The MSU Maroon & Write Project is proud to sponsor the 2016 Maroon Edition Essay Contest. All MSU undergraduate students are invited to submit an essay based on *Three Little Words: A Memoir*. Students must be enrolled during the Spring 2016 semester to be eligible for a prize. Prizes will be awarded in freshman and upper-classman categories. Winners in each category will receive the following awards credited to their MSU accounts:

- **1ST PRIZE** - $500
- **2ND PRIZE** - $300
- **3RD PRIZE** - $100

Your essay must discuss ONE of these topics:

1. What are the three little words of the title? Why are they so significant to Ashley and to the story? What three words would be significant to the story of your life and why?

2. Were all of Ashley’s experiences with foster families bad? Was there anything positive about her time in the system? Who was looking out for her? Who failed her?

3. Did Ashley’s definition of family change throughout the book? If yes, what motivated these changes? How does this compare with how you would define a family?

4. This book grew from an essay that Ashley wrote for a competition in which students were asked to write about a moment in their lives in which they learned something about themselves. Write your own essay about such a moment in your life and compare your story to Ashley’s.

Offer your own ideas and arguments, but be sure to use quotations and specific examples from the book to illustrate and support your points.
Submission Requirements: Essays must be 500-1000 words, double-spaced with 1-inch margins; use Times New Roman 12-point font. Center your essay title on the first page. DO NOT put your name on the body of the essay; instead, include a cover sheet with the following information:

- Name
- Telephone Number
- NetID
- Contest Classification (freshman or upper-classman)
- MSU Honor Code: “As a Mississippi State University student, I will conduct myself with honor and integrity at all times. I will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor will I accept the actions of those who do.”

Submit your essay by midnight on Friday, November 11, 2016, to essaycontest@msstate.edu as an attached PDF document.