



*Write Women Back Into History
Essay Contest Celebration Day*

Sponsored by:
Iowa Commission on the Status of Women
Iowa Department of Education
State Historical Society of Iowa

Celebration Day

Thursday, March 10, 2011

8 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Iowa State Capitol

8:00 a.m.

Winners and their invited guests meet on the ground floor of the Capitol. Students, teachers, principals, and essay subjects are to pick up their nametags.

8:30 a.m.

Introduction in the House, second floor, and meet with Representatives.

9:00 a.m.

Introduction in the Senate, second floor, and meet with Senators.

10:30 a.m.

Tour of the Capitol. (Optional) If we get separated, meet us at the desk on the first floor of the Rotunda for the start of the tour.

12 noon

Lunch on your own. (There is a cafeteria in the Capitol.)

1 p.m.

Awards ceremony with Governor Branstad and Lt. Governor Reynolds, G-9 Conference Room, ground floor.

Awards Ceremony

Thursday, March 10, 2011

1 p.m.

G-9 Conference Room

Welcome

Rachel Scott, Iowa Commission on the Status of Women

Gail Sullivan, Iowa Department of Education

Proclamation Reading by Governor Terry Branstad

March as Women's History Month Proclamation

Awards Presentation

Rachel Scott

Carol Heaverlo, Program for Women in Science and Engineering at Iowa State University

(As the students' names are called, they should move forward to receive their prizes and certificate.)

Students will be recognized in the following order:

- 1) 6-7th Grade Category
- 2) 8-9th Grade Category
- 3) Women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math 6-7 Grade Category
- 4) Women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math 8-9 Grade Category

Brayton Presentation

Mary Cownie, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs Director

Closing

Rachel Scott

2011 Winners

6-7 Grade Category Essays

- First Place: Jessica Heims
Teachers: Katie Brown and Shauna Sedore
Prairie Creek Intermediate School, Cedar Rapids
- Second Place: Gracie Harmeyer
Teacher: Sarah Seligman
North Polk Central Elementary, Alleman
- Third Place: Gabriella Baker
Teacher: Steve Leach
North Polk Middle School, Alleman

8-9 Grade Category Essays

- First Place: Emma Goodman
Teacher: Shirley Jarzombek
Taft Middle School, Cedar Rapids
- Second Place: Hannah Ackerman
Cedar Falls
- Third Place: Jack Hostager
Teacher: Tricia Folmer
Thomas Jefferson Middle School, Dubuque

Best Essays on Women in Science and Engineering for 6-7 Grades

- First Place: Lauren Kuch
Teachers: Katie Brown and Marcus Hora
Prairie Creek Intermediate School, Cedar Rapids
- Second Place: Sondra Flockhart
Teachers: Katie Brown and Marcus Hora
Prairie Creek Intermediate School, Cedar Rapids

Best Essays on Women in Science and Engineering for 8-9 Grades

- First Place: Jessica Lowthorp
Girl Scout Leader: Heidi Lowthorp
Sidney
- Second Place: Nathan Yeager
Teacher: Lisa Phillips
Cardinal Community Schools, Eldon

6-7 Grades: First Place

Amy Palmiero-Winters

by Jessica Heims

"When I had my accident, they said I would never run again. It was more proving them and myself wrong." ~Amy Palmiero-Winters

Imagine you were in a motorcycle accident and had your left leg amputated, what would you do? If you were Amy Palmiero-Winters, you would run. Not just run, but become the first amputee, man or woman, ever to get on the U.S. Track Team. The problem is, nobody has acknowledged her for these heroic acts.

Running has always been a priority for Amy Palmiero-Winters, ever since the first day she set foot on the starting line. Palmiero-Winters ran her first race when she was 8 years old. She ran with a borrowed pair of shoes that she stuffed with toilet paper to make them fit better. Although she came in last, she says it "sparked something inside me." That "spark" must have made a pretty good impression, because she never stopped. "Every place she went, she'd run" says her father, Larry. Amy loved running ever since that first race. But on a hot summer day in New York, it seemed as if all of that was about to change. Palmiero-Winters was on her motorcycle when a car ran into her and crushed her left foot and ankle. She had tried surgeries to save the leg. Amy actually ran a marathon with the limb still attached.

Finally, after 30 surgeries, the former track and swimming star reluctantly had her left leg amputated below the knee. And after over a decade of rehab, and even though doctors said she wouldn't, Amy Palmiero-Winters started running again.

Amy Palmiero-Winters was able to find her inner hero by returning to what she love doing most- running. After her amputation Palmiero-Winters ran a marathon in her personal best time: 3 hours 4 minutes and 16 seconds. After running in many races, Amy met a man named Erik Schaffer, the owner of A Step Ahead Prosthetics. She quit her job in Pennsylvania to work for Schaffer as a sports program director helping clients from small children to adults. Amy worked in exchange for running blades. A blade is made out of carbon fiber and is a better prosthesis for running and competing in races. The blades cost over \$25,000. They don't give her an advantage, they just let her compete at a more equal level. Being able to work for A Step Ahead has led to her achieving many goals beyond belief.

