

Native Sons and Daughters of Kansas  
January 25, 2008  
Mamie Boyd Memorial Awards  
*"KANSAS!" Say It Above A Whisper*

Award Winning Essay  
**Kristen Anthonis**  
Mission Valley Middle School  
Overland Park, Kansas

I've lived in other states and even another country before moving to Kansas five years ago. There are things I really like about each place because they're unique to that particular area. Mountains are beautiful but it's really cool to see an aerial view of Kansas. It looks like a patchwork quilt with all the farmlands growing different crops. I'm proud of the fact that my state produces most of the country's wheat and sunflowers.

Farmers are hard-working families with good values. They know that a person reaps whatever they sow. That down-to-earth attitude spreads to neighboring towns and cities. I live in a city and people here pretty much hold each other accountable for what they say and do. I appreciate being held to that standard.

I'm only minutes away from the country and I love when my family takes drives into it. It's pretty, peaceful, friendly, natural, and close to God.

Somehow, I think there is a significant link between Kansas' geographical location and the kind of people who live here. Kansas is almost dead center of the country, like our heart is almost dead center in our body. The heart has to be strong for the body and is connected to its different parts through arteries and veins. Well, the people of Kansas are strong, and provide crops for the rest of the country. Also, Kansas is surrounded on all sides by states, which represents our ties to everyone.

More than 75 entries were received; others deserving special mention are: Parker Hine, Prairie Village; Joshua Peiffer, Eldorado; Kelsi Ausherman, Haven; Kayla Stallbaumer, Seneca; Brooks Hobrock, St. Francis; Mikaela Grace, St. Francis; and Matthew Longabaugh, Sabetha. Thank you for your excellent submissions.