



*28<sup>th</sup> Annual Write Women  
Back Into History Essay Contest  
Celebration Day*

**March 13, 2012  
Iowa State Capitol, Des Moines**

# *Celebration Day*

**Thursday, March 13, 2012**

**8 a.m. – 2 p.m.**

**Iowa State Capitol**

**8:00 a.m.**

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

**8:30 a.m.**

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

**9:00 a.m.**

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

**11:15 a.m.**

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

**12 noon**

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

**1 p.m.**

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

# Awards Ceremony

**Thursday, March 13, 2012**

**1 p.m.**

**G-9 Conference Room**

## **Welcome**

Phyllis Peters, Iowa Commission on the Status of Women

Gail Sullivan, Iowa Department of Education

## **Proclamation Reading by Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds**

March as Women's History Month Proclamation

## **Awards Presentation**

Phyllis Peters

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

Chris Peterson Brus, Women in Science & 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

4) Women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math 8-9 Grade Category

## **Brayton Presentation**

Chris Kramer, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs

## **Closing**

Phyllis Peters

# 2012 Winners

## **Best General Essays for 6 - 7 Grades**

- First Place: Elizabeth Barrett  
Teacher: Cindy Lancial  
Harding Middle School, Cedar Rapids
- Second Place: Ally Richards  
Teacher: Melanie Smith  
Urbandale Middle School, Urbandale
- Third Place: Susanne Kerr  
Teacher: Sarah Seligman  
North Polk Elementary, Alleman

## **Best General Essays for 8-9 Grades**

- First Place: Molly Doruska  
Teacher: Amy Akers  
Northview Middle School, Ankeny
- Second Place: Gabriella Baker  
Teacher: Susan Vernon  
North Polk Middle School, Alleman
- Third Place: Mary Korch  
Teacher: Ashley Weaver  
Jefferson High School, Cedar Rapids

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

- First Place: Sreeja Vepa  
Teacher: Melanie Smith  
Urbandale Middle School, Urbandale

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

- First Place: Emily Robinson  
Teacher: Mary John  
Creston Middle School, Creston
- Second Place: Kirsten Siebenga  
Teacher: Ann Timm  
Harding Middle School, Cedar Rapids

# 6-7 General: First Place

## **Nellie Bly: Someone Worth Writing About** by Elizabeth Barrett

Have you ever noticed how things in the world almost always end up in print? When the Titanic sunk, thousands of newspapers reported on it the very day the event occurred, without even waiting to hear of survivors. When the Twin Towers were hit by terrorist attacks, it was the main story of every newspaper in America. We all know who wrote these stories. Reporters, that much is obvious. But do we ever consider who the reporters are? What they had to overcome to become who they are? What was their story? Though I may not have every reporter's story, I do have one's story. And her name is Elizabeth Cochran.

Elizabeth Cochran was born on May 5, 1864 in Cochran's Mills, Pennsylvania. The similarity between her surname and birthplace is no coincidence. The town was named after Elizabeth's father, Michael Cochran. Her father was a wealthy landowner, judge, and businessman. He had ten children by his first wife. After she died, he married again and had five more children. The third child of his second wife was named Elizabeth Jane Cochran. She was the "rebellious child" of the family.

Elizabeth Cochran was the first woman reporter. When Elizabeth was 18 she wrote a letter to the Pittsburgh Dispatch's Quiet Observer (Q.O.) Erasmus Wilson. The editorial he had written commented on the monstrosity that was the "working woman". Elizabeth herself knew many women who had to work to survive in industrial Pittsburgh. The newspaper thought her letter so fiery and spirited they hired her right then and there, giving her the pen-name Nellie Bly. Many people felt hiring a woman was a joke. Elizabeth refused to pay any attention to the negative thoughts surrounding her reporting.

In her first story, Nellie Bly wrote of the difficulties that working class girls overcame each day. In her second, she called for changing the state's divorce laws. She then did a series on the factory girls of Pittsburgh. Despite the fact that she loved to investigate, the editors of the newspaper put Nellie on the women's page and assigned her stories about flower shows and fashion. She eventually found a temporary way around her predicament by convincing the editors to send her to Mexico, where she became a foreign correspondent. She observed the people of Mexico, and then sent back stories about their everyday lives. When she returned, however, she was again confined to writing for the women's page.

That was the last straw. She wrote a note to Wilson. It said simply, "Goodbye, Q.O. I'm off to New York. Look out for me. Bly." It was six months before Nellie found a job in New York. She talked her way into the office of John Cockerill, managing editor of Joseph Pulitzer's "New York World." She was finally free to write as an investigative journalist.