For most people, winning a raffle drawing or t-shirt design contest is hard, but winning national awards? For Amy Palmiero-Winters, it's no biggie. She has won the ESPN ESPY Athlete Of The Year Award. That award wasn't just for amputees, either. It included both "able-bodied" and "disabled" athletes. Palmiero-Winters was also the first amputee - man or woman - to become part of the U.S. Track Team. This accomplishment is one that very few men or women are able to do. Amy knows that by being able to compete and make the U.S. Track Team, she can encourage many amputee girls to do running sports. She participated in the "Run to the Future" 24-hour race and was the overall winner. Can you imagine how much endurance you'd need to finish? Well however much you'd need, Amy had it. And she must have kept it throughout the years, because in 2006 she ran a total of 96.6 race miles. But in 2007, she ran a breathtaking 134.4 in race miles. In fact, the longest race she'd ever run was 130.4 miles. It took her a whole day to finish the race. In these races, she did not have places to stop and rest, in exception of the water stations. These races take a long time to run and a long time to recover. Runners participating in these races run through light or dark; rain, or shine. It takes a lot of guts to finish, or even start, one of these.

Amy Palmiero-Winters loves helping the community, especially children with limb loss, limb differences, or are wheelchair-bound. She takes those kids skiing, ice and rock climbing at resorts, swimming and camping at campgrounds, and trapezing, dancing, and bowling inside, just to name a few. Amy also pushes kids in their wheelchairs at marathons, doing the whole 26.2 miles, to teach them to push beyond their limits. If someone were to ask her what obstacles she has to face, she says, "The obstacles we face are the ones we put in front of ourselves and the ones that show up. Well I think they are not obstacles or hardships, they are learning tools."

Unlike some people who would give anything to meet their hero, I don't have to. I am a leg amputee myself, just like Amy, and met this inspiring amputee at a race where she ran with a teenage boy who lost both of his legs below the knee. She has taught me to never stop doing what I love because of other people's thoughts. I hope to grow up to be just like her.

Going through so many challenges would normally stop many people, but Amy Palmiero-Winters refuses to let that stop her. She never lets others' opinions get in the way of what she knows she can do, despite what most other people think. Since Amy Palmiero-Winters has kept strong through the years, she has decided to do many heroic acts, and continues to help children who have been through similar things she has. Amy Palmiero-Winters should never be forgotten, especially after what she has done for me and many other amputees in the world!

Resource List:

"Amy Palmiero-Winters" 17 Jan. 2011

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amy_Palmiero-Winters>

Brannen, Dan. "Amy Palmiero-Winters Wins 'Run to the Future' 24-Hour" 14 Jan. 2011

Hawkins, Kathryn "Leg Amputee Amy Palmiero-Winters makes United States National Track Team" 26 April 2010

<<http://glmundo.com/news/article.leg-amputee-amy-palmiero-winters-makes-unitedstates-national-track-team/>>

Michaelis, Vicki "Running Down A Dream: Leg Amputee makes U.S. Track Team" 27 April 2010

<http://www.ustoday.com/sports/olympics/summer/track/2010-04-25-amputeerunner_N.htm

Palmiero-Winters, Amy. Personal Interview. 18 Jan. 2011

6-7 Grades: Second Place

Our History is Our Strength by Gracie Harmeyer

My name is Gracie Harmeyer and I want to be a pharmacist. It all started when our school counselor first came to our third grade class to discuss career choices with us. She introduced me to the field of pharmacy. She explained how a pharmacist plays an important role in the lives of all people. From giving out baby aspirin to small children with fevers to dosing patients in hospitals, a pharmacist holds a valuable position in society. A pharmacist uses mathematics, chemistry, biology, science, and compassion to provide the appropriate drug and dosage to people in need. Pharmacists help people in need, that's why I want to be a pharmacist. I want to help people.

In doing my research for this project, I was surprised to learn of Gwendolyn Wilson Fowler. Even though Ms. Fowler was born in Arkansas, her parents moved to Des Moines, Iowa in 1913 when she was only six years old. Only a few years after they arrived in Des Moines, Ms. Fowler's father passed away. Mrs. Fannie Wilson, Ms. Fowler's mother, was determined that her daughter got the best education possible. Ms. Fowler was later sent to a special preparatory high school in Holly Springs, Mississippi where she graduated with honors in 1926.

Ms. Fowler returned to Iowa to attend the College of Pharmacy at the University of Iowa in Iowa City. Ms. Fowler later transferred to the Des Moines College of Pharmacy, later becoming the Drake College of Pharmacy. Ms. Fowler graduated in 1930 with a pharmaceutical/chemist degree, making her the first black woman to obtain a pharmaceutical degree and officially becoming a registered pharmacist in the state of Iowa.

Unable to find employment as a pharmacist in Iowa, Ms. Fowler found work in several other areas, as a seventh-grade teacher, a waitress, and a maid. Ms. Fowler often felt labor restrictions on women's hours; the Depression and racism were factors against her. It wasn't until 1944, that the State of Iowa Department of Health hired Ms. Fowler as a pharmacist's clerk, which was a turning point in her career. Ms. Fowler then took a position as chemist for the Iowa State Department of Agriculture laboratory. It was there President

Eisenhower's administration noticed Ms. Fowler and she became the only black woman on a panel of eight other women to be selected for Foreign Service positions outside the United States.

After she returned from her Foreign Service assignment overseas, Ms. Fowler returned to the State Agriculture laboratory for a while. Finally in 1962, Ms. Fowler achieved her goal of becoming a pharmacist for the Broadlawns Polk County Hospital in Des Moines. She retired from that position in 1974.

