

Youth Culture Lesson: Finding Teachable Moments in Culture From *YouthWorker Journal* and YouthWorker.com

I'd Like to Thank...Worthwhile Honors Sometimes Miss Real Heroes

By Paul Asay

Posted: Feb. 6, 2012

What Happened:

On Feb. 5, the New York Giants beat the New England Patriots to win Super Bowl XLVI. For quarterback Eli Manning, it was his second championship in two tries, placing him in some elite company. Some will consider him among the best of all time.

The Super Bowl championship is just one more honor in a season full of them. In January, the People's Choice Awards, the Video Music Awards, the Golden Globes and more were awarded. This month features the Grammys and Oscars.

In the midst of them all, some of pop culture's most famous celebrities will become more famous—giving interviews, posing for pictures and collecting valuable hardware during nationally televised award shows. Sometimes, we call such winners heroes; but while there's no question these people are good at their jobs, are they truly heroic?

On Jan. 24, 17-year-old Graceann Rumer grabbed the wheel of her school bus when the driver suffered a heart attack, potentially saving dozens of lives. "I just realized there's no one driving this bus—I need to do something," she told the local NBC affiliate. Oddly, Rumer typically didn't ride the bus. She had received her driver's license just a few weeks earlier and had been driving herself to school.

On Jan. 28, 14-year-old Logan Foster was surfing near Pipes Beach, Calif., when he noticed an unconscious man floating in the water. Logan ran into the water, and though the man's face and hands were already blue did his best to keep the guy's head above the surf. Once on the beach, the man coughed up about a half-gallon of water.

On Jan. 20, New Jersey's first lady Mary Pat Christie honored 13-year-old Malcolm Sutherland-Foggio for creating the Make Some Noise Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to raising awareness for pediatric cancer. Sutherland-Foggio happens to be a cancer survivor.

These three all have been dubbed heroes, but they didn't do what they did for awards or accolades. Indeed, most heroes never get a newspaper story or spot on television. Sometimes their deeds are small, hardly noticed; but they're important.

Talk About It

Have you ever received an award? What for? How did it feel? Have you ever received credit for something you didn't do? Have you ever been cheated out of credit for something you did?

It's human nature to crave recognition, but how important is it? If you know there's an award or honor connected to a certain task, does that make you likely to work harder to earn it?

Some of the most important things you do in life never earn much praise, if they earn any at all. Can you tell us about a time when you did something special, something really cool for somebody else that few others noticed? Has anyone ever done anything for you without the promise of recognition?

What the Bible Says

“I am just like you before God; I too have been taken from clay. No fear of me should alarm you, nor should my hand be heavy upon you” (Job 33:6-7).

“No one from the east or the west or from the desert can exalt a man. But it is God who judges: He brings one down, He exalts another” (Ps. 75:6-7).

“Before his downfall a man's heart is proud, but humility comes before honor” (Prov. 18:12).

“Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves” (Rom. 12:10).