



*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 11, 2010**

**8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.**

**Iowa State Capitol**

**8:30 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.

**8:45 a.m.**

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

**9:30 a.m.**

Awards ceremony with Lt. Governor Patty Judge, Kennedy Conference Room, ground floor (G-9).

**11 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.**

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

# Awards Ceremony

**Thursday, March 11, 2010**

**9:30 a.m.**

**Kennedy Conference Room**

## **Welcome**

by Lori SchraderBachar, Iowa Commission on the Status of Women and  
Cheryl Mullenbach, Iowa Department of Education Social Studies Consultant

## **Proclamation Reading by Lt. Governor Patty Judge**

March as Women's History Month Proclamation

## **Awards Presentation**

by Lori SchraderBachar

Wendy Kleve, Program for Women in Science and Engineering at Iowa State University

Chris Brus, Women in Science and Engineering at the University of Iowa

(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

## **Brayton Presentation**

by Former Lt. Governor JoAnn Zimmerman, State Historical Society of Iowa Trustee

## **Closing**

by Lori SchraderBachar

# 2010 Winners

## **6-7 Grade Category Essays**

First Place: Gaby Baker  
Teacher: Sarah Seligman  
Central Elementary, Alleman

Second Place: Olivia Dawson  
Teacher: Sandra Drapeau  
George Washington Middle School, Dubuque

Third Place: Tess Van Den Hurk-Moran  
Teacher: Erin Siefken  
Emmetsburg Middle School, Emmetsburg

## **8-9 Grade Category Essays**

First Place: Bethany Lehman  
Teacher: Suzan Turner  
Nashua-Plainfield High School, Nashua

Second Place: Joy Gnade  
Teacher: Kristina Doll  
Midland Community School, Wyoming

Third Place: Michaela Hoffelmeyer  
Teacher: Jill Deitz  
Winterset High School, Winterset

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

First Place: Emily Bonnstetter  
Teacher: Erin Siefken  
Emmetsburg Middle School, Emmetsburg

Second Place: Alexander Erlandson  
Teacher: Katie Brown  
Prairie Creek Intermediate School, Cedar Rapids

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

First Place: Kierstyn Feld  
Teacher: Katharine Mulfinger  
Pleasant Valley Junior High School, LeClaire

# 6-7 Grades: First Place

## Helen Brown Henderson

by Gaby Baker

*"Helen Henderson, almost single-handedly, created, cajoled, communicated, shepherded, nurtured, and developed services for the mentally ill/retarded in Iowa - literally, bringing the services from the dark ages to their present status as among the most enviable in the nation." - Michael V. Reagan, 1992*

My older brother, Ian Baker, was born in September 1996 with Infantile Spasms and Cerebral Palsy. Ian is now 13 years old and is profoundly mentally and physically disabled. I chose Helen Brown Henderson for this essay because she has directly impacted my brother's life and the life of my family.

Helen Brown Henderson was a mother of a special needs child born in the late 1940s in Iowa. At that time, she found that there were no real services or programs for children with special needs. Helen spent many years finding people that were in positions to help support her child and other families that had children like her own. In 1950, she was a driving force in developing 95 chapters of the ARC (Association for Retarded Children) throughout Iowa.

The Iowa ARC's Mission Statement is to ensure that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities receive the services, supports and opportunities necessary to fully realize their right to live, work and enjoy life in the community without discrimination. The Iowa ARC allows my family to get help with services and programs for my brother. The Iowa ARC helped to sponsor the first three Special Olympics. It is these organizations and their work with people with special needs that have allowed my brother to be a part of fun things like the Special Olympics state bowling competition this past Fall. Ian came home with a second place medal.

Helen also spent a lot of time lobbying the Iowa State Legislature for improvements in educational opportunities for children with disabilities. Her efforts paid off with the state's development of the Area Education Agencies (AEA). Established in 1975, the AEA provide additional services to schools including K-12 education support for children with special needs. Ian attends the Ruby Van Meter School in Des Moines and the local AEA helps provide his teachers with specialized training, materials, and specialized equipment to allow him to communicate and learn. His teacher has just ordered a Blink Eye Switch that may allow him to better communicate in school and at home. This is all through the help of our local AEA chapter. The Iowa AEA system is one of the best in the nation.