I could easily end my essay on Ms. Fowler here and feel I have introduced you to an impressive woman and important person in our history, but I would only be telling you half of her story. Her story continues even after her retirement from the hospital. She was a very active lady who volunteered her time at places like, the Wilkie House, Red Cross, and United Way. She served on boards for the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), the State Drug Abuse Council and the Des Moines Civic Music Board. She was appointed to the Iowa Statewide Health Coordinating Council by Governor Robert Ray, and also received the Governor's Volunteer Award. Ms. Fowler held memberships with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Des Moines Sister City Commission, the Des Moines Women's Club, and was an alumni at Drake University.

Gwendolyn Wilson Fowler should be an inspiration to us all. To pharmacist, men and women, African-Americans, and society because she overcame great odds to become the best she could be. She didn't let her race, gender or age overcome her. She played a role in life, and made it shine with great honor. She was a caring and loving person who did more than most dream of in a lifetime. Why did it take this assignment for me to learn about her many contributions?

I was pleased to see that Gwendolyn Wilson Fowler was inducted into the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame in 1987. She deserves to be there in my opinion; she deserves to be written into history. Ms. Fowler died in 1997, before I was born, but it would have been neat to be able to talk to her about her experiences as a pharmacist. I have no doubt she would have encouraged me to do my best within my career and in society.

This was a woman who followed her dream in becoming a pharmacist, and also paved the way for others like me. She inspires me to do well in school, graduate from college, fulfill my dream of becoming a pharmacist, and make my own contributions to society. Thank you, Gwendolyn Wilson Fowler, you have inspired me.

Source List

"IOWA WOMEN'S ARCHIVES - Gwendolyn Fowler Papers." The University of Iowa Libraries. Web. 12 Jan. 2011.

<<http://sdr.lib.uiowa.edu/iwa/findingaids/html/FowlerGwendolyn.htm>>.

"Gwendolyn Wilson Fowler." Iowa Commission on the Status of Women. Web. 12 Jan. 2011.

<http://www.women.iowa.gov/about_women/HOF/iafame-fowler.html>.

6-7 Grades: Third Place

Dr. Margaret Wragg Sloss

by Gabriella Baker

“Each man is a unique individual, not even identical twins are wholly alike. By the Grace of God you are what you are. Glory in your selfhood, accept yourself, trust yourself, respect yourself. You have a right to be here and each of us has important work to do. Never, never indulge yourself in self pity or spend time comparing yourself with others. What is right for you may not be right for them and vice versa. Don’t stand in your own shadow, get your little self out of the way, so your big self can stride forward.” This was Dr. Margaret Sloss’ belief that she shared with the 1972 graduating veterinary class the year she retired after a 50 year career at Iowa State University’s School of Veterinary Medicine.

I chose Dr. Margaret Sloss for this essay because she opened up the doors in Veterinary Medicine for all women. I have wanted to become a Veterinarian for a few years now, and no one has ever told me that I can’t become what I want to become. My parents have always told me that I can be whatever I want to be when I grow up. This is the same thing that Margret Sloss was told when she was a little girl, and she never stopped believing that.

The Sloss family moved to Ames in 1910 when her father got a job as the superintendent of buildings, grounds and construction at Iowa State. They lived in a house across the street from the veterinary clinic on campus, and she enjoyed watching the operations at the clinic. In 1923, Margaret graduated from Iowa State with a bachelor’s degree in zoology. That same year she got a job as a technician in the College of Veterinary Medicine. After two years, she quit to attend medical school. She tried to take physics classes from the University of Iowa but was denied. She eventually did take the physics course, but she decided not to attend medical school because she was still hurt by the denial. She went back to Iowa State to work at the College of Veterinary Medicine.

Margaret Sloss started her master’s work in veterinary anatomy at Iowa State in 1929. At first, Iowa State denied her entrance into the program because she was a woman. Determined to get into the program and do something that she really wanted to do, Margaret looked into the admission process at land-grant institutions and found that the grant of land on which Iowa State was located said that “persons applying for admission from Iowa could not be refused on the basis of sex.” In 1938, Margaret Sloss became the first woman in the history of Iowa State to receive a Doctor’s of Veterinary Medicine. She never stopped believing she could do what she wanted to do. She continued to work in the pathology laboratory and wrote or co-wrote a number of articles and books. Despite earning a number of awards during her career at Iowa State, it still took Margaret over forty years to become a full professor in 1965 at the age of sixty-four.

Margaret Sloss never stopped believing and working for the equality of women, mainly in the field of veterinary medicine. She believed that admission into the program should be based on grades and not on biological sex. She always displayed a curiosity for learning and never stopped pushing the gender barriers because she believed in equality for men and women.

In 1940, Margaret Sloss was listed by the Women’s Centennial Congress as one of one hundred women in the United States who followed a career unheard of for women one hundred years before. She was also chosen as the veterinarian who made the “most significant contribution to the profession” at the American Veterinary Medicine Association in Toronto, Canada, at a meeting of the “Veterinary Circle.”

Margaret Sloss has taught me that I should never stop believing in what I want to do. What other people think or believe about me doesn’t matter; that it is only my belief and determination in myself that matters. The only person standing in the way of what I want to become and do with my life is me. Most importantly, she has taught me that any impact I eventually make on this earth will be significant, not only in my life but possibly a huge difference in the world.

I plan on attending Iowa State University and graduating from the College of Veterinary Medicine before establishing a practice that focuses on the wellbeing of small animals. This dream will be mostly determined by me, but I owe Dr. Margaret Sloss a great debt for breaking the barriers for all women in veterinary medicine and never giving up on her dream.

Works Cited

Web. 30 Dec. 2010. <<http://www.lib.iastate.edu/spcl/exhibits/150/template/sloss.html>>.