Nellie Bly wrote in a style her jealous peers called "stunt reporting". She went undercover to get the "real" scoop on all of her stories. For her first story with the New York World, she pretended to be crazy, in order to be locked up in an insane asylum called Blackwell Island. Cockerill had heard stories about the ways patients there were mistreated and wanted the inside scoop. She made friends and became just another patient in the sea of "crazies". She experienced ice baths where she was nearly drowned, incompetent nurses and doctors, unsanitary meals (including rancid butter!), and one thin, ragged blanket to sleep under. When her boss busted her out ten days later, she wrote of her excruciating experience. Needless to say, conditions at Blackwell Island improved.

After her asylum experience, Nellie Bly went on to expose shady lobbyists, the ways women prisoners were mistreated by police, the inadequate medical care given to the poor, and much more. She even took a trip around the world, trying to beat Phileas Foggs' record of eighty days. She went unescorted, and, though no one thought she could do it, she did, circling the globe in 72 days, six hours, and ten minutes!

The young reporter always sided with the poor and needy. When she went to Chicago in 1894 to cover the Pullman Railroad strike, she was the only reporter who wrote of the strike from the striker's perspective.

Her personality was always noticeable in her stories, and she always poured her reactions, feelings and observations into the varied subjects she covered.

When Nellie was 30, she married a 70 year-old industrialist named Robert Seaman. When Seaman died ten years later, and his business went bankrupt, she went back to reporting. She used her forum to find good homes for abandoned children. She was employed by the “New York Journal” when she died from pneumonia in 1922, at the age of 57.

Nellie Bly is my role model not simply because she was the first woman reporter, nor simply because she did what was believed to be the impossible. She is my role model because while doing both of these things, while in the process of writing a story of an undercover experience, she helped. She helped those being mistreated in insane asylums. She helped those without love and care in places needing them most. She helped those who just simply needed to be heard. She helped everyone.

Nellie Bly was a hero to all who knew her. She entered a man’s world, and was expected to fail. Unexpectedly, rather than fail, she beat them at their own game! She opened up the news world to everyday women, and is a role-model to women everywhere. I myself can find more than simply my first name in common with this amazing woman. She improved people’s lives when she was living, and her legacy lives on with all the women, reporters and non-reporters alike, in today’s world. She earned her place in history books and her legacy will live on forever as women today continue to pursue the unthinkable, unimaginable, and impossible.

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## *6-7 General: Second Place*

### **Carrie Chapman Catt, a biography by Ally Richards**

Are you a woman? If so, do you vote in presidential and other elections? If you were not a woman I would kindly ask you to pretend you were one, just for the time being. Oh, and that you live one hundred fifty-three years in the past. You can’t vote! Now, obviously we can’t time travel but let me take you back to 1859 in Ripon, Wisconsin.

It is a pleasant day here in Wisconsin and a very exciting day for Lucius and Maria Lane. Their daughter will be born today, the beginning of her amazing journey as a woman and leader. Of course her parents didn’t know it at the time, but their daughter would grow up to be one of the most important women in Iowa, and the rest of the world. Now let’s embark on the especially important quest of Carrie Clinton Lane...

At the age of seven, Carrie and her family moved from their home in Wisconsin to the beautiful state of Iowa, in rural Charles City, where she graduated from high school in 1877. Just three years later, Lane graduated from Iowa Agricultural College and Model Farms, where she had to make money herself for her education by washing dishes and working in the library. Although she was the only woman in her graduating class, she still managed to come out on top. After her college years, Lane returned to her hometown of Charles City to work as a law clerk and, nearby in Mason City, a schoolteacher and principal. When 1883 rolled around, Lane was one of the first women in the nation to be appointed superintendent of schools.

In 1885 Lane became the wife of Leo Chapman, editor and publisher of the Mason City Republican. However, tragically, the following year Mr. Chapman passed away of typhoid fever in San Francisco, where he had hoped to discover fresh employment. Mrs. Chapman arrived in San Francisco a few days later and made the choice to stay there for the time being. One job she took there was at a newspaper company. 1887 came around, and the young widow decided to return to her hometown of Charles City and proudly became a member to the Iowa Woman Suffrage Association, to fight for women's rights to vote, and where she worked as a professional writer and lecturer. In a couple short years, she took up a job as the group's secretary.

Carrie Lane Chapman married George Catt in 1890. George Catt was a fellow alumnus from the Iowa Agricultural College and encouraged her participation in women's suffrage. This was certainly not the only exciting event in Catt's life however. At this time Catt had begun to travel all across the United States. She spoke at the Washington D.C. suffrage convention in 1890. In just a few months, Catt's work had awarded her the reputation of a leading suffragist. In the year 1892, Susan B. Anthony proposed that Catt went to congress about the offered amendment. At the turn of the century, Catt achieved Susan B. Anthony as President of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA). Now, most of her time was donated to speaking, and receiving political background.

