

Wisconsin Women Making History

March is Women's History Month, when the UWM Women's & Gender Studies team invites Milwaukee Public School students in grades 5 through 12 to participate in our essay contest. We encourage students to explore and celebrate the histories and contributions made by Wisconsin women.

Wisconsin women have diverse and complex history both before and after the territory of Wisconsin became a state in 1848. Many have raised families, educated children, and worked in their communities as volunteers. Others have held paid jobs and pursued careers, combining family and work responsibilities.

However, their contributions to Wisconsin have often remained invisible, because historians have only recently considered activities by women as worthy of attention. Most women's lives and experiences are still unknown. To reclaim the history of the private lives and public roles of Wisconsin women is to discover how people lived and what they valued. Until we know what women did and thought and experienced, we will only know half the story.

The purpose of the essay contest, *Wisconsin Women Making History*, is to help tell the other half of the story. You can be a part of the process: Explore and learn about the amazing and courageous contributions women have made, and continue to make, to our communities, cities, and state.

Wisconsin Women Making History

Students are to choose one Wisconsin woman, of any background and from any historical period (including the present), and write about that woman's contribution to her community, city, town, or to the state of Wisconsin. We encourage students to use a variety of ways to gather information including interviews and community or school library resources. Students may refer to our list of "[Notable Wisconsin Women](#)" as a starting point.

Awards

Judges will choose winning essays at the middle and high-school levels. Winners will receive a monetary award. All participants will receive a certificate of achievement. Essays will not be returned, students should make a personal copy if they wish to retain their work.

Criteria:

- Essays should include a persuasive explanation of why the student chose to focus on a particular woman and what this woman means to the student.
- Essays should be well organized, with an introduction, body, and conclusion.
- Essays should make use of evidence, and should include specific examples.
- Students should identify their sources of information in footnotes, in the body of the essay, or in a works cited page.
- Essays should be well written, with proper punctuation, grammar, and spelling.

Essay Contest Rules:

1. **ALL MPS** middle and high school students, grades 5-12 are eligible.
2. Essays should be between **400 - 1000** words typed on the supplied fillable pdf form (font size will adjust automatically to allow for fit). Word length should reflect grade level.
3. Essays should have an **original title** (not contest name) at the top of the first page.
4. Do not include your name on the essay page. Your name should only appear on the first page entry form.
5. Students should sign the entry form and ask their teacher to do the same to certify that the essay is an original work.
6. Entries must be received by **February 28, 2023**.

