

2004 Write Women Back Into History Essay Contest



Women Inspiring Hope and Possibility

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

Celebration Day
Thursday, March 11, 2004
8:00 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Iowa State Capitol

8:00 - 8:15 a.m.

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

8:30 a.m.

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

8:45 a.m.

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

10:30 a.m.

Awards ceremony with Lt. Governor, Kennedy Conference Room, ground floor.

12 noon

Lunch on your own.

1:00 p.m.

Tour of the Capitol. (Optional)

Awards Ceremony

10:30 a.m.

Kennedy Conference Room

Welcome

by Kimberly Painter, Iowa Commission on the Status of Women Chairperson

Proclamation Reading by Lt. Governor Sally J. Pederson

March as Women's History Month Proclamation

Awards Presentation

by Sue Mullins, Iowa Commission on the Status of Women Commissioner; Kimberly Painter; and Program for Women in Science and Engineering Director Karen Zunkel of Iowa State University

(As the students' names are called, they should move forward to receive their prizes from Gail Sullivan of the Iowa Department of Education, then approach Painter to receive their certificate. As the teachers' names are called, they should move forward to receive their prizes from Sullivan.)

Students/teachers will be recognized in the following order:

- 1) 6-7th Grade Category
- 2) 8-9th Grade Category
- 3) Edith Rose Murphy Sackett
- 4) Women in Science & Engineering

Brayton Presentation

by Anita Walker, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs Director

Closing

by Kimberly Painter

2004 Write Women Back Into History Essay Contest Winners

6-7 Grades Category

First Place

Rachel Evans, 6th Grade
Teacher: Brenda Goodwin
Urbandale Middle School

Second Place

Tausha Vannatta, 6th Grade
Teacher: Jane Kennedy
Parkview Middle School, Ankeny

Third Place

Lauren Ehrler, 7th Grade
Teacher: Lynette Schmidt
Andrew Community

8-9 Grades Category

First Place

Kathryn M. Skilton, 8th Grade
Teachers: Laura Johnson, Steve Karels,
and Joyce Haberman
Nashua-Plainfield Middle School

Second Place

Jessie Stumme, 8th Grade
Teacher: Brenda Jensen
Central Academy, Des Moines

Edith Rose Murphy Sackett Award on the Best Essay on a Woman Volunteer

Anna McNulty, 6th Grade
Teacher: Janet Blazanin
Merrill Middle School, Des Moines

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

Ryan Hupp, 6th Grade
Teacher: Gwen Gano and Lori Danker
Prairie Middle School, Cedar Rapids

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

First Place

Kelly Pierce, 8th Grade
Teacher: Bonnie Britten
Waukee Middle School

Second Place

Alex Hedrick, 8th Grade
Sue Griswold
Woodrow Wilson Junior High, Council Bluffs

Editor's Note: Essays were typed as submitted.



6-7 Grades: First Place



Jane Elliot: She's Fierce, Strong, Amazing...She's My Hero.

by Rachel Evans

After Martin Luther King Jr. died a student cried, "They killed a king, why?" Everyone knew of King's fight to end racism. He was murdered because of this fight and his desire to help African-Americans be treated equally. His murderer disagreed with his fight. Martin Luther King Jr. was written into history because of his fight against racism, but there were others who have fought this fight as well. Yet who has heard of a teacher in Riceville, Iowa who worked against racism? She, too, deserves recognition.

Jane Elliot was born and grew up in Riceville, a town of 1,000 people. She went to college at the University of Northern Iowa. When she graduated from college she became a teacher in Riceville.

After King's death, Elliot responded by teaching against racism through her blue eye, brown eye demonstrations. She knew she had to teach outside the textbooks. She taught third graders, and one day she told them "brown eyes" were dumb, mean, naughty, and that they shouldn't be treated with respect. No brown eyes could drink from the water fountain. Brown eyes wore collars so they could be told apart easily. They couldn't talk to blue eyes or get seconds at lunch and had to sit at the back of the room. After only a day, friends split up, brown eyes fought against blue eyes, and an excellent teacher had become a strict, mean teacher.

