DEBORAH MORTON AWARD CELEBRATION
Fiftieth Anniversary

SEPTEMBER 20, 2011

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND
716 Stevens Avenue
Portland, Maine
ORIGIN
of the Deborah Morton Award

The first Deborah Morton Awards were presented on April 20th, 1961, at a public Convocation entitled “The Modern World and the Education of Woman,” celebrating the 130th anniversary of the founding of Westbrook Seminary and Junior College. Mr. William S. Linnell, President of the Board of Trustees, assisted by college President Edward Y. Blewett, presented the first Awards to twelve women of the Greater Portland area who had made significant and valuable contributions to the civic, cultural, and social life of the community, in the manner of Deborah Morton who had rendered more than fifty years of distinguished service to Westbrook Seminary and Junior College.


“We wanted to call the attention of our women students to the notable professional, business and personal achievements of Maine women. The Board of Trustees, enthusiastic about the idea, readily agreed, and provided, wisely I think, that the women members of the Board would be charged with the nominations . . . [T]he happy plan began and prospered and our women leaders were invited each year—leaders chosen from an expanding area—leaders invited to accept the honors of the college, each one honoring the college by her acceptance.

“. ..I felt the name of Deborah Morton was the best we could hope to find to associate with the highest honor the college could confer on a woman—and the Board of Trustees agreed.”
DEBORAH MORTON  
(1857–1947)

Deborah Nichols Morton is a significant figure in institutional history. Her association with Westbrook Seminary and Junior College, beginning in 1876 as a student and extending to the 1940s, bridged two centuries and survived a crucial period in the life of the college—that of transition from seminary to junior college.

In the March 1964 Westbrook Junior College Alumnae News, Dorothy Healy, whose own association with Westbrook spanned fifty years and the transition from junior college to college, reminisced about Deborah Morton:

“I had thought myself ‘educated.’ Miss Morton taught me two lessons of immense value: (1) that education is a never-ending quest. Indeed, that life itself is of little or no value when the will to learn has stopped and (2) that every idea worth holding is worth doubting, testing, evaluating.

“Miss Morton was of Maine, a Down-East Yankee in character, but she was by no means provincial. She had studied abroad and in several of our finest New England colleges; she had travelled to Europe and the Middle East on at least fourteen voyages, many of them in groups of which she was a director; she served in the vanguard of women who fought for equal rights on the social, political, and economic levels. She had an adventurous spirit, an inquisitive and doubting one. These qualities her students, her colleagues and friends were all exposed to and we all in some measure were brought to see the world of ideas from a new perspective, with fresher slants of insight and imagination.

“Happily, Miss Morton’s influence is being extended through the Deborah Morton Award... Quite in keeping with Miss Morton’s own personality, these women are honored for the contributions which they have made ‘in the manner of Deborah Morton’ to the civic and professional life of their home communities... [T]he memory of her searching mind and of her intellectual integrity provides an example for new generations of young women who want to stake out an honest claim to being ‘an educated woman.’”
VOTED: To establish the Deborah Morton Awards to Westbrook Junior College to women of the Greater Portland community each year for College and Seminary teacher for more than fifty years.

— Westbrook Junior College Board of Trustees Minutes

1961 Lysla I. Abbott • Louise H. Armstrong • Hilda L. Ives • M. Greta Kerr • M. Lucile Kidder • Frances V. O’Brien • Margaret Payson • Anna C. Pride • Gertrude M. Prinn • Margaret M. Riggs • Edith K. Sills • Clara L. Soule 1962 Helen Richardson Andrew • Dorothy M. Healy • Geraldine Landry 1963 Margaret M. Jones 1964 Florence A. Lawrence • Marion E. Martin • Hannah Woodman 1965 Beatrice E. Center • Jean Gannett Hawley • Marion Brown Payson 1966 Mary Nash Flagg • Elizabeth J. Levinson 1967 Grace A. Dow • Dorothy W. Rowe • Nelly K. Wade 1968 Gladys Doten Chapman • Dagmar Potholm Petersen • Rosamond Thaxter 1969 Mildred Giddings Burrage • Ward E. Murphy 1970 Ilonka Fertig • Marie Peary Kuhne • Edith Hamblen Smith

1961–1970
be given by the Board of Trustees of Westbrook Junior who have, in the manner of Deborah Morton, Westbrook, rendered distinguished professional and civic service.

