

Announcing the 15th Annual Moonbeam Children's Book Awards Results

"2021 Moonbeam Award Winners Inspire Children and Families"

(Traverse City, MI - Oct. 14, 2021) The year 2021 has been another stressful one for us all, filled with social and political strife. Combined with more uncertainty about the pandemic, a changing climate, and worldwide poverty and hunger -- how frightening life today must be for a child! That is why Jenkins Group is proud to announce the results of the 15th annual Moonbeam Children's Book Awards, honoring the year's best children's books and their creators for bringing comfort and inspiration to kids and their families.

When all else is in doubt, the familiarity of a parent and child sharing the joy of reading together is something to cherish, and the Moonbeam Awards were founded to celebrate that notion. This year's judges chose gold, silver and bronze medalists in 45 categories, covering the full range of styles and genres in English and Spanish. The awards attracted nearly 1,500 entries from around the world, and medals will go to authors, illustrators and publishers from 34 U.S. states, 4 Canadian provinces, and 7 countries overseas.

Many of this year's winning books reflect on the ways we deal with issues like battling the pandemic, facing up to climate change, and ending racism. Last year's huge awakening and protest against racial injustice after the tragic deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and others prompted the Moonbeam Awards to add the category of Social Activism to the contest.

Gold medalist *Race & Inclusion: Standing Up to Racism and Building a Better World* (American Girl) sets the tone: "It can feel really awkward to talk about race and racism," writes author Deanna Singh. "Racial history is unfair and painful, so many people don't like to bring it up. Have you ever started talking about race and had a parent shush you? Racism remains a big problem for society because people don't talk about it. But we can't make racism better by staying quiet."

The topic of the seemingly endless Covid-19 pandemic was dealt with in various ways, including the poetic summation of gold medal-winning *Finn and the Ferocious Flu* (Smile From the Inside):

"Life as we know it changed
life as we know it ceased;
I'm grateful to be alive,
and the good in humanity released.
I've heard people talk of a cleanse,
nature's way of resetting the Earth;
Humanity is forever changed,
and I feel a universal re-birth."

Many of us have found refuge in nature during the pandemic, and sometimes just a favorite tree in the backyard brings comfort. In her silver medal-winning *The Tapping Stick*, D. A. Jennings brings

significance to the simple stick, from various species of trees and with various uses from fishing, to building, to writing, and ends with this verse:

"Sticks of many sizes served as swords to fight our fears.
Shadows fled into the woods prodded by our spears.
But today, I claim no stick to hold because there's something I must do...
Within our hands we hold the future...and I'm planting a tree for you."

Activism and environmentalism aside, we can agree on one thing we all need more of: *simple kindness*. Jess Mollo, author of the bronze medal-winning picture book, *Piper Fox Shows Kindness* (SparkPublications), says it this way:

"Being kind can bring
happiness, not just to you.
Sharing kindness can help
others grow their hearts too!
Kindness changes the world,
and it helps those you know.
So show kindness like Piper,
wherever you go!"

The purpose of the Moonbeam Awards is to highlight books that encourage children to be generous, compassionate, and to stand up for the rights of themselves and others. The diversity of this year's winning publishers proves that promoting childhood literacy knows no boundaries, as medal-winners came not only from long-established publishers and university presses, but from small presses and self-published, first-time authors. Congratulations to all!

See complete contest results here:

<https://www.MoonbeamAwards.com/98/2021-winners-temp-5>

About the Awards

The Moonbeam Awards are judged by expert panels of youth educators, students, and book reviewers, and are intended to bring increased recognition to exemplary children's books and their creators. Award recipients receive gold, silver and bronze medals and stickers depicting a mother and child reading and silhouetted by a full moon.

About Jenkins Group

Jenkins Group has been involved in book packaging, marketing and distribution since 1988, and many of its employees have children and grandchildren who strongly influence the company culture with their youthful exuberance and love of books.

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For more information about the Moonbeam Awards, contact Awards director Jim Barnes at jimb@jenkinsgroupinc.com or visit www.MoonbeamAwards.com. Check out winners' posts on Instagram and Facebook (@MoonbeamAwards) or with the hashtag #Moonbeam2021.