

Nominate next Rockford Woman of the Year

Do you know an amazing woman who lives in the Rock River Valley? If so, nominate her for Rockford Woman of the Year.

We're looking for someone who best exemplifies the mission of the magazine. She must:

- Foster community conversations among women in the Rock River Valley.
- Share the earned wisdom of women in their own words.
- Delight in the things that make women who and what we are.
- Celebrate women who teach us to strive and achieve beyond our limitations and challenges.
- Reflect the diversity and values of the women among us.



Julia Dayton

Photograph by Amy J. Correnti

Young RW

Age: 10

City: Rockford

Parents: Mike and Christy Dayton

School: Whitman Post Elementary School, fifth grade

Major extracurricular effort: Leader of The Curvy Girls of Illinois — Scoliosis Support Group

One of my major goals ... To teach people about scoliosis. I want to make sure no one has to feel alone as they deal with scoliosis.

What I want people to know about scoliosis: It doesn't make you different; it makes you special!

Why I started The Curvy Girls: To meet other girls with scoliosis. I wanted to teach people about scoliosis and be there to support girls who are going through the same things I am.

What The Curvy Girls do: It shows girls with scoliosis that they are not alone. All Curvy Girls are different and have their own story. We get together to share our stories and help each other cope. The girls who already have gone through treatment or surgery can give back by helping and supporting those who are still wearing a brace or getting ready for surgery.

The best advice I've ever received: God will give you only what you can handle.

A recent eye-opening experience: I saw a video of "Buttercup the Hedgehog." Buttercup has scoliosis. He has a curve just like mine. It showed me that even though all God's creatures are different, we are all the same, too.

Something I have always wanted to learn: To do a handstand on the balance beam.

Why I admire my mom and grandmother: They both care for me a lot, and they keep me calm when I'm upset.

What I like to do for fun: Singing, dancing, acting, knitting, baking and hanging out with friends.

In 10 years, I see myself ... in college, studying to be either a pediatric physical therapist or an artist.

My proudest moments: When people come up and tell me how great they think The Curvy Girls is. The group helps girls be less afraid. One man said his daughter had scoliosis and was diagnosed in high school. He said he knows a group like The Curvy Girls would have changed her life and helped her cope with everything she was going through. That makes me feel really good — The Curvy Girls is making a difference.