Helen Henderson was also the executive director of the Polk County Health Services between 1978-1983. There she continued to work for people with disabilities. These services are very important to my family because they allow Ian to continue to live at home with us. The Ill & Handicapped Waiver, provided through Polk County Health Services, have allowed Ian to get a lift system over his bed. This system helps get him in and out of bed. The waiver recently helped my parents get Ian a mobility van so that we are better able to get around as a family. Ian is also able to attend camp every other weekend and do all of the fun things that kids can do at camp. This also gives my family some time to rest between taking care of my brother.

Helen Brown Henderson is an important woman in history. She has changed the lives of many people with special needs and their families here in Iowa. Because of her love and determination for her special needs child she has helped to provide programs and services to improve the lives of people with disabilities. She has made it possible for them to reach their full potential through educational programming and state services.

Helen is important to me because she has made life easier for my brother and my family. Her work has allowed Ian to continue to live at home with us instead of in a state facility. We are able to get around as a family to do some of the things that others get to do like going out to church and dinner. My parents are able to find the services and equipment that they need to take care of him. But the most important thing for me is that we are a real family together.

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## *6-7 Grades: Second Place*

### **The Rosa Parks of Iowa**

**by Olivia Dawson**

Edna Griffin is a courageous and brave woman. I believe that she should be written back into history because she fights for what she believes in. She did not allow anyone to tell her that she could not be served in a public establishment. She stood up for what she believed in and worked for equal rights.

Edna was born in 1909 in Kentucky. She was raised in New Hampshire and graduated from Fisk University. Then she married Stanley Griffin. In 1947 they moved to Des Moines, Iowa. A year later she went to the Katz Drug Store sat at the lunch counter and ordered an ice cream soda and was refused service by Maurice Katz. Maurice told Edna that the store was “not equipped to serve colored people.”

Edna picketed outside the store and sued Maurice Katz. The Iowa Supreme Court backed her claim that Mr. Katz violated the 1884 Iowa statute making it a crime to discriminate in public accommodations. An all-white jury awarded Ms. Griffin \$1. Later on that year Ms. Griffin also organized the Des Moines chapter of the Congress on Racial Equality. (C.O.R.E.) She is a role model to all people especially women.

I chose Edna because I think discrimination is one of the most important issues in history of the past, present, and future. I am a young African-American woman and I think it is very inspirational that Edna stood up for herself, her rights as a black woman, and her freedom. If we had more people in our world like Edna Griffin, it would truly be a place where many people would not feel like the victims of discrimination and racism. I hope anyone who has heard of Edna Griffin can learn from her story that you should always stand up for what you believe in no matter how afraid you may be. My mom has always told me that if you don't stand for something, you'll fall for anything. Edna Griffin did not allow anyone to make her feel like less of a person or take away her right to freedom. She should be written back into history as the Rosa Parks of Iowa for her tremendous courage and bravery.

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The University of Iowa Libraries. <http://sdnc.lib.uiowa.edu/iwa/finginguids/html/GriffinEdna.html>. November 2007. Iowa City, Iowa.

# 6-7 Grades: Third Place

## Victoria Woodhull: The First by Tess Van Den Hurk-Moran

Victoria Woodhull was the first ever woman to run for President of the United States of America. She was an equal rights activist, and she was one of the first female stock brokers on Wall Street, along with her sister. Though she achieved many firsts for women, she was not written into history as much as people like Susan B. Anthony, Carrie Chapman Catt, or others who campaigned for woman's rights. She thought and advocated for things that many women of her time might think crazy. Some people do not know that a woman ran for president so long ago. I think the first woman to run for president is an important part of our history.

Victoria was born on September 23, 1838. She was the fifth of seven children born to Reuben and Roxanna Claflin. She did not receive much education from anyone but instead taught herself almost everything she knew. She and her sister Tennessee had the "second sight". Their father took them many places and called them psychic healers. Her childhood was less than normal.

