

# Stories of Light

By Jordan Hattar

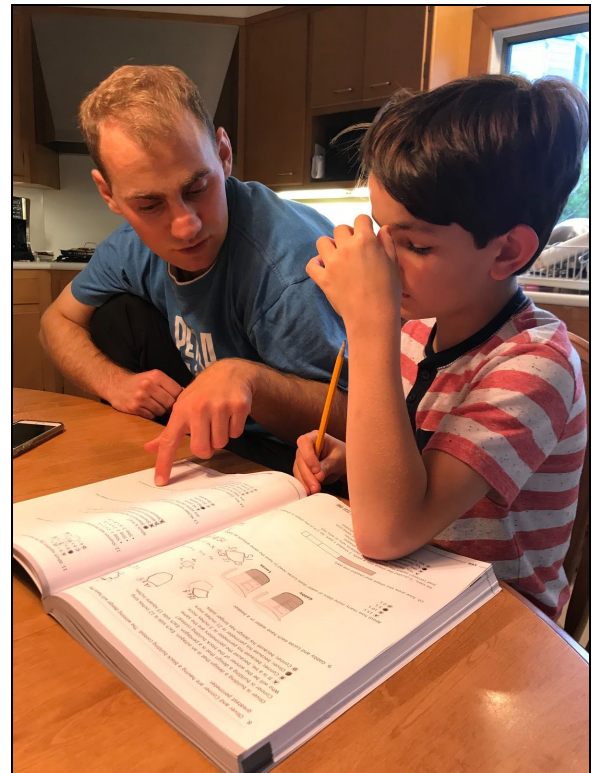
My partnership with CANDLES began in 2017 during my visit to Terre Haute, where I spoke at the [CANDLES 'Be the Change' Speaker Series](#). Following my visit to Terre Haute, I teamed up with the CANDLES museum to collaborate on the Light blog in effort to convey stories about transforming inspiration into action; stories that connect people from different cultures and show their common hopes, and stories that counter the rhetoric that promotes fear and uncertainty towards refugees, immigrants, or any other group labeled as 'the other.'

For this month's blog, I will focus on 4 inspiring stories that I've witnessed around the world:



1- Here is a video of Alex, a 6-year-old from Scarsdale, NY:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F6r1kbQH8hI>



Since Alex's video went viral, I learned about his story and have become good friends with Alex and his family. Above is a picture of Alex and I (in the midst of preparing for his math test). Alex reminds me that we don't always choose what happens to us or what happens in this world, but we always choose how we will respond. Are we going to respond with fear and close our hearts and homes to those that look, speak, or pray differently than us? Or will we respond with compassion and empathy?

2- In the last few years, I spoke in middle schools and high schools across the United States and Europe, and I came across very empathic students who sent me short videos on their views towards refugees. Here's a compilation of what they sent me:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=px4\\_PsoG8Q8&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=px4_PsoG8Q8&feature=emb_logo)

3- Following a speech I delivered at St. Mary's Calne, an all girls boarding school in the United Kingdom, the girls pictured below, fundraised over \$7,000 to support a midwifery school for young women in Idlib, Syria:

[http://www.gazetteandherald.co.uk/news/15579279.Girls\\_raise\\_money\\_for\\_refugees/](http://www.gazetteandherald.co.uk/news/15579279.Girls_raise_money_for_refugees/)



4- Mohammad, a Syrian student, was provided with a laptop in October of 2020 by Jana and Mariam, two recent high school graduates. This laptop will help Mohammad participate in distance learning and reach his dreams as a software engineer.



Thank you Jana & Mariam!