Readership WT Ambassadors 2012-13 Essay Contest

. . . without courage, compassion falters, and without compassion, courage has no direction . . . it is within our power, and the world requires of us – of every one of us – that we be both good and strong – Eric Greitens

Tour Bolivia – Spring Break 2013

The WTReadership Committee has planned a student trip to Bolivia in our effort to understand the conditions described in Eric Greitens’ *The Heart and the Fist*, the subject of the 2012-13 Readership WT. Interested freshmen are invited to write an essay exploring the ethical responsibilities we assume as educated world citizens to those suffering from cruelty and exploitation. Winning writers will earn a trip to Bolivia and upon return to WT will serve as Readership WT Ambassadors.

**Essay Contest Guidelines:**

- You must be an incoming, first-time WT student in the Freshman Class of 2012
- Essay must be 1000-1500 words in length; thoughtful, well-crafted, and error free.
- You may seek writing assistance from the University Writing Center, from an advisor, or from another WT faculty or staff member.

**Submission Guidelines:**

Submit your essay as an email attachment formatted as an MSWord document file. Your name should not appear on the essay. Include your name, the title of your essay, and your complete contact information, including your WT student email address within the body of the email to: readershipwt@wtamu.edu

**DEADLINE: September 21, 2012 – 5:00 p.m.**

Winning essays will be chosen for their thoughtful, well-written discussion of the ethical responsibility of an educated member of the world community. Confirmation of receipt will be sent via email. Essays will be judge by a committee of faculty, staff, and students. Semi-finalists will be announced during Fall 2012 Convocation; finalists will be notified by the end of October. As you begin your reading and writing, consider the following:

For the past several years WT has chosen books for its Readership program that reflect the struggle and commitment of individuals from around the world. Elie Wiesel (*Night*, 2007 WT Selection) warns us that "to remain silent and indifferent is the greatest sin of all." Khaled Hosseini (*A Thousand Splendid Suns*, 2009 WT Selection) works through his nonprofit organization to provide "humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan to help alleviate suffering and build healthy communities." Somaly Mam (*The Road of Lost Innocence*, 2010 WT Selection) envisions a "world where women and children are safe from slavery." Kelsey Timmerman (*Where Am I Wearing?* 2011 WT Selection) asks us to think about the —hundreds—if not thousands—of people around the world who had a hand in making the clothes we wear. This year, Eric Greitens (*The Heart and the Fist* 2012) tells us that “when people serve a purpose beyond themselves, they have a remarkable capacity for resilience. And with resilience comes the possibility of hard-earned wisdom, renewed courage, and enduring compassion.”

Must we then, not ask ourselves—what is our ethical responsibility for the inhumane actions of others if we say or do nothing to stop them? Can we turn our eyes away from horrendous conditions without then being somehow complicit in those conditions? As educated citizens of a new millennium, what accountability must we accept? What changes can we effect? What ethical responsibilities do we have to our world community?