The next day, Elliot told the students that she had lied. She explained that the blue eyes were really the stupid, nasty, and naughty ones, and she made the same rules apply to them. On the third day, she told them that color didn't matter. She asked them what they wanted to do with their collars, and they all responded, "throw them away." She smiled and said, "go ahead." The students rushed to the garbage can, and one child even tried to rip up his collar.

Before the demonstration, she asked the children what they thought of African-American people. None of them had ever met one, yet they responded, "They're dirty," "They stink," "They riot and steal," and "You can't trust them." She told them that this demonstration was just like what happens in the real world. She then questioned them again, asking if African Americans were different, bad, or stupid. This time they answered, "No!" She told them that she always wanted to hear that answer.

As a response to her actions some third graders stood up to their parents that night. They fought about racism. Can you imagine eight-year-olds standing up to their parents for this cause? Well, they did. I don't know if they changed any minds, but it took a lot of guts for the third graders to tell their parents that they were wrong about African-Americans. Jane Elliot's presentation had made a difference.

Elliot has developed a list of things white people can and must do to end racism. She thinks that first you must realize that racism is wrong, that you are doing it, and then you must stop. Next, you must realize that you weren't born a racist. You learned to be this way, and you can unlearn too. Finally, you must actively protest against racism. Elliot thinks that we blame racism on African-Americans when it is really our problem. "We learn to be racist. Racism is not genetic. It has everything to do with power," she once said. Let's listen to Jane's lesson, teach it to our children, and write her into history.

Bibliography

Eye of the Storm. Videocassette. William Peters. The Center for the Humanities. 1970.

Coronel, Mercita. "Eye to Eye - Interview with Jane Elliot". <http://www.magenta.nl/EvetoEve/contraste.html>. January 19, 2004.

Jane Elliot. <http://www.admireentertainment.com/speakers/elliott.j.htm>. January 19, 2004

Kral, Brigitta. The Eyes of Jane Elliott. <http://www.horizonmac.com/4/iane-elliott.asp>. January 19, 2004



6-7 Grades: Second Place



Madam C. J. Walker

by Tausha Vannatta

Madam C. J. Walker was born as Sarah Breedlove on December 23th, 1867. Her parents were Owen and Minervina Breedlove. Sarah has three brothers and one sister. Sarah's brothers names were James, Owen Jr., and Alex. Her sister's name is Louvenia. Sarah was born in a one-room cabin near Delta, Louisiana. She was the first in her family to be born free. Her parents picked cotton on a plantation near Delta, Louisiana. Sarah's parents died of yellow fever in 1875. Yellow fever was spread by mosquitoes out in the field. Sarah was seven when her parents died. Alex, Louvenia, and Sarah tried to take care of the farm by themselves. Alex moved to Vicksburg, Mississippi to look for work. When Sarah was eleven, her and Louvenia lost the farm. They moved to Vicksburg, Mississippi. They made a doallor fifty a week washing clothes for other people. In Vicksburg, Louvenia got married. In 1882, Sarah got married. Sarah was fourteen years old when she got married. She was married 6 years to Moses McWilliams. When Sarah was seventeen, she had a baby girl named Lelia. When Lelia was two years old, Moses died in a accident. Sarah went to Saint Louis. She washed clothes in Saint Louis to make money. Her brother died in Denver, Colorado. Alex's widow and children still live there. Sarah started her business in Denver and worked as a cook by day. She had three prouducts. They were called Wonderful Hair grower, Glossine, and Vegetable shampoo. The Vegetable shampoo cleans hair, the hair grower fights scalp diseases and Glossine softens curls. Sarah made her products specifically for African-American type of hair and sold her products door-to-door. Sarah put ads in the newspaper for her products. In 1906, she married Charles Joesph Walker. They moved to St. Louis. When she got married, she changed her name to Madame C. J. Walker. She changed her name thinking that it had style. Madame also thought it would help her sell her products. She hired other women called hair culturists. They went to houses and treated people's hair. Lelia changed her name to Alelia when she got married and ran the mail order business in Denver. Alelia was also in charge of the teaching college called Lelia College. Sarah moved to Pittsburgh. At Lelia College, hair culturists learned how to use Madam's products. Madam spent two years in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In 1910, She made Alelia the boss. Madam moved the Headquarters to Indianapolis, Indiana as she thought business would grow out there. In 1911, Madam opened a manufacturing plant in Indianapolis, Indiana. It was called the Madam C. J. Walker Manufacturing Plant. She gave away a lot of money to charity to improve people's lives. In 1912, Madam C. J. Walker and Charles Joseph Walker got a divorce. Also in 1912, Alelia adopted a girl named Mae Bryant. She had thick, beautiful hair. Mae was a model for Walker's Company. In 1913, Sarah took her products to Central American and the Caribbean Islands; Madam Walker had agents there. She spent a lot of time in Harlem, New York. The walkers lived in a 4-story townhouse on one hundred thirty-sixth Street when they moved there in nineteen sixteen. At the other Lelia College in New York, twenty women graduated from there every six weeks. Madam held a meeting of all her agents in