Two years later, Catt played a role in piecing together the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, so that women everywhere could have the right to vote. However, family came first when she resigned her presidency of the NAWSA to be of aid to her deeply sickened husband. The next few years would prove grief beyond imagination. In 1905 her beloved husband passed away, followed by Susan B. Anthony in 1906, her younger brother, William in 1907, and her mother, Maria, also in 1907. Despite her agony, Catt spent almost the entire next decade being actively involved with the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, serving as president.

When Catt returned to the United States in 1915, she reclaimed her position as president of the NAWSA, which had taken a downfall under the leadership of Anna Howard Shaw. In 1916, at the NAWSA convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey, Catt proposed what she called the "winning plan" to work both on state and federal levels, and to negotiate for partial suffrage among the states refraining from difference. Under Catt's leadership, the NAWSA won the support of the U.S. house and senate, along with the state support of the amendment's approval. By the year 1918, President Woodrow was at last changed to the cause.

The U.S. gained independence in 1776. One hundred forty-four years later, women in the United States were granted the right to vote when the nineteenth amendment was officially part of the U.S. constitution.

Although Catt stepped down from her position as president of the NAWSA, she continued to play a role in suffrage for women. She founded the League of Women Voter. Later on, she became more involved with other causes such as child labor and world peace. In 1925 Catt founded the National Committee on the Cause and Cure of War, where she served as its chair until the year 1932, when she served as honorary chair.

Carrie Chapman Catt passed away in 1947 of heart failure. However, her work and dreams will never be forgotten, as long as we keep reminding ourselves that we wouldn't be the world we are today without this worldwide respected woman.

To me, this gave me the inspiration to do great things. Women are humans too! As long as we can agree and work together, we can all live peacefully in the world that everyone wants and needs! I hope this provided you with a little more knowledge on the long and stressful journey of women's suffrage. This entire message is about never giving up on something that needs to be done!

Thank you for reading my essay and thank you so much for your time!

# 6-7 General: Third Place

## Inspiring One Child At A Time

by Susanne Kerr

Mrs. Sorenson is a fifth grade teacher. Her favorite TV show is Modern Family. Her favorite color is purple and her favorite food is pizza. She may sound just like you, but she has had to battle for her life. Here is her story.

“How did you feel when you were diagnosed with breast cancer?” Mrs. Sorenson has been asked that many times since her diagnosis. “Shock! I was really shocked” is the reply she would give. Before we get into more detail about the cancer, I think you should get to know Mrs. Sorenson a little better.

As a young girl Mrs. Sorenson would play school and she always played the teacher. So on her first day of professional teaching, she was very excited. She began her teaching career in Atlantic, Iowa. She taught in Atlantic for three years before making the life changing switch to North Polk Central Elementary. Over her twenty plus years of teaching, Mrs. Sorenson has blossomed into a bubbly, inspiring, and loving teacher.

Imagine getting asked twenty times a day “Did you fear anything about breast cancer?” Mrs. Sorenson forced her mouth to open and reply, “At first I feared they didn’t get it all.” She missed teaching her students and her students missed her as well. It hurt her a lot that she couldn’t tell her class what was going on with her life. Many days she had to leave school early to undergo treatment. Many days Mrs. Sorenson returned home physically drained.

Mrs. Sorenson does feel that her battle with cancer may have impacted the way she taught. When something would go wrong in the classroom she found herself waiting a little bit longer to allow the situation to die down. Upon her return to teaching after she had completed the last treatment, her students discovered that their teacher was the same as before. She may have even had a little extra spring in her step.

Mrs. Sorenson makes a connection with students each year. Some students she finds a special connection on a personal level while others it is on more of an academic level. The year Mrs. Sorenson battled breast cancer she seemed to make a special connection with her entire class. Almost as if her joy for life had become contagious.

Mrs. Sorenson was an avid runner prior to the cancer diagnosis and treatment. She wasn’t able to run during the treatment and is finding it harder to get back to her previous running level. Cancer has a way of changing your entire life long after it is gone. Her life motto is “Live for Today”.

I chose to write about Mrs. Sorenson because of the connection I had with her when she was my teacher in fifth grade. I found myself idolizing her before her diagnosis and afterward I found myself completely inspired by her. I was not alone. She inspired not only me, but many of my fellow peers and many of her fellow teachers. During my fifth grade year with Mrs. Sorenson she inspired me to discover what I want to become in life, a doctor and a politician. Over her teaching career Mrs. Sorenson has inspired hundreds of students. She is truly an inspiring woman. She changes history one child at a time.