Victoria's childhood ended at the age of fifteen when she married Dr. Canning Woodhull. They had two children named Byron and Zulu Maude. After eleven years of marriage she divorced Canning because he was an alcoholic. This was very uncommon for women at that time.

Two years later she married Colonel James Blood. When she and Col. Blood moved to New York City, she opened a salon. There she met and befriended Stephen Andrews and Massachusetts Congressman Benjamin Butler. Around the same time she became friends with a man named Cornelius Vanderbilt, who helped Victoria and Tennessee become the first ever female stock brokers with their company Woodhull, Claflin & Co., Bankers and Brockers. They were called "The Queens of Finance" and "The Bewitching Brokers". This accomplishment was "a new phase of the women's rights question" said Susan B. Anthony.

Three months after becoming the first female stock broker, Victoria announced that she would run as the presidential candidate for the Equal Rights Party. Fredric Douglass, a freed slave, was her Vice President, and the first black man to run for that position, as well.

Victoria and Tennessee launched a campaign sheet for the campaign called Woodhull and Claflin's Weekly that soon turned into a sixteen page newspaper. The news paper mainly talked about women's issues. Soon they earned the new nick-name "Queens of the Quill."

Victoria believed that women had the right to vote, according to the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments, so she tried to cast her vote. She could not have her vote count, though, because she was a woman.

Even with her and her sister's stock company, newspaper, fundraisers, and wealthy friends, Victoria found it hard to raise funds for her campaign. Issues Victoria addressed in her campaign included woman's rights, a graduated income tax, eight hour workdays, profit sharing, and social welfare programs. She thought a "woman's ability to earn money is better protection against the tyranny and brutality of men than her ability to vote."

At one point, her campaign was going so badly that her landlords evicted her because of rumors that she was a witch, and her daughter had to go to school under an alias so she could be safe. Victoria was arrested for telling the truth about a famous man, and no one wanted to believe her. Therefore, Victoria was in jail for libel on the night of the election. She lost the election, but she was later found innocent of the crime.

Victoria and Colonel Blood divorced in 1876 because he did not have a place in her life, for she and her mother became Catholic. She had the same principles as before but had a different way of living. Victoria, Tennessee and their mother moved to England in 1877.

Victoria married, for the third time, to a wealthy English banker named John Biddulph Martin in 1882. Some sources say that she took a trip to America and was nominated to be the candidate for President for the Humanitarian Party running against President Harrison and Governor Cleveland in 1892 and that, once again,

she lost. John Martin later died, and on June 9, 1927 so did Victoria, in Worcestershire, England. She was 88 at the time of her death.

I think that Victoria Woodhull is an important figure in American history simply for being the first woman to run for President. She ran so long ago, yet we still have not had a female President. Victoria Woodhull should be remembered as the first woman who ran for President just like the first man was. She is an important part of woman's history but everyone should know about her. She was a thinker, a century ahead of her time in her ideas for equal rights for all people. She should not be ignored just because she is a woman but she often is. I think she was an inspiring person who gets little of the credit that she deserves.

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## *8-9 Grades: First Place*

### **Write Women Back Into History: Carrie Chapman Catt by Bethany Lehman**

I decided to focus on one of my true "Founding Mothers," Carrie Chapman Catt. She grew up in small-town Iowa, like me. She was an individual that had to overcome established norms of that time period. Carrie Chapman Catt's actions truly benefited women in our country. It was through her actions in the women's suffrage movement that I am able to enjoy the benefits of her legacy.

As a young girl, Carrie realized that on voting day, only her father went in to vote. She questioned why her mother was not included in this privilege. Her parents laughed and explained to her that "voting is much too important of a civic duty to leave to women." Because of what she saw as an injustice, Carrie became involved in the women's suffrage movement. Women's suffrage created a division in society. Catt and her peers were commonly regarded as radical home-wreckers by most men and even some women. However, most educated women and men saw women's suffrage as a necessary means to having a government representative of all people, not just the male segment of society. Throughout Carrie's travels around the world the one thing she found common among all women was that they wanted what was best for their children, freedom of choice for their daughters, and better opportunities for themselves.