Philadelphia in nineteen seventeen. She gave prizes to the agents who did the most good in there communities. Madam Walker also worked for civil rights by organizing a non-violence pradade in nineteen thirty. Madam Walker had a mansion on the Hudson River named Villa Genaro; it had thirty rooms. Madam C. J. Walker died on May 25, 1919. of having high blood pressure. She was 51 years old. Madam C. J. Walker is important to me because even though she was african american she went ahead and pursued her dreams. Madam C. J. Walker should be written into history because she gives hope to a lot of people who are trying to make products. She helped people in her community by making their hair nice. She was the first african-american millionaire at a time when you did not see that.

Bibliography

Patricia and Fred Makissack, Madam C.J. Walker Self-made Millionaire, Barley Heights, NJ: Enslow Publishing, 1992

Taby, Marlene, Madame C.J. Walker Pioneer businesswoman Childrens Press, 1995



6-7 Grades: Third Place



Sandra Day O'Connor
by Lauren Ehrler

On March 26, 1930, in El Paso Texas, a baby girl was born that would someday change the nation and world's outlook on what a woman can accomplish concerning the legal system and in life. This baby would someday grow up to be Sandra Day O' Connor.

As a child and to this day, Sandra Day O' Connor's biggest influence is her grandmother, Mamie Scott Wilkey, whom she lived with as a young girl in El Paso, when her family lived in Arizona. O' Connor attended high school in El Paso and then went on to earn a law degree from Stanford in 1952. Sandra kicked off her legal career as a civilian lawyer for the U.S. Army in Western Germany while her husband was stationed there. She and her husband then moved to Phoenix, Arizona where O' Connor's career started to take flight. In Phoenix Sandra accomplished many things. 1965 through 1968 O' Connor was the assistant attorney general of Arizona. In 1969 she was then appointed to state senate. Sandra became the senate majority leader in 1973, and in the following year she was elected the judge of the Superior Court of Phoenix. She was then named to the Arizona court of appeals. Sandra had accomplished many things in her law career, but that was nothing compared to the nomination she received from President Ronald Reagan on July 7, 1981, to become a justice on the Supreme Court. Sandra accepted and on September 25th in the same year Sandra Day O' Connor was sworn in as the first Supreme Court Associate Justice the United States has ever known.

Sandra Day O' Connor inspires possibility and hope to me because I have dreams to someday pursue a career in law. Sandra could have stopped at being the assistant attorney general of Arizona, but she kept striving for success. Sandra Day O' Connor inspires me and people all around the world to keep working towards goals and to use their ability to succeed in whatever they try, not just in the profession of law. She has also opened many doors for women in the field of law. Women in the United States and in the world feel reassured and confident to try and succeed in something that they or any woman may or may not have tried before including the field of law. Also, because of Sandra Day O' Connor's actions, people feel more confident when a woman does a traditional man's job in the law field, in any other profession, or just in general life.

