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In Loving Memory of Justin

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Carr, by Susan and Darrell Carr

February 18, 2021 a tree of life (For two Justin's MOMS) WAS IT A COINCI-DENCE? December 25, 2020 LET THERE BE PEACE ON EARTH... December 14, 2020 Season of love: happy 24th

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POSTS STILL I RISE (PRAYERS CONTINUE FOR JUSTIN)

STILL I RISE Saturday, I woke up in the middle of the night (I guess during my

REM stage of sleep) and typed in the words "Still I Rise" into my

phone, then I went back to sleep. When I woke up hours later, I recalled that our beloved Phenomenal Woman Maya Angelou had written the poignant poem "STILL I RISE." I read it and quickly noticed how so many of the couplets in her poem related to the life sleep.

Justin led. Maybe that's why the words came to me so clearly in my Through the pain of this unimaginable loss, it is heart warming to take notice on how the legacy of Justin, our Phenomenal Young Man, has created a new life of its own—one that will help us RISE out of bed and try to put one foot on the floor. Yes, the blueprints of treasures that Justin left behind—his songs, his dance, his words of wis-

dom, his art, his messages of hope, and his self proclaimed character traits—of being skillful, observant, sensitive, helpful and creative will continue to resonate in the hearts and minds of so many, even those who never met him and those that only knew him briefly. But, I must say that often it is still hard to RISE up each day without his physical presence within arms reach. STILL I RISE You may write me down in history With your bitter, twisted lies, You may tread me in the very dirt But still, like dust, I'll rise.

Does my sassiness upset you?

Why are you beset with gloom? 'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells Pumping in my living room. Just like moons and like suns, With the certainty of tides,

Still I'll rise. Did you want to see me broken? Bowed head and lowered eyes? Shoulders falling down like teardrops. Weakened by my soulful cries.

Just like hopes springing high,

Don't you take it awful hard 'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines Diggin' in my own back yard. You may shoot me with your words, You may cut me with your eyes,

But still, like air, I'll rise.

Does my haughtiness offend you?

Does my sexiness upset you? Does it come as a surprise? That I dance like I've got diamonds At the meeting of my thighs?

You may kill me with your hatefulness,

I rise Up from a past that's rooted in pain I rise I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide, Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.

Leaving behind nights of terror and fear

Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear

Out of the huts of history's shame

Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave, I am the dream and the hope of the slave. I rise

I rise

I rise

I rise.

Maya Angelou

Justin with me everywhere I go. Last week, at a whirlwind of unconnected events, somehow they all mentioned the sweet sound of Justin's name. From the pomp and circumstances of a Catholic wedding, a Non-sectarian school wide awards ceremony, a Jewish B'nai Mitzvah, and an Episcopal Sunday Sermon, unexpectantly these inter-faiths all came together by including blessings and honors for Justin. And as my infamous phase goes "I can't make this stuff up!" It propelled me to write. I have to get it out.

RISING OUT INTO THE VISTA'S OF SAN FRANCISCO

A few Saturday's past, we proudly witnessed the wedding ceremony

and beautiful personal vows of Soledad (my dear high school friend)

and her best friend Marshall in our hometown of San Francisco, CA.

the tiled terrace of the historic Fairmount Hotel Penthouse, and lis-

ten to their spoken words, we were caught off guard when Justin's

Soledad's parents and Marshall's father who, too, have gone before

us. Later Soledad told me: "I consider Justin right up there with the

Soledad's connection to Justin is far deeper than many people know.

She and I just happened to be at the right place at the right time

name rang out during the Prayers of Remembrance along with

As we looked out into the vistas of the San Francisco skyline from

It is apparent, even with the stretch of my imagination, that I take

love I had for my parents. He will always have that special place in my heart." It was so thoughtful of them to include Justin in their sacred covenant and personal day of celebration.

when it was time for Justin to come into this world. Ironically, it was Soledad who delivered Justin. I had not planned to deliver Justin at the hospital where she worked. It just happened to be the nearest hospital since time was of the essence. Need I say that when she delivered Justin, she was also pregnant with her youngest child Shaylyn who was born just two weeks after Justin. She is also Justin's Godmother. So, even during the holy matrimony of a couple, Justin name STILL RISES and was included in the love shared between two. RISING TO ACCEPT AWARDS IN JUSTIN'S HONOR

Top Senior Honor Awards were given out to a about 10% of the

graduating class. The Faculty voted on most of them. The student

body voted on one. Darrell and I painfully, yet with pride, received

the awards on Justin's behalf. These awards given to Justin were not

still standing and some said that his name could have been placed on

out of circumstance: he would have received them even if he were

them in the early days when he first set foot on the campus.