Carrie is an excellent example of a memorable woman in history. Carrie Chapman Catt's work on behalf of women's suffrage spanned four decades and was multi-faceted. She brought attention to the cause by leading marches, speaking to Congress, addressing crowds, writing editorials and letters, and by leading three different women's suffrage organizations. She made a speech in front of Congress as the President of the National American Women Suffrage Association. These actions enabled women in the United States and internationally to gain the right to vote, a key step in political equality. She wanted only what was best for future generations, although she had no children. She focused on what was best for women worldwide, which is what makes her such a great person for the topic, "Women in History."

Carrie Chapman Catt's work culminated in the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920, giving American women the right to vote. While the media and government provided recognition for this achievement, it was only the beginning of greater opportunities for women worldwide. Her work expanded overseas and the effect of the landmark achievement grew. Today, women have been elected to nearly every segment of government providing a voice for the gender once forgotten.

Carrie Chapman Catt was inducted into the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame in 1975. Even decades after her death, the two issues that consumed Mrs. Catt's life remain unresolved in much of the world today, equal suffrage and peace. Carrie Chapman Catt, to this day, is a great role model for young women everywhere for what she did--what she stood for. Through her speeches, organizing powers, and sheer resolve, Carrie Chapman Catt helped to bring passage of the 19th amendment which forever altered female roles in society.

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###### Interview

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I spoke with Rhoda McCartney during my visit to the Carrie Chapman Catt Girlhood Home and Museum. She gave me insight on my project and helped me with my research. She told me specifically about Carrie's childhood and adolescence. I learned about her personality and what was important to her. After this interview, I felt I knew more about her and what she was like.

###### Museums

Carrie Chapman Catt Girlhood Home and Museum. Charles City, Iowa. 20 February 2009.

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# 8-9 Grades: Second Place

## Jesse Field Shambaugh

by Joy Gnade

Jesse Field Shambaugh, or some may know her as the, “mother of 4-H,” in my eyes one of the greatest women of all time.

Field was born on the 21st of June 1881, in Shenandoah, Iowa. While she was a young woman, about nineteen years old, she received her education at both Shenandoah University and Tabor College. Field received her Bachelor’s degree in 1903. While she was attending college she began teaching at local one room schoolhouses. She also taught at Antigo, Wisconsin and Helena, Montana before returning as Page County’s Superintendent of Schools in 1906. This was when Shambaugh started instituting new agricultural education techniques, like round tables for updating and sharing materials and methods. She also organized the Boys Corn Club and a Girls Home Club. Using these she taught rural youth modern farming and homemaking techniques. She also started different summer farm camps to extend the work of the clubs. In 1909 Field designed a three leaf clover representing three H’s Head, Heart, and Hands. These were distributed in 1910 and after. It was not until 1911 she added the fourth and final leaf, representing Health. The symbol was eventually copyrighted nationally. In 1917, when Field returned to Clarinda, the capital of Page County, she came as Mrs. Shambaugh. She married Ira Shambaugh on the 9th of June 1917. Ira Shambaugh was the son of James Shambaugh; he was a partner of his father’s in his milling business. Ira Shambaugh died on June 22nd, 1951. Jessie Shambaugh followed him in 1971 on the 15th of January at the age of 89. Funeral services were held at the Westminster United Presbyterian Church in Clarinda.

