

2002
***Write Women Back
Into History***



**Essay Contest
Winners**

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

2002 *Write Women Back Into History* Essay Contest Winners



6-7 Grade Category

- 1st Place: **Brianna Routh**, Parkview Middle School, Ankeny
2nd Place: **Kathryn M. Skilton**, Nashua Elementary
3rd Place: **Lauren Davidson**, Roosevelt Middle School, Cedar Rapids

8-9 Grade Category

- 1st Place: **Robert Martin**, Central Academy, Des Moines
2nd Place: **Alyssa Hedrick**, Wilson Junior High School, Council Bluffs
3rd Place: **Chelsea Combs**, Central Academy, Des Moines

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

- 1st Place: **Kiersten Ruff**, Wilson Junior High School, Council Bluffs

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

- 1st Place: **Stephanie Schulze**, Goodrell Middle School, Des Moines
2nd Place: **Emily Nagle**, Jefferson Junior High School, Dubuque

Edith Rose Murphy Sackett Award for the Best Essay on a Woman Volunteer **Quinnetta Claytor**, Central Academy, Des Moines

Editor's Note: Essays were typed as submitted.

6-7 Grades: First Place

by Brianna Routh, Grade 7

Parkview Middle School, Ankeny

Sponsoring teachers: Nick Pauly & Amy Akers

Some may say she is visionary, some call her teacher. She may be considered powerful or humble, still others would call her a saint. I would call her pure stone. Not any ordinary stone though, she is a gem, a ruby or a diamond. Whatever she is, Thelma Volger should always be considered a treasure that our society cannot afford to forget.

Thelma has spent most of her life right here in Iowa. She grew up in the small town of Muscatine. After getting her undergraduate degree in music, she went on to get her Ph.D. in music at the University of Iowa. Thelma, now Dr. Volger, then went back to Muscatine with her husband. While raising her children, she worked in programming at her husband's local radio station. She was also a mother full of energy as a choir director for her church, founder and leader of the boys' choir, a Girl Scouts leader, a gardener, an artist with the love of pastels, and no doubt an extraordinary pianist. Her children say she was great at making paper dolls as well as creating stories to go along with them!

Thelma went to southern Australia for twenty years when she was in her fifties. During that time she worked with autistic people, both children and adults, helping them to speak for the first time in their lives. She also applied for and received government grants to develop some of her educational ideas for an academy of music.

Thelma has done many things for her community. First and foremost, in 1997 she founded the Ankeny Academy of Music. The Academy offers many different instrumental lessons such as flute, brass, and harp lessons. Dr. Volger is the piano and pre-piano instructor. She has such a large number of piano students that they are split into six levels. Along with piano, she teaches a theory class once a week for all of the different levels.

The Ankeny Academy of Music has other activities like a children's choir and free concerts performed by professional musicians. Dr. Volger also works with autistic children and their parents. She has taught several children, around the ages of three and four, how to speak by teaching them first to sing something, then speak it. In addition, Thelma is starting a program that gives at risk teens a chance to play different instruments. Thelma has likewise been recognized by the Iowa Composers Forum for her compositions on the piano. In my opinion, the Ankeny Academy of Music has turned into one of the best music programs in Iowa, and has some extremely delightful staff.

Dr. Thelma Volger has played a big role in my life these past few years. She has not only helped me with playing the piano, but she has been my role model. I admire how much she is like a stone in that she lets nothing get in her way and she always sticks to what she thinks is right. Plus, Thelma is like a gem because her beliefs help people to learn things that make them become better people. She has inspired me with her kindness and generosity toward the less fortunate. I hope to follow in her footsteps to make this world a better place for everyone. Thelma has shown me how music can enhance the world, making it more beautiful. She is treasured by all who have learned from her. Hopefully they can pass on her sparkle to the people whose lives that they touch, so Dr. Thelma Volger will be remembered by our society forever.



6-7 Grades: Second Place

by Kathryn M. Skilton, Grade 6

Nashua Elementary

Sponsoring teacher: Brian Ortman

Throughout history there have been stories of great women who have influenced law, medicine, and modern technology. As we record these great women's stories, we seem to forget about the women, who next to parents and teachers, have affected children lives the most. While not famous or honored, the baby-sitter has a great impact on the lives of children.

