

I am delighted to introduce Rachel Brown, our scholarship winner from McCutchen High School.



Any of you who attend McCutcheon stage productions have enjoyed seeing Rachel the last four years in many musicals and plays.

Rachel has numerous academic recognitions, is a member of the National Honor Society, was a three year member of the Academic Superbowl team and the captain this year.

Rachael is also a ten year 4-H member with reserve and grand championships in dog training.

....but her real passion is helping others.

- She has been a member and then President of the Volunteer Club; and has contributed to the community in many ways....

- from coordinating Rock-the-Vote; to
- washing headstones in Greenbush Cemetery; to
- organizing a fundraiser for Natalie's Second Chance Home;
- but especially her nine months of preparation on behalf of "Locks of Love," a cut-athon, done in cooperation with a local salon. Her work was inspired by her grandmother who was diagnosed with advanced breast cancer when she was just three years old. She remembered a grandparents' day at her elementary school. Her grandmother almost didn't attend out of fear that her granddaughter would be teased or bullied because her grandmother didn't have any hair. Over thirty McCutcheon students donated at least eight inches of hair so that women battling breast cancer wouldn't be embarrassed by their appearance.

On top of all this, for the last two years Rachel has worked at K-Mart, rising quickly to a supervisory position. I was struck by the superlatives from her boss who went on to comment about how integral she was to their 'Shop with a Cop' and 'Shop with a Firefighter' events. She volunteered her own time to bake cookies for the children who were participating, and then interacted so well with them in picking out clothing. She truly cared about the people who walked into the store, not because it was her job, but because she had a genuine interest in helping anyone she could.

In conclusion, by reading a response she wrote, I want to let Rachel speak for herself about an impactful experience and about her future goals:

"I had planned my entire life to major in criminology and become a lawyer. This all changed when I participated in the World Food Prize in Iowa, where I was an Indiana Delegate at the Global Youth Symposium. At the Symposium, Joyce Banda, the 1st woman President of Malawi, spoke of gender inequality, food insecurity, and politics. I was so empowered by the speech, that another delegate from my high school and I decided to start a club to empower the women at our school. We read the book "I Am Malala" and organized a clothing drive among members to donate clothes to women in Haiti. I hope to dedicate my life to humanitarian work in order to gain human rights for people in impoverished nations. That is my true interest and I believe that the Exploratory Studies Program at Purdue will help guide me to the right major to pursue this career."

Our congratulations, Rachel, and thanks for your passion for helping others!