

Madeline Stewart

Ripon Memorial Library Scholarship

Early in my childhood, the Ripon Memorial Library has been more than just a building filled with books; it has been a place where my love for reading blossomed and where I found comfort in the pages of countless stories. The library holds a special place in my heart, not only for its vast collection of books but also for the memories and experiences it has afforded me.

My journey with reading began long before I could even pronounce the titles of the books I held in my small hands. My parents introduced me to the wonders of storytelling at a young age. Storytime soon became a cherished event, and as I grew older, my passion for reading only intensified. The Ripon Memorial Library became my second home, a place where I could explore new worlds, embark on grand adventures, and lose myself in the magic of words.

One of the most significant experiences I had at the library was joining the book club led by Melinda. Meeting with fellow readers opened my eyes to the diverse array of literature beyond my usual reading. Through lively discussion, I discovered the power of literature to provoke thought, inspire empathy, and foster connections with others. The book club not only broadened my literary horizons but also deepened my appreciation for the written word and the profound impact it can have on individuals and communities alike.

My love for reading has been a guiding light throughout my academic journey, leading me to pursue higher education with a desire to delve deeper into the realm of literature. It was this passion for reading, cultivated over years spent exploring the shelves of the Ripon Memorial Library, that propelled me towards academic excellence and ultimately enabled me to gain admission to the Honors Program at George Fox University.

The Honors Program at George Fox University represents not only a continuation of my academic pursuits but also a testament to the transformative power of reading. Through rigorous

coursework, intellectual discourse, and interdisciplinary exploration, I am eager to further cultivate my love for literature and engage with complex ideas that challenge and inspire me. The foundation of literacy instilled in me by the Ripon Memorial Library has equipped me with the skills and knowledge necessary to thrive in this academic environment, and I am grateful for the invaluable role the library has played in shaping my intellectual and personal growth.