

My little fingers wrapped around the coarse green ropes as I clambered up the web, one limb at a time. Nestled into my favorite corner at the very top, even the howling wind that danced with my hair and swung me like a sailor in choppy seas could not displace me. From when I sat atop Michael's Web, I was a storyteller, who surveyed the jungle gyms ahead of me as a playground for my imagination. I wrote novels of wild adventures through Sharon, defeating sinister skeletons in the library and engaging in magical battles. Nearly eight years later, I still hold onto my creative side, but now focus on sharing stories of other (real) people. I founded Humans of Sharon, a photo blog that highlights meaningful anecdotes from students and staff at the high school. I find that we, as a community, are each other's legacy, contributing to the shared quilt of experiences that surpass the boundaries of time. As I learn about Michael C. Rothberg's story, I hope to build mine. Michael indeed created a web: even as he rose professionally, excelling in academics and athletics, he became a support network, a welcoming host, and a caring philanthropist who dedicated himself to spreading positivity. Like Michael, I aspire to connect and support others, to embody his spirit of generosity and continue to give back. Combining my graphic design and computer science skills, I plan to help local small businesses and non-profit organizations develop websites and reach wider audiences. I find both courage and inspiration in Michael's legacy as he, and his web, showed me "the ropes" on how to succeed without forgetting the ties to the community of his past and now the future.