Sandra Day O' Connor's actions have affected people's outlooks on what they can do and what a woman can do not only in the field of law but in anything! Because of her many accomplishments in her career and the impact her accomplishments have made on me and people around the world, I think that Sandra Day O' Connor is very worthy of being written into history.

As Sandra Day O' Connor would say, "They power I exert on the court depends on the power of my arguments, not on my gender."

SOURCES

www.phoenix.about.com/cs/famous/a/oconnor.htm, January 14, 2004

Encyclopedia Americana, volume 20, copyright 1989



8-9 Grades: First Place



Rita Swan: Advocate for Children by Kathryn M. Skilton

Fifteen month-old Matthew Swan was screaming and convulsing in pain when a Christian Science practitioner told his parents that Matthew, "might be gritting his teeth because he was, 'planning some great achievement.'"¹ Raised as devout Christian Scientists, Rita and Doug Swan had turned to the church for healing when their son became ill. Rita believes that when Matthew failed to improve, the practitioner knew he was dying and told the Swans to take him to a doctor for a broken neck. According to church beliefs, medical care could be sought for broken bones. Instead, doctors determined that Matthew had bacterial spinal meningitis, a condition that was 95 percent curable with antibiotics, if treated promptly. It was just too late. Since Matthew's death, Rita Swan has made it her personal quest to ensure that children have the right to obtain medical care, regardless of their parents' religious beliefs.

"We left the Christian Science church right after our son died, and decided that we wanted to dedicate our lives to enhancing the rights of children to medical care,"² explains Rita. The Swans consulted medical doctors who explained to them how to live in a world where medical care and religious beliefs can co-exist. Rita and Doug founded the Children's Healthcare Is a Legal Duty (CHILD) organization in 1983. Based in Iowa, the organization is one of the nation's most respected child advocacy groups. With members in 44 states and 4 foreign countries, CHILD works to promote the view that parents should be required to provide medical care for their minor children. Groups like the Christian Science church vigorously oppose CHILD's efforts.

In 1998, Rita and pediatrician Dr. Seth Asser published the largest study of child fatalities in religious groups that discouraged medical care. They examined deaths of 172 children between 1975 and 1995, and found that 140 would have had a 90 percent likelihood of survival with medical care. Only three children would not have been helped by medical care.³

As CHILD's president, Rita lobbies, "to change state laws that give parents a legal defense if they withhold medical care from their children based on their religious beliefs."⁴ Rita has testified before state legislatures and a U.S. Senate staff briefing. CHILD has filed amicus briefs in courts including the U.S. Supreme Court. Her efforts have helped strengthen the rights of children to medical care, with passage of laws in eleven states. While many grieving parents might have avoided the subject, Rita embraces it and tries

to educate legislators and parents to save the lives of children. She believes that, “[I]f the laws plainly required parents to obtain medical care regardless of religious beliefs, many of the religious objector parents would be relieved to obey the law. It would relieve them of breaking moral laws of their church.”⁵

I became acquainted with Rita while I was working on a research project. Her wealth of knowledge, enthusiasm about the subject, and openness about her experiences inspired me. Rita Swan turned a heartbreaking tragedy in her life into an organization that works to protect children. Young people like me, and children for generations to come, owe Rita a great debt of gratitude for her tireless efforts to ensure that we have the right to medical care and treatment. As Rita puts it, “If we can save the life of even one child, it will have all been worth it.”⁶

¹Children’s Healthcare is a Legal Duty (CHILD), ed. Rita Swan, 23 Dec. 2002 <<http://childrenshealthcare.org.htm>>.

²“Rita Swan,” Leeza, November 1998.

³Turner, Scott J., Physician Studies Fate of Ill Children “Treated” by Faith Healing, Dec. 20, 2002 <http://www.brown.edu/Administration/George_Street_Journal/vol26>.