The term "baby-sitter," describes a person who takes care of children while their parents are busy. In the small community of Nashua, Iowa, one baby-sitter has become so much more, not only to the children she cares for, but also to their families. Her name is Alice Schilling.

Alice has been caring for children since an early age; the oldest of six she helped raise her younger siblings. After she married, she and her husband, Willie Schilling, raised six children of their own. Always busy, Alice held other jobs, including working at a local store and managing the country club, before the female doctor in town asked her to take over as housekeeper/nanny for her children. Later, she was asked to start a daycare business out of her home.

At age 67, the grandmother of thirteen and great-grandmother of one, Alice is helping raise another generation of children. Besides caring for them, she teaches the little ones their ABC's, colors, and numbers. She helps the older children with their homework. All learn manners. There is always something going on at Alice's house.

Baking, sewing, needleworking, woodworking, painting, creating plays, puppet shows, dances, movies and songs, as well as sports activities and animal care make up the curriculum at Alice's house. She encourages the children to read by keeping a library of her own and sending the older ones to the city library. Her yard is full of play equipment and great places to explore. During the summer, her garage is a craft center, workshop, and stage.

Alice says she treats all the children who come through her house as if they were her own. No matter how old or young they are, all the children at Alice's are treated like family. The older children help the younger ones. Although Alice says she does not know all the rules, she says the children do, and help keep each other in line. One of the biggest threats a parent can make is, "Do you want me to call Alice?"

Alice's house is in a perfect location, between the elementary and high schools in Nashua, for children come to her house before and after school. Older children who have "graduated" from Alice's show up for snacks and to use the telephone after sports practice or school activities Their friends are welcome, too.

Alice keeps track of her "kids" and seems to always know where they are and what they are doing. She is always there when someone needs her. She has been with us for births and deaths of family members, happy times and sad. When Alice's husband was diagnosed with cancer, she set an amazing example by showing strength and helping us deal with his illness and his death.

Alice is proud of her role as baby-sitter. When my older sister was in an automobile accident recently, she rushed to the scene to stay with my little sister and me, and then went to the emergency room with my mother. Asked if she was the grandmother, her reply was, "No, I'm the baby-sitter." That said it all. Although Alice may not be the most important person in history, she is important to me. I am honored to be one of Alice's "kids."



6-7 Grades: Third Place

by Lauren Davidson, Grade 6

Roosevelt Middle School, Cedar Rapids

Sponsoring teacher: Dianna Geers

Arabella Mansfield: First Woman Lawyer

Not enough people are aware of the extent of women's contributions to society. To recognize women's heritage and contributions, the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women (ICSW) established the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame in 1975. Each year the ICSW and the Governor welcome 4 women into the Hall of Fame, paying tribute to them and recognizing them as role models for others.

In 1980, the ICSW inducted 4 new women, Arabella Mansfield, Rosa Cunningham, Mary Grege and Catherine Williams. I would like to tell you more about one of these women, Belle Aurelia Babb.

Belle was born on a farm at Sperry Station in Des Moines County (outskirts of Burlington) Iowa on May 23, 1846. She was the second child of Miles and Mary Moyer Babb. Her older brother, Washington Irving Babb was born Oct. 2, 1842.

Belle's father left Iowa in 1850, hoping to find gold in California. Her father was superintendent of the Bay State Mining Company. In 1852, when Belle was 6 years old, her father was killed in a mining accident (cave-in). In 1860, Belle's mother moved her two children to Mount Pleasant, Iowa, because she wanted them to have a good education.

In 1866 Belle graduated from Iowa Wesleyan University (she was now known as Arabella), and became a teacher at Simpson College in Indianola, Iowa. There she taught Political Science, English and History, until her marriage in 1868 to John Mansfield, a professor of Natural History. In 1869 she began teaching at Iowa Wesleyan where she taught English and History. At this same time, Belle began to study law with her husband, John. Both Belle and John applied to get into the Iowa bar in 1869. She was "admitted to the Iowa Bar under a statute providing that 'any white male person' with the requisite qualifications should be licensed to practice, by virtue of a statute providing that words importing the masculine gender only, may be extended to females," and the Court held that "the affirmative declaration that male persons may be admitted is not an implied denial to the right of females." After passing her bar exams (June 9, 1869) in Henry County, Arabella Mansfield was certified as the first female lawyer in the United States.