Web. 30 Dec. 2010. <<http://www.lib.iastate.edu/spcl/exhibits/20thWomen/Listpages/sloss1.html>>.

Web. 30 Dec. 2010. <<http://www.public.iastate.edu/~ucw/HistoryofWomenatISU/Margaret%20Sloss.html>>.

8-9 Grades: First Place

Dr. Christine Grant by Emma Goodman

"Today we celebrate how far we've come. But we must also recommit ourselves to Title IX's goal of equality in education, for too many schools and education programs still drag their feet and lag behind in their responsibility to our young women and girls." — President Bill Clinton on the 25th anniversary of Title IX

My family consists of five and we are heavily active in sports and academics. My step father is a history teacher as well as a basketball coach at Thomas Jefferson High School, in Cedar Rapids. As for me, I play in eight different sports year round and participate in show choir and other school academics. I chose Dr. Christine Grant for this essay, because she was one of the many important people involved in the Title IX process, which gave women more opportunities to go to college and play in sports.

Dr. Christine Grant came to the University of Iowa, from Scotland in 1969 to get a graduate degree and decided to stay longer so she could receive a PhD. When she was part way through getting her PhD, Title IX was passed in 1972, but it was not heard of until 1973 because of poor communication. In early 1973 President Sandy Boyd, of the University of Iowa; decided that he ought to do something about it, so he met with the head of the department which was Dr. M. Gladys Scott and they decided that they were going to elevate some of the women's sports that were at the clubs level. They elevated 12 women's club teams and decided they needed someone to direct the program. Based on Dr. Scott's recommendation Dr. Grant was promoted to be the first female athletic administrator at Iowa.

When I interviewed Dr. Grant she told me that, at the time if you were a young women you were discouraged from taking certain courses like, math and science. An example that she used for gender discrimination, is if a twin sister and brother applied to the University of Iowa, before Title IX; the sister would have had to of have a higher GPA and ACT score than the brother to be admitted to the university. What Title IX meant was, in Dr. Christine Grant's words; "It's just being fair to our daughters as well as our sons."

In 1984, President Reagan completely eliminated Title IX and they did not get it back until 1992, when President Clinton became President. President George W. Bush tried to eliminate Title IX when he was president, but luckily he failed. Christine Grant devoted much of her life protecting Title IX, and she has spoken around the United States standing up for gender equality. If it weren't for her, I wouldn't be able to play sports in middle school, or even get treated as fairly in school, because I'm a girl.

Dr. Christine Grant has received many awards and honors, including the prestigious Billie Jean King Award presented by the Women's Sports Foundation, two honorary doctorates, and induction into the University of Iowa Athletics Hall of Fame and the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame. Also, the University of Iowa named their field hockey field after her.

Christine Grant is an honest woman, with the kindest heart I've ever met. She works so hard to get true gender equality and is one of many women I look up to in life, because without her I wouldn't be able to play basketball or go to college in the future. Women would be classified as unimportant to society but now we

have many women working in the congress and other places in America. Without Title IX women would be treated with very little respect and I have Christine Grant to thank for changing that. We still aren't fully there yet to gender equality and I ask myself all the time, "How good does a female athlete or student have to be before we just call her an athlete or a genius?"

Source List:

"Iowa Women's Archives: Christine Grant Papers." The University of Iowa Libraries. Iowa Woman's Archives. Web. 12 Dec. 2010. <<http://sdr.lib.uiowa.edu/iwa/findingaids/html/GrantChristine.htm>>.

Larson, Linn. "Be Remarkable." The University of Iowa. 10 Dec. 2007. Web. 12 Dec. 2010. <<http://www.uiowa.edu/be-remarkable/portfolio/people/grant-c.html>>.

"Dr. Christine Grant to Receive NACWAA Legacy Award Hawkeye Sports." Hawkeye Sports - University of Iowa Official Athletic Site. University Of Iowa, 17 Sept. 2008. Web. 12 Dec. 2010. <<http://www.hawkeyesports.com/genrel/091708aac.html>>.

"Inspirational Quotes (from Athletes) - Women's Sports Foundation." Home - Women's Sports Foundation. Web. 3 Jan. 2011. <<http://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/Tips-And-Tools/I-Am-A-Coach-Or-Administrator/Inspirational-Quotes.aspx>>.

Cantwell, Lois, and Pohla Smith. Women Winners: Then and Now. New York: Rosen Pub. Group, 2003. Print.
"Christine Grant." Personal interview. 18 Dec. 2010.

8-9 Grades: Second Place

Mrs. Alleta Sullivan of Waterloo, Iowa by Hannah Ackerman

I've never heard of a mother who gave more to this country than Mrs. Alleta Sullivan of Waterloo, Iowa. Alleta was a loving mother at home raising her children in 1943 during WWII. She wasn't a famous astronaut, scientist, or actress in history. She became part of history because of a terrible war. It changed her whole life. She was born Alleta May Abel in Waterloo on January 28, 1895. She married Thomas Francis Sullivan and they lived at 98 Adams Street, Waterloo. The Sullivan's were a large Irish-Catholic family. They had seven children. They were: George, Francis, Genevieve, Joseph, Madison, Albert, and Kathleen Sullivan.

On January 2, 1942, the five Sullivan brothers enlisted together in the U.S. Navy. They were all on the same ship, the U.S.S. Juneau, clear across the world in the South Pacific. Alleta heard rumors around town that all five of their sons were killed. On January 11, 1943, Navy personnel came to the Sullivan home and said:

"The Navy Department deeply regrets to inform you that your sons, Albert, Francis, George, Joseph, and Madison Sullivan are missing in action in the South Pacific."