⁴Children’s Healthcare is a Legal Duty (CHILD), ed. Rita Swan, 23 Dec. 2002 <<http://childrenshealthcare.org.htm>>.

⁵Rita Swan, E-mail to the Author, May 9, 2003.

⁶Rita Swan, Personal Interview, January 17, 2004.

List of Works Consulted

Children’s Healthcare is a Legal Duty (CHILD), ed. Rita Swan. 23 Dec. 2002. <<http://childrenshealthcare.org.htm>>.

“Doug and Rita Swan.” Donahue. November 1979.

Larabee, Mark. Parents Turn Grief into a Mission: Change the Laws. 13 Feb. 2003. <<http://www.rickcross.com/reference/foc/foc6.htm>>.

“Rita Swan.” Leeza. November 1998.

“Rita Swan and Nathan Talbott.” People are Talking. KPIX San Francisco. 23 May 1984.

Swan, Rita. Letting Children Die for the Faith. 20 Dec. 2002. <http://www.secularhumanism.org/library/fi/swan_19_1.htm>.

Swan, Rita. Telephone Interview. 16 March 2003.

E-mail to the Author. 16 March 2003; E-mail to the Author. 16 March 2003; E-mail to the Author. 21 March 2003; E-mail to the Author. 21 March 2003; E-mail to the Author. 21 March 2003; E-mail to the Author. 8 May 2003; E-mail to the Author. 9 May 2003; Personal Interview. 17 January 2004.

Turner, Scott J. Physician Studies Fate of Ill Children “Treated” by Faith Healing. 20 Dec. 2002. <http://www.brown.edu/Administration/George_Street_Journal/vol26>.



8-9 Grades: Second Place



Women Inspiring Hope and Possibility: Tammy Wilson

by Jessie Stumme

“She was always enthusiastic about what she was doing” according to Reverend A1 Rusk in an article in the Des Moines Register.com about Tammy Wilson. Tammy was a volunteer firefighter but was known throughout the state for her devotion to helping others in emergency medical fields. She was an emergency medical services educator and was described by the assistant fire chief of her unit, Tony Collins, as “a leader; she was compassionate, likeable and lovable” (Smith 1). Unfortunately, Tammy Wilson died unexpectedly at the height of her EMS educator career. However, because she impacted the paramedic field in Iowa through her role as an educator as well as sharing her firsthand experiences of how to recognize and treat gastric-bypass surgery complications, she made me realize that one person can influence many people without being famous.

Tammy devoted her life work to improving emergency medical service in Iowa by teaching classes and promoting the field of emergency medicine by persuading others to become paramedics. As one of the first certified paramedics in the state, she became a leader by training others. In her role as an educator for twenty-four years, she was described as a “gifted instructor” who inspired others (“Trainer used pain” 5B). The Clive fire chief said that Tammy was a warm, friendly and dynamic person (Smith 1).

In addition to her role as an EMS educator, Tammy had undergone gastric-bypass surgery during the summer of 2003 and had experienced serious problems for months after having the stomach reduction operation. She experienced serious dehydration and used her recovery experiences to teach others how to recognize and treat those complications (“Trainer used pain” 1B). Because Tammy had made a strong contribution to emergency medicine services in Iowa, over three dozen ambulances, fire trucks, and emergency vehicles led her funeral procession (“Death not tied to surgery” 1B).

Tammy has made me realize that no matter what profession I choose to practice I want to have an influence on others whether or not I receive any recognition. Tammy impacted so many people without having publicity for it but always made a difference in others lives. I think that everyone, myself included, can learn from her life.

