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May 14, 2019

MEDIA CONTACT: Matt Porter (617) 514-1574

matt.porter@jfkfoundation.org

www.jfklibrary.org

John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Essay Contest Winner Recounts Conflict over Refugees Fleeing Nazi Germany

– Winning Essay Profiles Former US Representative Edith Nourse Rogers of
Massachusetts –

Boston, MA—The John F. Kennedy Library Foundation today announced that **Elazar Cramer**, a senior at the Maimonides School in Brookline, Massachusetts, has won the national *John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Essay Contest for High School Students*. The winning essay describes the political courage of Edith Nourse Rogers, a Republican US Representative from Massachusetts who believed it was imperative for the United States to respond to the humanitarian crisis in Nazi Germany. She defied powerful anti-immigrant groups, prevailing public opinion, and the US government's isolationist policies to propose legislation which would increase the number of German-Jewish refugee children allowed to enter the United States.

Cramer will be honored at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum on May 19, 2019, and will receive a \$10,000 scholarship award. The first-place winner will also be a guest at the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation's May Dinner at which Nancy Pelosi, the Speaker of the US House of Representatives, will receive the 2019 John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award. Pelosi is being honored for putting the national interest above her party's interest to expand access to health care for all Americans and then, against a wave of political attacks, leading the effort to retake the majority and elect the most diverse Congress in our nation's history.

The essay contest is sponsored by the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation and generously supported by **John Hancock**.

[\[Click here to read the winning essay.\]](#)

The annual *Profile in Courage Essay Contest* invites high school students from across the nation to write an essay on an act of political courage by a US elected official. The contest is a companion program of the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award™, named for Kennedy's Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *Profiles in Courage*, which recounts the stories of eight U.S. Senators who risked their careers, incurring the wrath of constituents or powerful interest groups, by taking principled stands for unpopular positions. This year, 2,515 essays were submitted from students in fifty states, Washington, DC, Guam, and from US citizens in Canada, India and South Korea.

Cramer's winning submission recounts how former US Representative Edith Nourse Rogers (R-MA) risked her standing and reputation when she and former US Senator Robert Wagner (D-NY) introduced legislation to allow twenty thousand additional German-Jewish refugee children into the United States. Cramer explains that Nourse's call for a moral response to refugees fleeing Nazi Germany ran counter to the isolationist policies of the US government and was met with criticism from powerful anti-immigration groups. Ultimately, Cramer informs us, Rogers was able to maintain her seat while staying true to her principles. The essay concludes, "At a time when so many of the foreign policy challenges we face mirror those of the 1930s, Edith Nourse Rogers is a superb role model. Her legacy ought to be remembered, and it should remind our elected officials that those who are remembered favorably by history are not those who 'win' the most, but those who put morality above party politics at the most difficult moments."

"Each year, the Profile in Courage Essay Contest introduces thousands of young people to the concept of political courage and its importance in our democratic society," said Steven M. Rothstein, Executive Director of the Kennedy Library Foundation. "At a time when young people are becoming leading voices in the political process, we are thrilled that Elazar has discovered this pivotal moment of political courage in our country's history. We congratulate him for his extraordinary accomplishment."

"We congratulate Elazar Cramer for this well-deserved recognition," said Tom Samoluk, Vice President & Counsel, John Hancock. "As a proud board member of the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation, it is an honor to join my colleagues in celebrating Elazar and all of the students who wrote about meaningful acts of political courage that have helped move our country forward."

Cramer's \$10,000 prize is a joint award from the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation and John Hancock.

Cramer's love of writing and interest in politics and government led him to enter the contest. He is a sectional editor of his school newspaper and serves as a contributing writer. Having studied piano since second grade, he has played in various musical ensembles throughout middle and high school. He is an active member of his community's Jewish youth group and plans to spend next year in Israel before starting college at Princeton the following fall.

Cramer's nominating teacher, Mr. Christopher Dore, will receive a John F. Kennedy Public Service Grant in the amount of \$500 to be used for school projects that encourage student leadership and civic engagement.

Jonas Lorincz, a sophomore at **Marriotts Ridge High School** in **Marriottsville, Maryland**, was selected as the second-place winner for his essay on Penfield Wallace Tate II, former Mayor of Boulder, Colorado. He will receive a \$3,000 prize for this recognition.