Even though she was admitted to the bar she decided not to practice law. Arabella continued to teach at Iowa Wesleyan University, and earned her Master's Degree in 1870 and an LL.B., Bachelor of Laws degree in 1872. Women's rights pioneers Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony praised Mansfield when she passed the bar.

During this same period, she helped organize the Iowa Woman's Suffrage Society. Arabella worked endlessly to gain voting rights for women. Belle headed the Iowa Woman's Suffrage Convention in 1870.

In 1879 she and her husband moved to Greencastle, Indiana and joined the faculty of Indiana Asbury University (later DePauw University). Her husband suffered a nervous breakdown in 1884 and after a 2-year period of caring for him, she placed him in an asylum.

In 1886, Arabella returned to teaching at DePauw. She taught History, Aesthetics, and Music History. In 1893, Arabella became the Dean of the School of Art and in 1894 she became Dean of the School of Music. She held both positions until her death. Arabella Mansfield died in Aurora, Illinois on August 2, 1911, at the age of 65.

In conclusion, I am certain hardship, perseverance, faith and the passion for education contributed to a lifetime of success for Arabella Mansfield.

Resources:

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6. *The Twentieth Century Biographical Dictionary of Notable Americans*, Volume 3 - Daughters of America; or Women of the Century, Chapter XXI: Women Lawyers



8-9 Grades: First Place

by Robert Martin, Grade 8

Central Academy, Des Moines

Sponsoring teacher: Janet Williams

Roxanne Conlin

Right now, I am doing something that the subject of this paper refuses to do. Typing. Roxanne Conlin is an Iowa woman who has achieved national recognition for her work fighting prejudice and discrimination. Maybe less intentionally, she has also had a tremendous impact on my life.

When Roxanne Conlin completed law school in 1966, she was one of only 1500 female law students nationwide, and one of three women in her graduating class. Women were not yet being taken seriously as attorneys. Roxanne knew the fate of many female attorneys was assignment to work as legal secretaries. Determined to suffer no such fate, Roxanne said, "I knew they couldn't do that to me if I couldn't type." Despite her lack of typing abilities, she was mistaken for a secretary. At her first court appearance, the judge refused to let her represent her client. Roxanne recalls, "He was absolutely convinced I could not be a lawyer and I was in fact a secretary. For the first several years that I practiced law, I carried my admission certificate to the Iowa Bar with me at all times.

Weathering these early setbacks, Roxanne carved a path of shocking accomplishments through the legal profession for other young women to follow. She was appointed U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Iowa during the Carter administration, elected the first female president of the Association of Trial Lawyers of America, selected one of only two women members to Inner Circle of Advocates, and awarded more than 15 verdicts of \$1 million or more in discrimination cases.

Roxanne, however, is "most proud that [her] children turned out to be very nice people." Roxanne has been married 37 years, and has four children, and four grandchildren whom she adores. Roxanne's domestic life mirrored her professional life. "I have never cleaned, cooked, washed or ironed and I do not know how to operate my dishwasher." She refused tasks assumed to be women's work so that she could focus

on what she knew was more important, like being present for her children.

My life intersected Roxanne's when she hired my mother as a law clerk. I often accompanied my mother to Roxanne's office. I was ten years old at the time. I remember the small forests of paper traveling in and out of her office as she prepared for major trials. Roxanne's infinite affection for children extended beyond her immediate family. No matter how busy she was, when I arrived, she would stop what she was doing to greet me.

What I did not understand then and appreciate now is what she was accomplishing. The nights I fell asleep on the floor in Roxanne's office, my mother and many others were helping her prepare for enormous trials. One such trial resulted in an award of eighty million dollars, one of the largest jury verdicts in a discrimination case in U.S. history.

When I asked Roxanne why she chose to fight for others' rights instead of going into more profitable field of law, she responded, "I became a lawyer and endured the difficulties of law school and the practice only because I wanted to fight for the rights of individual human beings." And when I asked Roxanne what advice she would offer young women about their careers, she said, "Accept no limits."

I think Roxanne's advice is appropriate for all young people. Roxanne Conlin should be written into history because she is proof that nothing can stop us for she broke each barrier that stood before her and every accomplishment has been in the noble pursuit of equality for all.

