



MARK STEVENS

INVICTUS

STUDENT WRITING AWARD



The Invictus Student Writing Award was established by local author Wendy Byard to honor her late father Mark Stevens. He was her first role model for storytelling and an inspiration in her life. Mark Stevens grew up in challenging circumstances in Flint, Michigan, but developed confidence as his life progressed. He ultimately achieved significant success as he overcame an abusive childhood.

His favorite poem was "Invictus." Invictus is a Latin word that translates to "unconquerable" or "undefeated." It is often used to describe a strong, resilient spirit that perseveres through adversity. The term gained significant recognition through William Ernest Henley's poem of the same name, which explores themes of willpower and resilience in the face of suffering.

The final line of "Invictus" reads: "I am the captain of my fate. I am the master of my soul." The Invictus Student Writing Award logo is the compass, rooted in navigation, which symbolizes finding one's way and staying true to the path, even when faced with challenges. It has added significance as Mark Stevens served in the US Navy as a radioman and participated in the the Cuban Missile Crisis. He received military honors upon his death. Wendy Byard learned the poem in middle school at her father's urging. She still remembers it and appreciates its message of fortitude and self reliance - understanding the impact it had on her father's life and also her own.

The Invictus Student Writing Award will be presented to a graduating high school senior who has written an exceptional essay on overcoming adversity and growing in strength and character. The award celebrates a meaningful, original, and in-depth essay that focuses on a particular time/event in the student's life, how it impacted them, and how they were able to develop their character as a result of struggle. The essay should provide insight and the characteristics of effective creative writing and storytelling.

People can donate to the scholarship at Venmo: @Wendy-Byard-1, take QR code to PayPal, or mail check to Invictus Scholarship, 1526 Lake Metamora Drive, Metamora, MI 48455. Thank you.

