

Moses Stevenson  
Franklin Central High School  
6215 S. Franklin Rd.  
Indianapolis, IN 46259  
Grade: 12  
Age: 17

My name is Moses Stevenson, and I am a student at Franklin Center High School. I have spent the past several years growing as a student-athlete, competing for three years on the varsity wrestling team, where I was a two-time MVP and a state qualifier. I also participated in varsity cross country and track, which helped me develop discipline, endurance, and perseverance. Beyond sports, I am an active member of Business Professionals of America (BPA), where I work to strengthen my leadership and professional skills. I have been honored by Principal Tschiniak and earned the Susan Tomlinson ALL IN Award three times throughout high school.

As a student at Franklin Center High School, I have been deeply moved by the life and legacy of Eva Kor. Her story is not only remarkable but profoundly inspiring, and I am grateful for the opportunity to study and reflect on it. What strikes me most is her courage to stand firm in what she believed was right, even when faced with unimaginable suffering. Rather than allowing her painful past to dictate her future, she chose to move forward with resilience, transforming her experiences into a source of hope for others. Though she has passed away, her influence continues to shape and inspire lives around the world, including my own. For this reason, I feel truly honored to be writing this essay in her memory.

### **Hope In Suffering** **By Moses Stevenson**

"The tongue has the power of life and death"(Proverbs 18:21).

"For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he"( Proverbs 23:7).

As I reflect on the life of Eva Kor, what stands out most profoundly is her unwavering refusal to surrender and her commitment to speaking life rather than death. In the midst of unimaginable suffering, Kor exemplified a resilience that was not only remarkable but also deeply inspiring. Surrounded by death and cruelty, she resisted the temptation to give in to hopelessness. Instead, she declared bravely, that she and her sister Miriam would not perish in the filth of the camp but would endure. Even when weakened, crawling, and near unconsciousness, she found the strength to say, "I must survive. I must survive." Such declarations reveal the power of the tongue as both a weapon against darkness and a force of hope. Kor's life teaches us that perseverance requires not only physical endurance but also the courage to imagine a better future. By envisioning herself back in her hometown, tasting the fruits of her own trees, she sustained herself through visions of restoration and life beyond suffering. Her life reminds us that the act of speaking hope in the face of devastation is not mere optimism, it is an act of defiance, courage, and faith.

For the first half of my life, I grew up as an orphan in Uganda, Africa, a reality that shaped both my struggles and my resilience. I was born into a village where I lived with my stepfather, three siblings, and my mother, who was gravely ill. Because my family was unable to care for me, they made the painful decision to take me to an orphanage when I was four years old. I shared a home with 6-10 other children, and each day was filled with labor, tending the farms, caring for the animals, and walking to school. The days were long and demanding, and survival itself often felt uncertain. I remember moments when I would collapse in the 90-degree heat, waking hours later unsure of where I was. Yet, even in those moments, my imagination became my happy place. I looked to the sky seeing lines of

smoke from planes thinking they were trains. I made wooden motorcycles and pretended to ride them; I put on imaginary headphones, envisioning myself listening to music. Though discipline in the orphanage was often harsh, and punishments could be severe, I hung onto my visions of a better future. Rather than focusing solely on my immediate suffering, I chose to dream of possibilities beyond it. I dreamed of flying, of reuniting with my grandmother, of taking a hot shower, of riding in a car, and of sleeping on a soft bed free of ants and rats. One day, the unimaginable became reality: I received a call that a family in America had chosen to adopt a child from Africa, and that child was me. From that day forward, my life changed dramatically, many of my visions came true! Looking back, I see how the ability to imagine a better future sustained me through suffering. My story is a testament to the truth that even in the darkest places, hope and perseverance can carry us into new life. Praise be to the Lord Almighty, Jesus Christ.

Eva Kor didn't give up, nor did she allow despair to silence her voice. The words she courageously declared became the foundation of her survival and, ultimately, her testimony to the world. In many ways, I see her story reflected in my own. I may never fully understand why God chose her to survive when so many perished, or why God chose me, out of many children in the Orphanage, to be adopted and given a new life. Yet, what I do know is that neither of us remained silent. Like Eva, I must continue to tell my story, not only for myself, but to inspire others to never give up!