AWARDS JUSTIN RECEIVED

1. Performing Arts Award "Contrary to what some may imagine, the Performing Arts Award is given not to the student with the most outstanding talent, nor to the most-improved student during their time with us- but to the student who best demonstrates through his or her engagement in our

program, that which we, as a faculty, value most in a performing

artist. Above all, this means that the student is an excellent collabo-

rator; that they ask much of themselves and in so doing, raise the ex-

pectation of the group. As leaders, they are supportive, generous,

and devoted. Their focus first, is on what they can do to learn, grow and improve, and second, how they can help those around them to make the production better. Performing arts (Shared with his BFF Molly Chapman) 2. David Justin Rascoff Award "David Justin Rascoff, was a co-editor of the school's paper, the Harvard News. He passed away in a car crash in June 1991 (just days before his graduation). He was well known for his vehement opposition to the merger between all-male Harvard and the girl's Westlake school. Rascoff, who had been accepted to Princeton University,

played tight end on the football team and was a member of the stu-

"who has the courage to stand up for his beliefs" He always had the

3. The George Coleman Edwards award is given to a senior who has

"best served the School and his/her fellow classmates." There were

10 students from the class on the ballot which was put together by

4. Humanitarian Art Award "This Culminating Award is for the Stu-

dent who most inspired us as Artists". Justin did not have any formal

art training. Most of his masterpieces were just homework assign-

As the names were called for the 25 awards, I was elated to have

For years, five of them even road the bus with him each morning.

personally known most of the recipients. They were Justin's friends.

the Faculty. The whole student body voted on this award.

dent government. This memorial award presented to the senior

courage to say what he believed no matter how unpopular that

made him.

ments.

go both ways.

surprised.

stuff up.

all disapprovals.

closet family and friends.

OF HIS SCHOOL COMMUNITY

They all have been accepted into top colleges and have promising futures ahead of them. Many of them have shared with me their wonderful, idiosyncratic "Justin encounters" which helped shaped them. Whether it was: • His warm personality or his smile Looking up to him for inspiration • His genuine and funny personality • His enthusiasm that made people happy • His comforting nature during stressful times

In some way or another, Justin impacted their lives. I know that their

true friendships with Justin also impacted him as well. Friendships

THOUGHTS OF JUSTIN STILL RISE IN THE HEARTS AND MINDS

• His nurture and support to help build self confidence

B'NAI MITZVAH (VILLAGE OF FRIENDS AND FAMILY RISE TO SUPPORT THEIR YOUNG MEN) Mikey (my Jewish nephew), had his Bar Mitzvah with another young boy. At a mere 13 years of age, I can see Justin's traits shining through him. As we walked up the steps through the Temple doors, I had to pause and reflect on the many times Justin attended Bar and Bat Mitzvahs there. I remember he took pride in getting invited to

his friends' rites of passage. He made a point to always attend the

service to honor his friend and then make plans to go to the fun after

party. Justin would always stay and support his friends until the end

of the festivities. He did not like to see kids come and leave a party

rounded in joy to the end. We gave Justin his surprise "Bro mitzvah"

as some of his friends called it, when he turned 13. No formal cere-

mony, just fun times at LA LIVE bowling alley. He was shocked and

As I read in the program and what Mikey's parents Lori and David's

personal statement of love to him, my heart began to beat fast. The

"Our friends and family have called you an 'old soul'— a child who can

words brought me back to the love we had for Justin. They wrote:

have a conversation with a person of any age. Your interest in pho-

before it was over. He wanted to make sure his friends were sur-

tography, technology, and stage mirror your understanding of what is beautiful in the world and what makes people and things tick." Darrell and I are totally aligned with Lori and David with their unconditional love for Mikey, and their unyielding will and desire to support all of his curiosities. A true blessing when parents let their children "be" who they want to "be". Mickey is spirited, intuitive, creative, sensitive and willing to lend a hand. Last year, he took the time and made a personal phone case for me with a turquoise butterfly inscribed with Justin Carr Wants World Peace. Now what 7th grader do you know would take the time to even think of designing such a gift? I am so glad that Mikey was able to spend time with Justin. Louie was the other young boy who was also celebrating his Bar Mitzvah whom we did not know. However, we got to know him quickly. We learned that he was and only child, who stood strong during his fathers illness and he wanted to be an Architect and an Engineer. His parent's message to him was: "Wee have gotten to

watch and see you become a kid who thinks 'outside the box.' Your

imagination is incredible. You began to build first with blocks, then

So as you can see, both Mikey and Louie both had similar traits and

What also caught my attention was when Louie's Father Jeff shared

his love to his son by citing a verse form Ralph Waldo Emerson's

"Self Reliance". He encouraged Louie to continue to trust himself.

"Emerson, who is known for his repeated use of the phrase – "trust

thyself" which means to have faith in yourself, has woven it into his

work - "Self-Reliance". It is his explanation of what he meant by the

Emerson wrote that every individual has a genius in him which

comes out when one trusts himself, has faith in himself, when one

can trust his thoughts, feelings and his desire and passion even after

repeated use of the phrase - "trust thyself".

passions just like Justin. I could not believe it nor can I make this

action figures. You saw and created things in such a unique way."

I thought of Justin the whole time I was hearing Emerson's words. These words reminded me of the meaning behind the David Justin Rasnoff award that Justin received just a few days earlier. Justin (like David) stood up for his believes, even if his ideals were not popular. I am so glad that Justin trusted himself and his beliefs and relied on his self worth. He was often able to RISE above adversity. Justin's name was also mentioned in the program for the Kaddish prayer along with both families revered departed. Saying Kaddish

for a deceased loved one is an ancient Jewish tradition. Kaddish is an

soul to ascend to the higher realms. Darrell and I were so touched by

act of loving-kindness towards the departed's soul, enabling that

this love for Justin shared during the rites of passage for Mikey. It

was our honor to witness this special occasion with Lori and David's

AFTER THE TORAH WAS PASSED, JUSTIN'S NAME WAS REMEM-

Weeks earlier I had received a message from a young lady whom we

Conference (SDLC). She is a graduating senior at a local high school.

met after attending the 2013 Student Diversity and Leadership

BERED WITH THE HONORED KADDISH NAMES

LORA ROSE TO SHARE HER SUNDAY SERMON

During this past year, she has come to know about the spirit of Justin. She met him briefly in December of 2012 at the SDLC conference. They were standing in line to meet the Astronaut, Dr. Bernard Harris. Justin let everyone go ahead of him because he wanted to be the last one to speak to him. He was so excited about meeting him that he sent me a picture of them together. Justin loved this conference. He came home and said "Mom, it is ok to be me!" Lora told me that she was selected to give the sermon at All Saint's Episcopal Church on Sunday as part of the Youth Day Program. She wanted to know if it was ok to reference Justin when she spoke. I agreed, and told her that I did not think I could come into the church

(where we held Justin's service) but I would watch it online. When I

her. This girl is brilliant and the way she weaved Justin into her mes-

sage was beautiful. I could not see clearly see at all through the tears

after she finished. The Rector Ed Bacon gave Lora a blessing since

she was graduating and also gave a blessing for Justin, because he

too should have been a graduating senior. I was so glad that we were

mentioned it to Darrell, he said he wanted to go. So we surprised

there to witness this young mind speak so passionately about her life, beliefs and goals. Here are portions of her Sermon: "I Dream A World Of Eternal Life "I dream a world where one/No other one will scorn, /Where love will bless the earth/And peace its paths adorn" These words, based on the Langton Hughes poem, I Dream a World, are part of a piece we sang in Trouvéres my eighth grade year. This utopian world that Hughes dreams of is the same as the eternal life Jesus refers to in today's gospel. In today's gospel, Jesus turns to God and begs, "Give eternal life, to all you have given to me. "This eternal life that Jesus is referring to does not mean immortality, but rather he is describing a quality of life, to be able to truly live, a joyous life, a peaceful life, a purposeful life that begins here and now, in this lifetime. Furthermore, eternal life is not only experienced on an individual basis-Global eternal life is all about the interdependence and interconnec-

tion of all of humanity. In this oneness nobody is excluded; everyone

In that room at the SDLC conference, I found eternal life—that un-

quenchable drive to soar—within me and around me. In this context,

eternal life is not so much a lifestyle or mindset, but an atmosphere.