Being famous does not mean that a person has really changed the life of another person. But doing the job you are committed to doing, and doing it well, without regard to recognition or notoriety, does impact people’s lives. Tammy deserves recognition for her impact on emergency medicine services in Iowa because she trained so many people over twenty-four years and was so personally devoted to this effort. I was drawn to her story and impact on others because she was a pioneer in emergency medicine in Iowa at a time when women were just beginning to enter careers in medicine that were not related to nursing. In addition, she inspired hope and possibility for hundreds of her colleagues as well as those she serviced as a paramedic. Her influence stretched beyond those she taught because each of those paramedics likely saved many lives also. The Clive fire chief noted, “With all the units showing this kind of respect, it just reflects how many people through EMS Tammy touched” (Smith 1).

Works Cited

Smith, Christina. “Loss of paramedic leaves many stunned” at <http://www.dmregister.com/news/stories/c4788998/23021005.html>. 18 December 2003.

Leys, Tony. "Trainer used her own pain to teach lesson." Des Moines Register 13 December 2003, 1B and SB.

Leys, Tony. "Death likely not tied to surgery." Des Moines Register 18 December 2003, 1B.

Edith Rose Murphy Sackett Award on the Best Essay on a Woman Volunteer

Almo Gilmore Hawkins – Inspiration in Action

by Anna McNulty

Almo Hawkins is a wonderful woman who should be written back into history for her breathtaking work with the community and her devotion to Iowa. Her groundbreaking accomplishments for women and African - Americans truly inspire all of us. Almo is a tall, majestic woman with a glowing smile and a humble heart.

Almo came from a big Iowa family. She was the seventh of 10 children. Almo had no entertainment growing up like we do. That means that there was no television, no VCRs, computers, DVD players, or even CD players. Even so, Almo and her family always found something interesting to do. "There was always someone to play with," she said. One of her sisters used to write plays for the family, and they would act them out in the backyard.

The values of hard work, honesty, and giving to others were the beliefs her parents taught her. Almo's father always encouraged his children to help their elderly neighbors and volunteer to rake leaves, or shovel snow. Almo's father also taught his children about the importance of doing a good job, no matter what you are doing, and he taught them to always rely on God.

Almo went to public school in Des Moines. She says, "My favorite subjects were social studies and history because I had a teacher who really encouraged us to do our best." Almo attended college and studied history and literature.

Almo first broke a race barrier when she became the first African-American news anchorperson in the state of Iowa. In 1978, Almo joined the KCCI news team as a reporter and later became a news anchor for the station. In 1982, Almo joined Governor Branstad's staff as an Administrative Assistant. In 1990, Almo became the director of the Iowa Human Rights Commission. The Republican candidate for governor in 1998 was Jim Ross Lightfoot, and Almo was his running mate. This is the first time an African-American was a major party candidate in Iowa for a statewide race.

Almo's life is devoted to public service and helping others. Before Almo worked in human rights, she was the head of a substance abuse program. "That was a wonderful opportunity. When you work in an area like that, you get the chance to meet so many dedicated people." Almo exclaimed. "I think that I have really been blessed to work with people and make a difference," Almo said.

Almo has done many types of volunteer work over the years. She volunteered in hospitals, churches, and even in a prison at the Mitchellville Women's Correctional Facility. She was a board member of Bridges of Iowa, a substance abuse treatment home. "I think that volunteers really learn a lot. When you volunteer, I think that you receive a lot more than you give. It is a rewarding experience to be a volunteer," Almo, 66, said.

Almo believes that Iowa can do better in handicapped accessibility and violence against women and children. "There is so much Iowa can do for homeless people, also," Almo believes.

Almo inspires me in so many ways. She shows me that it is important to have goals and to work hard. Almo doesn't brag about herself, and always has a positive attitude. She shows her wonderful values through

her actions. She believes in children and says, “I think that adults need to sacrifice for young people and to be mentors and encouragers. It is easier to prevent problems...our children are our future. So, I think that we need to love them and give them guidance.” Almo Hawkins is my heroine!

References

Personal interview with Almo Hawkins, January 13, 2004.

African Americans in Iowa by Francis E. Hawthorne, 1992, Copyright Francis E. Hawthorne, p. 64.

Bridges of Iowa News, June 2000.

Outside In: African American History in Iowa 1838-2000, 2001, State Historical Society of Iowa, Pp. 356-357, 361, 381.



