

Grand Prize Winner Grades 5-8:**Student:** Isabella Schaffer – Grade 7, age 12**Prize:** \$3,000 for student and \$1,000 for Department/Classroom of Teacher

Missing or murdered. Over a thousand indigenous females were reported as such between 1980 and 2012. Due to a lack of concern from police and government officials, the number of cases may actually be much higher.

Racist and sexist stereotypes are part of the problem leading to acts of violence towards indigenous women. Aboriginal females are three times more likely to experience violence and six times more likely to be murdered than other Canadian females. Jody Wilson-Raybould has not only overcome these statistics, but has worked hard to be in a position to bring hope and greater awareness to these issues.

Jody Wilson-Raybould is the first indigenous person to be appointed Minister of Justice in Canada. Previously, she was elected as the regional chief of the B.C. Assembly of First Nations where she worked towards improving aboriginal administration. Now, she is in a position to give voice to Canada's indigenous people, who are often unheard, ignored, and shunned.

While reviewing the criminal justice system, Wilson-Raybould found that while indigenous people make up less than five percent of our population, they represent more than a quarter of Canadian inmates. Shocked by her discovery, she has made recommendations for more restorative justice over punitive sentencing to help those on the margins break the cycle of crime and reintegrate into their communities.

I am astonished by the harsh realities of aboriginal life in Canada, even today. Indigenous people are not objects, they are human beings and should be treated that way. Jody Wilson-Raybould is revealing what is happening to her people, and I believe that in her role, she will bring our country towards a better future with the First Nations. Wilson-Raybould inspires me to stand up for people who are overlooked and to fight for justice.