Just as a chrysalis incubates a young caterpillar as it transforms into

a soaring butterfly, this conference was like my chrysalis. This trans-

belongs, everyone is always welcome.

formational experience marked my re-emergence into this world as a new and revitalized person and set the tone for what I see as my purpose in this world. I finally understood who I am and learned how to accept that. Living this purposeful life, doing what I have been put on this earth to do, is bringing the kingdom of heaven into the here and now. Two years ago, while standing in line at the SDLC to take a picture with Dr. Bernard Harris—the first African American astronaut—I met a young man named Justin Carr. Justin understood global eternal life better than anyone I had ever met before. Since a young age, his dream had been to achieve world peace and he had done far more than the average 16-year old to reach this goal by ensuring that everyone felt included and cared for. This past year I learned that Justin's dreams had been curbed when he passed away from idiopathic hypertrophic cardiomyopathy. But Justin's eternal life did not begin posthumously. Through small actions, like the way he con-

stantly looked out for his friends, treated everyone with respect, and boldly refused to fall victim to a society that tries to put everyone into boxes, Justin lived an eternal life that continues to inspire all of us to do the same. It is not always the monumental, heroic acts that define one's eternal life. Sometimes it is the smaller acts of goodness and authenticity that are the key to a true, genuine, eternal life." Youth Sunday Sermon at 1:00 p.m.

ens across the faiths from Catholic to Jewish to Episcopal. This is what world peace is about. When others can state their love, show their love and welcome you into their place of worship without hesitation These experiences were true and really happened. Justin is in the hearts and minds everywhere, not just within me. JUSTIN'S NAME

HAS RISEN WITHIN THE WALLS OF VARIOUS RELIGIOUS

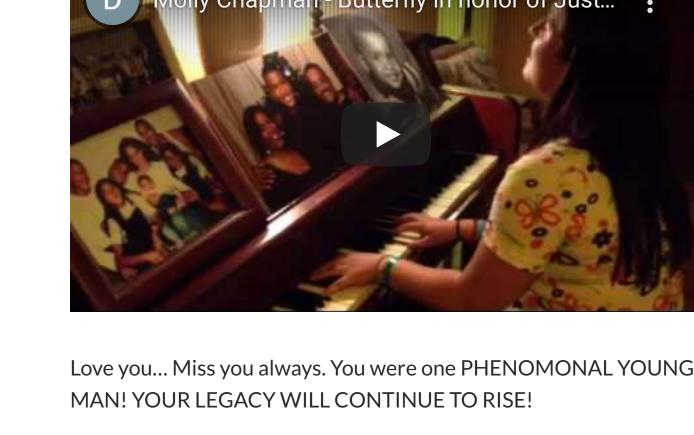
As Molly sang in her song she wrote for Justin "Butterfly," "You were

FAITHS'.

Justin, on your would be graduation day, we will RISE UP proudly

and accept your diploma for you honey. You are an angel in the heav-

the best, and you did not know it" I hope you know it now baby... Molly Chapman - Butterfly in honor of Just...



I will love you Always and Forever,

LOVE, MOM

• HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/JUSTINCARRWANTSWORLDPEACE CHILD LOSS • JUSTIN CARR IDIOPATHIC HYPERTROPIC CARDIOMYOPATHY • JUSTIN CARR WANTS WORLD PEACE • SCA IN ATHLETES

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Ellen Garrett on a tree of life (For two Justin's MOMS) WAS IT A COINCIDENCE? **CLOUD TAGS**

#JC4WPMom #JCWWP #JCWWPFoundation

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CarrWantsWorldPeace

Samuel L. Jackson SCA SCA in Athletes Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) University of San Francisco rwantsworldpeace.org

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