

***A special message to the Margaret Bansau Scholarship Award Winners  
from Mr. Gil Barner (Margaret Bansau's Cousin)***

*Part or all of your scholarship gift came from a woman named Margaret Bansau. Perhaps you'd like to know something about the lady who's investing in you.*

*She was a small woman...no more than 5' 1 or 2 inches in height. She had had polio as a young girl and during her life carried 40 pounds of iron braces on her legs. Although she looked fragile, looks can be deceiving.*

*Margaret was born in 1915 during World War One. The deadly influenza epidemic was raging. Not until twelve years later would Lindbergh make his historic flight across the Atlantic. matter what the surroundings.*

*As recreation her family regularly went camping at a time when what was to become the Interstate road system 45 to 50 years later was primarily gravel roads. Her family never allowed her to feel inadequate in any way, including her on all the camping and other trips throughout America. She was expected to carry her own weight no matter what the surroundings.*



*My cousin Margaret would visit with our family 2 to 3 times a week. The trek was 5 miles each way. Although her family had a car, Margaret walked, "Hauling iron," she used to say.*

*I remember later how excited she was about a driving trip to Alaska. Although paved, the new Alaskan Highway was crude by today's standards and Margaret managed to be among the first to drive it. Very large animals such as moose, bear and elk were a common traffic hazard "Service" stations were generally a hundred or more miles apart. She loved it. She drove cross-country a number of times, usually on her own. She knew backroads all over the Midwest.*

*Her dad was a contractor in Bloomington, IL. His family was from the Amboy, IL area in North Central Illinois. Her mother was one of Bloomington's early families.*

*She didn't go to college but deeply respected those that could and did. Having built a substantial estate through wise investment, Margaret left well over \$1.3 million for the education of children and young adults with disabilities. Her passion was to see that students with disabilities would be given the chance to learn and the chance to give back in return through teaching, mentoring and strengthening as she has done.*

*She was well read, a superb knitter, teaching knitting and crocheting for years. But most of all she really loved travel. Margaret was always generous to family and it was a joy to be with her. She died in January of '99 at the age of 83. Through her gift to Illinois State University, she continues to empower persons with disabilities and support those that who have the calling to teach in the field of special education.*