

Impact Statement

Nurin Mock, Grade 7

***Her Deepness*, 2024.**

Acrylic on plexiglass panels, handmade wooden frame, 13 x 18 x 3 inches.

Ida B. Wells Academic and Performing Arts Complex, Jackson, MS

Unsung Hero: Sylvia Earle

When looking for an Unsung Hero, I tried to look for something I could use to help a cause. I chose Dr. Sylvia Earle because her desire to help and protect the Earth protects me and other Earth inhabitants. From an early age, she always had a love for the environment like her parents. They later enhanced this fascination by moving to a house on the coast. Her many trips to the shore of New Jersey fueled her deep curiosity and desire to explore the ocean. She never let her love for the environment be extinguished. This inspires me to do the same with my passions and to keep them in my heart.

Dr. Sylvia Earle is one of the most well-known and inspirational marine biologists and oceanographers. She was the first female chief scientist in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and contributed to multiple expeditions. These expeditions include the Tekite Project, Tekite II, one dealing with an oil spill, and many more. In addition, Dr. Earle did some research with NOAA on Naked Beach. Even today, she works to help combat climate change, pollution, and the other issues the Earth faces. With these aspects in mind, I want to display resilience and courage in my artwork. As a role model, I admire her courage and strength to not back down on what she believes in. Dr. Earle keeps going when no one's telling her to but herself.

My artwork is heavily inspired by my research on Dr. Sylvia Earle. Her story is shown through the many animals and creatures she met throughout her career that have brought her to where she is today. The jellyfish on the left of the artwork represent her discoveries about them at Palau's Jellyfish Lake. In addition, the shark in the top right corner displays her fascination with them. The red spikey plants in the background are representative of the plants that she discovered called Hummbrella Hydra. Additionally, the portrait itself displays one of Dr. Sylvia's early explorations in her youth when she would climb up a tunnel after a mission. The name of the artwork, "Her Deepness," is a tribute to the deepest walk on the ocean floor, taken by Dr. Sylvia, which was 381 meters deep. All of these aspects I will display in my artwork tell the captivating ongoing career of Dr. Sylvia Earle. My vision is to tell the life of Dr. Sylvia Earle in a way that displays all the work she's done on multiple slides of brightly painted plexiglass. The bright colors and marine animals will show her passion, career, and bright past and future to come with marine biology.

This project has taught me courage, diligence, and bravery. To me, courage means to fight for a change in the world even if it's tough, diligence is the effort to make that change happen, and bravery is not backing down, even in fear. It has also made me more aware of the issues that the Earth is going through right now. I will make others in my community aware too by presenting my physical artwork to elementary kids. This will give them more insight into Earth and how they can help. My eyes have now been opened to see the effects of global warming, climate change, and pollution that have been occurring. Now, I aspire to help as much as I can. This project made me realize that if you want something to change, you have to do it yourself without someone asking you to. To do it on your own without someone telling you to. People like Dr. Sylvia Earle displayed that in the fight to ensure the protection of Earth.