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



Marie Curie

by Ryan Hupp

I think Marie Curie is a great woman. She was the first woman to ever win a Noble Prize, and the first person to ever win two of them. She was a leader in science, and was very respected for her work. That's enough to make anyone great, but she's done much more than that!

Marie Curie (maiden name Marie Sktodowska) was born in Warsaw, at a time when Poland was under Russian domination. In high school, she won a medal for excellence where some of the exams were in Russian. No higher education was available to women in Poland at the time so she got a job as a governess. She sent some of her pay to her sister in Paris, so her sister could continue her medical studies.

Marie went to the Sorbonne to study mathematics and physics. She graduated at the top of her class. In 1895, she married Pierre Curie, a French chemist and a teacher at the Sorbonne. Marie and Pierre worked mainly on the study of radioactivity. Together, they discovered polonium (named after Poland) and radium. They also discovered that some other elements, such as thorium, also emit radiation.

Marie Curie had some hardships. She was poor most of her life, and had trouble finding funds for her work. She had a tough time finding laboratory space and equipment, too. As a woman, she was denied awards she was qualified for. In 1906, her husband was run down and killed by a horse-drawn wagon. Marie then took her husband's place as Professor of Physics at the Sorbonne, therefore becoming the first woman ever to teach there.

In 1914, the University of Paris (Sorbonne) even made the Institut du Curie so that she in her colleagues could have equipment and lab space. Also, in that year, World War I broke out. Marie helped set up x-ray equipment in ambulances, which she drove to the front lines. The International Red Cross even made her Head of Radiological Service. She then held courses for doctors and nurses about this new technique.

The high-energy radiation finally started to get to Marie. After all those years of exposure, she started to develop leukemia, a form of cancer. This disease cost Marie her life. Yet, if she hadn't have discovered radium, thousands more would have died of the same thing.

One reason I admire Marie Curie is her love of science and her determination to study it. She just would not give up. If she were alive today, she would still be putting all of her energies into science. Another reason I respect her is that the Curies never patented any of their discoveries; they wanted everyone to benefit freely. Also, Marie was a woman. Today, there are a great deal of women scientists out there, and Marie Curie paved the way for all of them.

» Best Essay on Women in Science and Engineering for 8-9 Grades: First Place «

Rachel Carson – Scientist and Author by Kelly Pierce

Rachel Carson was born in Springdale, Pennsylvania on May 27, 1907. She grew up in this small town on a river, and was taught by her mother to love nature and the world around her.

Carson became a graduate of the Pennsylvania College for Women in the year 1929. She was a student of the Woods Hole Marine Biological Laboratory. She also received a Masters degree in zoology in 1932 at Johns Hopkins University. She wrote radio scripts for the US Bureau of Fisheries during the Depression and worked for the Baltimore Sun writing articles on natural history.

Although she wrote articles and pamphlets for her main income, she began to write books when she had spare time. She is noted for “The Sea Around Us”, and “The Edge of the Sea”. Carson quit her job at the Bureau of Fisheries and decided to devote herself to writing for the public in 1952. Soon other books and articles were written including “Silent Spring”.

The book “Silent Spring” was a warning to the public. Carson had become concerned about the overuse of chemical pesticides, and challenged both agricultural scientists and the government. The book encouraged humans to respect the world around them, as Carson had been taught to do when she was a child.

When “Silent Spring” was published, the government and the chemical industries accused Carson of overreacting. The book was almost suppressed because of the controversy it would cause. CBS ran a television show about the book’s findings, which gained the book publicity. “Silent Spring” was on the bestseller list for months. Carson continued to remind the public of how important the environment is to all of us. She brought attention to the problem and helped millions of people gain environmental consciousness. She testified in front of Congress in 1963 and asked for new policies. These policies would protect humans and the environment. The chemical industry spent a long time trying to convince the public she was wrong.

