

My name is Talisda Terry, and I am a student at Brush High School. Most of the tenth grade at Brush read *First They Killed My Father* and watched the powerful film adaptation. I wanted to share some of my reflections to close our time together.

Life, to me, is like a race. It's never about how tall or small you are. It's not about religion or nationality. It's about your intuition, perseverance, and luck. Reading *First They Killed My Father* reminds us that in our own personal races, fate sometimes seems to work against us. Loung is one of those people who conquered the pain and kept going.

Reading her story taught me something new-- that when bad things happen, you can make that the reason you keep going and strive to stand up for people all over the world. I personally know what it's like to be separated from my family and not be able to cry or dwell on it, but to continue on with them in my mind. Like Loung, I kept pushing forward with my family still in my head.

Loung's story had such a tremendous impact on our hearts. Despite heartbreak, tragedy, and pain she shows the world that your race doesn't have to be over, and that anyone can be an upstander, despite their circumstances. Loung is an inspiration to people all over the world, she is an inspiration to me and my peers. My sophomore Facing History class was inspired by Loung's story to take action and raise more than \$360 for the International Campaign to Ban Landmines. On behalf of my peers - and all of us here today -- I would like to thank Loung for coming here and speaking to us.