Jesse Field Shambaugh was a very important woman. She helped to inspire an international organization. You can find 4-H clubs in every county of every state in the United States, including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico as well as eighty other countries around the world today. We are six million strong today and over sixty million are the proud alumni of past generations of 4-Hers. 4-H has been a part of my family for generations, my parents, aunts, uncles; even my grandparents all were members of one club or another. Many went on to be leaders today; my mother is the leader of my club. I can honestly say that I am a dedicated member of the group Shambaugh helped to erect, I participate in three clubs, I hold two offices, and I regularly volunteer my time during the year to benefit my community. I have made many friends from around the county, including some of my very best friends. I consider myself lucky to be able to participate in 4-H. I have learned so much, I learned how to quilt and make candles and how to be a better leader. Through 4-H I have seen and done more than I would have even had the chance to do on my own, showing cattle is the big one for me. I love to show cows, I prefer breeding heifers and cow calves. Showing cattle had helped me to learn patience and about the proper care of animals. I have learned to always approach them slowly and with caution. I could spook them and they might hurt me. I know that animals need clean water and fresh food every day, which I happily provide. I love my calves, I name each one of them and I never get angry at them. Jesse Field Shambaugh was also a teacher, and because of this she is all the more special to me. Many people in my family have been teachers. My mother is a first grade teacher, my aunts teach preschool and secondary reading, my uncle is a retired math teacher, my grandma taught Kindergarten and my great-grandma taught fifth and sixth grade. I am hoping to be a high school teacher, preferably history, some form of science, or English. Teachers hold the future of America in their hands, like Shambaugh, they are able to teach us the very latest in technology. It just happens at that time to be agricultural revolutions instead of, say, science. She helped to shape the world using the new knowledge to bring young people together to a common learning place. That is the purpose of 4-H today, to help teach leadership, responsibility, and new agricultural techniques. Shambaugh literally helped to bring the world a little closer together, the 4-H organization is international, and kids from all over the world have joined.

In the future I hope that my children will participate in 4-H. I think it is a wonderful experience; it

helps produce independence and creativity in people. I have grown so much since that day in fourth grade when I went to my first 4-H meeting. I am more confident and more willing to help with communal projects to accomplish common goals. I am also able to help lead groups to achieve an objective. I think this is one of the most fulfilling feelings I personally have ever felt. These are just a few reasons why I think everyone should join 4-H, if not to benefit themselves, then to benefit their community.

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## *8-9 Grades: Third Place*

### **Mary Swander** by **Michaela Hoffelmeyer**

I wonder if Mary Swander was ever like me and dreamed of a future far from Iowa, or did she always know that Iowa would be her home and the place she would live out her dreams? She might not have known, but in my opinion Ms. Swander has had an amazing life! I first heard about Mary Swander from another Iowa State teacher. I read her biography and was then inspired to write about her.

While many people focus on one field in their life, such as, math, science, or journalism, Mary Swander has dipped her toes into an array of exciting professions, including: massage therapy, photography, and fine arts; however, she has made quite a splash in the literary field! Swander, a fourth generation Iowan, was born in Carroll, Iowa, in 1950. She attended Georgetown University, later returning to Iowa to finish an English degree at the University of Iowa, earning her Master of Fine Arts. She started her teaching career at Iowa State University in 1986 and continues teaching there today.

Swander has written eleven books, most of which include her personal experiences and life in Iowa. By writing about Iowa, her books have exposed many people to the landscape, history, and culture of this state. Not only in written word has her work informed the public about Iowa, but also through her plays and other performance pieces has she been able to impact audiences. Other contributions she has made include: co-founding a national group that explores the connection of agriculture and arts, called Agarts; editing three books; being a regular commentator on WOI radio in Ames and National Public Radio's Sunday Weekend Edition; co-authoring the musical Dear Iowa; performing her own works; giving solo readings across the United States; and touring her play, Farmscape. I feel all these things and many more have helped the state and country immensely. Swander still seems to hunger for more expansion and has plans to bring poetry to all ninety-nine Iowa counties. She is doing this by creating a website called "The Iowa Literary Community," for anyone with an Iowa connection to post their poetry and other writings. Included on this website will be a translation corner for people around the world to share poetry. I believe this could greatly benefit all writers and readers throughout the world. With all of Swander's hard work, people virtually everywhere are about to enjoy great literature and much more. She continues to help students achieve a great education, and she also continues inspiring people just like me.

Swander's work benefits me even though I'm just a freshman in high school. Her play Farmscape deals with the changing rural environments. I live on a small family farm. It is only a few miles from the town of Winterset, and as the town keeps expanding, more and more farmland is being lost. In fact, my grandfather owns the land surrounding our house and recently sold ten acres of what used to be used for growing corn and beans to a person who built a veterinary clinic. I feel that Farmscape could raise awareness of other scenarios similar to this, where farm ground is being lost. I also hope to join her co-founded group Agarts. I think this

would be a good opportunity because it deals with agriculture and art. In school I participate in both FFA and Art Club, so it would directly relate to my education. With the new website that Swander is developing, I will be able to post some of my own works of poetry and be inspired by others' writings as well.

