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Press Release:

Paul Seideman Annual Composition Prize: 2019 Winners Announced

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Three young writers have been honoured for their moving and thoughtful compositions on the Holocaust, in the Holocaust Centre of New Zealand's annual Paul Seideman Composition Prize for 2019. Generously funded and supported by Holocaust survivor Paul Seideman, this year's competition introduced a new junior age category for students in Year 7-8.

"We would like to thank all students who submitted work and to acknowledge the high standard of research and composition," says Chris Harris, CEO of the Holocaust Centre of New Zealand

The winner of the inaugural Year 7-8 age category was Rosetta Tanner, in Year 8 at Somerville Intermediate School in Auckland. Rosetta wrote about Irena Sendler, the Polish nurse and social worker who smuggled more than 2,000 children out of the Warsaw ghetto. Rosetta said that researching Irena's story "made me realise it is simple courageous acts that make someone a hero."

Orlando Ye, a Year 9 student at Botany Downs Secondary College in Auckland, won the Year 9-10 category, writing about how Holocaust survivors "found it very hard to return home" and that many chose to immigrate to countries around the world, including New Zealand.

The Year 11-13 category was won by Sophey Jenkins, in Year 12 at Tararua College in Pahiatua. In her well researched consideration of life after liberation, Sophey noted that "as the numbers of Holocaust survivors dwindle, it is more important than ever to learn and pass on their stories to future generations."

Chris Harris, CEO of the Holocaust Centre of New Zealand, visited all three winners at their respective schools to break the good news to them. Rosetta, Orlando and Sophey will attend the United Nations Holocaust Remembrance Day at Makara Cemetery in Wellington on 27 January 2020 and will read their winning compositions before an audience of distinguished guests at the Parliamentary reception.

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