Resources

Roxanne Barton Conlin: Overcoming bias to join elite litigators,
<http://www.nl.com/staging/special/1217women-conlin.shtml>

Bouncers' Trial Echoes Throughout Community <http://www.dmregister.com/news/stories/c4788998/12794157.html>

Roxanne Conlin and Associates P.C. website <http://www.roxanneconlinlaw.com>

and an interview with Roxanne Barton Conlin (1/8/02)



8-9 Grades: Second Place

by Alyssa Hedrick, Grade 8

Wilson Junior High School, Council Bluffs

Sponsoring teacher: Sue Griswold

Writing Women Back Into History

History is very important. We can learn from history, and learn about the people who made history. Well, I know that at school we learn about a lot of famous people, such as George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson. But, we never really study about famous women, or women who should be famous. These women should be recognized and honored by being put in their rightful place: the history books.

I have learned about one such woman. Her name is Elizabeth Cochrane, but she came to be known as Nellie Bly. Nellie was a fiery young girl, and she was always somewhat of a rebel. So what makes her so

special? Nellie Bly was the first woman reporter.

When Elizabeth was 18, she wrote a letter to a local newspaper, criticizing an editorial. She wrote with such spirit and energy that they gave her a job on that same paper. Most people thought that hiring a woman was just an elaborate joke, and they didn't really pay her much attention. But Elizabeth refused to be ignored.

Elizabeth had an original style of reporting that made terrific stories. She did "stunt reporting". She got her best stories this way. I'll tell you about one of the biggest stories she's ever done. She wrote this while writing for the New York World. There was an insane asylum called Blackwell Island, and it was rumored that the patients there were mistreated. Elizabeth passed herself off as insane, fooling not only the police, but a board of doctors as well. She made it to the island. Elizabeth befriended the other patients, and became just another patient. The nurses were horrible. They gave them ice cold baths, nearly drowning them at times. They each got one thin, raggedy blanket, and cold unsanitary food. The doctors were incompetent and inexperienced. It didn't look good.

Elizabeth's boss busted her out after two weeks, and her passionate words shocked the country and Blackwell Island now had competent and caring nurses and doctors. She signed this story "Nellie Bly", and that is what she was called from then on.

Nellie did lots of stories like this. She went into slums, helped the poor, and busted cruel factory workers. To those she wrote about, Nellie Bly was a hero, and she helped a countless number of people. But she wasn't done with her stunts. Nellie Bly made a trip around the world, trying to beat Phileas Foggs' record of eighty days. She went unescorted, and nobody thought she could do it. But she did, circling the globe in 72 days, 6 hours, and 10 minutes!

Nellie Bly was a wonder and a hero to all who she wrote about. Every day letters came pouring into her, begging her to do a story about their life. She was very popular. But what I view as her biggest success is that she had entered a man's world and beaten them at their own game!

I believe that Nellie Bly truly belongs in the history books. For so long we've heard about that man, and that man, but we've scarcely heard about that woman, and I think it's important that we do. Nellie Bly has opened up a whole new field of opportunity for women all across America, and to just forget her would be an insult to her memory and to the whole newspaper industry. She has really been an inspiration to me to push the limits, and work my hardest. She accomplished so much, and this is an honor that she deserves.

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8-9 Grades: Third Place

by Chelsea Combs, Grade 8

Central Academy, Des Moines

Sponsoring teacher: Russell Vanderhoef

Millie Webb

Millie Webb is an extremely inspiring woman. She has been through so much pain in her life, but she makes the best out of it by helping others. In 1971, Millie's life was changed forever as a result of a drunk driving crash. It is amazing that Millie has suffered so much and yet is so willing to help others and make a difference in the world. She now works diligently to help those who have experienced the pain caused by drunk drivers. Millie Webb should be written into history for her courage and accomplishments in the MADD organization.

On August 14, 1971, a drunk driver rear-ended Millie Webb, her husband, their daughter, and their nephew. Their car caught on fire and flipped over, throwing Millie and the children into the road. She suffered burns on more than seventy-three percent of her body. Her four-year-old daughter, Lori, had also suffered severe burns and died two weeks after the crash. Millie's nineteen-month-old nephew, Mitchell, had more burns and died within six hours of the crash. Her husband, Roy, has pins in his hands from trying to extinguish the flames on his family's bodies. At the time of the crash, Millie was seven months pregnant.¹ Her baby had to be delivered two months prematurely because of the crash. Millie's new baby daughter was legally blind as a result of the crash.² Although Millie has suffered terrible pain from drunk driving, she has dedicated her life to educating others and fighting for change.

