



## Impact Statement

Mia McDowell, Grade 8

***The Golden Women***, 2026

Colored pencil, marker, collage, pen on paper, 12 x 18 inches

Byron Center West Middle School, Byron Center, MI

Unsung Hero: Emily Newell Blair

My Unsung Hero, Emily Newell Blair, was a writer, editor, and leader in the women's suffrage movement who helped Missouri women get the right to vote. She was born in Joplin, Missouri, on January 9, 1877, in a small mining town. She had a unique perspective on politics because of her midwestern roots, which would help her in the future as a writer for the women's suffrage movement. Emily Newell Blair stood out to me because she used her talent as a writer to bring attention to the women's suffrage movement. She used her creativity and talent as a writer to inspire others to fight for what's right. I feel connected to her through my talent, the visual arts, and how it can also motivate people. I find her strength and courage inspiring, especially during a time when women were greatly underestimated.

Emily Newell Blair's efforts helped lead to convincing the Missouri governor, Frederick. D Gardner, to pass a law granting women the right to vote in presidential elections. This success eventually led to the 19th Amendment, which allowed women from any state to vote. As a mother of two, she cared for her kids' future and the rights that they deserve. One of her most famous quotes is, "Must our children start where we did?" This means she did not want her children to go through the inequality she fought so hard against. Emily's writing journey began when she found her love for writing. She started to realize her articles and short stories were having an impact on her community and how she could use this to bring light to the women's suffrage movement. She became an editor for the Suffragist publication, Missouri Women. As she grew into a public leader, she created the "Golden Lane," which was a silent protest of women wearing white dresses and gold sashes. They stared down male politicians to show their strength as a community.

In my piece to show her story, I decided to draw the Golden Lane protest emerging from the Missouri women's magazine she edited for. This represents her lighting the way for women voters and bringing people together through her writings. I drew Emily Newell Blair watching over the "Golden Lane" protest to represent her leadership and impact on other women. I used newspapers and articles to create a collaged background. These articles were both about her and written by her, to show her impact through physical media. I decided to create the color palette as a range of different colors of gold and yellow to literally show the "Golden Lane" and how she lit the way for women.

I hope the impact of this piece is that it brings recognition to Emily Newell Blair, since she has inspired me and is underrepresented throughout history and the media. Her story influences me to create and use my artistic talent to spread awareness and fight for what I believe in. I hope that when I share this art piece with others, they'll see the impact she had on women and their rights and be inspired to fight for their own rights.