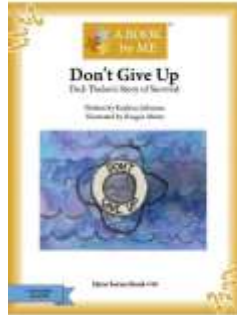


Social Justice Superstars

Real People who Triumphed over Adversity



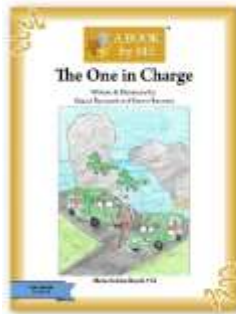
Dick Thelen was 17 years old when he joined the U.S. Navy to serve in the WWII Pacific campaign. He was assigned to serve on the USS *Indianapolis*. In July, 1945, torpedoes from a Japanese submarine sank the ship leaving the men stranded in the ocean. The men fought to survive through hot days and cold nights in shark-infested water. A pilot spotted them, and they were rescued by the USS *Doyle* ship.

#wwii#ussindianapolis#navy#michigan



Jewish Holocaust Survivor Inge Auerbacher survived three years in a concentration camp facing horrible conditions and illness. She was a young girl thankful to have her doll Marlene by her side. Today she speaks to groups encouraging youth to overcome obstacles in their own lives.

#germany#survivor#hope#newyork



WWII Veteran Al Taylor was a homeless youth who had a hard life during the Great Depression. At age 18, he was assigned to triage, making life and death decisions after the Pearl Harbor attack. Al's highly-decorated military career even after the war speaks to struggling youth today that it's not how you start in life but how you finish.

#texas#homelessness#resilience#iowa



Hungarian Eva Apathy and her husband were trapped in Nazi Germany because his medical school was there. Her greatest fear was losing their papers which proved they were not Jewish and being sent to a concentration camp. After the war, they came to America as refugees. Eva's story touches the hearts of young readers, especially those who are refugees themselves.

#hungary#hope#kindness#illinois



Irene Butter was born in 1930 in Germany. When Hitler became chancellor and began policies persecuting Jews, Irene's family moved to Amsterdam. The Nazi's invaded the Netherlands and took Irene's family away to concentration camps, first to Westerbork and later Bergen-Belsen. Irene survived, moved to the United States and later earned a Ph.D. in economics from Duke University.

#germany#survivor#triumph#michigan





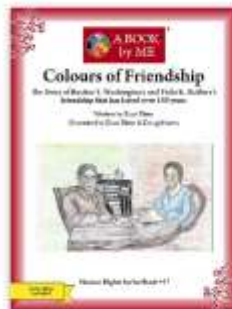
Veteran John Gaultier was a medic on the front line during WWII, and his decisions each day meant life or death to his patients. After the Allies won the war, his unit liberated a concentration camp where a Jewish man he was feeding died in his arms. After the war, John became suicidal but managed to get help. Even into his 90s, he volunteered at the VA hospital.

#ohio#suicideawareness#armystrong#iowa



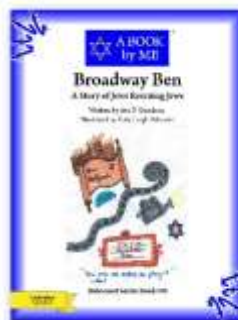
Veteran John Moon was 103 years old when his young author heard about his reaction from the attack on Pearl Harbor. John recalled he thought, "I'll fight to make the world a safe place for our young son." He joined the United States Marines and fought a bloody battle on an island in the Pacific called Iwo Jima. Men in his division raised the U.S. flag as shown in the iconic picture on Mount Sunbachi.

#service#patriotism#leathernecks#illinois



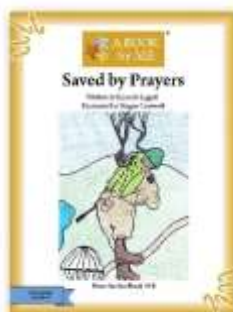
A white teacher named Viola Ruffner played a big role in the life of former slave Booker T. Washington by befriending him and teaching him to read. He would go on to great things, including being a leading voice of education to former slaves and their children. A young descendant of Viola Ruffner wrote this story, and a teenage descendant of Booker T. Washington helped her illustrate it.

#vermont#education#racism#westvirginia



Curt Lowens disappeared from his Jewish life during the war and became "Ben," a teacher by day and a worker in the Dutch Underground by night. He helped save many Jewish children and aided an American whose airplane was shot down in Nazi territory. After the war, Curt became an actor and worked with many Hollywood greats, including actor Tom Hanks.

#eastprussia#courage#inspiration#california



Henry Langrehr was a paratrooper who crashed through a greenhouse roof (as seen in a movie called "The Longest Day"). He was taken as a prisoner of war and became an eyewitness to the horrors of Auschwitz before being taken to work as a slave laborer in the mines. Fearing that a guard might kill him, Henry successfully escaped his imprisonment.

#tolerance#compassion#patriotism#iowa