In 1981 Millie became involved in the Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) organization.³ She formed the first MADD chapter in Tennessee in 1982. In 1991 she was elected to the MADD National Board of Directors and served two three-year terms.⁴ She has served as a member of the board's public policy and as vice president of victim issues. In 2000 Millie was elected National President of MADD.⁵ She hopes that she can save lives by raising awareness about drunk driving. She also hopes to lower the blood alcohol content laws to .08 in all fifty states. Millie wants to prevent underage drinking by having more community outreach and educational programs for youth. She should be written into history for her dedication and progress in the MADD organization.

Millie Webb has made a huge impact on my life. In 1994 my aunt, Tammy Sullivan, tragically died in a drunk driving crash. My family experienced the same pain that Millie and her family experienced. Since my aunt's death, my family has been involved with the MADD organization. Millie is definitely a role model for me. I would like to have the same determination and spirituality that Millie does. I admire her for her willingness to help others. She has a wonderful attitude toward what she does and life in general. If everyone were a little bit more like Millie, this world would be a much better place.

Millie Webb is an amazing individual. She has made a huge difference in the lives of many people by educating others about the effects of drinking and driving. She has suffered so much pain, but has taken that suffering to help other people. She remains optimistic, even through all that she has experienced. Millie has made many accomplishments in the MADD organization and continues to work hard to lower the number of drunk drivers on the roads. Millie should be written into history for her dedication and accomplishments in the MADD organization.

¹ Valerie Kalfrin, "New MADD Leader's Trial by Fire From Exploding Car to National Podium," Internet, www.APBnews.com

² Kalfrin 1.

³ Tresa Hardt, "Profile: Millie Webb," DRIVEN magazine, Spring 2000

⁴ Hardt 1.

⁵ Hardt 1.



Best Essays on Women in Science and Engineering for 6-7th Grades: First Place

by Kiersten Ruff, Grade 7

Wilson Junior High School, Council Bluffs

Sponsoring teacher: Sue Griswold

Women in History

Everybody knows Elizabeth Blackwell for being the first women doctor, but not all people know how hard it was to make her dream come true.

Elizabeth was born near Bristol, England in 1821. When a fire destroyed her father's business, eleven-year-old Elizabeth and her family moved to New York City. After spending only three years there, they moved to New Jersey, and then to Cincinnati a few years after that. While in Cincinnati, her father died and Elizabeth, her mother, and her sisters started teaching to earn money for the family.

Elizabeth could have been a teacher, but she soon got bored and decided to go into medicine. Before she applied to a medical school she studied privately. When she applied to Medical Schools such as Harvard and Yale, she had no luck until Geneva College accepted her.

Even though Elizabeth was in school, she still had a long way to go. That first year was tough, and her professors or classmates did not respect her. In the summer of 1848, she finally was given the chance to practice medicine.

When Elizabeth graduated in 1849, she left for England to finish her studies. While there, she had completed her midwifery course and got ophthalmia, an eye infection. This made her blind in one eye, and ended her plans to be a surgeon.

Elizabeth returned to New York in 1851, but she could not continue her medicine because no institution would take her. While waiting, she adopted an orphan named Katharine Barry or "Kitty". She also wrote a paper about the importance of hygiene.

By doing this, a Quaker organization gave her support by referring patients to her. Soon Elizabeth was in business with her sister Emily and Dr. Marie Zakrzewska. In 1858, she went back to England and in 1859 she became the first woman to have her name on the Medical Register of the United Kingdom.

Later that year she returned to New York. When the Civil War began, her plans for opening women's medical school was delayed, but in 1868 the school was established. Then Elizabeth moved to London to practice medicine there.

While there she helped with the National Health Society. She then became a professor at the London School of Medicine for Women. In 1910 Elizabeth Blackwell died.

Elizabeth Blackwell taught me that if you fight for your dreams, they can come true. She also taught me never to give up despite the odds. Elizabeth Blackwell showed women that they can be anything they want to be. Elizabeth Blackwell was brave and inspiring person.