Alleta probably didn't know which way to turn, or what to do with the rest of her life. All five of her sons were gone, and were not coming back. She showed such courage, even though she had terrible grief. Rather than just give up, she chose to do good things for this country.

I learned that Alleta chose to carry on and traveled around the country on behalf of the U.S. Navy. She encouraged people to keep making planes and equipment needed by the Navy, and to keep buying war bonds as a way to honor her boys. Once, while traveling in 1943, Alleta spoke to a reporter in San Francisco and said:

"The trip has kept me from thinking," she said. "It's bad to think too much when you have work to do. And I have-for my boys and for my country. I know my five boys would want me to do everything in my power to carry on the fight they intended to finish... American boys are fighting everywhere for their mothers and their loved ones. And we must be as brave as they are... I'm not afraid, either of the past or the future. I've lost my own five, but there are millions of other boys I feel belong to me. They're my family now."

What many people do not know is that before the five brothers died together, Alleta had lost other family members too. Alleta and Thomas lost their youngest child, Kathleen, at 6 months old due to pneumonia, and Alleta lost her father, George Abel, in a train accident. When the five brothers died, Alleta was only 48 years old, and had lost 6 of her 7 children. Their daughter Genevieve was their only child left.

On May 4th, 2009, I entered a project in the “National History Day in Iowa” Competition in Des Moines, and received a “Best of Iowa Award, Junior Individual Performance.” My play was called: “Mrs. Alleta Sullivan, No Other Mother Gave More.” It is about Mrs. Sullivan’s life and losing her five sons.

While I did research, I learned that Kelly Sullivan Loughren, great-granddaughter of Alleta and Thomas Sullivan, lived here in Cedar Falls, IA, my hometown. I was honored to have her come to my home and interview her. Hearing about Alleta’s life from her own great-granddaughter was very special.

Since 2009, I’ve continued to perform this play about Alleta Sullivan’s life for many Veterans and others around Iowa including the Sullivan Brothers Iowa Veterans Museum, Waterloo, the Sullivan Brothers Statue Re-Dedication in Waterloo, AMVETS State Convention, Iowa State Fair, Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA, and many others. In September, 2011, I will be performing for the U.S.S. the Sullivans DD537/DDG68 reunion in Waterloo.

Alleta Sullivan is important to history because she showed all of us that even with tragedy, you should continue to lead your life and do good things. She had terrible grief, but showed us all how to have courage. This is a story that should never be forgotten in history.

Sources Cited

Satterfield, John R. We Band of Brothers. The Sullivans and World War II. Parkersburg, Iowa: Mid-Prairie Books, 1995.

Ackerman, Hannah. Personal interview with Kelly Sullivan- Loughren, Great Granddaughter of Alleta Sullivan. Interviewed at my home in Cedar Falls, Iowa: January, 2009.

<http://www.nara.gov/exhall/people/suldeath.jpg>

Copy of letter dated January, 1943 written by Mrs. Alleta Sullivan to the Bureau of Naval Personnel. (This copy was given to me by Kelly Sullivan-Loughren during interview at home, 2009).

8-9 Grades: Third Place

Eleanor Roosevelt by Jack Hostager

She started out as a sad, depressed, orphaned little girl, but turned herself into what is widely known today as one of the most important and influential woman of the twentieth century. Eleanor Roosevelt was a maverick of her time. She pioneered a first lady’s role of being actively involved in politics. Even when her husband, president Franklin D. Roosevelt, died, she continued to be a player on the national and world stage right up until her death at the age of seventy-eight. But Eleanor Roosevelt wasn’t just a politician, she was an advocate for social justice. Her concern in this area prompted her to visit many poverty-stricken areas around the world, interact with individuals of all color and ethnicity, and be a part of many boards and commissions pertaining to woman’s rights and other areas of social justice. Because of this, Eleanor Roosevelt touched countless lives during her life.

Eleanor Roosevelt was born on October 11, 1884 in New York. Her childhood was full of pain and sorrow. Her parents both died when she was ten, after which Eleanor was forced to live with her grandmother, who was very strict and maintained a solemn mood throughout the house. Eventually she was enrolled into a boarding school, where she “came out of her shell” and became popular among both students and teachers.

Eleanor Roosevelt’s childhood didn’t make much of a difference and isn’t a reason for her to be written into history, but I think it’s interesting how she was able to bring herself up from this time of struggle. Sure, she had many luxuries that most could only dream of, but she lacked a close-knit family. Knowing that she experienced this hardship makes me realize how good I really have it. It also gives me a hope that other kids my age who have nothing positive going in their lives will be able to do something similar.

In 1905, Eleanor Roosevelt married Franklin Roosevelt. As FDR became more involved in politics, Eleanor followed right along. She often accompanied her husband on the campaign trail and sometimes followed him on the job. Soon she began to embark out on her own. When FDR was elected president in 1932, Eleanor

disregarded a first lady's previous role of standing on the sidelines and continued to make her name known. She kept her own schedule, frequently touring the country by herself. She held her own press conferences and wrote a newspaper column. By the time FDR had completed his presidency, Eleanor Roosevelt had become a very important figure throughout the country and beyond.

