turn it off. I relish the warmth it brings, though. I sit and think like I do every night. This time different thoughts fill my mind. New memories appear. I see my older sister thriving at University of

Georgia as a Residential Advisor, my oldest brother getting a promotion at his job, my other brother experiencing brand new adventures as he starts his first year at college, my little sister becoming a freshman in high school, and my parents separated but happy. I smile. Along with these things I see more. I see myself overcoming my parents' divorce, overcoming the pressures of high school and peer pressure, overcoming the tough classes and getting good grades, overcoming the long nights at work, overcoming the inevitable loss of friends, overcoming much more. I began to see the good in the changes in my life and how much I had truly succeeded.

For so long I sat at the top of those stairs just staring into the darkness.

I made no attempt to get up and turn on my light. When I finally did, I realized that you can search in darkness for light all you want, but you will never find it unless you turn it on yourself. As Earl Nightingale once said, "We all walk in the dark and each of us must learn to turn on his or her own light." I realized that I needed to turn on my own light. So now, I sit here in my bed, immersed by the light that fills my room, and all I had to do was walk out of the darkness and into my own light. ☺

*LAW OF LIFE:
"We all walk
in the dark and
each of us must learn
to turn on his or
her own light."
—Earl Nightingale*



George A. Stewart Jr. Character in Action Award*

Azra Mahmutovic

North Forsyth High School – 11th Grade

I was never the one to appreciate days fully dedicated to rest and absolutely nothing else, until I lost all my opportunities to relax. My personality and lifestyle force me to keep myself busy; otherwise, I lose my mind and feel like I wasted a day where I could have accomplished something. I know why I am like this; it's not some sudden realization. I know the unhealthy habits I have. However, they do not stop me from busting my behind.

For years, my family struggled to pay the bills and put food on the table, and thus, irritation and lack of patience were always apparent throughout the household, which rubbed off on my personality. Middle school and the beginning of high school became difficult, due to the intense jealousy I felt towards students who owned fancy cars, brought homemade lunches their mothers packed for them, wore brand clothing, and owned material items that they simply did not need. The little things grinded my gears. I always thought, "This is so unfair. Why can't things be easier? The price of those Jordan sneakers could have paid off the electricity bill. Hey, don't throw away the apple; my little brother could eat that!"

Summer of 2016, I decided enough was enough. I applied for jobs, and within a month, I received a call and began working around the start of my junior year. Every single day I still feel gratitude for the call back. Training came first, ranging from 10-15 hours per week, and then came the actual work hours,

ranging from 20-25 hours per week. It may not sound like much, but when you add school hours, that adds up to approximately 60 hours a week of school and work, *without* homework, extracurricular activities, and community service included. Exhaustion and irritability came quicker than a cat jumping out of a bath. Many days I stay up until 1 a.m. and/or wake up at 4 a.m. to finish my work, and I would be lying if I did not admit to crying because this all feels so incredibly overwhelming.

However, I learned that "you never know how strong you are until being strong is your only choice." This load on my back has taught me time management and responsibility. The jealousy I felt towards others dissipated, and I developed higher tolerance. Often, I am referred to as being "too independent" or "too adult-like," and I agree. I feel as if my childhood has been stripped away, but I keep pushing myself in order to provide for my family and myself.

My priority has always been sacrificing what you must for the better, whether it be losing sleep for a good grade or losing energy for a meal on the table.

While the lifestyle I hold may not be the healthiest for a sixteen-year-old, I carry hope in my heart for a better future for my family and myself. I strive for success, and I will do whatever it takes to reach the one day where I lie down in a comfy bed, breathe a sigh of relief, and say "I made it. We made it." ∞

LAW OF LIFE:
"You never know
how strong you are
until being strong
is your only
choice."

* The George A. Stewart Jr. Character in Action Award, which carries a \$1,000 prize, is presented in conjunction with the Dunwoody Rotary Club to honor Dunwoody Rotarian George Stewart for his dedication to student character education and for his long-time service to the Georgia Rotary Clubs Laws of Life Essay Contest.