Swander's work has been truly amazing. She has been recognized for her hard work and been the recipient of numerous awards. One of the most honorable was the Poet Laureate of Iowa. Governor Chet Culver named Swander Poet Laureate on February 18, 2009, and she will serve in this position for the next two years. After appointing Swander, the Governor Culver said, "Mary Swander has had a long and distinguished career as an author and a teacher of poetry and other forms of literature. In her new role as Poet Laureate, she will be a strong and passionate advocate for Iowa's unique culture and the inspiration that poetry can offer." Other awards she has won include Iowa Author's Award, Whiting Award, National Endowment for the Arts grant for the Literary Arts, two Ingram Merrill Awards, the Carl Sandburg Literary Award, and the National Discovery Award.

It is apparent from her awards and accomplishments that she should be written into Iowa's history, but beyond her professional life, it is clear that Mary Swander embodies what we in Iowa think of as a true Iowan. Not only does this woman compose beautiful words about the state of Iowa, she also raises sheep and goats and spends her time farming organically. Overall, I think Mary Swander has made a major difference to Iowa and continues to do so. For this reason, I believe Mary Swander deserves a place in Iowa history!

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# 6-7 STEM: First Place

## Rachel Carson: Scientist by Emily Bonnstetter

Rachel Carson changed the study of science forever. Rachel grew up in a small farmhouse outside of Springdale, Pennsylvania. Her love of science, ever since she was a child, helped her reveal scientific discoveries that made millions of people rethink life on earth. Rachel stood up for the life of all living things in the world. Carson connected to the earth around her. She is a major role model for me, and for many generations to come.

Rachel Louise Carson was born in Springdale, Pennsylvania on March 27th, 1907. In 1925, she entered Chatham Collage, and graduated in 1929. She went on to receive her Master of Arts in Zoology from John Hopkins University in 1932 with a scholarship in hand. Under the hard times of the Great Depression, Rachel was hired to write and create radio scripts. Her outstanding articles on natural history ended up giving Carson a wide open door to the scientific world. Over time, Carson became Editor-In-Chief for the Bureau of Fisheries due to her biologist contributions. The many books and articles she published made Rachel Carson well known throughout her life.

She published her well known book, *Silent Spring* in 1962. The book is about chemicals and their harsh impact on the environment. She changed the whole concept on the Earth and made countless people rethink taking care of the environment. Carson encouraged President Kennedy to call for testing of the harsh chemicals, which in return, could save the planet for years to come. After *Silent Spring* was published, she was criticized for being called an alarmist by the chemical field. Carson died April 14th, 1964. Carson accomplished bountiful things in her lifetime.

Rachel Carson cared about the environment and everything around it. Her love of Earth made countless contributions to the world today. She did something not many women did in history. Being a biologist and writer was something incredible for women to be doing at that time. She made everything around her feel like it was.....natural. Everything was meant to be. Rachel, to me, is like a super hero. Many others, including all living creatures in the world, probably have her to thank as well. I think Rachel Carson should be more thoroughly written into history for her bravery and great love of the outdoors. Part of her bravery was taking the chemical case to President Kennedy. Not many people these days know how the whole topic of "Global Warming" and "Taking Care of the Environment" came to be. She stirred up the conversations of what today might come to save generations. Even though Carson is not the most famous scientist in the world, or even in the United States, what she achieved in her lifetime was something incredible, and worth all of her time and effort.

Rachel Carson was born and raised a farm girl. Her strong passion for science and everything surrounding her gave her the drive and will to do anything she wanted. Living in a rural community, Carson and I share a personal connection. When you live in a small community such as Carson and I, you feel closer to nature and it helps you connect and share a passion to life near and far. Instead of looking around to life next-door, she looked beyond that to attain everything she wanted, and never gave up. For one person, she sure did accomplish some things that some people would only dream about doing. Rachel Carson will always be cherished in our hearts, and for the sake of science as well. Role models, such as Rachel Carson, should be written more into history and life today, and as well in the future.