### Source List

Sorenson, K (2012, January 19 and 20). Personal Interview.

# 8-9 General: First Place

## World Wide Impact

by Molly Doruska

Who or what makes a difference? Should the work of a pioneer ever be forgotten? How significant is one's impact on the future? Although Juliette Gordon Low, the founder of the Girl Scouts of the United States, has made a difference and an impact on the lives of future generations, she is a pioneer that is often forgotten. Juliette Gordon Low should be remembered for her initiative, her courage, and her vision.

Juliette Gordon Low's life of creating impact began on October 31, 1860. Her childhood days were filled with the arts, sports, and school. After school, she toured the United States and Europe. Later, she married William Mackay Low. Juliette Gordon Low's life was filled with challenge shortly thereafter when she lost all her hearing. This did not stop her from anything. More tragedy struck in 1905 when her husband died. After his death, Juliette Gordon Low spent years searching for something to do ("History: Juliette Gordon").

After meeting with Sir Robert Baden-Powell, the founder of Boy Scouts and Girl Guides in foreign countries, she found her mission in life. She realized that she could make an impact on the lives of others if she initiated a similar program in the United States. She took initiative and registered the first troop of Girl Scouts on March 12, 1912. She had the courage to unite girls of very different backgrounds and helped them develop their skills of self-reliance, resourcefulness, and professionalism in the arts, science, and business ("History: Juliette Gordon"). This came at a time when women were just gaining rights (Freeman). Daring these girls to dream and then become what they want to be took great courage because that was not the social and acceptable norm at the time. She became a pioneer using her vision of a world in which girls and women were not inferior to men but equals. Most importantly, Juliette Gordon Low took the initiative to make her vision a reality. Just believing in the possibility took courage, but Juliette Gordon Low's ability to take the initiative and make this vision real created an impact on future generations.

Juliette Gordon Low did not stop her vision there. She continued to keep in touch with the international community; therefore, she laid a foundation for the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGS) ("World Association of"). Juliette Gordon Low's immediate impact ended with her death from breast cancer in 1927, yet her organization lives on ("History: Juliette Gordon").

Currently, the Girls Scouts of the United States has grown to 3.7 million members, the largest educational organization for girls in the world ("History: Juliette Gordon"). One of those members is me. I joined Girl Scouts five years ago, and since then, I have been inspired to do so many things I could have never done without the support of other Girl Scouts. I have been able to complete a ropes course, to canoe, to mountain bike, and to create my own service project. Like many other scouts, I was always curious about the founder, Juliette Gordon Low. Her ability to impact those first eighteen girls and influence the ten million people who have belonged to WAGGS has inspired me to grow as a scout and do more for my community ("World Association of"). Not only do I want to impact others as a teenager, but I also want to be able to continue to serve others as an adult. Someday, I hope to become a camp counselor at Girl Scout Camp Tanglefoot in Clear Lake, Iowa. Then, I want to be able to serve others all over the world; hopefully I will make an impact similar to Juliette Gordon Low's. With Girls Scouts, I learned that I can do anything with courage, confidence, and character.

All in all, Juliette Gordon Low should be remembered for her initiative, her courage, and her vision which inspired her to found Girl Scouts of the United States. She organized the first troop in 1912, and today we celebrate the hundred year anniversary with 3.7 million members. These members are given courage, confidence, and character as well as inspiration from the founder and the organization she created. Juliette Gordon Low was a pioneer in women's education, impacting more than 50 million people a hundred years later and creating a different and better world ("History: Juliette Gordon"). Juliette Gordon Low should be remembered for her initiative, her courage, and her vision, but also should be written back into history

because of her impact on women's education and empowerment. She is a role model for so many, truly an example of the America spirit that all should follow.

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## 8-9 General: Second Place

### The 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Write Women Back into History Essay Contest:

#### Patricia Buckley Moss

by Gabriella Baker

*"As a dyslexic, my art is paradoxically both my refuge and my means of communication. Very early in life, when I failed at everything else in school, my art became my solace. What talent I lacked academically was more than made up for through my art; whereas some people succeed in spite of a disability, I believe I thrive because of mine. Now, with recognition and success, I reach out in my charitable endeavors to help others through my art, especially those with learning differences." – Patricia Buckley Moss*

Having a disability is not easy. I know this because I have an older brother who has lived with a disability all of his life. My brother Ian was born with Cerebral Palsy and a seizure disorder. I have watched him struggle to learn and find even the smallest bit of enjoyment in his life. As a family, we have found that even the smallest things like art and music in school give him the most enjoyment. That is why I believe Patricia Buckley Moss should be written back into history for her tireless and continued effort to bring awareness and support for children's education that promotes the use of art in the classroom, especially as a means to teach children with learning disabilities.