The Georgia Laws of Life Essay Contest

Alpharetta High School
Natasha Havanur

Apalachee High School
Mariah E. Clark

Banneker High School
Aniyan White

Berkmar High School
Jennifer Dean

Bremen High School
Kaylen Smith

Bainbridge High School
Kamryn Williams

Brookwood High School
Kaelyn Kim

Brunswick High School
Minh Nguyen

Cambridge High School
Andrea Hummel

Cairo High School
Emily Meadows

Carrollton High School
Anna Lowry

Cass High School
Jenna Keeler

Central Gwinnett High School
Connado Del Real

Central High School (Carrollton)
Katlyn Payne

Cherokee High School
Cassidy Hannon

Columbus High School
Cordelia Phillips

Cross Keys High School
Eden Hailemariam

Dawson County High School
Brandi Joanne Hafermalz

Deerfield-Windsor High School
Caroline Willis

Duluth High School
Annalise Rosati

Dunwoody High School
Jordan Hope

Eagle's Landing High School
Logan Fiddell

Evans High School
Haley Boone

Forest Park High School
Shikayashia Sexion

Forsyth Central High School
Claudia Marquez

George Walton Academy
Jenni Anderson

Gilmer High School
Anna Destito

Grady High School
Jada Kennedy

Griffin High School
Jayme Angeles

Hardaway High School
Autumn Rounsaville

Heritage High School
Naomi Douglas

Independence High School
Colin Davis

Lakeview Academy
Sara Laine

Lamar High School
Dakotta Strickland

Lambert High School
Christina Sun

Lassiter High School
Ben Marmoll

Martha Ellen Stilwell School of the Arts
Jerusalem Danielson

Marietta High School
Junmoke James

McIntosh High School
Catherine Quarles

Milton High School
Avery Burchfield

North Cobb High School
Katie McCampbell

North Forsyth High School
Azra Mahmutovic

North Gwinnett High School
Eliana McKenzie

Northside High School (Columbus)
Jason Cole Lassiter

Parkview High School
Colin Taliaferro

Pickens High School
Erick Rodriguez

Rome High School
Gigi Gonsalves

Roswell High School
Lanai Huddleston

Sequoyah High School
Sarah Martin

Shaw High School
Alexis Stinson

South Forsyth High School
Taylor Reimann

Spalding High School
Turner Jordan

Spencer High School
Dominique Preer

Thomas County Central High School
Ansley Alligood

Thomson High School
Aaron Hayes

Thomasville High School
Claudia-Michele White

Towns County High School
Anyia Bury

West Forsyth High School
Abigail Brown

West Hall High School
Ashley Nelson

Westover High School
Kiara Douglas

White County Ninth Grade Academy
Kristina Barber

Winder-Barrow High School
Jared Harrison Black

2016-2017 Georgia Laws of Life Teachers of Distinction

We salute the school contest chairs who achieved a 20 percent or higher student participation rate.

Alpharetta High School
Maureen Bergeron

Apalachee High School
Becky Hasty

Bainbridge High School
Heidi Chambers

Banneker High School
Marie Ojofeitime

Berkmar High School
Shellie A. Ellis

Bremen High School
Jessica Allen

Brookwood High School
Jesse Hancock

Brunswick High School
Diana Powers

Cairo High School
Lisa C. LeGette

Carrollton High School
David Bryson

Cass High School
Amanda Ward-Wilbon

Central Gwinnett High School
Roxanne Rogers

Central High School (Carrollton)
Stephanie Herring

Cherokee High School
Shannon Hemphill

Columbus High School
Lynne Jenkins

Cross Keys High School
Dr. Terri N. Bell

Dawson County High School
Lindsey Luchansky

Deerfield-Windsor High School
Irmgard Schopen-Davis

Duluth High School
Katherine McNally

Dunwoody High School
TeNesha J. Ukomadu

Eagles Landing High School
Shannon Vessell

Evans High School
Terry Wimburn

Forest Park High School
Stephenia T. Hill

Forsyth Central High School
Antonia Alberga-Parisi

George Walton Academy
Wrynn Carson

Gilmer High School
Stacey Hadden

Grady High School
Terra Avery

Griffin High School
Melanie Underwood

Hardaway High School
Kristen Raymond

Heritage High School
Jennifer Howell

Independence High School
Linda Legros

Lakeview Academy
Marsha McFall

Lamar County High School
Carol Parrish

Lambert High School
Woody Van Treek

Lassiter High School
Dr. Anne Blanchard

Marietta High School
Kristina Nesbitt

Martha Ellen Stilwell School of the Arts
Christopher Prince

McIntosh High School
Maggie Walls

Milton High School
Caroline Marquess

North Forsyth High School
Elizabeth Smith

North Gwinnett High School
Barbie Nelson

Northside High School (Columbus)
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Parkview High School
Kelly Hayden

Pickens High School
Brenda Dial

Rome High School
Dawn Faulkner

Roswell High School
Megan Volpert

Shaw High School
Bailey Parise

South Forsyth High School
Angela Satterfield

Spalding High School
Kristin Smith

Spencer High School
Brenda Davis

Thomas County Central High
Sharon Davis

Thomasville High School
Rebecca Ramsey

Thomson High School
Amy Proctor

Towns County High School
Mandy Housley

West Forsyth High School
Rebecca Britten

West Hall High School
Melissa Giggey

Westover High School
Tye Beck

White County Ninth Grade Academy
Sarah McCollum

Winder-Barrow High School
Michelle Harris

In Memoriam

Jeanine Halada (1954-2017), dedicated Bainbridge High School Laws of Life Contest Chair for more than 15 years.

"She has left quite a legacy within our community and part of that is due to the Laws of Life program."

– Heidi K. Chambers, English Department Chair, Bainbridge High School

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