The Marian A. Dammon
Endowed Scholarship
Est. December 1995
Marian Dammon was an outstanding English teacher who touched the lives of many students during her 39 years of teaching. Marian was born in Lansing, Michigan in 1908. Following her father’s death from mumps in 1912, Marian and her mother moved to Big Rapids, Michigan, so her mother could finish her secretarial coursework at Ferris Institute (now Ferris State). Upon completion of the coursework, they moved to Hamburg, Michigan where her mother remarried. In this rural part of the state, Marian was able to indulge in her love for biology while making some money at the same time. She would collect insects for fun and sell them to students from the University of Michigan who needed them for coursework. Her family did return to Lansing, and she graduated with honors from Lansing Central High School in June 1925.

That fall, she entered what was then Michigan State College, and pursued three majors – English, biology and social studies. As she lived at home during this time, she would take the streetcar to and from college. She graduated magna cum laude four years later, and was hired to teach in Manchester, Michigan. Marian, whose starting salary was $1,400, related how in 1929 after spending hard-earned dollars on new red shoes and a slicker, was told she could not wear red in her first classroom. The reason? It might bring out the “wrong” emotions in her young male students!

She instructed classes in English, Latin, and French at Manchester for eleven years. Classroom space was scarce, so she taught classes in the local Moose Lodge, which provided a variety of memorable experiences. Marian shared that one day while teaching class, teeth from the stuffed moose head fell out, creating quite a stir in class. On another day, the pot-bellied stove began smoking so bad that Marian had to call the superintendent. He showed up wearing the professional dress at that time - a full suit and stovepipe top hat. In attempting to solve the problem of the smoking stove, he pulled the stovepipe off, subsequently covering himself from head to toe in soot.
While at Manchester, Marian also oversaw a variety of extracurricular student activities including Girl Scouts, debate, junior play, all senior activities including the senior play, commencement, and Delta Phi Delta, a club emphasizing debate, parliamentary procedure, and drama. Marian then followed her superintendent to Farmington Public Schools (MI), where she taught for the next ten years. She finished her career at West Junior High School in Lansing, where she taught for 18 years until her retirement in 1968.

Marian was always involved with her students, which engendered a great deal of loyalty in return. She never encountered a discipline problem while in the classroom. At one point while teaching at Farmington she injured her knee, which impaired her ability to walk. While she recuperated, members of the football team would show up at her home and carry her to class and the school's sporting events on a sled. During the war she corresponded with 240 of her former students who were servicemen. She kept all of the letters in a scrapbook, which was donated to the Michigan State University Museum.

**Recollections from former students:**

I was editor of the paper and spent a lot of time with Miss Dammon in a glassed off section of her classroom. As I recall, this small room with two roll-around chairs, one table, a paper cutter, and a lot of encouragement were the centerpiece of this publishing empire. After a few in-school efforts we were sure it was time to widen our circulation. Miss Dammon encouraged us to make a business call on the editor of our local weekly paper, The Farmington Enterprise. We were successful in being assigned one page each week. We now had to face a deadline, and be responsible for an editorial, sports, PTA and other important school events. Many days we were sure we would never make it. But no excuse was ever good enough, and we met our deadline each week. I believe this is an example of how she interacted with her students. We knew we were important to her, but we also knew she expected a lot of us and we were determined not to fail. I suspect that we didn’t realize then that she was teaching us much more than journalism. - Audrey
Many times I have thought about what an impact she had on my life...When I discussed going to college with Miss Dammon and she found out I was interested in bacteriology, she mentioned a very close friend of hers had taken bacteriology at Michigan State College. She also mentioned the professor she had worked under to get her Masters degree. Guess what, the same professor, Dr. Mallman, was my major professor for my Ph.D.

So many of the things that I really have enjoyed throughout my life are associated with Miss Dammon and there has been hardly a day that goes by that I don't think of her. It is just amazing how much one excellent teacher can do for a student. – Al

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Marian A. Dammon Endowed Scholarship Fund

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