Bibliography

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Best Essays on Women in Science and Engineering for 8-9th Grades: First Place

by **Stephanie Schultze, Grade 8**
Goodrell Middle School, Des Moines
Sponsoring teacher: Suzanne Case-Card

The Lady of DNA

Rosalind Franklin was one of the first people to see and photograph DNA. DNA is the genetic coding within living cells that directs the cells. Rosalind Franklin's pictures helped James Watson and Francis Crick discover the double helix shape of DNA. She did not get credit for the help she gave them, even when Watson and Crick won the Nobel Prize for their discovery. Rosalind Franklin is one woman who should be written into history.

Rosalind Franklin was born on July 25, 1920, in London. She attended Cambridge University and graduated in 1941. She moved to France and then back to England and began work at King's College. There she photographed DNA using X-ray crystallography, which she had learned in France. Her pictures of DNA were so good that Watson and Crick used her pictures to help them discover the structure of DNA. After this, she left King's College and went to Birbeck College. She began to study virus structure. Unfortunately, not long after, she was diagnosed with ovarian cancer. She died on April 16, 1958, at the age of thirty-seven. (Fiona Foster)

Watson and Crick would probably not have discovered the structure of DNA without Rosalind Franklin's help. Wilkins, a co-worker of Franklin, gave her pictures to Watson and Crick. "They got most of their information from the documents that Wilkins showed them. Those documents helped them pull together information they had missed, but Rosalind hadn't" (Fiona Foster). This goes even further to show that Rosalind Franklin should be written into history.

Rosalind Franklin is interesting to me because she photographed DNA which is what makes our lives possible. She also studied virus structure, so that all of us know what a virus looks like. It makes sense that it is easier to find a cure for something if you know what it looks like.

It is important for women to be recognized for things they have accomplished, even if the recognition comes after they die. Rosalind Franklin has gotten some recognition, most of it after her death. Toward the end of her life, she was recognized by being asked to build models of viruses for the 1957 Brussels World Fair. (Fiona Foster)

I came across Rosalind Franklin in an article in *U.S. News and World Report*. I saw it as an example of a woman who should be more well known in history. In history, men have taken credit for nearly all discoveries made by mankind. Women such as Rosalind Franklin have aided greatly in these discoveries but have not received nearly as much credit. Rosalind Franklin deserves to be written into history because she photographed DNA, which helped Watson and Crick to discover DNA structure. All women deserve to be part of history, but Rosalind Franklin stands out in the crowd.

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Best Essays on Women in Science and Engineering for 8-9th Grades: Second Place

by Emily Nagle, Grade 8

Jefferson Junior High School, Dubuque

Sponsoring teacher: William Krocheski

Emilie Du Chatelet

Emilie Du Chatelet was born on December 17, 1706 in Paris, France. She grew up at a time when society disapproved of educated women. Her father recognizing her talent, began teaching her Italian, English, Greek, and German. Also she was given a basic education from tutors. Spite of her ability to learn languages she had a infinite love for math and science.

Emilie was an average looking girl who was tall with large, poetic eyes. At the age of 19, three years after she was introduced to court life, she married 34 year old Marquis Du Chatelet. The two were married with very little common interests. Together Emilie and Marquis had three children; even with the marriage and children, Emilie refused to give up her fascination with math. Since it was common for people to have affairs, Marquis, had many affairs. After two affairs, Emilie conquered the heart of Voltaire, who was one of the most brilliant scholars of his time. They spent most of their time at Cirey-Sur-Blaise, to get away from the tireless court life in Paris. Emilie attached herself to the works of Leibniz; she explained a part of his system in a book entitled *Institutions de physique*.

The time she spent at Cirey-Sur-Blaise was the most productive and intense years of her life. While she was there, it was said by one of their servants, that they both stayed in front of their desks and worked very hard, they had not like to be disturbed. When Emilie did retired for a break she didn't seem to be the same person. In replace of being serious there was an air of vivacity toward society.

Soon after, she abandoned her work on Leibniz, and started working on Newton's discoveries. Emilie

was extremely successful in translating all of Newton's work into French. Before publishing her book *Institutions de physique* in 1740 she added to it an "Algebraical Commentary" in which very few general readers understood. Although she didn't get all the credit that she deserved. After the book was published her old tutor, Koenig, told everyone that what she had written was merely a rehash of what he taught her. Although the knowledgeable scientists knew her capabilities, she didn't believe she received the support she deserved. At this time Emilie felt being a women really worked against her.

