

2010 SCHOLARSHIP WINNER – ISABELLA LEAVITT OF TUCSON, AZ

MY LEAVITT HERITAGE

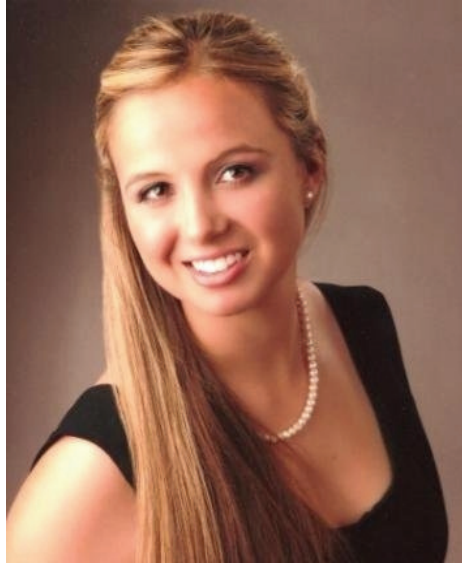
My Leavitt heritage is something that has always been important to me and has influenced the decisions I have made since I can remember. It has played an important role in the direction I am headed in the future.

My Grandparents pursued genealogy in earnest before I was born. I have always known from where I came, on both sides of the family. I am a descendent of the Josiah line, and have followed the path of the Leavitt migration from Bare Cove, to Tucson, Arizona. When I was only nine, my family loaded up into a Suburban and drove across the country, visiting every town we knew our line of Leavitt's lived in for the past three and a half centuries. We visited graves, some of which had been untended for over 100 years, of all but one of my Grandfathers over 12 generations. Someday, I am sure we will find that grave, Aspah Leavitt, B. 19 Feb 1744, Suffield, Hartford, Connecticut, D. 1789, Rupert, Bennington, Vermont, as well.

I am also of Mexican descent, with first generation American grandparents on my mother's side. My maternal grandfather's rich history includes a German immigrant grandfather in 1751, whose line moved to Tucson to ranch and mine in the 1860's. As was the custom of the day, a custom that continues, my German relatives married into established Mexican families that lived in the area when it was Mexico. They helped build and lead early Tucson.

The journey I experienced serves as a constant reminder of the duty I have to do the most with what I have been given by my ancestors. I understand the sacrifices each must have made simply to survive in the early years in America. I have seen when my grandfathers earned doctorates at Harvard, and when they have signed documents with an "X."

I know that all of my actions reflect upon them, and those to come. I have done my best to honor them through the decisions I have made. I had the good fortune to attend the best high school in Tucson, Arizona, Salpointe Catholic High School. I took full advantage of the opportunities at the school, participating in athletics, music, student government, clubs, and the most difficult academic curriculum. I was honored this past week for my achievements at the school as I was named a Salpointe Scholar and Athlete of the Year, while being awarded the United States Marine Corps Scholastic Achievement award for civic engagement and scholarly achievement. My Grandfather, John Adams Leavitt, who passed away in



late 2008, was unable to attend John Leavitt's 400th birthday party in Hingham, a goal he had set for himself during his struggle with cancer. He was too sick to go that summer, but sent my grandmother, Aunt, and Uncle in his place. He was the first volunteer for the DNA project. His homeless to Harvard story is what has inspired me to set ambitious goals, and reach them. In Arizona, the Native American tribes believe in a responsibility to seven generations; the three that precede the current generation, today's generation, and the next three generations. Undoubtedly this is a value elsewhere in the country, but it is constantly reinforced by the culture in Tucson. I know it has helped me make the decisions that have pointed me in the best direction to get the education in college that will help me make a difference in the world.

FUTURE PLANS

I have dedicated a great deal of thought about what I would like to spend my life doing. I have the widest variety of role models from which to choose because of the diversity of my family. I know that my plans must include education past that of a Bachelors' degree, as the economy of the future will require more education than ever before.

On my Fathers' side of the family, there are doctors, lawyers, physicists, chemists, and university administrators. There are also police officers and tennis pros. My mothers' family includes engineers, judges, and college administrators. There are also construction workers, cowboys, and heavy equipment operators. The commonality amongst all of my family is that they work hard. They don't use sick leave, and they strive to make the most of the opportunities they have been presented.

What I want to do is live a life that makes a positive difference to the world. I believe that the best days of our country lie ahead of us, and want to be a part of moving in a positive direction in the future.

I have been accepted into the Barrett Honors College at Arizona State University next fall. I intend to study Political Science, and then go to Law School. I want to do this because I know a good legal education will prepare me for a future in being a part of the elected government that has allowed my family to succeed.

I hope to begin my legal career as a prosecutor and ultimately seek a congressional seat representing Southern Arizona. I know that my rich experience in Southern Arizona will help me represent people from a broad spectrum in shaping the future of our country.

2010 SCHOLARSHIP WINNER – ERIC STAFFORD OF ROCHESTER, MN

MY LEAVITT HERITAGE

I did not get to know my grandfather, Frederick C. Leavitt, when he was in his prime. He was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease just after I was born. While I was growing up, his memory was getting less and less clear, making it harder for him to tell me stories about himself and all of his challenges and accomplishments. I had to learn about his obstacles and successes through other people.

These stories told were of the life of a chemist who was firm in his reasoning yet very easygoing. He worked for Dow Chemical Company throughout his career in numerous managerial positions. One of his former employees (Mel Koch, Executive Director, Center for Process Analytical Chemistry) wrote me a letter to help me understand more about my grandfather's influence on him and on Dow Chemical. He mentioned that my grandfather was a "remarkable manager who is remembered as a strong technical leader who created forums for people to succeed in their field of expertise". My grandfather encouraged new ideas, insisted on excellence, interfaced "well with top management" and had concepts that "lead to effective teamwork". He pursued many different challenges, finding ways to beat the odds and overcome them. Throughout it all he was able to form strong alliances, build relationships at multiple levels and succeed as a manager while earning the respect of the employees that worked for him.

Grandpa had a great sense of humor and when I was young he could remember stories from when he was young. Other stories were told to me by my grandmother, Jeanne M. Leavitt or my mom, Jacqueline Leavitt Stafford. I think it was because he was such a people person and a great storyteller that many people didn't realize for years that my

grandpa had Alzheimer's disease. He retained his sense of humor despite the disease and continued to be very sociable.

With my grandmother's help, my mom was able to trace her heritage through the Leavitt generations back to our relative that served in the Revolutionary War (Edward). While it is interesting to have a connection to the Revolutionary War, I feel that my best connection with the Leavitt family heritage was through my grandfather. He was a bright, capable person who was able to fight his own personal war against a disease with no cure. He did it with patience and humor. The qualities that my grandfather had were ones that I hope to develop and pass on to future generations of Leavitt family members. I am very proud to be Fred Leavitt's grandson.



FUTURE PLANS

Next year I will be attending St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN. I am very excited about the school. I plan to major in chemistry and take environmental science courses for a possible minor. My grandfather was majored in chemical engineering and got a PhD in chemistry. My mom majored in biochemistry and went from there to medical school. I must have chemistry "in my genes". [There are ties with my grandfather and the environment too since he did his PhD in the School of Forestry at Syracuse University - I don't think they had environmental science back then!]

St. Olaf has a world-renowned music program and I plan to try out for the freshman choir. I attended swim camp in the past at St. Olaf so I may also swim for the college. Needless to say, I will have to plan these activities and save enough time to concentrate on my class work.