Carson died April 14, 1964 in Silver Spring, Maryland. She died of a cancer that could have originated from exposure to the chemicals she was studying. Although she is no longer with us, Rachel Carson’s legacy lives on. Her influence has been great. One major honor Carson didn’t live to see was “Silent Spring” being named the most influential book of the past 50 years by a group of distinguished Americans in 1992.

I selected Rachel Carson because she combined science and literature. I am interested in writing, and I wanted to choose an author. Being a marine biologist and having an advanced degree in zoology also made her a role model for me.

Rachel Carson should be included in history for her devoted work for the environment, and for her ability as a writer. She was added to the Women’s Hall of Fame, and is famous for her books. Rachel Carson can be an inspiration to us all.

Works Cited

<http://www.rachelcarson.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=bio>

<http://www.ecotopia.org/ehof/carson/bio.html>

» **Best Essay on Women in Science and Engineering for 8-9 Grades: Second Place** «

Professor Mary Jaylene Berg

by Alex Hedrick

I believe that Mary Jaylene Berg should be written into the history books for many reasons. Mary Berg has made numerous accomplishments in the field of medical science. Her research on Folic Acid may help millions of epileptic women who would like to have normal pregnancies and children, someday. Mary has also paved the way for women in the field of pharmacy.

Mary Jaylene Berg has changed my life in many ways. By improving the role of women in pharmacy at The University of Iowa, she has affected my sister's life. My sister is a freshman at The University of Iowa and a pharmacy major. It may not have been possible for her to do this if Mary had not come along. Mary Berg was the first woman pharmacy professor at The University of Iowa. Go Hawkeye's!

Berg, herself, was born in Fargo in 1950 and later graduated from The University of North Dakota. Since then, she has become a professor at the college of pharmacy at The University of Iowa. She was the first female to be promoted to professor since the university was founded in 1885. Berg has also been a coeditor of four marvelous books concerning the role of women in pharmacy and Gender-Related health issues. Mary Berg has also written over fifty articles; most concerning women's health. She has been included among the best of the best in the following books: *Who's Who in America*, *Who's Who in American Women*, *The World Who's Who of Women*, *Who's Who in the Midwest*, *Who's Who in the World*, and *Who's Who in Science and Engineering*. Berg was also inducted into the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame.

Prof. Mary Berg would have also helped another family member of mine. I have another sister, who just recently stopped taking medicine for epilepsy. She had a mild form of epilepsy, when she had a seizure, she would just stare or if she were moving she would walk in the same direct until the seizure was over. Prof. Berg's research could have helped her start a family someday. So I must thank Mary Berg for potentially changing the lives of two members of my family, and in turn, changed my life.

These are just several of the reasons why I believe that Mary Jaylene Berg has changed history. She is a worthy candidate for the history books because, as Dr. Adrienne Bendich said in 1997, "Dr. Mary Berg is the acknowledged leader in fostering the important role of women in pharmacy."

Works Cited

<http://www.state.ia.us/government/dhr/sw/iafame-berg.html>. Iowa Women's Hall of Fame, N.A.

JUDGES

Lora Allison, General Public
Susan Andersen, Iowa Department of Education
Kim Cheeks, Iowa Commission on the Status of African-Americans
Janice Edmunds-Wells, Iowa Department of Public Health
Sheila Hanke, State Historical Society of Iowa
Carlos Jayne, General Public
Sarah Macht, State Historical Society of Iowa
David Meeks, Iowa Department of Human Services
Joan Moll, Iowa Department of Human Rights
Naomi Peuse, State Historical Society of Iowa
Michelle Rubin, General Public
Mary Beth Schroeder Fracek, Iowa Department of Education



Lucas State Office Building
Des Moines, IA 50319
Tel: 515/281-4461, 800/558-4427
Fax: 515/242-6119
dhr.icsw@iowa.gov
www.state.ia.us/dhr/sw

Sponsored by

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

Additional Prizes Sponsored by

Program for Women in Science and Engineering, Iowa State University
Women in Science and Engineering, University of Iowa