Emilie then fell in love with Marquis de Saint-Lambert, a minor poet and courtier. Even with the new love, Voltaire, still remained her colleague. After concluding her work, in 1749, with Clairaut, an old friend with whom she had been studying, she realized that her book on Newton awaited completion. She was determined to finish it, so she took to a life that consisted of only working. She woke up early in the morning and stayed up late actively working on her book. All this effort practically terminated her social life. Early in September 1749, Emilie gave birth to her daughter. She was healthy for several days, but suddenly on September 10, Emily died, followed just days after by her child. It was recorded that Voltaire was distraught by her death.

Gabrielle-Emilie Le Tonnelier de Breteuil, Marquise du Chatelet died at the age of 43. Soon after her death her book on Newton was published. Though her life was short, it was well lived. Emilie was a truly peerless women, whose achievements were immense. Emilie Du Chatelet, is a role model to everyone. She showed that if you have enough of a passion for something, you can achieve anything, no matter what the circumstance.



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

by Quinnetta Claytor, Grade 8

Central Academy, Des Moines

Sponsoring teacher: Jerry Leventhal

Evelyn K. Scott Davis

It was a bright, summer Sunday with the radiant sun beaming through the fluffy, white clouds. With slow but steadfast strides, Mrs. Davis steadily approached the Maple Street Baptist Church. This church is where she refocused and reorganized her thoughts. She was respected and looked upon as a revolutionary woman. This weekly routine allowed her to face the trials and tribulations of the uncivil, but urbane society. Evelyn K. Scott Davis was an opinionated woman with a voice that could change many unfortunate aspects of life. Being able to help needy people and transform and modify their lifestyles, she contributed extraordinary feats to her community.

Mrs. Davis was born in Kansas City, Missouri on April 20, 1921. She spent her childhood in the coal-mining town of Hiteman, Iowa. Throughout her lifetime, she was instilled with positive and optimistic morals. The last sixty years of her life were spent in Des Moines, where she changed the lives of many, in unforgettable ways; and she became nationally known as a wise educator and exponential leader for the

poor. She died at the age of 80.

Mrs. Davis wanted to make a difference in her community, and she continually strove to make an impact in everyone's life. In Des Moines, neighborhoods were filled with poverty-stricken parents. Mothers and fathers barely made ends meet with small salaries and endless troubles. Mrs. Davis had a vision that could help these indigent and oppressed people. She helped found the Tiny Tots Family Outreach Center in 1965. This non-profit daycare center allowed thousands of parents to pursue employment and educational opportunities. Later, in response to the lack of access to medical services to destitute families and their children, Mrs. Davis initiated the Evelyn K. Davis Free Medical Clinic. While participating in numerous boards and projects, Davis's leadership continued to impact the city of Des Moines and beyond. Both the Inner Urban Health Board and United Way Volunteer Board benefited from her knowledge. She was also affiliated with community groups, such as Mid-City Vision Coalition and Sisters On Target, an encouragement group for African American women involved in politics. Because of her courage and persistence, Mrs. Davis was rewarded in many ways. In 1996, the National Black Child Development Institute, Inc., honored Mrs. Davis with the highest volunteer recognition. She was also honored with a Des Moines Human Rights Award. In the early 90's, Evelyn Davis initiated profitable community projects, such as the Forest Avenue Library, Evelyn K. Davis Park, and later, the new Grubb YMCA.

Her wonderful spirit, personality, and accomplishments have not only inspired the community, but they also have inspired me personally. Knowing that we can change the unfortunate circumstances in which people find themselves, setting goals of high standard, Mrs. Davis exhibited the generous contributions of a faithful, God fearing, world changing woman. Her life achievements make me feel like the sky is the limit. I will always acknowledge her contributions to the world. She was always rejuvenated with a disposition that all people should have. Always willing to help and go the extra mile, Mrs. Davis was warm-hearted everyday of her life. So, as I have everyday of my life, I will remember her spirit and character and always go that extra mile.

Mrs. Davis was a historical figure that had accomplished soaring goals. Driven and determined to succeed, her generosity and warm heartedness were highlights of her nature. Opening the doors to many needy families, Mrs. Davis was a life changing person. Some would still be in the terrible life of poverty if not for her courage and perseverance. She will surely be remembered long after her death, by me and many others.