Deborah Nichols Morton (1857–1947)

1971  Anne Carroll Payson Holt • Dorris Westall Isaacson • Mary Rines Thompson  1972  Agnes E. Flaherty • J. Frances Hapgood • Doris Libby Lindquist  1973  Rosalyne Spindel Bernstein • Pearl R. Fisher • Frances Wilson Peabody • Margaret Chase Smith  1974  Rebecca Thurman Bernstein • Margaret Joy Tibbetts  1975  Marion Fuller Brown • Jane Smith Moody • Alice A.S. Whittier  1976  Gisela K. Davidson • Millicent Sprague Monks • Mary Ginn Worthley  1977  Berenice Abbott • Katherine Wing Hildreth • Esther E. Wood  1978  Edith L. Hary • Dahlov Zorach Ipcar • Alnah James Johnston • Isabel Kittridge Pease  1979  Nancy Hemenway Barton • Grace Decarlton Ross • Jean Sampson  1980  Louise Bates Ames • Madeleine Richards Freeman • Sue McConkey • Alice Hildreth Rand

1971–1980
1981 Wilma Additon Bradford • Louise Nevelson • Wilma Parker Redman • May Sarton
• Charity Waymouth 1982 Phyllis Thaxter Lea • Pamela P. Plumb • Lucy Anne Poulin
• Elizabeth Ring 1983 Rachel Franck Armstrong • Mary Renier Calvert • Virginia Chase
Perkins 1984 Nancy Pingree Drake • Elizabeth Bottomley Noyce • Lois Dickson Rice
1985 Katharine E. O’Brien • Doris Stewart Pennoyer • Elizabeth Gilmore Holt 1986
Helen K. Nearing • Carolyn Walch Slayman • Eleanor Houston Smith • Joan Benoit
Samuelson 1987 Selma Wolf Black • Gladys Hasty Carroll • Harriet Putnam Henry •
Olympia Jean Snowe 1988 Eve M. Bither • Gerda Shield Haas • Harriet Waterman Lutes
• Mary-Leigh Call Smart 1989 Lillian H. Corey • Caroline Duby Glassman • Anita
Cooper Stickney • Dorothy Clarke Wilson 1990 Beverly Hallam • Gloria Shaw Duclos
The bagpiper pipes as Deborah Morton awardees and their escorts line up for the Convocation march.

1991  Sherry Huber • Louise Kreuzer Montgomery • Sally Vamvakias  1992  Constance Coulter Hunting • Jane Dalton Weinberger  1993  Judith Magyar Isaacson • Katherine Foster Woodman  1994  Helen Sloane Dudman • Bettsanne Holmes • Peggy L. Osher  1995  Patricia McGuigan Collins • Madeleine G. Corson • Patricia Wiggins  1996  Marjorie A. Boyd • Judith Ellis Glickman • Marion M. Kane • Sally Wallace Rand  1997  Carol Brightman • Elizabeth H. Mitchell • Doris ‘Didi’ Stockly • Rita Willis  1998  Barbara Guild McKernan • Anne B. Pringle • Elaine D. Rosen • Clarice M. Yentsch  1999  Eleanor Goodfellow Ames • Ethel ‘Billie’ Gammon • Mary J. Herman • Tabitha King  2000  Lisa M. Gorman • Patricia A. Peard • Ann Sutherland Riley • Joann B. Thomas
A scanning of the citations of... honorees reveals an impressive range of leadership and service. Medicine, the law, education, the consular service, religion, social welfare, journalism, politics, literature, the arts, extraordinary contributions to humane causes are a few among the many areas of life on which these... distinguished Maine women have had a marked impact.

— Westbrook News & Views

2001 Joyce Kelley Butler  •  Jean M. Deighan  •  Linda Greenlaw  •  Merle Royte Nelson  •  Beverly J. Paigen 2002 Jill C. Duson  •  Colleen A. Khoury  •  Geraldean Donahue Paterson  •  Elizabeth Oliver Shorr 2003 Kimberly L. Block  •  Dale McCormick  •  Alice M. Savage  •  Dorothy Schwartz  •  Dianne Tilton 2004 Barbara Morris Goodbody  •  Margaret Jane Kravchuk  •  Dora Anne Mills  •  Mary Pennell Nelson 2005 Susan M. Collins  •  Louise Parker James  •  Eleanor Parker Merrill  •  Mary Norberta  •  Kay Rand  •  Paula D. Silsby 2006 Bridget D. Healy  •  Theodora J. Kalikow  •  Grace A. Valenzuela  •  Elizabeth Carter Warren 2007 Sandra Armentrout  •  Meg Baxter  •  Kris Doody  •  Carol Wishcamper 2008 Martha Tod Dudman  •  Esther Nettles Rauch  •  Leigh Ingalls Saufley  •  Nancy A. Thibodeau 2009 Kate Cheney Chappell  •  Josephine ‘Dodie’ Detmer  •  Sandra Green Featherman  •  Meredith Jones  •  Laurie Lachance 2010 Ruth Foster  •  Deborah Carey Johnson  •  Katherine Pope  •  Jean Wilkinson 2011 Kaye Flanagan  •  Lynn Kraemer Goldfarb  •  Gail Kelly  •  Donna M. Loring
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