Patricia Buckley was born on May 20th, 1933 in Richmond Borough, New York. In grade school Patricia was thought to be an underachieving student which was eventually diagnosed as dyslexia. Dyslexia is a misunderstood reading and perceptual disorder. At that time one of her teachers realized that Patricia was artistically gifted. Her mother enrolled her in an extraordinary public school in downtown Manhattan the Washington Irving High school for the Fine Arts. There, Patricia was encouraged to explore her artistic gift. In 1951 she received a scholarship to New York's Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art. Patricia is someone who has achieved great success even with her learning disability. She is perceptive and sensitive, with an amazing ability to communicate with others through her art. She devotes a lot of time and effort to helping others.

In 1967 she won her first major art show prize. The exhibition was a sellout and that success encouraged her to start marketing her work. In 1989 the P. Buckley Moss Museum opened in Waynesboro, Virginia. Today the Museum attracts 45,000 visitors per year. Patricia's art has mainly focused on rural America and the Amish people. She is recognized as one of America's most prized living artists.

Patricia has become a role model for those with learning disabilities. She is frequently asked to speak to Special Education classes throughout the nation. Donations of Patricia's original works and prints to children's charities have raised millions of dollars for their causes. In 1995 the P. Buckley Moss Foundation for Children's Education was formed to help children with learning disabilities. It encourages the use of visual and performing arts in all educational programs. It hosts annual teacher conferences to share new techniques and other methods. They also grant regular teacher and student awards.

It is through these teacher's conferences that special equipment and programming is made available to schools to help students with a variety of disabilities express themselves through art and music. Ian attends Ruby Van

Meter High School in Des Moines which is a specialized school for children with disabilities. Art and music are his favorite classes. Even though he can't pick up a pencil or crayon to draw, he uses special computerized equipment attached to his wheelchair to push buttons with his head to draw and color. He can also use the equipment to change the music he listens to throughout the day. The equipment can be changed to encourage him to read books and change lights. It is through the awareness that people like Patricia Moss bring to these causes that help Ian's school and teachers. Art and music are special things that bring light and joy into Ian's otherwise dark and silent world. They are his ways of expressing himself.

In her art Patricia Moss seems to be able to speak a language that other "ordinary" people can understand, she has been referred to as "The People's Artist". In 1992 Patricia got a citation from the 1st Lady Barbara Bush for her charitable contributions toward learning disabled children. In 2008 she received an award for her Commitment to Special Education from the Virginia Council for Exceptional Children. On April 17th 2009 she received a certificate proclaiming her an Honorary Iowan by Iowa Governor Chester J. Culver. It was presented to her by Iowa's First Lady Mari Culver. Her original works of the Iowa State Capital and Terrace Hill hang on display in those buildings.

Patricia Moss reminds us that no obstacle is too high for anyone. That, even those with disabilities, like my brother Ian, should be given every opportunity to express themselves. I love to dance and participate in music and band at school. These are ways I can express who I am and what I love. It makes me feel good to know that Ian can do some of those same things through his music and art at school. We are all given the same opportunities to experience the joy that art and music bring into our lives. Pat Moss was given that opportunity as a little girl and she has made sure through her art and experiences that others are given that same opportunity in school. It is for those reasons that I believe that Patricia Buckley Moss should be written back into history.

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## *8-9 General: Third Place*

### **A Woman Who Changed Lives One Deed at a Time** by Mary Korch

Every President of the United States so far has been a man. Their faces have been seen dozens of times. Beside each one of them was a woman: the first lady. I believe Lou Hoover was one of these unrecognized first ladies who should be written into history. She was born a commoner who became a hero in our world. Yet many people do not recognize her accomplishments today.

Lou Henry Hoover was born in Waterloo, Iowa on March 29, 1874. Her parents were Charles and Florence Henry, and she had one sister, Jean. When she was growing up her family lived in a variety of places including Iowa, Texas, Kansas, and California. Lou was raised to enjoy many physical exercise activities including ice skating, basketball, boating, and baseball. Camping was one of her favorite activities because she loved the outdoors. This love for the outdoors evolved into a curiosity for nature. Her father educated her on edibility of different nuts and plants, plant life, geological formations, and hunting. As time passed, she attended Stanford University and was able to speak in 6 different languages including English, Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, Latin, Italian, and French. She also studied Geology and worked for the mining company.

At this same time Herbert Hoover worked at the mining company and met Lou Henry at Stanford University. They shared similar loves for camping and the outdoors. Herbert left to work in the mining company in Australia. During this time he sent Lou a telegraph asking if she would marry him. She took the offer and they married not long after.

