

Larinda Kaufer Family Scholarship

“Believe in yourself and all that you are.

Know that there is something inside you that is greater than any obstacle.”

~ Christian D. Larson



The family of Larinda Kaufer wanted to honor her forty years of dedication as an educator serving and advocating for children. Larinda’s greatest source of pride are her three sons who established this scholarship in their mother’s name. They are Dr. Seth Kaufer: Financial Advisor, Adam Kaufer and PA State Representative, Aaron Kaufer.

Larinda was born and raised in Springville, PA. She was the oldest of five children and was raised in a rural farming community. When Larinda was in school she remembers the teachers that encouraged and motivated her to succeed in school. Larinda knew she wanted to become a teacher, like those who inspired her throughout her education. Larinda credits her beloved Grandma Button, who graduated from Mansfield University in 1920 with encouraging her and helping to develop her confidence. Larinda’s grandmother convinced her despite all of the financial challenges facing her, that she could overcome those obstacles ahead to achieve her dream of becoming an Elementary School Teacher.

Larinda was determined to overcome the obstacle for financial aid needed to go to college. She researched colleges until she discovered that Wilkes College offered scholarships, grants, loans and work study jobs. She also knew that she could work in the city as a waitress as she did in high school.

The incredible Dean of Students, Jane Lampe, became Larinda's first Wilkes College advocate. Dean Lampe listened to Larinda's pleas for help, heard the emotion, as she begged for a chance to prove herself worthy of becoming a Wilkes College student.

According to Larinda: "Dean Lampe became my mentor by guiding and supporting me through four years at Wilkes College. She advocated for me by putting her trust in me, helping me apply for everything that was available. I worked hard, studied hard and graduated with Honors. Dean Lampe continued to be my advocate, my hero, by guiding and supporting me to overcome my financial obstacles. With her guidance I realized my dream to become an elementary teacher".

Larinda graduated from Wilkes College with a B. S. in Elementary Education and then during her teaching career she continued to earn her M.S. Elementary Education Degree from Wilkes College. She also has attained numerous graduate credits from other local universities.

Larinda started her teaching career as a Kindergarten Teacher in 1975 at Mill City Elementary School in the Tunkhannock Area School District. She continued the following year as a first grade teacher and in 1978 transferred to first grade at Evans Falls Elementary School for thirty more years. Larinda loved working with children. During this time, she accepted every child into her classroom and helped them to discover their true abilities and talents. Larinda always reached out to those students who faced challenges and needed encouragement, support or guidance in their lives. She was always willing to assist and fight for children and their families throughout her teaching career. She was always and still is an advocate for the children she taught. Larinda was named “Teacher of the Year,” she received the “Excellence in Teaching Award” twice and many other awards during her career. She has also mentored over twenty five student teachers from local

college. After retiring, Larinda joined the Trucksville Early Childhood Education Center as a preschool teacher. She volunteers there currently and still loves interacting and reading to the children.

Larinda's greatest joy is raising her sons whom she loves dearly. They have always been her first priority. She is the Mom who supports her sons in all areas of their lives. Larinda's oldest son, Dr. Seth Kaufer has just moved back to the area and is a Gastroenterologist at a local hospital. Her son, Adam Kaufer is a Financial Advisor and retired Veteran of the U.S. Army and is married to Anneliza who is a successful Environmental/Landscape Architect. Her youngest son, Aaron Kaufer is the Pennsylvania State Representative for the 120th District.

CRITERIA:

This scholarship is designed for a graduating Wyoming Area senior who has had to overcome specific challenges in order to graduate from high school. We are looking for students who may have faced learning disabilities, physical challenges or obstacles in their lives. The \$1000.00 scholarship is to assist with the costs associated with the student's studies in a training program, vocational, trade or technical school, 2 or 4 year college or university of the applicant's choice. Recipients must be known to show consideration and respect to the students, faculty and administrators in their school and community.

REQUIRED ESSAY: (Please do not use your full name on the essay page or in your essay. Use your 3 initials at the top of your essay page. Finalists may be interviewed.)

In a solid essay of at least 500 words explain how you have coped with your challenges. Tell us about your future goals and how you can be an advocate based on your own experiences to encourage and support others. Larinda recognizes the importance and value of all students and that everyone should have the opportunity to further their education and advocate for others.