

Aditi Bhowmik
Grand Prize Winner Grades 5-8 Category

Essay:

True Colours

I was colouring a picture of my family and searched a box of crayons for the colour of our skin, but I couldn't find it. It had peach and dark brown, but those were not the right shades. I wondered why there wasn't a color for us in the box. Several years later, the same brand produced crayons for diverse skin tones. Now I could color in all the blank spaces in my art.

Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement is so much like a box of crayons because they represent the same problem – lack of recognition. Like me, Sandy Hudson's goal is to ask for more colors and represent them around the world. Sandy is one of the many BLM activists who fight for the rights of their communities. She started into activism after hearing about unfortunate acts of police brutality. Sandy believes that a way to make a difference is to defund the police and instead put money into community resources, for example, emergency health services. By bringing the BLM movement to Toronto, she made Canadians recognize that this problem resides in our communities. Therefore, community resources where people can be creative, free, and express their views without being judged are happy places. In 2020, with fellow activists, Sandy launched the Wildseed Centre for Art and Activism in hopes to build an enduring space that can cultivate aspirations amongst Toronto's Black communities. Sandy's work compares so much to the box of crayons because they are both about recognizing that all people deserve equal opportunities.