

Contact Kent Mayfield
(608) 935-3540
June 21, 2010

Mineral Point, Highland Students Win Mary Louise Symon awards

Grassroots Citizens of Wisconsin has announced the recipients of the first annual Mary Louise Symon Memorial Award. Two awards were presented to area students this year. Molly Palzkill, Mineral Point, and Kallee Satern, Highland, were chosen on the basis of a comprehensive application, including an essay that focused on a significant contemporary social issue.

Ms. Symon, of Spring Green, who died in late 2009, blazed a path for women in politics, including as the first woman chair of the Dane County Board. Throughout her life she remained deeply committed to advancing a broad social agenda including protecting the environment, preserving farmland and rural regions, making courts more humane, ensuring fair housing and defending social services, among others. She was one of the founders of the Grassroots Citizens of Wisconsin and was a strong advocate of the role of citizens in a democracy. An active, successful politician, her volunteer activities in the cause of peace, justice and equal rights earned recognition nationwide.

The Mary Louise Symon Memorial Award honors her memory by recognizing young men and women whose scholarship, personal character and volunteer service demonstrate a similar commitment to community engagement and the creation of a positive social environment.

Throughout her high school career Molly Palzkill has been active in the arts and music. She has been a volunteer at the Mineral Point library and Shakerag Alley Center for the Arts, as well as participating in church-related service projects. She has served as the president of the school art club and was an officer of the Mineral Point National Honor Society. She is the daughter of Bruce and Anne Palzkill, Mineral Point. Her essay addressed the phenomenon of bullying in the high school environment and called for tolerance and understanding in an increasingly diverse society.

A few of Kallee Satern's many accomplishments include leadership positions in her class, Culture Club, band and choir, as well as with her local 4-H group. She has served as a coach for Odyssey of the Mind, a drama-related problem solving and leadership development program, and is also a member of the National Honor Society. Kallee is the daughter of Linda Roum, Highland, and Wayne Satern, Oregon, WI. Kallee's essay focused on peer pressure as an element in underage drinking, suggesting that the peers can serve as powerful role models for one another.

In the fall, Molly Palzkill will be majoring in genetics at the University of Wisconsin, Madison and looks forward to a career in genetic counseling. Kallee Satern Kallee will be attending Viterbo College in LaCrosse and studying nursing.

The recipients will be honored at gathering hosted by Grassroots Citizens of Wisconsin early in the fall.

The Mary Louise Symon Award is made annually by Grassroots Citizens of Wisconsin, a network of engaged people in southwest Wisconsin who, through constructive dialogue and education, foster informed, positive change in our communities. In sponsoring this award, it seeks to underscore the place of young people of high character and motivation in the shaping of the communities of Southwest Wisconsin.