



## Impact Statement

Brianna Fish, Grade 11.

***The Heart That Helped***, 2021.

Oil pastel on paper, 18 x 24 Inches.

Hopewell Valley Central High School, Pennington, NJ

Unsung Hero: Helen Taussig

What inspired me to show the story that I did through my art was I thought it would be very important to incorporate a baby in the piece because I wanted to show the color of the skin compared to a normal person, with the blue hue on the baby I feel that it shows that its not any normal babies that she takes care of and that she saved. I also thought that it was important to incorporate the device that she made that actually helped the babies survive, so I chose to incorporate that within the hero. With the study/lab I chose to incorporate it because its where most of her work was done, she was in school for a long time and that's where her talent showed most, because she had dyslexia and loss of hearing it was harder for her to learn, as why I put letters flowing around in the background.

I feel as though my work shows who my hero is and what she stands for because the letters in the background are a big part of who she is, I thought that it showed that she had some type of connection with school, learning, or reading, and I also purposefully did not include a stethoscope because it would be pointless considering she felt for the heartbeat with her fingers and palpated with her fingers to find the problem. I feel as though the heart shows that she has a significant connection with helping people and that she had a creation connected with the heart. As well as the baby, it shows that her main achievement and act that she was known for was helping babies and their hearts.

I feel as though I showed this visually through having the heart connected to my hero which is also helping the baby live, connecting through her fingers to help the baby breathe. I chose to have the hero and the baby in the front almost at a layering process. Putting her background or origin in the background, where she started, being dyslexic and that affecting her way of learning and her process of becoming the person she is today. Then showing the school and the lab in which, she worked to figure out the device that ended up helping millions of babies in the world. Providing them the air to breathe just like any other human. I would have liked to incorporate my cousin in some way because in the process of making the art and sharing / teaching my parents about the hero that I was creating my art on. They told me that my cousin had this condition when she was born, and she had to have open heart surgery to save her.

Along with this information, it made me realize that it's a very common thing or condition that happens in the world. Almost everyone in twenty thousand babies are born with this condition which considering there are about 380,000 babies born every day so that's 19 babies a day that are born with this condition. Putting that into perspective, every year, there are thousands of babies whose lives would be lost simply because of the lack of the device that was made by Helen Taussig. Creating this piece and learning about a hero that I had no clue the name of before this project, is mind-opening. Considering that she made such a large impact on the health industry I'm blown away that she is not well known. While I was creating this piece, and

learning about my hero, I realized how similar we are in the sense that we are both mentally tough. I thought that including the fact that she struggled in school was a big factor in the piece because I also have a disability that stunts my learning, while she had dyslexia, I have ADD and ADHD which makes it hard for me to pay attention and do well in standardized testing.

My family has the tendency to ask me about my artwork and recently I've been accepted into NAHS Juried Exhibition with one of my pieces of art and with that comes multiple texts and calls from family asking about it, sharing the link with others and posting about it. As well as it was put into the public newspaper which brought attention to my artwork and the history behind my art. With that being said if my art piece was to be put in a competition, I would share with my friends about it and share the story of Helen Taussig because I think that her story is one that is meant to be heard. I enjoyed working on this project a lot because it helped me learn about someone who ended up helping millions of people, not just ones in the time period that the hero was alive.