29<sup>th</sup> Annual USOE MLK Contest Jr. High Grand Prize – Essay By: Jay Orten – 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Juab Jr. High School – Juab School District

## An Unforgotten Legacy

"In the process of gaining our rightful place we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline." Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. says that not only will violence and hate make the war in inequality worse, but it will destroy a free country and many of its occupants. We can use this great promise in many of our life problems, and Dr. King's legacy will always stay with us. All of us should always relate to this lesson in hard times to honor him.

I feel that Dr. Kings quote can be implemented into our everyday life and in many different situations. Because, although it might be hard to hold in our anger, if we can remain civilized in situations where we have been threatened or hurt we can solve problems easily and without much trouble. The fight against discrimination is a perfect example. If it had not been for some people who simply just stood up and walked away when they were called names, or threatened and laughed at, the problem would have escalated and it would soon spin seriously out of control.

To me, this quote means a lot. It means that anger won't fix anything, and only people who make peace with others and love their enemies will be able to change situations and stand out as a leader in a crowd. It is a true fact, and there is living evidence, that people can change a nation, or possibly a world, when they love those who despise them. As Dr. King once said: "Hatred paralyzes life; love releases it." Hatred confuses life; love harmonizes it. Hatred darkens life; love illuminates it."

My own personal responsibility is also a responsibility that many others in this nation, and world, should have. We should not fight back when we are fought, nor do injustice when we have been unjustly blamed. Instead, we should pick back up those who have fallen, and raise them high with the strength that we have gained from being a leader and a true friend to everyone. With this, we can make a positive difference and a major impact in the hearts of those who have been terrorizers, and the hearts of those who have been victims. In several experiences I have seen what happens when someone tries to have revenge on those who they have been threatened or hurt by, and in the end nobody is happy.

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that." Dr. King was a warrior against discrimination, and a fighter against racism. To honor him, we can follow his teaching and keep this country free. This way, we can keep his legacy alive.