The College of Basic & Applied Sciences
2020 Summer Reading Essay Contest

What would **YOU** do with $500?

The College of Basic & Applied Sciences (CBAS) is sponsoring an essay writing contest for the 2020 freshman class.

All first year students are eligible to submit essays. Essays will be read and evaluated by members of the faculty and staff of CBAS.

Two winners of the contest will be given a $500 cash prize.
Select one of the following four topics:
For all these questions, use quotations from the text to support your interpretation

- What are the connections between Dr. Mona’s stories of Iraq and those of the Flint water crisis? What is the purpose of family stories like Haji and the Birds in the narrative? Are there morality tales from your own family that you cherish and give you strength?

- Why did Dr. Mona decide to teach her pediatric residents about the history of racial injustice in the United States? What examples did she share when teaching residents about the history of racism in medical care? Why did she believe it was important for her residents to be made aware of the city’s weaknesses and needs, while also fostering solidarity with and empathy for Flint’s residents?

- Dr. Mona writes, “We each have the power to fix things. We can open one another’s eyes to problems. We can work together to create a better, safer world” (page 13). How did Dr. Mona’s actions make a difference in the community of Flint? Can you think of a time in your own life when you have made other people aware of a problem that they were not aware of? What do you believe you can do as an individual to make the world a better and safer place?

- Dr. Mona describes the “real villains” in the Flint water crisis as being “the ongoing effects of racism, inequality, greed, anti-intellectualism, and even laissez-faire neoliberal capitalism. These are powerful forces most of us don’t notice, and don’t want to” (page 14). Share your 5 reactions to this opinion. How could the water crisis have been prevented? What policies and practices do you think should be put in place in order to prevent future crises?

**Be brief:** Your essay should be no more than 1000 words. That’s about six minutes when read aloud at your natural pace.

**Be personal:** Write in words and phrases that are comfortable for you to speak. We recommend you read your essay aloud to yourself several times. Each time edit it until you find the words and tone that truly echo your ideas.

**Additional Guidelines**
- Essay Length: maximum of 1000 words
- Formatting: double-spaced, 1-inch margins, 12 pt. font, *Times New Roman font*
- Personal Information:
  - Cover Page: All entries must have a cover sheet that includes your name, essay title, student M number, MTSU email and phone number.
  - Essay: As judging will be anonymous, do not include your name anywhere in your essay. You will only include your name on the cover page.
- Originality: Your submission must be an entirely original piece of writing.
- Deadline: All entries must be submitted by August 1st; submit your essay to basdean@mtsu.edu with Eyes Don’t See in the subject line.

**Submission Review & Winner Selection**
Submissions will be reviewed by faculty and staff judges. Two first year student winners will be selected and given a $500 award. Up to three first year students will be chosen to receive Honorable Mention, and will each be given a $50 award. The winners and up to three Honorable Mention recipients will be notified and the awards given in September of fall 2020 semester. Each award will be processed through the Financial Aid Office per MTSU policy.