

\$500, Publication, and a public reading and talk at Drake University

The Freeman Family and the Drake University Department of English invite you to submit outstanding unpublished non-fiction essays of up to 3500 words on the subject of change and changes – whether that means the changing world, the changing self, metamorphoses or evolutions, sea changes or slow changes, we are open to all interpretations of this very general theme.

Students and faculty of Drake University will read all entries and choose the finalists. The winner will be selected by final judge Thomas Page McBee, author of *Man Alive* (2014), and the forthcoming *Amateur*.

The winner will be awarded \$500, published in *The Rumpus*, and brought to Drake University in April 2017 to read from the winning essay and speak at a public event.

The first annual Payton Prize (2015) was won by Tammy Delatorre, whose essay [Out of the Swollen Sea](#) was selected by Cheryl Strayed. The second annual Payton Prize (2016) was won by Stephanie Anderson, whose essay [Greyhound](#) was selected by Emily Rapp.

There is no fee.

Payton James Freeman was a bright, loving child whose ability to move -- even to smile -- was stolen by a disease called Spinal Muscular Atrophy. Diagnosed as an infant, Payton was expected to live perhaps six months. Instead he fought for five and a half years as his parents worked with doctors and scientists, fundraising in hopes of a cure. SMA ultimately took his life, but his story lives on in all those who continue striving against uncountable odds, and who struggle to put life's most complex and trying events into words.

SMA is the #1 genetic killer of children under age two. The Freeman Family would like you to learn about SMA and remember Payton as you submit your essays and as we read and celebrate the winning essay.

HOW TO SUBMIT

Please follow these directions, or your submission may not be read. Send only one essay of up to 3500 words directly in the body of an email to [writers.critics\[at\]drake.edu](mailto:writers.critics[at]drake.edu) (replace [at] with @), with the subject line 2017 PAYTON PRIZE SUBMISSION. Please add your name and any alternate contact information (optional) to the end of your essay. The email you submit from will be your official contact for contest results unless you instruct us otherwise, so be sure to monitor it. Deadline for submissions is midnight on Monday, November 21, 2016. Winner and finalists will be announced in January 2017.

Authors must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents and must agree to attend and participate in the reading at Drake University in April 2017 to receive the award. Current students and employees of Drake University, *The Rumpus*, and/or Thomas Page McBee are ineligible for the award.