Source List:

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# 6-7 STEM: *Second Place*

## **The Hardships and Accomplishments of Shirley Ann Jackson** **by Alexander Erlandson**

To us, bees are something we usually don't want to run into in the summer. But for a young Shirley Ann Jackson, they were her favorite things to see on a scorching summer day. Shirley loved a warm summer day, but she didn't like it because of friends, pools, sports, or sunshine. She liked it because it was the best time to catch bees. It may sound strange to you and me, but to her it was a normal routine in the summer. For her, science started with the small but interesting world of bees.

Shirley Ann Jackson was born August 5, 1946, in Washington D.C. Mrs. Jackson is a physicist who in 1979 married fellow physicist Morris A. Washington. Two years, later in 1981, they had their first and only son, Alan. Although she was accepted to many different colleges throughout her life she decided to stay at the Massachusetts Institutes of Technology (MIT) to inspire more African American students to become physicists.

Mrs. Jackson may have accomplished a lot in her life but it wasn't easy. Through out her time at MIT her classmates chose not to accept her because she was African American and segregation was a problem. Some of her teachers were also reluctant to be in the same room as her, but she didn't let that stop her. She excelled in all of her classes and her teachers started to open up to her.

Of course all of Mrs. Jackson's hard work and talent did not go unrewarded. She was the first African American woman to receive a Ph.D. from MIT. Another accomplishment of hers is that she was named a professor of physics at Rutgers University in 1991.

What amazed me about Shirley Ann Jackson was that she wasn't afraid to chase her dreams even though people were rude to her and disliked her because she was African American. Shirley Ann Jackson should be better known because she motivated African American people everywhere to follow their dreams. She was an inspiration because, like Martin Luther King Jr. she taught people that it doesn't matter what your skin color is the only thing that matters is the strength of your mind, the love in your heart, and the purity of your soul.

Not many people think science and physics are that important, but just think about the world of the future and what we could become. Shirley Ann Jackson is one of the very few people who believes we can accomplish great things and make the world a better place.

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# 8-9 STEM: First Place

## The Mother of Iowa's Prairies by Kierstyn Feld

Every spring, the harsh smell of manure blankets Iowa, expelling the fresh scents of dew and grass from our noses. It is hard to believe this overworked land was once a prairie. There used to be buffalo; now there are cows, chickens, and a few horses. Where the fox roamed freely, there is a neglected dog by the side of a highway, feeding on the carcass of a deer hit by a car. However, even though the land has seen much change, there are still some places that exist as "museums" to the land. These "museums" would not have been possible without the work of one crucially important woman: Ada Hayden.

Growing up on the outskirts of Ames, Ada was the daughter to farmers David and Christina Hayden. Most children have swing-sets to play with outside, but Ada had a small piece of prairie that she would spend hours upon hours playing in. She most likely had no idea what plants she was playing around with at such a young age, but, regardless, admired them for their beauty. During high school, she met Dr. Louis Pammel. He encouraged Ada to pursue her dreams of becoming a botanist, and they became very close friends. This was a pretty important friendship in Ada's life, because at this point in time women were discouraged to do "the work of men" (science and math). She graduated high school in 1904 with several honors classes.

Ada was like a flower in bloom during her college and middle age years, with her petals blooming out to reveal just how brilliant she was inside. She attained her Master of Science degree in 1910, and was the first woman to ever get a Doctor of Philosophy degree from Iowa State University in 1918. A year later, she became an assistant professor in botany, and added over 30,000 good samples of different plants to the Iowa State Herbarium. Ada loved her work, and became the Curator of the Herbarium in 1947 through 1950.

Besides working for Iowa State, Ada was an avid conservationist, as well as a photographer of plants. She felt that the land needed to be saved from becoming towns or farm fields, and served as the acting chair to the Conservation Commission of the Iowa Academy of Science. In fact, due to her and some others, Iowa purchased its very first prairie in 1945! After that, she continued trying to conserve as much native land as she could. Her total came up to 26 individual prairies saved. Right alongside working physically, Ada wrote 29 papers concerning Iowa's plants and ecology, stressing the need for conservation.

