

Impact Statement

Eleanor Zhang, Grade 7

Breakthrough, 2025

Acrylic, Colored Pencil, Graphite on paper, 16 x 14 inches

Independent Study, Greene Middle School, Palo Alto, CA

Unsung Hero: Dr. Norman Borlaug

Dr. Norman Borlaug was an American agricultural scientist and a humanitarian who brought about a significant yet controversial change to the world. He was someone with a huge idea and an even larger dream to achieve ending world hunger, something that he somehow managed to accomplish during his life. With his achievements in mind, I decided to choose him and draw him how I see him.

Borlaug was a man whose achievements touched the world. He was the definition of how even one mere person can have a massive impact on the whole entire world. By developing several varieties of wheat which were disease resistant and had high production of crop per unit area, Borlaug was able to increase the amount of wheat harvested in the same area of land; and at a later time was able to introduce his invention to other countries like India and Mexico. The popularity and increased production of his wheat allowed for more mouths to be fed and increased food stability in many countries, which originally may not have been as secure. The wheat that he had developed was truly something extraordinary especially for starving regions. Being high-yielding, it could be harvested and sold for less than wheat before and would be more accessible for those who needed it. Additionally, he was able to improve agricultural techniques used by farmers. Everything he did eventually led to his being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1970. He said once, "You can't build a peaceful world on empty stomachs and human misery" urging the importance and urgency of fighting against world hunger. And his wheat invention was his take and what he chose for a solution to this problem. In numbers, his wheat seems like something that drastically helped improve the state of the world in terms of food security. Over many years, Norman's wheat is something that is estimated to have saved over a billion lives from starvation. Extraordinary and revolutionary.

I drew this picture of Borlaug with him standing surrounded by wheat, the very thing that brought him his success and the main thing he had studied during his life on his path to his dream of ending world hunger. I wanted to show his dedication towards his research and additionally also his moment of discovery, joyful and disbelieving. I drew him looking at the wheat in his hand, representing his new creation he spent years on.

Personally, I feel that there are many things to take from Norman Borlaug's way of living. The amount of dedication and focus he must have had in order for him to

accomplish something such as this must have been incredible and it (his amount and level of dedication and focus) is also something that one should strive for. His determination to achieve his goal ultimately led to him succeeding. As someone hearing about all this, the thought that one person can have a large impact on the world is something that is inspiring to just merely think about.