During these years, Eleanor did what no other woman had ever done before. She became a powerful political influence without even holding an official position. She never hesitated to take a stand on an issue she believed in, of which there were many. She stood up to segregation, pushed for peace, and fought for the poor population of America. She didn't care what people thought of her, or what someone like her was supposed to do. She did what she thought was right, and wasn't afraid to create maelstrom in doing so. That's what made her such a powerful political and reforming force. I also respect her for this. People who aren't afraid to speak their mind are the ones who are great leaders and drive the world. I for one am sometimes hesitant to make my voice heard, so I have great respect for those such as Eleanor Roosevelt who do.

On April 12, 1945, FDR died. But Eleanor continued to her work, especially in human rights. She was one of five delegates selected to represent the U.S. in United Nations. She went on to be the chairwoman of the UN's human rights commission. She worked tirelessly until the last few months of her life. On November 7, 1962, at the age of seventy-eight, Eleanor Roosevelt died.

Even when she was widowed, even when her body said no, even when people all over the world opposed her ideas, Eleanor Roosevelt trudged along, fighting persistently for the poor, oppressed, and deprived all over the world. She stood up for those who couldn't stand up for themselves. In doing so she helped better, and in many cases save, the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. That alone is astonishing. One person changing the lives of so many others. Her courage in fighting for human rights, sometimes challenging some of the most respected minds in the world, is truly remarkable. Even those who disagreed with her on the issues admired her extraordinary courage and audacity. Where most people would have shrunken into the corner and given up, Eleanor Roosevelt continued on without a flinch. Her perseverance is what made the difference.

But as she was working in many areas of human rights, Eleanor was redefining a woman's role in society. Besides standing up for their rights, she showed that women do things just as well, and sometimes even better than men. Just by being out in public, making speeches and such, Eleanor took women to a whole new level and undoubtedly inspired other women to make a difference. Without her influence, the advancement of women in society may have been delayed, and some of the great accomplishments of the modern era made by women may not have happened.

But what really made Eleanor Roosevelt one of a kind, what really made her one of the greatest women of the twentieth century, what really amazes me is how much she genuinely cared. Her compassion for underprivileged, oppressed, and even just demoralized people all over the world was a true reflection of her character. This is the reason Eleanor Roosevelt should be written into history, and this the reason she is important to me. Spending your entire life helping others takes extreme dedication and commitment. I have a high regard for Eleanor Roosevelt and all her wonderful work, and I hope her legacy will live on forever.

Sources:

Eleanor Roosevelt: A Life of Discovery Freedman, Russell New York Scholastic 1993

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<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/eleanor/timeline/index.html> (11/11/10)

6-7 STEM: First Place

Mary Edwards Walker by Lauren Kuch

The first female surgeon in the United States Army, Mary Edwards Walker, fought through many tough battles. Mary accomplished many things in life, and made a difference in history. She also was awarded one of the biggest national awards you can receive.

On November 26, 1832, in Oswego, New York, Mary Edwards Walker was born. Mary had four sisters and one brother. She was the youngest out of all of her sisters. Her father was a country doctor and worked on their farm a lot. Mary's mother was a teacher in a one-room school house that their family built. Her mother taught all of the kids in their town.

Mary Edwards Walker grew up to make good decisions, she was also an opponent of alcohol and tobacco. While being dedicated and loyal to her country, her family took their religion very seriously. Around 1855, she got married to Dr. Albert Miller, but Mary kept her own last name. They tried to start their own medical practice in Rome, New York, but the people of that town would not accept a female physician.

Mary Walker accomplished many great things in life. Following in her mother's footsteps, she became a teacher in 1852, and was only a teacher for one year. She decided she wanted to go to medical college. Using the money she had from teaching, she enrolled at Syracuse Medical College in 1853. In 1855, Mary graduated with her M.D and was the only woman in her class. She was then the second female doctor in the nation. When the Civil War broke out in 1861, Walker went to Washington and tried to join the Union Army.

At first Walker was denied, but she volunteered anyway, serving as an acting assistant surgeon. Then Walker became the first female surgeon in the US Army. Since she was an unpaid volunteer surgeon, she worked in the U.S. Patent Office Hospital in Washington. A little later, Walker became a field surgeon near the Union front lines for about two years. That's including the Fredericksburg Battle and in the Chattanooga Battle after the Battle of Chickamunga.

While treating wounded civilians, Mary Edwards Walker was taken prisoner. The Confederate Soldiers kept her prisoner for four months. She was finally released in a prisoner exchange. Walker was so pleased that she had been traded "man for man." She had been released in time to help in the battle for Atlanta as a surgeon.

Mary Edwards Walker had worked very hard serving as a surgeon in the war. That is why she was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor in 1865. It was signed by President Andrew Johnson on November 11, 1865. Mary Edwards Walker was the only woman to receive the Medal of Honor. But in 1917, they tried to take it away, based on a decision from the Army because they changed the "rules" to receive the Medal of Honor. She refused to return it, and wore it till her death in the year 1919, at the age of 86.

Many things were dedicated to honor Mary Edwards Walker. In 1982, the U.S. Postal Service made a stamp in honor of her. She was dedicated to the Women in Military Service for the America Memorial in 1997. There was a World War II Liberty Ship named the SS Mary Walker. A medical facility is named after her, as well as a U.S. Army Reserve.

I chose Mary Edwards Walker because she was the first woman to receive the Medal of Honor. I also chose her because she didn't seem to care that she was usually with a bunch of men, and nothing seemed to stop her from trying something new. I think Mary Edwards Walker seemed very persistent and always tried her best. To me she reminds me of Martin Luther King, except as a woman because she worked so hard to make a difference, and she did.

