



MEDIA RELEASE

GABE'S RED BALLOON FOUNDATION YOUTH AWARD

Date: May 1, 2019

For Immediate Release

Kelly Whetter, mother of Gabriel Nikov, 18, who was the victim of a gun murder by a stranger on Yonge Street near Bloor in Toronto on April 13, 2016, announces the inauguration of the first annual Gabriel Nikov Memorial Award, to be presented by *Gabe's Red Balloon Foundation* in August, 2019. The Foundation was created by Gabe's Mom to inspire youth towards positive life choices and away from violence or crime – "Pick up a book, not a gun."

The Award will recognize a GTA youth between the ages of 17-21 who has overcome significant life challenges to embark on a positive path through some form of post-secondary education, such as a vocational programme or course, trade, apprenticeship, college or university. The successful candidate will be awarded \$1,500 to support his/her educational goals. To be eligible for the Award, candidates will be asked to write a 500-word essay (online or in paper format) about the life challenges they have faced, how they have overcome them, and what their educational and future goals are. Entries opened on May 1 and must be received by May 31, 2009. This year's recipient will be chosen and informed of his/her successful application by a panel of the Foundation's Board by June 30.

Information and the online and printable application forms are available at:

<https://redballoonfoundation.ca/>

Donations to Gabe's Red Balloon Foundation are welcomed and may also be made through this site.

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