

## **Dr. Rebecca C. Maher Memorial Scholarship**

### **The Award**

The Dr. Rebecca C. Maher Memorial Scholarship is a one-time \$3000.00 scholarship award.

### **General Eligibility**

Student must be a current senior at Colfax-Mingo High School.

Student must be attending either a state university or a private college.

Student must submit a completed application by the deadline, which is March 31, 2018 for the next academic year.

### **Selection Criteria**

The committee will select the winner based upon a point system. Twenty five percent of the points will be awarded based upon past academic performance, fifteen percent of the points will be awarded based upon community service, involvement, etc., ten percent of the points will be awarded based upon letters of reference and other submitted items, and fifty percent will awarded based upon answers to essay questions.

### **The Committee**

The committee will vary from year to year but will be comprised of members of Dr. Maher's family, educators, and friends of Dr. Maher.

### **Additional Criteria**

Award is for tuition only and will be paid directly to the educational institution attended by the winner. Alternative arrangements are not encouraged but may be considered on a case by case basis.

### **About the Scholarship**

The Dr. Rebecca C. Maher Memorial Scholarship was established in 2016 by her family as a tribute to a life well lived.

#### **About Dr. Maher**

We feel that understanding a little about Dr. Maher will help you understand a little about this award.

Dr. Maher was a life-long learner who served in many capacities during her career with the Colfax-Mingo Community School District. Her association with local schools started at the Mingo Community School as a part-time school nurse in 1981 and ended 32 years later as the Principal at Colfax-Mingo Middle School. After her retirement, she continued her work with the schools as a member of the Colfax-Mingo Community School Board until shortly before her death in 2015.

Throughout the years Dr. Maher attended a variety of educational institutions. She began her lifelong journey of learning at St. Austin's, a Catholic elementary school in Austin, Texas and ended at Drake University, with many stops along the way. After graduating from St. Joseph's Academy in Des Moines, Dr. Maher was unable to attend college due to circumstances beyond her control. She wanted to go to

school, and after getting married and starting a family in Mingo, Iowa, she attended nurses training at Des Moines Area Community College in 1975. Shortly thereafter her association with local schools began. Dr. Maher was initially hired as a school nurse in 1981 by the Mingo Community School District and then served as school nurse/health coordinator for the district until 1990. During her tenure as school nurse in the mid-1980's, she decided that she wanted to become a teacher and began attending Upper Iowa University. She took classes at night and on weekends and graduated with a Bachelor of Education degree in 1991. She then served as a substitute teacher until she was hired full-time by the district in 1993 as a middle school English/Language Arts (among other things) teacher. During that time as a teacher, Mrs. Maher (as she was known) developed an interest in school administration and in the late 1990's began coursework at Viterbo University with the intention of becoming a school administrator. She received a Master's Degree in Education from Viterbo University in 2000. In 2003, she was hired as the Middle School Principal at Colfax-Mingo and remained in that capacity until her retirement in 2013. As principal, Dr. Maher continued to teach classes and greatly valued those interactions with students. Seeking to further her education and career, she was accepted in to the Drake University Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership in 2008, and received her Doctorate in 2012. Her personal educational journey was one which demonstrates both a strong work ethic and commitment to learning. For nearly 30 years there was very little time that she wasn't taking some class, program, or certification, somewhere.

Dr. Maher was committed to the Colfax-Mingo School District as a parent, a community member, and an educator. She was a tireless proponent of the great value of small schools and was very proud of her students and spoke often of their successes. She sought to continually expand the horizons of her students and had an inclusive approach to education, focused on elevating all students regardless of aptitude or attitude. Dr. Maher challenged her best students to do more and took particular interest in showing those students with educational or family challenges that they were both worthy and capable of great things. She mentored teachers and students in a discreet yet enthusiastic manner, and is remembered as a difference maker by those fortunate enough to encounter her along their educational or professional journey.

Dr. Maher's family seeks to honor her unique approach to education and life through the Dr. Rebecca C. Maher Memorial Scholarship. Dr. Maher always sought improvement in herself and those around her. She was driven, committed, and hardworking. She advanced her education and career through sheer grit, while always enjoying the learning process. A tireless worker, the entirety of her post-secondary education was attended at night and on weekends and in addition to her many other personal and professional commitments. She overcame many obstacles to continue on her educational path and saw great value in those who would "pull themselves up by their bootstraps". While it was a life cut short by cancer, hers was a life well lived. That is the essence of the Dr. Rebecca C. Maher Memorial Scholarship. Just as she was non-traditional in her approach to education, the committee will be non-traditional in our approach to the scholarship award. It will not be solely based on grades, other awards, or other traditional measures. We invite everyone to apply and tell us your story. On the application you will have the opportunity to tell us about yourself, what you have accomplished and how this award will contribute to your life well lived.