Mary Edwards Walker risked her life to save other people's lives who had been destroyed in the Civil War. She fought against sex discrimination many times. Her personal achievements helped the struggles for women's rights.

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6-7 STEM: Second Place

Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell **by Sondra Flockhart**

My mom, Sarah Flockhart, just graduated from the Kirkwood Nursing Program. The 5 year journey was hard on my whole family, but when I read Elizabeth Blackwell's story, I couldn't imagine how hard it was for her. Being the first woman doctor in history is a big deal. This is why I chose her, and I believe she should be written back into history.

Elizabeth Blackwell was born February 3rd, 1821. She was born in Bristol, England where her father, Samuel Blackwell, owned a business. Elizabeth's father believed his daughters deserved as good an education as his sons, so he had all of his daughters educated by private tutor. When Elizabeth was 11, a devastating fire burnt down her fathers' business (1832). After the fire, her father moved the Blackwell family to the United States. After they moved, Mr. Blackwell had troubles with business. Having to move the family from New York, to Jersey City, and finally to Cincinnati where they finally settled. Three months after the family's final move, Mr. Blackwell died of Biliary Fever, leaving the family without financial resources. After her father's death, Elizabeth, her sisters Marian and Anna, and their mother opened a private school in an attempt to support the family. This is when Elizabeth became interested in medicine.

Later on, in an attempt to earn money for medical school. Elizabeth took up a job of teaching in Kentucky. Wanting to completely devote herself to the practice of Medicine, Elizabeth moved in with physician, so she could study Medicine before she could actually attend a Medical School. Elizabeth applied at various Medical School's, but each one was horrified at the fact that she was a woman, so no one accepted her. Except one, Geneva College, in New York. But supposedly the only reason she got accepted was because the professors put it to a student vote, and thinking it was a joke/hoax, they accepted her. January 11, 1849, she became the first woman in the United States to earn a medical degree. January 23, 1849, she became the first woman to graduate medical school.

When people wouldn't let her practice in hospitals, she was advised to go to Paris. While she was in Paris, she caught a serious right eye infection from a baby she was treating. When her right eye became severely infected, she had to have it removed and replaced with a glass eye. After Paris, she went to England and worked at St. Bartholomew's hospital. On this trip, she met Florence Nightingale. When she returned to New York, still no one would let her practice in hospitals, and they wouldn't even let her rent an office to set up her own private practice. By now, she was very frustrated, so she decided to buy a house, where she then set up her own private practice.

Since Elizabeth had avoided marriage, she didn't have a family, though she wanted one. So in 1854, she adopted an Irish girl named Katherine "Kitty" Barry.

In 1857, Elizabeth, her sister Emily (Blackwell), and Dr. Zakrzewska, another female doctor, turned her small

practice into an infirmary for women and children. Elizabeth left after a year, for a year long lecture of Great Britain, and Zakrzewska left the practice after 2 years. While Elizabeth was there, she became the first woman to have her name entered into the Britain Medical Register in January, 1859. When she went back to New York in 1859, she began working at the infirmary again.

During the Civil War, the Blackwell sisters helped in an organization of Women's Central Association of Relief, picking out nurses to train and send to service the war. A few years after the war, Elizabeth, her sister Emily, and Florence Nightingale, made the infirmary into the Women's Medical College. The college was supposed to run for 31 years, but without Elizabeth. She moved back to England again, and she helped organize the National Health Society. She then co-founded the London School of Medicine. 1875, she was made the Gynecology Professor at the London School of Medicine. She stayed in England until 1907, when she had a serious fall down the stairs, from which she never fully recovered. After her fall, she retired. On May 31, 1910, she died of a stroke in her home in Sussex. She was buried June 1st 1910 in St. Muns churchyard in Western Scotland.

I think Elizabeth is an important figure because she became the first woman doctor, even after everyone told her she couldn't. She never gave up, and never let anyone tell her what she could and could not do just because she was a woman. Even after everything that happened to her, she persevered until she achieved her goal of earning a medical degree. For everything she did for our country, from making history by becoming the first woman doctor, to sending nurses in to service in the war, to opening infirmaries and working at colleges, everything, I think she deserves to be remembered in our American History.

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8-9 STEM: First Place

Changing the Future for Iowa's Children, One Giant Step at a Time. Thoughts about one of the greatest women of Iowa's past: Cora Bussey Hillis (1858-1924) by Jessica Lowthorp

Better crops, better livestock, better children. This is what one woman dreamed of. This woman was determined to help the children and mothers of Iowa, so she set out to follow her dreams. Born in Bloomfield, IA, in 1858, this woman was Cora Bussey Hillis.

In my mind she found success. Cora Bussey Hillis was one of the first people to help develop child education in Iowa. My mother works in the field of child development and works with children on a daily basis. She goes to their homes and visits with their parents about child development and parenting skills. She has about 30 families she visits monthly. Cora didn't do this quite exactly but she did work with children and their mothers.

Cora Bussey Hillis did some miraculous things. She had to take responsibility and raise her sister who had a spinal disease. The doctors gave her sister a grim future, but Cora was determined to change that. She rehabilitated her sister who later became a college graduate and social worker. I know that I would never have the strength to do that.

The most amazing feat that I think she accomplished was convincing the Iowa court system to create a Juvenile Court System. This would be for the kids who committed a crime. Before the juvenile court was established in 1904, children would receive adult punishments, which were by far harsher and more severe than a child

should have endured. She saved many children from torture and death.