Ada Hayden is heard around Iowa, but many people have no idea who she is. An example is the Iowa State Herbarium. Students at Iowa State may be familiar with the name of the herbarium, but few actually know who Ada Hayden was. Or the large peak in Ames; Ada Hayden Heritage Park. Do they really know what an important person she was?

Ada was a wonderful botanist, opening pathways for other women looking to study the same area. Or maybe a completely different one! She proved to women everywhere that they can be smart and attain PhD's. Ada was one of the pioneers in science that made it easier for me to study what I want, without limited choices. She collected more samples than anyone else ever to add to the Iowa State Herbarium. And on top of that, helped save 26 prairies. Ada is someone we should write into history because she made use of her knowledge, applying what she learned in a way that continues to benefit Iowans today. We can enjoy hiking in the prairies she helped save and observe the plant samples she collected for the herbarium.

Ada also provided an unbiased academic environment for young women looking for further knowledge in botany. Being an assistant professor, she had much persuasion over how the classroom was conducted, and no doubt saved several women from what would have been a stressful year in a class where they may have been discouraged.

Years from now no one knows what will happen. More land might be saved, or maybe it will be lost. This is why Ada's work in conserving Iowa's prairies was important. We need to save much, much more of the prairie. Iowa has so little of it left – only 0.1 percent of the once 28.6 million acres. This little portion would have been even less if it was not for Ada's heroic efforts to conserve the Heartland prairies of the USA. More

people should be like Ada, that is, doing what they believe is right. It was no easy matter to convince the state to purchase prairies with its own money. Ada was most likely discouraged a lot, but was still able to fulfill what she set out to do. I find that very amazing – if a lot of people told me my idea was bad, then I would probably listen to them.

As important as she was, Ada is not remembered by very many Iowans today. Sure, we take pride in having beautiful prairies, but we do not take pride in the woman who made it possible for them to exist. In fact, this generation probably has no idea who she was! All they know is the prairies are there and that is good enough for them. At least a few of us will remember her – Ada Hayden, the mother of Iowa's prairies.

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# Resolution

In both the Iowa Senate and Iowa House of Representatives, a resolution designating March 2010 as Iowa's Women's History Month has been introduced. We may witness its passage when in the House and Senate.

The Senate Resolution is sponsored by Senators Mary Jo Wilhelm and Kim Reynolds. In the House, it is sponsored by Representatives Linda Miller and Cindy Winckler. These legislators serve *ex officio* on the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women.

The text in both Chambers is almost the same; below is the Senate Resolution.

## Senate Resolution

A Resolution designating March 2010 as Iowa Women's History Month.

WHEREAS, Iowa women of every race, class, and ethnic background have made historic contributions to the growth and strength of our state and nation in countless recorded and unrecorded ways, including through the struggle for women's rights; and

WHEREAS, Iowa women have played and continue to play a critical economic, cultural, and social role by constituting a significant portion of the labor force working inside and outside the home despite being underpaid; and

WHEREAS, Iowa women were particularly important in the establishment of early charitable, philanthropic, and cultural institutions in our state and nation; and

WHEREAS, Iowa women and men ratified the amendment to the Iowa Constitution, declaring that "All men and women are, by nature, free and equal, and have certain inalienable rights"; and

WHEREAS, Iowa women have been leaders in the abolitionist movement, the emancipation movement, the industrial labor movement, the civil rights movement, the peace movement, and the women's suffrage movement, which created a more fair and just society for all people; and

WHEREAS, despite these contributions, and those of women throughout the world, the role of women has been consistently overlooked and undervalued in the literature, teaching, and study of history;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE, That the Senate designates the month of March 2010 as Iowa Women's History Month and invites the citizens of Iowa to continue to uncover, recognize, and honor the roles women have played throughout history.

# *Judges*

Lora Allison Bird, General Public

Kim Cheeks, Iowa Commission on the Status of African Americans

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

Michael Kates, Fort Des Moines Museum & Education Center

Kristin Clark Nolan, General Public

# *Sponsors*

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