With both of the Hoovers working for the mining company, they spent time in China and then London. While working in London, Lou Hoover helped create and chair the American Women's War Relief Fund and Hospital. This was an organization to help fund the suffering during World War one in 1914. Lou Hoover also became a leader in the Society of American Women in London. This time was a hard time for many European Countries. Belgium was being occupied by Germany and endured starvation. The American ambassador asked her to organize a mobilization of immediate aid to neutral countries. She brought her two sons back to California to live while still partnering in Europe. Lou Hoover worked to bring loads of food back to Europe and raise money to help with the starvation problems in Belgium. This eventually turned into the Relief Commission for Belgium. In California she wrote articles and promoted Belgian lace to help struggling families.

When Woodrow Wilson became President, Herbert Hoover was appointed as chief of the U.S. Food Administration. During this time Lou was head of the administrations women committee. This was her first high profile job in the United States. She gave speeches, contacted the media, and tried to inform as many people as she could on saving food on a daily basis so they could give more food to the Relief Commission for Belgium. She encouraged families to go without wheat one day a week, live without meat another, and use smaller amounts of sugar. The amounts unused could be given to those in Belgium. This became known as "Hoovering." In addition to this she created recipes and encouraged others to grow their own produce.

Lou Hoover became friends with the first lady Edith Wilson. It was then when she assumed a new role: the President of the Girl Scouts of America. She met with Juliette Low, the founder of the girl scouts. Juliette was excited about Lou's background in nature and her California Roots. In 1917 Lou Hoover was a national commissioner and loved the aspect of young girls helping places in crisis or disaster. She organized the idea of teaching them to grow their own war vegetable gardens to donate food to these needy places. She tried to include more of the western states in the girl scouts of America. She was the leader of troop 7 in Washington and included both white and African American girls in the same troop. This was a rare occurrence at this time in history.

I believe Lou Hoover has been a hero and set examples for women all over the world. Lou Hoover helped so many starving children in her era by encouraging others through teaching and advertizing to share what they have with the idea of "Hoovering." If we all followed this example today, we might be able to solve hunger problems in other areas of the world like Western Africa and South Asia. In regions of the world some countries do not have enough food to sufficiently supply its people. The problem is not that the world does not have enough food, it is that the distribution is not equal. Another inspiring aspect of Lou Hoover's life is that she taught other young girls to improve and change the world as well. She was the first woman to fully promote the girl scouts to let young girls do community service in their area.

I see Lou Hoover as a very important person in our history because she is a great example to show young women they can reach their dreams. Even though Lou Hoover was born to an ordinary family in Waterloo, Iowa, she was still able to affect so many lives all over the world by her actions. I believe if more young women were aware of Lou Hoover's accomplishments and how she achieved these actions, they would be inspired to complete world changing deeds as well. Lou Hoover once said, "The independent girl is truly of quite modern origin, and usually is a most bewitching little piece of humanity."

-[http://quoteshash.com/quotes\\_search/lou\\_henry\\_hoover.php](http://quoteshash.com/quotes_search/lou_henry_hoover.php)

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# 6-7 STEM: First Place

## Clara Barton by Sreeja Vepa

*I have an almost complete disregard of precedent, and a faith in the possibility of something better. It irritates me to be told how things have always been done. I defy the tyranny of precedent. I go for anything new that might improve the past. - Clara Barton*

Imagine the relief on the faces of the Hurricane Katrina victims when the Red Cross had arrived. This was all thanks to Clara Barton. Before Clara Barton, the Red Cross was only helping people during war time. It is due to her tireless efforts that the Red Cross had started helping victims of natural disasters in addition to the war efforts. Her gift of nursing became evident at the young age of eleven, when she nursed her brother David back to health.

At the age of seventeen, Clara Barton became a teacher and began to work at a private school, where the parents of the students had to pay for tuition. She often saw students whose families could not afford the tuition and therefore denied the opportunity to learn and succeed. She offered to teach those children for free, if the town would provide her a place to teach; the school population soon reached six hundred students. Although Clara Barton was the founder of this school, the school board refused to allow her to be the principal because she was a woman.

Frustrated, she decided to change her career and became a clerk in the U.S. Patent Office. She was the first woman to receive a substantial clerkship in the federal government. Even though she was a woman she insisted that they give her equal wages.

Once the Civil War started, she dedicated herself to aiding soldiers on the battlefield. She was given the well earned nickname "The Angel of the Battlefield". Before her, no woman had ever been given permission to go inside a hospital, camp, or on battlefields. (At first, military and civil officers declined her help, but eventually, after gaining their trust, she was granted permission.) She comforted the soldiers, bought food for them, and searched for missing soldiers. She officially became the superintendent of Union nurses in 1864 and began collecting camp and hospital supplies, military trains, and assistants for her work on the front. She nursed soldiers on sixteen different battlefields, which allowed her to experience the horrors of war first hand. Although she had almost lost her life on the job many times, she continued to serve her country. In the years following the Civil War, she was able to reunite thousands of soldiers with their families.

