



***The Commission for Women and Alice's Kids ([www.aliceskids.org](http://www.aliceskids.org)) present the***  
**2012 WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH ESSAY CONTEST**

**Topic: 'Personal Sheroes'**

- ❖ Did Harriet Tubman teach you that certain risks are worth taking despite the uncertainty of reward?
- ❖ Is it your mom's compassion as a caregiver that underlies your goal to enter the health field?
- ❖ Was it Frida Kahlo's passionate colors that compelled you to pick up a paint brush?
- ❖ Has Aung San Suu Kyi demonstrated to you the grace and power of peaceful resistance?
- ❖ Does Lady Gaga prove to you that there is room in the world for nonconformists?
- ❖ Do your culinary interests stem from the warmth and love of grandma's kitchen?

Who is your 'Shero' – the woman whose example, actions, narrative or words influence your life in a positive way? Is she an historical figure or your neighbor? Is she famous or a silent shero? How or why does she motivate you to excel? How does she guide your choices? Why is she your personal inspiration?

In an original, creative essay of 1000 words or less, describe your personal 'Shero', how you know or came to know of her, and the role she plays in your life.

**Eligibility**

The contest is open to any high school senior, currently enrolled at a public high school in Fairfax County.

*[See back]*

### Submission Requirements

- Essay submissions will be accepted starting November 1, 2011. The contest deadline is December 31, 2011.
- Essays must be the original work of the student.
- Essays can be no more than 1000 words, typed, double-spaced, and paginated.
- Source material (e.g., personal interviews, articles, books, website, etc.) is optional. However, if relied upon to any extent, source material must be disclosed by using parenthetical citations in the text and providing a bibliography. Citations and bibliography are not included in the word count.
- Students are encouraged to submit their essay entry by email to: [Sandra.bromley@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Sandra.bromley@fairfaxcounty.gov)
  - Essays will also be accepted via mail: *Sandy Bromley, Fairfax County Commission for Women, c/o Office for Women & Domestic and Sexual Violence Services, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 339, Fairfax, VA 22035.* Mailed essay entries must be post-marked no later than December 31, 2011.
- Each essay shall have a cover page, which must include the following information:
  - Student's full name, age and grade
  - High school name and high school address
  - Student contact information (email and phone number)
  - Word count

### Evaluation Criteria

- Is the essay written in a compelling, persuasive and original manner?
- Does the essay explain why and how the Shero served as a role model for the essayist?
- Is the essay well-organized? Are the essayist's thoughts communicated clearly?
- Is the syntax, grammar, spelling and punctuation correct?

### Recognition and Awards

- The first-place winner will receive a \$1000 cash award and will accept the Proclamation of Fairfax County Board of Supervisors designating March 2012 as Women's History Month.
- The second-place winner will receive a \$500 cash award. Additionally, students from each of the county's nine (9) magisterial districts will receive an honorable mention and a cash award of \$100.
- All finalists (winners and district honorable mentions) will be invited to attend the Proclamation Ceremony, which includes a photo opportunity with the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and a reception.
- All finalists' essays will be posted in the Fairfax County Government Center in celebration of Women's History Month during March, 2012.

### Releases

- Through submission of an essay, essayists grant Fairfax County permission to use the essay, their name, likeness and/or Prize information, the name of the high school, for private or public purposes without further permission or compensation. Essayists may opt-out from granting such permission via signed opt-out form. Participants under the age of 18 acknowledge that they have the consent of their parent or legal guardian to participate in this contest.



Fairfax County is committed to nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in all county programs, services and activities. Reasonable accommodations will be provided upon request. For information, **call the Commission for Women at (703) 324-9494 (voice) or (703) 324-5706 (TTY).**