

Girl power

Women should follow role models to make an impact



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Despite efforts in recent years to improve the status of women in the workplace, in sports and in politics, women still have many barriers to overcome. We live in a society that is dominated by men, yet women have so many talents.

In the United States, we have yet to see a female president. Why is this? In only a few countries has there ever been a female prime minister, such as Great Britain's Margaret Thatcher, who was a successful politician.

Last year, I listened to a speech at the Lied Center, given by Coretta Scott King, the wife of the late Martin Luther King Jr.

Her speech was the most touching and inspirational speech I have ever heard. Listening to her speak about her life experiences was so emotional to listen to, I nearly cried.

The thing I respected most about her was she was so strong. She spoke of the pain and suffering she had endured during the 1960s.

The many attacks she and her family encountered from people who were against her husband were some of the experiences she shared.

Though she and her husband had been imprisoned on many occasions, she felt no anger - simply a deep sadness for the people who had unjustly imprisoned her.

What

gave her strength through all of her struggles was her undying faith in God. Though she came in contact with many barriers, she spoke of her experiences on how she overcame them.

Coretta had so much love and forgiveness in her heart for all those who had hurt her and her family. This is what I admired most about her.

Her spirituality showed through the entire time. It was particularly evident as she described those who had tormented her. She felt no hatred.

Even until this day she can forgive the person who killed her husband. This is very remarkable. Very few women could do this.

After listening to this speech I began to think about female role models, and it occurred to me that we need more women like Coretta Scott King, who I would describe as a strong woman of impact.

Women are very warm, loving, charitable and compassionate. But women also are strong-minded individuals with desires and ambitions.

My biggest role model is my mother, who to me is simply the best. She is a wonderful mother who is hard-working, thoughtful and always loving. She is full of words of wisdom, and I can always depend on her.

She is a fantastic woman, and I cannot praise her enough. I can only thank her for giving me life.

There are many positive female role models that many young women such as myself can look up to.

Women have plenty of courage and bravery.

Rosa Parks, for example, is a woman who I have tremendous admiration for. She was the first black person to gain notoriety for giving up her seat on the bus to a white person during the 1960s.

Rosa Parks showed amazing boldness. She broke a barrier that no other woman or person in history had ever done, and this is why she is a woman of significance.

Women are dedicated to a cause.

Mother Teresa devoted her whole life to the poorest of the poor in India. She had so much compassion for others, and she lived her whole life giving to others.

She once described her work as "ripples in the ocean," just like throwing a stone into the water.

The rippling effect reaches out and touches everyone, which under-

Women are beautiful, graceful and are very influential.

Princess Diana was a woman of great impact. She had so much compassion for others. She was a woman who also dedicated her life to helping others.

She reached out to people who many of us would probably just ignore. Victims of war, homeless people, people with diseases such as leprosy and AIDS. Diana sacrificed her time to care for people less fortunate than her.

Diana cared most about making sure that the sick and dying knew that someone loved them.

She was a woman of impact who we can never forget.

Women also are great athletes and should be respected equally as men.

Florence Griffith Joyner was a woman of great importance to me. As a young female athlete, she is a woman I greatly respect, and one day I may follow the strides she made.

She sensationally took the world by storm on the track by breaking records people thought were impossible. She proved the critics wrong by setting world records in the 100 and 200 meters.

"Flo-Jo" had amazing speed, grace and elegance. She took women's athletics to a whole new level. She was perhaps the fastest woman who ever lived.

Some women are so inspirational that they can change others' lives.

Oprah Winfrey is a woman who many women can relate to because of her many life experiences. Oprah has personally battled problems such as child abuse and obesity, and she is still so strong.

She is praised by those who watch her show. Her recent portrayal of the character Sethe, from the book "Beloved" by Toni Morrison, is outstanding.

The book highlights the importance of women's relationships and the sacrifices women are forced to make.

Oprah has so much strength and power that no obstacle can get in her way. She is a realist, and she always is positive.

There also are many female pop stars who are of great impact.

Though I hate to admit it, even the Spice Girls are women of impact. They are young, artistic and very innovative. They have broken records in the music industry that no other all-girl group has ever done.

They rapidly achieved enormous worldwide fame, and they're still the group that we're all talking about.

They've popularized this whole idea about "Girl Power."

The Spice Girls' philosophy is that women should be independent, self-motivated and dedicated to a cause - not relying on any men.

All these women have made a difference to our society and to others, and this is why they are women of impact.

We still need more. Women need to set out strong goals like the females I have mentioned and do something positive and productive.

Each and every woman on this campus can be a woman of impact if she is dedicated and committed to her work. We all have so many qualities.

Some of us are caring and giving, some of us are athletic and energetic, some of us are intelligent, and some of us are simply fun-loving.

One day, ladies, we will all graduate and gain that degree and go out into the work force and hopefully be like other positive females.

We are role models for young girls of the future.

So, let's try and increase the numbers of women of impact.

Strength is all we need.



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