

Rare Disease Day: A Barlow Memorial



The Joel Barlow community showed their stripes with the unveiling of a mural painted by Grace Doremus, a senior at the high school, to remember and honor her fellow classmate, Tyler Cummings, who died this past summer after battling a rare neuromuscular disease.

Tyler, or Ty-man as many of his friends called him, was known throughout the Barlow community for his optimistic personality, fistbumps and hugs, which became his way of connecting with others once the effects of the disease took over. The mural, an image of a fist bump overshadowed by a lotus flower, contains the quote, "the flower that blooms in adversity is often the most beautiful."

Grace Doremus notes the flower's tendency to bloom in murky waters, just as Tyler grew up with his disease yet lived on to show the vibrant petals hidden inside. Tyler was open and kind and brightened the atmosphere of every room. "I hope this mural will leave a lasting effect on Barlow as Tyler has left a lasting effect on each of us," Grace said. His passing left an empty space within the Joel Barlow family, especially the class of 2020, who must go on to graduate without their friend this spring.

It is no question that Tyler's death came too soon and we all would have loved to see him

go on in life to impact others as he did to us. However, he now takes part in a new future, guiding the classes to come which will enter Barlow's halls and be reminded to be kind, be strong, be courageous, and most importantly, bloom.

Rare Disease Day was established in 2008 to be held on the last day of February, the month famous for its peculiar number of days. Schools, businesses, and communities have come together to celebrate the day and bring awareness to the lesser known ailments of the world by wearing striped clothing.









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IN LOVING MEMORY OF
TYLER 'TY-MAN' CUMMINGS
2002-2019