Five students were recognized as finalists in the competition: **Sophie Braun**, a senior at **Homestead High School** in **Fort Wayne, Indiana**, for her essay on Howard Vance, former Superintendent of Schools of Hoxie, Arkansas; **Peter Dunlap**, a senior at **Klein Oak High School** in **Spring, Texas**, for his essay on Ernest Gruening, former US Senator (AK); **Garifalia Kapsalis**, a junior at **Lake Forest High School** in **Lake Forest, Illinois**, for her essay on

Margaret Chase Smith, former US Senator (ME); **Michael Murray**, a junior from **Lake Oswego High School in Lake Oswego, Oregon**, for his essay on Tom McCall, former Governor of Oregon; and **Katie Rebhan**, a sophomore at **The Potomac School in McLean, Virginia**, for her essay on Ellis Arnall, former Governor of Georgia. Each finalist will receive a \$1,000 prize.

Eight students were recognized as semifinalists: **Tanya Babbar**, a sophomore at **Pine Richland High School in Gibsonia, Pennsylvania**, for her essay on Steve Kagen, former US Representative (WI); **Victoria Bishop**, a senior at **Edward S. Marcus High School in Flower Mound, Texas**, for her essay on Mark White, former Governor of Texas; **William Cheng**, a senior at the **Waterford School in Sandy, Utah**, for his essay on Barbara Lee, US Representative (CA), **Sol Del Risco**, a junior at **Las Vegas Academy in Las Vegas, Nevada**, for an essay on Elaine Noble, former State Representative, Massachusetts, **Austin Huckins**, a junior at **Grand Ledge High School in Grand Ledge, Michigan** for his essay on Brian Mast, US Representative (FL); **William Schrepferman**, a senior at **Zionsville Community High School in Zionsville, Indiana** for his essay on Albert Patterson, former State Senator, Alabama; **Samantha Waterman**, a senior at **Homestead High School in Fort Wayne, Indiana**, for her essay on James E. Horton, former Circuit Judge, Alabama; and **James Zheng**, a senior at **Fossil Ridge High School in Fort Collins, Colorado** for his essay on Ralph Edward Flanders, former US Senator (VT). Each semifinalist will receive a \$100 prize.

Ten students received honorable mention and are listed, along with winners, finalists, and semifinalists at www.jfklibrary.org/essaycontest.

The John F. Kennedy Library Foundation created the **John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award** in 1989 to honor President Kennedy's commitment and contribution to public service and to celebrate his May 29th birthday. The award is presented annually to public servants who have made courageous decisions of conscience without regard for the personal or professional consequences. The award is named for President Kennedy's 1957 Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *Profiles in Courage*.

The recipients of this prestigious award for political courage are selected by a distinguished bipartisan committee of national, political, and community leaders. **Martha Minow**, 300th Anniversary University Professor, Harvard University, former dean, Harvard Law School chairs the 15-member committee. Committee members are **David Axelrod**, Political Strategist and Founder, the Institute of Politics at The University of Chicago; **Joaquin Castro**, Congressman, (D-TX 20th District); **Christopher Dodd**, Senior Counsel for Arnold & Porter, former U.S. Senator (D-Connecticut); former U.S. Congresswoman **Donna F. Edwards** (D-Maryland); **Adam Frankel**, Vice President, Corporate and Executive Communications at PepsiCo, former Speechwriter to President Barack Obama; **Kenneth Frazier**, Chairman and CEO of Merck & Co.; **Albert R. Hunt**, journalist, formerly a columnist for Bloomberg View; **Sherrilyn Ifill**, President and Director-Counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund; **Bob Inglis**, (R-South Carolina), former U.S. Congressman and Profile in Courage Award Honoree; **Caroline Kennedy**, former U.S. Ambassador to Japan and Honorary President of the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation; **Marne Levine**, VP of Global Partnerships and Business Development at Facebook; **Ronald L. Sargent**, Chairman, John F. Kennedy Library Foundation; **Jack Schlossberg**, Grandson of President Kennedy; **David Shribman**, former

Executive Editor, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*; and **Nicolle Wallace**, Anchor of MSNBC's *Deadline: White House*.

This contest is supported by John Hancock, a part of Manulife Financial Corporation (MFC), a leading international financial services group with principal operations in Asia, Canada and the United States. Operating as Manulife Financial in Canada and Asia, and primarily as John Hancock in the United States, our group of companies offers clients a diverse range of financial protection products and wealth management services through an extensive network of employees, agents and distribution partners.

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The John F. Kennedy Library Foundation is a 501(c)(3), non-profit organization founded in 1984 to provide financial support, staffing, and creative resources for the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, a presidential library administered by the National Archives and Records Administration. The Kennedy Presidential Library and the Kennedy Library Foundation seek to promote, through educational and community programs, a greater appreciation and understanding of American politics, history, and culture, the process of governing and the importance of public service.