

News

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Contact:

Josiah Williams

Phone: 360.802.9758

Email: josiah@winepresspublishing.com

Reality-Based YA Novel Prepares Teens to Cope with Bullying and Suicide

Enumclaw, WA—Look through your high school yearbook and find 30 faces; two of those people have tried to kill themselves.

Thirty-two percent of students report being bullied during the school year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).* Victimized youth are at increased risk for mental health problems such as depression and anxiety, headaches, and poor school adjustment.

At San Diego's fictitious North Harbor High, students get bullied – to death. *Locker 572*, by L.T. Kodzo (WinePress Publishing, 2011), exposes this epidemic through the eyes of three students who attend the school.

There's Sheridan Alexander, a senior transfer student who finds an abandoned journal in her locker and learns the truth about a student who's being harassed mercilessly by her classmates.

There's the journal's author, Ribbon Barber, an innocent girl who endures endless insults and scarring abuse.

And there's Ashley Nobel, Ribbon's childhood friend, who joined a popular clique in junior high. When that clique turns into a gang of bullies, Ashley must face the consequences that come from being a follower.

"Bullies have been given too much reign," says Kodzo, who has over 25 years experience teaching and mentoring teenagers. "I wanted to write a reality-based novel that provides a solution for teenagers to silently, but publicly stand up to bullies at their own schools."

Kodzo's impetus for writing the book stemmed from countless news reports she read about teens being bullied to death. "There's something sadly intoxicating about the mob mentality," she says.

But while bullies can be powerful, bullying is not the majority mindset, she adds. She hopes that *Locker 572* stops at least one teenager from making an irreversible decision, and creates a means for teens to discuss the issues of bullying and suicide.

"It's often easier for a teen to open up about a fictional character before they would share their private experiences with an adult," she says. "This novel is a bridge that makes it safe to discuss what feels dangerous."

For more information, to request a review copy, or to schedule an interview, please contact Josiah Williams by phone at 360-802-9758, by email at josiah@winepresspublishing.com, or by fax at 360-802-9992. To purchase a copy of this book visit www.winepressbooks.com or call 877-421-7323.

10% of all book proceeds are donated to iMatter Festival. Check out iMatterfest.org.

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*http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pub/understanding_bullying.html

*Quality images to accompany this press release are available in digital format.
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WinePress Publishing LLC • 360.802.9758 tel • 360.802.9992 fax • 1730 Railroad St., Enumclaw, WA 98022