



## Eileen Garvey Doherty Scholarship Endowment

As one of twelve children, I learned at an early age to work for what I wanted in life. Whether it was a treat at the corner store, a new book, a prom dress or a used car, I knew that the cost of any extras in my life were my responsibility. At the age of 12 I started working as a babysitter, my training coming from years of caring for a crowd of younger brothers and sisters. At 15 I was hired for the first of several waitressing jobs, which became the mainstay of my self-support until I finished college. In those years I earned an average of 80 cents an hour for taking orders and carrying meals to customers who might or might not leave me a tip. Because I worked so hard to earn my money, I was, for the most part, a careful spender, always aware of the amount of work it took to make my purchases.

And so at the end of my senior year of high school, the excitement of my college acceptance was tempered by the prospect of paying for the cost of my education. I worked extra shifts at the restaurant that summer, saving whatever I could in anticipation of paying my tuition and buying books in the fall. In July I was elated to learn I would be receiving two scholarships. I was, of course, proud that my academic achievements had been recognized, but also relieved that some of the financial burden was eased. The first award was enough to cover tuition for a full semester, while the second paid for my first trip to the college bookstore. I distinctly remember calculating the amount of waitressing it would take to earn that much money; my tired feet were grateful for the work they were spared.

Those scholarships eased my transition into six years of college, which prepared me well for a career in teaching. When I finished, I was offered a position as an English teacher at Westfield High School, where for more than three decades, I took on the challenge of helping teenagers learn to express themselves effectively. My career was filled with satisfaction beyond measure and I was blessed to be a part of so many young lives, and so many successes, both large and small.

Even now, I think back to the scholarships I received and I am grateful for the assistance they provided to make the start of my college journey easier. And so, to the student who receives this award, I congratulate you for the four years of hard work you have just completed, and I hope that in some small way this scholarship eases your transition to the exciting education that awaits you. I wish for you the same enrichment I knew in my college years and the same joy and satisfaction I found in my life's work.

Written by: Eileen Doherty  
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