

## Impact Statement

Sarah Brunner, Grade 10.

***What Was Once A Dream***, 2023.

Digital art, 20 x 16 inches.

Parrish Community High School, Parrish, FL

Unsung Hero: Eugenie Clark

I learned about Eugenie Clark when I was younger. I had the opportunity to participate in a club called Gills Club at Mote Marine Laboratories, research facility which she founded in 1955 and was originally called Cape Haze Marine Laboratories. Gills Club, a club created only for girls, focused on teaching girls to explore the wonders of the seas and sharks. I also participated in another program at Mote called Sci Girls where I developed a presentation about the most effective shark tags. There were always mentions of her and her contributions to marine science. I've always loved sharks and that's why Eugenie Clark inspires me, she created opportunities like these for me and all girls. She opened up science for females and changed the way humanity sees sharks. I even wanted to be a marine biologist when I was younger but found my calling in art instead.

During my research of articles and news reports, I found Eugenie Clark was a marine scientist specifically an ichthyologist, a scientist who researches different fish. Throughout her career she went on 72 submersible dives and many more using scuba gear. She was a scientific pioneer who helped pave a path for women's roles in the sciences, the use of diving technology to study marine biology and increased people's knowledge of sharks, such as the fact that they don't have to continuously swim to breathe. She pushed past the negative voices around her that said she couldn't follow her dream because she was a woman and science was a man's job.

Within my artwork, I wanted to express the dreams of Eugenie Clark, her passion and what she did. many articles say when Clark was young, she was dropped off at a New York aquarium over the weekends by her mother on her way to work, she would spend hours staring at the fish, especially the sharks, imagining herself swimming with them. I tried to incorporate that in my piece. The little girl represents Clark when she was little staring at the sharks in the aquarium and the millions more females in science yet to come. The white outlined figure/scuba diver represents Clark's dreams and what she would become in the future; a diver standing there as sharks swim around her, this led to the name of my piece, "What Was Once A Dream." In other areas of the piece, I tried to incorporate symbolism of Eugenie. For example, within the bottom left corner, I drew Genie's Dogfish (the shark named after her ), and the table in the other corner references famous pictures of her, one in her scuba gear, and the other of her in the jaw bones of a shark. Along with her famous alias the "shark lady"

The process of creating this work helped me understand Eugenie more and reflect on how much she really has done. Her impact on the world and society, how many sharks she's worked with, and the countless contributions she's made for science are evidence of why she should be recognized. As an inspiration for many, I hope to share this artwork, and inform others about her, and let everyone know just how much of a hero she was and how lucky we all were to have her. One way I hope to share this piece is by making prints or postcards cards to sell online,

with all proceeds from the prints going to shark research. Another way would be to talk with Mote Marine about using my art to raise funds for their educational programs to help other girls like Eugenie and me.