



Rising Leader Award

Voices Against Injustice (VAI) celebrates today's champions of human rights by presenting the annual Salem Awards, stewarding the Salem Witch Trials Memorial, and inspiring members of our worldwide community to confront fear and social injustice with courage.

The Rising Leader Award is given each year to up to two young people in the Salem community who have demonstrated the courage to confront social injustice. By doing so, the Rising Leader exemplifies the mission of Voices Against Injustice, to honor the legacy of the Salem Witch Trials and to recognize acts of bravery that illustrate the lessons learned from them.

Who is eligible?

Any young person who resides in Salem, attends a Salem school, or participates in a community-based program in Salem.

Who nominates the Rising Leaders?

A teacher, guidance counselor, program leader, or adult engaged in a school or community-based program in Salem may nominate a qualified young person for the Rising Leader Award. The Rising Leader nomination form is attached and should be sent in with the nomination package or emailed to the addresses below by **February 15**.

What is required for nomination?

1. Nominator Statement
2. Nominee's Statement

How are recipients chosen?

Rising Leader Award recipients are chosen based on a review of the completed nomination package which includes the documents listed above. All nominees will be reviewed by the VAI Awards Committee using a Rising Leader nomination rubric, then voted on by the Board of Voices Against Injustice. A member of the Awards Committee will contact the RLA recipients to confirm that each will accept the award.

What is the Award?

Each Rising Leader selected will receive \$500 and a book related to the theme of human rights and social justice.



Rising Leader Award Nomination Form

Thank you very much for supporting a Rising Leader from the Salem community whose actions and work support human rights and social justice.

To nominate a young person for the Rising Leader Award, please fill out the information below and attach the documents listed. You may either email or mail the completed package to one of the addresses below.

The nominee must be a young person either residing in Salem, attending a Salem school, or participating in a Salem after-school or community-based program.

Please enclose with this form:

1. **Nominator Statement:**

Describe how the actions of the nominee for the Rising Leader Award exemplify the lessons of the Salem Witch Trials and relate to human rights and social justice (up to 250 words).

2. **Nominee's Statement:**

Respond to the topic below in an essay (up to 250 words) describing how you confront fear and social injustice with courage. What issue is most important to you now, and why? What are you doing about it?

Nominations for the Rising Leader Award must be emailed by February 15 to nominations@salemaward.org

or mailed and postmarked by February 15 to:

Voices Against Injustice
Rising Leader Award
P.O. Box 8484
Salem, MA 01970

Thank you for your support of Voices Against Injustice and the rising leaders of our community!

Nominator Statement

Nominee Information

Name	
School or community program	
Age or grade	
Email	
Phone	
Mailing Address	

Nominator Information

Name	
Organization and title	
Relationship to nominee	
Email	
Phone	

Nominator Statement

Describe how the actions of the nominee for the Rising Leader Award exemplify the lessons of the Salem Witch Trials and relate to human rights and social justice. (Please attach a statement of up to 250 words).

Nominee's Statement

Name	
Phone number	
Name and contact information of adult mentor, teacher or supervisor (other than the person who nominated you) who has recognized and supported your service to the community	

Respond to the topic below in an essay (up to 250 words) describing how you challenge injustice and stand up for others. What issue is most important to you now, and why? What are you doing about it?

330 years ago, Salem fell apart. A roiling stew of greed, fear, and paranoia, Salem became the center of one of the most extreme periods of injustice in United States history. On the surface, it was a few teenage girls whose baseless claims of witchcraft led over 200 people to be accused and 20 executed. But the real causes of these murders were deeply rooted in the community. Resources were scarce and people were hungry. Women were starting to acquire land and power, which threatened those in charge. The prevailing religious belief in the existence of the devil allowed people to believe in - and fear - things they could not see.

For a while, mob mentality took over. Then people started to realize that, in this climate of hysteria, they themselves were at risk. However, it was not until the wife of the governor himself was being questioned that the people in control finally decided to stop the madness. But the damage had been done.

Today's world is not so different. Every day in the news there are stories of injustice. More often than not, the victims are people of limited means, people of color, people who have been marginalized. It is up to all of us, together, to use our voices against oppression.

How do **you** use your voice? What issue is most important to you now, and why? What are you doing about it? Write an essay in which you

- explain the problem
- offer your solution(s)
- describe what you (and all of us) can do moving forward

Organize your ideas carefully and combine logic with passion.