Wanting to continue to help others in need, she joined the relief effort in the war between France and Prussia. At the time, Europe had an organization named the International Red Cross. In Europe, she was educated about the concept of the Red Cross (as outlined in the Treaty of Geneva) while traveling with the volunteers serving in the France- Prussian War. She found out that twelve nations had signed this treaty, but the United States had not.

When she returned to the United States, she rallied to have the U.S. join the treaty and vowed to establish this work in the United States. At that time, the Red Cross only participated in the war time efforts. Clara Barton is the reason that the concept of the Red Cross was expanded to helping victims of natural disasters. For eight years, she talked to people in the government and gave many speeches. Finally all of her hard work paid off: she had formed the American Red Cross.

Thanks to Clara Barton, we have a wonderful relief service that assists thousands of people around the United States. The dedication of Clara Barton has taught me that even when a person is outnumbered one to a thousand, they must still persevere.

What Clara Barton accomplished is not something one can accomplish twiddling one's thumbs. She worked hard and put others' lives ahead of her own. Even though a woman was not allowed in hospitals, camps, or on battlefields, she still convinced the officials otherwise. She is my role model. Because of her, I decided to help

the community by giving more than what I take. I am looking forward to participating in more relief projects. She has also inspired me to work towards a medical career where I can personally be involved in the well-being of others. Clara Barton was a woman who deserves to be forever remembered by everyone.

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## 8-9 STEM: First Place

### **Barbara T. Welander: The First Certified Woman Architect in the State of Iowa (1944-present) by Emily Robinson**

*"If you have an interest, go with it. You don't know until you try."*

In today's society, we are very lucky. Women, and men, are both able to enroll in any high school program they choose. However, in the 1940's and 1950's, women were not as lucky. I heard this first hand from Barbara Welander. She was the first woman architect to be certified in the state of Iowa, and trust me, it wasn't easy.

Barbara Welander grew up in Mount Pleasant, Iowa in a loving family. Her parents were both very supportive and encouraging in everything she did. This came in handy throughout all of her education.

When Mrs. Welander was in junior high school, she took standardized tests, just like we do today. These tests show your strengths, and Barbara was definitely strong in English, math, science, and art. After talking to her parents about it, she decided to try and go into architecture.

Mrs. Welander hit a rough spot when she tried to sign up for mechanical drawing classes. The school's superintendent was not willing to let a girl take a class that was thought of for boys, and of course, Barbara's family revolted. Her parents went to the school board to discuss the issue. The teacher of the class that Barbara wanted to take was willing to have her in class. When the superintendent stepped up to the stand, however, things changed. He convinced the board that was a bad idea, and Barbara was not allowed to take the classes. Things changed, though. After the superintendent left the school, a new one was hired. The new superintendent told Barbara that it was a public school, and he didn't see why there was a problem with it.

Needless to say, Barbara was now officially enrolled in the drawing classes she needed to work into the field of architecture. After high school, she sent in her application to Iowa State University. She was accepted, and started into her new school. At the beginning of her freshman year, there were about 200 students in the architecture program. Out of these 200 students, eleven were women. By her sophomore year, Barbara was the only woman remaining, meaning ten women had left the program. Of course, there was about that same percentage of men that dropped out as well, but Barbara was now alone in a major of men.

Mrs. Welander finished out her school years strongly, and graduated from Iowa State University. She then went on to do her three years of required experience before becoming licensed by the state of Iowa. What I think makes her special is that she was the first woman architect certified here!

When I asked Mrs. Welander if she thought of herself as a role model for women, she said "Yes and No." When I asked her why, she said that she hoped that she was a role model for both men and women. She wants to remind others that there should not be anyone that tells them that they can't do something. "If you have an interest, go with it," she said. "You don't know until you try."

Mrs. Barbara Welander has, because of all this, made a huge difference in my life. She has endured so much just to make her dreams come true. Throughout all of this, she stood up for herself. She did not let anyone bring her down, or crush her dreams. Sometimes, kids would come up to her and say, "Why are you taking mechanical drawing?" Barbara always had a way to respond. She did not let anyone destroy her. She used logical answers, and always told them that she was doing what she wanted to do.

I believe that Mrs. Welander should definitely be a role model for any person, not just students that want to go into architecture or design. She is all about letting students, and adults, know that you can do whatever you want to do.

