

A. Describe how your personal goals, challenges, or commitments exemplify or have been inspired by Michael Rothberg's legacy.

I have always wanted to do something meaningful in my life. I am motivated to live a life that will be remembered by others, to make choices that will leave a positive mark on the world. Michael's legacy is impressive. Though I cannot say that I have achieved enough already in life to merit the respect that Michael's legacy commands, I believe that the actions and choices I have made thus far have set me on the right path.

When I was eleven, my mother was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. Rather than accept the looming uncertainty of the future, I decided to act. Introduced by my mother to the National MS Society, I volunteered my time at charitable bike events and helped my mom fundraise. In the summer of 2006, I biked 36 miles in one of these events, and last June, I brought together a team of my friends to ride with me in a 150-mile bike event. This past summer, thanks to the efforts of my mother and her neurologist, I worked as a research intern in the Center for Neurologic Diseases of Brigham and Women's Hospital. I not only was given the incredible opportunity to work alongside MS research pioneers, but was also encouraged to pursue my own independent research towards a cure for MS. Just as Michael was proactive in fighting for the causes he believed in, I have refused to remain a passive onlooker in the battle against MS.

Michael's legacy has inspired me as I plan the future of my education. I hope to pay tribute to his qualities of innovation and dedication by pursuing the study of Biomedical Engineering. As a professional, I hope to create solutions that will benefit the

wellbeing of others. By creating novel new therapies and prosthetics, I hope to aid those like my mother who suffer from the diseases that Michael threw his resources against.

B. How have acts of terrorism around the world affected your own life and your outlook on the future?

It is very easy to loosen your hold on your convictions. The liberties we possess in our lives, when untested, can quickly become commonplace; with time, basic rights such as life, liberty, and happiness may be forgotten. I, certainly, was guilty of this assumption of rights – before September 11<sup>th</sup> I gave no consideration to the fact that I was free, that I could live without fear that my right to life would be challenged. I took for granted the basic tenets that America was founded upon.

When the terrible tragedy of September 11<sup>th</sup> struck, I found myself distinctly aware of my values. I found myself suddenly remembering what exactly was so dear to my life and what thousands of men had committed their lives to protecting in the past. I saw with anger how countless individuals like Michael were violently robbed of what should be guaranteed to all humans, and in response, I solidified my conviction that one's essential rights must not be violated.

I emerged from the terror of September 11<sup>th</sup> with new need for justice. Though instances of terrorism in the world have not brought me to any heroic acts against the propagators of terror, I am determined to act against injustice when I see it in my own community. I am now particularly aware of the necessity of taking action, of declining passivity even when our rights seem unchallenged. I am stronger in my beliefs and more

assertive in enforcing them. The fear mongers of the world seek to light a burning question mark on our belief of liberties, but I refuse to allow acts of terror to shake my belief in man's innate right to life, liberty, and happiness. I once took for granted the rights present in America, but I know now that I will never disregard them again; rather, I will act to the best of my ability to preserve them.