

## Impact Statement

Halim Leem, Grade 10

***Mother of the Venture***, 2025

Acrylic on paper, 11 x 14 inches

Redmond High School, Redmond, WA

Unsung Hero: Caroline Ferriday

“Mother of the Venture,” so called Caroline Ferriday, was not only a philanthropist, but something beyond that. To the survivors of Ravensbrück, she was the source of true hope and warmth. She acted to protect the dignity of the women who suffered during wartime and aided in their recovery. I deeply resonated with her story and her commitment to helping those who had been marginalized, which is why I chose Caroline Ferriday as my Unsung Hero. I greatly admire her courage to stand against injustice and act on it with compassion. It is truly inspirational to learn about a true hero who used her privilege to save others.

After World War II, Caroline Ferriday devoted herself to help the women survivors of the Ravensbrück concentration camp in Germany, especially Polish women who were called “Lapins.” Even after the war had ended, these women continued to suffer from the physical and mental scars caused by medical experiments enforced by Nazi Germany. Despite their long, painful suffering, only little attention was paid to this issue by international society and the German government continuously attempted to hide the existence of the camp and the experiments. Meanwhile, Caroline Ferriday played a significant role in gathering donations and raising awareness of the issue. She not only worked to bring the Lapins to the United States and provide them medical treatment, but she also actively sought to bring them with a “future.” She provided consistent support for these women and helped them adapt to American society. Without her persistent love for the Lapins and her efforts to publicize their suffering, these victims could have remained silenced to this day.

Through my piece *Mother of the Venture*, I sought to vividly tell the story of Caroline Ferriday and the Lapins. The figure on the right is Caroline Ferriday, illustrated with a warm smile, reflecting her title, “Mother of the Venture.” In the background, I referenced a news article that shared the story of the Lapins’ arrival in the United States to portray how her heroic effort is remembered in history. On the left, there are the survivors of Ravensbrück concentration camp. Though they are wearing poor-quality prisoner’s uniforms, they are delightfully smiling at Caroline Ferriday, showing their appreciation for her hard work. With the broken chains around one of the women’s wrists and the other woman removing her hood, I created the symbolism of liberation from physical and mental suppression. The dark illustration of the camp symbolizes the past pain and scars, while the broken chains shattering further represent the publicizing of such issue,

which brought hope to the victims. Through this composition and illustration, I sought to visualize the impact Caroline Ferriday had on the lives of the Lapins. I conducted in-depth research on Caroline Ferriday, the camp itself, and the Lapins to better understand every aspect of the story. I also watched several videos documenting her story to capture the most accurate elements.

By learning and understanding Caroline Ferriday's story and her values through research, I was deeply moved and began to admire such a hero. The lesson I learned is that one doesn't need great power or authority to create change in the world; true dedication to helping others is what brings a real change. This made me reflect on my own life and promise myself that I will become a person who can give hope to those who are suffering. Therefore, I want to share this learning with the world through my art. I hope that this work will inspire others to pay attention to the heartwarming story of Caroline Ferriday and the survivors of camp Ravensbrück. I plan to share this piece, along with my process and the related information, across my social media accounts to reach a wider audience and spread the story of this Unsung Hero. Caroline Ferriday was not only a courageous philanthropist, but also the true definition of the "mother" of the venture. She fostered a new home for the Lapins, and her love and courage continue to remind us of the importance of hope and action to this today. I believe the story of my Unsung Hero, Caroline Ferriday, will inspire us, all around the world, to take meaningful action and stand up for those who are in need, just as she did.

#### References:

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