I am a student that wants to go into architecture. The thought of designing buildings has always appealed to me. On January 24, 2012, I got the pleasure of having a phone conversation with Mrs. Welander. She was so inspiring! All of her stories about getting support from her fellow students (and discrimination from some) inspired me to keep moving forward. Mrs. Welander told me about everything she went through, from struggling to learn about architecture because of her gender to working and still being there for her children. This conversation has made a lifelong impact on me, and has also directed me toward classes I need to take to achieve my dreams.

Even though a lot of women went through struggles to get their freedom, I think Barbara Welander should be written into history as one of the greatest women to overcome a learning obstacle. She persevered, and when things didn't go right, she never gave up. I hope her story will inspire others, not just me, and leave an impact on society.

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## 8-9 STEM: Second Place

### Barbara McClintock and her A(mazing) work by Kirsten Siebanga

Barbara McClintock was a truly amazing woman. Albert Einstein once said, "Great spirits have always encountered violent opposition from mediocre minds." Just as Albert Einstein said it many years ago Barbara McClintock would experience it first-hand. Barbara was a cytogenetic scientist in the midst of an era when women had virtually no rights. You might wonder why remember the past? Why should we care to remember those who came before us? Because, if we can't learn from the past, how can we approach the future?

Barbara was an independent child. She liked to isolate herself to do activities. Barbara McClintock was originally named "Eleanor" but her parents decided she was much too independent and strong to be named that. When Barbara was five she lived with her aunt and uncle because of the financial burden all of the kids had on her family. She often rode in her uncle's truck. The truck would frequently need repair and this brought Barbara to ask for a set of tools.

Barbara McClintock was a woman who had a passion for her career and wasn't going to let anything stop her, even her mother. Barbara's mother thought going to college would make her less likely to marry. But even without her mother's approval, Ms. McClintock studied at Cornell University and took all of the courses dealing with genetics. After Barbara finished at Cornell to receive her PhD, she began exploring chromosomes in the maize plant. The maize plant or corn plant doesn't need special conditions or monitoring to be grown and each individual plant had three alleles rather than two. Barbara's work is very complex and I hope to do it justice. This is how I understand it: Barbara discovered that changing the placement of chromosomes would change

the color of the maize. Today, her discovery of the “jumping gene” is widely used from forensics to tracing our ancestry in evolutionary biology. Forensic scientist can now tell from a piece of DNA of what decent the criminal is from. In the field of evolutionary biology, scientists can tell if we are or how closely we are related to people and different species of animals. All this is now done thanks to Barbara’s discovery.

But just as Albert Einstein said, great spirits have always encountered opposition, being a woman in science even today is rare. With statistics from STEM(science, technology, engineering, and math) showing women still are not evenly represented with men in many science and math careers. Ms.McClintock established a career in science in the 1920’s. This amazing woman had just received her right to vote, and she could now lead a country with her science discoveries.

Many scientists did not understand Barbara’s discovery or chose not to, especially those not studying in her area. This may be due to the complexity of Ms.McClintock’s discovery and we can only speculate being that she was a woman, was the reasoning behind them not accepting her discovery but no one would say it because of the era. Almost thirty years after her discovery with the chromosome in the corn plant, at the age of eighty-one she received the Nobel prize. She was the first woman to earn the prize in the Physiology or Medicine category. After Barbara was famous to the world more in-depth research of her lab notes were looked for, but some of her notes had been destroyed. Maybe this was due to the frustration of her colleagues not seeing her work as clearly as she did. Barbara said this to scientist Oliver Nelson, “I stopped publishing detailed reports long ago when I realized, and acutely, the extent of disinterest and lack of confidence in the conclusions I was drawing from the studies.”

Barbara is an inspiration to me and she should be also to the world, she followed her dream and didn’t let anything stand in the way. I really enjoy science like Barbara; I hope to one day be a doctor or surgeon and put that fire in my belly to ease. I think I am similar to Barbara; we are both independent people and I stand up for my beliefs and try not to let anyone change them. Barbara and I are both females who enjoy science, I hope when I get to my career, women in science will not be as rare as they were in Barbara’s day.

I see now that Barbara had a true gift, she never married or had children; her contribution to this world will forever be her discoveries in science. I know Barbara won’t be forgotten because of the laboratory named in her honor in Cold Spring Harbor, New York. Numerous books, and articles have been written about Barbara. As the sun sets in the west and the oranges and purples dance in the sky a light is still shining in the midst of the shadows of the oak trees. The McClintock laboratory is cleaning up from a day’s work. But someone is watching up in that sunset to insure her legacy is to live on. Like Albert Einstein said, even facing adversity, Barbara continued to follow her passion. Barbara must never be forgotten; her a(mazing) work and life will continue in me and the whole world.

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