

Stockton Student Wins Prestigious Maude Dahme Award

Emily Heerema, Brick Twp. Resident, Recognized for Series of Articles on Human Rights Issues

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Contact: Tim Kelly
Stockton Public Relations
(609) 652-4950

Galloway Township, NJ – Emily Heerema, recent Stockton graduate has been selected as the 2008 Maud Dahme Award Recipient by the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education for her work in genocide education, including a series of articles in *The Argo*, Stockton's student newspaper.

Heerema, from Brick Township, is a graduate of Monsignor Donovan High School who earned her Bachelor of Arts in Literature with two minors, one in Holocaust and Genocide Studies and one in Political Science. She was nominated for the honor, which is usually reserved for professional educators, by Holocaust Resource Center Director Gail Rosenthal.

"To say I was surprised would be an understatement," Emily said. "I was honored to be nominated but to be honest had forgotten about it when the letter came announcing that I had actually been selected. I was really happy the Commission saw me as an educator on the topic of genocide."

As a sophomore, Heerema was chosen to be part of the Campus Editors' Mission to Poland and Israel, an event which was sponsored by the Anti-Defamation League. Since then, she said, her goal has been to educate herself, her peers and the community about human rights violations, both past and present. To that end came the series of articles, a leadership position in the group Students Take Action Now: Darfur (STAND), and a series of talks at local schools about genocide in addition to other activities. These volunteer activities included a spring break trip Emily made to Louisiana following Hurricane Katrina to help the cleanup and re-building efforts while many of her peers were on vacation. She also volunteers with the environmental group Water Watch on campus.

Now that Heerema's Stockton years have passed, she will continue on with her volunteer efforts. "I hope to work with AmeriCorps and help in an inner city area such as the Bronx in New York City or in Washington D.C." she said. "New York is a great place to be for writers, activists and artists, and D.C. is where policy is often decided," she said.

Her love of activism and helping people "began in the classroom and extended to the real world," Heerema said. She mentioned Stockton faculty members such as Patrick Hossay, EvaMarie DiGiorgio, Carol Rittner and Lisa Honaker among those individuals who have inspired her. "It's hard to single people out because so many have been supportive," she added.

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