Cora also set up a camp for single mothers of small children. Here, the mothers could give their kid(s) to the workers and they would take care of them. This was so the mothers could have time for themselves and take a break. During this time, Cora would also educate the mothers on how to improve their parenting abilities.

The biggest thing that Cora did during her life was she believed that if scientists studied how to have healthy children the same way that they studied how to improve livestock and crops, Iowa families could improve their "Human Stock," too.

Initially funded through the University of Iowa, Hillis' research drew attention to the fact that Iowans knew more about raising livestock and crops than raising children. Through Hillis' desire and efforts to improve the health and welfare of Iowa's children came the Iowa Child Welfare Research Station (ICWRS), which operated from 1917-1974. This was one of America's first institutions for the study of child development. One of the station's milestones was the first freestanding preschool in the country.

With these children, they would look at inheritance, racial features, and social skills. Scientists would check all these during prenatal development, infancy, childhood, adolescence, and youth. This may seem "weird" that they study them all the time, but actually they studied them in natural settings and also in a controlled environment. I think this is a little over the top but, since we now have an abundance of healthy children being raised correctly, it worked.

Cora Bussey Hillis' gift to Iowa and to us was one of the small evolutionary steps we took as human beings. The development of the ICWRS, and the first preschool, are just a couple of the domino effects that have followed Hillis' desire to better understand and educate children.

With the current debate on state-funded preschools, Cora's work emphasizes how important preschool actually is. Regardless of how preschools are funded, I think that Cora's life-long passion and research reinforces the need for early childhood education.

The more emphasis that is placed on a child's development in the early years of their life, the fewer problems there may be down the road. Every child deserves the best possible start in life. Cora understood that and devoted her life to making children grow tall and strong in Iowa, right along with the corn.

All of this is why I chose Cora Bussey Hillis. She definitely needs to be written back into history because of all the great things she did to improve a child's life, here in Iowa.

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8-9 STEM: Second Place

Dare to Dream by Nathan Yeager

To quote Sally Kristen Ride, "All adventures, especially into new territory, are scary." Sally Kristen Ride was an American astrophysicist and astronaut. She was also the very first woman in America to enter space. I believe Sally Ride is one of the most inspiring women in America and even the world.

I am inspired by anyone who does something that is deemed impossible because of their age, race, creed, color, sex, national origin, religion or disabilities. When someone strives to do something that has never been accomplished before it motivates me to do my best and try to accomplish my dreams and goals. Sally K. Ride did just that by becoming the first American woman to go into space. In the later twentieth century it wasn't extremely common for women to be interested in pursuing a job as an astronaut.

Sally Kristen Ride was born May 26, 1951, to Carol Joyce and Dale Burdell Ride in Encino, California. She had only one sibling which was her sister Karen Ride. Sally attended Portola Middle School and eventually won a tennis scholarship to Westlake School for Girls in Los Angeles, California which was close to her birthplace. After her graduation from Westlake School in 1968 she decided to attend Swarthmore College. Sally decided to drop out to pursue a career in professional tennis, but eventually decided she was not capable enough to become a successful professional tennis player. She then decided to attend Stanford University where she received a Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, and Masters' degrees.

It is inspiring to me how she worked extremely hard in school in both academics and sports to earn scholarships to go to college and try to do something that has never been accomplished before. This motivates me to do the same, as I have always wanted to enroll at a prestigious school such as Stanford University and get a degree in math or the sciences like Sally Ride did. To reach my goal of attending a prestigious university, I am going to make my academics a priority and make sure I study hard and receive good grades in high school. I plan to take as many classes possible in high school to prepare myself for college and concentrate in advanced courses in science and math. Even though academics are my first priority in achieving scholarships through my good grades, I love to participate in sports throughout the year. I try my hardest in sports that I participate in and will continue to strive to do my best. Through her inspiration to me, my goal is to receive both academic and sport scholarships when I go to college, play college football, receive a Bachelors Degree and continue on to graduate school and receive my Masters Degree.

Not only has Sally motivated me to do well in my academics and sports, but also has encouraged me to chase my dreams. One example of chasing dreams was when Sally was looking for work in the astrophysicist field and read about how NASA was searching for astronauts and she applied. There was more than 8,000 applications! These ranged from both men and women, but they only accepted thirty-five in which Sally K. Ride was one. She had to undergo training exercises which included parachute jumping, gravity and weightlessness training and flight training. In 1983, Sally accomplished something that had never been done before. She became the first woman in America to go into space. Sally went on the shuttle named the Challenger(STS-7). She also went on another voyage that lasted for eight days. Sally was preparing for her third mission when the Challenger exploded. She had spent a total of

343 hours in space. Sally eventually decided to retire from her work at NASA in 1987. She was named Director of the California Space Institute and Professor of Physics at the University of California, San Diego. I have learned that to reach your dreams, you have to take chances, try new things, and believe the impossible. Through all of Sally's achievements, she inspires me to believe that I can accomplish my goals through hard work. Sally Ride also wanted to do something for others, so she chased one of her most passionate goals, inspiring young women to study science and math. She has also developed a program called Sally Ride Science, which is an association that provides support for any girls that are interested in the fields of science, math, and technology.

Sally Ride has been given many prestigious awards such as the Jefferson Award for Public Service, National Space Flight Medal and many more. She was inducted into the Astronaut Hall of Fame at Kennedy Space Center on June 21, 2003. With all the things she has accomplished and all the people she has helped, it inspires and motivates me to do great things and help others in their pursuit of their dreams. Sally Kristen Ride said the following about her experience in space, "The stars don't look bigger, but they do look brighter."

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